



MEETING: RHPP Directors and Regional Center Directors
 DATE: October 15, 2025
 TIME: 12:00 – 12:59 pm
 PLACE: AHEC Zoom Meeting
 HOST: Leila Barraza
 RHPP Director Attendees: Shelley Vaughn, Bettie Coplan, Bryna Koch, Gina Buban, Diane Nunez, Jeremy Gneck, Andrea Lerner, Christy Pacheco, Jonathan Cartsonis, Amy Kennedy, Joe Harrison
 Center Director Attendees: Marica Martinic, Jennifer Smith, Jeff Axtel, Gloria Vasquez, Yolanda Perez, Shannan Gonzalez
 Other Attendees: Jennifer Zúñiga, Sonia Cota-Robles, Alyssa Gough, Rachel Ramos, Marni Valenzuela, Nicole Paredes, Edgardo Figuero, Hildi Williams, Beth Zerr, Brooke Rector, Kelly Nguyen, Debra Illchak, Angel Sanchez, Becca Harris, Jonathan Cartsonis

ITEM	ANNOUNCEMENT/DISCUSSION	Information provided by:
Meeting 12:00pm	Welcome	Leila Barraza
Discussion	<p>AHEC Scholars Program (ASP) Fall Immersion Summary by Center</p> <p>AIH-AHEC: The Year 2 (2022–2026) scholars’ immersion took place in the Hopi community from September 26–28. Activities included a tour of the Hopi Healthcare Facility led by Dr. Vincenti and a presentation on the impact of limited emergency services within the community. A highlight of the immersion was participation in a Women’s Society Meeting and Ceremony; photography was not permitted during the event.</p> <p>The Year 1 (2025–2027) scholars’ fall immersion was held in the Navajo Nation at Fort Defiance. The agenda included a tour and historical overview of the Fort Defiance Medical Center, a presentation by a traditional healer on traditional medicine practices and their benefits, and an update on current policy initiatives related to healthcare coverage for these services. Scholars also toured the Window Rock community, visited the Navajo Nation Council Chambers, and concluded with a visit to a local grocery store to better understand food access and availability for community members of the Navajo Nation.</p> <p>CAAHEC: The fall immersions for both cohorts were held on the same weekend. The Year 2 (2024–2026) scholars’ immersion took place in Maricopa, while the Year 1 (2025–2027) scholars’ immersion was held in Wickenburg. The Year 1 immersion began with a welcome dinner to allow scholars to get acquainted. On Saturday, participants engaged in community-based activities, including a tour of the Adelante Community Health Center in Wickenburg and a presentation on transportation challenges and barriers to patient care in rural areas. Additional activities included visits to the Wickenburg Tourism Office/Chamber of Commerce and the public library, where scholars learned about available community resources.</p> <p>CPCHP: The Year 2 (2024–2026) scholars’ immersion took place in Winslow. Activities included presentations from community members, the Winslow Indian Health Care Center’s Health Promotion Programs, and the Winslow Rotary Club. Scholars toured the Little Colorado Medical Center and a local family health center and attended a community festival on Saturday evening. Planning also began for the spring immersion, which will feature a community health fair focused on children’s health and wellness. Scholars began assigning related planning tasks.</p>	<p>Jeff Axtel</p> <p>Gloria Vasques</p> <p>Marica Martiniz</p>



	<p>The Year 1 (2025–2027) scholars’ immersion occurred in Flagstaff and featured a windshield survey scavenger hunt to explore the community. Scholars were given \$3 to purchase lunch as an exercise designed to simulate living on limited food resources and used public transportation to experience challenges faced by low-income residents in Flagstaff.</p> <p>SAAHEC: The Year 1 (2025–2027) scholars’ immersion took place in Nogales and included a windshield survey of the community. Saturday’s activities featured presentations from the Chief Medical Officer at Nogales Community Health Center, a community member with lived experience in substance use, and representatives from Mariposa Community Health Center who discussed the challenges of providing care in rural communities. Scholars reported feeling motivated and inspired by the sessions.</p> <p>The Year 2 (2024–2026) scholars’ immersion was held in Bisbee, focusing on workforce development efforts. Scholars heard from the local health department about ongoing initiatives discussed in previous immersions and collaborated with a high school teacher and students to develop healthcare workforce development materials for area high schools.</p> <p>CERE: The Year 2 scholars focused their project on disparities in fetal medicine, particularly blood pressure–related morbidities. They wrote a grant proposal and obtained blood pressure cuffs from the American Heart Association, distributing them to primary care clinics due to the large number received. Additional activities included a hike, a tour of a new park under development, and attendance at a local festival.</p> <p>The Year 1 scholars completed a windshield survey scavenger hunt, during which several community members presented on local health issues. On Sunday, the superintendent of schools discussed disparities affecting homeless youth. In response, students plan to assemble kits and establish an ongoing supply chain to meet unmet hygiene needs of the homeless youth in the community.</p> <p>SHEC: The immersion included tours of San Luis, Somerton, and Yuma, with site visits to the U.S.–Mexico border, a group lunch in the San Luis area, and participation in a local festival on Saturday evening. Sunday activities included work sessions, with planning underway for a health fair at the next immersion.</p> <p>Fall Immersion Satisfaction Survey Results A total of 84 anonymous participants from the six centers provided feedback on the community immersions. Overall, participants reported that the experience enhanced their understanding of rural and medically underserved communities. Some participants noted that receiving relevant information earlier and in a timelier manner would have been helpful. Others suggested that additional time engaging with the community and more team-building opportunities within their cohort would have further enriched the experience. A full report will be distributed to all Center and RHPP Directors.</p> <p>AHEC Scholars Program Participation Update A total of 219 scholars is currently active in the program. The 2024–2026 cohort includes 117 scholars, and the 2025–2027 cohort includes 102 scholars. The charts below reflect the breakdown of each cohort by RHPP and by Center.</p> <p>AHEC Scholars Program Deadline Reminders 1. For Centers:</p>	<p>Yolanda Perez</p> <p>Jennifer Smith</p> <p>Shannon Gonzales</p> <p>Sonia Cota Robles</p> <p>Nicole Paredes</p>
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	<p>a. Friday, 10/17- Fall Immersion attendance in Salesforce is due. Upload to Notes and Attachments section:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Final immersion agenda ii. Multi-media release forms for each cohort iii. Photos and Videos <p>b. 11/15- Faculty Mentor Monthly seminar material due</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. All have been sent a calendar invite-deadline reminder. ii. Link to upload material: https://uarizona.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_bkID6HhA4LluSxM <p>2. For RHPPs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Scholar quarterly validation will be sent this week. Due on 11/15/25 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Upload completed spreadsheet https://uarizona.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_doEha6z4lhuV3z8 <p>2026 RHPP Conference The 14th Annual RHPP Conference will be held on April 10-11, 2026. Due to budgetary constraints and the ongoing student rotations in rural and underserved areas, the conference will be continued to be offered virtually in 2026, as in prior years. Satellite viewing locations will continue to be supported by AzaAHEC. CAAHEC has confirmed they are available to host a satellite location in 2026. Conference planning will begin shortly. Email reminders will be sent soon inviting participation on the Planning Committee.</p> <p>Next Meeting The next Center/RHPP director meeting will be 11/19/25 via zoom.</p>	<p>Jennifer Zuniga</p>
<p>Ended 12:59 pm</p>		



FY26 AHEC Scholars by Center by Cohort

AHEC Region	Active Scholars
2024/2026 Two Year Traditional Scholar	117
AIHAHEC	18
CAAHEC	19
CERE-AHEC	21
NAHEC	19
SAAHEC	19
SHEC	21
2025/2027 Two Year Traditional Scholar	102
AIHAHEC	16
CAAHEC	17
CERE-AHEC	17
NAHEC	18
SAAHEC	18
SHEC	16
Grand Total	219



FY26 AHEC Scholars by RHPP by Cohort

RHPP	Count of AHEC Scholars Cohort
2024/2026 Two Year Traditional Scholar	117
ASU College of Nursing and Health Innovation	13
NAU Department of Physical Therapy and Athletic Training	5
NAU Department of Physician Assistant Studies	54
NAU School of Nursing	2
UA College of Medicine - Phoenix	8
UA College of Medicine - Tucson	2
UA College of Nursing	15
UA College of Pharmacy	13
UA College of Public Health	5
2025/2027 Two Year Traditional Scholar	102
ASU College of Nursing and Health Innovation	13
NAU Department of Occupational Therapy	4
NAU Department of Physical Therapy and Athletic Training	5
NAU Department of Physician Assistant Studies	48
NAU School of Nursing	2
UA College of Medicine - Phoenix	6
UA College of Medicine - Tucson	1
UA College of Nursing	10
UA College of Pharmacy	12
UA College of Public Health	1
Grand Total	219