Summer 2013

“Wisconsin AHEC: On Location” presents highlights of programs and people who bring teaching and learning to life in communities across the state. Suggestions for future articles are welcome; send your ideas to Keri Robbins, AHEC statewide programs manager (krobbins@wisc.edu) or Alissa Siegenthaler, AHEC statewide communications assistant (aasiegenthal@gmail.com).

TRIVIA CONTEST: Identify the “loony” location pictured in the masthead and win a free gift! Send your entry to: webmaster@ahec.wisc.edu - be sure to include your U.S. Mailing address.

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AWARD: UW-Madison University/Community Partnership Award
By Keri Robbins, AHEC statewide programs manager

On June 13, Literacy Network received a UW-Madison University/Community Partnership Award for its ground-breaking work in the “English for Health” program. Literacy Network has partnered with the UW School of Medicine and Public Health since July 2011. English for Health classes teach learners how to access the healthcare system, communicate effectively with healthcare providers, use medication appropriately, and adopt healthy lifestyles. The Department of Family Medicine and Wisconsin Area Health Education Centers assign medical students to English for Health classes for eight-week placements, where the medical students serve as volunteer teaching assistants. Medical students offer class participants authentic speaking practice through role playing in mock health situations; work one-on-one with students; and assist the instructor with class activities.

This structured setting and the organization’s mission made this site an ideal placement opportunity for service learning projects conducted by third-year medical students. The Literacy Network staff members were welcoming and supportive of the ongoing relationship. Medical students offer English language learners a greater sense of confidence when communicating with healthcare professionals. The benefits are reciprocal: medical students report having gained many valuable insights through their work with the participants in these classes.

Many English language learners are anxious or embarrassed to speak with healthcare providers. Interacting with a medical student during class is an invaluable way of breaking down some of the barriers our learners feel. They are able to see providers on a more personal level, as individuals who want to help, listen and learn from them. These increased feelings of comfort and confidence develop more honest and effective communication between learners and providers. Medical students report stronger skills and confidence in establishing meaningful connections with low-literacy patients as a result of their interactions.

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Additionally, medical students share their expertise with the English for Health class members. From answering questions to giving presentations on hypertension and diabetes prevention, medical students teach English language learners how to make healthier decisions in order to prevent chronic illnesses. We brought in resources from the university, including the infamous bucket of human organs (which are used as demonstration models to enhance class conversation). Showing up at class with a real liver (as one of the medical students did) is a memorable and interesting way to share the university’s knowledge.

When medical students conclude their eight-week placements, they give a public presentation about their project. Many relate positive lessons about what they have learned from English for Health participants. This helps ensure that the program is a consistently popular choice for medical students for service learning.

Literacy Network welcomes the volunteer UW medical students as equals in the course instruction, collaborating on subject matter to expand the course and responding to the needs of each class. Medical students’ input has been integrated into the classes with excellent results. Medical students have gained important perspectives about how their approach and professionalism are viewed by community members. Truly this partnership has been mutually rewarding and a wonderful example of a dynamic in which all parties can learn, and all parties can teach.

I am thrilled about the productive and friendly status of this ongoing partnership and look forward to maintaining this connection and placing our medical students as volunteer teaching assistants in the English for Health classes, and other Literacy Network programs, for many years to come.

SPECIAL EVENT: AHEC Reunion at Viterbo University
By Alissa Siegenthaler, AHEC statewide communications assistant

In April 2013, AHEC alumni in the Scenic Rivers AHEC region, including health careers campers, La Crosse health science academy, Wisconsin Express and CHIP participants, were invited to an AHEC reunion at Viterbo University in La Crosse. The evening was designated to giving the students a break before their school final exams began.

Martha McCabe, Scenic Rivers AHEC Executive Director, reports it was a great evening of relaxed conversation about AHEC memories. McCabe said the students also shared advice about a successful college transition and suggestions for finals preparation. The students were invited to walk through the Viterbo School of Nursing labyrinth and learn about its meditation and relaxation purposes.

The AHEC participants were also invited to Nursing Research on the Green, a community event to celebrate and recognize excellence in nursing which took place at Viterbo University’s Fine Arts Center in La Crosse that evening. Sponsored by Gundersen Lutheran Health System, Logistics Health, Inc., Mayo Health System, Pi Phi Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau International, Viterbo University School of Nursing, Western Technical College, Winona State University and Wisconsin Nurses’ Association, this forum recognizes nursing scholarships and shares research and clinical practice innovations. Nursing Research on the Green is designed for nurses working in any setting, as well as student nurses. AHEC students had the privilege of attending the keynote address, Living an Examined Life: One Nurse’s Path to Calling & Inquiry—All Nurses’ Imperative. Keynote speaker Valerie Lincoln, PhD, RN, AHN-BC is currently the Director of Integrative Services, Acute Care Hospital Division at HealthEast Care System in Minnesota. Certified as an advanced practice nurse in holistic nursing, Dr. Lincoln shared her story of transformation from a technologically focused intensive care nurse to a nurse whose real passion is the art and science of holistic nursing. Dr. Lincoln also shared insights concerning the application of the theoretical framework of holistic nursing. Lincoln spoke about healing presence, a strategy that she considers to be the greatest tool a professional nurse may employ in practice which challenges the professional to engage in a holistic perspective of self-care, compassion, and heart-centered choices.

This educational activity gave AHEC students a unique opportunity to reflect upon their own journey and to identify the importance of self-care and reflective practice in all health-career settings.

Following the presentation, the AHEC students had a special opportunity to meet and visit with Dean Silvana Richardson of Viterbo University School of Nursing and Dean William McBreen of Winona State University School of Nursing.
TEACHING: 2013 Wisconsin Express sets an attendance record

Wisconsin Express remains a popular statewide program for AHEC, with a record-high 87 students from across the state attending the weeklong immersion experience this summer. Wisconsin Express places college students in a host community that is medically underserved. The students interact with local health care professionals and participate in interprofessional teamwork-based learning exercises, group projects and community outreach.


Northern Highland AHEC Launches New Regional Site for Wisconsin Express in Menominee/Shawano

By Gail Nelson, Northern Highland AHEC project coordinator

Over the past five years, Northern Highland AHEC considered developing a second Wisconsin Express site in its rural, 11-county service area. In 2013, that dream became a reality with the launch of a new site in Menominee and Shawano counties. The pervasive Native American presence in that locale made it an ideal location for exposing our group of mainstream, health care students to tribal cultures and health services for native peoples.

The planning and coordination of the new WI Express site was accomplished with the able assistance of Sarah Kreul (La Crosse), a third-year medical student in the WARM program. Excited over the opportunity to participate in the project, Sarah wasted no time researching and developing a WI Express plan and itinerary for the weeklong event.

Our week commenced on the Menominee Indian Reservation, where the Wisconsin Express students experienced a “Gathering of Warriors Pow Wow” at Woodland Bowl in Keshena. Veterans hold a place of high esteem in native culture and the memory of every fallen soldier is commemorated with a flag, a portrait photo and a written account of the warrior’s personal story.

Over the course of the week we came to understand the history on “termination and restoration” of tribal identity, a process that the Menominee people endured and continues to affect the community today. Menominee County suffers from the most extreme health disparities in the state of Wisconsin, thereby ranking the county at or the bottom of the health status scale. In an effort to counter this dismal circumstance, a Menominee County Community Engagement Committee was formed to address the conditions of disparity, which the committee has been doing with notable success.

One afternoon, the group ventured to nearby Wittenberg, where we shared a traditional feast with the Ho-Chunk community and learned about tribal health issues and services. Capping the day was a tour of the tribe’s new mobile medical/dental unit for extending the delivery of health care services into the community. The week also featured visits to various schools, community agencies, and the College of Menominee Nation.

At the conclusion of the week, our eight WI Express students all agreed that they not only enjoyed the week’s experience, but had been enlightened by it. Indeed, they wished they might have learned even more from the tribal elders about Native American culture. Overall, it was a wonderful week of learning and celebrating community life with a people about whom our students previously knew very little.

The most rewarding part for me was to witness the opening of students’ minds and to encounter the “ah ha” moments that elucidate something new and fascinating. One simply has to believe that these students are destined to evolve into wiser and more culturally sensitive health care practitioners as a result of this WI Express experience.

May 2013 Wisconsin Express Sites

1.  **Ashland** - 9 students  
   Site Coordinator: Lori Cannon, RN  
2.  **Beloit/Janesville** - 6 students  
   Site Coordinator: Angie Flickinger, MPH, RD, CPT  
3.  **Green Bay** - 6 students  
   Site Coordinator: Chris Vandenhouten, PhD, RN  
4.  **La Crosse** - 6 students  
   Site Coordinator: Bob Milisch, MEd, RRT  
5.  **Menominee & Shawano County** - 8 students  
   Site Coordinator: Gail Nelson, MA  
6.  **Milwaukee** - 10 students  
   Site Coordinator: Suzanne Letellier, MEd  
7.  **Rhinelander/Lac Du Flambeau** - 8 students  
   Site Coordinators: Mark Scully, MLS, MPA and Larry Bergum  
8.  **Rusk Barron (Somali Focus)** - 8 students  
   Site Coordinator: Jackie Pederson, RN, MS  
9.  **Sheboygan (Hmong & Hispanic Focus)** - 11 students  
   Site Coordinator: Jill Niemczyk  
10. **Stevens Point** - 10 students  
    Site Director: Jasia Steinmetz, PhD, RD  
11. **Wausau (Amish & Mennonite Focus)** - 5 students  
    Site Coordinator: Christine Salm-Little
Health Careers Camps are five-day programs hosted by Wisconsin AHEC and are held around the state of Wisconsin. These camps allow high school students to experience first-hand the challenges, opportunities and rewards of health professions.

**Wisconsin AHEC Hosted 7 Sites for Health Careers Camps in Summer 2013**

1. **Fox Valley Area Camp - Oshkosh**
   - June 23 - 27, 2013
   - 20 Campers
   - Stayed at UW-Oshkosh
   - Director: Jackie Martin (Northeastern WI AHEC)

2. **Lakeshore Camp - Sheboygan**
   - July 7 - 11, 2013
   - 20 Campers
   - Stayed at Lakeland College
   - Director: Jackie Martin (Northeastern WI AHEC)

3. **La Crosse Camp**
   - June 16 - 20, 2013
   - 18 Campers
   - Stayed at UW-La Crosse
   - Director: Martha McCabe (Scenic Rivers AHEC)

4. **Madison Camp**
   - June 23 - 27, 2013
   - 20 Campers
   - Stayed at Edgewood College
   - Director: Kari Steck (South Central WI AHEC)

5. **Northern WI Camp - Ladysmith and Rice Lake**
   - June 9 - 13, 2013
   - 17 Campers
   - Stayed at Mount Senario Ed. Center, Ladysmith
   - Director: Jackie Pederson (Northwest WI AHEC)

6. **North Central WI Camp - Wausau, Marshfield, Stevens Point**
   - June 23 - 27, 2013
   - 18 Campers
   - Stayed at UW-Stevens Point
   - Director: Christine Salm-Little (North Central WI AHEC)

7. **Health Camp for Native Students (Ho-Chunk and Ogalal)**
   - July 7 - 11, 2013
   - 10 Campers
   - Stayed at UW-La Crosse
   - Director: Martha McCabe (Scenic Rivers AHEC)

**NEW for 2013:**

**North Central AHEC and Marshfield Clinic host first annual Health Careers Summer Camp**

By Carol Pinkston, North Central AHEC program manager

In June 2013, 18 students from North Central AHEC’s 11-county region visited Marshfield Clinics in Marshfield, Weston and Wausau, Aspirus Hospital, Birge Clinic, UW-Stevens Point, Northcentral Technical College and the Stevens Point Salvation Army over the course of four days for the first annual North Central AHEC/ Marshfield Clinic Health Careers Camp. The students stayed at Neale Hall, a dorm at UW-Stevens Point. Each day gave the students a new experience and a variety of information sessions.

**Day One:** NCAHEC and Dr. Marty Loy (UW-SP) welcomed campers and parents with orientation following.

**Day Two:** Students engaged in an EMS accident scene scenario at Northcentral Technical College. Students also observed and practiced injections in the student lab and watched a demonstration using the Medi-Man robot. In the afternoon, campers traveled to Wausau’s Aspirus Hospital, where they toured the Rehabilitation Center. Staff from the Aspirus Pharmacy Center provided a tour and presentation on becoming a Pharmacist and the workings of the Pharmacy in a hospital setting. Later, the students went to the Wausau area’s Federally Qualified Health Center/Community Health Center, Bridge Clinic. They learned that Bridge patients are most often under-served, uninsured, or under-insured and only get to health care at a later stage in their illnesses.

**Day Three:** The students enjoyed Dr. Aswani presentation about his experiences in Primary Care. Students toured Marshfield Clinic’s morgue and learned about forensic medicine, dissected a cow’s heart, participated in hands-on casting and splinting, toured the outstanding Marshfield Clinic Laboratory, tried their hands at typing blood, learned about the importance of dedication to helping people, and explored the current and projected needs/shortages for Health Career professionals in Wisconsin.

**Day Four:** Health Careers professors and students at UW-SP presented their outstanding health careers curriculum to our students. Afterwards, they enjoyed presentations on advanced practice nursing and oncology as a career. Students also toured the DTC (Diagnostic Treatment Center) at Marshfield Clinic-Weston. Students next traveled to the Marshfield Clinic Wausau Center where they learned about the pathway to a career as a physician and practical things that they could do while still in high school to enhance their acceptance into a medical school or into other health careers. This was followed by an interactive presentation by Elizabeth Landretti, Director of Physical Therapy, who had students participate in activities that simulated what it would be like to be physically challenged.

**Day Five:** Guided by Camp staff, students were engaged in a group discussion about Diversity in Healthcare to help campers understand the importance of empathy and compassion when providing care to patients. Additionally—and a very important part of the camp’s emphasis on community service—the students volunteered at the Salvation Army in Stevens Point. The camp concluded with a slide show of the week’s activities for parents to see, followed by a graduation ceremony.

It wasn’t all work for the campers and staff. Evening activities with campers included icebreakers, games, a cookout and bonfire on the UW-SP campus, outdoor games that fostered trust and team building and a pizza party. Counselors and the Camp Director, Christine Salm-Little, talked much about professionalism, real life medical situations, their own health career experiences, medical missions, and other health career and life experiences that will linger in campers’ memories for years to come.
Scenic Rivers AHEC health careers campers receive first-hand medical experience
By Alana Erickson, Scenic Rivers AHEC marketing assistant

“I loved this camp. Coming here was a great experience that I will never forget. I will not forget any of the new family that I have met here either,” stated Earl Lamont, one of the 10 American Indian students who attended a Health Careers Camp in La Crosse this month. He was addressing his peers from the Wanbli, SD and Oglala Lakota Sioux tribe, new friends from Black River Falls (WI) and the Ho-Chunk Nation tribes, and the many collaborating organizations who attended the 2013 Native Students Health Careers Camp graduation ceremony.

Scenic Rivers AHEC is known for high-quality camps that introduce rural students to health careers in the local area. The Native Students camp, piloted in 2012, is specifically designed to give this experience to students of American Indian heritage. The camp’s developer, Ian Stormont (a third-year medical student with the Wisconsin Academy of Rural Medicine based at Gundersen Health System) received the John Snow, Inc. Student Achievement Award at the 2013 National Rural Health Associate Conference, for his work to launch the camp.

Continuing the student-led project this year was Michael Brenner (now a fourth-year medical student). The camp served as his community engagement project, a requirement for 3rd-year medical students. “Taking a leadership role in this camp rejuvenated my passions for community involvement and the possibility of making a difference,” he says. “Coming from a small rural Wisconsin town, being a contributing member of my community was instilled in me at a young age. Its importance in my life has only grown stronger. A sense of community is something that I shared with this year’s campers and it was an incredible experience exploring new opportunities, paths and possibilities together.”

The four-day camp gave students first-hand experience in CPR training, casting, suturing and nursing workshops, a diabetes education seminar, facility tours at Gundersen Health System and the Ho-Chunk Health Care Center, plus campus/admissions tours at Viterbo University, UW-La Crosse and Western Technical College. All of the activities culminated in a trauma simulation on the last day. Students traveling to this camp come from areas with health vulnerabilities and limited access to health care. The low representation of health providers from their culture makes the path to health careers less obvious. All of the partners, Scenic Rivers AHEC, the Wisconsin Academy of Rural Medicine, Gundersen Health System and the La Crosse Health Science Academy, hope to make that opportunity a realistic option for the career choices of these students.

South Central AHEC Health Careers Summer Camp: learning and fun
By Joel Davidson, South Central AHEC center director and Kari Steck, South Central AHEC health careers summer camp coordinator

For 14 years, South Central Wisconsin AHEC, formerly Southwest Wisconsin AHEC, has been offering high school students in our region a chance to learn about wonderful careers in health care. Students hear directly from health care practitioners and academic instructors teaching health care courses, and spend time at community-based health care facilities. During the week, they also shadow practitioners in a field that interests them. Since 2000, we have enrolled over 470 high school students in our health careers camp. Without the tremendous support from our community-based partners throughout our region, we couldn’t offer students this significant experience.

This summer’s South Central AHEC Health Careers Camp was held on June 23-27, 2013 in Madison. The outstanding group of high school students learned about health careers from a wide array of health professionals. Some highlights of the camp were students’ job shadow experiences; touring Camp Randall football stadium and learning from a UW Athletic Trainer; learning how to give injections from the UW School of Nursing; speaking with Family Medicine Fellows about medical school and the practice of Family Medicine; touring the EPIC facility and learning about its electronic medical record products and how they impact managing patient care; and viewing the cadavers at the UW Anatomy Lab. It wasn’t all work and no play….the students also attended a Madison Mallards baseball game.

The dedicated staff who see this camp through included Kari Steck, a former health careers camper and now a Special Education teacher in the Mt. Horeb school district; Hope Villiard, who just completed her first year as medical student in the Wisconsin Academy of Rural Medicine (WARM) program at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health; Zach Droeszer, who entered the WARM program this summer, and Meaghan Orr, who just graduated from the University of Wisconsin School of Nursing and began work in the UW Hospital and Clinics Emergency Department in July.

Students and counselors had a blast and learned a lot throughout the camp. Many campers commented that they thought they knew what they wanted to do coming into the camp, but after learning of all of the different health careers, left wanting to explore the many other health careers they had just discovered. The counselors are already looking to next year! The 14th annual South Central Wisconsin AHEC Health Careers Camp was another success.
NEW: Resources and information to assist with Affordable Care Act implementation

Wisconsin AHEC has compiled resources on our website to assist Wisconsin health professionals and concerned community members who are implementing the Affordable Care Act and/or facilitating Health Exchange insurance signups during Fall 2013. As additional information becomes available, we will continue to add to the page. To view, go to the Wisconsin AHEC homepage and click on ‘ACA - Affordable Care Act’ under Resources located on the left-hand side or visit: http://www.ahec.wisc.edu/aca-implementation.

AHEC IN THE NEWS:

WARM students plan and execute a La Crosse citywide disaster drill

WARM students Emily Ramharter, Jordan Godzdzialski, and Brad Peterson saw their community-engagement project, a disaster drill at La Crosse Central High School, play out June 2013. With the help from their mentor, Dr. Kimberly Lansing, the students began planning and coordinating for this event a full year in advance.

WARM teamed up with Martha McCabe (Scenic Rivers AHEC) and Keith Butler (the La Crosse County Director of Emergency Management) to coordinate the police, firefighters, ambulance crews, other emergency personnel and students who volunteered for the disaster drill. Dr. Kimberly Lansing, WARM mentor, said they spent less than $200 on the drill because so many volunteers pitched in.

The medical students also had a chance to teach the high school students about the injuries that they would be reenacting. This was a great teaching and learning opportunity for not only the high school students, but for the college students and emergency personnel as well. The full article appears on the La Crosse Tribune website.

Milwaukee YHSC in the news

Last June, members of the Milwaukee AHEC Youth Health Service Corps (YHSC) spent a day at the Medical College of Wisconsin, where they practiced medical procedures on standardized, computerized “patients”.

Read the full article on the Wauwatosa Patch website: http://wauwatosa.patch.com/groups/local-connections/p/a-head-start-in-health-care-in-wauwatosa

AHEC Staffing Announcements

While we are certainly sorry to see them leave the Wisconsin AHEC staff, we offer best wishes and congratulations to staff making career moves during the summer of 2013:

Martha McCabe, formerly Scenic Rivers AHEC Director, has relocated to Kansas City. Martha has accepted a position working for KC STEM Alliance, a collaborative network that inspires interest in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math careers. Martha invites you to keep in touch with her at mccabemb@kcstem.org.

Mandy Meloy, formerly Wisconsin AHEC community health programs coordinator (CHIP and Informed Caring), is now teaching at Toki Middle School of the Madison Metropolitan School District. She is teaching two multi-cultural literature classes and running the school library. Mandy says she hopes to build partnerships with the nearby public health department, public library and community center.

A very special THANK YOU to both Martha and Mandy for your passionate and dedicated service to Wisconsin AHEC, our community partners, and our students! You will be missed!