Learning Objectives

• Describe the AHEC Scholars Program and the benefits of participating for future health care professionals.
• Recognize opportunities to be involved in and support the AHEC Scholars Program.
• Generate additional ideas for interprofessional education and collaboration.

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What is AHEC?

- Area Health Education Center
- National program funded since 1970s by HRSA
- Purpose: To meet the health care needs of rural and underserved communities through robust community-academic partnerships that educate and train future and current health care workers
- PA AHEC based at Penn State College of Medicine with 7 regional centers across state
- Work with medical, dental, nursing, pharmacy, and other health professions schools
- Network of partners and clinical preceptors across PA
What is the AHEC Scholars Program?

• New program organized by all AHECs nationwide
• For health professions students interested in supplementing their education by gaining additional knowledge and experience in rural and/or underserved urban settings

• 6 core topic areas
  o Interprofessional Education/Collaboration
  o Behavioral Health Integration
  o Social Determinants of Health
  o Cultural Competency
  o Practice Transformation
  o Current/Emerging Issues (opioids, obesity, Zika virus, etc.)
PA AHEC Scholars Program
https://www.paahecscholars.org/

• 2-year interprofessional program
  o 40 hours interactive online didactics each year
  o 40 hours community-based experiences each year
  o Scholarly service learning / research projects
  o Opportunities to shadow / network with professionals providing care in communities with limited resources

• Certificate awarded upon program completion

• Eligibility criteria
  o Be enrolled in health professions education training program in PA
  o Have reliable access to a computer and Wi-Fi Internet access
  o Have reliable transportation to regional meetings/observations
  o Have interest in rural / underserved care
PA Scholar Experiences So Far

• Deeper dive into topics than classes
• Like learning from and networking with one another
• Online modules are well organized
• Good hands-on work experience with community
• Learning things about myself and my community
• Not a burden and learned a lot so far
• Looks good on resume
• Favorite modules: poverty, social determinants of health, interprofessional education, rural health
• 93% already have or would recommend to peers
Seeking Partners

- Didactic module development
- Live and online discussion leaders
- Community-based experience sites
- Scholar recruitment / promotion
  - April 30, 2019 Cohort #2 Application Due Date
- Evaluation / publications / posters
Would love your ideas to facilitate even more interprofessional education and collaboration!

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