WISCONSIN AHEC Statewide Programs

The Wisconsin AHEC system improves the supply, distribution, diversity, and quality of health care professionals — improving access to health care in the state’s rural and underserved areas.

FEATURED PROGRAM:

AHEC Community Engagement Project Placements during the Primary Care Clerkship (PCC)

These service-learning projects occur statewide; of the 180 projects/year, 60 were implemented in South Central Wisconsin, 120 in other regions.

In each region, an AHEC staff member coordinates local partnerships and project placements for medical students to provide meaningful service during the 8-week Primary Care Clerkship (a required course in the third year of medical school).

In 2012-13, these Community Engagement Projects built on the success of a pilot program launched the previous year. This year, we:

- In total matched 180 PCC students to projects, each requiring at least 24 work hours on site.
- Expanded the network of partnering host sites.
- Established ways that our students’ skills and knowledge could be applied to achieve the goals articulated by the local community.
- Identified and assessed important learning outcomes for the medical students.
- Made measurable progress on initiatives to improve public health in the local communities.

Throughout the year, AHEC program staff recruited new host sites (including schools, non-profit organizations, libraries, and others). We worked collaboratively with community leaders to design suitable projects.

SELECTED PARTNERS / SITES FOR PCC COMMUNITY PROJECT PLACEMENTS

**South Central Wisconsin AHEC Region**

- Dane County Parent Council / Head Start
- Dane County Literacy Network “English for Health” classes
- Dryhootch—Madison (Veterans health)
- Goodman South Madison Branch Library
- Reedsburg Area Medical Clinic / Webb Middle School “Club Scrub”
- Community Action Coalition for South Central WI: Community Garden placements, including at Dept. of Corrections Day Report Center
- Mazomanie/Black Earth Community Garden
- Sauk Prairie Senior Center
- Centro Hispano (fishing club nutrition project)
- League of Women Voters WI (health policy)
- HealthNet (patient education activities in the Janesville/Beloit area)
- Public Health Madison Dane County—Refugee Immunization Program
- Waunakee High School (heroin abuse prevention project)

**Northern Highlands AHEC / Minoqua**

- Menominee County (the PCC student designed a week-long immersion on the Menominee reservation for a group of college students)

**Milwaukee AHEC**

- Fight Asthma Milwaukee
- Immunize Milwaukee Coalition
- Pulaski High School
- Milwaukee Achiever Literacy Program
- Health Care Training Institute
- James Madison Milwaukee High School
- Walker’s Point Clinic
- 16th Street Community Health Center
- United Community Center Health & Research

**North Central AHEC / Eau Claire**

- Literacy Volunteers of Chippewa Valley
- Eau Claire City Health Department
- Dunn County Health Department
- Reality Check 21
- Head Start

**Scenic Rivers AHEC / La Crosse**

- St Clare’s Health Mission / Salvation Army
- Viroqua Middle School Special Education
- La Crosse County Public Health Department
- Whitehall High School
- Unity House for Men
- La Crosse YMCA Teen Center

PARTICIPANT COMMENTS

“In addition to expanding my knowledge about the risk and legalities of tanning, tattooing, and piercing, I learned a fair amount about communicating with groups of teenagers. As someone interested in pediatrics, it was a real learning experience to see the full range of maturity that comes with middle adolescence. It is one thing to see a 14 year old or even multiple 14 year olds in clinic, and recognize that they are different in maturity. To see the full spectrum in one room is a different experience.”

- PCC student, March 2013

“During my community project I learned about patients with early memory loss. I learned about the impact creative story telling, physical activity, and social interaction can have on health and well-being. I learned a lot from the participants. There was one participant who is still able to teach a class at the local technical college although he had difficulties during my group. He is such a good teacher that his students are willing to give him a ride to his own class. I now have a better appreciation for the abilities of people with memory loss.”

- PCC student, March 2013

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