



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA HEALTH SCIENCES

Arizona Area Health Education Centers

Annual Report 2025



In 2024 and 2025, AzAHEC- including the Program Office, six AzAHEC Regional Centers, ten Rural Health Professional Programs at U of A, NAU, and ASU, and the South Campus Medical Residency- continued to provide community-based interprofessional education in novel and innovative ways. I congratulate Arizona AHEC on their unwavering commitment to rural and medically underserved communities across the state of Arizona.

*Jennifer Barton, Ph.D., Interim Vice Provost for Health Programs
Thomas R. Brown Distinguished Chair, Biomedical Engineering*

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 92-157, the Comprehensive Health Manpower Training Act of 1971). 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, six AzAHEC Regional Centers support health professions education through Community Based Experiential Training (CBET) rotations, provide continuing education for health professionals, address health disparities, and support local health workforce development.

We respectfully acknowledge the University of Arizona is on the land and territories of Indigenous peoples. Today, Arizona is home to 22 federally recognized tribes, with Tucson being home to the O’odham and the Yaqui. The University strives to build sustainable relationships with sovereign Native Nations and Indigenous communities through education offerings, partnerships, and community service.

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16,235 individuals participated in the following activities:

Over 2,200 unique trainees participated in 4,302 Rural and Urban Underserved Health Professions Community Based Experiential Training (CBET) Rotations.

From July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025, the Arizona AHEC Program supported the following CBET Rotations in AzAHEC Regional Centers, Rural Health Professions Programs, and South Campus Medical Residency Program for 639,003 unduplicated contact hours:

Trainee Academic Discipline/ Program Residents	# of Unique Trainees	# of Field Experiences
Medical Resident	72	325
Dental Resident	14	56
Students:		
Medical	488	1,294
Nurse Practitioner	358	730
Nursing or Medical Assistant	234	236
Pharmacy	208	411
Registered Nurse, Nurse Anesthetist or Other Nurse	197	221
Public Health	188	195
Physician Assistant	174	466
Dentistry, Dental Hygiene or Dental Assistant	138	193
Other Undergraduate Health - Related Disciplines	50	52
Radiological Technician	44	46
Physical Therapy	39	40
Occupational Therapy	26	26
Other Graduate Health - Related Disciplines	11	11
Grand Total	2,241	4,302

Youth (K-16) Health Career Preparation Programs in Rural and Urban Underserved Areas: 6,090 Participants

Participants in Health Career Preparation Programs included 1,826 Grade 9-16 students in health career structured programs, inclusive of students sponsored or co-sponsored by AzAHEC Regional Centers, Flowing Wells Unified School District, and UAHS Office of Student Engagement and Career Advancement. Health Career Preparation Programs have an established curriculum and meet a minimum of 20 hours with the same participants who learn about health career opportunities.

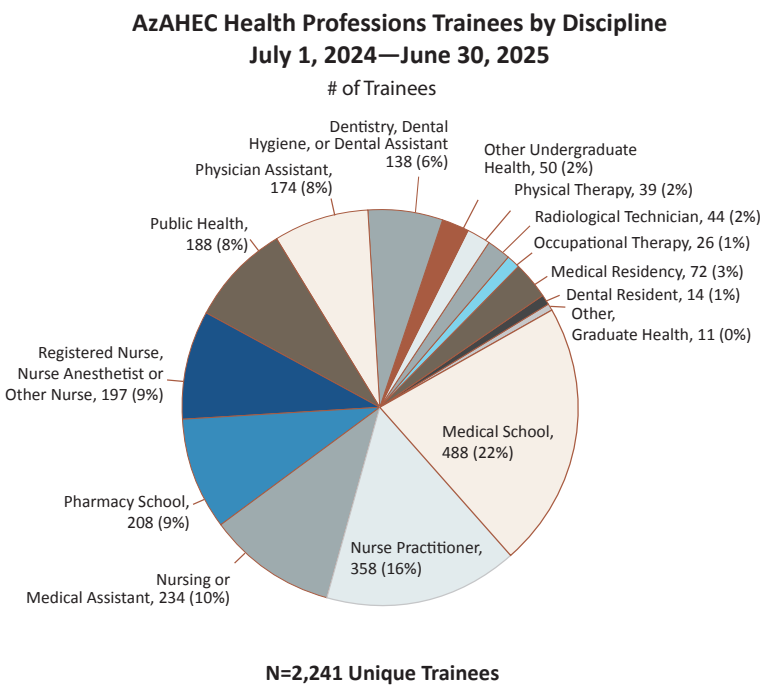
Participants in Health Career Events included 4,264 students and adults (parents, teachers and others) who participated in short-term events, including health career informational sessions sponsored or co-sponsored by AzAHEC Regional Centers.

Health Professions Continuing Education Participants: 4,712 Trainees

Participants at 160 continuing education and professional development events included 4,712 physicians, dentists, public health and allied health professionals, pharmacists, nurse practitioners, registered nurses, and physician assistants. Seventy-eight percent (78%) of these events resulted in the issuance of Continuing Medical Education, Continuing Nursing Education, or other required continuing education credits for 3,672 health professionals toward health professional licensure.

Community Health Education Events: 3,192 Participants

Regional Centers coordinated and supported health information activities and events for 3,192 local community members throughout Arizona’s rural and urban underserved communities.



Since 1984, Arizona Area Health Educations Center (AzAHEC) Program has served Arizona through health professions workforce recruitment, training and retention in its rural and urban underserved communities. We appreciate Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Bureau of Health Workforce and the State of Arizona Lottery Fund for the continued support of our programs, and our many community and academic partners who have joined us throughout the years.

The 2024-25 AzAHEC Annual report highlights progress and achievements over the last 12 months. A total of 2,241 unique health profession trainees completed 639,003 training hours at over 50 universities and residency programs. Trainees participated in 4,302 Community Based Experiential Training (CBET) rotations in collaboration with Arizona’s six AHEC Regional Centers, ten Rural Health Professions Programs (RHPPs) from the state’s three public universities (U of A, ASU and NAU), 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 (ASP), a two-year interprofessional education program that selects RHPP students for additional community experiential learning, congratulated 97 AHEC Scholars from the 2023-25 cohort who completed the program in May 2025. In Fall 2025, 118 AHEC Scholars from the 2024-26 cohort will begin their second year of the program and are scheduled for completion in May 2026. Recruitment for AzAHEC’s eighth cohort (2025-27) of Scholars projects over 100 Scholars who will complete the ASP in May 2027. Each cohort gained knowledge through interprofessional curricula with specific didactic and community-based training activities offered at AzAHEC Regional Centers and in rural and/or urban underserved communities.

Sincerely,

Leila Barraza, JD, MPH

Director and PI, AzAHEC Program
Professor, Zuckerman College of Public Health
The University of Arizona Health Sciences



Preceptor Laura Maurer, DNP, FNP-C and RHPP student Wilfredo Rodriguez, FNP are shown here on the maternal health outreach mobile unit at Wesley Community Clinic. Dr. Maurer has precepted multiple graduate nursing students from University of Arizona, Northern Arizona University and Arizona State University. Mr. Rodriguez is enrolled in the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) Program at Arizona State University with plans to graduate in May 2026.

Continuing education for working health professionals remains a core AzAHEC activity. Each Regional Center identifies and addresses this need, resulting in 160 continuing education and continuing professional development events to 4,712 health professionals across Arizona.

AzAHEC Regional Centers hosted health career programs with a structured curriculum for over 1,800 students in Grades 9-12. AzAHEC Regional Centers provided health education information to 4,264 elementary through high school students, and to nearly 3,200 community members on health-related topics.

On behalf of the Arizona AHEC Program, we thank our federal and state 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, AzAHEC Program
Associate Vice President for Rural Health Workforce Development Initiatives, University of Arizona Health Sciences

About the Arizona AHEC Program (AzAHEC)

- Initiated in 1984 with the first AzAHEC Regional Center opening in Nogales to recruit, train and retain a primary care workforce committed to helping rural and medically underserved populations.
- By 2022, AzAHEC had expanded to total six AHEC Regional Centers serving all 15 Arizona counties and 22 American Indian Tribes.
- 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 voter ballot initiative directing support to the AzAHEC Program and Regional Centers.

Structure

The University of Arizona (U of A) in Tucson administers the AzAHEC Program and has formal contracts with the AzAHEC Regional Centers located strategically statewide. The AzAHEC Program and Regional Centers conduct 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 (i.e., Request for Proposal) process staggered such that one or two RFPs are evaluated per year.

The AzAHEC Program Director (Leila Barraza, JD, MPH) consults regularly with the AzAHEC Advisory Commission, who represent 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 U of A. Formal reports are submitted regularly to the Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA), and annually to Arizona Board of Regents (ABOR) and the Arizona State Legislature.

AzAHEC Focus Area 2024-25

The AzAHEC 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 AzAHEC 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. Many trainees received housing, travel, and related expense support for rural rotations.

AzAHEC Scholars: The 2023-25 Scholar cohort completed their two-year program; a 2024-26 Scholar cohort was accepted and had community immersion experiences at their assigned AzAHEC Regional Center. In addition to their health profession trainee education, Scholars receive advanced, interprofessional community-based experiences in AHEC Regional Center communities and RHPPs. Faculty mentors nominated by AzAHEC Regional Centers provided AzAHEC Scholars with continuity and guidance throughout the two-year program.

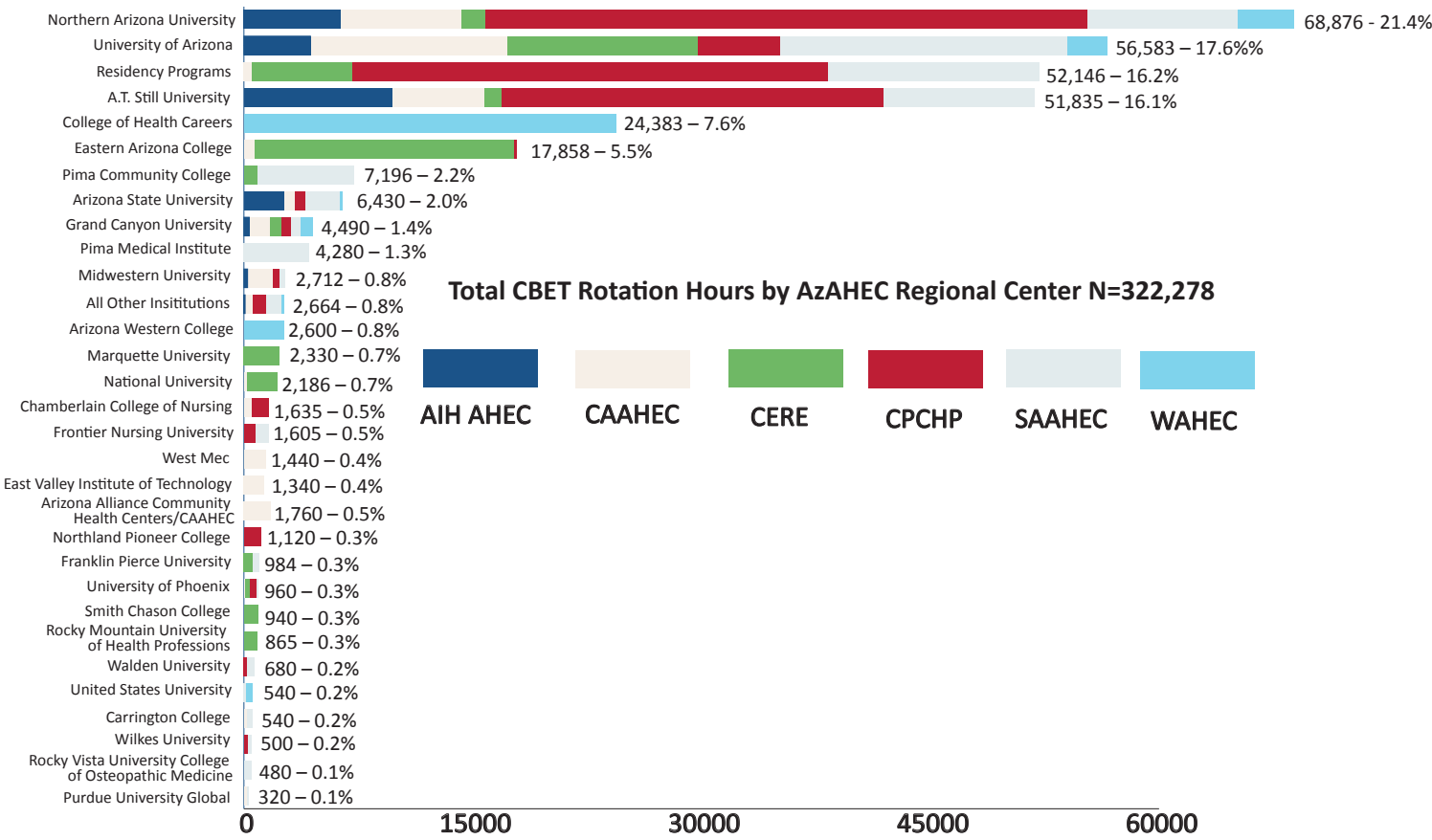
Youth (K-16) Health Career Programs: The AzAHEC Program and Regional Centers supported structured activities to introduce Arizona’s youth to health professions, collaborating with local high schools and community organizations to support health career structured programs such as the Health Occupations Students of America (HOSA) chapters. Summer programs included Med-Start Health Careers and Flowing Wells Unified School District. 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 provided CE/CME events that supported licensure requirements for health professionals. Regional Centers sponsored professional development events that increased the knowledge of health professionals.

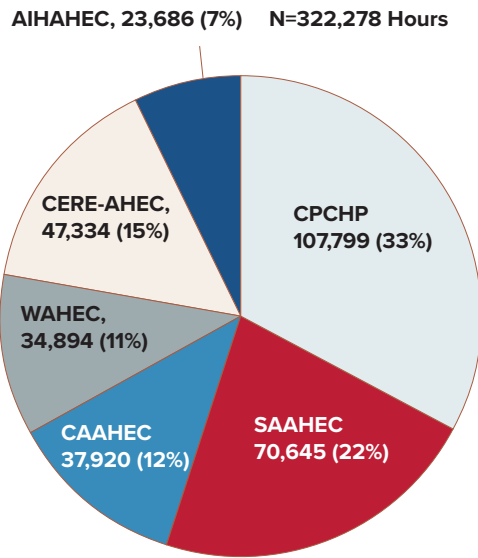
Community Health Promotion: Regional Centers coordinated and supported health education activities and events for local community members throughout Arizona’s rural and urban underserved areas.

AzAHEC Regional Centers’ Overview

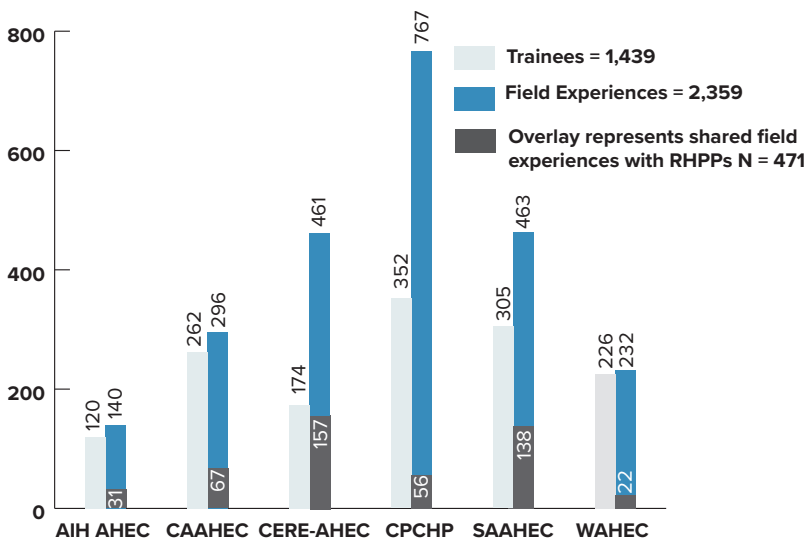
Beginning in 1984 and for 41 years, Arizona AHEC has served the healthcare needs of rural and underserved Arizonans. Today, there are six AHEC Regional Centers serving all 15 counties and 22 American Indian Tribes in Arizona. The six AzAHEC Regional Centers in FY25 were American Indian Health AHEC (AIH-AHEC); Center for Excellence in Rural Education AHEC (CERE); Central Arizona AHEC (CAAHEC); Colorado Plateau Center for Health Professionals (CPCHP); Southern Arizona AHEC (SAAHEC); and Western Arizona AHEC (WAHEC). The following charts highlight work across all AHEC Regional Centers in 2024-25; Center-specific narratives are provided beginning on Page 25.



AzAHEC Rotation Hours by AzAHEC Regional Center July 1, 2024-June 30, 2025



AzAHEC Trainees and Field Experiences by AzAHEC Regional Center July 1, 2024-June 30, 2025



The AzAHEC Rural Health Profession (RHPP) Overview

The Arizona State Legislature authorized the Rural Health Professions Program in 2007 by state statute (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 2024-25, 1,001 unique RHPP students at U of A, ASU and NAU RHPPs received a total of 2,167 rural and underserved community based experiential training (CBET) rotations for a total of 394,519 hours.

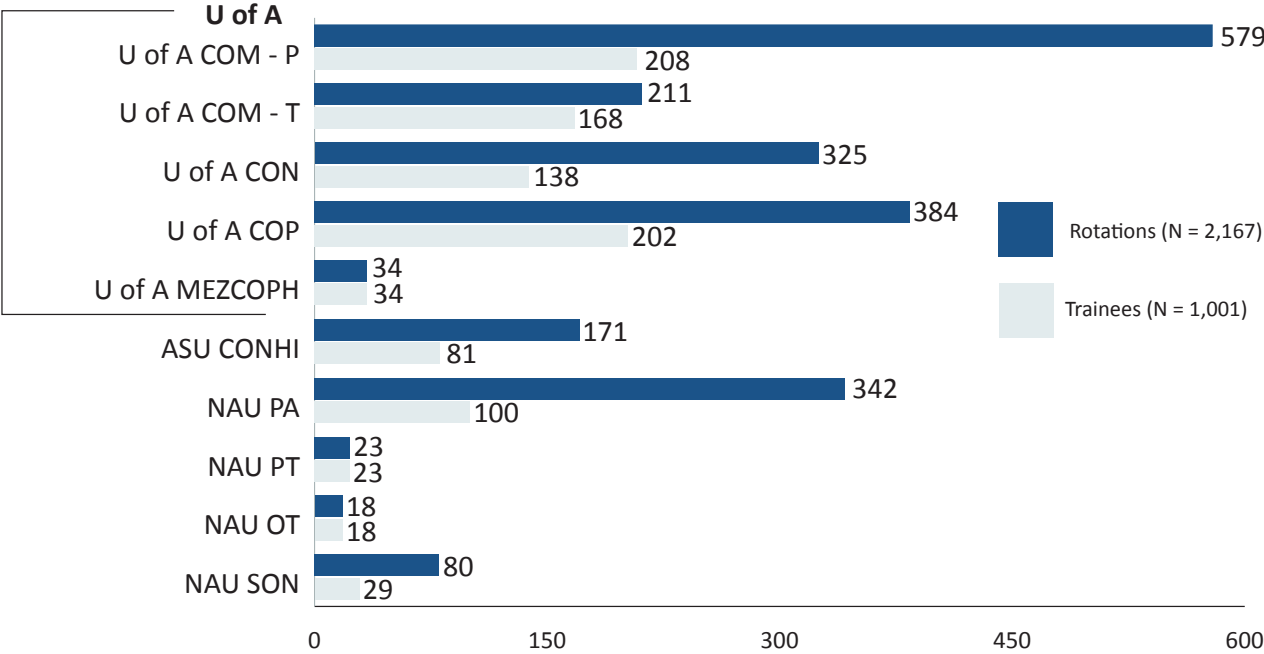
RHPPs provide rural training experiences for health professions students in the public universities under the ABOR: University of Arizona Health Sciences Colleges of Nursing, Pharmacy, Medicine (COM-Tucson and COM-Phoenix), and Public Health; the Arizona State University (ASU) Edson College of Nursing

and Health Innovation, and the Northern Arizona University (NAU) School of Nursing, Department of Occupational Therapy, Department of Physical Therapy, and Department of Physician Assistant Studies.

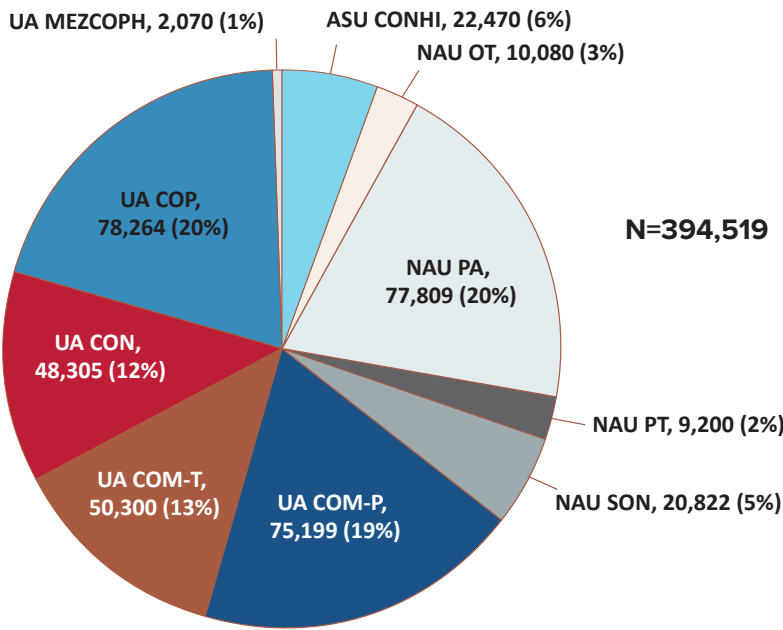
The AzAHEC Program supports rural and urban medically underserved training experiences to address primary care provider shortages. RHPPs prepare health professions students for practice in Arizona’s rural communities.

While RHPP student participation is voluntary, statutorily, U of A selects 15 medical, four pharmacy, and ten nurse practitioner students; ASU selects four and NAU selects two nurse practitioner students for RHPP. The number of participating RHPP students and programs has grown significantly above these statutory requirements.

AzAHEC Trainees and Rotations by Rural Health Professions Program
July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025



AzAHEC Trainees Field Experience Hours by Rural Health Professions Program
July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025



Collaboration Between RHPPs and AHEC Regional Centers

In 2024-25, 22% of trainees reported by the Rural Health Professions Programs received additional support from an AHEC Regional Center with preceptors, housing, and/or stipends.

In 2024-25, Rural Health Professions Programs reported an average of 394 Community Based Experiential Training (CBET) hours per student.



Northern Arizona University School of Nursing Rural Health Professions Students Leanne Neu and Alyssa Titus shared their thoughts about participation in the RHPP.

“Being an RHPP student was one of the most pivotal parts of my academic program, and I cannot recommend it enough to future and current students.”

LeAnne Neu, RHPP Student & AHEC Scholar 23/25 Cohort

“RHPP made me aware of the unique challenges rural communities face and placed me in a position to help improve their lives in my practice as a nurse practitioner. I am so grateful for the experience because I never would have known what it takes to get by living without the basic amenities and resources so many take for granted.”

Alyssa Titus, RHPP Student & AHEC Scholar 23/25 Cohort

AzAHEC Scholars Program

The Arizona Area Health Education Center (AzAHEC) Scholars Program (ASP) is a two-year interprofessional program providing health profession students with advanced community-based experiences in rural and underserved settings in the AzAHEC Regional Center services areas.

Graduate-level participants are selected from the AzAHEC Rural Health Professions Programs (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 placed into interprofessional groups at one of the AHEC Regional Centers where they complete 80 hours annually of community-based experiences in rural and urban medically underserved settings. For the 2023-25 cohort, 97 RHPP graduate level students completed the ASP in Spring 2025. For the 2024-25 cohort, 118 students will continue with the ASP and are expected to complete the program in Spring 2026.

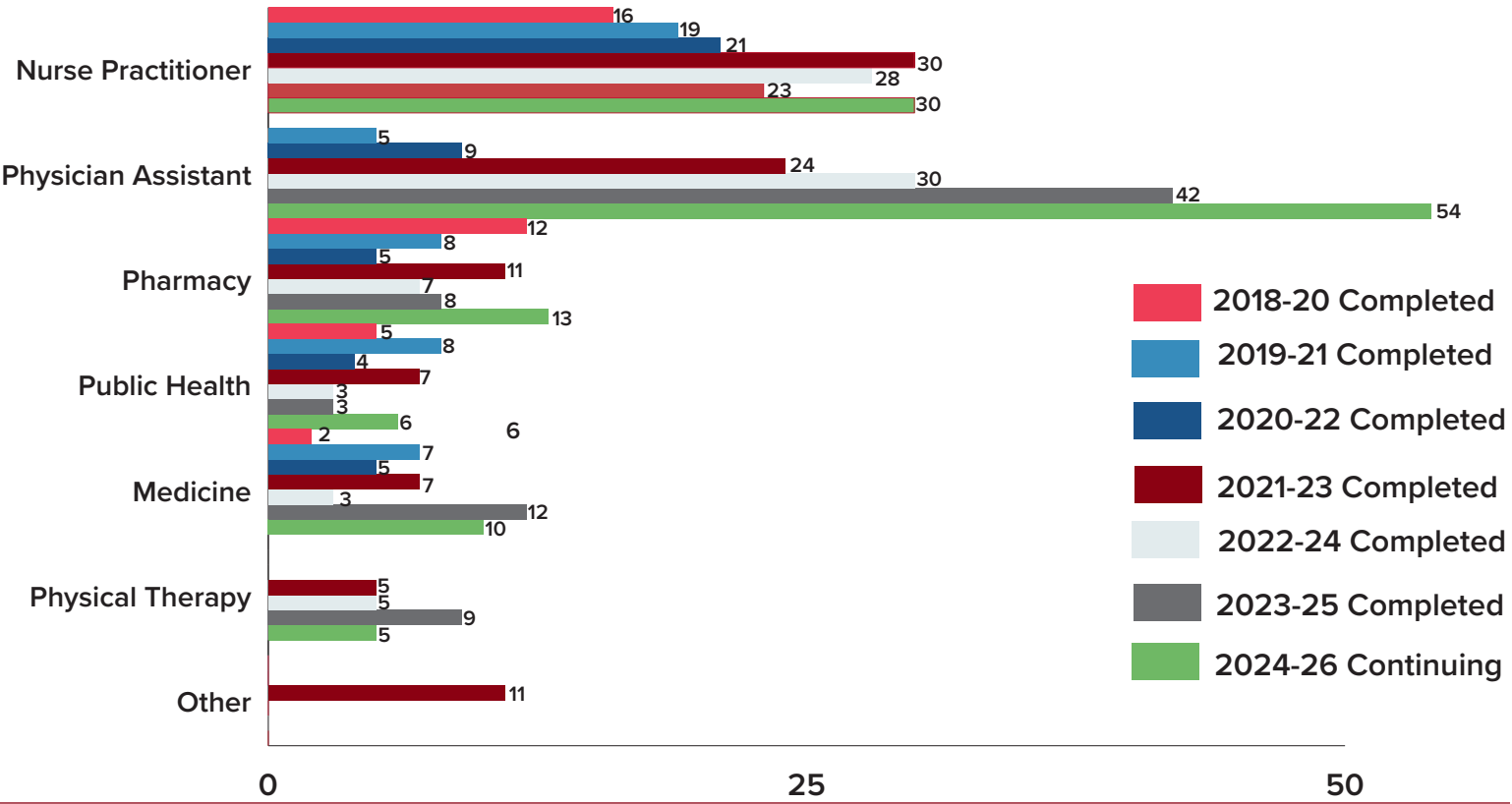
Faculty Mentors are practicing health professionals and community experts who support and direct interprofessional cohorts at each Regional Center. Approximately 21% of the 1001 RHPP students apply to the ASP. Beginning with the 2023-25 Cohort, American Indian Health AHEC ASP program became available to undergraduate students

from the NAU Nursing and Public Health Colleges, in addition to RHPP graduate programs.

Since inception of the ASP, a total of 512 scholars have either completed the program or are currently enrolled 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. Ninety-five (95) scholars completed the fourth (2021-23) cohort.
- E. Seventy-six (76) scholars completed the fifth (2022-24) cohort.
- F. Ninety-seven (97) scholars completed the sixth (2023-25) cohort
- G. One hundred eighteen (118) scholars are presently enrolled in the seventh (2024-26) cohort and are expected to complete the program in May 2026.

Recruitment is on-going for the eighth (2025-27) cohort. Early enrollment includes one hundred six (106) students who were accepted to date.



Evaluations

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

1. Health profession trainees (students and residents) who participated in rotations
2. Health profession students who participated in the AHEC Scholars Program (ASP)
3. Licensed and other health professionals who received Continuing Education (CE) or Continuing Medical Education (CME)
4. High School and undergraduate students who participated in structured pipeline programs

The evaluations indicate that AzAHEC programming leads to positive outcomes. Highlights of 2024–25 survey responses include:

- ▶ The majority (73%) of health profession trainees that responded to the Post-Rotation Survey indicated that the rotation increased their likelihood of selecting practice in a rural or medically underserved area.
- ▶ The majority of AHEC Scholars (84%) who completed the two-year program in 2025, and responded to the Post-Program Survey, reported increases in confidence in interprofessional collaborative competencies. A majority (85%) reported that they intend to become employed or pursue further training in a medically underserved setting, and 74% also reported that they intend to become employed or pursue further training in a rural setting. Analysis of surveys from 25 respondents to the One-Year Post Graduation Surveys for AHEC Scholars who were working in a health discipline at the time of the survey indicated three (7.5%) were working in rural Arizona and ten (40%) were working with an Arizona medically-underserved community.
- ▶ The majority (90%) of respondents to the Continuing Education (CE) survey indicated they were “likely” or “very likely” to implement the CE material into their practice.
- ▶ The majority of Grades 9–16 respondents to the Post-Pipeline Program Survey reported that they had increased their knowledge of health careers “very much” (60%) or “pretty much” (28%). Across all programs, 88% were able to specifically identify one or more health careers they were interested in pursuing.

Tuba City, Arizona, is located within the Navajo Nation in northern Arizona. AzAHEC leases a modular home in Tuba City that can accommodate up to eight simultaneous health professions trainees completing clinical rotations in the area. These trainees have the opportunity to provide essential health profession services and to play a critical role in one of Arizona’s most underserved rural communities. In FY25, eight trainees, including medical, nurse practitioner and pharmacy students stayed at the Tuba City housing.



Thirteenth Annual Interprofessional Rural Health Professions Conference

AzAHEC is dedicated to supporting the success of health professional trainees throughout Arizona, especially as they engage with rural and underserved communities. As part of their educational experience, the AzAHEC Program, in collaboration with AzAHEC Regional Centers and Rural Health Professions Programs (RHPPs), host an annual two-day Interprofessional Rural Health Professions Conference. This year’s conference—our 13th consecutive annual conference—was held on April 11-12, 2025, had 290 participants, including AzAHEC Scholars. The conference highlights best practices as presented by health professionals and provides AzAHEC Scholars an opportunity to present their work. The conference was hosted online for the convenience of attendees throughout the state, many of whom are on clinical rotations. The CAAHEC, NAU School of Nursing and Physician Assistant Program co-hosted in-person satellite viewing of the online conference on the Phoenix Bioscience Core Campus, attended by 30 RHPP students, directors, and staff. Approximately 30% of the RHPP-supported students in Community-Based Experiential Training rotations, including those in the AHEC Scholars Program, participated in the conference.

Friday, April 11, 2025 Keynote Presentation and Poster Showcase

The first day of the conference began with an Opening Blessing provided by Darren Vicenti, MD. Judith Ochieng, PhD, DNP and an AHEC Scholar Mentor, presented “Transforming Rural Healthcare: Lessons in Interprofessional Collaboration.” A Poster Showcase highlighted health professional students and faculty scholarly work. AHEC Scholar groups completing their first year in the program were invited to present posters. Three awards supplemented by state funded prizes were given,

including the “Dr. Ronald Weinstein Excellence in Video Engagement Award,” named in honor of the telehealth pioneer and former Arizona AHEC Commissioner. The winning video poster, “Identifying Gaps in Rural Healthcare, Payson, Arizona,” was created by the 2024-26 AHEC Scholars Group from the CERE-AHEC Region. Additionally, awards were given for Outstanding Poster and Excellence Poster winners, recognizing the high quality of the presentations. A complete list of poster winners is shown in the sidebar.

Saturday, April 12, 2025 – Main Session

The second day of the conference began with an Opening Blessing provided by Carlos Gonzales, MD. The day included a series of presentations by health professionals and future health professionals, focusing on topics relevant to the Arizona populations served. A keynote presentation, “A Practical Approach to Population Health: A Journey and Opportunity for Rural and Small Urban Care Insight” was provided by Darren Vicenti, MD. Following lunch, Merlin T. Curry, MD, presented, “Together We Will: Medical Professionals Building Systems of Care in Rural and Native Communities.” Throughout the day, AHEC Scholar groups completing their second year of the program provided podium presentations of their scholarly work. The names of the AHEC Scholars Group Regional Center and presentations are highlighted in the sidebar.

Highlights of the conference, including posters and recordings, can be found at

<https://azahec.arizona.edu/13th-annual-interprofessional-rural-health-professions-conference>

Poster Awards
Dr. Ronald Weinstein Excellence in Video Engagement Award

- **Identifying Gaps in Rural Healthcare, Payson Arizona** - Emily Burrows, Sonia Fatahi, Bailey Fowler, Mirna Munoz Garcia, Faith Gonzales, Jesse Higgins, Ryan Karvel, Yva Luc, Jonah Mayers, Ramsey Christopher Martz, Maci Noble, Logan Peery, Jenna Pugliese, Gia Quintero, Jennifer Sanchez, Tyler Sedig, Alia Touadjine, Mckayla Vasquez, Emma Walther, Mandi Whittaker, Lauren Zanotti

- Outstanding Poster Award**
- **A Community Assessment of Winslow Arizona** - Shannon Aston, Alex Barta, Taylor Black, Jackson Brusseaux, Ramon Bustos, Madison Calabretta, Lindsey Collins, Ryleigh Collins, Evan Gilbert, Victoria Guzman, Andrea Hickman, Da Joo, Anam Khalid, Drew McKearney, Marie Nguyen, Angel Parra, Kim Pierson, Lexi Schwan, Kiera Vaughn, Jamie Williams

- Excellence Poster Award**
- **Addressing the Valley Fever Knowledge Gap in Rural Arizona Primary Care** - Rebecca Foley, Lori Martin-Plank, Patricia Daly, John Galgiani

Podium Presentations by AHEC Scholars

Podium presentations on Saturday, April 12, by the AHEC Scholars 2024-26 Cohort groups included the following topics:

- AIH-AHEC Scholars – Growing the Future: Building Healthcare Sovereignty in Partnership with Tohono O’odham Community College
- CAAHEC Scholars – Apache Junction Scholarly Project: Health & Dental Fair
- CERE-AHEC Scholars – Addressing Social Isolation of Older Adults: Building Connections and Community Engagement
- CPCHP Scholars – A Community Garden in Ash Fork, AZ
- SAAHEC Scholars – Empowering a Rural Community Through Health Education: Antibiotic Resistance Awareness and Preventive Screenings in Rio Rico, Arizona
- WAHEC Scholars – Combating Antibiotic Resistance: Advancing Awareness and Solutions

Arizona AHEC is deeply appreciative of the collaboration by the Arizona Telemedicine Program in providing technical support for the Rural Health Profession Conferences

University of Arizona
College of Medicine-Phoenix (COM-P)
Rural Health Professions Program (RHPP)
and AHEC Scholars Program (ASP)

Jonathan Cartsonis, MD, RHPP Director

2024-25 Program Highlights	
RHPP Students Supported	208
RHPP Rotations supported	579
RHPP Rotation Hours supported	75,199
2023-25 AHEC Scholars	6
2024-26 AHEC Scholars	8

For the University of Arizona College of Medicine–Phoenix (U of A COM-P), FY25 marked greater engagement with rural Arizona communities and the largest number of medical students placed in these settings to date.

Expanding the Longitudinal Integrated Clerkship (LIC)

The Longitudinal Integrated Clerkship (LIC)—a clinical training program emphasizing months-long placements in rural health systems—continued to grow. In partnership with Safford’s community physicians and Mt. Graham Regional Medical Center, the Safford LIC launched this year, joining existing LICs in Payson, San Luis, the Gila River Indian Community, and Page.

Evidence shows the LIC, with longer periods spent in rural communities, produces better learning outcomes than the traditional “block” monthly rotation model. Rural communities embrace the program, building strong bonds with “their” students and taking pride in helping them develop professionally. LIC graduates consistently report that the experience provided a supportive environment built on lasting relationships with patients, preceptors, and the community. Most importantly, LIC participation increases the number of graduates entering rural practice after graduation. Now in its fifth year, U of A COM-P’s LIC has matured into a nationally recognized program.

New 3-Year Rural Medical Curriculum

Complementing the LIC is a newly approved three-year medical school curriculum to be piloted at U of A COM-P rural sites. Applicants interested in primary care will be placed in select rural LIC locations that also host rural primary care residencies. The curriculum delivers

the same content as the traditional four-year program, but in an accelerated three-year format. The accelerated pathway works because LIC’s immersive environment enables rapid skill acquisition. Physician mentors, who get to know their students well, assess readiness for early graduation, allowing them to transition directly into residency (also known as graduate medical education or GME) at the same site where they received undergraduate medical education (UME) training.

Rural LASSO Presentations

The Rural Longitudinal Academic Strategic Student Opportunities (LASSO) presentations continued in FY 2025, engaging health professionals and health professional trainees statewide as both presenters and learners. Physicians and nurses in attendance earned CME and CE credits through Banner Health. Representative topics included:

- ▶ Wrongful Incarceration as a Public Health Hazard
- ▶ Treatment of Rheumatoid Arthritis by the Rural Physician
- ▶ Care of the Critically Ill Patient
- ▶ Management of COPD in High Altitude Settings
- ▶ Medical Student Difficult Case Presentations
- ▶ Management of Diabetes in Pregnancy
- ▶ Reflections on Homelessness in Rural Arizona

Workforce Impact and AHEC Partnership

Arizona’s rural and Tribal communities remain disproportionately affected by health workforce shortages. U of A COM-P’s integrated approach that combines LIC, the three-year UME curriculum, and strong community partnerships, offers an evidence-based solution to this challenge. We are already seeing results: early graduates are returning to practice in the very communities where they trained. None of this would be possible without AzAHEC grant funding, which in FY 2025 supported 208 unique medical students in Community Based Experiential Training (CBET) clinical rotations. This investment is building a sustainable, community-rooted rural healthcare workforce for Arizona.

University of Arizona
College of Medicine-Tucson (COM-T)
Rural Health Professions Program (RHPP)
and AHEC Scholars Program (ASP)

Jeremy Gneck, MD RHPP Director, Associate Professor, RHPP Director beginning FY26

Josie Acuña, MD, Interim RHPP Director, Associate Professor, Department of Emergency Medicine

2024-25 Program Highlights	
RHPP Students Supported	168
RHPP Rotations supported	211
RHPP Rotation Hours supported	50,300
2023-25 AHEC Scholars	6
2024-26 AHEC Scholars	2

The University of Arizona College of Medicine-Tucson (COM-T) is the oldest and longest-running Rural Health Professions Program in Arizona. The COM-T RHPP program started in 1996 and graduated its first class in 2000. It places medical students in rural and underserved sites to complete rotations in various specialties and become immersed in new communities. The program emphasizes primary care, to build Arizona’s rural physician workforce.

Each year, COM-T RHPP enrolls many students from rural Arizona and provides them the opportunity to return home to serve their communities as a medical student. The program also introduces students with little or no exposure to rural health to experience the strong sense of community, exceptional care, and meaningful connections that define rural life and medicine. Our students express that they chose COM-T because of its commitment to rural and underserved populations and programs, such as RHPP, that allow them to become involved as early as their first medical school year.

An RHPP information session is provided to first-year medical students in the Fall. Interested students complete and submit an RHPP application. In the spring, students accepted into the program take part in “Issues in Rural Health” noon seminar series on rural health policy, ethics, cultural humility, and generational trauma and assigned to preceptors for summer rotations.

Students compile community profiles and educate each other on their assigned rural communities. In the summer following their first year of medical school, students rotate for 4-6 weeks in primary care specialties (family medicine, pediatrics, and internal medicine). Rural rotations in obstetrics/ gynecology, general surgery, and emergency medicine are also available. Upon their return, students submit rural rotation reflections. They often report that these activities shape their future careers in medicine, establish life-long mentors, and influence decisions to return for their clerkship rotations and electives in their final years of medical school.

The COM-T RHPP Certificate Program requires students complete 10 weeks of clinical rotations in rural Arizona. For the Rural Health Distinction Track (RHDT), students must complete 16 weeks in rural rotations and complete a capstone project. Capstone Projects included challenging and innovative topics such as: “Environmental Health Threats Facing Rural Communities” and “Palliative Care in Rural Health Settings: Background, Barriers, and Facilitators.”

COM-T AHEC Scholars Program included eight Scholars this year. We are eager to continue our recruiting efforts and grow this program.

Longitudinal Integrated Clerkship (LIC) - is a continuity-based clinical medical education where students stay in one rural community. They work with a single set of faculty members and a panel of patients, for an extended period and complete the majority of their core clerkships in the same site. We currently have a medical student taking part in the Payson LIC.

	% Staying in State to Practice*	
	Arizona	U.S.
UME Only (medical school)	42.7%	37.8%
GME Only (residency training)	48.7%	48.2%
UME + GME	75.2%	68.2%
*Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) 2023. U.S. Physician Workforce Data Dashboard: Physicians Retained from Medical School and Graduate Medical Education. Accessed 9/6/25 at: https://www.aamc.org/data-reports/report/us-physician-workforce-data-dashboard		

University of Arizona
College of Nursing
Rural Health Professions Program (RHPP)
and AHEC Scholars Program (ASP)

Christy Pacheco, DNP, FNP-BC
RHPP Director, Clinical Assistant Professor

2024-25 Program Highlights	
RHPP Unique Students supported	138
RHPP Rotations supported	325
RHPP Rotation Hours supported	48,305
2023-25 AHEC Scholars	11
2024-26 AHEC Scholars	15

With every county throughout Arizona experiencing a shortage of primary care providers and persistent health disparities, Nurse Practitioners are in a unique position to provide evidence-based, primary care services with a focus on prevention, community and population health. The University of Arizona College of Nursing Rural Health Professions Program (U of A CON RHPP) continues to successfully train an interprofessional healthcare workforce to practice in rural and medically underserved areas across Arizona. Doctoral Nurse Practitioner (DNP) students encompass a range of specialties, including Adult Gero Acute Care (AGACNP), Family (FNP), Nurse Midwifery (NM), Pediatrics (PNP), and Psychiatric Mental Health (PMHNP).

Clinical Education. Students received a range of support for their clinical rotations, from travel to clinical decision-making apps. RHPP rotation stipend support was provided to 37 students in the Fall, 26 students in the Spring, and 28 students in the Summer. Though most of these students were RHPP students, support was also provided to non-RHPP NP students to further promote and support workforce development in rural and medically underserved areas (MUAs). Students completed clinical intensives and workshops to develop expertise in clinical skills such as telehealth.

Interprofessional Education (IPE) Events: Students participated in IPE clinical events, gaining expertise in working with other health professions students, from medicine to pharmacy. The Annual Interprofessional Mock Code Event was conducted in collaboration with the CPCHP at North Country HealthCare, with 16 registered graduate health professions students, including

medicine, nurse practitioner, pharmacy, and others, under the direction of four community and faculty clinician facilitators. An interprofessional Pascau Yaqui Tribal Back to School Health Fair was developed, with three NP students registered. Six students joined U of A COM-T for the BRIDGE Fellowship, learning collaboratively about AHCCCS and how to improve access to care for underserved patients.

Didactic Opportunities. Coursework and seminars provided an evidence-based foundation to better understand needs and resources of rural and medically underserved populations. The newly implemented RHPP Rural Health Seminar Series, in collaboration with Dr. Renteria, Medical Director for the Pascua Yaqui Tribe, focused on strategies for providing culturally appropriate care for rural and medically underserved populations, and leadership skills. Approximately 30 students attended each semester.

Outcomes. Twenty-six RHPP Students graduated during this period. Seven students from a range of specialties completed the U of A CON RHPP Post-Graduation Survey. Most (86%) planned to work in an underserved setting, with half (50%) planning to work in a rural setting; one planned to work in a specialty setting. Two of these students planned to attend NP Residency Programs, including at El Rio and the VA. One student aimed to return to the rural clinic where she had completed her clinical rotations, illustrating the value of rural clinical placements and role in recruitment.

The U of A CON RHPP successfully provides critical clinical and didactic support to Doctoral Nurse Practitioner (DNP) students to develop expertise in caring for rural and medically underserved Arizonans. Program growth, both in terms of student numbers and clinical and didactic opportunities, continues to develop a qualified workforce and further supports community sites and preceptors. This is possible due to the extensive collaboration that occurs among RHPP and AHEC Regional Centers across the state, the AzAHEC Program, and our community partners.

University of Arizona
College of Pharmacy
Rural Health Professions Program (RHPP)
and AHEC Scholars Program (ASP)

Amy Kennedy, PharmD, BC-ADM, BCACP
RHPP Director, Clinical Assistant Professor, beginning FY 26

Elizabeth Hall-Lipsy, JD, MPH, RHPP Director
FY25

2024-25 Program Highlights	
RHPP Students Supported	202
RHPP Rotations supported	384
RHPP Rotation Hours supported	78,264
2023-25 AHEC Scholars	8
2024-26 AHEC Scholars	13

Pharmacists are consistently ranked as one of the most accessible healthcare providers, and has opportunities to help meet the needs of rural Arizonans. While 11% of Arizona’s population lives in rural communities, only 7% of Arizona’s pharmacists practice in these areas. Pharmacists are trained to be medication experts, equipped to provide patient care by dispensing and clinical consultation in collaboration with other health providers. Through the promotion of RHPP, ASP, and our Professional Certificate in Pharmacy-Related Health Disparities, the R. Ken Coit College of Pharmacy continues to advocate for more student rotations in rural settings and to promote postgraduate employment in rural communities.

Students participating in the RHPP Certificate Program are immersed in rural settings throughout their pharmacy education. Four-week introductory practice experiences occur in the summers after year 1 and 2, and six-week advanced practice experiences take place during year 4 of their training. All participating students complete three rural practice experiences, with many electing to complete more. Students earning the RHPP Certificate complete two didactic courses taught by college faculty: Health Disparities in the U.S. and Community Assessment for Pharmacy. The second course includes a community assessment of the student’s RHPP site, with an accompanying oral and written presentation to their peers and AzAHEC Regional

Center colleagues at the Annual Interprofessional RHPP Conference. In FY25, 30 students earned their RHPP Certificate for a total of 336 since its inception in 2010.

The COP RHPP recruited 30 students from the class of 2028, and 28 students completed their first rural rotation this summer. In FY25, we placed 202 unique students in 384 rotations for 78,264 hours of pharmacy training in rural and urban underserved Arizona communities. All of our RHPP students are in the Professional Certificate track (n=127), 54% represent a racial minority group, 5% identify as Hispanic/Latinx, 41% are from a rural community (pop. < 50,000) and 68% are from an underserved background defined as 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.

Recent graduates spoke highly of their experience with RHPP stating “I really liked my rural rotations as those gave me more exposure to patients” and “every student should do at least one rotation in a facility that is in a rural area.”

Of our 30 graduates, 16 were selected for competitive post-graduate pharmacy residencies, five of these residencies provide care in rural communities and four are in underserved communities; 12 work at community pharmacies in Tucson and Phoenix; three are pursuing IHS/ Tribal Health Care employment; two will be completing post-graduate fellowships; and four were undecided at the time of the survey. In our graduates survey, 93% reported intent to pursue employment in an underserved community and 56% plan rural employment.

University of Arizona
College of Public Health
Rural Health Professions Program (RHPP)
and AHEC Scholars Program (ASP)

Bryna Koch, DrPH, RHPP Director, Assistant
Research Professor

2024-25 Program Highlights	
RHPP Unique Students supported	34
RHPP Rotations supported	34
RHPP Rotation Hours supported	2,070
2023-25 AHEC Scholars	2
2024-26 AHEC Scholars	6

The RHPP at the Mel & Enid Zuckerman College of Public Health (COPH) is housed in the Arizona Center for Rural Health (AzCRH). The AzCRH mission is to improve the health and wellness of Arizona’s rural and underserved populations. In partnership with the AzAHEC Program and its six Regional Centers, the program aims to increase the number of public health students who serve rural and underserved Arizona communities and populations upon graduation.

The COPH RHPP program implements the ASP, a two-year interprofessional program that fosters additional engagement through community immersions and applied interprofessional projects with the AHEC Regional Centers. The COPH RHPP enrolled six new AHEC Scholars in FY25, bringing the total COPH AHEC Scholars cohort to eight.

The COPH RHPP offers community-based experiential training through graduate-level service-learning courses in rural and urban medically underserved communities, in collaboration with local organizations and community leaders. Through these courses, students learn from public health experts, practice the skills of community engagement, collaborate on community projects, and provide essential services.

The four graduate courses offered in FY25 were:

- Family and Child Health in Urban Settings
- Community Outreach: An Interprofessional Model of Service and Learning
- Border Health Service Learning Institute
- Rural Health Service Learning Institute

These courses partnered with the following communities:

- Bisbee, Cochise County
- Douglas, Cochise County
- Superior, Pinal County
- Winchester Heights, Cochise County
- Tucson, Pima County
- City of South Tucson, Pima County
- Phoenix, Maricopa County
- Yuma, Yuma County



Rural Health Professions Program faculty, students, and community partners in Bisbee, Arizona

In 2024-2025 the COPH RHPP:

- Supported five rural health focused summer practicum experiences for RHPP students. These projects focused on essential topics relevant to rural health, including early childhood support, addressing rural heat risk, and improving vaccine uptake.
- Supported five professional development opportunities for RHPP students to participate in the 51st Annual Rural Health Conference.

The COPH RHPP program remains committed to engaging with community partners in rural and underserved Arizona to provide community-based experiential training opportunities for students and supporting students to work in those communities after graduation.

Arizona State University (ASU)
Edson College of Nursing and Health
Innovation (CONHI)
Rural Health Professions Program (RHPP)
and AHEC Scholars Program (ASP)

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

2024-25 Program Highlights	
RHPP Students Supported	81
RHPP Rotations supported	171
RHPP Rotation Hours supported	22,470
2023-25 AHEC Scholars	10
2024-26 AHEC Scholars	13

In FY25, the ASU Edson College of Nursing & Health Innovation’s RHPP delivered high-impact clinical rotations for Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) students throughout Arizona. These experiences took place in rural, Tribal, and underserved urban Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs), aligning with the AzAHEC mission to develop a culturally competent and diverse healthcare workforce to reduce disparities and improve statewide health outcomes.

Clinical Rotations and Community-Based
Education Training (CBET):

Collaborating with all six regional AHEC Regional Centers, ASU supported 81 unique students in completing 171 rotations. Of these:

- 36 rotations were interprofessional in integrated healthcare settings.
- 17 occurred in rural areas and 9 in Tribal clinics.
- 23 students participated in mobile maternal-child health outreach through an FQHC partner.
- 23 students completed longitudinal rotations over two or more semesters, deepening their immersive experiences and promoting continuity of care; several included community-based quality improvement projects.

Students engaged in quarterly lunch-and-learn sessions covering topics such as social determinants of health, cultural humility, and population health. All students had access to CAIPER e-learning modules and completed a required course, DNP 603: Health Equity and Social Justice, to strengthen their interprofessional preparedness.

AHEC Scholar Activities:

All students fulfilled ASP requirements, including monthly seminars, community immersions, and attendance at the 13th Annual Interprofessional Rural Health Professions Conference (hosted at an in-person satellite site with NAU). Upon completion, students received ASU AHEC Scholar medallions and certificates. In 2025, 10 AHEC Scholars graduated. Of the five eligible for employment, three (60%) now work in rural or underserved areas.

Program Impact and Outcomes:

Key outcomes from the FY25 cohort include:

- 61% of students reported coming from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- 37% grew up in rural areas; 18% currently reside in provider-scarce communities.
- 36% identified as minority; 15% were bilingual Spanish speakers, with another 24% fluent in other languages.
- 51% of participants were Arizona natives.

Student cultural and linguistic skills enhanced patient care, particularly in underserved settings. Regular meetings between the project director, regional AHEC directors, and program staff addressed student placement, preceptor recruitment, and retention strategies. RHPP students completed 16 DNP projects in AHEC regions, organically developed through their clinical rotations and community assessments. These projects fulfilled both academic and community needs.

Northern Arizona University
Physician Assistant
Rural Health Professions Program (RHPP)
And AHEC Scholars Program (ASP)

Bettie Coplan, PhD, PA-C
RHPP Co-director, Associate Professor
Joe Harrison, DMSc, PA-C
*RHPP Co-director, Associate Program Director,
Director of Clinical Education and Assistant Professor*

2024-25 Program Highlights	
RHPP Students Supported	100
RHPP Rotations supported	342
RHPP Rotation Hours supported	77,809
2023-25 AHEC Scholars	42
2024-26 AHEC Scholars	54

The NAU PA program prepares graduates to deliver high-quality, compassionate medical care across Arizona, with a strong focus on primary care and medically underserved communities. The 24-month curriculum combines 12 months of intensive didactic instruction with 12 months of hands-on clinical training in medical clinics and hospitals.

Community-Based Clinical Education:
With generous support from the AzAHEC Program and all six Regional Centers, students in the Class of 2025 completed a majority of their clinical rotation hours in rural and other medically underserved settings. Because these CBET experiences are central to the PA program mission, all NAU PA students participate in the RHPP.

Innovative Learning Tools:
The RHPP equips students with advanced educational technology to prepare them for the complexities of clinical environments. A case-based database enables exploration of how social and environmental factors influence health, while an educational electronic health record trains students for real-world documentation and telehealth visits - essential tools for expanding rural healthcare access.

AHEC Scholars Program (ASP)
Recruitment for the ASP begins during applicant interviews and continues through orientation, where incoming students hear directly from graduates and second-year Scholars. Participation remains high—during 2024-2025, 42 Scholars (74% of the clinical

cohort) completed their second year, and 54 (92% of the didactic cohort) completed their first year. The ASP seminars, community immersions, and interprofessional collaborations align with the timing of the PA curriculum, allowing students to benefit from ASP experiences throughout their PA education. Evaluation data confirm that Scholars highly value the firsthand exposure to Arizona communities and the opportunity to work alongside students from other health professions.

Professional Development Highlights:
All NAU AHEC Scholars attended the virtual Annual Interprofessional RHPP Conference in April. Didactic phase students also engaged with nurse practitioner colleagues through the NAU NP Poster Presentations at the Phoenix Bioscience Core campus. PA AHEC Scholars had the opportunity to participate in an in-person Arizona Alliance for Community Health Centers Conference event aimed at fostering interprofessional connections and broadening perspectives on community health.

A notable highlight was an NAU PA AIH-AHEC Scholar, who is also an Indian Health Service (IHS) Scholar, joined RHPP faculty at the Arizona Rural Health Conference in June. She described the event as invaluable for networking with practicing healthcare professionals and gaining insights for her future PA career.

Outcomes & Impact:
The RHPP and ASP experiences have measurable impacts on student readiness and workforce distribution. Among the 57 RHPP students in the Class of 2025:

- Confidence: 85% felt prepared to practice in rural areas; 93% felt prepared to practice in urban underserved settings.
- Employment: At graduation, 45% accepted PA positions; of these, 92% were in Arizona, 40% in primary care, 16% in urban underserved settings, and 12% in rural locations.

Graduate retention in Arizona remains very strong. For the Class of 2023, 75% are practicing in Arizona, with 60% providing care in a Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA) or Medically Underserved Area (MUA). Through a combination of community-based clinical training, innovative learning tools, and interprofessional development opportunities, the NAU PA RHPP—supported by the AzAHEC Program and its Regional Centers—continues to prepare graduates to serve Arizona communities.

Northern Arizona University
Occupational Therapy Program
Rural Health Professions Program (RHPP)
And AHEC Scholars Program (ASP)
Gina Buban, RHPP Director

2024-25 Program Highlights	
RHPP Students Supported	18
RHPP Rotations supported	18
RHPP Rotation Hours supported	10,080

During the 2024–2025 academic year with support from AzAHEC funding, 18 occupational therapy (OT) trainees successfully completed their 14-week Capstone Experience and Project in designated rural and/or urban underserved areas. This experience marks the final semester of the NAU OT program, requiring students to complete a minimum of 560 hours across diverse community and traditional settings.

Rotations were completed across three AzAHEC regions: CPCHP, SAAHEC, and CAAHEC. Two

Northern Arizona University
College of Nursing
Rural Health Professions Program (RHPP)
And AHEC Scholars Program (ASP)
Shelley Vaughn, DNP, RHPP Director, Clinical Assistant Professor

2024-25 Program Highlights	
RHPP Students Supported	29
RHPP Rotations supported	80
RHPP Rotation Hours supported	20,822
2023-25 AHEC Scholars	2
2024-26 AHEC Scholars	2

The NAU RHPP proudly graduated 30 Family Nurse Practitioners (FNP) in May 2025. Funding from AzAHEC enabled the program to support these students with clinic rotations during a time when securing placements is challenging due to limited clinic space and the high demand for primary care rotations in Arizona.

students required relocation to fulfill their placement requirements. All 18 trainees graduated in May 2025. At the time of reporting, the majority are preparing to sit for the national certification exam, and all but one are employed, primarily in urban underserved settings within the CAAHEC region.

Post-graduation survey data was collected from 10 of the 18 trainees. Of those respondents:

- 78% reported feeling somewhat comfortable in response to the question:
“How confident do you feel about your ability to provide occupational therapy services in a rural or underserved setting?”
- 90% responded yes to:
“Would you consider mentoring students as a fieldwork educator or capstone supervisor in the future?”
- One trainee expressed their appreciation, stating:
“I just wanted to thank you for applying for the AHEC grant! Being a grant recipient has been a huge benefit to me, and I am so grateful for you!”

Students were supported throughout their two-year program, leading to the successful retention of all students from Fall 2023 to Spring 2025. All graduates received clinical placement support, and two participated in the AHEC Scholars Program

All NAU RHPP students attended the 13th Annual Interprofessional Rural Health Profession Conference in April at the NAU Phoenix Bioscience Core campus, where they joined NAU Physician Assistant students, NAU Occupational Therapy and ASU NP RHPP students. All 30 NAU FNP students presented posters. The event welcomed incoming AHEC Scholar applicants, offering an excellent recruitment opportunity.

Participation in the RHPP and AHEC Scholars Program is a privilege for our NP students. They consistently report how learning experiences enhanced their understanding of rural communities and improved healthcare delivery. We are grateful for this opportunity.

Northern Arizona University
Physical Therapy
Rural Health Professions Program (RHPP)
And AHEC Scholars Program (ASP)

Andrea Trujillo Lerner, PT, DPT RHPP Director,
Director of Clinical Education, Associate Clinical
Professor

2024-25 Program Highlights	
RHPP Students Supported	23
RHPP Rotations supported	23
RHPP Rotation Hours supported	9,200
2023-25 AHEC Scholars	9
2024-26 AHEC Scholars	5

The NAU-PT RHPP aims to meet the needs of rural and medically underserved communities by preparing students to practice in diverse settings throughout Arizona. DPT students are offered clinical experiences in rural and medically underserved areas to foster interprofessional collaboration and promote student career interest. The goal is to have more PT graduates practice in these areas post-graduation. This contributes to the AzAHEC mission to develop a culturally competent, diverse healthcare workforce that will reduce disparities and improve outcomes for vulnerable Arizona populations.

The NAU-PT RHPP has been a part of AzAHEC Program since 2021 and has increased student participation in rural clinical experiences by more than 200%. It accepted five AHEC Scholars starting in August of 2024, coinciding with their first year of Doctoral PT School and who will graduate in 2026. These students enrolled at both the Flagstaff Mountain and Phoenix BioScience Core Campuses.

In the Summer and Fall of 2024, the NAU PT program graduated 12 RHPP students who worked across Arizona including in Prescott, Yuma, Tuba City, Payson, Whiteriver, Vail, Bisbee, Kingman, Fort Defiance, and Cottonwood. The students completed 10 weeks of terminal clinical experience in rural or medically underserved areas (MUAs), and each received a financial stipend to offset the cost of housing.

In May 2025, there were 5 NAU PT RHPP students headed out on terminal clinical experiences in rural/ MUAs in Cottonwood and Prescott. Some PT students complete more than one clinical experience in a rural/

MUA. NAU PT is consistently recruiting students to participate in rural clinical experiences. There are 25 clinical experiences in rural/MUA areas planned for 2025-26. Interest is strong and far reaching. Recruitment efforts are underway with the incoming PT cohort (Class of 2027). NAU PT is in ongoing discussion and strategy to create a consistent collaboration with a specific rural clinical site to host multiple students per year. Challenges include garnering support from NAU and staffing issues at rural healthcare facilities.

The NAU strategic plan “elevating excellence” aligns well with the mission and goals of AzAHEC Program and that of the PT RHPP. The NAU DPT program transitioned to a competency entrustment-based curriculum. Starting in 2026 all students will be under this innovative curriculum. This effort is groundbreaking in DPT education that aims to produce students that are 100% workforce ready and capable of earning “entrustment” from their clinical preceptors to perform the tasks that physical therapists do every day.

We look forward to continuing our collaboration to assure health equity and access to health care throughout Arizona in partnership with the AzAHEC Program and Regional Centers.



Arizona Health Workforce Data System Arizona’s Pathways to Practice
Bryna Koch, DrPH, Susan Coates, MBA and Charles Drake, MS, MA

Education, training, retention, and support for the health workforce in rural and underserved Arizona are essential to carrying out the AHEC mission. Health workforce analysis helps to inform decisions on policies and programs aimed at strengthening health workforce pathways from education to practice.

With support from AzAHEC in FY25, the Arizona Center for Rural Health (AzCRH) workforce team sustained the Arizona Health Workforce Data System (AzHWDS) project. The project relies on a data warehouse approach to integrate workforce data with other publicly available and secondary data. The data warehouse enables the team to efficiently respond to assistance requests for data, analysis and other support from workforce and health system partners. This data warehouse also forms the backbone of the Health Workforce Profile Report.

The project also relies on GIS mapping and Power Bi interactive visualizations to create and distribute workforce reports and maps. The workforce team makes resources publicly available through the AzCRH website. We maintain the [Geographic Information System Hub](#) where we provide interactive maps including the Arizona Rural and Safety Net Health Facilities map and more.

Throughout the year the workforce team collaborated with internal University of Arizona partners and external non-profit organizations, healthcare organizations, and governmental entities to provide data and mapping support. We responded to requests for technical assistance from the University of Arizona Health Sciences, the AzAHEC Graduate Medical Education program, the Arizona Hospital and Healthcare Association (AzHHA), the Arizona Governor’s Office, the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) and other health workforce stakeholders to provide data analysis and to answer questions to inform workforce program and policy development.



North Country HealthCare/Colorado Plateau Center for Health Professions
Colorado Plateau Family & Community Medicine Residency

Marica Martinic, MPH, Director, Colorado Plateau Center of Health Professions (CPCHP)

The NARBHA Institute Family & Community Medicine Residency Program at North Country HealthCare (NCHC) and the Colorado Plateau Center for Health Professions (CPCHP) celebrated the graduation of our third class of family medicine (FM) physicians in June 2025: Jenna Kay, MD, Jacob Somen, DO, Savannah Ottero, MD, and Skot Neilson, DO. Dr. Kay stayed on with North Country HealthCare and joined our team at the Williams clinic in their urgent care department. Dr. Kay is a graduate of the University of Arizona College of Medicine Tucson. It is a joy to see our graduates join the northern Arizona healthcare community as practicing family medicine physicians after residency. One of last year’s graduates, Dr. Jeff Quick, joined the residency as associate faculty this year.

We also welcomed our new family medicine interns on July 1st: Inna Amaryllis, MD; Paige DeRemer-Young, DO, MPH; Emily Hong, DO, MPH; and Timeri Jordan, MD. Our residents are thriving in northern Arizona and express strong commitments to our mission.

At the graduation event, several community partners and graduate medical education advocates were recognized. These included Jenna Kay, MD as Chief Resident, Savannah Ottero, MD for the prestigious Society of Teachers of Family Medicine (STFM) Resident Teacher of the Year, Barbara Polstein, DO for the Distinguished Service Award, Banner Children’s at Desert for the Outstanding Community Champion Award, and Chad Taylor, DO for the Preceptor of the Year Award.

This year, NCHC completed a pilot of Competency Based Medical Education (CBME) with the American Board of Family Medicine (ABFM). This required direct observation, frequent assessment using a mobile application based tool through New Innovations, structured resident coaching, individualized learning plans (ILPs), and aligning assessment tools with ABFM Core Outcomes. The program provided residents with frequent, relevant feedback and supported development of competent physicians for practice.

The residency program continues to lead the Future

Faces of Family Medicine (FFFM) program developed for high school students interested in health professions. FFFM includes resident-led after school programing, clinical shadowing, and mentorship. Residents enjoy getting to know the high school students and seeing them open their minds to the possibilities of a healthcare career. Many participants expressed a strong interest in pursuing medicine as a career.

NCHC initiated a new project to develop and implement an innovative curriculum in point of care ultrasound (POCUS) technology with plans to expand POCUS to other clinical teams. This year, NCHC will measure the effectiveness of POCUS training in a community health center-based FM residency program. The Accreditation Council for GME (ACGME) identified POCUS as an important FM competency for the future.

FM Residency maintained its ACGME program accreditation with no citations, we enhanced our obstetrics and long-term care rotations and implemented new accreditation requirements to improve assignment of patients to the same primary care physician, continuity of care, and quality improvement. We requested to expand our FM class size from four to six residents per year in 2027, assuming we obtain ACGME approval and find funding for the additional GME slots.

Our residents and faculty presented at conferences and published academic manuscripts. The FM residency was selected to update and publish the AAFP Curriculum Guideline for Chronic Pain Management. Drs. Coles, Wise, and Pressley presented at the STFM Annual Conference in the spring. Drs. Coles, Hernandez, and Wise presented “Misinformation and Conspiratorial Thinking: The Role of The Family Physician” at the AAFP FUTURE Conference July 31 – August 2, 2025. Drs. Coles and Wise had an article accepted for publication in the American Family Physician Journal summarizing recent evidence for depression management. We look forward to another successful year!

University of Arizona (U of A) College of Medicine-Tucson (COM-T)
South Campus Family Medicine (FM) Residency

Sommer Aldulaimi, MD, FAAFP
Director, Rural Health Program

Arizona faces physician shortages in all counties with the greatest needs in rural, Tribal and border communities. The mission of the U of A COM-T Family FM Residency South Campus Track is to train family physicians to work in rural and underserved areas in Arizona and beyond. Our curriculum includes 20 weeks of rural rotations over three years in FM, ob, emergency medicine, rheumatology, border health, pediatrics, and others.

These immersive, longitudinal rotations allow resident physicians to experience the profound professional and personal benefits of living and working in Arizona’s rural and underserved communities. FM resident applicants identify rural rotations as a major reason to apply to our program, and a key factor to choosing such practices after graduation. FM residents who spent time at least 50% of their training in rural areas have a 5-fold higher chance of practicing in a rural area after graduation than those without rural training.¹ South Campus FM residents receive advanced procedural, obstetrical and ultrasound training to prepare for practice in resource-limited areas. We are grateful for AzAHEC Program support of our rural residency education.

Over the 2024-25 academic year, our South Campus FM residents did rotations in Fort Defiance, Polacca, Safford, Tuba City, Whiteriver, Payson, Douglas, Casa Grande, Copper Queen, and Nogales. FM residents rotated in Sells and San Xavier for part of their musculoskeletal and rheumatology experience. FM residents completed 40 rural rotations in 10 rural sites during 13 blocks. We actively explore new community-based training opportunities for our residents, particularly with the American Indian Health AIH-AHEC Regional Center partnership.

AzAHEC Program support is pivotal for our “Point of Care Ultrasound (POCUS)” program. Residents identify it as one their favorite components of our curriculum. This longitudinal, hands-on instruction with ultrasound-trained faculty provides basic proficiency in this practical and sought-after clinical tool for trainees in preparation for rotations and eventual practice in low-resource areas.

The richness of these rural rotations is directly related to the quality of the preceptors teaching our residents. Our preceptors share their robust clinical knowledge, technical skills and their passion for practicing rural medicine. Residents often return from their rotations invigorated with renewed commitment to rural practice. Resident feedback is overwhelmingly positive about how these rotations enhance their training. Our FM program is indebted to these rural educators who invest time in teaching our residents and sharing their communities with them.

“My rural rotations were the highlight of my residency. These rotations allowed me to experience what it is like to practice medicine with limited resources which was incredibly valuable. Being one of the few physicians working in a single area quickly taught me how to become more independent and pushed me to utilize my own resources to properly care for patients. I chose this program specifically for my rural rotations not only because of the medical exposure, but also because it allowed me to bond with communities all over Arizona which has made a lasting effect. I have so far been to Nogales, Safford, Bisbee, and the Hopi reservation, and I have thoroughly enjoyed every rotation.”

-Najayah Niemi (FM, PGY-3)

1 Russell DJ, Wilkinson E, Petterson S, Chen C, and Bazemore A. “Family Medicine Residencies: How Rural Training Exposure in GME Is Associated with Subsequent Rural Practice.” J Grad Med Educ (2022) 14 (4): 441–450. <https://doi.org/10.4300/JGME-D-21-01143.1>

Pipeline Programs

Flowing Wells School District

Anna Hayer, M.Ed.

District Science Specialist, Mentor Coordinator

Program Summary:

The Flowing Wells Health Professions Week 2025 was a four-day immersive summer program designed to expose high school students to a range of health careers. Funded by AzAHEC, the program served 24 students and featured hands-on activities, field visits, professional guest speakers, and team-building activities. Participants explored careers in medicine, veterinary medicine, behavioral health, nursing, dentistry, emergency response, and physical therapy.

Program Structure and Activities:

Held from May 27 to May 30, 2025, the program followed a daily structure of breakfast, team-building, off-site learning, and in-depth engagement activities at the Flowing Wells Community Learning Center. Students participated in the following highlighted activities:

Day 1: Cord Blood Registry tour, cooking lesson, physical therapy & mental health speakers

Day 2: Adobe Veterinary Center rotations and suturing workshop

Day 3: University of Arizona medical campus tour (nursing & midwifery), CPR certification

Day 4: Fire Station 8 tour, dentistry speaker, medical stations (blood typing, forensics, vital signs)

Outcomes and Impact:

Student surveys showed high levels of engagement and learning: 96% of participants reported a better understanding of health career pathways. Each student earned CPR certification. Many said they could see themselves graduating from a college or university. All students surveyed said they would recommend this program to other students. Many noted an increased awareness of health profession opportunities not previously considered.

Logistics and Challenges:

Fifty-six students applied to attend the program week, and 25 were accepted based on grades, teacher recommendations, and application responses. Meals and transportation were provided each day. Due to the wide geographic distribution of participants, transportation was complex, and required two bus drivers and individualized pick-up

schedules. Despite these coordination logistics, attendance remained strong throughout the week.

Conclusion:

Flowing Wells Health Professions Week 2025 successfully introduced students to a variety of healthcare careers through immersive, experiential learning. The feedback affirms its value in expanding student perspectives and inspiring future health professionals. We are grateful for the ongoing support of AzAHEC and look forward to continuing this important work.



At the University of Arizona's HSIB Building, students toured the ASTEC simulation floor and standardized patient rooms, where they observed the simulated birth of a baby and learned how healthcare professionals train in real-world scenarios. They heard from faculty representing the new Physical Therapy program, the Physician Assistant program, and the College of Nursing.



Students spent the day at Adobe Veterinary Center rotating through hands-on learning stations, observing pig and goat surgeries, examining a horse, and meeting a cannulated cow. Later, Dr. Christine Staten shared her pathway into veterinary medicine and led students in a suturing lesson.

Med-Start Health Careers Program

Francisco Moreno, MD., *Associate Vice President for Student Engagement and Career Advancement*
Professor of Psychiatry, University of Arizona, College of Medicine - Tucson (U of A COM-T)

Eliza Yellow Bird, M.D., *Director, Student Development and Career*

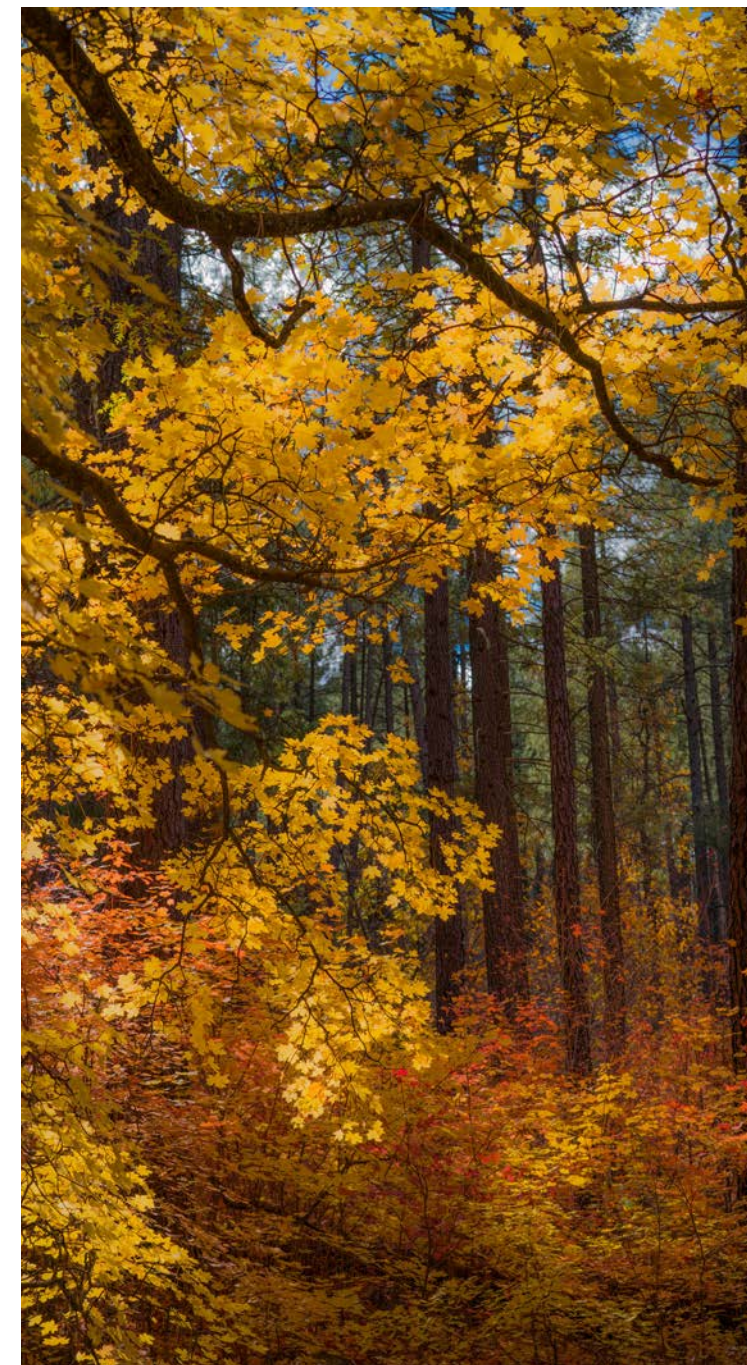
Established in 1969, Med-Start Health Careers Advising Program is a six-week academic enrichment and health-care career exploration experience coordinated through U of A in partnership with the AzAHEC Program and Regional Centers. In the Summer 2025, 42 high school students from across Arizona, including rural and Tribal communities, were selected from 241 applications. Med-Start students represented 35 high schools from all regions of the state and the Navajo Nation. Participants included 29 (69%) female and 13 (31%) male students. Nearly half of the students (N=19, 45%) were from rural communities and 33 (79%) were from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Students were immersed in an intensive college preparatory curriculum and exposed to a wide variety of health professions. Med-Start students received three college credits, one each in English 175A; Math 199A and Chemistry 197A. They participated in lectures and written assignments; ALEKS Placement, Preparation and Learning; and College 101, a success course that supports students in their transition to college life including an introduction to college admissions and financial aid processes, scholarship preparation, and personal statement development.

Students participated in hands-on health career exploration activities and university tours. Skills-based sessions included suturing, intubation, ultrasound techniques, CPR/First Aid certification, Stop the Bleed certifications, pharmacy compounding, dental concepts, loss of blood procedures, and a cadaver lab. Students explored a wide range of health professions through weekly career chats with practicing healthcare professionals and engaged with both western and holistic health practices through community-based learning opportunities such as a visit to Banner University Medical Center of Tucson.

Students emerged with a solid academic foundation to support their future college success. Participants strengthened their sense of responsibility,

professionalism, and mentorship while gaining valuable insight into health career pathways. They developed critical skills in teamwork, time management, resource utilization, networking, and budgeting—tools that will serve them well in both their academic journeys and personal growth. Program feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with 90% of students rating their overall Med-Start experience as excellent or above average.



American Indian Health - AHEC (AIH-AHEC)
Jeff Axtell, M.Ed., Director

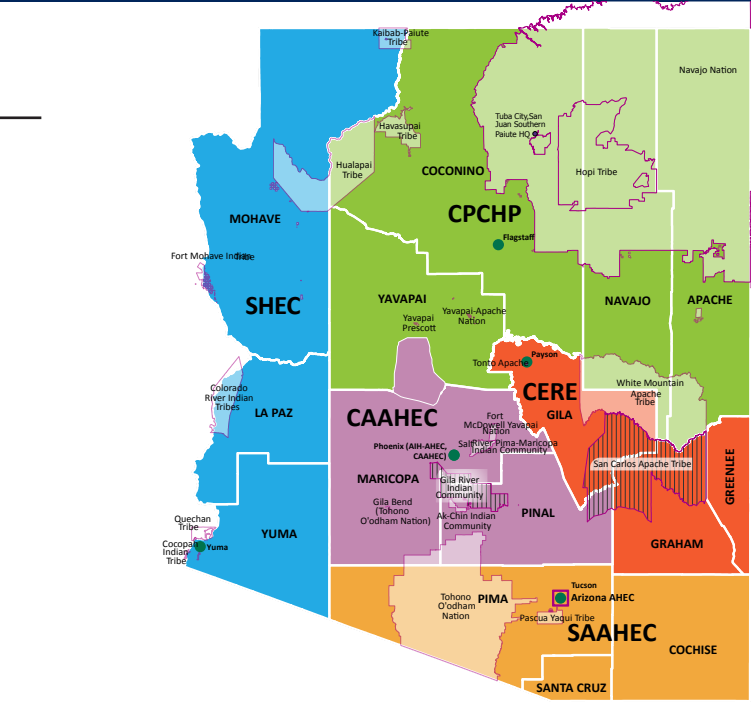
The American Indian Health – AHEC, a program within the Arizona Advisory Council on Indian Health Care (AACIHC) was established in 2022 by statute. AIH-AHEC serves Arizona’s 22 Federally Recognized Tribes and is focused on developing an American Indian health system and workforce to provide for better representation of our Tribal communities. AIH-AHEC works in close collaboration with our Tribal partners, Gila River Health Care (GRHC), San Carlos Apache Healthcare Corporation (SCAHC) Native Health, and, new this year, the Hopi Health Care Center. AIH-AHEC’s mission is to increase the number of American Indian Healthcare professionals by nurturing partnerships with Arizona’s Tribal communities to increase and support present and future American Indian students and healthcare providers.

2024–25 Program Highlights	
Health Professions Unique Trainees	120
Health Professions Training Experiences	140
*31 training experiences were completed in collaboration with RHPP Partners	
Health Profession Trainee Hours	23,686
2023-25 AHEC Scholars	14
2024-26 AHEC Scholars	18
Structured Pipeline Participants	228
Continuing Education/Professional Development Participants	291
Community Health Education Participants	778
Health Career Event Participants	1,999

AHEC Scholars Program (ASP):
AIH-AHEC integrates cultural teachings and Tribe-specific knowledge to emphasize the social determinants of health and wellness. We expand our programs in collaboration with the communities we serve and our Tribal partners.

AIH-AHEC marked a significant milestone with their inaugural 2023-25 AIH-AHEC Scholars cohort experiencing their immersion on the Tohono O’odham Nation. The Scholars cohort completed a resource for local students entitled “Digital Guidebook for Health Career Pathways,” with insights and reflections from each scholar as to their own health career pathway.

The second AIH-AHEC Scholars cohort began their two-year immersion on Hopi Land, learning about the Hopi Health Care Center in Polaca. The Sipaulovi



village leader warmly welcomed the Scholars on their Spring immersion and into the heart of the community at a home where a baby naming ceremony was in progress. We had the incredible opportunity to assist in plastering a fresh mud coating to the Hopi bread oven, a process deeply tied to the ceremony. Students chopped wood, many for the first time, learned about the physical labor involved and the ceremonial and cultural significance behind each step. A Hopi grandmother shared wisdom, giving students firsthand insight into tradition and resilience. Our journey continued up to the village of Sipaulovi, where we provided items to the Bear Clan’s elderly matriarch and assisted with household tasks. We explored the village and discussed the importance of its history and structure. We were able to support families living more traditionally on top of the Hopi Mesas, offering essential items and learning from their way of life.

Pathways Programs:
AIH-AHEC’s Tribal partners reached over 2,200 students last year through K-12 Youth Pathways programs focused on healthcare career activities, high school clubs and summer programs. Gila River Health Care’s Elev8 Youth Pathway Program introduced participants to allied, public health, and professional health careers from doctors and medical students within their own health facility and community. The Elev8 program reached out to kindergarten through 8th grade students with Baby and Jr. Scrubs programing focused on introducing youth to health professions and programs.

San Carlos Apache Healthcare (SCAHC) conducted their Summer Student Program for 116 students and young adult community members ages 16-20 years. SCAHC conducted two six-week cohorts introducing participants to a variety of health care careers and increasing cultural knowledge and skills to better help their community. SCAHC initiated programs in the high school and with the San Carlos Community College during the school year.

AIH- AHEC partnered with Gila River Health Care’s Elev8 and San Carlos Summer Health Programs to host a Simulation Laboratory Workshop at Skyline Gila River High School. The event provided cutting-edge medical simulation with cultural relevance and mentorship, providing a safe, supportive environment for Indigenous youth to explore healthcare careers. Students explored real-world clinical scenarios with learning skills, building confidence, and discovering career possibilities in medicine and advanced practice health careers.

Professional Development:
AIH-AHEC’s professional continuing education and program development component blossomed last year under the direction of the CE/CPD Coordinator, reaching over 290 participants in 16 events. AIH-AHEC partnered with the Arizona Telemedicine Program (ATP) to provide continuing professional development sessions on topics

including “Forensic Health Care in Tribal Communities” and “Indigenous Maternal Health for Veterans.” AIH-AHEC collaborated with Gila River Health Care’s nursing education team to help coordinate the 2024 GRIC Nursing Conference which focused on reducing burnout. AIH-AHEC continues to seek out new topics and issues relevant to our Tribal communities and providers.

Growth:
AIH-AHEC had a successful year in meeting and exceeding many of its program goals. New staff came on board including Youth and Academic Pathways Coordinator, bringing the total staff to four individuals. In AIH-AHEC’s quest to serve all 22 Tribal communities, new partners included Hopi Health Care Center, the Wassaja Carlos Montezuma Center for Native American Health and the Phoenix Area IHS office to access more IHS facilities (i.e., Colorado River Service Unit, Whiteriver Service Unit, Fort Yuma Service Unit, Phoenix Indian Medical Center and the Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation) across Arizona.

AIH-AHEC staff are confident we are preparing the pathways to achieve our vision, to foster and empower health career aspirations among our youth and to cultivate and support a strong culturally responsive , sustainable health-care workforce with Arizona’s Tribal communities.



American Indian Health AHEC Scholars 23-25 Cohort completed their Scholars Immersion on the Tohono O’odham Nation

Central Arizona Area Health Education Center (CAAHEC)
Arizona Alliance of Community Health Centers (AACHC)
Gloria Vasquez, Center Director Beginning FY26
Shelli Stewart, FY25 Center Director

Housed in the Arizona Alliance for Community Health Centers (AACHC), CAAHEC is based in Central Phoenix, serves Maricopa and Pinal Counties, and the community of Prescott in Yavapai County. CAAHEC supports all aspects of the health professions pipeline, from K-12, health profession trainees (students and residents), and practicing providers. AACHC is Arizona’s Primary Care Association that partners with Arizona’s 26 Community Health Center systems and their 175 Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) to ensure that healthcare is affordable and available to the state’s rural and underserved communities.

2024–25 Program Highlights	
Health Professions Unique Trainees	262
Health Professions Training Experiences	296
*67 training experiences were completed in collaboration with RHPP Partners	
Health Profession Trainee Hours	37,920
2023-25 AHEC Scholars	14
2024-26 AHEC Scholars	19
Structured Pipeline Participants	274
Continuing Education/Professional Development Participants	2,905
Health Career Event Participants	828

Community-Based Education and Training (CBET) Activities:
In FY2025, CBET activities supported students with travel expenses, meals, housing, and clinical rotation coordination. Various health professions were in attendance, including Medicine, Dentistry, Nursing, Public Health, Physician Assistant, and others. A support enhancement program was implemented, providing automated notifications to students on future clinical rotation support.

AHEC Scholars Program (ASP) Activities:
The 2023-2025 CAAHEC Scholars Cohort participated in two community-based immersions in Apache Junction. The fall and spring immersions included participation in a Community Dental &

Health Fair, which included dental screenings and oral health education at A.T. Still University. Scholars presented at the Annual Rural Health Professions Program Conference in April, highlighting the partnership with Horizon Health and Wellness in Apache Junction and the Community Dental & Health Fair.

The 2024-26 CAAHEC Scholars Cohort participated in two immersion experiences in the communities of Maricopa and Ak-Chin. Students attended presentations on community health needs and services and participated in a clinic tour. A facilitated windshield survey provided additional opportunities for Scholars to learn about the challenges of residing in a rural community. The 2024-26 Scholars presented at the Annual Rural Health Professions Program Conference, where they shared their community needs assessment poster.



For their scholarly project, Central Arizona Scholars 2023-25 Cohort planned and implemented a Community Health & Dental Fair at Horizon Health and Wellness for the residents of Apache Junction that included free dental screenings from A.T. Still University students.

Pathways Program Activities:
To inspire future generations of healthcare professionals, Grade K-12 students are provided hands-on, experiential learning opportunities outside of the traditional classroom setting. This year, CAAHEC learning experiences offered included CPR training, suture and knot-tying workshops, and Stop the Bleed training. The highlight of the year was the Expanded Summer Learning Program, in which 12 high school students participated in a one-week immersive camp that included a dissection workshop at the University of Arizona College of Medicine – Phoenix, campus tours, and a scientific research presentation.

Continuing Education (CE) Activities:
In FY25, CAAHEC supported 49 continuing education (CE) events with more than 2,900 attendees. The Arizona Medical Association (ArMA) Accreditation, approved CAAHEC to offer CME credits to physicians. The CAAHEC Accreditation impact is

significant, with far more healthcare professionals receiving CME than in previous years. CAAHEC’s automated system allows CAAHEC staff to distribute CE credits more efficiently, resulting in additional events and a significant community impact.

“I had so much fun at the CAAHEC 2025 spring immersion. It was such a special opportunity to work with other future health professionals and put on a health and dental fair for the city of Apache Junction. We all worked well as a team and brought the excitement and passion to Apache Junction. I will always be grateful for memories formed in Apache Junction with this team for many years to come!”



Center for Excellence in Rural Education (CERE)

MHA Foundation
Jennifer Smith, MBA, MS, C.Ped Executive Director

The Center for Excellence in Rural Education (CERE) is the Area Health Education Regional Center serving Arizona’s Gila, Graham, and Greenlee Counties. CERE’s mission is to promote integrated, community-based training and experiential education to develop a skilled workforce adept at meeting the unique needs of rural communities. July marks the completion of CERE’s second year as an AHEC Center with exciting outcomes.

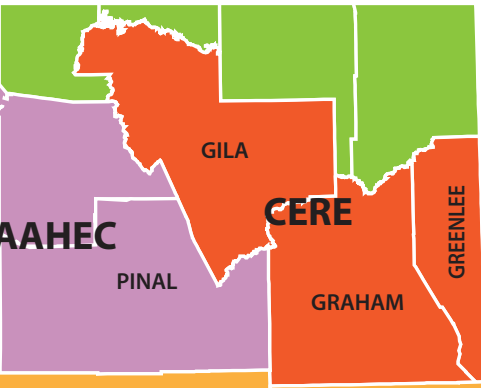
2024–25 Program Highlights	
Health Professions Unique Trainees	174
Health Professions Training Experiences	461
*157 training experiences were completed in collaboration with RHPP Partners	
Health Profession Trainee Hours	47,334
2023-25 AHEC Scholars	16
2024-26 AHEC Scholars	21
Structured Pipeline Participants	202
Continuing Education/Professional Development Participants	155
Health Career Event Participants	11
Community Health Education Participants	851

Pipeline:

CERE expanded its pipeline programming from five clubs to twelve clubs in FY25. These activities included HOSA clubs and Scrubs Camps (both in Globe and



Payson Scrubs Camp attendees Lydia Mullahy and Curtis Perry learning proper CPR techniques.



Payson), and innovative programs with curriculum developed by the CERE team. The primary drivers for this success have been CERE’s Fitness and Health Education initiatives, and its Healthcare Careers Enrichment Class offerings at Payson High School. These areas have resonated strongly with our community, with great demand for ever-expanding programming.

Community Based Experiential Training:
Nearly doubling its number of unique CBET trainees this year, CERE marked an astonishing increase in training impact within the region.

This year’s rotations included contributions from various institutions including RHPP students from U of A Colleges of Pharmacy and Medicine in both Phoenix and Tucson, NAU Physician Assistant Program, and nursing students from NAU, U of A, and ASU. CERE also supported rotations for learners in CRNA, Radiology Technician, Medical Assisting, Nursing Assisting, and Residency programs. Such collaboration across professions and programs enriches our training and strengthens our community ties.

Continuing Education:
The CERE team obtained accreditation to offer CE credits from the California State Board of Registered Nursing. The content produced for these initiatives is now available at www.ruraled.org/CE. This platform enhances content delivery, engages learners more effectively, and participants receive certificates instantly upon completing the course criteria. This platform includes a built-in survey feature, providing the CERE team with critical feedback that will help us continually improve our programs.



CERE AHEC Scholars 24-26 Cohort participating in a community immersion in Payson, Arizona. Their poster, “Identifying Gaps in Rural Healthcare in Payson” was awarded the Dr. Ronald Weinstein Excellence in Video Engagement Award at the 2025 Rural Health Professions Conference.

CERE-supported Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programming grew 25% this year. Student and provider attendance at these events significantly boosts participation and engagement among our lifelong learners.

AHEC Scholars:
The 23-25 CERE AHEC Scholars, led by Dr. Alan Michels, completed their program this year. This group of interprofessional RHPP students successfully engaged in multiple service projects in the Payson area, with a focus on addressing social determinants of health in the elderly population.

CERE’s 24-26 ASP cohort looks forward to their community immersion projects: the production and distribution of educational information and blood pressure cuffs to patients during their prenatal and immediate postpartum periods.

During their first years of the program, both CERE Scholars cohorts were recipients of the Dr. Weinstein Award for Best Poster Presentation at the spring RHPP conference. The CERE team is excited to welcome its third cohort this autumn and looks forward to supporting both the students and their faculty mentors.

Community Health Education Events
Quarterly CPR Classes were sponsored for the local Payson community, with coursework and certification

offered to community residents at no charge. In addition, combined CPR/First Aid/AED training was offered at no charge for the volunteers and staff of the Payson Homeless and Homeless Veteran’s Initiative.

CERE sponsored the annual Community Health and Care Fair and Women’s Wellness Forum hosted by MHA Foundation. Through these efforts, over 850 citizens of the CERE region were the beneficiaries of health-related education.

I have had a wonderful, once-in-a-lifetime experience here in Payson the past five months. Complementing my clinical work with immersion in the community has highlighted the importance of compassionate care and understanding rural healthcare.

Being an Arizona Area Health Education Center scholar first introduced me to Payson and what the LIC experience could offer my education and development as a physician. As a scholar, I have the opportunity to create a positive impact on future families, and I get to see this implemented as an LIC student.

Overall, both programs synergized and enhanced my time in Payson and developed the creativity and knowledge I will need as a future clinical leader. I will be sad to leave later this year... but knowing these opportunities exist for future students is exciting.

--Ramsey Martz, U of A COMP LIC Student and CERE AHEC Scholar

The Colorado Plateau Center for Health Professions (CPCHP)
North Country Health Care (NCHC)
Mariça Martinic, MPH, Director

The Colorado Plateau Center for Health Professions (CPCHP) at North Country HealthCare is based in Flagstaff and serves Coconino, Navajo, Apache, and Yavapai Counties. CPCHP exceeded all metrics in its scope of work in the areas of youth health career pathways, community based experiential training, and continuing education for our communities.

2024–25 Program Highlights	
Health Professions Unique Trainees	352
Health Professions Training Experiences *56 training experiences were completed in collaboration with RHPP Partners	767
Health Profession Trainee Hours	107,799
2023-25 AHEC Scholars	17
2024-26 AHEC Scholars	20
Structured Pipeline Participants	127
Continuing Education/Professional Development Participants	505
Community Health Education Participants	1,552
Health Career Event Participants	401

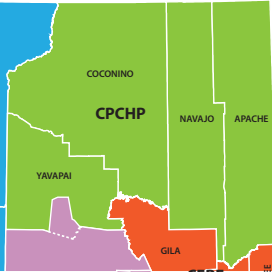
Community Based Experiential Training:
For many years, CPCHP has proudly partnered with the AzAHEC Program and now with NAU’s Department of Health Sciences to help prepare the next generation of public health professionals. Through NAU’s senior capstone course, public health majors team up with local nonprofits to design and carry out a “mini-health” intervention that makes a real difference in the community. To bring these ideas to life, CPCHP offers mini-grants exclusively for capstone projects. Students craft competitive grant proposals, receiving in-class guidance from CPCHP staff on the elements of a successful application. CPCHP staff also collaborate with NAU faculty to evaluate proposals and provide feedback, giving students an authentic experience in grant writing and review. When funding is awarded, students implement their interventions in partnership with their nonprofit collaborators. They also showcase their work at NAU’s Undergraduate Research Symposium through professional academic posters, turning classroom learning into community impact.

This past year, NCHC hosted four capstone groups, who worked on projects pertaining to car seat safety, career exploration in high school with CPCHP, Girls on the Run, and HIV stigma reduction. One team presented at the National Conference for Undergraduate Research in Pittsburgh Pennsylvania in April on their health intervention, completed in partnership with NCHC’s HIV-Ryan White outreach program, titled Decreasing Stigma around HIV.



CPCHP AHEC Scholars 24-26 Cohort conducted their community immersion in Winslow, Arizona.

Longitudinal Tracking:
This year, CPCHP took a major step forward by implementing a new contact resource management system, Neon One. This customizable platform serves as our primary communication tool, allowing us to connect with students, community partners, and program alumni, with targeted messages about upcoming events, scholarship opportunities, and CPCHP news. Neon One functions as an up-to-date database for clinical training and pipeline students, providing more accurate data and streamlining our reporting processes. The system supports longitudinal data collection, enabling us to track engagement and outcomes over time to better understand trends and measure program impact. Neon One is being integrated into CPCHP workflows. We look forward to using this tool to connect participants



to other CPCHP programs and follow participants over time to see if they choose a health career, work in a rural or underserved area, or otherwise help fill the gaps in the health workforce in our region.

Health Career Pathways:
The CPCHP mission starts with our pathway programming. We work with high school and post-secondary undergraduate students to expose them to health careers early and often. Career exploration is fundamental to students of this age in helping shape their future career plans. With programming like Girls on the Run for

elementary students and HOSA clubs for high school students, we offer continuity to a learner’s desire to learn and explore a career in health at every stage.

*Continuity of support is an important aspect at CPCHP. Arizona State University (ASU) undergraduate student, and Flagstaff resident, Kei Sieben, has been interested in a healthcare career for many years, reinforced by participation in programs offered by the Colorado Plateau Center for Health Professions (CPCHP) at North Country HealthCare (NCHC). As a senior in high school, Kei participated in the **Future Faces of Family Medicine** program with CPCHP and shares comments about that experience.*

“It definitely helped cement that healthcare was the right path for me. My favorite part was getting to do such a wide variety of things, from learning about Social Determinants of Health, to ultrasounds to doing dissections. I felt like I got to see so many different sides of healthcare, and I really liked getting to interact with the residents and attendings as well.”

During the summer of 2025, Kei returned to NCHC as a Health Partners Intern, connecting NCHC patients to community resources. They saw it as a way to experience a different side of healthcare and to work with people one on one.

Kei is currently studying biomedical sciences at Barrett, the Honors College at ASU, and planning to apply for ASU’s nursing program for fall of 2026. They are also considering double majoring in biomedical sciences and healthcare coordination, with the goal of becoming a physician after working as a nurse.



In FY 25, CPCHP welcomed Kei Seiban as a Health Partners intern. In the prior year, Kei participated in CPCHP’s Future Faces of Family Medicine program and is shown here practicing vital signs on Dr. Sarah Coles with the supervision of Dr. Dakota Wise.

Southern Arizona Area Health Education Center (SAAHEC)
El Rio Health Center
Yolanda Perez, MPH, Director

Founded in 2021, the Southern Arizona Area Health Education Center (SAAHEC) at El Rio Health is dedicated to enhancing healthcare across Santa Cruz, Cochise, and Pima Counties. Our goal is to expand access to high-quality, affordable, and compassionate care in Southern Arizona’s rural and medically underserved areas. We achieve this by increasing the supply and distribution of skilled healthcare professionals and supporting their training at every stage. From inspiring young students and supporting health professions learners to aiding practicing professionals and championing new initiatives, SAAHEC is committed to advancing the mission of AHEC and making a meaningful impact on Arizona’s healthcare landscape.

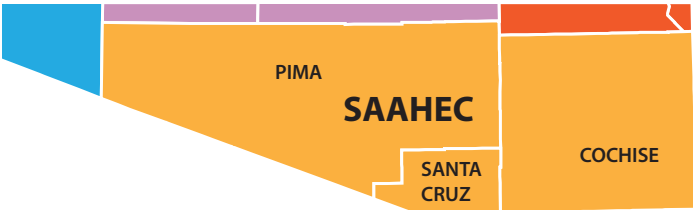
2024–25 Program Highlights	
Health Professions Unique Trainees	305
Health Professions Training Experiences	463
* Additional 138 training experiences were completed in collaboration with RHPP Partners	
Health Profession Trainee Hours	70,645
2023-25 AHEC Scholars	17
2024-26 AHEC Scholars	19
Structured Pipeline Participants	259
Continuing Education/Professional Development Participants	629
Health Career Event Participants	1,025

Clinical Based Experiential Learning:

SAAHEC facilitated 463 field experiences for 305 unique graduate, undergraduate and technical health profession trainees. Trainees included Residents in Family Medicine, Pediatrics, Internal Medicine, Dental, and Psychiatry. Other trainees include students in Medical, Osteopathic, Nurse Practitioners (NP), Medical Assistant, Dental, Nutrition/Dietetics, Behavioral Health and Pharmacy programs.

AHEC Scholars:

SAAHEC’s AHEC Scholars Program (ASP) is designed to enhance interprofessional learning among graduate students and engage community members in Santa



Cruz, Cochise, and Pima Counties. The 2023-25 cohort included scholars working in the community of Rio Rico, AZ while the 2024-26 cohort focused on Bisbee, AZ.

ASP Scholars work in interprofessional teams to conduct comprehensive needs assessments, implement targeted interventions, and evaluate the impact of their initiatives. A key component of the curriculum emphasizes leveraging community assets and building strong local partnerships to effect meaningful and sustainable change. During the 2025 Interprofessional RHPP Conference, the 2024-26 SAAHEC Scholars showcased their work with a poster presentation titled “A Community Assessment of Bisbee, AZ.” The 2023-25 cohort delivered podium presentations on their community project, “Empowering a Rural Community Through Health Education: Antibiotic Resistance Awareness and Preventative Screenings in Rio Rico, Arizona.”



SAAHEC AHEC Scholars 24-26 Cohort held their community immersions in Bisbee, Arizona

Pathways Programs:

SAAHEC is dedicated to preparing and empowering the next generation of healthcare professionals through comprehensive pathways programs across Santa Cruz, Cochise, and Pima Counties. SAAHEC initiatives provide students from K-16 with early exposure to health professions, fostering their interest and commitment to healthcare careers. Collaborations and partnerships were created with schools and colleges across Southern Arizona to enhance student engagement in healthcare. Key partners include Pima JTED, Pima Community College, U of A, and Banner Health. A notable initiative is the Summer of Community Health Exploration Academy (SOCHEA), a weeklong program where high school students interact with healthcare professionals and focus on post high school preparation and skill-building with peers who share their interests. This year, SAAHEC produced two cohorts of SOCHEA participants.



SOCHEA SUMMER PROGRAM
Students explored future health careers and practiced skill-building with peers who share their interests.
SOCHEA Juniors and Seniors cohort participants learning and practicing taking vitals.

Continuing Education and Professional Development:

SAAHEC is currently one of ten state-accredited providers of continuing medical education (CME) in Arizona recognized by the Arizona Medical Association (ArMA) for meeting the high level of quality established by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME).

Through its ArMA-accredited CME program, SAAHEC actively supports, plans, and executes educational activities designed to improve the knowledge, strategies, and performance of Southern Arizona’s healthcare workforce, specifically targeting the educational needs of primary care physicians and other clinicians serving the region’s rural and medically underserved populations.

Over the last year, SAAHEC awarded 88.75 CME credits with a focus on collaboration across different specialties, such as behavioral health, pharmacology, and clinical practice. Feedback is consistently positive. The practical application of knowledge, innovative topics, and event organization contribute to a positive and impactful attendee learning experience.

SAAHEC was instrumental in the planning and implementation of El Rio Health’s 2nd Annual Southwestern Primary Care Research & Innovation Summit - a dynamic gathering on May 6-7th, 2025 centered on the theme of “Transforming Health Outcomes and Access through Innovation & Excellence.” The 2025 Summit featured an academic poster fair and accredited CME sessions.

Create Tomorrow:

At El Rio Health, one of our organizational cultural beliefs is to “Create Tomorrow.” SAAHEC embraces this vision, aiming to build strong partnerships within the communities we serve to tackle the healthcare needs of rural and medically underserved areas. Looking ahead to the coming year, SAAHEC is excited about expanding opportunities to introduce students to healthcare careers, enhancing clinical rotation capacity for students and residents and delivering high quality continuing educational activities for the health workforce.

Western Arizona Area Health Education Center (WAHEC)

Regional Center for Border Health

Ana Montoya, Director

WAHEC was based in Somerton, Arizona and served Yuma, La Paz and Mojave Counties. WAHEC’s contract with Arizona AHEC ended on 8/31/25. Arizona AHEC extends deep appreciation to WAHEC for many years of delivery of health professional training and promotion of the health professions pipeline including K-16 students.

2024–25 Program Highlights	
Health Professions Unique Trainees	226
Health Professions Training Experiences	232*
* 22 training experiences were completed in collaboration with RHPP Partners	
Health Profession Trainee Hours	34,894
2023-25 AHEC Scholars	19
2024-26 AHEC Scholars	21
Structured Pipeline Participants	712
Continuing Educ/Professional Development Participants	227
Community Health Education Participants	11

Community Based Experiential Training:

WAHEC provided 226 trainees with 232 unique field experiences. WAHEC supported rotations for Regional Center for Border Health College of Health Careers students in Certified Nursing Assistant, Medical Assistant, Phlebotomy Technician and other allied health programs. WAHEC supported Rural Health Professions Program (RHPP) rotations from the U of A Colleges of Nursing and Medicine (Phoenix and Tucson), and the NAU Physician Assistant and Physical Therapy Programs.

AHEC Scholars:

The 2023-25 AHEC Scholars cohort participated in two community immersions. They concluded the two-year program with a podium presentation at the Rural Health Professions Conference, “Combating Antibiotic Resistance: Advancing Awareness and Solutions.”

The 2024-26 AHEC Scholars cohort participated in two community immersions this year. They presented a poster at the Rural Health Professions Conference, “Community Needs Assessment of South Yuma County.” The poster focused on Diabetes Mellitus Type 2 and

included an overview of the history, demographics and community of South Yuma County.

Pipeline:

WAHEC provided pipeline programs for over 700 Grade 9-12 Students. Participants enrolled in ten clubs in the WAHEC region, including eight Health Occupations Students of America (HOSA) Clubs.

Continuing Education:

WAHEC has accreditation to offer CE credits from the California State Board of Registered Nursing. WAHEC had 227 participants enroll in seven continuing education events in the WAHEC region.

Community Health Education Events:

WAHEC sponsored the annual Community Health and Care Fair and Women’s Wellness Forum. Through these efforts, citizens of the WAHEC region were the beneficiaries of health-related education.



WAHEC AHEC Scholars 23-25 Cohort

Southwest Arizona Health Education Collaborative (SHEC) (FY 26)

Onvida Health, in partnership with Arizona Western College (AWC), and Sunset Health, launched the Southwest Health Education Collaborative, a new AHEC Regional Center to build a stronger, healthier future for Southwestern Arizona in FY26.

SHEC will focus on core program components of community-based training, youth mentorship and pipeline development, interprofessional education, and culturally responsive training.

As a recognized leader in health education and workforce development, Onvida Health partners with local organizations to strengthen the pipeline of healthcare professionals and advance health equity for all.

Arizona Western College, founded in 1963, is an essential educational resource for breaking down barriers to learning for generations of students.

Sunset Health has grown from humble beginnings in the agricultural fields of Somerton, Arizona into a recognized healthcare leader.

By combining Onvida’s innovative healthcare system, AWC’s academic leadership, and Sunset Health’s deep community roots, the SHEC Regional Center partnership expands access to care and advances local health workforce development for rural and historically under-resourced populations throughout Yuma, Mohave, and La Paz Counties.

AHEC Scholars Faculty Mentors

Each AzAHEC Regional Center identifies a Faculty Mentor for each group of two-year AHEC Scholars. AzAHEC thanks the following Faculty Mentors for their important participation in the AzAHEC Scholars Program during fiscal year 2024-25.		
Regional Center Name	2024-26 Faculty Mentor	2023-25 Faculty Mentor
American Indian Health AHEC	Daniel Sestiage, Jr., MPH	Timian Godfrey, DNP
Central Arizona AHEC	Joe Harrison, MSPAS, PA-C	Carol Moffett, PhD
Center for Excellence in Rural Education AHEC	Lura Ryder, MSN	Alan Michels, MD
Colorado Plateau Center for Health Professions	Cherish Lorica, MD	Victoria Noack, PT
Southern Arizona AHEC	Athena Ganchorre, PhD	Miriam Morales, MPH
Western Arizona AHEC	Gustavo Alvarez, MPH	Jake Schwarz, PharmD

AzAHEC Financial Review for Fiscal Year 2024-25

The AzAHEC Program earns Federal funding from Health Resources Services Administration (HRSA), Bureau of Health Workforce 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) under the Arizona Board of Regents (ABOR). AzAHEC is in year four of its five-year federal funding cycle.

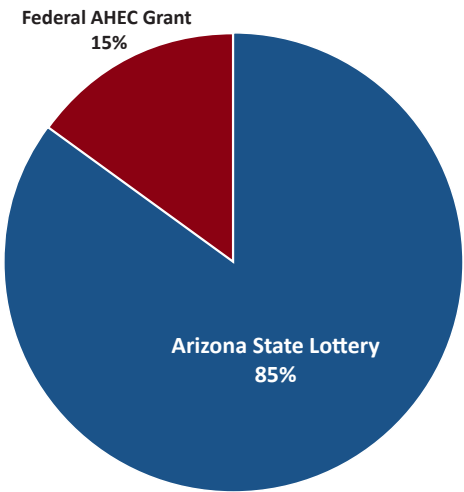
The AzAHEC Program is administered through the University of Arizona Health Sciences (UAHS). Leila Barraza, JD, MPH, is the Director of the AzAHEC Program, and serves as Principal Investigator (PI) of the HRSA Model AHEC grant. Daniel Derksen, MD, serves as the AzAHEC Program Senior Advisor. He served as Principal Investigator (PI) of the HRSA Model AHEC grant from 7/1/2020 through 9/30/23. Jennifer

Zúñiga is the AzAHEC Program Associate Director.

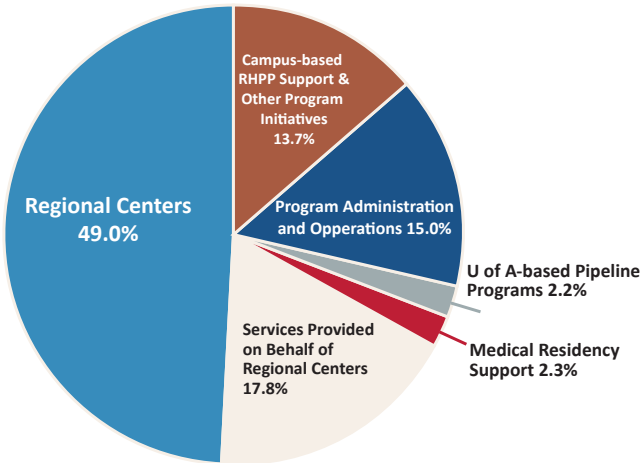
Federal and state funding supports the six AzAHEC Regional Centers (AIH-AHEC, CERE-AHEC, CAAHEC, CPCHP, SAAHEC, and WAHEC) via annual reimbursement subcontracts administered through the AzAHEC Program Office following University of Arizona, state, and federal requirements. AzAHEC supports the Arizona statute-required (ARS § 15-1754 Rural Health Professions Programs (RHPPs) (ASU, NAU, and U of A)).

Item/Initiative	FTEs	“Person Count”
AzAHEC Program Office	9.93	16
AIH-AHEC	3.15	4
CERE-AHEC	2.91	3
CAAHEC	4.71	22
CPCHP	6.20	10
SAAHEC	4.55	6
WAHEC	5.60	9
RHPP U of A COM-P	0.90	3
RHPP U of A COM-T	0.50	2
RHPP U of A CON	0.50	3
RHPP U of A COPH	0.80	10
RHPP U of A COP	0.50	2
RHPP ASU Nursing	0.65	4
RHPP NAU Nursing	0.41	2
RHPP NAU Physical Therapy	0.06	1
RHPP NAU Physician Assistant	0.55	4
RHPP NAU Occupational Therapy	0.10	1
North Country Residency Program	0.40	1
South Campus Primary Care Residencies	0.44	4
Med-Start Program	1.16	13
Establishing an Arizona Health Workforce Data System	1.70	4
Total	45.72	124

AzAHEC Funding Sources 2024–25



AzAHEC Expenditures 2024–25



American Indian Health AHEC (AIH-AHEC)

150 N. 18th Ave
Phoenix, AZ 85007
928-714-6925
Jeffrey Axtell, Director
jeffrey.axtell@aacihc.az.gov
<https://americanindianhealth-ahec.az.gov>
Service Region: Tribal Communities across Arizona

Central Arizona AHEC (CAAHEC)

c/o Arizona Alliance for Community Health Centers (AACHC)
3838 N. Central Avenue,
Suite 1600
Phoenix, Arizona 85012
602-253-0090
Gloria Vasquez, Center Director
gloriav@aachc.org
<https://aachc.org/workforce-caahec/>
Service Region: Maricopa and Pinal counties, and south-central Yavapai county

Southern Arizona AHEC (SAAHEC)

c/o El Rio Health
1230 S. Cherrybell Strav
Tucson, AZ 85713
520-309-4019
Yolanda Perez, Center Director
Yolanda.Perez@elrio.org
www.southernazahec.org
Service Region: Cochise, Pima, Santa Cruz Counties

Center for Excellence in Rural Education AHEC (CERE)

431 S. Beeline Highway Ste. 1
Payson, AZ 85541
928-472-2588
Jennifer Smith, Executive Director
jennifer@ruraled.org
<https://ruraled.org/>
Service Region: Gila, Graham, Greenlee Counties

Colorado Plateau Center for Health Professions (CPCHP)

c/o North Country HealthCare
2920 North Fourth Street
Flagstaff, AZ 86004-1816
(Mailing) PO Box 3630, ZIP: 86003
928-522-9855
Marica Martinic, Director
mmartinic@nchcaz.org
<https://coloradoplateauchp.org/>
Service Region: Apache, Coconino, Navajo Counties and eastern portions of Yavapai County

Southwest Health Education Collaborative AHEC (SHEC)

c/o OnVida Health
2400 S. Avenue A
Yuma, Aza 85364
928-336-3222
Shannan Gonzalez, Center Director
SHAGonzalez@onvidahealth.org
<https://www.onvidahealth.org/south-west-health-education-collaborative/>
Service Region: La Paz, Mohave, Yuma Counties

Advisory Commission Members

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

Randall Flores
Clinical Pharmacist, Chiricahua Community Health Centers

Jessica Madrid
Nurse Practitioner, San Carlos Indian Hospital

Lura Ryden
Senior Director, Chief Nursing Officer, Banner Payson Medical Center

Ex Officio

Matthew Bertsch
Board President, CAAHEC

Kenny Evans
Board President, CERE AHEC

Juan Guerrero
Board Chair, WAHEC

Paul Ferris
Board President, CPCHP/NAHEC

Alex Berens
Board Chair, SAAHEC

Navaz Dolasa
Board President, AIH-AHEC

Leila Barraza
Director, AzAHEC

Rural and Underserved Primary Care Workforce Development

Ed Paul, AzAHEC GME Initiative Director

The Arizona State legislature appropriated 5 million dollars (SB1727) in 2023 to assist with the development and support of new primary care GME (residency training) programs in rural and underserved communities. This initiative, is housed in the AzAHEC Program. It created a GME advisory team to identify and offer start-up funding to multiple community based sites over the last two years.

Our GME initiative supports 10 sites that are engaged in developing new GME programs across the state. Seven of the 10 are located in FQHCs, one at a Tribal 638 site, one at a Rural Health Clinic on the US-Mexico border, and one based at a Critical Access Hospital. All of the sites will develop Family Medicine residency programs except for a new Psychiatry residency program at North Country Healthcare in Flagstaff.

When all programs are mature, 34 additional board certified physicians will be graduating each year in Arizona. Our plan is to double or triple this number over the next five years.

Associated with our support of new GME programs, all established and newly developing primary care GME programs in the state were invited to participate in an innovative consortium under AzAHEC. This new Primary Care GME Consortium is founded upon collaboration, that includes sharing educational resources and tools, administrative policies, scholarly activity, and faculty development.

This important work of creating additional training sites for primary care physicians and fostering collaboration among AZ residency programs will be continued for the next 5 years thanks to a generous grant from The Diane and Bruce Halle Foundation.

New AZ GME Sites				
Start-up Funding and Technical Support Provided by AZ AHEC		Location	number of slots per year	Type
Mariposa Community Health Center	Family Medicine	Nogales, AZ	4	FQHC
El Rio Community Health Center	Family Medicine	Tucson, AZ	6	FQHC
North Country HealthCare, Community Health Center	Psychiatry	Flagstaff, AZ	4	FQHC
Sun Life Health, Community Health Center	Family Medicine	Casa Grande, AZ	4	FQHC
Neighborhood Outreach Access to Health, Community Health Center	Family Medicine	Phoenix, AZ	4	FQHC
Sunset Community Health Center	Family Medicine	Yuma, AZ	2	FQHC
Regional Center for Border Health	Family Medicine	San Luis, AZ	2	RHC
Gila River Healthcare	Family Medicine	Sacaton, AZ (Tribal)	4	Tribal 638
United Community Health Center	Family Medicine	Green Valley, AZ	2	FQHC
Cobre Valley Healthcare * start-up funding pending	Family Medicine	Globe, AZ	2	CAH/RHC
Total			≈ 34	



Arizona AHEC Program

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Tucson, Arizona 85721-0425
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<https://azahec.arizona.edu/>

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Jennifer Zuñiga, BA, Associate Director
Sonia Cota-Robles, JD, PhD, Evaluation Specialist
Edgardo Figueroa, MOL, Program Manager
Alyssa Gough, BA, Grants Administrator
Nicole Paredes, MEd, Program Manager
Rachel Ramos, MBA, Grants and Contract Manager, Sr.
Colleen Reed, BA, Grants Administrator
Marni Valenzuela, MPH, Program Manager
Dan Derksen, MD, Senior Advisor AzaHEC Program & Associate VP Rural Health Workforce Development Initiatives

The Arizona AHEC Program is administered through the University of Arizona Health Sciences. The U of A Health Sciences Colleges include the College of Medicine–Tucson, College of Medicine –Phoenix, College of Nursing, College of Pharmacy (COP), and the Mel and Enid Zuckerman College of Public Health.

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Arizona AHEC Annual Report

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

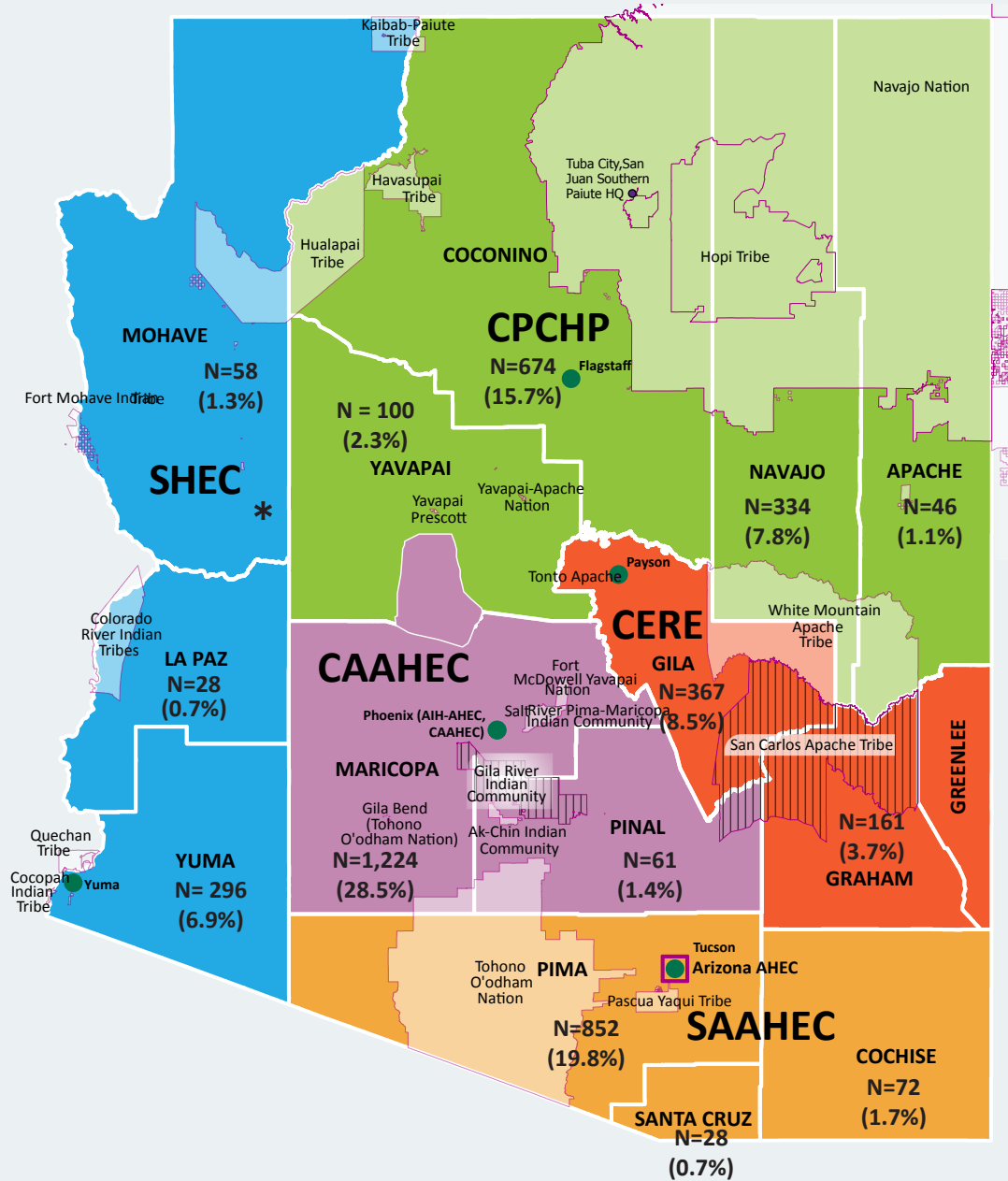
Design: Ann Garn, Arizona Center for Rural Health

Cover photo: Bonita Lake, Dan Derksen. Landscape photos by: Adobe stock

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AzaHEC Health Professions Field Experiences by County (Total N= 4,302)

Number (N) and percent (%) of field experiences for each county.



- Arizona Area Health Education Center Program (AzaHEC) Tucson
- Tribal Nations
- American Indian Health Area Health Education Center (AIH-AHEC)
- Southern Arizona Area Health Education Center (SAAHEC)
- Central Arizona Area Health Education Center (CAAHEC)
- Center for Excellence in Rural Education (CERE)
- Colorado Plateau Center for Health Professions (CPCHP)
- Southwest Health Education Collaborative (SHEC)

*Map reflects regional center (SHEC) as of FY26; Data reflects regional center (WAHEC) FY25 reach.