

NEW MEXICO AHEC

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NEW MEXICO

- The 5th largest state geographically in the United States and one of four “minority majority” states, sparsely populated New Mexico enjoys a rich blend of Hispanic, Native American, African American, and Anglo Cultures.
- 30% of New Mexico’s population live in rural/ frontier areas.
- Experiencing some of the highest rates in poverty, health inequities and poor health outcomes in the nation, New Mexico has documented shortages in all areas of the health professional workforce.

AHEC MISSION

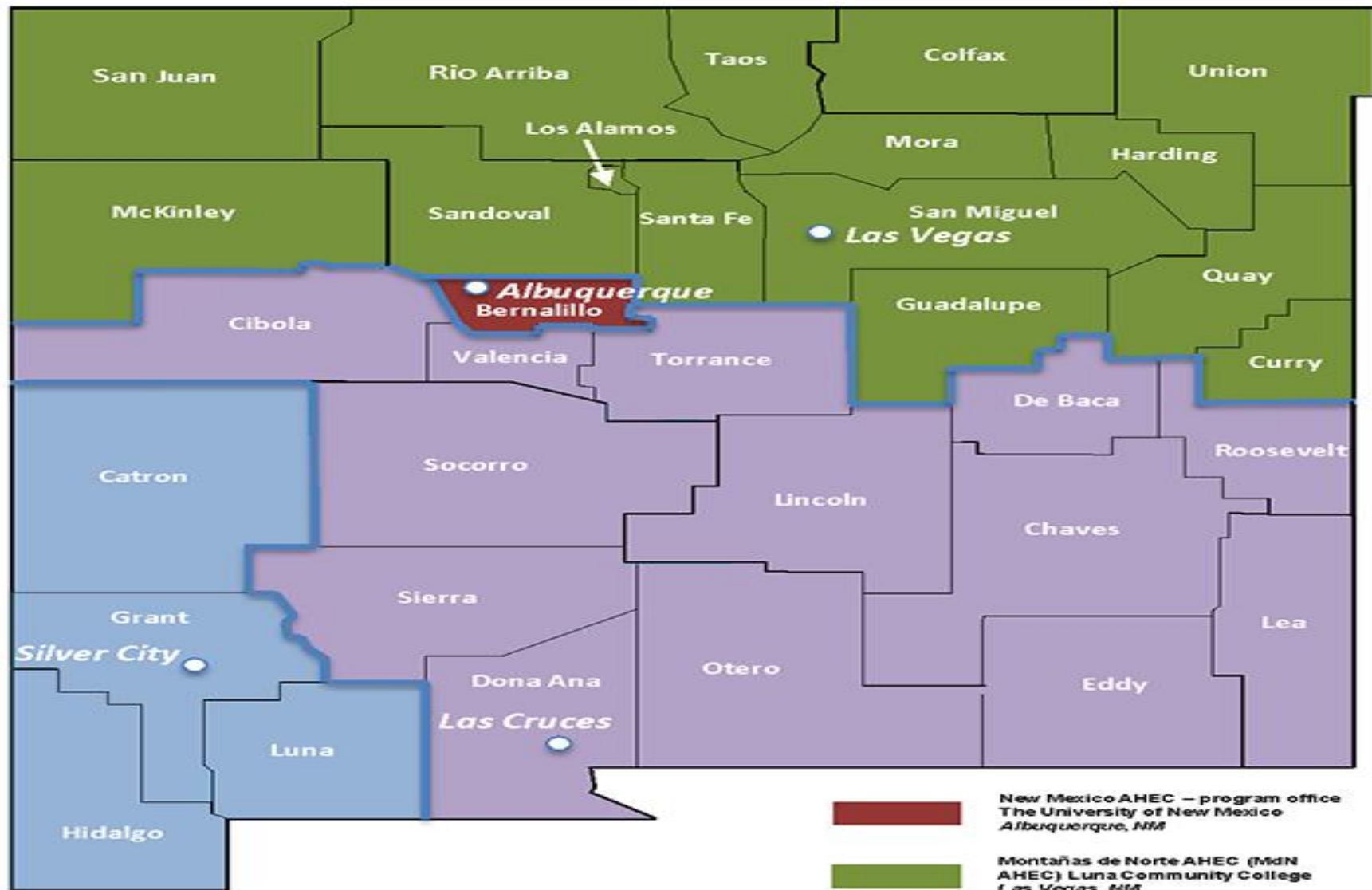


“To enhance access to quality health care, particularly primary and preventative care by improving the supply and distribution of health care professionals through community-academic partnerships.”



WHAT IS AHEC?

- The New Mexico Area Health Education Center (NM AHEC) is part of the federally funded Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) and a member of the National AHEC Organization, which has been active since 1971. The NM AHEC is one of more than 300 AHEC program offices and centers that serve over 85% of United States counties. NM AHEC's program office is located at the University of New Mexico, school of medicine, and is housed under the Dept. of Family and Community Medicine. NM has three AHEC Centers: Southern Area Health Education Center (SoAHEC) in Las Cruces, Montañas Del Norte (MdN) in Las Vegas, and Forward NM, (FNM) in Silver City.



NM Area Health Education Centers Network

- New Mexico AHEC – program office
The University of New Mexico
Albuquerque, NM
- Montañas de Norte AHEC (MdN AHEC)
Luna Community College
Las Vegas, NM
- Southern AHEC (SoAHEC)
Southwest Center for Health Innovations
Las Cruces, NM
- Forward NMA AHEC (FNMAAHEC)
Southwest Center for Health Innovations
Silver City, NM

GOAL OF AHEC

- Diversity, Distribution & Practice Transformation
- Develop the health professional pipeline for underserved communities by engaging with young people in schools and through special events.
- Encourage health professions students to work in underserved communities by providing financial support for clinical rotations in rural and underserved settings.
- Support health professional retention and culturally sensitive, regionally appropriate health care through continuing education.
- The MdN AHEC is located on the campus of Luna Community College and serves 15 counties in Northern NM.

HEALTH PROFESSION SHORTAGE AREA



- There are not enough health care professionals in New Mexico to meet the population's need for health care services. The demand for health care workers and providers is much greater than the supply of graduates in the health field. The state of New Mexico ranks at the bottom in terms of the number of dentists, nurses, physicians, pharmacists, nurse aides, psychologists, and other health care workers.

4 PRIMARY AREAS OF FOCUS

- The New Mexico AHEC Scholars Program
- Community-based Clinical Experiential Training
- Health Career/ Pipeline Activities
- Continuing Education Training

NEW MEXICO AHEC SCHOLARS PROGRAM

- The Area Health Education Center's (AHEC) are a federally funded, nation-wide initiative to create a cadre of health professionals across disciplines who are committed to providing health care to those living in rural and medically underserved communities. They will gain the skills necessary to be leaders in inter-professional clinical teams and practice transformation in primary care.

NEW MEXICO AHEC SCHOLARS PROGRAM

- In New Mexico, the AHEC Scholars Program will enroll at least 45 students per year from across universities and colleges in a variety of health professional programs, such as graduate counseling/ psychology, dental, medicine, nursing (graduate and undergraduate), occupational therapy, pharmacy, physical therapy, physician assistant, graduate population/ public health, rehabilitation services, and social work. Educational support stipends are available.

EXPECTATIONS OF THE PROGRAM

- AHEC Scholars will complete 40 hours per year of didactic training and 40 hours per year of community-based experiential (i.e., clinical) training for a total 80 hours didactic and 80 clinical hours over the course of the 2-year program. Currently, we are recruiting for cohort 6 which will be from January 2024 – August 2025.

EXPECTATIONS OF THE PROGRAM

- A significant part of the didactic training will include intensive systems leadership workshops with the NMAHEC Scholar cohort.
- Scholars will participate in a series of Primary Care Area Health Education Center TeleECHO clinics. The first of its kind TeleECHO clinic will introduce AHEC scholars to inter-professional problem-based clinical didactics that will focus on the core topic areas as a part of the common primary care case studies. These case studies will be drawn from the experiences of the AHEC scholars, other health professions students, and clinic faculty.
- Community-based clinical experiences will be part of the students' regular health profession programs' curriculum, not additional hours.

AHEC SCHOLARS PROGRAM FOCUS

- **Inter-professional education** – coordinated, patient centered model of health care that involves understanding of the contributions of multiple health care professionals.
- **Behavioral health integration** – promotes the development of integrated primary and behavioral health services to better address the needs of individuals with mental health and substance use conditions.


- **Social determinants of health** – economic Stability, education, social and community context, health and health care, and neighborhood and built environment – and their impact on health.
- **Cultural Competency** – improving individual health and building healthy communities by training health care providers to recognize and address the unique culture, language, and health literacy of diverse communities.

AHEC SCHOLARS PROGRAM FOCUS



- **Practice transformation** – aims to fully support quality improvement and patient-centered care through goal-setting, leadership, practice facilitation, workflow changes, measuring outcomes, and adapting organizational tools and processes to support new team-based models of care delivery.
- **Current and emerging health issues** (opioids, COVID, etc.)

BENEFITS OF AHEC SCHOLARS PROGRAM

- Graduates of the AHEC Scholars Program will be leaders in their fields, having gained knowledge, skills and training to improve primary care practice outcomes through inter-professional and collaborative training and experience.
- In addition, NM AHEC Scholars will receive 

- Formal certificate of completion.
- Intensive leadership training and skill development.
- Expert mentorship and training by recognized faculty.
- Participation in the path-breaking Primary Care Area Health Education Center TeleECHO clinic.
- Program specific benefits including academic credit.



AHEC
SCHOLARS

Explore beyond the classroom.
As an Area Health Education Center Scholar, you will be a leader in your field!

If you're looking to graduate from your health professions program with distinction, consider applying to become an AHEC Scholar. While in their program of study, AHEC Scholars gain additional knowledge in key areas via didactic and experiential education.



CORE TOPICS

- Interprofessional Education
- Behavioral Health Integration
- Social Determinants of Health
- Cultural Competency
- Practice Transformation
- Current and Emerging Health Issues



REQUIREMENTS

- Must be a health profession student
- 40 hours per year of community-based experiential (i.e., clinical) training.
- 40 hours per year of didactic training



BENEFITS

- Enhance healthcare knowledge in clinical and community settings
- Positively impact underserved communities
- Engage with interdisciplinary teams
- Gain career development skills
- Resume building opportunities
- Networking with like-minded healthcare providers
- *Educational Support Stipends available*

For questions or assistance with application please contact NMAHECScholars@salud.unm.edu

COMMUNITY BASED EXPERIENTIAL TRAINING

- To improve the distribution of health care providers through meaningful and successful experiences in team-based clinical practice in rural and underserved communities.
- MdN AHEC has provided funding support to the Christus St.Vincent's Family Medicine Residency Program to cover the expenses of housing and mileage.
- MdN AHEC provided the Luna Community College RN Nursing Program with funding to support the students' travel from Las Vegas, NM to Santa Fe, NM for clinical rotations (130 mile round trip). For academic year 2022-2023, (40, 722) miles were travelled.
- MdN AHEC provided the Luna Community College Dental Assistant Program with funding to support the students' travel to their dental rotations.

HEALTH CAREER/PIPELINE ACTIVITIES

- New Mexico AHEC aims to enhance, strengthen, and develop existing pipeline activities for high school students (grades 9-12) with a focus on exposing youth to health careers in their home communities. This is in response to our ongoing need to develop a health professions pipeline in which diverse youth from underserved communities consider the advantages of becoming health professionals, identify how to do so, and take steps in that direction. We are particularly committed to reaching Hispanic, African American, and Native American youth who we know are more likely to return home to medically underserved, rural communities in order to practice health care.

HEALTH CAREER/ PIPELINE ACTIVITIES

- Robertson High School Dream Makers (48 students) & the West Las Vegas High School Dream Makers (27 students) supported with funding for materials
- Semillas de Salud “Grow your own professional” Health Career Club funding for program and coordinator
- Health Careers Opportunity Program – Sandoval County, McKinley County, and San Miguel County
- UNM HSC Pre-Health Certificate

- Health Career Fairs – Mora, UNM Health Professions Symposium, Luna Community College
- Health Career Presentations in schools
- QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer) Training for Suicide Prevention (Suicide in NM has consistently been 50% higher than the U.S. rate)
- Sitting is the New Smoking Presentation (Obesity, Diabetes, & Exercise)
- Dangers of Smoking/Vaping Presentation
- Supporting STEM Programs such as MESA(Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement) and the American Association of University Women

CONTINUING EDUCATION TRAINING

- To retain health professionals, reduce isolation, enhance the quality of their practice and prepare them to transform the health care delivery system environment. Cosponsor and/or support continuing education training for health professionals including Community Health Workers.
- MdN AHEC also supports statewide initiatives on Chronic Disease Management such as the New Mexico Chronic Disease Prevention Council's (CDPC) "Prevent diabetes work group" and the New Mexico Department of Health's Tobacco Use Prevention and Control Program (TUPAC). MdN AHEC Director also serves as CDPC Board Secretary.

CONTINUING EDUCATION TRAININGS SUPPORTED

- NM Department of Health Office for Community Health Workers 1st Annual Conference
- NM DOH Community Health Worker Northern/ Tribal Collaborative Training
- NMDOH Community Health Worker Metro/ Central Collaborative Training
- 3rd Annual Suicide Prevention Summit
- New Mexico Health Resources Annual Provider Retreat

- New Mexico Academy Family Physicians 64th Annual Family Medicine Seminar
- NM Chronic Disease Prevention Council Quarterly Meetings
- NM Public Health Association Annual Conference
- NM Behavioral Health Providers Association's 45th Annual Conference
- New Mexico Academy of Family Physicians 41st Annual Winter Refresher

AHEC INVOLVEMENT IN COMMUNITIES

- NM Chronic Disease Prevention Council
- 100% Community – San Miguel County Job Training/ Workforce co-lead
- San Miguel County Health Council Member
- Mora, San Miguel, and Guadalupe County Collaborative (MSG)

- Luna Community College Building Rough Rider Resilience
- NM DOH Office for Community Health Workers Board of Directors
- MdN AHEC Quarterly Advisory Board Meetings

HEALTH EXTENSION RURAL OFFICES (HEROS)

- People in rural NM often found it difficult to find and utilize needed resources from the University of New Mexico. The University of New Mexico's Health Sciences Center (UNMHSC) created Health Extension Rural Offices (HERO's), in which HERO agents live in the communities they serve, help identify health and social needs, and link them with UNMHSC and other university resources.
- In their regions, HERO agents' activities have been diverse, including recruiting physicians, mobilizing research funds to address local priorities, working on economic development, training community members in Mental Health First-Aid, and helping local institutions access UNMHSC resources.



THANK YOU!



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