California AHEC Annual Report

2021-2022

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Dear Colleagues,

I am both pleased and excited to share with you the 2021-2022 California Statewide Area Health Education (AHEC) Program Annual Report.

Once again, this year, and in many cases due to your support, the California AHEC administered multiple workforce training activities and executed dozens of community education and outreach projects through our 12 AHEC centers located throughout our state. This effort involved thousands of health professions students, residents, and practicing health professionals who participated in community-based experiences in clinics, pre-health career programs, activities to learn community education, continuing professional education, and the AHEC Scholars Program in Community Health. In addition, pipeline programs for our state's youth also remain a prime focus for the AHEC. With the need for expanding the scope and breadth of healthcare providers in our state becoming ever more dire in the coming decade, we recognize that along with engaging and training the health professions students and professionals of today with robust programs also comes a need to look ever forward and lay the groundwork for the next generation of healthcare.

In August 2021, the California AHEC, along with many of our state partners and leaders in health professions education, developed a strategic plan for the next five years that crystallizes the vision and mission of the AHEC. With our strategic plan came valuable guidance and direction for expansion of AHEC activities, including new and ambitious programs for resiliency and wellness training and developing diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice curriculum for the AHEC Scholars Program in Community Health.

Thank you for your support and partnership and for all that you do to develop the next generation of health care. I hope you find the report interesting! We appreciate your continued interest and support of the AHEC Program and welcome your advice and feedback.

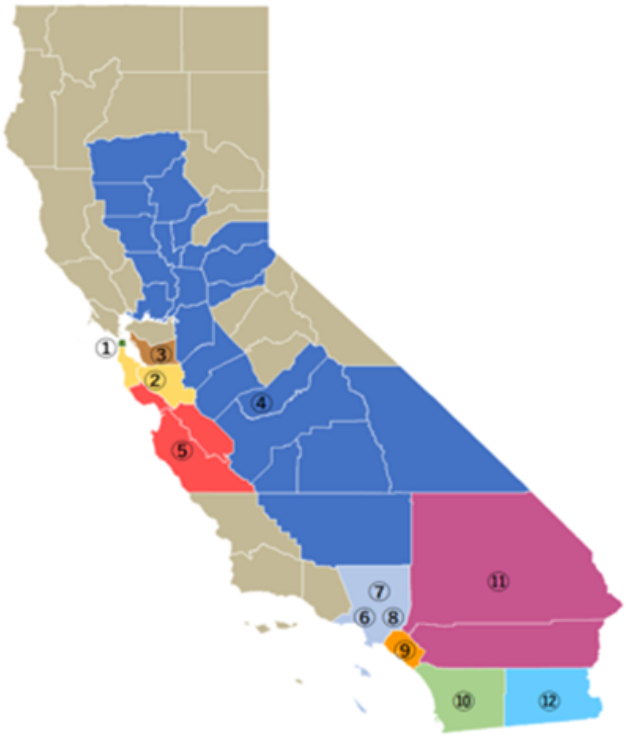
Ivan Gomez, MD, FAAFP, AAHIVS
Director | California Statewide Area Health Education Center
Chief | Family and Community Medicine, UCSF Fresno
Vice-Chair | UCSF Department of Family and Community Medicine
Clinical Professor | University of California San Francisco School of Medicine

Mission Statement and Goals

California Area Health Education Center (AHEC) is a multi-center and collaborative health professions (HP) training program with the mission of improving ***access to quality health care for underserved populations of California through academic and community partnerships.***

Our mission is accomplished through:

- Increasing workforce **diversity**.
- Equitable **distribution** of the workforce.
- **Practice transformation** and improving quality of care.
- **Teaching residents and students how to conduct community health education.**
- **Improving resiliency** among HP students, residents and practitioners.



1 San Francisco
2 South Bay
3 East Bay
4 Central Valley
5 Central Coast
6 Los Angeles Harbor
7 East Los Angeles
8 South Los Angeles
9 Orange County
10 San Diego
11 Inland Empire
12 Imperial Valley

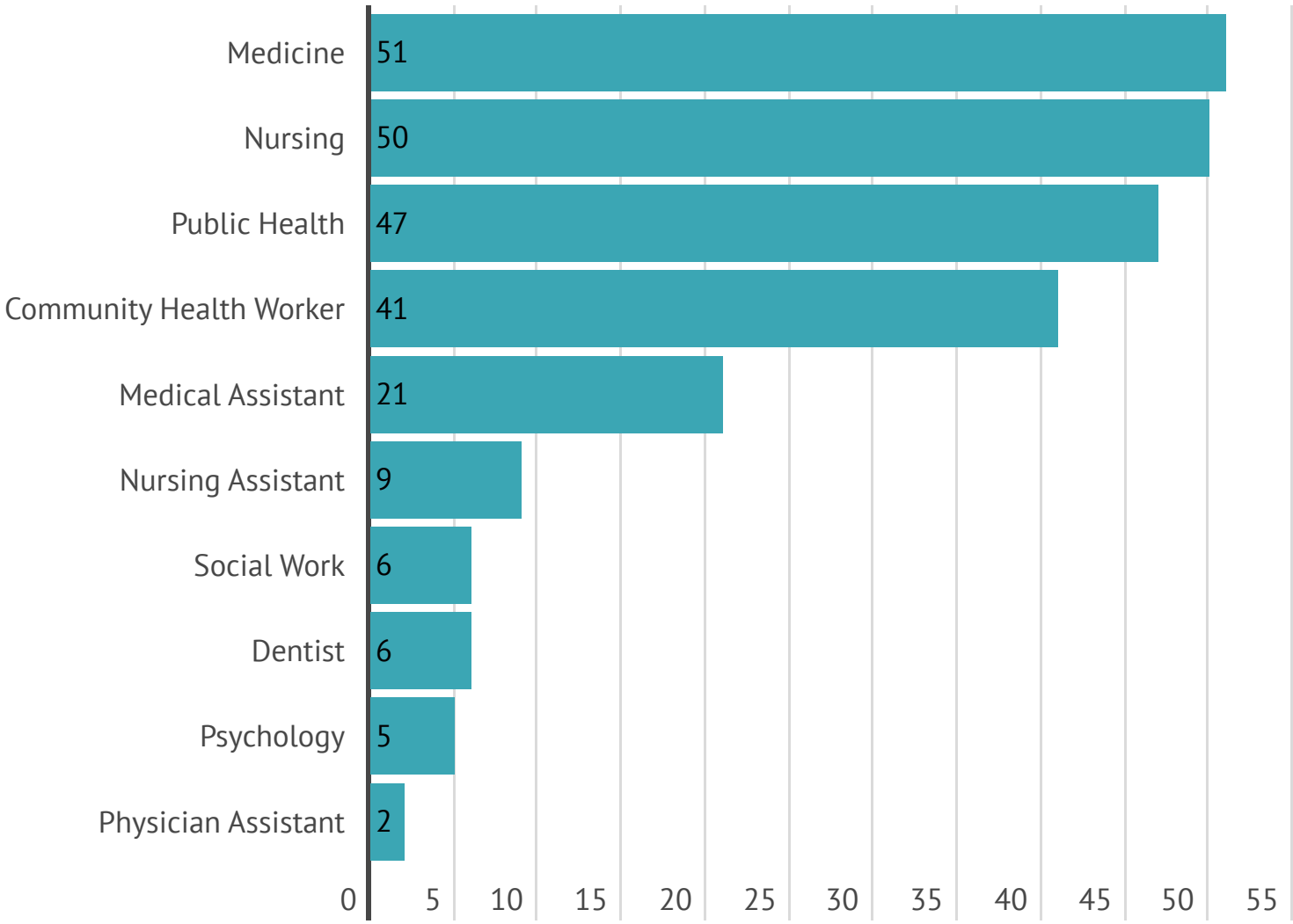
AHEC Partnerships

AHEC has an expansive impact on health care training and education through academic, clinical, community, state, and federal partnerships. Our AHEC centers plan and conduct their programs with their regional advisory boards and academic, clinical, community, and other partnerships. Our state-level partnerships expanded this year to include representatives from the chancellors' offices of the **California Community Colleges** and **California State University** systems.

AHEC Scholars in Community Health

The AHEC Scholars Program in Community Health is a two-year program supplementing HP students' clinical education by preparing them with knowledge and skills in community health. All AHEC centers participate in recruiting students and supporting their training in underserved sites. Upon completion of the requirements, students receive a certificate in community health signed by the AHEC Director and the California Primary Care Association. Since 2018, 166 scholars have completed the program. We have 256 active scholars statewide with 70 on track to complete the program by June 30, 2022.

AHEC Scholar Health Profession Types



* 2021-2022 Academic Year

"I really enjoyed the program. It made me re-think what I wanted to be in the future."
- High School Student, San Diego AHEC

AHEC Scholars Curriculum

The curriculum was developed by an academic-community partnership between medical school faculty and AHEC center directors. The curriculum consists of 80 hours of online modules, covering 9 topics: community engagement, health care reform, leadership and advocacy, medical neighborhoods, patient-centered medical home, patient engagement reflections, quality improvement, work-life balance, and team-based care along with guidelines for required community projects. We are pleased to report that **three medical schools** (UCSF Prime Program, UC Riverside, California School of Medical Science) and **one community college** (Cabrillo College Dental Hygiene Program) **have adopted our curriculum** for their HP students.

80 Hours

9 Topics

Online Modules

3 Medical Schools

1 Community College

Adopted Curriculum

The online modules for the didactic requirements of the curriculum include:

- Quality Improvement in Primary Care
- Leadership and Advocacy
- Community Engagement
- Patient-Centered Medical Home
- The Medical Neighborhood
- Patient Engagement
- Team-Based Care in Primary Care
- Health Care Reform in the Community
- Work-Life Balance

"This program really helped me to see the patient's life as a whole. It helped me view medical care from a different perspective." - Nursing Student, Central Coast AHEC

Community-based Projects

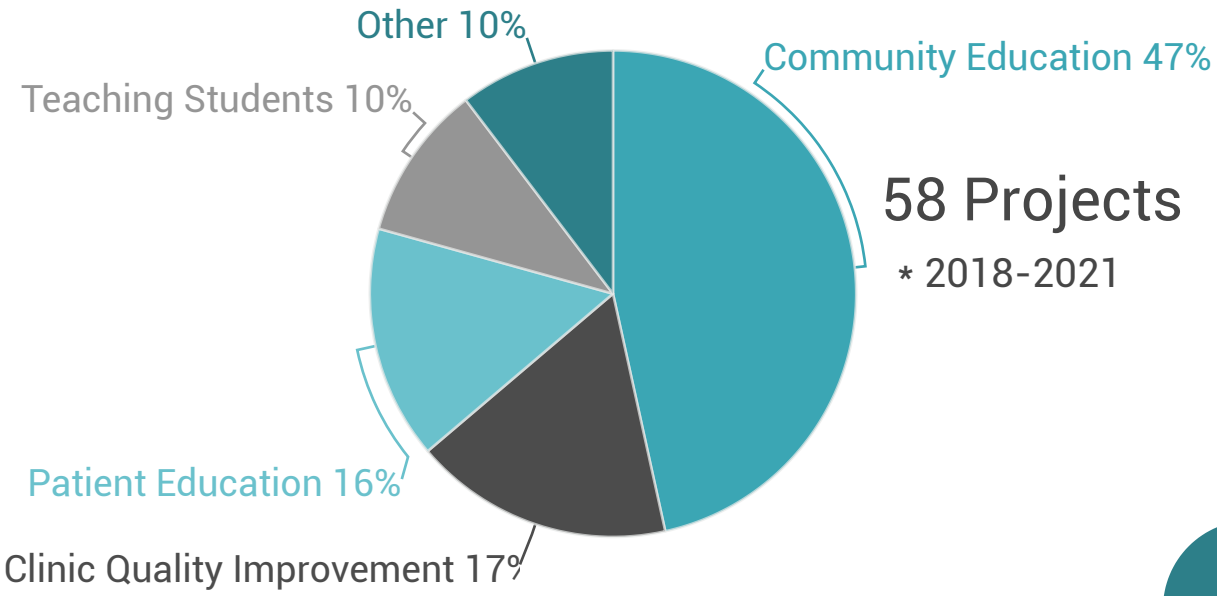
110 AHEC scholars have completed 58 projects since the program's inception in 2018. The Scholars identify and design a project that meets the health needs at their clinics or other medically underserved sites under the guidance of Center Directors and submit an outcome report describing the process, findings, and summary of the work accomplished. The projects are completed individually or as a multidisciplinary group. Types of projects include community education, clinic quality improvement, patient education, and high school education.

Previous Project Titles

- Necessity to Improve Preventative Oral Health Services to Low-Income Adolescents - El Centro Dental, Imperial Valley AHEC
- The Use of Pictograms in Disseminating Information about the COVID-19 vaccine - Santa Cruz COVID Vaccine Clinic, Central Coast AHEC
- COVID-19 Impact on Behavioral Health - WellSpace Health, Central Valley AHEC
- A Mental Health Series for Adolescents Webinar Series - San Diego AHEC

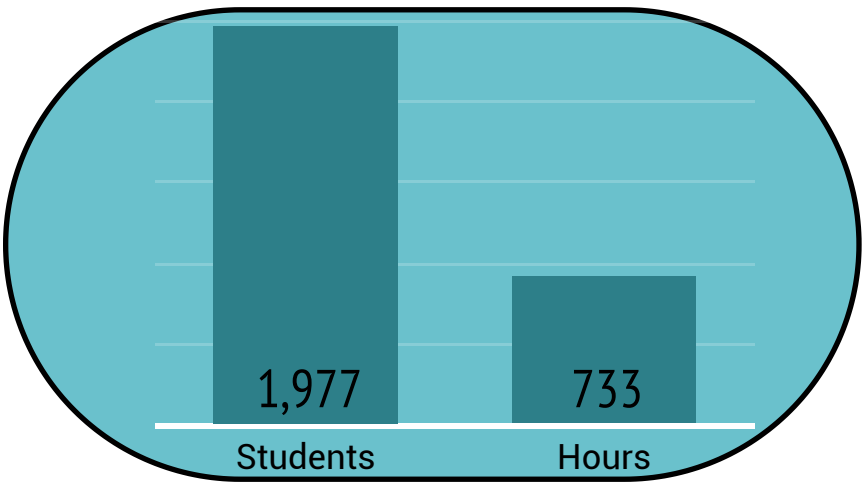
"It was an honor to work in a community setting and provide care for the underserved population. This training not only enriched my fund of knowledge but also reinforced my strong interest in medicine and service."
- Medical Student, Los Angeles Harbor AHEC

Project Types



High School Pipeline Activities

Our centers have established relationships with middle and high schools to provide health careers promotion and preparation programs to disadvantaged and underrepresented students. 1,977 students participated in 733 hours of health careers enrichment presentations, lecture series, and workshops, often under the mentorship of resident physicians and HP students. 1,368 students participated in 134 hours of summer programs that provided in-depth exposure to health careers and current topics in health care.



High school students participated in over 700 hours of health career enrichment presentations, lecture series, workshops, and more.

Examples of programs include:

- Health education seminars at Gardena High school - Harbor-UCLA Department of Family Medicine residents provide weekly health-related and mentoring workshops for the students at Gardena High School in alignment with the school needs and Los Angeles Unified School District's health curriculum. Topics included: careers in health, mental health, common teen disorders, and drugs of abuse/prevention.
- Scripps Family Medicine Residency Health Career Mentoring Pathway Programming – San Diego AHEC is developing a comprehensive pipeline beginning with elementary and middle school students and continuing to medical school and residency. The training will consist of educational sessions (e.g., wellness, future careers in health care), internship opportunities and summer programs, and targeted community-based training during medical school and residency.

Community Engagement

We provide opportunities for high school, undergraduate, and graduate students to engage with their communities through established programs. Central Valley AHEC and Los Angeles Harbor AHEC offer two of our most established programs:

- **Stanford Youth Diabetes Coaching Program** – Central Valley AHEC partners with Stanford University to implement an innovative course to empower youth in the community by educating high school students from Duncan Polytechnic in Fresno and Golden Valley High School in Merced about diabetes self-management to become coaches for family members and friends who have diabetes.
- **Health Education Advocacy Leadership (HEAL) Health club** – Los Angeles Harbor AHEC offers a six-week community-based pipeline program that educates students about health professions, community health, structural racism and health disparities, along with providing tools to conduct social justice advocacy and promote health equity in marginalized communities. It has reached over 1,000 high school, undergraduate, and medical students, most from marginalized communities and under-represented groups. Many participants have gone on to HP graduate schools.

"Very valuable training experience. One of the most meaningful types of community engagement that I've done."
- Family Medicine Resident, San Francisco AHEC

Continuing Professional Education for HPs

CA AHEC provides continuing educational opportunities to a breadth of practicing HPs. 1,479 HPs completed a total of 1,161 hours of continuing education, mostly remote learning due to the pandemic, but some trainings were held in person or offered as individual-based webinars. Topics included pertinent and urgent matters in health care: COVID-19 updates, opioid use treatment, telehealth, patient-centered medical homes, and performance management and improvement. To aid our HPs with the emergent demands of COVID-19, the AHEC Program Office produced a webinar series that covered long COVID, mental health, vaccines, patient education, and health provider wellness.

Future Plans for AHEC

September 2022 marks the beginning of our next grant cycle and new top priorities for our organization. We plan to add the following to our current activities:

- **Establish a comprehensive resiliency and wellness training program in collaboration with the Hennepin Healthcare Institute for Professional Worklife to address mental health needs of HP students, residents, and practicing HPs. The program will consist of materials tailored to the needs of our learners, such as lectures, workshops, and webinars.**
- **Develop a justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (JEDI) curriculum for the AHEC Scholars Program, in addition to incorporating JEDI into activities for all trainees served by our program.**

AHEC Publications in Development

We have a draft manuscript **Teaching Community Engagement for Health Professions Students in Underserved Areas** that reports how the AHEC Scholars' curriculum, clinical experience, and community projects impact students immediately after the program and one year later. Centers showcase their work at their local advisory board meetings and at statewide AHEC meetings.

Additional planned publications include **Value of AHEC Partnerships in Community Education** that will summarize the local, regional, and state partners of the California AHEC. **California Statewide AHEC Scholars Program: 4 years** will summarize the impact of AHEC Scholars at 4 years out of the program.

California AHEC

Area Health Education Center

UCSF Fresno