



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
Arizona AHEC
Area Health Education Centers

ANNUAL REPORT 2022





Arizona AHEC Program Mission Statement:

To enhance access to quality health care, particularly primary and preventive care, by improving the supply and distribution of health care professionals through academic community educational partnerships in rural and urban medically underserved areas.

Congress authorized the Federal Area Health Education Center (AHEC) Program in 1971 (PL III-148 § 751 PHSA). There are now 56 AHEC Programs and 235 Regional Centers in 48 U.S. states and territories. In 1984, Andy Nichols, MD, founded the Arizona Area Health Education Center (AzAHEC) Program in Tucson with the first AzAHEC Regional Center opening in Nogales. Today, five AzAHEC Regional Centers support health professions education, provide continuing education for health professionals, address health disparities, and enhance the local health workforce. A sixth Regional Center focused on American Indian healthcare workforce needs was authorized by the State of Arizona in 2021 and began operations on July 1, 2022.

AzAHEC Program Personnel

Dan Derksen, MD, Senior Advisor and Principal Investigator

Leila Barraza, JD, MPH, Director and Co-Investigator

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15,276 individuals participated in the following activities:

Over 1,500 trainees participated in 3,022 Rural & Urban Underserved Health Professions Trainee Field Experiences

From July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022, the Arizona AHEC Program supported the following unduplicated field experiences in AzaHEC Regional Centers, Rural Health Professions Programs and Residency Programs for nearly 450,000 contact hours:

Academic Discipline/Program	# of Trainees*	# of Field Experiences
Medical Residency	86	251
Pharmacy School	129	277
Other Undergrad. Health-related Disciplines	22	22
Nursing or Medical Assistant	203	204
Medical School	399	1,176
Dentistry and Dental Hygiene	74	80
Other Graduate Health - Related Disciplines	4	4
Graduate - Behavioral Health	6	6
Nurse Practitioner	218	370
Public Health	180	197
Graduate - Social Work	4	6
RN, Nurse Anesthetist or Other Nurse	59	63
Phlebotomy Technician	22	35
Physical Therapy	21	21
Physician Assistant	101	307
Podiatry School	3	3
Total	1,531	3,022

*Each trainee is counted once in this column, regardless of the number of field experiences.

Youth (K-16) Health Career Preparation Programs in Rural and Urban Underserved Areas: 6,534 participants.

Participants in Grades K-16 Health Career Preparation Programs included **946** Grades 9-16 students in health career structured events, inclusive of **871** students in programs at the five AzaHEC Regional Centers and **75** students in UArizona summer programs (Med-Start and BLAISER/FRONTERA). Nearly **5,600** students and adults (parents, teachers and others) participated in other health career events, including health career informational sessions sponsored or co-sponsored by AzaHEC Regional Centers.

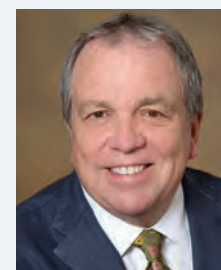
Health Professions Continuing Education Participants

Participants at **136** continuing education events included **4,462** physicians, dentists, public health and allied health professionals, pharmacists, nurse practitioners, registered nurses, and physician assistants.

Community Health Education Events

Regional Centers coordinated and supported health education activities and events for **2,749** local community members throughout Arizona’s rural and urban underserved communities.

In 2021-22, the AzaHEC Program, its five AzaHEC Regional Centers and the nine Rural Health Professional Programs at UArizona, NAU, and ASU have continued to provide innovative, community-based interprofessional education in new and innovative ways during these unprecedented times. I congratulate them on their unwavering commitment to Arizona’s rural and urban underserved communities, and warmly welcome our sixth AzaHEC Regional Center, the American Indian Health AHEC, beginning July 1, 2022.



Michael D. Dake, MD
Senior Vice President for Health Sciences

Since 1984 the Arizona Area Health Educations Center (AzaAHEC) Program has served Arizona through health professions workforce recruitment, training, and retention in its rural and urban underserved communities.

The 2021-22 AzaAHEC Annual report highlights progress and achievements over the last 12 months. A total of 1,531 health profession trainees representing over 40 universities and residency programs participated in 3,022 community-based clinical and experiential training in collaboration with Arizona's five AHEC Regional Centers, nine Rural Health Professions Programs (RHPPs) from the state's three public universities, and graduate medical education (GME) residency programs at Banner University Medical Center South (BUMC-S) and North Country HealthCare (also known as the Colorado Plateau Center for Health Professions).

The AHEC Scholars Program, a two-year interprofessional education program that builds on the RHPPs, graduated 44 students from its third cohort in Spring 2022. One hundred and five (105) AHEC Scholars in our fourth cohort completed the first of two years (i.e., 2021-23) of their interprofessional program including community immersions at an AHEC Regional Center. This included an inaugural group of undergraduate health profession students from UArizona College of Nursing and NAU Dental Hygiene Program. Each cohort gained greater knowledge through interprofessional curricula with specific didactic and community-based training activities focused on rural and/or urban underserved communities. In Fall 2022, a fifth cohort of 81 scholars was welcomed and included health profession students from the nine graduate-level RHPP programs.

Continuing education for working health professionals remains a core AzaAHEC activity. Each Regional Center identifies and addresses this need, resulting in 136 continuing education events across all regions offered to 4,462 health professionals over the last year.

The AzaAHEC Regional Centers hosted health career programs with a structured curriculum for 1,376 students in

Sincerely,

Leila Barraza, JD, MPH
*Director and Co-Investigator, AzaAHEC Program
Associate Professor, Zuckerman College of Public Health
The University of Arizona Health Sciences*



Grades K-12. The Regional Centers collaborated on a one week-long virtual camp for participants from all regions; learning opportunities included medical diagnostics, telemedicine, Fentanyl and Narcan presentation, college presentations and social determinants of health discussions. Med-Start and BLAISER/FRONTERA provided summer intensive programs at the UArizona-Tucson for 75 future health professionals. The AzaAHEC Regional Centers provided health education events to 5,083 elementary through high school students and to nearly 8,700 community members on health-related topics.

In Spring 2021, Arizona Governor Ducey signed legislation authorizing the creation of the sixth AzaAHEC Regional Center focusing on the American Indian health system and workforce. The AzaAHEC Program began fiscal year 2022-23 welcoming a new Regional Center, the American Indian Health Arizona Area Health Education Center (AIH-AHEC) on July 1, 2022.

On behalf of the Arizona AHEC Program, we thank our federal partners, providers, collaborators and educators from across the state in carrying out our mission "To enhance access to quality health care, particularly primary and preventive care, by improving the supply and distribution of health care professionals through academic community educational partnerships in rural and urban medically underserved areas."

Daniel Derksen, MD
*Senior Advisor & PI, AzaAHEC Program
Associate Vice President
Office of the Senior VP for Health Sciences
The University of Arizona*

About the Arizona AHEC Program (AzaAHEC)

- Initiated in 1984 with the first AzaAHEC Regional Center opening in Nogales to recruit, train, and retain a primary care workforce committed to helping underserved populations.
- Expanded to a total of five AHEC Regional Centers, serving all 15 Arizona counties by 1989, expanding to six AHEC Regional Centers in July 2022 by adding the American Indian Health AHEC Regional Center.
- Housed in the UArizona Health Sciences Office of the Senior Vice President as a Sponsored Project.
- Enacted by Arizona Revised Statutes (ARS) §§ 15-1643, 15-1644, 15-1645, and 5-572(C).
- Funded by federal and required non-federal matching funds.
- Continued to meet the required non-federal match with State of Arizona lottery funds resulting from a citizen ballot initiative directing support to the AzaAHEC Program and Regional Centers.

Structure

The University of Arizona (UArizona) in Tucson administers the AzaAHEC Program and has formal contracts with the AzaAHEC Regional Centers located statewide. The AzaAHEC Program and Regional Centers carry out the mission, goals, objectives, and work plan by creating, coordinating, and implementing a scope of work designed to address the health professions education and training needs within each Regional Center service area, updated each year. Following federal guidelines and as required by state procurement guidelines, the Regional Centers undergo a periodic formal competing continuation Request for Proposal (RFP) process staggered such that one or two RFPs are evaluated per year.

The AzaAHEC Program Director (Leila Barraza, JD, MPH) consults regularly with the AzaAHEC Advisory Commission, comprised of health educators, health professionals and community members serving and/or living in rural and urban medically underserved Arizona communities. Other committees involve faculty, staff, and students at participating health professions colleges at Arizona's three public universities under the Arizona Board of Regents (ABOR) authority: Arizona State University (ASU), Northern Arizona University (NAU), and UArizona. Formal reports are submitted regularly to the Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA) and annually to ABOR and the Arizona State Legislature.

Each AzaAHEC Regional Center has its own governing board, comprised of health care providers and consumers who reflect the demographic, racial and ethnic diversity of the Center's geographic service area.

AzaAHEC Focus Areas 2021-2022

The AzaAHEC Program and Regional Centers expanded statewide efforts to strengthen Arizona's health professions workforce pathways to practice including students in Grades K-16, post-secondary health professions students, and health professionals from many disciplines. Regional Centers supported activities to promote health awareness in their communities.

Health Professions Trainee Education: The AzaAHEC Program, Rural Health Profession Programs (RHPPs), Regional Centers, and Graduate Medical Education (GME, aka residency training) supported clinical rotations throughout Arizona. Dedicated, experienced preceptors and strong academic partnerships with colleges and universities provided high quality community-based education. Some trainees received housing, travel and related expense support for experiences in remote areas.

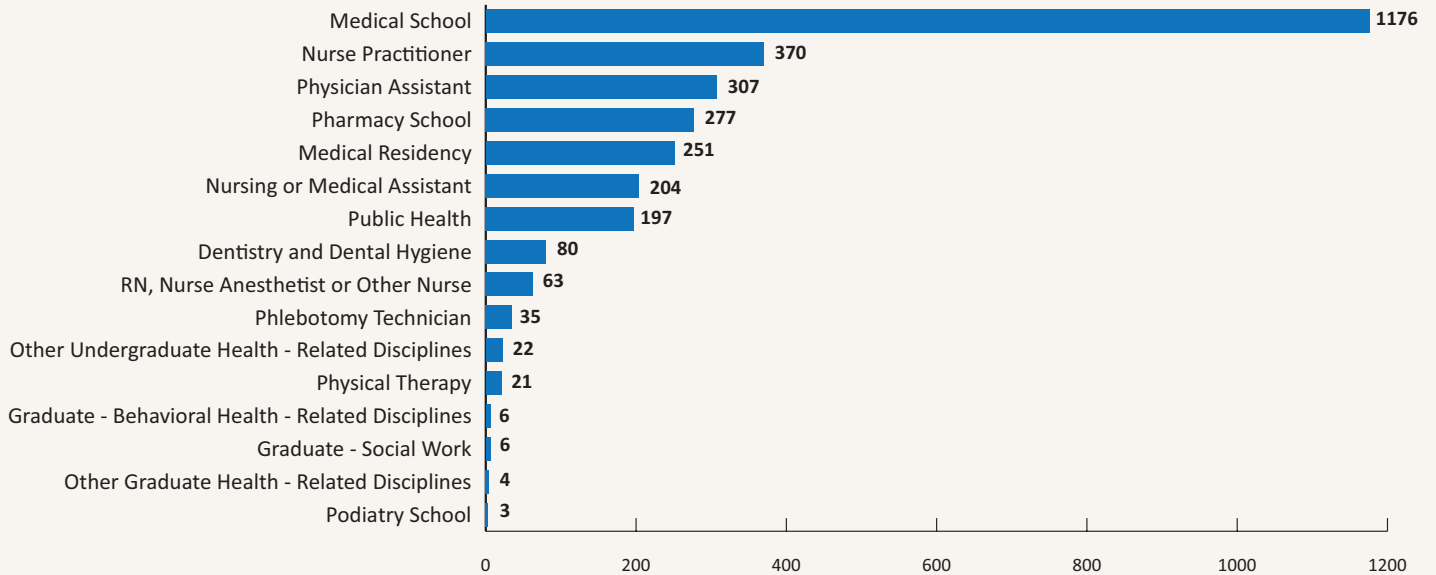
AzaAHEC Scholars: The third year Scholar cohort completed their two-year program; a fourth year Scholar cohort was accepted and had community immersion experiences at their assigned AzaAHEC Regional Center. Scholars get advanced, interprofessional community-based experiences in AHEC Regional Center communities and Rural Health Professions Programs. Faculty mentors nominated by RHPPs provided AzaAHEC Scholars with continuity and guidance throughout the two-year program. Undergraduate health profession students from NAU Dental Hygiene Program and UArizona College of Nursing constituted an undergraduate AzaAHEC Scholars with community immersion opportunities at various Regional Center communities.

Youth (K-16) Health Career Programs: The AzaAHEC Program and Regional Centers supported activities to introduce Arizona's youth to health professions, working with local high schools and community organizations to support health career structured programs: the Health Occupations Students of America (HOSA) chapters, Border Latino and American Indian Summer Exposure to Research (BLAISER), Focusing Research on the Border Area (FRONTERA) and the Med-Start Health Careers Program. Regional Centers participated in information events that introduced students in Grades K-12 to health careers.

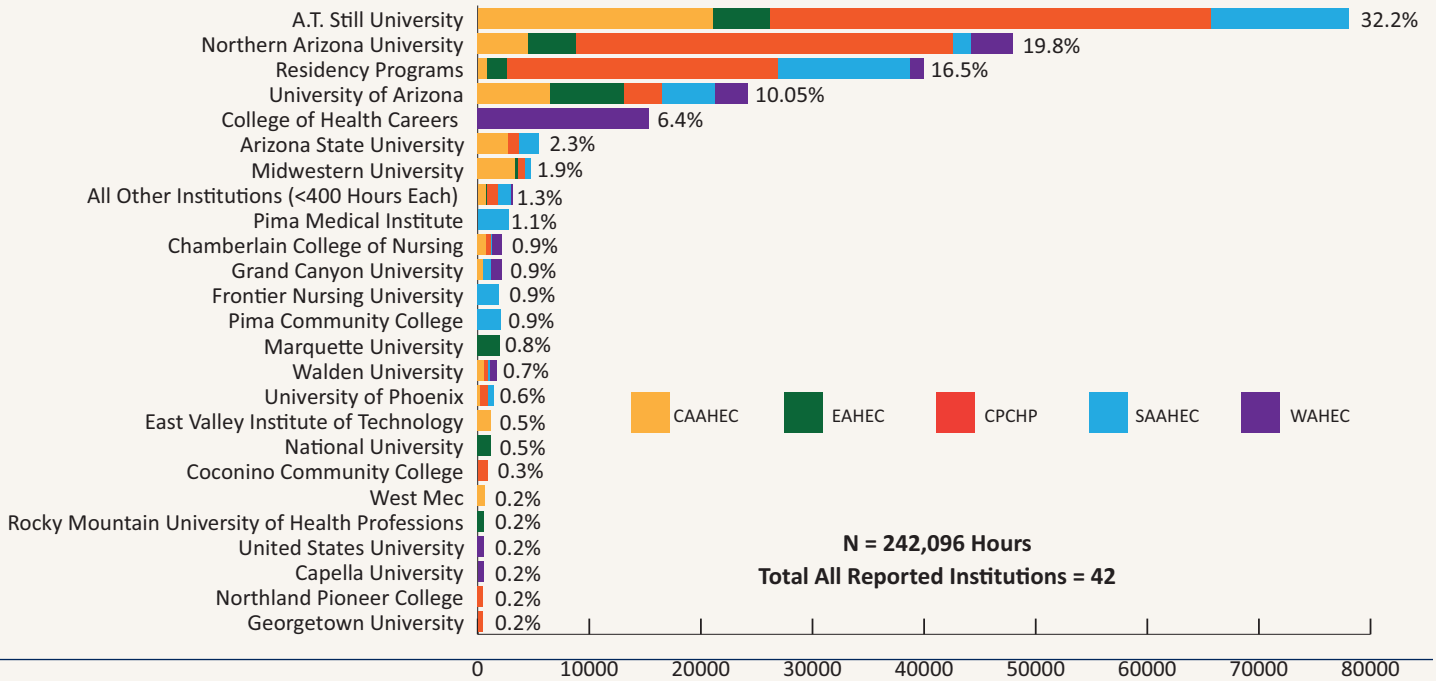
Continuing Education (CE/CME) for Health Professionals: Regional Centers sponsored numerous CE/CME events throughout the year for health professionals statewide.

Community Health Promotion: Regional Centers coordinated and supported health education activities and events for local community members throughout Arizona's rural and urban underserved areas.

AzaHEC Health Professions Clinical Rotations by Trainee Discipline (N=3, 022)



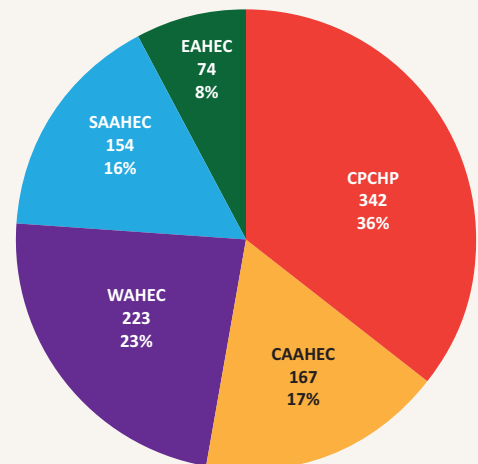
AzaHEC Rotation Hours by Regional Center and Academic Institution: July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022



AzaHEC Rotation Hours, Number of Rotations and Number of Trainees by Center, July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022

Regional Center	Total Rotation Hours	Number of Rotations	Total Trainees
CAAHEC	43,675	213	167
EAHEC	22,054	96	74
CPCHP	106,816	878	342
SAAHEC	42,266	392	154
WAHEC	27,285	247	223
GRAND TOTAL	242,096	1,826	960

AzaHEC Unique Trainees by Regional Center July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022



N = 960 Unique Trainees

The AzaHEC Rural Health Professions Program (RHPP) Overview

The Arizona State Legislature authorized the Rural Health Professions Program in 2007 (ARS § 15-1754). It is now a core component of the AzaHEC Program to address shortages of health professionals in rural and urban underserved Arizona communities. In 2021-22, 609 University of Arizona (UArizona), Arizona State University (ASU), and Northern Arizona University (NAU) RHPP students received 1,158 rural and underserved training experiences.

RHPPs provide rural training experiences for health professions students in the public universities under the Arizona Board of Regents: UArizona Health Sciences Colleges of Nursing, Pharmacy, Medicine (COM-Tucson and COM-Phoenix), and Public Health; the ASU Edson College of Nursing and Health Innovation, and the NAU School of Nursing, Department of Physical Therapy, and Department of Physician Assistant Studies.

RHPPs prepare health professions students for practice in Arizona’s rural communities. The AzaHEC Program and AzaHEC Regional Centers also support urban, medically underserved training experiences to address primary care provider shortages. While RHPP student participation is voluntary, statutorily, UArizona selects 15 medical, four pharmacy, and ten nurse practitioner students; ASU selects four nurse practitioner students and NAU selects two nurse practitioner students for RHPP. The number of participating RHPP students and programs has grown significantly above these statutory requirements.

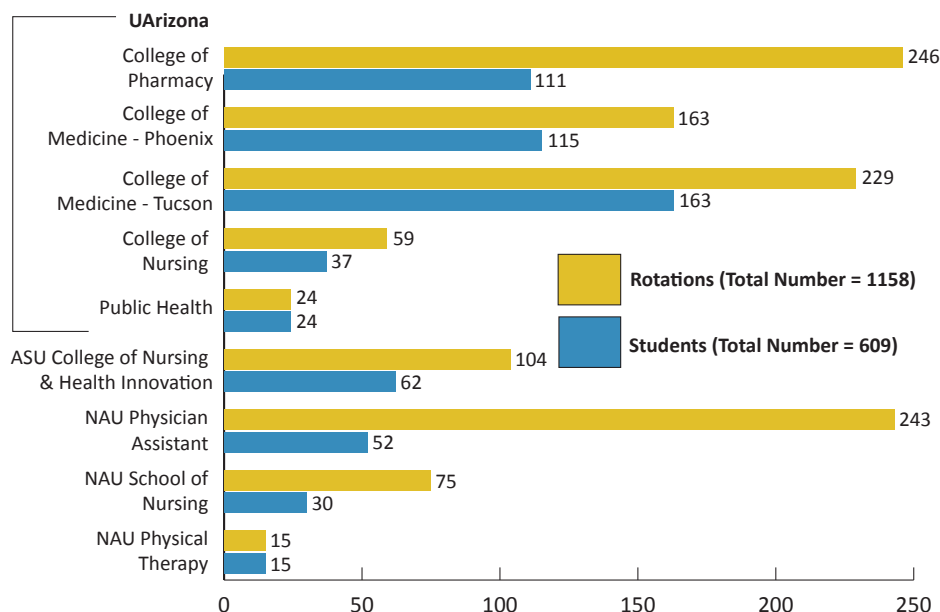
“At my rural health clinical site, I had a wonderful experience. My preceptor was extremely knowledgeable and a great teacher. We saw a variety of patients and diseases. I thoroughly enjoyed caring for patients in this rural, FQHC setting. The population is unique and requires many resources and holistic care. My experience at this clinical site reaffirmed my passion for rural and underserved patients and gave me great experience and knowledge in caring for them.”

– Allison “Kate” Macias, Doctor of Nursing Practice, Family Nurse Practitioner Student

Tuba City Housing

AzaHEC leases a four-bedroom, two bath modular home from the Tuba City Regional Health Care Corporation Housing Office so students have housing during their clinical rotations. During 2021-22, 12 RHPP Health Profession students were housed for a total of 374 nights. This included eight medical and four pharmacy students. Living in the community enhances the AzaHEC student experience working interprofessionally in a tribal community. Housing activity is expected to continue to increase as in-person rotation restrictions are lifted post-pandemic.

**AzaHEC RHPP Students by Participating Institution
July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022**



AzAHEC Scholars Program

The AzAHEC Scholars Program is a two-year interprofessional program providing health profession students with advanced community-based experiences in rural and underserved settings in the five AzAHEC Regional Center services areas.

Graduate-level participants are selected from the AzAHEC RHPPs. To qualify, Scholars must be enrolled in an RHPP and meet all academic and didactic training requirements of their graduate-level health professional program. Scholars are matched into interprofessional groups at one of the five AHEC Regional Centers for advanced community-based experiences in rural and underserved settings. For the 2021-23 cohort, 92 RHPP graduate level students are expected to complete the Scholars Program in Spring 2023. Faculty Mentors serve an important role of supporting and directing the interprofessional cohorts at each Regional Center.

For the 2021-23 cohort, 13 undergraduate students from UArizona College of Nursing and NAU Dental Hygiene Program will continue with the AzAHEC Scholars Program and are anticipated to complete in Spring 2023. To qualify, undergraduate Scholars must meet all academic and didactic training requirements of their undergraduate-level health professional program. This group of scholars are mentored jointly by faculty from the two academic programs.

“I am proud to participate in this important scholar program. Rural and underserved communities benefit directly from groups that work as partners to develop and implement programs to serve their unique needs. As a future Nurse Practitioner, I know that this opportunity will benefit my practice. Even if I end up not directly serving in a rural or underserved community it will expand my knowledge, compassion, and ability to understand the unique needs of my individual patients.”

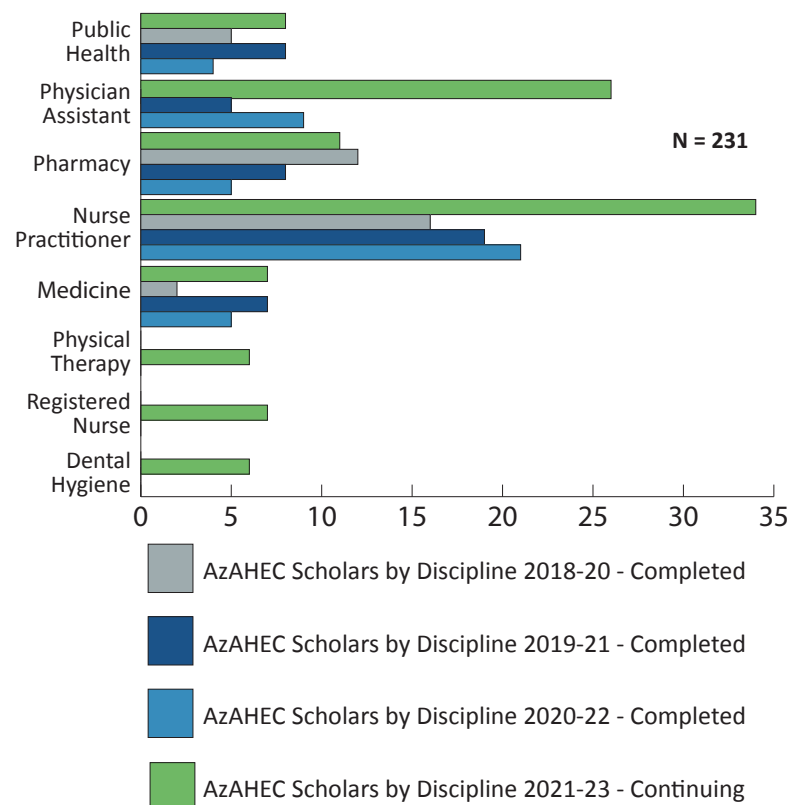
- Marian Brock-Andersen, Doctor of Nursing Practice, Family Nurse Practitioner Student
AHEC Scholar 2021-2023 Cohort

Since inception of the AHEC Scholars Program, a total of 312 scholars have either completed the program or remain enrolled for their capstone year of the program as follows:

- A. Thirty-five (35) scholars completed the first (2018-20) cohort.
- B. Forty-seven (47) scholars completed the second (2019-21) cohort.
- C. Forty-four (44) scholars completed the third (2020-22) cohort.
- D. One hundred and five (105) scholars are in the fourth (2021-23) cohort and are expected to complete the program in May 2023.
- E. Eighty-one (81) scholars were welcomed into the fifth (2022-24) cohort in September 2022 and are expected to complete the program in May 2024.

Further expansion of the AzAHEC Scholars Program at all six Regional Centers, including the American Indian Health AHEC, will begin with the 2023-25 Cohort.

AzAHEC Scholars 2018-23 Cohorts



AzAHEC Undergraduate Scholars Program

Denise Muesch Helm, RDH, Ed.D., Professor, Northern Arizona University Department of Dental Hygiene,
Patty Goldsmith, MS, RN, PHNA-BC, Faculty, University of Arizona College of Nursing

Modeled after the graduate AHEC Scholars Program, the AzAHEC Undergraduate Scholars Program exposes health profession students to immersions, seminars, and interprofessional experiential learning appropriate to the undergraduate level. Faculty from the NAU Department of Dental Hygiene and UArizona College of Nursing serve as Program Directors and Faculty Mentors.

The Program Faculty identified learning objectives that guided the entire two-year program curriculum. Undergraduate AHEC Scholars had immersion experiences at multiple Regional Centers and experienced the unique characteristics of the communities they serve with community partners. One particularly successful experiential learning activity was a day at Casa Alita Welcome Center - a humanitarian aid project that assists migrants when they are released from ICE and Border Patrol.

Scholars participated in video conference monthly seminars with presentations on Telehealth and Teledentistry, Health and Health Care in American Indian Populations, and the U.S. Public Health Service Corp. Undergraduate Scholars created posters that were shared at the Interprofessional RHPP Conference in April 2022 on two vulnerable populations: People Living with Homelessness and Asylees. Experience gained in the poster development process will help the Scholars with their podium presentations at the Spring 2023 RHPP Conference.

Program Faculty were grateful for the opportunity to expose Undergraduate Scholars to experiences with entities that serve underserved Arizona populations. Through these activities, they are confident that Undergraduate Scholars will be more likely to seek a career serving the vulnerable in rural and urban underserved communities.



Casa Alita Welcome Center Tucson Arizona
 (left to right) Sarah McCann-UA Nursing, Emily Carlson-NAU Dental Hygiene, Vanessa -NAU Dental Hygiene, Jasmine Ceballos-NAU Dental Hygiene, Rodrigo Lazcano-NAU Dental Hygiene, Nina Edwards-UofA Social and Behavioral Science, Emily Compton-UA Nursing



COVID -Vaccine Clinic at the Mexican Consulate, Tucson Arizona
 (left to right) Jennifer Navarro- UA Agriculture and Life Science, Rile Kuderca-UA Nursing, Nina Edwards-UA Social and Behavioral Sciences

Evaluations

AzAHEC evaluates programs based on activity participation reported by partners and through surveys collected from participants in four activity types:

- Health profession trainees (i.e., students and residents) who participated in rotations
- Health profession students who participated in the AHEC Scholars Program
- Licensed and other health professionals who received Continuing Education (CE) or Continuing Medical Education (CME)
- High School and Undergraduate students who participated in structured pipeline (pathway) programs

Evaluation findings indicate that AzAHEC programming reaches diverse populations and has positive outcomes. Survey response highlights include:

- ▶ In a post-rotation survey, 75% of the respondents indicated that the rotation increased their likelihood to select practicing in a rural or medically underserved area. After completing a rotation, 34% of respondents reflected a more positive belief about the ability of rural/medically underserved communities to meet lifestyle needs compared with before the rotation.
- ▶ Of the AHEC Scholars who completed the two-year program in 2021 and responded to the survey, nearly all (88%) reported that they intend to become employed or pursue further training in a medically underserved setting. The majority (69%) indicated an intention to become employed or pursue further training in a rural setting.
- ▶ Most respondents to the Continuing Education survey (90%) indicated they were "likely" or "very likely" to implement the CE/CME materials into their practice.
- ▶ Over 97% of Grade 9-16th respondents to the Pipeline Program Survey reported that they were "very interested" in pursuing a health career. Nearly all respondents (88%) reported that their health career program had increased their knowledge of health careers, with 52% reporting "very much" and 36% reporting "pretty much."

Tenth Annual Interprofessional Rural Health Professions Conference

The Tenth Annual Interprofessional RHPP Conference was held April 8-9, 2022. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, it was held as a virtual event in collaboration with Arizona Telemedicine Program.

The two-day conference began with Carlos Gonzales, MD, and RHPP Director, UArizona COM-Tucson, offering a traditional tribal blessing ceremony. Over 275 attendees, including RHPP Students, AHEC Scholars, faculty, preceptors, and AzAHEC Program, RHPP and AHEC Regional Center directors and staff participated in the conference.

Community preceptors, who are themselves health professionals, are a critical component in the success of trainees' experiences in Arizona's rural and urban underserved areas. The contribution of 398 preceptors ('field faculty') of nearly 200,000 hours (from January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021) was acknowledged during the conference. The AzAHEC Program is deeply grateful to these preceptors who are integral to the AHEC mission to increase and retain the health workforce in these communities.

The conference featured 25 posters. Each 2021-23 AzAHEC Scholars cohort group completing their first year of the Scholars program collaborated on a poster focusing on their community immersion region. Twelve posters were submitted for video presentation and presented in a facilitated Zoom session. Poster topics included community health needs assessments, interprofessional health professions research, healthcare research among the underrepresented minority population, behavioral health, healthcare evaluation, and current issues in primary care.

On Saturday, April 9, the five AHEC Scholars 2020-22 Cohort groups made podium presentations on their community immersions on the following topics:

- ASP CAAHEC Group – Prediabetes Screening at a Community Street Fair in Casa Grande
- ASP CPCHP Group – Vaping in Adolescence: A targeted Anti-Vaping Campaign in Flagstaff, AZ
- ASP SAAHEC Group – Surveying Food Scarcity in Winchester Heights
- ASP EAHEC Group – Family Based Intervention to Improve Mental Health Outcomes in Youth Residing in a Rural Community
- ASP WAHEC Group – Facilitating Access & Knowledge to Mental Health & Addiction Rehabilitation Resources in Yuma, Arizona

Saturday, April 9, also included a thought-provoking panel discussion about Impacting Disparities in Rural and Underserved Communities with Facilitator: Nancy

Johnson, RN, MSN, MS, PhD and Panelists: Gail Guerrero-Tucker, MD, MPH; Laura Maurer, MSN-Ed, RNC-OB, FNP-C; and Jacob Schwarz, PharmD, MBA, BCIDP, BCCCP, BCPS, FAzPA. The panel provided participants an opportunity to learn about the challenges and outcomes within these communities. Some challenges include workforce shortages, transportation and internet needs, available and affordable housing, poor health literacy, and population diversity. The panel also offered insight to how these challenges impacted the areas they served and what opportunities could be implemented to transform these needs into positive outcomes.

With Regional Center and RHPP Directors serving as poster judges, prizes were awarded for four posters:

Ronald Weinstein Award for Excellence in Video Presentation

- *A Community Assessment of Yuma, Arizona*
Authors: R. Stokes, L. Williams, K. Boyd, E. Platzbecker, Haoting Pei, K. Everhart, Mitchell Kramer, Benjamin Nichols, A. Palma, Jennifer Tovar, M. Vodicka, Z. Migliore, R. Shatto, S. Madrid, F. Rodriguez

Outstanding Poster (1st Place)

- *A Community Assessment of Yuma, Arizona*
Authors: R. Stokes, L. Williams, K. Boyd, E. Platzbecker, Haoting Pei, K. Everhart, Mitchell Kramer, Benjamin Nichols, A. Palma, Jennifer Tovar, M. Vodicka, Z. Migliore, R. Shatto, S. Madrid, F. Rodriguez

Excellent Poster (2nd Place) (tie)

- *Identifying Barriers to Cervical Cancer Screening in Rural Women*
Author: Lacey Parkman
- *Improvement of Pediatric Vaccination Rates in a Rural Clinic Setting Amid COVID*
Author: Sharon Caravetta

The conference agenda, videos, submitted posters more conference material can be seen at: [10th Annual Interprofessional Rural Health Professions Program Conference | Arizona Area Health Education Centers Program](#)

University of Arizona (UArizona) College of Medicine-Tucson (COM-T) RHPP

Carlos R. Gonzales, MD, FAAFP

RHPP Director, Assistant Dean, Curricular Affairs & Associate Professor, Family & Community Medicine

2021-2022 Program Highlights

RHPP Students supported	163
RHPP Rotations supported	229
RHPP Rotation Hours supported	50,950
2021-23 AHEC Scholars	3
2020-22 AHEC Scholars	3

The COM-T RHPP is a mature program with solid outcomes in influencing primary care and rural practice. It provides rotation support (housing, travel, stipends) to students enrolled in the RHPP and other students participating in rural and urban underserved rotations. A total of 163 students completed nearly 51,000 hours in clinical rotations, including: Indian Health Services Winslow Indian Health Care Center; Mariposa Community Health Center, Tuba City Regional Health Care Corporation, Whiteriver Indian Health Service Hospital, Yavapai County Community Health Services and Yuma Regional Medical Center. There are 83 COM-T students enrolled in RHPP, and with the addition of this year’s proposed group of 30 students, there will be 113 RHPP students at the COM-T campus during 2022 –2023.

Two UArizona COM-Tucson programs enhanced student participation in the RHPP:

1. The PreMedical Admissions Pathway (P-MAP) program is designed as a post-baccalaureate educational program exposing students from underserved communities to the academic rigors they will face in medical school. Students benefited from participating in P-MAP by strengthening their COM admissions portfolio. P-MAP students receive admission into the UArizona COM-T campus upon successfully completing their P-MAP studies.
2. The UArizona Primary Care Scholarship Program (PCSP) was established by the Arizona State Legislature to help address the urgent need for physicians within the state by covering COM-T and COM-Phoenix tuition and fees associated with medical education for students who commit to practice primary care in a rural or urban underserved community in Arizona after completing residency training.

RHPP is a longitudinal program that starts with an application in the early fall semester of Year One for medical students. Once selected into the program, the RHPP Director

meets with each student and assures placement with a preceptor who can provide an experience consistent with the interests of the student. Some students are interested in a specific type of practice, such as general surgery or family medicine, while others are interested in pursuing a career with the Indian Health Service or in US-Mexico Border health issues. All attempts are made to make a sound “match” between student and preceptor.

COM-T offers the Rural Health Distinction Track which ensures that those students who are dedicated to the provision of healthcare in rural Arizona are recognized for their commitment with a Certificate of Distinction upon graduation. This distinction track requires an additional experience of six weeks during the last two years of medical school and a researched Capstone paper of eight to ten pages. Of 21 graduating RHPP seniors in the class of 2022, 16 obtained a Certificate of Distinction in Rural Health.

AHEC Scholars Program

Following acceptance into the RHPP, students are encouraged to apply to the AHEC Scholars. Six COM-T RHPP students additionally participated in the AzAHEC Scholars program. These students engaged interprofessionally at AHEC Regional Centers with pharmacy, public health, nurse practitioner, physical therapy, and physician assistant students from all three Arizona Board of Regents universities (UArizona, NAU, ASU). The curriculum included community immersions, monthly seminars, and year-round teamwork with a focus on one regional center in Arizona.

Expansion Longitudinal Integrated Clerkship (LIC)

The traditional block format of medical student clinical education includes multiple rotations in various disciplines and various locations. A Longitudinal Integrated Clerkship (LIC) is a continuity-based clinical medical education which requires that students stay in one place, with one set of faculty members and one group of patients, for an extended period (i.e., nine months). Plans are being developed for medical students from the UArizona COM-T completing a portion of their required clinical rotations in Yuma, Arizona.



Ken Miller

University of Arizona (UArizona) College of Medicine-Phoenix (COM-P) RHPP

Jonathan Cartsonis, MD

RHPP Director

2021-2022 Program Highlights	
RHPP Students supported	115
RHPP Rotations supported	163
RHPP Rotation Hours supported	36,313
2021-23 AHEC Scholars	4
2020-22 AHEC Scholars	2

The COM-P RHPP provides clinical opportunities for students to work in Arizona’s rural and urban underserved areas. A total of 115 students were supported during their rotations within these communities. COM-P students completed over 36,000 hours in clinical rotations, including at Gila River Health Care Hu Hu Kam Memorial Hospital in Sacaton, Mount Graham Regional Medical Center in Safford, Ponderosa Family Care Clinic in Payson, North Country HealthCare in Flagstaff, Phoenix VA Healthcare System, Tsehootsooi Medical in Fort Defiance and Wesley Health Center in Phoenix.

Established in 2020-21, the UA COM-P/Payson Longitudinal Integrated Clerkship (LIC) continued into 2021-22 hosting two medical students this year. Highly interprofessional in character, it included pharmacy (UArizona), PA (NAU and Marquette), and NP (ASU, UArizona, NAU) students in the longitudinal learning community. Based on current plans, Payson will host seven LIC students in 2022-2023, a three-fold increase over the prior year.

Two additional rural sites have committed to hosting an LIC.

- 1. North Country CHC** and The Colorado Plateau Center for Health Professions (CPCHP) hosts one student (beginning in May 2021) in an LIC curriculum.
- 2. Gila River Indian Community** will also host one LIC. We believe this to be among the first LIC programs to be hosted by a tribal nation.

The COM-P RHPP is developing Interactive Learning Modules (ILM) that facilitate clinical teaching skill development and provide CME credits. Dr. Jeremi Smith developed ILMs to orient rural faculty to the grading application (MyTipReport App).

AHEC Scholars Program

Six COM-P RHPP students additionally participated in the AzaHEC Scholars program. These students engaged interprofessionally at AHEC Regional Centers with pharmacy, public health, nurse practitioner, physical therapy, and physician assistant students from all three Arizona Board of Regents universities. The curriculum included community immersions, monthly seminars, and year-round teamwork with a focus on one regional center in Arizona.

COM-P RHPP students participated in the Tenth Annual Interprofessional RHPP Conference in April 2022. Joining their colleagues from other ABOR institutions, the four COM-P AzaHEC Scholars from the 2021-23 Cohort made poster presentations, and the two COM-P AzaHEC Scholars from the 2020-22 Cohort made podium presentations.

Dr. Judith Hunt (shown right in picture) serves as a preceptor for multiple health profession students, including LIC COM-P students. “Payson serves as a rural campus for the COM-P and gives LIC students the unique opportunity to follow patients longitudinally,” says Dr. Hunt. Dr. Hunt, an internal medicine and pediatric physician, additionally serves as an AHEC Scholars Faculty Mentor (see page 5).



University of Arizona (UArizona) College of Pharmacy (COP) RHPP

Elizabeth A. Hall-Lipsy, JD, MPH

RHPP Director

Assistant Dean of Academic Affairs and Assessment

Associate Professor of Practice

Director PharmD Forward Programs

2021-2022 Program Highlights

RHPP Students supported	111
RHPP Rotations supported	246
RHPP Rotation Hours supported	51,999
2021-23 AHEC Scholars	11
2020-22 AHEC Scholars	5

A University of Arizona R. Ken Coit College of Pharmacy (UArizona RKC-COP) mission priority is developing the pharmacy workforce to address the unmet needs of Arizona's rural and medically underserved communities. Arizona's rural communities face barriers to pharmacy care access. Data show that only 7% of Arizona's pharmacists practice in rural areas where 10 to 15% of Arizona's population lives. We work to address workforce shortages through our RHPP and Professional Certificate in Pharmacy Related Health Disparities which can dramatically impact student exposure and decisions to practice in rural and underserved communities.

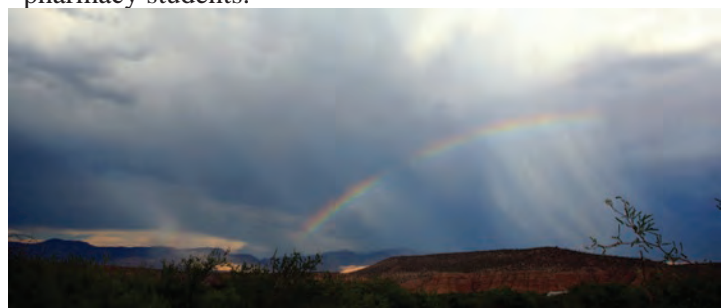
Students in the RHPP/Professional Certificate are placed in rural communities three times: (1) the summer between their first and second year for a four-week introductory community or institutional rotation, (2) the summer between second and third year for a four-week introductory community or institutional rotation, and (3) during fourth year for a six-week advanced pharmacy practice rotation. With AzaAHEC funding over the last eight years, our RHPP expanded from four to 38 new first year student participants per year, representing 28% of the RKC-COP Doctor of Pharmacy (PharmD) student body. AzaAHEC funding also supported 16 RKC-COP AHEC Scholars this year.

The RKC-COP RHPP recruited 44 new participants from the class of 2025 and 38 students completed their first rural rotation during the summer of 2022. We placed 111 students into 246 rotations, comprising almost 52,000 hours of pharmacy training in rural and urban underserved Arizona communities. Among the 114 RHPP students enrolled in 2021-22, all are in the Professional Certificate track, 42% represent a racial minority, 26% identify as Hispanic/Latinx, 36% are from a rural community (population < 50,000) and 63% are from an

underserved background identifying with one or more of the following: (1) first in their family to attend college, (2) received a scholarship or loan for disadvantaged students, (3) relied on federal or state assistance programs, or (4) lived in an area where there were few medical providers at a convenient distance.

To improve student retention and support student participants, the RHPP since 2010 now includes a Professional Certificate in Pharmacy-Related Health Disparities. In 2022, 39 graduates earned the certificate, joining a total of 206 students who completed the certificate to date. In addition to clinical rotations, the certificate requires two classroom courses taught by college faculty: Community Assessment for Pharmacy Students and Health Disparities in the U.S. As a result of the community assessment course, 200 students have conducted RHPP community assessments in their rotation sites and presented their findings orally and in written reports to their peers and colleagues. Students presented posters at the Tenth Annual Interprofessional RHPP Conference and shared them with the AzaAHEC Regional Centers. Students participate in AHEC Regional Center programs and events such as PharmCamp, health fairs and vaccination campaigns.

In May 2022, 39 Class of 2022 RHPP students received their Certificate in Pharmacy Related Health Disparities. Among these graduates, 18 students sought and were selected for competitive post-graduate pharmacy residency positions. Eleven of the residency programs that selected RHPP graduates this year serve rural or underserved populations. Among the other 20 graduates, five accepted employment at a rural Arizona pharmacy, two are pursuing employment through the Indian Health Service, eight accepted positions at urban community pharmacies, four are pursuing employment in a rural or underserved community, and two were undecided at the time of data collection. In a survey of these graduates, 86% reported intending to pursue employment in an underserved community and 65% plan to pursue rural employment. Employment tracking data shows that 33% of our RHPP graduates were employed in a rural setting, and 65% treat underserved patients. RKC-COP is especially proud to report that 20% of RHPP alumni are practicing in rural Arizona, and 24% of our RHPP alumni are now rural preceptors for current pharmacy students.



University of Arizona (UArizona) College of Nursing (CON) RHPP

Christy Pacheco, DNP, FNP-BC

RHPP Director and Clinical Assistant Professor

2021-2022 Program Highlights	
RHPP Students supported	37
RHPP Rotations supported	59
RHPP Rotation Hours supported	8,998
2021-23 AHEC Scholars	9
2020-22 AHEC Scholars	6

There are persistent health disparities across Arizona. Access to care is a key issue particularly among rural and medically underserved areas and populations. Every Arizona county has primary care provider shortages. Nurse Practitioners provide evidence-based, primary care services with a focus on prevention, community and population health. Consistent with the AzaAHEC Program mission, the UArizona CON RHPP aims to develop and recruit of an interprofessional health workforce to practice in Arizona’s rural and medically underserved areas. Students participate in a range of clinical, didactic and immersion activities in these communities.

The CON RHPP grew from 47 to 66 enrolled students during this period, with 37 receiving financial support. Twelve RHPP students graduated in December 2021 and 15 also participated in the AHEC Scholars Program: six in the 2020-22 and nine in the 2021-23 cohorts. An AHEC Scholar Undergraduate Program was implemented and included undergraduate CON BSN students.

Clinical Education

Students completed primary care clinical rotations in Arizona’s rural and medically underserved areas in a variety of settings, from federally qualified health centers (FQHCs) to private practices. Newly developed longitudinal rotations allowed training continuity. Two students participated in Arizona rural and medically underserved area (MUA) continuity placements last Fall and another three in the Spring and Summer. Students completed telehealth training in MAT (Medication-Assisted Treatment) for substance use disorder, SANE (Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner) and LARC (Long-Acting Reversible Contraception), led by CON faculty on the skills critical to improve care in rural and medically underserved communities. RHPP stipends supported 25 RHPP students in rotations. Travel stipends supported an average of 25 students per semester. Clinical Supervision also supported rural and medically underserved rotations. Site directed quality improvement project priorities were identified. Doctoral Nurse Practitioner (DNP) students conducted quality

improvement projects at their clinical sites, informed by stakeholders, with the aim of improving quality or access to care. Collaboration with the Colleges of Medicine and Public Health permitted students to participate in numerous interprofessional COVID vaccination events.

Didactic Opportunities

Coursework provided an evidence-based foundation to better understand rural and medically underserved population needs and resources. Fifteen DNP students, including RHPP students, completed NURS 773 Rural Health Systems, focusing on rural organizational systems and health policy. Nine students completed NURS 638 Conceptual Foundations for Rural Health, including a community health needs assessment through the lens of the social determinants of health. Students had the opportunity to complete a Rural Telehealth Certificate Program to gain expertise in rural telehealth via coursework and rotation support. Virtual seminars facilitated discussion on rural rotation and practice issues. An RHPP Brown Bag Lunch Seminar highlighted a range of interprofessional community immersions and activities.

AHEC Scholars Program

Collaboration continued with RHPP Directors and Regional AHEC Directors in the AHEC graduate-level Scholars Program and the new AHEC Scholars undergraduate program. AHEC Scholars presented their work at the Tenth Annual RHPP Conference in podium and poster presentations. CON AHEC Scholar Haoting Pei and her group were awarded both the Excellence in Video Presentation and Outstanding Poster (1st Place) for their community assessment of Yuma, Arizona.

Outcomes

Feedback from RHPP Students indicate program effectiveness, strongly agreeing that (1) coursework improves knowledge, and (2) clinical rotations improve expertise in caring for rural and medically underserved populations. Of the 12 graduating RHPP students, nine completed a graduation survey. All (100%) indicated intent to practice in an Arizona underserved area, with nearly 80% (7/9) intending to practice in a rural area. Follow-up data indicate eight graduates are currently practicing in rural or medically underserved areas and one is working at a VA facility.

The UArizona CON RHPP provides critical clinical and didactic support to DNP students interested in caring for rural and medically underserved populations. Our RHPP students gain expertise in delivering interprofessional primary care and improving access to care and health outcomes. Extensive collaboration continues among RHPP directors, the AzaAHEC Program and Regional Center directors, the CON and our community partners.

ASU Edson College of Nursing (CON) and Health Innovation RHPP

Diane E. Nuñez, DNP, RN, ANP-BC, FNAP
*Clinical Professor, DNP Program Director,
 RHPP Director*

2021-2022 Program Highlights	
RHPP Students supported	6
RHPP Rotations supported	104
RHPP Rotation Hours supported	14,438
2021-23 AHEC Scholars	16
2020-22 AHEC Scholars	13

The ASU Edson CON and Health Innovation RHPP provides clinical opportunities for primary care Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) students to work in rural and urban underserved areas throughout Arizona, while fostering interprofessional educational opportunities that stimulate and cultivate student interest in careers in underserved settings. DNP students are selected as RHPP fellows based on an essay statement and interview, leadership and community involvement, scholarship activities and potential to seek employment in AzAHEC focus areas upon graduation. Students can also apply to participate in the AHEC Scholars Program (ASP).

Despite ongoing COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, the ASU RHPP continued to offer virtual opportunities for students to experience networking, outreach, community service and education in social determinants of health, cultural humility, community assessment and local and regional engagement. Students develop knowledge and expertise in the unique challenges of working in rural and medically underserved communities (MUCs), along with the health and access issues these populations face. In the ASU DNP program, clinical experiences included long-term MUC rotations across two to four semesters which fostered deeper community engagement and long-term patient care continuity. All students completed direct patient care, and some provided quality improvement projects at their designated sites.

In 2021-2022, ASU RHPP supported students assigned to rural private practices, Federally Qualified Community Health Centers (FQHC), Community Health Centers (CHC) and Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSA) across all AHEC regions, totaling 14,438 hours of community-based training. We placed 61 unique students in rural or underserved communities in 104 rotations, and 21 students had longitudinal clinical rotations across several semesters.

DNP students represented all primary care specialties and included 15 Adult-Gerontology Health, 28 Family Health,

eight Family Psychiatric Mental Health, six Pediatric, and five Women’s Health. Of the 62 students who completed these rotations, 46% are from a rural area, 62% from a disadvantaged background, 29% currently live in a medically underserved community with too few providers at a convenient distance and 48% grew up in Arizona. Program participant self-reported racial and ethnic backgrounds included Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (1%), American Indian/Alaskan Native (3%), Black/African American (5%), Asian (6%), more than one race (7%), Hispanic (18%) with 20% that speak Spanish fluently, and White (78%).

The Edson College Center for the Advancement of Interprofessional Practice, Education and Research (CAIPER) provided e-learning modules for RHPP students. Project teams designed clinical experiences to include placement in HPSA areas, provided mentorship and identified quality improvement projects. Mentors fostered positive clinical experiences and sustainable projects and encouraged graduates to remain in Arizona to practice. E-learning modules related to IPEC® national interprofessional competencies and included interactive case studies, clinical scenarios, self-checks and reflection easily accessible to students and preceptors in remote locations. Participants can receive personalized Certificates of Completion demonstrating IPE competence.

Student service-learning included COVID testing and contact tracing experiences through the Edson College, St. Vincent de Paul Medical Clinic and Circle the City homeless outreach. Students participated in the 10th Annual Interprofessional RHPP Conference. Students reported enjoying the interactive nature of the virtual conference, engagement, the posters and guest presenters.

In September 2021, we exceeded our recruitment goals when 16 students joined the 2021-23 AHEC Scholars Cohort. We celebrated our 2020-22 AHEC Scholars Program graduates in May 2022. Six ASU AHEC Scholars secured jobs in rural or medically underserved areas, representing primary care practice in family medicine, adult-gerontology, pediatrics, women’s health and family-psychiatric mental health. AHEC Scholars engaged interprofessionally with pharmacy, public health, medicine and physical therapy students. Scholars completed the IPE curriculum which included in-person and virtual community immersions in an AHEC Regional Center service area, monthly virtual seminars, and completion of a community assessment and intervention project. At the RHPP Conference, the 2022-24 Cohort created and presented posters and the 2021-22 Cohort provided virtual podium presentations. The graduating cohort was honored at an ASU luncheon event and received AHEC Scholar medallions.

Northern Arizona University (NAU) Physician Assistant (PA) Studies Department

Bettie Coplan, PhD, PA-C

RHPP Director, Associate Professor

2021-2022 Program Highlights	
RHPP Students supported	52
RHPP Rotations supported	243
RHPP Rotation Hours supported	59,504
2021-23 AHEC Scholars	26
2020-22 AHEC Scholars	9

The NAU PA Program recruits individuals from diverse backgrounds and prepares them to practice throughout Arizona, but with special emphasis on rural and other underserved communities. Since it began in 2014, the NAU PA program has had over 90% of its graduates practice in Arizona, 60% in primary care and 50% in medically underserved settings.

Students complete the NAU PA Program in 24 months with an initial 12-month didactic phase and subsequent 12-month clinical phase with rotations including family medicine, internal medicine, pediatrics, women's health, behavioral and mental health. In 2021, the NAU PA program expanded from 50 to 60 students who all participate in our RHPP. During 2021-22, 47 students successfully completed the program's clinical phase. Our RHPP supports 52 students with education technology to support clinical decision making, student travel and relocation stipends and clinical rotation placements. In collaboration with AzaAHEC Program and Regional Centers, the RHPP supported 243 clinical rotations - an average of five, four-week rural/medically underserved rotations supported per PA RHPP student.

Class of 2022 highlights at the time of graduation in August 2022:

- 30% (14) accepted PA positions of whom:
 - ◆ 79% (11) are in Arizona
 - ◆ 29% (4) are in rural/urban underserved clinics
- 8% (4) had accepted residency positions (which are optional for PAs) in Arizona
- Of the 29 who had yet to accept a position:
 - ◆ 66% (19) planned to apply to urban underserved clinics
 - ◆ 24% (7) planned to apply in rural areas.

In 2022, the NAU PA RHPP Elias Villarreal Jr., DMSc, MPAS, PA-C, DFAAPA left the state for another academic position. Bettie Coplan, PhD, PA-C was appointed chair of the NAU Department of Physician Assistant Studies in

March 2022. The PA program is grateful to Dr. Villarreal, the first director who firmly established the RHPP as a core component of the NAU PA program. Between 2021-22, the NAU PA RHPP expanded its AHEC Scholars from nine to 24 in the Class of 2023 and to 30 in the Class of 2024.

To graduate from the NAU PA Program students complete a scholarly capstone project. For AHEC Scholars, the community assessment and scholarly projects fulfill the capstone requirement. Scholars value the community engagement, interprofessional learning, networking opportunities and support that the AHEC Scholars Program provides. More importantly, AHEC Scholar engagement enhances interest in rural community practice and builds confidence.

AHEC Scholars Highlights:

Class of 2022 (9 scholars) and Class of 2023 (24 scholars):

- 61% (20) grew up in rural communities (population < 50,000 people)
- 42% (14) identify as ethnic minorities
- 45% (15) are the first generation in their family to attend college

Class of 2023, at the conclusion of the first year of the AHEC Scholars Program:

- 75% (18) felt that practice in an urban underserved setting is highly desirable or desirable
- 58% (14) felt that practice in a rural setting is highly desirable/desirable

Class of 2022, at the time of graduation in August of 2022:

- 33% (3) have accepted positions in medically underserved areas (1 rural, 2 urban)
- 33% (3) are seeking positions in rural or other medically underserved areas
- 89% (8) reported feeling confident in their ability to practice in rural and non-rural medically underserved settings.



Northern Arizona University (NAU) School of Nursing (SON)

Shelley Vaughn, DNP, FNP-BC

RHPP Director, Assistant Clinical Professor

2021-2022 Program Highlights	
RHPP Students supported	30
RHPP Rotations supported	75
RHPP Rotation Hours supported	12,424
2021-23 AHEC Scholars	9
2020-22 AHEC Scholars	2

NAU SON RHPP provided 30 students clinical training in Arizona’s rural and urban underserved areas for over 12,000 hours at North Country HealthCare in Flagstaff, Wesley Health Center Golden Gate in Phoenix, Ponderosa Family Care Clinic in Payson, and Gila Valley Clinic in Safford.

Eleven NAU-SON RHPP students also participated in the AzaAHEC Scholars Program in 2021-22. They engaged interprofessionally at AHEC Regional Centers in conjunction with pharmacy, public health, medicine, physical therapy and physician assistant students. The curriculum included community immersions, monthly seminars and year-round teamwork.

Student participation in the Tenth Annual Interprofessional

RHPP Conference in April 2022 was a huge success. NAU RHPP students and AzaAHEC Scholars attended virtually from the NAU North Valley Phoenix campus. The nine NAU-SON AzaAHEC Scholars from the 2021-23 Cohort joined their colleagues in podium presentations, and the two NAU-SON AzaAHEC Scholars from the 2020-22 Cohort joined their colleagues from across all regions in poster presentations. Sharon Caravetta, NAU FNP Student and AHEC Scholar, received an Excellent Poster Award for her poster, “Improvement of Pediatric Vaccination Rates in a Rural Clinic Setting amid COVID.”



2022 NAU SON FNP RHPP Graduates

Northern Arizona University (NAU) Physical Therapy (PT) Program - Flagstaff

Andrea Trujillo Lerner, PT, DPT

RHPP Director-PT, Director of Clinical Education

2021-2022 Program Highlights	
RHPP Students supported	15
RHPP Rotations supported	15
RHPP Rotation Hours supported	6,000
2021-23 AHEC Scholars	6

The NAU PT RHPP helps meet the PT needs of Arizona’s rural and medically underserved areas. It sends students to rural areas for clinical experiences during their final program year. In the past students reported obstacles such as lack of resources and support to successfully complete a clinical experience in a rural area. The goal of providing stipend support to PT students who complete a rural clinical experience is to open research opportunities that would benefit these rural communities and increase the likelihood of them returning to these sites to practice following graduation.

Prior to the NAU PT RHPP, there were one or two students doing rural clinical rotations. The NAU PT RHPP selected five students in 2021 and 17 for the new 2022-23 fiscal year.

AzaAHEC Scholars Program recruitment began 2021 with six students selected for the Class of 2023 and five anticipated for the Class of 2024. Recruitment includes outreach to incoming PT students with informational webinars and Q&A sessions to our Flagstaff and Phoenix BioScience Campuses.

NAU PT RHPP student preceptor sites included: Tuba City Regional Medical Center, Copper Queen Community Hospital, Fort Defiance Indian Hospital, Summit Healthcare, White River Indian Hospital, Verde Valley Medical Center, Chinle Comprehensive Health Care Facility, Mountain Valley Rehabilitation Hospital, Payson Physical Therapy, Canyon Physical Therapy and Aquatic Rehabilitation, Havasu Regional Medical Center, Yavapai Regional Medical Center, Roadrunner Physical Therapy, Mount Graham Regional Medical Center and North Country Healthcare in Williams.

UArizona Mel & Enid Zuckerman College of Public Health (MEZCOPH)

Marc Verhougstraete, PhD,

RHPP Director, Assistant Professor

Jennifer Peters, Arizona State Office of Rural Health Program Manager

Mona Arora, PhD, Assistant Research Professor

2021-2022 Program Highlights	
RHPP Students supported	24
RHPP Rotations supported	24
RHPP Rotation Hours supported	1,710
2021-23 AHEC Scholars	8
2020-22 AHEC Scholars	4

MEZCOPH’s RHPP is housed in the Arizona Center for Rural Health (AzCRH) led by Marc Verhougstraete (Assistant Professor), Jennifer Peters (AzSORH Program Manager), and Mona Arora (Assistant Research Professor). Dr. Arora joined the team in 2021 to help with reporting and identifying new avenues for RHPP student involvement. Dr. Verhougstraete and Ms. Peters are experienced RHPP leaders in service-learning courses designed to support community-engaged experiences that provide the framework for understanding the assets, challenges and issues facing Arizona’s rural and underserved communities. Dr. Verhougstraete is a faculty mentor for the AzAHEC Scholars Program. Partnerships nurture active learning and reflection for MEZCOPH students, assure health equity and reduce health disparities in Arizona.

During this year, many activities transitioned to hybrid virtual and in-person from the virtual experiences necessitated by the COVID-19 pandemic. The AzCRH RHPP offers service-learning courses that include an undergraduate course PHPM 497D, and graduate courses: 16-week PHPM 597C (2 credits), seven-week offerings (PHPM 497D, PHPM 597D and HPS 597A), and a flexible schedule program (HPS 597B). Evaluation and exploration of alternative course dates and modalities are being explored. The MEZCOPH RHPP supported the MILAGRO independent study course for nine students in a multi-disciplinary approach with the UArizona Colleges of Nursing, Pharmacy and Medicine and the ASU School of Social Work.

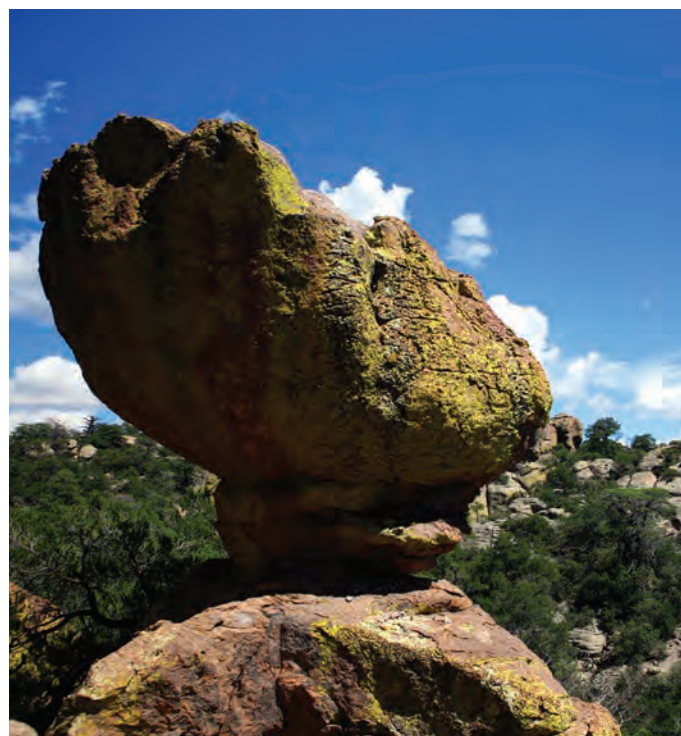
RHPP supported efforts to connect with more rural communities and increase our involvement and support for environmental health, climate change, infectious diseases, and COVID-19 response. Edward Dotherow served as a community engagement and outreach coordinator and established or enhanced partnerships between our RHPP leaders, public health students, local health departments, health clinics and AHEC Regional Centers.

Of the 24 (of the 35 students total) who participated in the 2021-22 service learning courses and completed course surveys:

- 79% (19 students) were female
- 33% (8) self-identified as Hispanic or Latino
- 33% (8) grew up in a rural area
- 25% (6) grew up in Arizona
- 25% (6) were MPH - Health Behavior and Health Promotion students
- 21% (5) were MPH – Public Health Policy & Management students
- 17% (4) were MPH Family & Child Health students
- Other students included MPH - Health Policy and Management, MPH - Public Health Practice, MPH - Epidemiology, MPH / MA (LAS), and PhD.

AHEC Scholars Program (ASP)

The two-year interprofessional ASP provides students with community-based experiential training in rural or underserved Arizona communities in an AHEC Regional Center service area. The MEZCOPH RHPP had four Cohort 2020-22 students learning in Arizona’s communities in their second ASP year and graduated in April 2022. Eight Cohort 2021-23 students settled into AzAHEC Regional Center ASP experiences.





Rod Gorrell, Saguaro Sunrise

The “CRHWorks” Health Workforce Data System

**Bryna Koch, MPH; Susan Coates, MBA;
Charles Drake, MS, MA; Daniel Derksen, MD**

Health workforce research and analysis inform decisions on policies and programs aimed at supporting pathways from education to practice. Understanding the supply, demand, distribution, recruitment and retention of the health workforce is also a critical component to ensure health system capacity and meet the needs of Arizonans, particularly in rural, tribal, border and underserved areas.

With sustained support from the AzAHEC Program since 2018, the Arizona Center for Rural Health (AzCRH) expanded the Arizona Health Workforce Data System (AzHWDS) project and completed the transition from a database to a data warehouse system. The data warehouse supports our core report, the [Arizona Health Workforce Profile Report](#).

FY2021-22 the team updated workforce data for behavioral health analysts, counselors, marriage and family therapists, nurses, physician assistants, physicians, psychologists, social workers and substance use counselors and added new data for the dentists and dental hygienist workforces. With updated U.S. Census data, we expect to publish an updated core workforce profile report in the coming 2022-23 fiscal year.

In FY 2022, the Health Workforce team completed the following briefs:

- Arizona Health Workforce Profile: Direct Care Workers
- Arizona Health Workforce Profile: Physical Therapists
- Arizona Health Workforce Profile: Occupational Therapists

Additionally, the team created or updated the following visualizations:

- Arizona COVID-19 County Snapshots: Cases, Deaths, & Health Care Infrastructure
- Poverty in Rural Arizona
- Arizona Graduate Medical Education Funding
- Arizona Marketplace and Medicaid Enrollment
- Arizona Hospital Select Indicators Report
- Arizona Rural Health Safety Net Map
- And GIS maps on the AzCRH GIS Hub

The team collaborated on two manuscripts:

- Analysis of physician relocation patterns manuscript accepted for publication in Family Medicine.
- Analysis of rural access to medication for opioid use disorder treatment published in Health Services Insight

The Health Workforce team continued its research collaboration in the areas of behavioral health and maternal health with faculty Ben Brady, DrPH and Patrick Wightman, PhD. The team also provided technical assistance and sustained collaboration with state level partners as listed below.

Collaboration

- Provided data on the physical therapist workforce and health system to inform the needs assessment process to establish a DPT program at the University of Arizona Health Sciences.
- Convened the Arizona Health Workforce Advisory Board on November 11, 2021.
- Assisted the AZAHEC Program with data related to AHEC student rotations in tribal areas.
- Supported AzCRH AHEAD grant activities related to public health system and workforce capacity.
- Continued to collaborate with the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) Health Systems Development Office including work with the Primary Care Office (PCO).
- Continued to collaborate with UAHS College of Nursing faculty to support HRSA workforce grant development.
- Continued to participate in Cover Arizona and Children’s Action Alliance coalition meetings.
- Continued to participate in the Medicaid State Advisory Committee Meetings.
- Continued to participate in ADHS Maternal and Infant Mortality Summit planning meetings.

Outreach

- Presented to the Department of Psychiatry departmental meeting, July 2021.
- Co-presented with ADHS Primary Care Office Bureau Chief Edith di Santo, to the AzCRH Teaching Health Center conference on the behavioral health workforce in Arizona, Oct 2021.
- Presented to the AAMC Health Workforce Research Conference, May 2022.
- Promoted workforce data and products to the Annual AzCRH conference, July 2022.

University of Arizona (UArizona) College of Medicine – Tucson (COM-T) University of Arizona College of Medicine Tucson Family Medicine Residency

Sommer Aldulaimi, MD, FAAFP

Director of Rural Health,

Co-Director of Global Health COM

The mission of UArizona COM-Tucson South Campus is to train resident physicians to work in rural and underserved areas in Arizona and beyond. This year, the two discrete family medicine residencies merged and became the UArizona Family Medicine Residency. Because of the incredible mission and vision of the South Campus Program, and its commitment to rural and underserved populations, the two programs will remain as separate tracks, so we can continue to recruit residents and train physicians who are committed to future practice in rural and underserved sites. Residents on the South Track continue to receive advanced procedural, obstetrical and ultrasound training through AzaHEC support for 20 weeks minimum in family medicine and throughout residency for rheumatology, border health, and other experiences. Spending significant amounts of time in rural areas allows resident physicians to experience the profound professional and personal benefits of living and working in underserved and rural communities. Our rural rotations are some of the most valued experiences our residents have. The rural rotations are why some of our best residents decide to train here, and why many stay to practice in Arizona's rural and underserved areas - many times where they rotated as a resident. The Banner University Medical Center Family Medicine and Internal Medicine residencies are grateful for AzaHEC Program support of rural Arizona resident education.

During the 2021-22 academic year, we sent first-, second- and third-year Family Medicine Residents to rotations in family medicine, obstetrics, pediatrics (residents from both tracks), emergency medicine and community medicine in rural Arizona. The Family Medicine Residents had the privilege to serve in the communities of Fort Defiance, Polacca, Safford, Tuba City, Whiteriver, Payson, Douglas, Casa Grande, Copper Queen and Nogales (a new site).

Family Medicine Residents also rotate in Tohono O'odham Nation communities in Sells and San Xavier for part of their musculoskeletal experience. For community medicine, we started a new collaboration in Nogales doing border health and that has gone so well that we have expanded the site to pediatrics, gynecology and family medicine. We are working on establishing two border health sites in emergency medicine and

family medicine in Douglas and Bisbee (Copper Queen Community Hospital). We continue to expand our rural Arizona footprint and are excited about our new rotations. The Family Medicine Residents completed 52 rural rotations in 13 sites during 13 blocks - a significant increase from last year. Internal Medicine Residents completed 20 rural rotations at two sites.

The South Campus Track has a high percentage of their graduates stay in Arizona to work in underserved and rural areas. Of resident graduates over the last three years, 47% practice in rural areas in the U.S., 30% of whom work at our AHEC sites and now training our residents, with 60% practicing in rural Arizona. Eighty-five percent of our graduates over the last three years work in federally designated HPSAs, 72% of them in Arizona. Each year, we continue to work with rural health facility staff in sharing rural practice opportunities as our residents begin their search for a permanent physician position. Because of the high percentage of our residents who practice rurally, we have had the honor of receiving the National Rural Training Track Collaboration Rural Recognition for three of the last four years.

AzaHEC supports courses to prepare Family Medicine residents for rural practice including Advanced Trauma Life Support (ATLS), Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS), Pediatric Advanced Life Support (PALS), Neonatal Resuscitation Program (NRP), Advanced Obstetrical Life Support (ALSO) and an introduction to medical Spanish. AzaHEC also supported the introduction of a new "Point of Care Ultrasound (POCUS)" curriculum for the residents to prepare them for rural rotations and be competent to practice in under-resourced rural areas after graduation.

In 2022-23 we will implement a rural health curriculum for our South Track residents delivered on the fourth Thursday of the month during their didactic time. This curriculum includes health issues for rural physicians and patients, IHS specific topics, border-health topics, wilderness and disaster medicine, POCUS (see above) and basic public health for rural practice. We are excited about the development of this new curriculum aimed specifically to strengthen the skills needed to practice in rural and remote areas. We will also continue to present and publish on training physicians for rural practice nationally and internationally.

Our Family Medicine and Internal Medicine residents continue to see their rural rotations as a key element in their training. Rotating during the COVID-19 pandemic presented challenges and opportunities. Residents participated in community testing and vaccine programs and learned how public health measures are implemented in rural areas. Residents went out into the community, were immersed in the rural physician roles outside the hospital

and began to understand how to be effective outside of a clinical setting. Residents provided extra support to rural sites during a difficult time. The quality of the teaching by rural preceptors is one of the most valued components of rural rotations and very highly regarded by residents. Feedback from both Internal and Family Medicine residents is positive. We are honored to have such amazing rural preceptors who invest so much time in teaching our residents. Each year, residents select a Rural Preceptor of the Year Award. This year's award went to Amber Heym, MD, from Fort Defiance.

Mobile Health Program Obstetrics

AzAHEC supports part of our Mobile Health Program Obstetrics (MHP OB), which is an incredible service for our patients and a great learning experience for our residents. It provides prenatal, postpartum and family planning services to uninsured patients in the Tucson area.

Drs. Person-Rennell, Elizabeth Kyle Meehan and Krista Sunderman supervise second- and third-year residents who provide high quality, continuity prenatal care to under and uninsured women throughout their pregnancies, deliveries into the post-partum period. This year MHP OB had 659 patient encounters for a total of 110 unique patients, which is the highest number served to date. We provide an ultrasound clinic as well with the help of Lynn Coppola MD that saw an average of seven patients per session.

This program is critically important for the urban underserved women living in the Tucson area, and for Family Medicine resident education. Providing clinical care services that our patients and community need during even the most difficult times embodies the commitment to the MHP OB mission. Residents attest to the sense of giving back to the community, providing care where it really matters, and they report a sense of fulfillment. They develop confidence as they strengthen their OB decision-making skills in accordance with evidence-based medicine and community standards of care in a resource poor environment.

We are immensely proud of what we have accomplished in conjunction with AzAHEC. Our programs continue to expand, and we are excited for the future! This partnership allows us to develop programs that train strong residents to serve rural and urban underserved populations in Arizona and beyond. We look forward to our continued collaboration with AzAHEC.

The following are some of the thoughts our current residents and recent graduates have shared about their experiences:

"I absolutely loved my rotation in Payson. It was the first time in residency that I felt completely independent to manage my own patients and this was an invaluable experience, especially for me who wants to become a hospitalist. It also allowed me to experience how it feels to be a rural hospitalist with limited resources which is something that we do not get at our university centers. It is such a wholesome and rounding rotation for our residency program and I would've loved to do this rotation many more times."

- Govind Chhina (IM PGY3)

"Rural rotations are an opportunity to work in another system and environment and learn how to function in a healthcare setting different from a large academic center. They are also an opportunity to work with underserved people across Arizona and learn about the huge variety of patients that exists even within 1 state. We typically have more 1 on 1 learning with attendings and are often the only learner there, so get to be involved with every case."

- Taylor Buel (FM PGY1)

"My rural medical experiences have been vital in preparing me to be a competent full spectrum Family Medicine [FM] physician. When your community has limited access to resources and specialists' patients depend on FM docs to provide them with the care they need. My rural rotations ensure I develop these necessary skills. Where else can you learn to deliver a baby, preform a post-partum tubal, admit a [patient] to the ICU and preform a shoulder reduction all in one day!"

- Amanda McKeith (FM PGY1)

"My rural experience in Tuba City was eye opening for me in the setting of patient resources and provider resources. We served patients there [who] didn't have running water or electricity. Specialties/medications/ and services at our disposal in Tucson simply didn't exist. I also felt that the doctor patient relationship was different and it was more difficult to gain the trust of patients providing yet another learning opportunity."

- Bryce Hunsaker (FM PGY1)

Colorado Plateau Family & Community Medicine Residency

Marica Martinic, MPH,

Director Colorado Plateau Center for Health Professionals (CPCHP)

North Country HealthCare and the CPCHP began planning for our Family Medicine (FM) residency program in 2010 with support from the AzaAHEC Program, the University of Arizona, the NARBHA Institute in northern Arizona and other partners. After launching in 2020, we welcomed our third FM resident group in June 2022 so now have the full complement of 12 residents in our three-year program.

The residency program boasts strong Arizona ties for residents and faculty. After Dr. Ed Paul's retirement, Sarah Coles, MD, joined us as Program Director in 2022 and hit the ground running. Dr. Coles is a graduate of the first class of the University of Arizona College of Medicine – Phoenix (UArizona COM-P) and has been a leader in Graduate Medical Education, Family Medicine, and advocacy in Arizona for many years. Kelsey Morgosh, MD, also a UArizona COM-P graduate, also joined the core faculty team this spring. Half of our residents are graduates of Arizona medical schools, including two who graduated from the North Country HealthCare training site of AT Still University School of Osteopathic Medicine in Arizona (ATSU-SOMA),

and another from the UArizona COM-Tucson.

This year, North Country HealthCare received continued accreditation as the residency sponsoring institution and as the Family Medicine program from the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME), with no citations. This is a huge accomplishment. We are grateful to our excellent faculty and training partners for establishing such a robust program. Across the three-year program, residents train with many community partners including inpatient adult medicine at Flagstaff Medical Center; rural medicine at Tuba City Regional Health Care; emergency medicine at Kingman Regional Medical Center; inpatient pediatrics at Banner Children's at Desert; community medicine at the Coconino County Health and Human Services Department; and much more. Next up: we are excited to help expand GME training to other potential Teaching Health Centers in the state and develop new training opportunities locally to help address the physician shortage.



Chief Resident Tasha Harder, MD shows off her Supporting Every Step of the Health Career Journey t-shirt.

Mobile Health Vaccination Program

University of Arizona (UArizona) COVID 19 MOBILE HEALTH VACCINATION PROGRAM

UArizona Mel and Enid Zuckerman College of Public Health UArizona College of Medicine-Tucson

From the Spring 2021 until Spring 2022, the AzaAHEC Program provided grants to both the UArizona Mel and Enid Zuckerman College of Public Health (MEZCOPH) and the UArizona College of Medicine-Tucson (COM-T) for Mobile Health Vaccination Programs established in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic. The funding provides education opportunities for health professions students to learn first-hand public health pandemic mitigation and education efforts. Health profession students also bolstered local county health department efforts by enhancing capacity to offer vaccine clinics and provide evidence-based information to individuals with questions about the vaccine.

Health profession students from UArizona and other academic institutions volunteered to staff pop-up testing, education and vaccination in hard to reach populations in rural, border and underserved communities. By volunteering, health professions students applied newly acquired knowledge and skills to address a rapidly evolving public health emergency. These experiences helped students 1) gain new skills working as a member of an interprofessional team, 2) enhance their understanding of health disparities facing rural communities, 3) prepare them to be leaders in future public health emergencies, and 4) encourage them to pursue careers and practice in medically underserved communities after graduation.

Med-Start Health Careers Program

Francisco Moreno, MD, Associate Vice President for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, University of Arizona Health Sciences (UAHS), Professor of Psychiatry, University of Arizona College of Medicine - Tucson (COM-T)

Lydia Kennedy, M.Ed, Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (OEDI)

Med-Start is a six-week summer academic enrichment program for 11th grade Arizona high school students interested in health careers. The program is offered in partnership with AzaAHEC Program and the UAHS-OEDI. Since 1969 (53 years), Med-Start has attracted and prepared high school juniors from rural, border, tribal and other educationally and economically disadvantaged communities for higher education. More than 2,400 high school students from Arizona’s most remote areas and underrepresented minorities have completed the program since its inception. Med-Start supports high school juniors by preparing them for their future careers in the health professions. The Med-Start program promotes an inclusive environment with minority populations including Arizona’s Tribal Nations. Med-Start resumed its traditional in-person program this year.

In FY 2021-22, Med-Start received 200 online applications through one of the five AzaAHEC Regional Centers or through Arizona high school counselors, science and math teachers. Following a comprehensive review and rubric selection process, 46 students were accepted, with 34 funded by AzaAHEC.

Med-Start students received up to five college credits for courses in English, Math, Chemistry, College 101. Med-Start students also participated in health career lectures, interactive tours in academic institutions and healthcare facilities, presented their research projects at

the academic conference and facilitated AHEC research. Students traveled and toured the UA Health Sciences Innovation Building in Tucson, the COM-Phoenix, Grand Canyon University, NAU, Midwestern University, Mayo Clinic COM and AT Still University. Med-Start students gained knowledge on admission requirements for health careers, including hands-on activities such as suturing sessions, intubation, ultrasound techniques, pharmacy compounding, scrubbing techniques (prepping for surgery), CPR/FA techniques, DNA Cancer Research, optometry, dental and the opportunity to learn to identify anatomy on a cadaver.

An important Med-Start goal is to expand the “health professions” pathways of diverse and culturally intelligent students by encouraging Arizona, rural and Tribal Nation high school students to pursue higher education. These students are from economically or educationally disadvantaged backgrounds and under-represented populations. This year’s Med-Start students represented 31 high schools from across Arizona. Med-Start student demographics in Summer 2022 included 70% Hispanic (regardless of race), 9% American Indian and 7% African American. Sixty-eight percent (68%) of students were female and 32% were male. Twenty-seven percent (27%) of students were from rural communities in Arizona, and 75% were from disadvantaged backgrounds.

“This program opened up my perspective, both from the focus of healthcare professions and patients. I had a lot of fun with my fellow interns, the advisors were great, and the activities were both educational and exciting!”



Med-Start students visited the UA College of Medicine-Phoenix patient simulation room.

Focusing Research on the Border Area (FRONTERA) The Border Latino and American Indian Summer Exposure to Research (BLAISER) Program

Francisco Moreno, MD, Associate Vice President for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, University of Arizona Health Sciences (UAHS), Professor of Psychiatry, University of Arizona College of Medicine - Tucson (COM-T)

Allison Huff MacPherson, DHEd, Assistant Professor, Family and Community Medicine Department, UArizona COM-T

The UAHS-OEDI, in partnership with AzaHEC, offered a hybrid ten-week summer internship to 41 students through the Focusing Research on the Border Area (FRONTERA) and the Border Latino and American Indian Summer Exposure to Research (BLAISER) Programs. These two programs became one program in the Summer 2022.

FRONTERA|BLAISER Summer Internship provided 40 undergraduate and one graduate student with preparation for applying to graduate programs, research experience and an increased understanding of public health disparities in the U.S.-Mexico Border Region. The program has an incredible wealth of committed and world-renowned faculty, a network of organizations committed to improving the health of border communities and community leaders interested in developing the next generation of culturally competent and research savvy health professionals, all of whom worked cohesively to tackle crucial public health issues.

FRONTERA|BLAISER received 127 applications with 41 students selected using a quantitative rubric that weighted the selection criteria. The selection committee included FRONTERA|BLAISER staff and pre-health advisors. Priority was given to diverse students from underrepresented minorities, first-generation college students and Arizona High School Graduates. Fifty applications were approved, and 41 students ultimately enrolled in the program. AzaHEC Program financial support covered the program's costs, operations, and stipends for the FRONTERA|BLAISER interns. The Arizona Health Opportunities Pathways to Excellence (AZ-HOPE) HRSA grant provided stipends for ten interns.

During the two-and-a-half-month program, FRONTERA|BLAISER students were paired with faculty and/or graduate student mentors according to the area of interest stated on their application. The program had 32 mentors from the COM-T and COM-P, MEZCOPH and Psychology. FRONTERA|BLAISER interns participated in an



FRONTERA|BLAISER Interns

health disparities speaker series that highlights common illnesses, medical and psychological challenges through the lens of the social determinants of health. Students worked on study and test-taking skills; prep courses for the MCAT & GRE through UArizona Think Tank; creating and refining their Personal Statement materials. FRONTERA|BLAISER interns received the Grad/Med School Application Prep Series, Q&A Medical admissions panelist and PMAP. In partnership with the Southern Arizona AHEC Regional Center, students participated in experiential learning in a service-learning project

FRONTERA|BLAISER student demographics in Summer 22 included 60% Hispanic (regardless of race), 5% American Indian, and 5% African American. Seventy percent (70%) of students were female, 29% were male, and 1% were transgender. Twenty percent (20%) of students were from rural communities and 20% from US-Mexico border Arizona communities. Forty-six percent (46%) of participants were first-generation college students.



FRONTERA|BLAISER Interns visit Winchester Heights Community Center in Willcox, AZ, serving migrant farmworkers



Central Arizona Area Health Education Center (CAAHEC)

Ana Roscetti, MPH, Director

CAAHEC is based in Central Phoenix and serves underserved communities in Maricopa, West-Central Pinal, and South-Central Yavapai Counties. CAAHEC supports all aspects of the health professions pipeline, from K-12, health profession trainees (students and residents) and practicing providers.

2021-2022 Program Highlights	
Health Professions Unique Trainees	167
Health Professions Training Experiences	213
Health Professions Trainees Hours	43,675
Health Career Participants	1,357
Continuing Education Health Professional Participants	1,050
Community Health Education Participants	298

CAAHEC is embedded in the Arizona Alliance for Community Health Centers (AACHC), a HRSA designated Primary Care Association (PCA) for Arizona with 23 community health center systems that operate in 175 Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC) statewide.

CAAHEC is an extensive public/private partnership with ongoing commitments to support the AHEC Scholars Program, enhance engagement with HOSA clubs and youths in Title 1 Schools, expand community-based experiential training through direct placement of health profession students in community sites, housing and travel, and provide continuing medical education (CE/CME) and community education.

Community Based Education and Training (CBET)

CAAHEC expanded clinical training to 213 rotations and 43,675 clinical hours in FY 2022. CAAHEC provided housing support to 17 trainees, including seven residents from the Banner University Family Medicine Residency Program and 10 health professions students.

AHEC Scholars Program

CAAHEC supported 27 graduate AHEC Scholars, including 17 Scholars in Year 1 (Cohort 2021-23) and 10 in Year 2 (Cohort 2020-22). For Year 1 Scholars, CAAHEC hosted a community immersion in Prescott, AZ about the Scholars’ required community needs assessment reports. Year 2 Scholars participated in the Casa Grande County Fair which helped facilitate completion of the Scholars’ diabetes prevention project.

CAAHEC hosted a community immersion for the undergraduate scholars in nursing and dental hygiene programs. The community immersion focused on people experiencing homelessness, asylum seekers, undocumented immigrant populations and border issues in Arizona.

Pathways Programs

Over 350 students, representing 13 schools from five school districts across Maricopa County participated in CAAHEC’s structured pipeline programs. CAAHEC piloted two programs with HOSA clubs and 9th-12th grade students in Title 1 schools to increase awareness about health care careers. CAAHEC hosted 20 high school students at the Creighton University Campus where they participated to learn phlebotomy, ultrasound and intravenous insertion simulations.

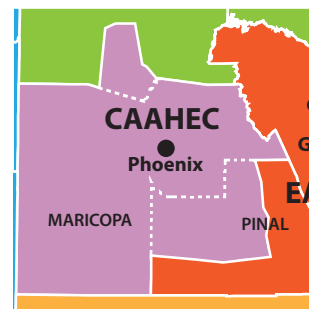
In partnership with the Arizona Health Opportunities Pathways to Excellence (AZ-HOPE) and UArizona COM-P, CAAHEC piloted a successful PACE (Promoting Academic and Career Exploration) Conference, exposing 141 high school students to ultrasound, intubation, intraocular surgery simulation, surgical knot tying, and CPR workshops. CAAHEC supported high school summer camps such as Future Health Leaders, Med-Start, Summer Scrubs, Youth Engagement for Success (YES) Camp, Cardiology Camp, INSPIRE, and Summer Health Institute. CAAHEC engaged with K-8 students by bringing awareness about oral health, dental school career pathways and social determinants of health. CAAHEC collaborated with Grand Canyon University, ASU College of Health Solutions, Creighton University COM, A.T. Still University, and NAU for campus visits for K-12th grade students.

Continuing Education/Professional Development

Through CAAHEC’s ongoing partnership with community organizations, 18 continuing education events were delivered reaching 1,050 health professionals. CAAHEC hosted 12 community education events reaching 298 participants.

Growing Our Own

Through a funded partnership with the UArizona Center for Rural Health’s (AzCRH) Addressing Health Equities and Disparities in Arizona (AHEAD-AZ) initiative, CAAHEC collaborated with the Regional Center for Border Health College of Health Careers to launch its six-month fast-track online Medical Assistant (MA) Pilot Program in June 2022. This program aims to address the critical need for MAs in Arizona. A total of 32 students funded by AHEAD-AZ and nine students funded by CAAHEC were enrolled. Upon passing the National Health Career Association Certified Clinical Medical Assistant (CCMA) and Certified Medical Administrative Assistant (CMAA) Certifications, these students will help address Arizona’s need for certified MAs.



Eastern Arizona Area Health Education (EAHEC)

Jeri Byrne, BA, MS, *Executive Director*

EAHEC is based in Globe, Arizona and serves Graham, Greenlee, Gila, and Pinal Counties. The AzaAHEC Program contract with EAHEC includes all aspects of the health professions pipeline to practice including K-12, health professions students, resident trainees and practicing health professionals.

2021-2022 Program Highlights	
Health Professions Unique Trainees	74
Health Professions Training Experiences	96
Health Professions Trainees Hours	22,054
Health Career Participants	857
Continuing Education Health Professional Participants	65
Community Health Education Participants	760

Health Professions Programs: EAHEC facilitated 96 field experiences for 74 unique graduate, undergraduate and technical health profession trainees. Trainees included Family Medicine residents and Medical, Nurse Practitioner (NP), Podiatry, Registered Nurse (RN) and Physician Assistant (PA) students. EAHEC collaborated with four Rural Health Professions Programs (RHPPs) and the UArizona COM-T Banner University Medical Center (BUMC) South Campus Family and Internal Medical residencies with housing, travel and other support. Of 96 clinical rotations this year, 56 provided support for RHPP students and BUMC-South Campus residents.

Longitudinal Integrated Curriculum (LIC)

EAHEC welcomed the second Longitudinal Integrated Curriculum (LIC) student cohort from UArizona's College of Medicine Phoenix (COM-P) to Arizona's only accredited LIC program. This eight-month program immerses medical students in simultaneous clinical experiences across multiple medical specialties. The program occurs during the third year of a medical student's curriculum for students interested in rural medicine. The 2021-22 LIC students learned clinical skills and patient management in the context of continuity with patients, medical staff and the community. The structure in this accredited curriculum provided a broad range of content while providing flexibility to follow patients longitudinally through acute episodes of illness and transitions of care. EAHEC supported student housing and other costs.

Dr. Judith Hunt at the Ponderosa Family Care Clinic precepts LIC students. Interprofessional training is a core LIC program concept. During their rotations, LIC students learn in an interprofessional milieu including Physician Assistant (PA), Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP), Physical Therapy (PT) and Podiatry students. Students attend weekly interprofessional didactic sessions where

cases are presented with medical residents and community health providers in attendance. A third LIC student cohort begins in the 2022-23 fiscal year.

AHEC Scholars:

The 2021-23 AzaAHEC Scholars cohort spent two weekends at EAHEC during the 2021-22 academic year as part of their community immersion experience. The 2020-22 EAHEC Scholars presented their podium presentation, "Family Based Intervention to Improve Mental Health Outcomes in Youth Residing in a Rural Community" at the Tenth Annual Interprofessional RHPP Conference. The 2021-23 EAHEC Scholars presented their poster "The Bridge of Tonto Basin, a Rural Community with Limited Healthcare Access." Eight EAHEC 2020-22 Scholars completed the program in 2022 and 14 EAHEC 2021-23 Scholars will complete the program in Spring 2023.

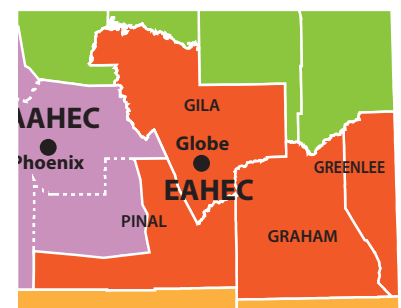
Health Career Programs

EAHEC supported 21 students in two health career programs with a structured curriculum. The SCRUBS Summer Camp provided 14 students the opportunity to explore health careers at their local community colleges: Gila Community College in Globe, Eastern Arizona College in Thatcher and Gila Community College in Payson. Topics included apothecary, suturing, dissections, CPR, and nursing. The Health Occupation Students of America (HOSA) was offered to seven students in Payson.

Over 500 Grades K-8 students participated in flu prevention (handwashing) and oral hygiene events at Copper Rim, Destiny and JFK Elementary Schools. Three hundred twenty (320) Grades 9-12 students participated in other health career presentations at Globe, Superior, Miami and Hayden High Schools.

Continuing Education and Professional Development

In collaboration with Banner Payson Hospital, EAHEC reported 65 health professionals who participated in 12 continuing education and professional development events, including "Adult Macular Degeneration and Eye Disease."



The Colorado Plateau Center for Health Professions (CPCHP)

Marica Martinic, MPH, Director, CPCHP, North Country HealthCare

CPCHP is based in Flagstaff, Arizona and serves Apache, Coconino, Navajo, and Yavapai Counties. CPCHP supports all aspects of the health professions pipeline to practice including K-12, health professions students, resident trainees, and practicing health professionals.

2021-2022 Program Highlights	
Health Professions Unique Trainees	342
Health Professions Training Experiences	878
Health Professions Trainees Hours	106,816
Health Career Participants	2,291
Continuing Education Health Professional Participants	1,451
Community Health Education Participants	1,419

Colorado Plateau Center for Health (CPCHP) is embedded in a community health center system – North Country HealthCare – with Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) located throughout Arizona’s northern counties and communities. CPCHP embodies the idea of a Teaching Health Center. This year, for National Health Center Week, we celebrated *Supporting Every Step of the Health Career Journey*. It takes a village (literally) to support training the next generation of health professionals, healthcare staff at all levels and their patients to address the healthcare provider shortage in rural and underserved communities. During this event, healthcare workers, patients and other stakeholders reflected on their contributions to the health career journey. The event built energy and enthusiasm for health professions education.

Interprofessional Education Case Study

CPCHP has offered a robust interprofessional education (IPE) program for over ten years, training medical, nursing, pharmacy and public health students side by side. In the Fall 2021, we developed a patient-centered care program, where students met together with a volunteer patient monthly for five sessions. Led by the IPE faculty member, each group included nurse practitioner, osteopathic medicine and pharmacy students and followed a chronic care patient. One of the students led each session on topics such as: general medical history, social determinants of health, patient-driven focused history and goal setting, pharmacology reconciliation and wrap-up session with an invited speaker on a topic identified by the patient.

In one case, the student team learned about COVID-19 and its long term affects in some patients. Team members researched symptoms, validated the patient’s issues and concerns and helped her obtain health insurance. They also explored local resources and referred the patient to a local practice that specializes in chronic fatigue and long-term

COVID. The patient was extremely grateful and felt her life had been changed through the experience. She felt heard and appreciated teaching the students about chronic pain and the impacts of persistent COVID symptoms. Two of the participating medical students were granted permission by the patient to write up her case and present it at a professional conference. Their abstract was accepted for a poster presentation on the benefits of team based, patient centered care, and was presented in early 2022.

Inaugural Research Symposium

One CPCHP strength is providing research and quality improvement opportunities for students and residents to transform clinical care. This year we held an inaugural research symposium to highlight projects completed this year: Lifestyle educational intervention and its effect on BMI in pediatric patients at North Country HealthCare by ten second year medical students at A.T. Still University School of Osteopathic Medicine in Arizona; Pharmacist-Led Provider Education Detailing Statin Therapy Prescribing for Patients with Type 2 Diabetes by Julia Goodin, PharmD, PGY-1 Community-Based Pharmacy Resident at North Country HealthCare; and Building Awareness of the Medicare Annual Wellness Visit in Rural Health Care by Amanda Smith, BSN, RN, ASU DNP Student.

Longitudinal Integrated Clerkship with University of Arizona College of Medicine – Phoenix

CPCHP and North Country HealthCare welcomed our first Longitudinal Integrated Clerkship (LIC) third-year medical student from the UArizona COM-P. LIC training began in May 2022, in a framework of continuity with patients, medical providers and the community. Shifting the education from clinical-based hospital experiences to longer community-based healthcare helps the student learn about care continuity. The LIC aims to teach the medical student various rural health specialties simultaneously with an emphasis on learning the core competencies needed to be a rural physician and instilling a passion to serve the community after graduation.



Southern Arizona Area Health Education Center (SAAHEC)

Felipe Perez, MD, Director

SAAHEC at El Rio Health was established in 2021 and serves Santa Cruz, Cochise, and Pima Counties. Our mission is to improve access to comprehensive, affordable, quality and compassionate health care in Southern Arizona’s rural and medically underserved communities by increasing the supply, diversity, distribution, and training of health care professionals. SAAHEC supports all aspects of the health professions pipeline to practice including K-12, health professions learners, practicing health professionals and supports new initiatives to advance the AHEC mission.

2021-2022 Program Highlights	
Health Professions Unique Trainees	154
Health Professions Training Experiences	392
Health Professions Trainees Hours	42,266
Health Career Participants	1,500
Continuing Education Health Professional Participants	1,300

Health Professions Programs:

SAAHEC facilitated 392 field experiences for 154 unique graduate, undergraduate and technical health profession trainees. Trainees included Family Medicine residents and Medical, Nurse Practitioners (NP), Medical Assistant, Dental and Pharmacy students.

AHEC Scholars

SAAHEC’s AHEC Scholars Program (ASP) cohorts focused on the Winchester Heights community and City of South Tucson. Scholars in interprofessional teams conducted a needs assessment and intervention and measured the impact of their efforts. An important concept included in the ASP curriculum is to focus on community assets and build community partnerships to foster realistic and sustainable changes desired by the community.

The 2020-22 SAAHEC Scholars gave a podium presentation, “Surveying Food Scarcity in Winchester Heights” at the 2022 Interprofessional RHPP Conference. The 2021-23 SAAHEC Scholars presented their poster, “A Community Assessment of South Tucson.” Eight SAAHEC 2020-22 Scholars completed the program in 2022, and 18 SAAHEC 2021-23 Scholars are scheduled to complete the program in 2023.

Pipeline Programs:

Training the next generations of healthcare workers requires early introduction of healthcare career opportunities. SAAHEC partnered with JTED, Cochise Community College, Pima Community College, and UArizona’s Med-Start, BLAISER and Frontera programs to introduce the next generation to healthcare careers. SAAHEC has developed a healthcare interest group at El Rio Health which includes a curriculum to introduce participants to different disciplines.

SAAHEC supported 1,500 K-16 students in pipeline programs, including 58 in structured programs. SAAHEC

offered health career information to 939 students at 11 elementary and middle schools, including Apollo Middle School and Los Niños, Roadrunner, Los Amigos and DeGrazia Elementary Schools.

Continuing Education and Professional Development

SAAHEC identified the top workforce development needs of primary care providers in Southern Arizona to improve clinical rotation capacity in rural and underserved communities. Interviews with leaders in primary care organizations indicated a strong need for faculty and preceptor development to equip current and future preceptors to become effective clinician educators. In response to this need, faculty development was identified as one of SAAHEC’s top CME/CE priorities. Two successful preceptor development training sessions were provided to 70 primary care health professionals in Cochise County. SAAHEC is expanding the program into an in-depth, four-hour preceptor training experience to help increase the quantity and quality of clinical rotation opportunities for the coming year.

The majority of SAAHEC’s health profession continuing education training programs have been accredited by the American Academy of Family Medicine and the American Medical Association. SAAHEC is a sponsor of Performance Improvement credit (MOC VI) by the American Board of Family Medicine, SAAHEC is undergoing a rigorous application process to become a provider of AMA PRA Category 1 CME Credits™. With the guidance of an interdisciplinary CME committee representing primary care providers serving all three counties, SAAHEC incorporates CME opportunities to address local community health needs and build a robust preceptor community. SAAHEC is committed to growing its CME program in partnership with its community stakeholders to reach a broader statewide audience of primary care providers.

Create Tomorrow

At El Rio Health, one of our organizational cultural beliefs is to “Create Tomorrow.” SAAHEC has embraced this belief and our goal is to help foster partnerships in the communities we serve to address the healthcare needs of rural and underserved communities. For next year, we look forward to more opportunities to introduce students to healthcare careers and support healthcare organizations to increase clinical rotation capacity.



Western Arizona Area Health Education Center (WAHEC)

Joena Ezroj, M.Ed., *Director*

WAHEC is based in Somerton, Arizona, and serves Yuma, La Paz, and Mojave Counties and housed in the Regional Center for Border Health (RCBH). WAHEC supports all aspects of the health professions pipeline to practice including K-16, health professions students, resident trainees and practicing health professionals.

2021-2022 Program Highlights	
Health Professions Unique Trainees	223
Health Professions Training Experiences	247
Health Professions Trainees Hours	27,285
Health Career Participants	454
Continuing Education Health Professional Participants	596
Community Health Education Participants	272

Health Professions Programs: WAHEC facilitated 247 field experiences for graduate, undergraduate and technical health profession trainees with many community partners. Trainees included Family Medicine residents, Certified Nursing Assistants (CNA), Nurse Practitioners (NP), Phlebotomy Technicians, Registered Nurses (RNs), and Medical Assistants (MAs). WAHEC collaborated with five Rural Health Professions Programs to support clinical rotations for RHPP students

AHEC Scholars: The 2021-23 WAHEC AzAHEC Scholars cohort spent two weekends at WAHEC during the 2021-22 academic year as part of their community immersion experience. The 2020-22 Scholars presented their podium presentation, “Facilitating Access & Knowledge to Mental Health & Addiction Rehabilitation Resources in Yuma, Arizona” at the 2022 Interprofessional RHPP Conference. The 2021-23 WAHEC Scholar Group won both the **Ronald Weinstein Award for Excellence** in



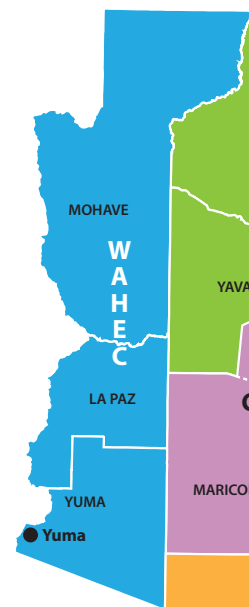
Med-Start Students visiting WAHEC/Regional Center for Border Health.

Video Presentation and Outstanding Poster: 1st Place for their poster “A Community Assessment of Yuma, Arizona.” Ten WAHEC 2020-22 Scholars completed the program in 2022, and 15 WAHEC 2021-23 Scholars are scheduled to complete the program in Spring 2023.

Pipeline Programs: WAHEC has extensive high school programming and supported 409 Health Occupation Students of America (HOSA) students in structured programs in Lake Havasu, Antelope Union, San Luis, Cibola, Kofa and Gila Ridge High Schools. In partnership with UArizona, WAHEC also supported students in the Med-Start Summer Program. WAHEC additionally supported 9-12 grade students in health career informational events.

Continuing Education: WAHEC provided 15 continuing education events to 596 participants. Topics included, “Colorectal Screening,” “Hereditary Cancer Testing,” “Screening and Treatment of Postpartum Depression,” and “Autism Spectrum and Behavior Intervention.”

Community Health: WAHEC provided community health education to 272 participants, including on the topic of “Domestic Violence Prevention.”



AzAHEC Financial Review for Fiscal Year 2021-22

Amanda Perkins, M.Ed, CPA, Assistant Finance Director, AzAHEC Program

The AzAHEC Program earns Federal funding from Health Resources Services Administration (HRSA), Bureau of Health Professions through a competitive Model AHEC grant. It requires 1:1 matching non-federal funds. Statutory state funding is from the Arizona State Lottery for the AzAHEC Program (ARS § 5-572C) to the Arizona Board of Regents (ABOR). The AzAHEC Program received its five-year competing continuation federal Notice of Award (NoA) from the HRSA for the time period from 9/1/2022 through 8/31/2027.

The AzAHEC Program is administered through the University of Arizona Health Sciences (UAHS) Office of the Senior Vice President for Health Sciences. Leila Barraza, JD, MPH, is the appointed Director of the AzAHEC Program. Daniel Derksen, M.D. serves as the AzAHEC Program Senior Advisor and Principal Investigator (PI), in his role as the UAHS Associate Vice President for Health Equity, Outreach and Interprofessional Activities.

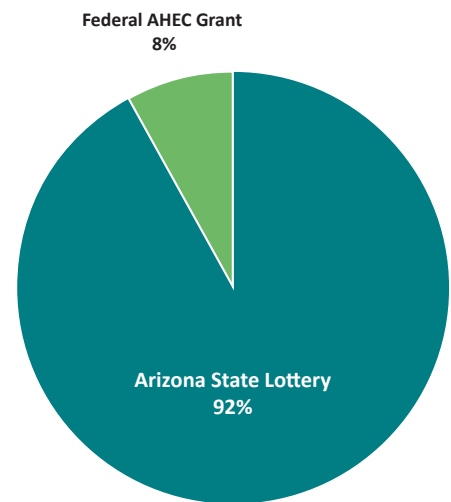
AzAHEC Employment Data 2021-22: Arizona AHEC Programs employ 128 people statewide, operating as important economic forces in their communities.

Item / Initiative	FTEs	"Person Count"
AzAHEC Program Office	8.58	14
CAAHEC	4.65	18
EAHEC	4.00	6
CPCHP	6.60	9
SAAHEC	5.00	8
WAHEC	5.55	8
RHPP COM-PHX	0.50	4
RHPP COM-TUS	0.60	3
RHPP CON	0.65	4
RHPP COPH	0.65	11
RHPP COP	0.45	2
RHPP ASU Nursing	0.85	5
RHPP NAU Nursing	0.26	2
RHPP NAU Physician Assistant	0.90	4
RHPP NAU Physical Therapy	0.75	4
NAU Dental Hygiene	0.25	1
North Country Residency Program	0.41	1
South Campus Primary Care Residencies	0.20	3
BLAISER/FRONTERA	0.63	3
Med-Start Program	1.56	12
Establishing an Arizona Health Workforce Data System	2.87	6
TOTAL	45.91	128

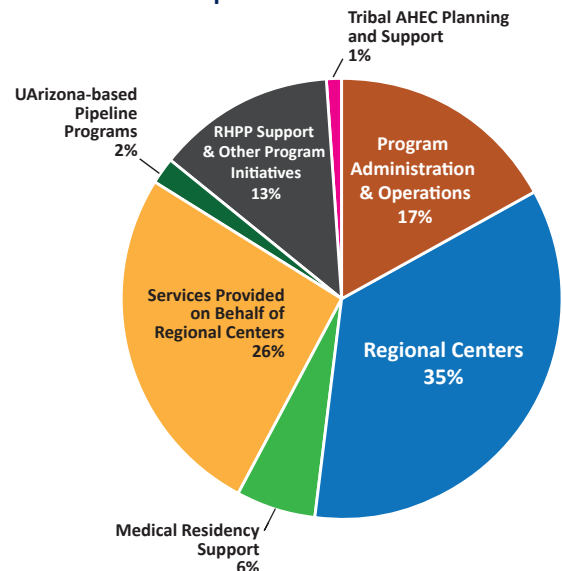
Federal and state funding supports the AzAHEC Program and five AHEC Regional Centers (EAHEC, CAAHEC, CPCHP, SAAHEC, WAHEC) via annual reimbursement subcontracts administered through the AzAHEC Program Office following University of Arizona, State of Arizona, and federal requirements. AzAHEC supports the Arizona statute required Rural Health Professions Program.

In the 2021 Arizona State Legislature session, a bill creating a sixth AHEC Regional Center was passed and signed by the Governor, effective 90 days after the session conclusion. Following state procurement guidelines, the University of Arizona Procurement and Contracting Services posted a formal Request for Proposals (RFP). The Arizona Indian Health AHEC (AIH-AHEC) Regional Center was awarded to the Arizona Advisory Council on Indian Health Care. The formal contract was executed and will start with the new AHEC fiscal year 7/1/2022.

AzAHEC Funding Sources 2021-22



Expenditures 2021-22



Central Arizona AHEC (CAAHEC)

Arizona Alliance for Community Health Centers
700 E. Jefferson
Suite 100
Phoenix, Arizona 85034
602-253-0090
www.caachc.org

Service Region: *Maricopa County and portions of west-central Pinal and south-central Yavapai Counties*

Eastern Arizona AHEC (EAHEC)

1600 E. Ash Street, Suite 3
Globe, AZ 85501
(Mailing) PO Box 572 ZIP: 85502
928-402-8054
<http://aheahec.org>

Service Region: *Gila, Graham, Greenlee Counties and portions of eastern and southern Pinal County*

Colorado Plateau Center for Health Professionals (CPCHP)

c/o North Country HealthCare
2920 North Fourth Street
Flagstaff, AZ 86004-1816
(Mailing) PO Box 3630, ZIP: 86003
928-522-9855

<https://coloradoplateauchp.org/>

Service Region: *Apache, Coconino, Navajo Counties and eastern portions of Yavapai County*

Southern Arizona AHEC (SAAHEC)

c/o El Rio Health
1230 S. Cherrybell Strav
Tucson, AZ 85713
520-309-4019

www.southernazahec.org

Service Region: *Cochise, Pima, Santa Cruz Counties*

Western Arizona AHEC (WAHEC)

Regional Center for Border Health, Inc.
950 East Main Street, Bldg A
Somerton, AZ 85350-0617
PO Box 617
928-315-7910

<https://www.rcfbh.org/western-arizona-ahec.html>

Service Region: *La Paz, Mohave, Yuma Counties*



ARIZONA AHEC PROGRAM FY 2021-22

Advisory Commission Members

Michael Allison

*Retired, Native American Liaison, Arizona
Department of Health Services Policy and
Intergovernmental Affairs*

Kristina Diaz

*Residency Program Director
Yuma Regional Medical Center*

Amanda Klein

*Scientific Director
Critical Path Institute*

Kristen Grimes McCabe

*Interim Infection Control Officer San Carlos
Apache Healthcare*

Ed Paul

*Director, Family Medicine Residency
Program, North Country Healthcare*

Randall Flores

*Clinical Pharmacist,
Chiricahua Community Health Centers*

Jessica Madrid

*Nurse Practitioner,
San Carlos Indian Hospital*

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Board Chair, Southern Arizona AHEC

Arturo Magana

Board Chair, Western Arizona AHEC

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Director, AzAHEC

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Tucson, Arizona 85721-0425

Phone: 520-626-0265

<http://azahec.ahsc.arizona.edu>

The Arizona AHEC (AzAHEC) Program is administered through the University of Arizona (UArizona) Health Sciences Office of the Senior Vice President for Health Sciences. UArizona Health Sciences Colleges include the College of Medicine–Tucson (COM-T), COM-Phoenix (COM-P), College of Nursing (CON), R. Ken Coit College of Pharmacy (RKC-COP), and the Mel and Enid Zuckerman College of Public Health (MEZCOPH).

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Arizona AHEC Annual Report

Managing Editor: Jennifer Zúñiga, Associate Director, Arizona Area Health Education Centers

Design: Ann Garn, Arizona Center for Rural Health

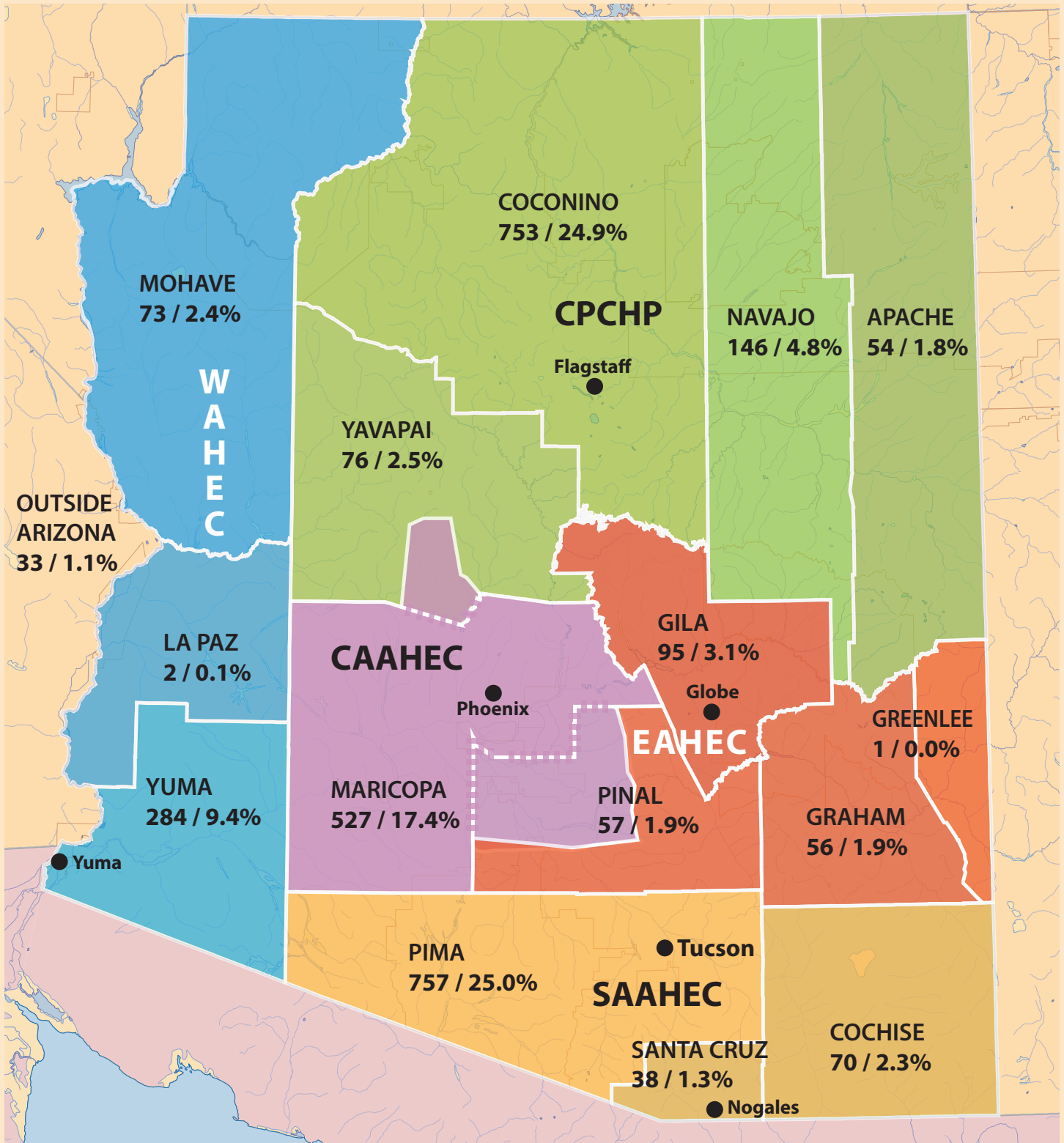
Landscape photos by Ken Miller; (Cover, p.i, p 9, 11, 14, 16, 24, 31)

Kris Harring, University of Arizona Health Sciences Communications, (p. 10)

Rod Gorrell, Arizona Center for Rural Health (p. 17)

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AzaAHEC Health Professions Field Experiences by County (total 3,022)



The American Indian AHEC became an AzaAHEC Regional Center effective July 1, 2022 and will be reflected on the 2022-23 AzaAHEC Annual Report.



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
Arizona AHEC
 Area Health Education Centers

azahec.uahs.arizona.edu