Wisconsin AHEC wins national award

WASHINGTON D.C. - The Wisconsin Area Health Education Center (AHEC) program earned national recognition as the 2016 recipient of the Eugene S. Mayer Program of Excellence Award from the National AHEC Organization (NAO).

The Program of Excellence award is given biennially to an AHEC program that exemplifies community and university partnerships, program comprehensiveness, responsiveness to community needs, and has had a significant impact on improving access to health care for citizens in its state.

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AHEC welcomes two new regional directors

Gail Kell
NORTHERN HIGHLAND

MARINETTE - Northern Highland AHEC and statewide staff welcome Gail Kell as the new director. Kell has lived in northern Wisconsin for almost 25 years. She graduated from UW-Stevens Point in 2001 with a dual degree in sociology and social work. She continued her graduate studies at UW-Stevens Points with a master’s of science in Human Community Resources, which prepared her for running nonprofits.

Previously Kell has worked as the program manager for the Wisconsin Institute for Public Policy and Service (WIPPS). In 2015, Kell served as the project manager for the Rural Health Initiative-Marathon (RHI-M). Before WIPPS and RHI-M, Kell worked as a research coordinator for the UW School of Medicine and Public Health in the UW Institute for Clinical and Translational Research (ICTR) for the Community Health Connections Program.

Throughout her career Kell has developed a passion for community-based work and partnership. She says, it is important “to work to better increase the health and vibrancy of our communities.” Kell has a long-standing relationship with AHEC and respect for the work that is accomplished.

“This work revolves so much around building relationships,” says Kell. She hopes to use the connections she has made throughout her career to create new partnerships and continue the collaborative spirit. In her free time Kell assists her daughter in horseback riding competitions and enjoys reading and spending time outdoors with her family.

Brad Gingras
NORTHWEST

SUPERIOR - Wisconsin AHEC staff welcomes Brad Gingras as the new director for the Northwest region. Gingras is originally from Northern Illinois and remains a diehard Cubs fan. He came to Wisconsin to study at Northland College in Ashland. He reports that he met his sweetheart in the Ashland area, and they stayed local.

Over the past ten years, five as the executive director, he worked at Northwest CEP (Concentrated Employment Program, Inc.), a workforce development agency that serves all of northwest Wisconsin. For the past seven years, Gingras has served on the Northwest AHEC board of directors. During this time, he designed and managed two nationally recognized programs. The Crex Meadows Youth Camp provides leadership and job skills development opportunities for economically disadvantaged youth. In 2008, the camp was recognized by the White House and President as a best practice program. Gingras also developed the first Medical Discovery Days in 2007, which remains a current program of Northwest AHEC.

Gingras is looking forward to the educational opportunities in his new role with AHEC. “My gift and passion is education and steering people into the right careers,” says Gingras. The need for health care in rural areas is very important with an aging population and many people retiring.

“I am excited to get into a focused line of work that is going to impact a lot of people,” says Gingras. He hopes to develop and implement partnerships with programs across the state and the country.

Wisconsin AHEC welcomes administrative program specialist

Chris Lee joined the AHEC program office in Madison in July. Her position as administrative program specialist involves a range of administrative, financial and program administration services and federal data reporting.

Lee says, “I look forward to supporting AHECs cooperative efforts to improve access to health care for the people of Wisconsin in rural and underserved areas.”

Chris is a dyed-in-the-wool Badger, originally from the Coulee Region.

Staff announcements

Mark Scully
Retired Summer 2016
Gail Kell will replace Scully as the Northern Highland director (see left).

Jann Brill
Retired Summer 2016
Brad Gingras will replace Brill as the Northwest director (see left).
Community Health Internship Program: Summer Project Spotlights

During summer 2016, 83 interns were placed throughout Wisconsin to work on projects that improve the health of our local communities. Students worked at health departments, UW-Extension sites, community health clinics, universities, and non-profits. Among the variety of CHIP internship projects this summer, the most common focus areas included environmental health, food systems, nutrition, coalition work, and general community health promotion initiatives.

Rural Health

STOCKBRIDGE-MUNSEE HEALTH AND WELLNESS CENTER

BOWLER - Thanks to support from the Aspirus Health Foundation, two students (Kelly Loberger and Alex Klimenko) were placed at the Stockbridge-Munsee Health and Wellness Center in rural Bowler, Wisconsin. They spent eight weeks as Community Health Assessment interns, working on numerous community-wide projects. Kelly and Alex conducted and analyzed the Youth Risk Behavior Survey, which asked about drug and alcohol consumption and sexual risk behavior among teens on the reservation. This information will be used to determine the need for a prevention program.

Kelly participated in the regional FRESH project, where she surveyed local businesses about fresh fruits and vegetables available for purchase. Survey results will inform future projects to provide everyone in the area access to healthy and affordable foods.

The most rewarding part of this experience for Kelly was learning about the Stockbridge-Munsee community. Kelly plans to attend medical school and has built her cultural awareness, sensitivity, and competence. She believes that as a future physician, she will be more aware of how culture impacts health care practices. Kelly is thankful to have been welcomed by the Stockbridge-Munsee community during her CHIP internship.

Statewide Initiatives

WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES

MADISON - A cohort of eight students (Alexandra Carl, Charriese Ellis, Ruth Gebremedhin, Mamawa Konuwa, Samuel Park, Martin Martinez, Erik Sanson, and Natalie Schmitz) worked on statewide initiatives at the Department of Health Services (DHS), including projects focused on health disparities, accreditation, tobacco prevention, primary care, cancer screening, adolescent health and climate effects.

Erik Sanson spent his summer with the Tobacco Prevention and Control Program and had the opportunity to work with community-based coalitions throughout Wisconsin. He worked with many different groups, including rural and urban communities, cultural neighborhoods, and individuals within the LGBTQ community. This experience has fueled his passion for public health as he pursues a medical degree.

Mamawa Konuwa worked with the Chronic Disease Prevention Unit where she was able to learn about the chronic disease strategies across the state and touch many different areas of health, ranging from physical activity and nutrition to diabetes prevention and control. Her goal as a future physician and public health educator is to combine medicine and public health to better care for her patient population.

Community Outreach

PEPIN COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

DURAND - Janessa VandenBerge spent her summer working with the Pepin County Health Department where she played an integral role in many summer community health programs and outreach events.

Janessa was highly involved in Pertussis management, child passenger safety check, the Get Yourself Tested Campaign, WIC clinics, the Read 2 Me Program and social media messaging.

This CHIP internship experience has prepared Janessa for a career in public health through taking leadership throughout the summer, practicing her advocacy skills, as well as learning how to prepare, plan, implement, and assess community health programs.

Her internship provided Janessa the opportunity to work with diverse populations and advocate for all community members.
Partnerships enhance “Health Careers Exploration Days”

DODGE COUNTY - South Central WI AHEC hosted a two-day “Health Careers Exploration Days” event in Dodge County April 26th and 27th 2016. The event provided numerous opportunities for nine rural high school students to gain a better understanding of a career in health care in their own community. Activities included job shadows, tours, public health education and interprofessional competencies.

Students who attended the event reported that they have a better understanding of what a career in health care is like and greater knowledge of their own community resources. One student stated that the most valuable part of the event was “the tour of the hospital and seeing all of the different jobs and the job shadows.” Students also gained a better understanding of public health.

This event helped introduce the diverse career fields in health care that are available to high school students with a focus on rural health care and its opportunities and challenges. Community partners that participated in this event were, Beaver Dam Community Hospital, Beaver Dam High School, Church Health Services Free Clinic, Moraine Park Technical College, Wayland Academy, Community Pediatrics, Prairie Ridge Orthopedic Clinic, and the Dodge County Public Health Department.

Visit from Rep. Shankland inspires summer campers

STEVENS POINT - Representative Katrina Shankland (serving Wisconsin’s 71st Assembly District) made a special visit to Neale Hall - University of Wisconsin Stevens Point on the evening of July 11th to visit the North Central AHEC Health Careers Camp to share her insights on youth workforce development and advocacy.

She began the session by getting to know each student’s career interests and then provided an overview of her education background and some of the challenges she encountered along the way. Furthermore, topics discussed included how to advocate for issues the students are passionate about, and opportunities to develop oneself into a future leader in health care. Additionally, the students were fascinated hearing about the major legislative issues impacting the health care system locally and nationally. In closing, she encouraged the students to be the voice for their future patients and to advocate on issues each individual feels passionate about by speaking to their local, state and US legislators.

North Central WI AHEC would like to thank Representative Shankland for inspiring these young adults and supporting youth career development programs, like the Health Careers Camp, to build a stronger healthcare workforce throughout Wisconsin.

Rural Fennimore area welcomes Wisconsin Express program

FENNIMORE - Under the direction of Scenic Rivers AHEC Director Laura Pettersen, Wisconsin Express introduced its 12th site located in Fennimore, Wisconsin. The site included activities across Southwestern Wisconsin. Strong partnerships with the Grant County Health Department, the Southwest Community Action Coalition, Southwest Technical College, the UW Extension and many more organizations made this new program successful. This new site was offered to six students in a range of areas of study during May 2016.

The Fennimore site allowed students to experience the health care challenges in Southwestern Wisconsin including access to health care and funding. Students shadowed professionals at a maximum security prison, Amish farm, midwifery clinic, multiple free clinics, a women’s health clinic and much more. The students also had a chance to participate in a food insecurity simulation which was coordinated and presented by the UW Extension office.

Participants visited an Amish family’s farm

Participants toured a Platteville free clinic

Rural students learning about lab careers
Wisconsin AHEC wins national program of excellence award

This recognition is the culmination of many smaller awards the Wisconsin AHEC system has received over the years for regional programs and statewide events. The award was presented on Tuesday, June 28th, 2016 at the NAO biennial conference in Washington DC.

Nancy Sugden, Assistant Dean at the UW School of Medicine and Public Health and Program Director for Wisconsin AHEC, accepted the award on behalf of the directors and staff of Wisconsin AHEC’s seven regional Centers (Manitowoc, Milwaukee, Beloit, Cashton, Wausau, Superior, and Marinette), their governing boards and the Statewide AHEC Board.

“It is especially gratifying to receive this award as we celebrate Wisconsin AHEC’s 25th year,” said Nancy Sugden. “We have enjoyed the steadfast support of the UW School of Medicine and Public Health through those 25 years, and many, many individuals, academic programs and partner organizations have contributed to the development of our AHEC System and its signature programs. What I find most remarkable about Wisconsin AHEC, however, is the degree of collaboration among our seven regional AHEC centers for program development and implementation. Shared programming and a cooperative spirit have enabled us to make the most of limited resources and build the program.” Two regional AHEC’s, Scenic Rivers and North Central, also received recognition.

For more information about the NAO national Program of Excellence award visit:

www.ahec.wisc.edu/Awards

#ahec2016
for more photos
Join us for the 2016 AHEC Interprofessional Conference

Conference objectives:
• Engage with colleagues practicing in health care and education interested in interprofessional education (IPE) and interprofessional clinical practice (IPCP).
• Develop and build on knowledge and skills across the spectrum of IPE and IPCP program development.
• Learn the current state of IPE and IPCP, theory-based best practices, and lessons learned in the field.
• Advance and sustain IPE and IPCP to facilitate effective and patient-centered health care education and practice.

INTERPROFESSIONAL HEALTHCARE CASE COMPETITION 2017

Register now for 2017 Interprofessional Case Competition

Wisconsin AHEC has invited students from all Wisconsin colleges/universities to compete in a case competition event during the Fall 2016 semester.
• Health professions students from any degree or discipline may compete, on a team of 4-5 students, with at least three different degrees/professions represented.
• Each team will conduct an analysis of interprofessional efforts during the care of a patient/client (case study provided to team).
• At the end, top teams are invited to present their findings to a panel of judges.
• Teams will travel to Wisconsin Dells to present their case January 12-13, 2017.
• Cash prizes are awarded to winning teams.

Presenters and alumni needed for the Interprofessional Village

A resource fair with a station for each health profession at its own table, the “Interprofessional Village” is an opportunity for college students to explore roles of different health care professionals.
Students will be issued an “IP Passport” to travel among the various stations within the IP village.
Healthcare professionals in Wisconsin are eligible to host a table.
The IP Village will run concurrently with the team presentations during the case competition, in an adjoining ballroom. Table hosts may attend morning, afternoon, or both sessions of the IP Village.
Friday, January 13, 2017
9:30am - 11:30am: morning village
12:30pm - 2:30pm: afternoon village
Registration link and more info: www.ahec.wisc.edu/ip-competitions

Additional news and update:
www.ahec.wisc.edu
"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 Jordan Gaal, AHEC statewide communications assistant (jgaal@wisc.edu).

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Wisconsin AHEC (Area Health Education Center)

Superior
Madison
Sheboygan
Sparta
Stevens Point
Dodge County
Fennimore
Marinette

Articles in the newsletter cover the statewide AHEC system. Find out where stories in this issue were happening on the map below.