



PA AHEC Scholars Program

Pat Bricker, PA AHEC Program Manager
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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
 - Interprofessional Education/Collaboration
 - Behavioral Health Integration
 - Social Determinants of Health
 - Cultural Competency
 - Practice Transformation
 - Current/Emerging Issues (opioids, obesity, Zika virus, etc.)



PA AHEC Scholars Program

<https://www.paahecscholars.org/>

- 2-year interprofessional program
 - 40 hours interactive online didactics each year
 - 40 hours community-based experiences each year
 - Scholarly service learning / research projects
 - Opportunities to shadow / network with professionals providing care in communities with limited resources
- Certificate awarded upon program completion
- Eligibility criteria
 - Be enrolled in health professions education training program in PA
 - Have reliable access to a computer and Wi-Fi Internet access
 - Have reliable transportation to regional meetings/observations
 - 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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pbricker@pennstatehealth.psu.edu

