

**Oregon**

*Area Health Education Center*



2021-2022  
**Annual Report**



## DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

It is impossible to recap the past year without discussing the COVID pandemic. As we keep moving toward our new "normal," we also understand that the collective experience forever altered us.

Change has been a constant, and the ability to adapt a must. Like many organizations, the Oregon AHEC Program has experienced staff turnover, restrictions on in-person programming and clinical experiences, and uncertainty about how to adjust processes and programs to ensure they remain high quality. Add to that the burnout our practicing professional leaders, teachers and partners experienced caring for patients—bringing clarity about the need for well-being resources. I am proud to say that Oregon AHEC has been able to keep rising to meet these challenges with results-oriented programming accessible to participants in every part of the state. In doing so, we have achieved many successes.

In 2022 we welcomed two new Regional Center Directors, and all Centers are well-staffed with accomplished and committed teams. The Program Office has welcomed a new Manager, Education Coordinator and Administrative Coordinator. We were awarded a competitive renewal of the HRSA-funded AHEC grant for 2022-2027. Additionally, Oregon AHEC was one of only five AHECs nationwide to be awarded a competitive Simulation Education Training (SET) supplemental grant. This enables three of our Regional Centers to expand the availability of state-of-the-art simulation training resources, increasing access across the 27 counties in their collective services areas. Oregon AHEC collaborated with the Oregon Health Authority to create culturally competent, multi-lingual immunization training material. Medical career exploration for pathway students is back—First Steps, job shadowing and local high school Health Occupations classes have resumed. And the already popular MedQuest camp in Northeast Oregon creatively adapted to an online format, expanding its reach statewide and resulting in its highest enrollment to date.

The Oregon AHEC Scholars Program continues to see growth in the number of scholars, number of participating disciplines and academic partners, and the quality of content and achievements of our students. The fifth cohort of Scholars started in 2022 and is comprised of 89 students representing 11 programs training eight disciplines at five academic institutions in Oregon. We have enrolled a total of 426 students, and expect continued growth as we onboard additional schools and programs. The Scholars Annual Event hosted 50 scholars in person and 35 online. Dr. Amy Wiser, MD, from PRISM Health and Dr. Christopher Wheldon, PhD, from Temple University educated us on HPV cancers and how they affect gender minorities.

## DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE (cont.)

Oregon AHEC Scholars continue to achieve state and national recognition for their outstanding work. We held our first poster session at the Annual Oregon Rural Health Conference; eight students presented their scholarly work at the AHEC



Statewide Advisory and conference sessions. Additionally, in 2022 AHEC Scholars presented at the Oregon Rural Practice-based Research Network Convocation, as well as the Oregon Academy of Family Physicians' Annual Conference. Jasmine Curry, MD, Candidate, will present at the Society of Teachers of Family Medicine in New Orleans in January 2023. Preliminary evaluation data proves that the Oregon Scholars program effectively teaches AHEC pillar concepts, and that participants express increased interest in practicing in rural and underserved communities—because of their AHEC experience.

Our statewide clinical partners have hosted AHEC Scholars' required rotations at rural and underserved sites. These include clinics, federally qualified health centers, hospitals, Tribal Health Clinics, Veterans Affairs facilities. In the past year, students have rotated through Bandon, Chiloquin, Enterprise, Grants Pass, Hermiston, Joseph, Klamath Falls, La Grande, Lebanon, Port Orford, Prineville, Stayton, Tillamook, Toledo, Warm Springs, and more.

I am really looking forward to 2023 and the contributions AHEC will make. I am thrilled to note that more educational events on healthcare provider wellbeing are queued up. In partnership with Tend Health, Oregon AHEC will host another continuing education series to help reverse burnout and a Scholars Wellbeing Intensive day to prepare those entering the workforce. January will also kick off the third offering of the Oregon AHEC Clinical Education ECHO. Our partnership with the Oregon EHCO Network continues to train educators around the region to be better clinical instructors. All faculty for our ECHO series are directly from the AHEC Scholars Steering Committee and represent multiple universities and professions.

In closing, I'd like to note that Oregon AHEC's continued success is only possible due to a strong network of effective Regional Centers, institutional and community stakeholders, and all the providers, educators and policymakers committed to building a diverse healthcare workforce that is prepared to serve all of Oregon. The pandemic may have distanced us socially, but our partnerships remained close. Thank you for all you do to make our home healthy, we are honored to work with you.



## OUR PROGRAMS

### Continuing Medical Education

A variety of annual programs providing health professionals with access to learning resources that support practice, reduce professional isolation, disseminate best practices and improve healthcare quality for medically underserved communities and health disparities populations. In 2022, access was provided to credit-bearing offerings in partnership with host organizations and subject matter experts, including over 350 hours of medical technical and professional education.

### Diagnosis Day

Resuming in person in 2023, this is a full-day program at St. Charles Hospital Bend. High School students from rural central Oregon interested in healthcare careers follow a simulated patient throughout the entire hospital experience—from the incident, to the ambulance, to the emergency room. Students participate in hands-on learning with an advanced simulation manikin.

### First Steps into Healthcare Careers (Pathways)

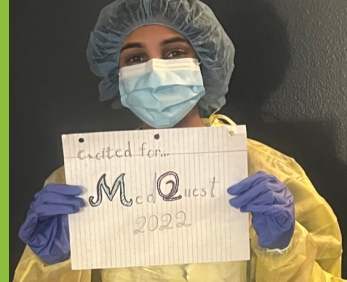
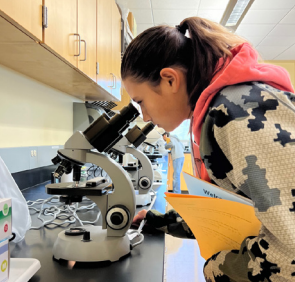
This enrichment program offers Oregon Pacific AHEC (OPAHEC) region high school students the opportunity to participate in healthcare-related activities while exploring healthcare careers and educational pathways. It helps participants create connections with pre-med and medical school students, healthcare providers and employers, and to develop a vision for their own career path. Students receive assistance with completing college, scholarship and employment applications to pursue a health career. They also participate in skills workshops such as BLS/CPR, career exploration and health career fairs.

### Health Occupations

High school juniors and seniors enrolled in their schools' health occupations or biomedical foundations courses explore careers at St. Charles Health System in central Oregon. Students complete a three-hour hospital site orientation. Many schools offer credit for participants, and students have the opportunity to shadow community medical providers.

### Health Speaker Series

Organized by Northeast Oregon AHEC (NEOAHEC) and the Eastern Oregon University (EOU) Pre-Professional Health Club, the series engages undergraduate students and community members with unique health career presentations. Health providers, graduate students, or representatives from health career programs share their educational and career journeys, advice for students considering their career and thoughts about why it is so valuable to practice in a rural area. Sessions feature a variety of healthcare careers and provide invaluable networking opportunities between students and current industry professionals.



## OUR PROGRAMS *(cont.)*

### Human Health and Performance (HHP-131)

The former Future Health Professionals of Oregon Program is now integrated into EOU's Human Health and Performance Department as HHP-331. It is taught by approved high school teachers who have participated in NEOAHEC's annual GO-Healthcare Professionals Summer Institute. Students from 17 rural and frontier high schools are eligible to participate and to earn college credit and expand their knowledge of health careers.

### Investigators of Science

Formerly known as Girls in Science, Investigators of Science is an annual event at EOU that provides students in grades 6-8 with an exciting day of hands-on STEM exploration. Participants work alongside EOU faculty members and undergraduate students and use math, chemistry, biology, and computer science to solve the open-ended challenge that has been carefully designed to inspire creative, yet scientific thought. Students use real-life STEM equipment and test their critical thinking abilities as they form their own conclusions about the mystery.

### Job Shadowing

In cooperation with the OHSU School of Nursing, COMP-Northwest, and Providence, various job shadowing opportunities are available for prospective students to learn about the healthcare field through tours, interactive simulation labs, and surgical viewings.

### MedQuest

This immersive camp provides an opportunity for high school students to explore the field of healthcare. After 27 years of being held in person in La Grande, the program expanded statewide through an online platform in 2020. Returning in person this year, along with continuing to offer it virtually. Campers will be able to job shadow health professionals, learn hands-on skills from current healthcare students, participate in panel discussions, be immersed in rural Oregon through local recreational activities, receive mentorship, and meet like-minded students from all over the state. Students' experiences vary depending on their job shadows and interest, but all will learn how to use their stethoscopes and could have the opportunity to witness surgery, sit in on medical exams or procedures, ride along on an ambulance call, and much more.

### Mental Health First Aid

This nationally recognized program is provided in cooperation with the National Council for Mental Wellbeing. Adult participants are instructed on noticing the signs and symptoms of an individual struggling with mental health challenges. Oregon Pacific AHEC offers the program to students in professional and pre-professional healthcare educational programs.



## OUR PROGRAMS *(cont.)*

### Next Steps

Next Steps is a program for students transitioning into post-secondary education at local universities and community colleges. The program focuses on supporting pre-health science students to promote successful completion of professional education. It bridges the gap between high schoolers transitioning into college and college students transitioning into professional-level educational programs in healthcare.

### Nourishing Change

This Community Service Learning project provides pre-med and medical school students with an opportunity to impact social determinants of health by developing nutrition and wellness programs for under-resourced families in Linn and Benton Counties. The program helps students build a resume that relates their academic work to real-world problems. Students design menus, produce their own cooking shows, and distribute materials to families. Student presenters provide demonstrations and instructions on how to prepare foods and discuss nutrition, food safety and cooking on a budget.

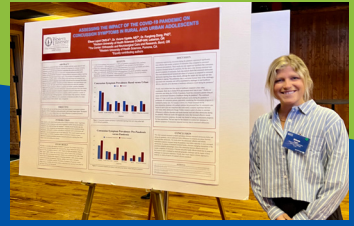
### Pre-Health Society

The Pre-Health Society provides community college, university, and gap year students from rural and disadvantaged backgrounds in northeast Oregon with the resources to become successful applicants to competitive graduate-level healthcare programs. By providing resources like health career education, mock interviews, test preparation, confidence building, personal statement writing, and mentorship, NEOAHEC aims to reduce the socioeconomic, geographic, ethnic, and systemic inequities in the medical, dental, and graduate school admission processes.

### ReConnect Gap-Year Fellowship

Through this program, graduates from bachelor programs have the opportunity to be employed full-time as medical scribes, medical assistants, or community health workers in a rural clinical setting, simultaneously gaining patient contact hours. The AHEC of Southwest Oregon program is intended to fill a gap-year while learners are applying to advanced health profession programs.

# SCHOLAR HIGHLIGHTS



Oregon AHEC hosted poster presentations at the 39th Annual Oregon Rural Health Conference. All Oregon health profession students were invited to submit.

## Oregon AHEC Scholars presented their teams' work:

- Factors Influencing Fitness Performance in Rural Volunteer and Professional Firefighters. Authors Adam Hall, OMS-IV; Max Jette, OMS-III; Robin Faulkner, OMS-III; Cailin Johnson, OMS-III; Tyler Johnson, OMS- II; Dr. Elisabeth Guenther, MD.
- Planning and Implementing Health Promotion, Rural Oregon: Providing New Clinician Education to Increase Community Integration, Improving Retention Rates and Health Outcomes. Authors Benjamin Thuesen, Chia-Ying Lee, and Tatyana Basulto, PA students at Pacific University.
- "Dear Future Provider": A Mobile Podcast for Pre-Medical Students in Rural, Under-Represented Communities. Authors Ashley Rietmann, OMS-II; Chris Guastaferro, Executive Director of Oregon AHECSW.
- Flo's Pantry: A Free Menstrual Project Pantry in Lebanon, Oregon. Author Ashley Rietmann, OMS-II.

## Additional Oregon health professional student posters presented:

- Effects of COVID-19 pandemic on Affective Concussion Symptoms in Adolescents. Authors Ellese Lupori OMS-II, Dr. Viviane Ugalde MD, Dr. Fanglong Dong PhD.
- Evaluating the Impact of Telemedicine Care Coordination on Access to Care in Oregon's Pediatric Type 1 Diabetes Population. Authors Emily Mitchell, Sarah Andrea, MPH, PhD, Ines Guttman-Bauman, MD, MCR.
- Choosing and Implementing a Home-Induced Buprenorphine Micro-Dosing protocol. Author Lera O'Sullivan MS3, Anisa Richardson MD.
- Providing Food Security Resource Information to the Klamath Basin. Author Colin Eaton, OHSU MD student.

A first-place prize was awarded for Evaluating the Impact of Telemedicine Care Coordination on Access to Care in Oregon's Pediatric Type 1 Diabetes Population.

# AHEC SCHOLARS



[AHEC Scholars](#) is a longitudinal, interdisciplinary program for health professions students with a defined set of clinical, didactic and community-based training activities in rural and/or underserved areas. The program is a partnership between the following programs:

## Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU)

School of Dentistry—DMD  
School of Medicine—MD  
School of Medicine—PA  
School of Nursing—NP

## OHSU & Oregon State University

College of Pharmacy

## Oregon State University—Cascades

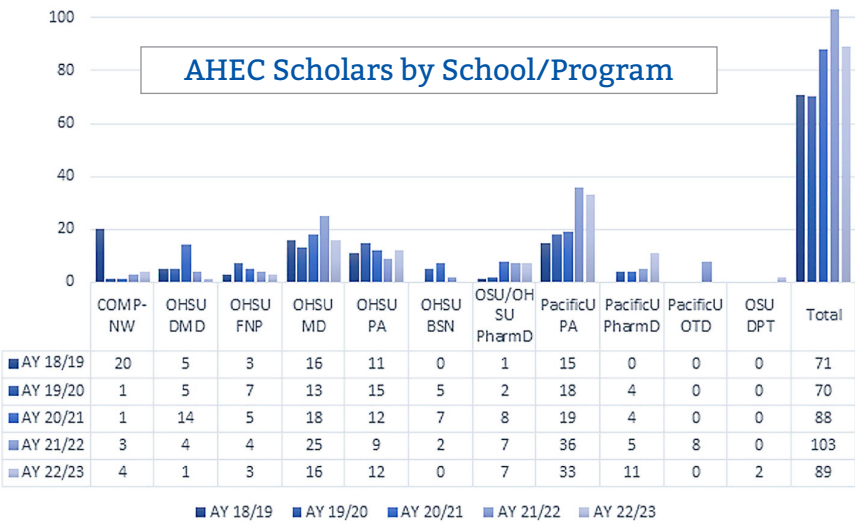
Doctor of Physical Therapy

## Pacific University

College of Physician Assistant Studies  
College of Pharmacy  
School of Occupational Therapy

## Western University of Health Sciences

College of Osteopathic Medicine of the Pacific Northwest—DO  
College of Health Sciences NW—DPT





## AHEC SCHOLARS (cont.)

### Current Scholars Enrollee Data:

Of the 189 actively enrolled students

- 7% are Veterans
- 32% identify as under-represented minority
- 47% reported proficiency in a language other than English
- 55% from an economically<sup>1</sup> or educationally<sup>2</sup> disadvantaged background

### AHEC Scholars Academic Program Recruitment

- Oregon State University Cascades Doctor of Physical Therapy program began participation in 2022.
- University of Portland Doctor of Nursing Practice program is anticipated to begin in 2023.

### AHEC Scholars Programming Highlights

- The Program offered a 2022 Spring Speaker Series for Oregon AHEC Scholars. Access was also available to Scholars nationwide. The series included:
  - Strong Foundations: Incentives and Programs to Manage Student Debt and Build a Great Financial Future, presented by Janna McKay, Manager of the Educational Debt Counseling and Personal Financial Management Program at OHSU.
  - Oregon's Approach to Medicaid: Things to Know About CCOs, presented by Charles Hofmann, MD, MACP.
  - Rural Medicine and the Path to Winding Waters, presented by Emily Knudsen MD, MPH.
- A team of faculty and staff from a range of academic programs updated current Scholar Program didactic materials in preparation for launching the two new HRSA Core Topic areas:
  - Connecting Communities and Supporting Health Professionals; and
  - Virtual Learning and Telehealth.

<sup>1</sup> Defined as family income at or below federal poverty level and includes whether your family received public assistance—Aid to Families with Dependent Children, food stamps, Medicaid, public housing.

<sup>2</sup> Defined as the first in your family to attend college, or if you graduated from a high school where 50% or less go to college, or college is not encouraged, or graduated from a high school where many of the students were eligible for free or reduced lunches.



## 2021-2022 Federal Report Highlights

*Enhancing access to quality healthcare, particularly primary and preventive care, by improving the supply and distribution of healthcare professionals through community/academic educational partnerships.*

# 7,901

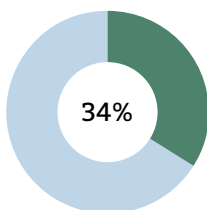
Program participants

*Pathway programs* expose students to health careers and develop intent to pursue post-secondary education in primary healthcare professions.

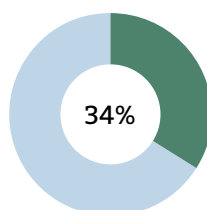


# 2,354

student participants  
grades 9-16



from disadvantaged  
backgrounds



from rural  
backgrounds

## Clinical training

improves readiness, willingness, and ability of health professions trainees to serve in primary care, rural and underserved community settings.

# 221

Number of OHSU MD student clinical rotations facilitated in rural communities.

**AHEC Scholars** is a longitudinal program designed to equip future health professionals with the skills needed to address the unique needs of underserved communities. In addition to specialized didactic learning, all Scholars complete rotations at team-based rural and/or urban underserved clinical practice sites.

# 189

AHEC Scholars:

- 50 medical students
- 18 dental students
- 23 pharmacy students
- 17 nursing students
- 73 physician assistant students
- 8 other disciplines



## Clinical Training sites

by location:

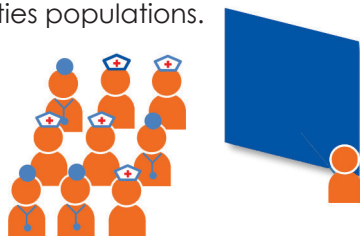
- 36 rural area
- 48 primary care setting
- 40 medically underserved community

## Continuing education

providing health professionals with access to resources to improve the quality of care for medically underserved communities and health disparities populations.

# 5,547

continuing education participants



# Oregon AHEC System

## Oregon Pacific AHEC

[www.opahec.org](http://www.opahec.org)

Hosted by Samaritan Lebanon Community Hospital. The Center serves communities along the Oregon Coast and I-5 Corridor, including the counties of Benton, Clatsop, Columbia, Lincoln, Linn, Marion, Polk, Tillamook, and Yamhill.



## AHEC of Southwest Oregon

[www.aviva.health/ahecsw](http://www.aviva.health/ahecsw)

Hosted by Aviva Health in Roseburg. The Center provides services to Coos, Curry, Douglas, Lane, Jackson, and Josephine counties.



## Oregon AHEC Program Office

[www.ohsu.edu/area-health-education-centers](http://www.ohsu.edu/area-health-education-centers)

Hosted by OHSU in Portland.



## Oregon Healthcare Workforce Institute

[www.pacificu.edu/ohwi](http://www.pacificu.edu/ohwi)

Hosted by Pacific University. The Center serves Clackamas, Multnomah, and Washington counties.



## Northeast Oregon AHEC

[www.neoahec.org](http://www.neoahec.org)

Located on the campus of Eastern Oregon University in La Grande. The Center serves Baker, Gilliam, Hood River, Malheur, Morrow, Sherman, Umatilla, Union, Wallowa, Wasco, and Wheeler counties.



## Cascades East AHEC

[www.cascadeseast.org](http://www.cascadeseast.org)

Hosted by St. Charles Health System in Bend. The Center serves Central and Southeastern Oregon and includes Crook, Deschutes, Grant, Harney, Jefferson, Klamath, and Lake counties, plus the Warm Springs Indian Reservation.



**Oregon**  
Area Health Education Center

## Oregon AHEC Regional Centers

Please visit each of the five Oregon AHEC Centers Websites for updates on current events and programming:

### AREA HEALTH EDUCATION CENTER OF SOUTHWEST OREGON

AHECSW | [www.aviva.health/ahecsw](http://www.aviva.health/ahecsw)

### CASCADES EAST AREA HEALTH EDUCATION CENTER

CEAHEC | [www.cascadeseast.org](http://www.cascadeseast.org)

### NORTHEAST OREGON AREA HEALTH EDUCATION CENTER

NEOAHEC | [www.neoahec.org](http://www.neoahec.org)

### OREGON HEALTHCARE WORKFORCE INSTITUTE

OHWI | [www.pacificu.edu/ohwi](http://www.pacificu.edu/ohwi)

### OREGON PACIFIC AREA HEALTHCARE EDUCATION CENTER

OPAHEC | [www.opahec.org](http://www.opahec.org)

### OREGON AHEC PROGRAM OFFICE

ahec@ohsu.edu | [www.ohsu.edu/area-health-education-centers](http://www.ohsu.edu/area-health-education-centers)

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