



COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

MEETING: AHEC Commission Meeting
 DATE: February 26, 2026
 TIME: 12:00-12:49pm
 PLACE: AHEC Zoom Meeting
 HOST: Jennifer Zúñiga
 COMMISSIONERS: Michael Allison, Randall Flores, Paul Ferris, Kenny Evans, Hannah Ponder, Navaz Dolasa, Sharon Taylor
 AHEC CENTER DIRECTORS: Marica Martinic, Gloria Vasquez, Shannan Gonzalez, Yolanda Perez
 OTHERS: Matthew Bertsch, Rachel Ramos, Nicole Paredes, Marni Valenzuela, Alyssa Gough, Colleen Reed, Matt Stelling, Gina Buban, Amy Kennedy, Hildi Williams, Shelley Vaughn, Bryna Koch, Angel Sanchez, Brooke Rector

ITEM	ANNOUNCEMENT/DISCUSSION	Information provided by:
Called to order	Welcome	Jennifer Zúñiga
Meeting Minutes	<p>Quorum confirmed; introduction of attendees.</p> <p>Review and approval of November 20, 2025 meeting minutes; motioned for approval by Kenny Evans, second by Paul Ferris. Approved by all commissioners in attendance.</p>	Jennifer Zúñiga
Director's Updates		
Financial Report	A financial update was provided for Quarter 2, highlighting predictable mid-year spending patterns and stable lottery revenue projections. Federal and state funds are tracking appropriately. There are no fiscal/compliance issues.	Rachel Ramos
Programmatic Report	<p>A programmatic update was provided for Quarter 2, highlighting achievement toward HRSA performance goals. FY26 goals have already been met or are close to being met at mid-year (i.e., 12/31/25).</p> <p>For Centers: The 1,010 unique health professions trainees reported as of 12/31/25 is 140% of the goal of 720. The 325 pipeline (Grades 9-12) participants is 45% of the goal of 720 structured pipeline participants. This is excellent given that most pipeline programs begin after mid-year. The 2,038 continuing education/continuing health profession participants is 113% of the goal of 1,800 participants.</p> <p>For RHPPS, the 556 unique health profession trainees reported is 83% of the goal of 667.</p> <p>Two hundred nineteen (219) AHEC Scholars have been identified by RHPPs and supported by Regional Centers, achieving HRSA goals.</p>	Jennifer Zúñiga
Regional Center Presentations	<p>CPCHP: We are excited to report that the new Psychiatry residency program received ACGME accreditation. We will start recruiting faculty members and residents for a 2027 start. The Family Medicine residency program is waiting for match results for their next resident. Recent financial challenges haven't impacted the FM faculty or residents. The program has remained stable despite the changes. Our youth programs have shown the highest enrollment in many years. With 159 participants so far, we are way ahead of the goal of 120. However, we do not have as much capacity for clinical rotations right now due to the financial challenges. Our AHEC Scholars had successful immersions in January (Year 1) and February (Year 2). The Year 1 cohort was in Flagstaff for a sexual health clinic and presentations from the Food Bank, Crisis Mobile Unit, and Community Assistance Teams (C.A.T.s), a non-profit helping unsheltered</p>	Marica Martinic



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	<p>residents with essential supplies. They also attended a tour of Flagstaff Medical Center and HOPE. The Year 2 cohort was in Winslow for a community fair at the Health Center. This event had 68 participants, a great turnout. We are in process of being acquired by another fed qualified health center. This is scheduled to be finalized on April 1. Updates are forthcoming.</p> <p>CERE: We are pleased to announce that we are well ahead of our performance goals for this year. 140 students have requested support and most of those students did receive support. We have had 560 rotations so far, with 233 unique students. For AHEC Scholars, the Year 1 cohort prepared poster presentations and planned their service-learning projects for Year 2. The Year 2 cohort put finishing touches on their service-learning projects before spending an afternoon at the free clinic where they worked with leadership and helped the residency program with QAQC and tracking metrics. Our K – 16 program is robust and our enrichment program at Payson High School is going very well, with 8 video presentations created for students so far. Our scrubs camp has partnered with the local community colleges in Payson and Globe. Continuing Medical Education is moving along well also. 174 continuing professional development attendees have been reported so far. We are at 100% for our scope of work requirements and are now looking for overperformance.</p> <p>CAAHEC: We have partnered with Collaborative Health Sciences to conduct a survey for school admins to determine what courses are offered and if there are any clubs like HOSA that we might be able to support. We are looking into shadowing or training opportunities for students after they graduate from high school. Among other events, we are also helping with two IHART (national nonprofit) events scheduled for April, one at A. T. Still University in Mesa and one at University of Arizona in Tucson. These events will be titled “Rising Healers: A Native American Youth Health Expo.” One program alumna said that she was able to get a job in an Arizona State University lab because of her experience in this program. For AHEC Scholars, the Year 1 cohort attended a pow-wow in the Wickenburg community and toured Wickenburg Hospital. The Year 2 cohort worked with Project Salt, a nonprofit organization committed to making a positive impact in the Wickenburg area. There was scavenger hunt on Sunday. We are in phase 1 of getting our reaccreditation from ACGME. This is due at the end of March. We’ll know by October if we are reaccredited. For CBETS, we are on track to overperform.</p> <p>AIH: Our pipeline activities include a Research Mentors program that offers clinical research for high school students. This is tied in with other areas of clinical healthcare and provides a great opportunity to analyze and discuss articles. A poster presentation is coming next weekend. The students will choose a research topic, find articles, and create a presentation that looks like an advanced degree presentation. Our Year 1 AHEC Scholars were in Fort Defiance in the Navajo Nation where they had a tour of the Navajo Council Chambers and participated in a scavenger hunt at the Gallup Flea Market. The Year 2 cohort will have their community immersion on the weekend of March 27-29.</p>	<p>Kenny Evans</p> <p>Gloria Vasquez</p> <p>Angel Sanchez</p>
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	<p>SHEC: Our CBET numbers are improving as we refine our processes and become more familiar with Salesforce. We are right at 97 unique trainees with more waiting to be validated, putting us on track to meet our performance goals. We have a new Radiology program with Arizona Western College and will be supporting those trainees with their travel. Our Year 1 AHEC Scholars cohort was at the Food Bank in Yuma to provide community awareness about diabetes. They also had a “date night” in the date fields outside of Yuma. The Year 2 cohort participated in a community health fair at the Crossroads Mission in Yuma, hosting three different booths. On Sunday, there was a panel of providers from various specialties, with one speaker a former AHEC Scholar. We have lots of other things underway with Arizona Western College and other local university campuses as we build our presence in La Paz and Mojave. One continuing education event is planned for each location and will be virtually streamed as well now that we have that capability. This will allow for additional CE opportunities.</p> <p>SAAHEC: We started recruitment efforts for our summer program at El Rio, an exploration health academy. That program has 83 applications already in progress. The first week will be for freshmen and sophomores; the second week will be for juniors and seniors. We have another summer program that lasts 6 weeks and is for rising high school seniors. We developed two new high school HOSA chapters in addition to other pipeline programs. For CME, our biggest annual research and innovation summit will take place on May 7. This is a poster fair on the first day and a conference on the second day. Additionally, we are developing CME workshops in the fall and spring. These will be designed to meet the needs of partners, for example those hoping to start a residency program. For AHEC Scholars, the Year 1 cohort was in Nogales with their faculty mentor where they toured the Crossroads Mission and met with representatives from the Marana Health Center, Adult Protective Services, and Population Health. They also attended a car show put on by a Nogales High School student. The Year 2 cohort was in Bisbee with their faculty mentor where they gave workshops to high school students. Workshops included CPR, suturing, public health, and PT. Our CBET numbers are strong at 79% of the Scope of Work goals at mid-year.</p>	<p>Shannan Gonzalez</p> <p>Yolanda Perez</p>
<p>Other Business</p>	<p>The 2026 Interprofessional Rural Health Professions Program Conference will be held on Friday, April 10 and Saturday, April 11 via Zoom. This conference represents the work of RHPP students and AHEC Scholars. An agenda and registration link will be distributed shortly.</p>	<p>Jennifer Zúñiga</p>
<p>Ended 12:49pm</p>	<p>Next meeting on May 28, 2026, at noon. Meeting adjourned.</p>	