



***“Connecting Students to Careers, Professionals to Communities,
and Communities to Better Health”***



**NY Metropolitan Region Office at
Institute for Family Health**

Statewide Office at the University at Buffalo

The New York State AHEC System, comprised of nine AHECs, three regional offices and the Statewide Office, implements community-based strategies that cultivate a more diverse health workforce, address health workforce shortages — particularly primary care, and improve access to quality health care for all New Yorkers.

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Statewide Office

University at Buffalo,
Dept. of Family Medicine
77 Goodell St, Suite 220
Buffalo, NY 14203
716-816-7225
www.nysahec.org

Project Objectives/Summary of Accomplishments

July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024

Mission:

The New York State AHEC System focuses on strategies to enhance access to quality health care and improve health care outcomes by addressing the health workforce needs of medically disadvantaged communities and populations through partnerships between institutions that train health professionals and communities that need them most.

Recruitment, Training and Retention Goals

1. Diversity

- ◆ Prepare a diverse, culturally competent primary care workforce representative of the communities served.

2. Distribution

- ◆ Improve the workforce distribution, particularly within medically underserved communities.

3. Practice Transformation

- ◆ Develop and maintain a healthcare workforce that is prepared to deliver high quality care in a transforming healthcare delivery system.

Objectives

- 1) Support the recruitment of underrepresented minorities/underserved populations into health professions via youth exposure activities, with an emphasis on high school students grades 9-12.
- 2) Support the community-based experiential training of health profession students in medically underserved communities through field placements and clinical rotations.
- 3) Enhance the local healthcare workforce through continuing education programs for currently practicing medical and healthcare professionals focusing on core topic areas.
- 4) Support the development and implementation of a two-year, interdisciplinary program curricula in core topic areas with a defined set of clinical, didactic, and community-based training activities in medically underserved communities for a cohort of interprofessional students.
- 5) Connect health professional graduates to vacancies in medically underserved communities and raise awareness of debt reduction incentive programs for medically underserved community practice.
- 6) Develop and strengthen partnerships for implementing, advancing, and sustaining the work of the NYS AHEC Program.



Purpose/Need

According to 2023 HRSA data, there are approximately 6.51 million New Yorkers identified as residing in locales designated as "underserved" throughout New York's nearly 200 Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs).^[1] It would require nearly 1,350 additional healthcare practitioners in these areas to remove the shortage status. Moreover, the NYS Department of Labor projects that the healthcare sector will account for one of the largest areas of growth, roughly 20% of all employees, within the next decade.^[2] As such, the NYS AHEC System's recruitment, training and retention strategies are solutions to current and future workforce needs.

[1] Designated Health Professional Shortage Areas Statistics.: Third Quarter of Fiscal Year 2023 (June 2023). [Chart]. Bureau of Health Workforce, Health Resources and Services Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Retrieved from <https://data.hrsa.gov/Default/GenerateHPSAQuarterlyReport>

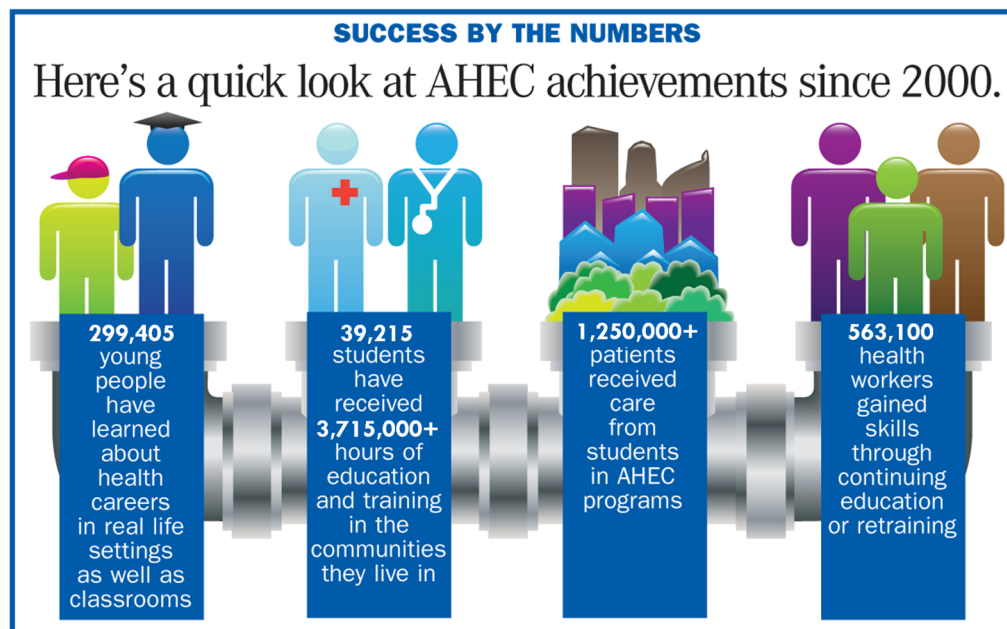
[2] New York State Department of Labor: Long Term Industry Employment Projections, 2020-2030. [Chart]. Retrieved from <https://dol.ny.gov/employment-projections>.

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Overview: Outreach 2023-2024

- ◆ Roughly 8,700 high school students and approximately 2,200 college students either interested or currently participating in health careers programs.
- ◆ Nearly 115 rotations were completed by medical, physician assistant, and other health professions students at AHEC-sponsored community-based sites (e.g., community health centers, hospitals, clinics and private practices) with an emphasis on underserved communities.
- ◆ Approximately 34,300 health professionals received continuing education training via workshops, seminars, conferences and distance learning programs/series.



Note: These are round numbers. Please call the Statewide Office for detailed statistics.

Alignment with NYS Department of Health Priorities

- ◆ The New York State AHEC System continues to be involved in several NYS Department of Health initiatives. As the health care system transitions to deliver patient-centered care with increased efficiency, the NYS AHEC System is a leader among community collaborators focusing on the development and enhancement of an adequate supply of well-trained medical and allied health professionals. The NYS AHEC System is a consistent voice emphasizing that programs must include recruiting and training of future health professionals who will carry on health system transformation. As neutral brokers with more than twenty years of health workforce development, AHECs work with students at all age levels and convene community-based collaborations with health professions schools and health institutions to improve access to care.
- ◆ Moreover, many of the NYS AHEC System Programs target NYS DOH priorities, including but not limited to opioid awareness and education, maternal and child health, behavioral health integration, and cultural competency/social determinants of health.

Making all of New York state a Campus:

The New York State AHEC System has established affiliation agreements, participating school agreements and/or collaborative partnerships (to support training, pipeline and/or continuing education programs) with:

- 80** academic institutions;
- 200+** elementary/secondary schools;
- 285** hospitals/health care systems/clinics/networks; and nearly
- 165** community and professional organizations/government agencies/businesses.

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Overview of NYS AHEC System Program Evaluation

The NYS AHEC System is taking a collaborative and participatory approach to statewide evaluation. The evaluation plan drives the planning process for the program. As a result, they are linked through parallel conceptualization and development. Our plan is systematic, broad-based and integrates evaluation within all stated objectives and activities. Therefore, the goals and objectives provide implicit evaluation standards by which evaluation achievements can be assured, as the objectives also provide outcome measures.

Evaluation

NYS AHEC System Statewide Evaluation Plan Updates

- The NYSAHEC Statewide Evaluation Plan is based on the RE-AIM Framework (Reach, Efficacy, Adoption, Implementation, and Maintenance), which is well matched to inform the specific needs of the NYS AHEC System Program including the centers, regional offices, partners, policy makers, strategic partnerships and funders. In reviewing our goals and objectives, an in-depth data analysis details the following:
 - **Objective 1: Pipeline Programs –Goal Partially Obtained.** Health career pipeline activities and tools are being provided to students, with a target of those from disadvantaged backgrounds and/or underrepresented students. Underrepresented minorities in New York State make up approximately 31.1% of the state's population. The NYSAHEC system aims to recruit a similar or greater percentage of underrepresented minority and/or students who live in MUCs, to participate in their pipeline programs.
 - **Objective 2: Internships and Rotations for Health Profession Students – Goal Partially Obtained.** To obtain goal completely, 100% of all placements should be within a MUC and/or a team-based setting. Currently, 83% of rotations or internships facilitated by the NYS AHEC system were within a MUC, rural, primary care, or team-based setting.
 - **Objective 3: Continuing Education – Goal Obtained.** Roughly 34,300 health professionals received continuing education training this year alone. Additionally, of all of workshops, seminars, conferences and distance learning programs/series facilitated by the NYS AHEC System, approximately 97% addressed a HRSA Core Topic Area.
 - **Objective 4: AHEC Scholars Program– Goal Partially Obtained.** Participant retention has improved over the last year, with current enrollee numbers near the 15 participants/center deliverable outlined by HRSA. In regards to program impact, results from the pre-post tests demonstrate that participants improved their scores on both Cultural Competency scale and the retrospective evaluation items, and were comparable in their attitudes pertaining to Interprofessional Healthcare Teams. Overall, reviews of their 2-year participation in the program by the Cohort 1, 2, 3 & 4 Scholars have been positive, as shown via their qualitative comments and feedback. Similarly, the longitudinal follow up of AHEC Scholar graduates indicate that a majority of students are either employed in a health-related field or pursuing additional health profession training and education in a medically underserved or rural area. Additionally, the knowledge and skills gained as a result of participation in the program has been applicable in their professional settings.
 - **Objective 5: Connecting Graduates to MUCs – Goal Obtained.** Centers are identifying and advertising vacancies in MUCs via their websites and social media accounts.
 - **Objective 6: Strategic Partnership Development– Goal Obtained.** Centers are successfully continuing to develop strategic partnerships to leverage resources and expand program services.
 - **Objective 7: External Funding and Program Enhancement– Goal Obtained.** AHEC Centers, as well as the Statewide Office, are continually preparing and submitting proposals for new grant opportunities, and successfully receiving external funding from grants and contracts. AHEC Centers are also continuing to build infrastructures to obtain and maintain external funding via new or extended programs and initiatives. .

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NYS AHEC Scholars Program

The NYS AHEC System continued to implement and expand its AHEC Scholars Program. This year marked the sixth year of implementation, and ushered in a new cohort of AHEC Scholar participants for the two-year longitudinal interdisciplinary program. AHEC centers utilized a wide variety of experiential learning opportunities, thereby expanding flexibility regarding program structure and participant completion. Using the standardized student application via each center's website and strategic partners, over **500** student applications across the state have been received. A total of 67 returning Cohort 5 AHEC Scholar Students progressed into year 2, while 100 new students were accepted into the program for their first year as Cohort 6.

The overarching goal of the AHEC Scholars Program is for students to gain a valuable understanding about the numerous social and cultural factors that influence an individual's overall health and their ability to access quality care. By exposing students to social, financial, and cultural issues of care, this program aims to support the development of future healthcare professionals who are able to provide high-quality, patient-centric care to all members of their community.

Program Implementation:

During the program year, students diligently worked through the didactic portion of the program via online modules developed by the NYS AHEC Statewide Office. To date, over 6,200 hours of didactic training have been completed by Cohorts 4 and 5. Students have also been participating in experiential learning opportunities addressing medically underserved and rural areas. To date, over 4,600 cumulative hours of experiential training have been completed by Cohorts 4 and 5.



When asked to provide feedback on the program so far, students have stated:

- ♦ “[The AHEC Scholars Program was] Very helpful in understanding how to approach healthcare in my community and underserved communities.”
- ♦ “The AHEC Program was great in furthering my interprofessional development as a social worker and a member of a healthcare team. I would recommend this program to anyone who is passionate about providing quality healthcare in rural areas.”
- ♦ “I found this program to be extremely diverse in topics and disciplines. The topics pertained to many different career paths, and highlighted the necessity for interpersonal and professional connections to better support patients of diverse populations.”
- ♦ “The AHEC Scholars Program allowed me to learn more about the social determinants of health that impact patients and health care quality and gave me an opportunity to look at healthcare from a different perspective than the one I was learning in the classroom. I enjoyed my experiences with AHEC Scholars and highly recommend it for new healthcare students or those who may need help understanding what the social determinants of health might mean for effective care provision and patient safety.”

Objective #4:

Support the development and implementation of a two-year, inter-disciplinary program curricula in core topic area with a defined set of clinical, didactic, and community-based training activities in medically underserved communities for a cohort of interprofessional students.

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Objective #1:

Increase elementary, secondary, community college and college students' knowledge and awareness of health careers through pipeline programs that promote medicine and health professions as viable options, particularly for students from disadvantaged and underrepresented minority backgrounds, in order to promote a culturally diverse workforce.

Health Careers Awareness Programs

Multi-Session Programs

- ◆ Bronx-Westchester AHEC (BW AHEC), Brooklyn-Queens-Long Island AHEC (BQLI AHEC), and Manhattan-Staten Island AHEC (MSI AHEC) hosted **Summer Programs** for over 45 high school and college students with hands-on exposure to local health careers.
- ◆ Erie Niagara (ENAHEC) and Western NY Rural (RAHEC) provided **internship opportunities** for high students interested in healthcare careers.
- ◆ Erie Niagara AHEC (ENAHEC) and RAHEC also continued their participation with the **SEPA project**, encouraging students to learn about bioinformatics through local research activities.
- ◆ EN AHEC worked closely with high school students in their PATCH (Providers and Teens Communicating for Health) Program to support increase advocacy and youth engagement in health issues.

Single Session Programs

- ◆ Approximately **10,600** 9-12 and college students attended **single session awareness programs** via career fairs, and in-classroom or remote presentations. These single session events increase awareness and exposure to health-related careers through lectures, hands-on activities, and demonstrations.



Scholarships Across the System

The NYS AHEC System would like to congratulate all of our Scholarship Recipients!

- ◆ In May, Hudson Mohawk AHEC (HM AHEC) awarded ten \$500 scholarships to area high school students and adult learners interested in or already pursuing a healthcare related program at a local college and/or a certification program. All awardees were residents of HM AHEC's 10 county catchment area.
- ◆ WNY Rural AHEC (WNY RAHEC) awarded six \$1,000 scholarships to area high school students who intent to pursue a health related career or matriculate into a health professions related degree program. The awardees represented several of WNY RAHEC's 12 county catchment area.



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Pipeline Program Spotlight– SWAG

Erie Niagara AHEC, in partnership with Niagara Falls High School and the NYS AHEC Statewide Office, piloted the Student Athletes With Academic Goals (SWAG) program in Spring 2024. The goal of the program was to encourage and prepare student athletes to pursue a healthcare profession while maintaining balance as an athlete.



Twenty-four students participated in weekly learning sessions and were given the opportunity to explore careers in healthcare, with a focus on sports medicine. Each session expanded students' knowledge and skills on topics including Nutrition and Healthy Eating, CPR and First Aid, Body Language, Harm Reduction (Narcotics Training), Mental Health, and Healthy Relationships. A highlight of the program included a visit to D'Youville University for a Body Language Workshop. During this special event, students learned what their body language might be saying, how it can help with effective communication, and the role it plays in professional settings.

A graduation ceremony was held on May 30th to celebrate and recognize the program's amazing group of pilot participants. Based on the success of the pilot program, Erie Niagara is looking forward to continuing and expanding the SWAG program at Niagara Falls High School next academic year.



"All three of my sons attended the MASH Camp at Arnot Ogden Medical Center. They learned a lot, had fun and came away wanting to know more about the many opportunities in healthcare. It is a wonderful program. We are thankful it is available right in our community."
CNYAHEC mother

"I love how they teach us about different careers and how they work."
BQLI AHEC participant

"I was able to experience working with professionals [in bioinformatics], an opportunity that inspired my future."
ENAHEC participant

"Thank you for providing these opportunities and exposing me to careers and paths I never knew."
MSI AHEC participant

"I was exposed to the healthcare field in such depth and detail that it allowed me to understand what working in a hospital is actually like, as well as all the different responsibilities that go into making sure a patient has a successful experience."
BW AHEC participant

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Objective #2:

Expand and support health professions training programs and community-based training experiences in underserved areas for medical students, health professions students and post-secondary students, particularly those from New York State high schools and post-secondary schools.

Health Professions Students

- ◆ The NYS AHEC System, in collaboration with academic institutions such as Lake Erie College of Medicine, University at Buffalo, and SUNY Upstate Medical University supported community-based experiential and/or clinical learning for the following students:
 - * **14 Medical Students**
 - * **18 Doula/Maternal Health Students**
 - * **16 Veterinary Students**
 - * **1 Social Work Student**
 - * **12 Public Health Students**
 - * **40 Physician Assistant Students**
 - * **1 Occupational Therapy Student**
 - * **1 Physical Therapy Student**
 - * **1 Respiratory Therapy Student**
 - * **6 Other Health Professional Students** (including nursing, art therapy, and Not Reported disciplines)
 - ◆ **Rotation sites included community health centers, ambulatory care sites, hospitals and non-profit community organizations** including NY Metropolitan Region Office/Institute for Family Health (IFH) medical student rotations at ECHO Free Clinic (Einstein), placements at Wyoming County Community Health System, veterinary placements at Perry Veterinary Clinic, and placements at both Erie Niagara AHEC and Brooklyn-Queens-Long Island AHEC.
 - ◆ During the summer of 2022, Manhattan Staten Island AHEC provided roughly 20 NY Institute of Technology College of Osteopathic Medicine (NYITCOM) students with a **six week Community Health Experience (CHE)**. Students served in diverse community health settings and gained exposure to intercultural concerns and dynamics.
 - ◆ Western NY Rural AHEC (R-AHEC) manages a Hospitality House, conveniently located next to Wyoming County Community Hospital, to support current students and professionals in the area. Over 20 medical/health professions students and an additional 10+ visiting providers received **housing support**.
 - ◆ Northern AHEC and Central New York (CNY AHEC) continued their **Rural Immersion Programs**. Six students spent a week or more shadowing providers at Carthage Hospital and community agencies while exploring rural community life and identifying public health issues, including health care access.
 - ◆ Central Region Office (CRO)/Upstate Medical University continued their **Rural Medical Scholars Program** designed to increase the number of family physicians entering the rural workforce. Students completed all medical rotations in a rural and/or underserved setting.
 - ◆ Each NYS AHEC System center and regional office have staff who are **National Health Service Corps NHSC Ambassadors**. Each ambassador assists with increasing placements at sites with NHSC providers and informs students of scholarship/loan repayment options.
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Ongoing Summer Programs

- ◆ BQLI AHEC, BW AHEC and MSI AHEC are hosting virtual and hybrid versions of their **Summer Health Internship Program (SHIP)**.
- ◆ MSI AHEC is also hosting their **Community Health Experience Lecture Series** virtually. Medical students and nursing students will come together once again to participate in didactic sessions addressing health disparities.

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Program Spotlight– WNY Rural AHEC Internship Program

Western NY Rural AHEC hosted two separate internship programs from area academic institutions. Three interns from SUNY Geneseo were hosted during the spring semester. With the aim of providing a well-rounded experience for each intern, the students received exposure to several of RAHEC's programs such as Mental Health First Aid, Opioid Prevention Education Project, Care Coordination Course, MASH Camps, and the GLOW With Your Hands Health Career Fair. Responsibilities included general office work, data collection and reporting, program planning, attending off-site MASH camps and tabling events, training events, and reviewing workforce development courses. As the conclusion of the program, Kayla O. shared the following comments:



- ◆ *"Thank you all for providing me with a safe and welcoming environment. The kindness, respect, and patience that everyone gave me will never be forgotten. Although my internship was only a semester-long, the experiences and knowledge I learned will last a lifetime."*

Following the Spring semester, WNY Rural AHEC welcomed a summer intern from the MPH Program at Daemen University. The student will be completing an eight-week internship with R-AHEC and has already been essential to supporting the success of several summer programs this year.

Rural AHEC will be adding to their intern total, with two additional interns slated to participate in the 2024 Fall semester.



Connecting Health Professional Graduates to MUCs

The NYS AHEC System is dedicated to reducing the shortage of healthcare professionals across the state, as well as increasing awareness of available debt reduction programs for eligible providers. Each of the nine centers have designated at least one staff member to serve as a National Health Service Corps ambassador to notify health professional students regarding debt reduction programs and incentives for MUC employment. The NYS AHEC System continues to develop strategic partner agreements with employers in MUC settings to identify current and upcoming job vacancies and collaborate with local academic institutions to notify health professional graduates of available jobs. Current activities in progress include:

- ◆ Integration of a Job Board on center webpages to highlight available vacancies in medically underserved areas
- ◆ Social media posts and bi-monthly newsletters to followers regarding available vacancies and eligible loan forgiveness and scholarship programs
- ◆ Classroom presentations on eligible loan forgiveness and debt reduction programs
- ◆ Exposure and shadow programs with hiring healthcare facilities

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Objective #3:

Enhance the local health care workforce through continuing education programs for medical and health care professionals, development and support for career ladders and promotion of programs that support re-entry workers.

Continuing Education Programs

- Central New York AHEC (CNYAHEC) continued to add **InService Solutions (ISS)** clients. Over 31,000 individuals completed training across 15+ modules with topics including **training on corporate compliance, patient rights and safety, and workplace violence** to stay current on required regulations and certifications.
- WNY Rural AHEC continued their **Mental Health First Aid Trainings** for roughly 610 participants this year. The training provides individuals with the tools to identify, understand and respond to signs of mental health and substance use challenges. MHFA teaches participants to recognize the signs and symptoms that suggest a potential mental health or substance use challenge, how to listen nonjudgmentally and give reassurance to a person who may be experiencing a mental health or substance use challenge, and how to refer a person to appropriate support and services.



- Catskill Hudson AHEC (CHAHEC), Central New York AHEC (CNY AHEC), Erie Niagara AHEC, Northern AHEC (NAHEC), and WNY Rural AHEC (RAHEC) hosted multiple **Cultural Competency, Health Literacy, and Social Determinants Awareness Trainings** to roughly 385 individuals, including current and aspiring healthcare professionals and the general community.
- HMAHEC hosted multiple sessions **addressing provider well-being, burnout, and workforce retention**. Over 100 health professionals and staff members attended.
- Northern AHEC hosted a Public Health Domestic Violence Response simulation for roughly 15 participants.
- HM AHEC and NAHEC also hosted a seizure first aid training for roughly 10 participants to increase awareness and educate participants on how to respond to emergency situations.

Seizure First Aid

How to help someone having a seizure

- 1 STAY** with the person until they are awake and alert after the seizure.
 - ✓ Time the seizure
 - ✓ Remain calm
 - ✓ Check for medical ID
- 2** Keep the person **SAFE**.
 - ✓ Move or guide away from harm
- 3** Turn the person onto their **SIDE** if they are not awake and aware.
 - ✓ Keep airway clear
 - ✓ Loosen tight clothes around neck
 - ✓ Put something small and soft under the head

Call 911 if...

- Seizure lasts longer than 5 minutes
- Person does not return to their usual state
- Person is injured, pregnant, or sick
- Repeated seizures
- First time seizure
- Difficulty breathing
- Seizure occurs in water

Do NOT

- Do NOT restrain.
- Do NOT put any objects in their mouth.
- Rescue medicines can be given if prescribed by a health care professional

Learn more: epilepsy.com/firstaid



epilepsy.com

24/7 Helpline: 1-800-332-1000

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Program Spotlight– Addressing Burnout and Wellbeing

In 2023, Hudson Mohawk AHEC collaborated with Adirondack Health Institute's North Country Care Coordination Collaborative (NCCCC) to plan and coordinate a second series of burnout and well-being session with Kim Perone, CLC, a Wellbeing Coach and Certified Workplace Mindfulness Facilitator, after success and continued demand from prior sessions in 2022. A total of six sessions were held via zoom discussing wellbeing at work, at home, in our social community and financial wellbeing for approximately one hour with a total of 74 participants across all sessions.

Feedback continued to be positive through the series –

- ♦ *"I truly enjoy and get so much out of this series. Especially being in the Human Services for so very long, and with the world the way it is, and sometimes it helps to know it's not only you but others as well. With these series, it's nice to come together, learn and listen and know you're not alone and there is a place to go to for ideas."*
- ♦ *"Everything I have learned so far can be used for myself and/or for my team to help us all feel better and thereby work more efficiently. I always go away with a positive feeling and have more tools in my toolbelt to help me throughout my day at work and can bring to my life at home."*

The demand for trainings to address burnout and wellbeing remained high based on evaluation results across all trainings. In November 2023, Hudson Mohawk AHEC again collaborated with NCCCC to plan and coordinate an in-person conference for Care Managers in Lake George, NY which was attended by 117 Care Managers from across the region. Keeping this focus, the opening keynote provided a presentation on Finding Joy by nationally certified health and wellness coach Benita Zahn, DPS who shared pointers on embracing strategies to live a life of wellness and find joy everyday. A breakout session on How to Find Your Center by Kim Perrone was also included to help attendees understand how to identify their current state and ways to improve wellbeing while still accomplishing everything we need and want to do in life.

Additional sessions on burnout and resiliency are planned for Fall 2024 in partnership with SUNY Adirondack Community College.

Objective #3:

Enhance the local health care workforce through continuing education programs for medical and health care professionals, development and support for career ladders and promotion of programs that support re-entry workers.



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ONGOING: Supplemental Funding Activities: Opioid Prevention Education Project

The NYS AHEC System continued to offer community-based programming to address HRSA's priority focus on the opioid epidemic. Focused on expanding training related to opioid diagnosis, use, treatment and prevention, programming targeted current health professionals, future practitioners (i.e. students), and the general population.



Project Outcome to Date:

All nine AHEC centers (Brooklyn-Queens-Long Island AHEC, Bronx-Westchester, Catskill Hudson AHEC, Central NY AHEC, Erie Niagara AHEC, Hudson Mohawk AHEC, Manhattan-Staten Island AHEC, Northern AHEC, and Western New York Rural AHEC) are currently participating in the project, which focuses on the following objectives:

♦ Objective 1: Community Engagement and Outreach

Centers have coordinated nearly 50 community events, with several upcoming events planned. Reaching over 2,070 participants, these events have included free Narcan Trainings, structured webinar series, and presentations on the impact of opioid and vulnerable populations. Center were have utilized mixed formats for community events, including in-person events and online informational webinars and trainings.

♦ Objective 2: High School and College Student Awareness

Centers have completed nearly 140 student tabling and informational events. Through in-person presentations as well as virtual activities, such as virtual health fairs, remote presentations, targeted social media posts, or presenting to marginalized students, participating AHEC Centers have been able to reach nearly 6,000 participants.

	Obj. 1: Community Events	Obj. 2: Tabling Events
TOTAL	52 Events: 1,070 Participants	137 Events 5,960 Students

ONGOING: Supplemental Funding Activities: Simulation Education Training

Expanding on prior year offerings, the NYS AHEC System continued to facilitate programming focused on the use of experiential learning and innovative simulation-based technology. A total of six AHEC Centers agreed to participate this year: Brooklyn-Queens-Long Island AHEC, Catskill Hudson AHEC, Central NY AHEC, Hudson Mohawk AHEC, Northern AHEC, and Western New York Rural AHEC.

As part of their participation in this project, the AHEC Centers and the Statewide Office were responsible for (a) identifying and supporting current AHEC Scholars in the participation of simulation based learning, inclusive of simulated patient scenarios and group debrief meetings, (b) coordinating simulation and scenario based training addressing health professions career exposure for high school students, and (c) coordinating simulation and scenario based training addressing COVID-19 topics (i.e. contact tracing, vaccine education, and vaccine hesitancy) via for health professional students (i.e. college matriculated students) and/or current health professionals.

To date, several AHEC Scholars have or are scheduled to work through patient scenario based learning, roughly 440 high school students have participated in hands-on based learning, and nearly 100 health professions students and professionals have participated in COVID-19 continuing education.

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Leveraging NYS Investment (Selected Funding)

- ◆ Catskill Hudson AHEC received funding in the amount of \$50,000 from the NYS Department of Health to support community outreach efforts related to colorectal cancer prevention. As a result, Catskill Hudson AHEC is working with a local community health educator to provide community education to individuals aged 45-75 with an emphasis on people of color and LGBTQIA+ individuals.
- ◆ Erie Niagara AHEC received several funding awards including: funding from Fidelis to support the Birth Equity Project; funding from the New York State Office of Mental Health Western Field Office; funding through the Large Wellness RFA; and funding from StoryGrowing WNY 2024.
- ◆ Hudson Mohawk AHEC received funds from the Adirondack Trust Community Fund to help support activities at a MASH Camp planned for July 2024 at SUNY Adirondack. Hudson Mohawk AHEC is also collaborating with SUNY Adirondack to support continuing education activities as part of the Healthcare Pathways Grant.
- ◆ Hudson Mohawk AHEC and Northern AHEC are partnering with Adirondack Health Institute to host MASH Camps in the area through the end of next year.
- ◆ Northern AHEC and Hudson Mohawk AHEC have also been included on a grant to begin the implementation process for the Institute for Career Advancement in Medicine (ICAM). This funding will be designated towards programming in Clinton, Franklin, and Essex Counties, and involves a close partnership with the Health Workforce Collaborative., who will develop the digital platform.
- ◆ Western NY Rural AHEC received the following grants: \$5,000 from Rochester Area Community Foundation for MASH Camps in Wayne County; \$10,000 from ESL for MASH Camps; \$1,250 from Mary Clark Thompson Grant Program for AHEC SET activities; and \$10,000 from Five Star Bank to support AHEC Scholar stipends.
- ◆ WNY Rural AHEC also continued their participation in the part of the **Rural Public Health Workforce Training Network Program**, in which RAHEC will be providing technical assistance over a three year period.



Objective #6:

Develop and strengthen partnerships for implementing, advancing, and sustaining the work of the NYS AHEC Program.

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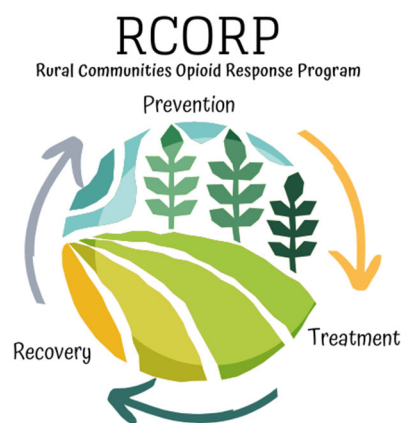
July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024

Ongoing Statewide Office Grants

The NYS AHEC System continues the work on the following external grant projects:

Rural Communities Opioid Response Program (RCORP) III

The NYS AHEC System received funding from the Health Resources and Services Administration to for the third round of RCORP funding, designed to strengthen and expand substance use/opioid use prevention, treatment, and recovery service delivery in high-risk rural areas. This three year program assembles a consortium of direct care providers, local county health agencies, and community non-profit organizations to accomplish each of the project objectives listed below. Together, the consortium will (a) support comprehensive OUD screening, treatment, tracking, and recovery services; and (b) expand awareness and education focused on substance use prevention, community and family education, professional development, and provider/local community resources and services. Four AHEC Centers (Catskill Hudson AHEC, Central New York AHEC, Hudson Mohawk AHEC and Norther AHEC) will be collaborating with local service providers and prevention groups, including Catskill Addiction Coalition, Samadhi Recovery Community Outreach, Essex County Mental Health Services, Hamilton-Fulton-Montgomery Prevention Council, and Seaway Valley Prevention Council, to help support the initiatives of this program across five counties in NYS: Cortland, Fulton, Essex, St. Lawrence, and Ulster.



Fostering Access, Rights, and Equity (FARE) Program



The NYS AHEC System Statewide Office continued its **Fostering Access, Rights, and Equity (FARE) program**. Funded by the US Department of Labor, Women's Bureau, the program aims to assist underserved and marginalized women workers in understanding and accessing their employment rights, public services, and benefits in the Great Buffalo Niagara Region. With an emphasis on education and training related to workplace discrimination, the NYS AHEC System Statewide Office has partnered with local community-based organizations to implement a workshop series designed to educate women to identify and address workplace discrimination in its many forms, as well as promote self-advocacy efforts to mitigate discriminatory behaviors.

Project Objectives/Summary of Accomplishments

July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024

AHEC State and National Leadership

Mid-Hudson Rural Integrated Delivery System Provider Network Board and **Eastern Dutchess Rural Health Network Advisory Board** [Catskill Hudson (CHAHEC)]; **Community Care of Brooklyn Community Engagement Committee** [Brooklyn-Queens-Long Island AHEC (BQLI AHEC)]; **NYS Association for Rural Health** [CHAHEC, Northern AHEC (NAHEC), Western New York Rural AHEC (R-AHEC) and Central Regional Office (CRO)]; **State Workforce Advisory Group** [(Statewide Office, Hudson-Mohawk AHEC (HMAHEC), and Northern AHEC (NAHEC)]; **National AHEC Organization (NAO) Center Director Constituency Group Representative** and **Chair, NAO Diversity Committee** [Manhattan-Staten Island AHEC (MSI AHEC)]; **Vice Chair, Resource Center for Accessible Living of Ulster County Board of Directors** (CHAHEC) and **NYS Health Innovation Plan** (NYS AHEC System Director); **University at Buffalo Community Health Equity Research Institute**, Steering Committee Member (Statewide Office); **Project TEACH Education Committee** Member (Statewide Office), **DSRIP/SHIP Workforce Workgroups, Planning and Advisory Committees**.

Social Media and Advocacy Campaigns

In an effort to maintain and secure state funding, the NYS AHEC System launched a detailed advocacy campaign targeting key legislators. As part of this Advocacy Campaign, all nine centers were provided with a detailed timeline pertaining to legislative outreach and budgetary processes, sample legislative and community outreach templates, and other guided examples to help garner greater public awareness of NYS AHEC's impact in local communities and across the state.

To further support brand awareness and advocacy efforts, the NYS AHEC System ramped up its social media presence, with the addition of platforms such as Instagram and TikTok. By implementing these social media platforms (in addition to Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn), NYS AHEC aims to grow our overall following, increase active engagement, and encourage brand evangelism via the construction of relationships with similar groups, current affiliations, and the healthcare and education industries. Platforms are regularly maintained, monitored, and updated, with previous posts including: Current trends/reports (employment trends, salary growth, attendance/graduation information); Links to healthcare-related news (National, state, or local articles/videos/conferences); Upcoming deadlines/events/activities (including but not limited to NYS AHEC programs, sponsored events, local enrollments; and National Health Service Corps applications); and Upcoming healthcare-related holidays/celebrations (e.g. National Nurses Week, Thank a Doctor Day, etc..

CALL TO ACTION — ADVOCACY ALERT

NEW YORK STATE AHEC SYSTEM

Connecting students to careers, professionals to communities, and communities to better health!



**Help to ensure that vital healthcare resources
continue to exist in YOUR community.**

WE NEED YOU!!!