

Alaska AHEC Program 2016 Annual Report



UAA Alaska Center for
Rural Health and Health Workforce
UNIVERSITY of ALASKA ANCHORAGE

 **AlaskaAHEC**
Area Health Education Centers

AHEC Mission and Organization

Area Health Education Centers (AHECs) are academic and community-based partnerships engaged in primary care workforce engagement, training, recruiting and retaining activities to improve the distribution, diversity, supply and quality of the healthcare workforce.

The national AHEC program is funded by the Health Resources and Services Administration, Bureau of Health Workforce (HRSA). The Alaska AHEC began at the University of Alaska Anchorage in 2005 and was the first in the country to be awarded to a School of Nursing, rather than a School of Medicine. The five Alaska regional centers conduct educational activities to engage and expose students to primary care delivery in a rural or underserved setting, and to provide Continuing Education/Professional Development (CE/PD) to current health professionals.

Letter from the Director

This year was jam-packed with exciting new programs and a multitude of future opportunities. It has been rewarding to watch students take part in these experiences. The Alaska AHEC launched the Rural Immersion Institute of the North (RIIN), a statewide program focused on inspiring undergraduates from across the country to pursue careers in rural health. Behavioral Health Career Pathways expanded with two new sites and a new funding stream to continue growth in the next 3 years. Our network of staff and partnerships is stronger than ever before.

This year has also been overshadowed with unknowns... Alaska is in the midst of a complete renovation of the healthcare system. Medicaid and Criminal Justice Reform are at the forefront of state politics. The National AHEC Program is also at the brink of transformation with discussions of redesign leading the way to the next grant funding opportunity for the cycle beginning in 2017. Despite this climate of uncertainty, the AHEC remains committed to our mission of strengthening Alaska's healthcare workforce. One thing is certain, the AHEC will continue to play a key role in improving the healthcare system for all Alaskans.



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Director, Alaska's AHEC
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Meet the newest member of our team



Gregory Navitsky is the Yukon Kuskokwim region AHEC Executive Director. He holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Education from Tufts University and a Master's Degree in International Administration from Endicott College. His work experience includes national and international K-12 education and coordination, fulltime fine arts professor at the College of Micronesia, museum educator at the Anchorage Museum, Native Alaskan art sales agent and fulltime educational volunteer in the Federated States of Micronesia.

Northwest AHEC

Hosted at Ilisagvik College
Amanda Sialofi, Director
Lauren Kelly becomes the new director in fall 2016.
lauren.kelly@ilisagvik.edu

Interior AHEC

Hosted at Fairbanks Memorial Hospital
Lillian Ruedrich, Director
Tabitha Crocker becomes the new director in fall 2016.
tabitha.crocker@bannerhealth.com

Southcentral AHEC

Hosted by Alaska Primary Care Association at Providence Health and Services Alaska
Mariko Selle, Director
mariko.selle@providence.org

Yukon Kuskokwim AHEC

Hosted at Yukon Kuskokwim Health Corporation
Greggory Navitsky, Director
Greggory_Navitsky@ykhc.org

Southeast AHEC

Hosted at Peacehealth
Ketchikan Medical Center
Carlen Williams, Director
cwilliams@peacehealth.org

Alaska AHEC Steering Committee

The Alaska AHEC Steering Committee's role is to advise program activities and advocate for sustainability. Each member plays a vital role in ensuring that the Alaska AHEC remains a viable statewide resource and meets the needs of our diverse healthcare industry.

Suzanne Allen, MD, MPH, Assistant Dean, Regional Affairs and Rural Health, UW School of Medicine
Barbara Berner, EdD, APRN, FNP-BC, FAANP, Director, School of Nursing, University of Alaska Anchorage

Patricia Carr, MPH, Director, Alaska State Office of Rural Health, State of Alaska, Division of Public Health

Curtis Clough, State CTE Administrator, State of Alaska, Department of Education & Early Development

Terri Doughfman-Billings, Assistant Director of Nursing, Maniilaq Health Center

Paula Easley, Member, Board of Trustees, Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority

Jan Harris, DHA FACHE, Center Director, Alaska Center for Rural Health and Health Workforce, University of Alaska/UAA

Kathleen Hollis, Director, Mission Services, Providence Health and Services Alaska

Birgit Meany, EdD, Dean of Instruction, Ilisagvik College

Nancy Merriman, MPH, MBA, Chair, Executive Director, Alaska Primary Care Association

Jeannie Monk, Senior Program Officer, Alaska State Hospitals and Nursing Homes Association

Thomas Nighswander, MD, MPH, Assistant Dean, Alaska WWAMI Regional Affairs, UW School of Medicine

Vacant, PeaceHealth Ketchikan Medical Center

Vacant, Yukon Kuskokwim Health Corporation

Fred Villa, Associate Vice President, UA Workforce Programs, University of Alaska

Nicole Welch, Chief Human Resources Officer, Fairbanks Memorial Hospital

Elizabeth Woodyard, MEd, MSN, Vice Chair, Chief Executive Officer, Petersburg Medical Center

Health Careers Promotion and Preparation

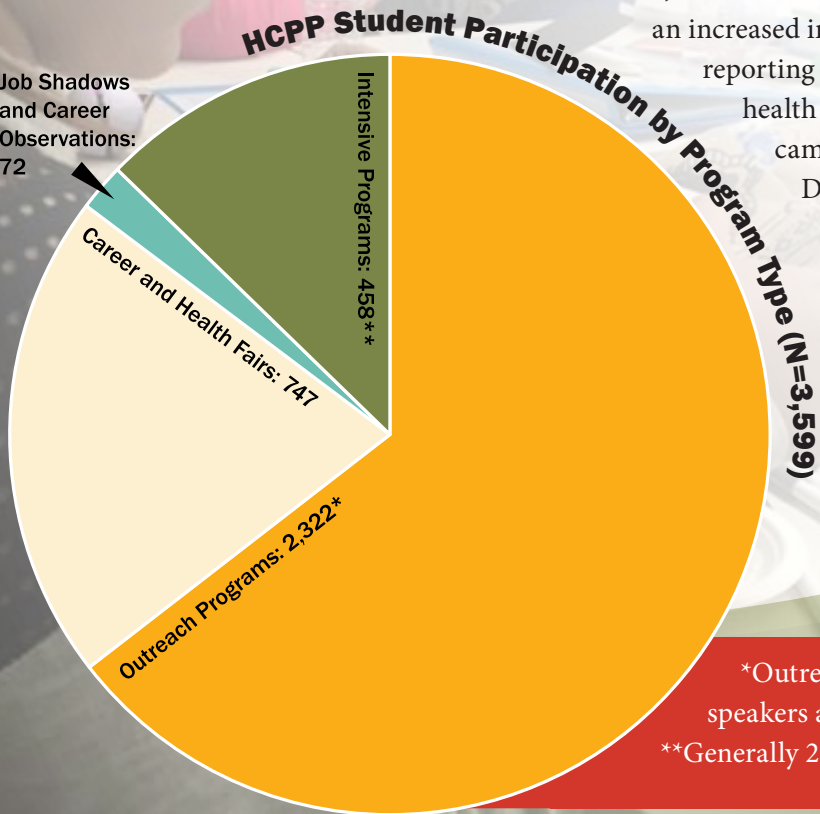
HCPP engages Alaskans of all ages into health careers. This year marks the launch and expansion of programming from primary school through undergraduates:

- RIIN Program launched its pilot year in June with 14 participants and 8 rural sites throughout the state
- Behavioral Health Career Pathways expanded to 2 new sites with funding secured through 2019
- Southcentral AHEC launched the Junior Scrubs Academy and complementary “pop-up camps” for 6-12 year olds in partnership with the Municipality of Anchorage
- Continued partnership with ANSEP to provide health science experiences to middle and high school students
- Interior AHEC partnered with the UAF BLaST program to provide hospital based experiences for undergraduates

Behavioral Health Career Pathways

In response to industry needs, AHEC began to focus specifically on behavioral health workforce development in 2015 with some seed funding from the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority (AMHTA). This funding helped to launch a pilot behavioral health camp in summer 2015. In 2016, the AHEC applied for and received both a Carl Perkins Postsecondary CTE Planning and Implementation grant. These funds, paired with additional support from AMHTA and HRSA allowed for the expansion of Behavioral Health Career Pathways through 2019. 2016 summer camps were located in Barrow, Anchorage and Fairbanks. The program consists of a one-week camp for students ages 15-19 with a focus on behavioral health topics including substance abuse, self-care, grief, mental illness and career opportunities. All participants have the opportunity to earn Mental Health First Aid Certification and college credit. The AHEC continues to engage participants by providing future dual credit opportunities to earn general education requirements for college.

To date, there have been 58 total participants with 83% reporting an increased interest in behavioral health careers and 95% reporting an increase in knowledge about behavioral health after the camp. 3 participants from the 2015 camp earned dual credit for PSY150: Lifespan Development in summer 2016. AHECs in Montana & Washington are modeling similar programs in their states. The camps will rotate regionally and 2017 camps will be located in Ketchikan, Bethel, Nome and Anchorage. For more information, visit the AHEC website at www.bit.ly/AKAHEC.



*Outreach programs include presentations, tours, speakers and career exploration days.
**Generally 20 hours or more.

Certificates for Training

117 students earned certificates in AHEC programming this year in the following areas:

- Emergency Trauma Technician
- First Aid
- CPR
- Mental Health First Aid
- Blood-borne Pathogens
- Certified Nursing Assistant
- Medical Office Assistant
- Dental Health Aide Therapist

Rural Immersion Institute of the North (RIIN)

In 2013, the Alaska AHEC began exploring opportunities for social enterprise. Facing continued budget cuts and increasing workforce needs, the AHEC needed to focus on program income and diversified funding streams. As the program explored potential sources of revenue, the

idea to capitalize on the market of students interested in experiencing rural healthcare in Alaska came to the surface. The Rural Immersion Institute of the North (RIIN) was born... a simple idea melding together the wonders of Alaska and the realities of rural healthcare practice to inspire a generation of future providers dedicated to practicing in America’s neediest communities.

Fourteen participants flew into Anchorage, AK with limited expectations, knowing they were the first to take part in RIIN. By the end of the 3-week experience, the participants left with new friendships, inspiration and knowledge. As one student shared, “RIIN gave me the experience of a lifetime, something I will never forget.” During the orientation week in Anchorage, participants were provided with a foundation of Alaska’s healthcare system. Students also experienced Alaska firsthand with hiking tours and visits to the Alaska Native Heritage Center. Following this week of intensive preparation, the students ventured out to rural clinical sites. The “rural week” was packed with job shadowing and community based immersion experiences including health clinics, emergency rooms, rehabilitation, tribal health, behavioral health and hospital settings. Overall, the pilot program was deemed a great success with preliminary participant evaluations exceeding programmatic expectations.

HOSA

HOSA is an international student organization recognized by the U.S. Department of Education and the Health Science Education Division of Career and Technical Education. HOSA’s two-fold mission is to promote career opportunities in the healthcare industry and to enhance the delivery of quality healthcare to all people. The Alaska AHEC has supported HOSA since 2011. The program grew slowly to start, but the past couple of years have generated a strong advisor and student base in schools throughout the state. HOSA is a student-centered organization which focuses on leadership, health career exploration, and competitive events involving the health sciences at annual state- and national conferences.

The AHEC has worked diligently to fine tune long-term tracking methodology for evaluation of youth programs like HOSA. As a result, there have been 571 total HOSA participants of which 87% have been successfully tracked and/or monitored to date.

For more information, see the HOSA website at www.scahecak.org/hosa.html

Where are they now?

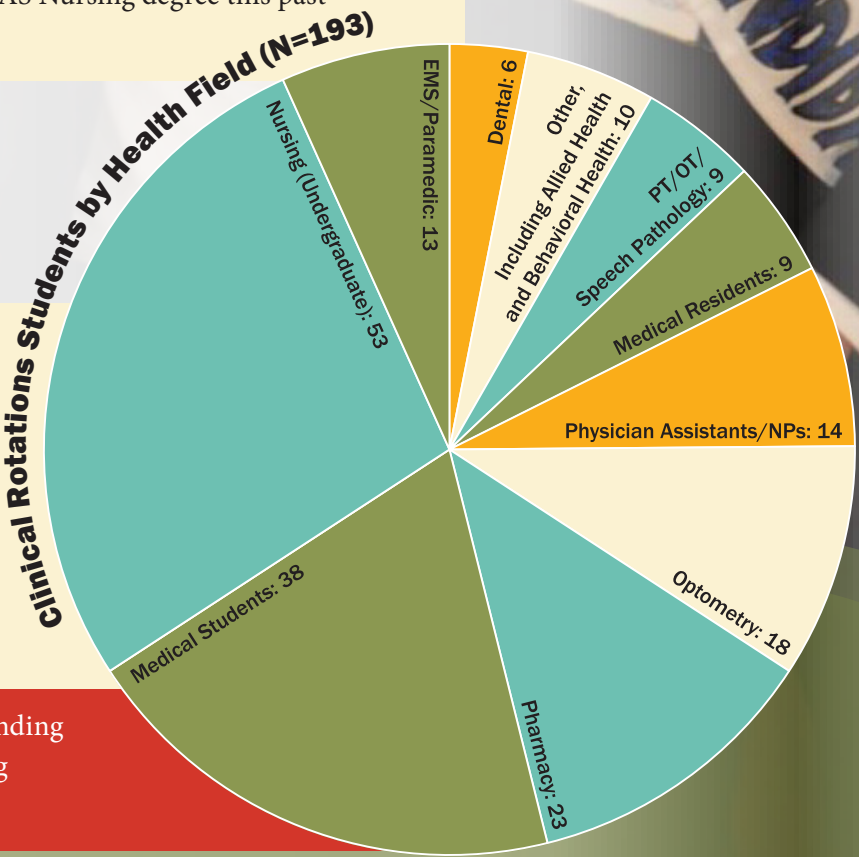
Of 495 HOSA participants:

- 25% are still enrolled in high school.
- Of the remaining participants, 89% are known to have graduated from high school.
- 77% of the HOSA high school graduates have at least some college coursework.
- 61% of those with college coursework are majoring in health or science with another 28% in general studies or undeclared.
- 1 student earned a Pharmacy Technology Occupational Endorsement and has gone on to pre-nursing and 1 student earned their AAS Nursing degree this past spring

Clinical Rotations

Clinical rotations are typically required clinical experiences that students must complete in order to successfully finish their program. AHEC strives to facilitate rotations at rural and underserved sites in Alaska to expose students to care delivery in these settings, where hard-to-fill vacancies persist.

In 2016 AHEC assisted 193 students with either finding placements for their clinical rotations or providing financial support for these rotations.

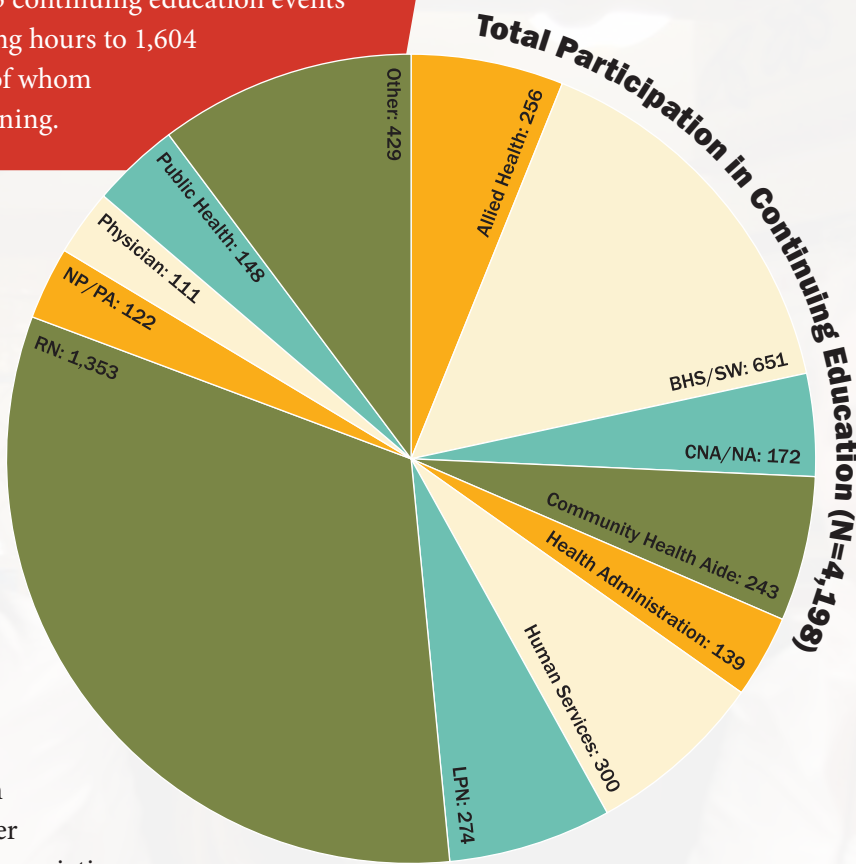


Alaska AHECs provided 233 continuing education events and 6,501 participant training hours to 1,604 health professionals, many of whom attended more than one training.

Continuing Education

To support health professional workforce retention and growth across Alaska, the AHEC provides continuing education and professional development (CE/PD) opportunities through partnerships with other health organizations, associations, and state programs or by developing individual events. Highlighted activities for FY 2016 include:

- Jointly provided workshops - Post Concussion and Brain Injury: Assessment and Treatment; Complex Trauma and Addiction; Alaska Anti-microbial Stewardship
- Rural Veterans Health Access Webinars –Focused on Traumatic Brain Injury. Sponsored through a grant received by the Alaska DHSS.
- Annual Geriatric Education Series – Coordination of twenty 1.5 hour weekly webinars broadcast from the University of Washington to over 30 host sites across Alaska.
- Improving HPV Vaccination rates in Alaska, Oregon, Idaho, and Washington – Training providers across the Northwest region in partnership with the American Cancer Society. This is a multi-year National AHEC Organization (NAO) project funded by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).



Webinar and Live Training Evaluation Results

Measures	Number	Percentage
Completed evaluations	1536	81%
Number of participants who increased their knowledge	1241	81%
Number of providers who planned to implement changes in their practice	948	62%
Number of participants applying contact hours to a license or certification	1169	76%

**Alaska Center for Rural Health and Health Workforce
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Alaska CACHE: www.akcache.org

Alaska AHEC manages the Alaska CACHE, a Clearinghouse for Alaska's Continuing Health Education. This web resource connects all health professionals, associations and facilities to CE/CME opportunities in our state—a great benefit to our time-challenged healthcare providers.

Alaska AHEC Clearinghouse for Clinical Rotations: www.alaskaahec-rotations.org

The Alaska Clearinghouse for Clinical Rotations provides information for students looking for clinical rotation placements in Alaska. The website includes information about our regional AHEC centers, frequently asked questions, cultural attunement modules and a downloadable application.



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Area Health Education Centers

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