



IE AHEC SCHOLARS 2021-2022

Program Wrap-Up



CALIFORNIA AHEC PROGRAM
A Member of the National AHEC Organization



AHEC
SCHOLARS

ABOUT THE SCHOLARS PROGRAM



The California AHEC Scholars Program in Community Health is a two-year, longitudinal, interdisciplinary curriculum divided into three components: community-oriented education, clinical training, and community-based hands-on activities that supplement students' existing health programs. The goal of the AHEC Scholars Program in Community Health is to provide health professions students with a comprehensive experience of working in community health to ultimately encourage them to pursue careers serving rural and/or underserved communities. The program will equip students with the knowledge and the skills for them to be successful in the primary care health system and to deliver high-quality care to patients, especially in rural and underserved areas. The program year runs from July to June. This wrap up will cover data from the last program year.



Our Local Partners



In the 2021-2022 program year, the Inland Empire AHEC partnered with five local colleges and universities: Azusa Pacific University, CSU San Bernardino, California University of Science and Medicine, Loma Linda University, and UC Riverside School of Medicine.

In collaboration with UCR School of Medicine, a new designated emphasis was created that allows students to enroll in our AHEC scholars program and receive school credit for their work in the program. Our partnership with California State University, San Bernardino (CSUSB) allowed us to open our doors to public health students in both undergraduate and graduate programs. Additionally, we established a partnership with California University of Science and Medicine, which provided an opportunity for their medical students to enroll in our scholars program. We also have students in this program that are part of Loma Linda University's Primary Care Psychology Pipeline Program (4P) that is essentially a scholarship program for clinical psychology students. Azusa Pacific University promotes the program to their Masters in Public Health graduate students. Our newest addition, Western University promotes the program to their dental students. Our partners share our same vision and ultimate goal, to encourage students to continue working in our underserved communities and help address the need for health professionals in the Inland Empire.





DIVERSITY OF 1ST YEAR STUDENTS

Hispanic/Latino	2
Asian	5
African American or Black	4
White	1
American Indian or Alaska Native	1
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	0

DIVERSITY OF 2ND YEAR STUDENTS

Hispanic/Latino	5
Asian	11
African American or Black	3
White	4
American Indian or Alaska Native	0
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	0





GENDER OF FIRST YEAR STUDENTS

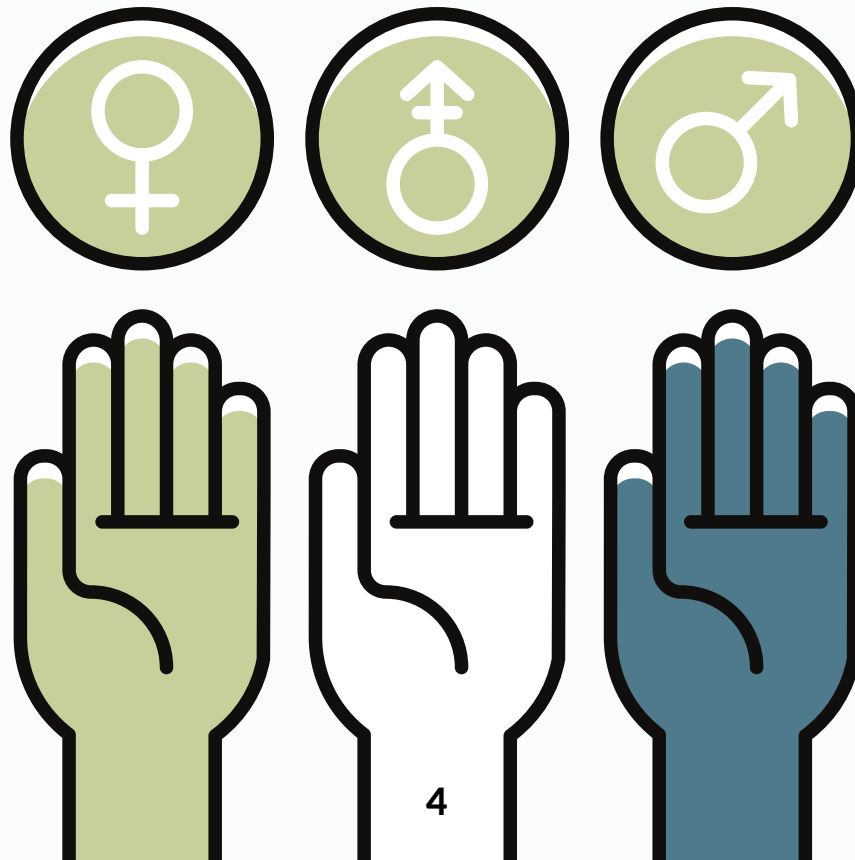
Male	8
Female	5
Prefer Not to Say	0



GENDER OF SECOND YEAR STUDENTS

Male	3
Female	20
Prefer Not to Say	0

*Categories based on California AHEC survey guidelines





HEALTH PROFESSIONS OF 1ST YEAR STUDENTS

Dental	4
Medical	6
Nursing	2
Psychology	1
Public Health	0

HEALTH PROFESSIONS OF 2ND YEAR STUDENTS

Dental	0
Medical	17
Nursing	0
Psychology	3
Public Health	3

In the 2021-2022, the Inland Empire AHEC office increased its recruitment exponentially. The special partnerships established with UC Riverside School of Medicine and California University of Science and Medicine helped with this increase. Both of these universities created special programs that embedded the AHEC curriculum and allowed students to get school credit for their participation in the scholars program, thus encouraging more students to apply for the program. The cohort for this year is by far the most diverse and largest that the center has had. The Inland Empire thrived and achieved a 100% completion rate for the program. Additionally, the IE AHEC was the center with the largest number of completed scholars in the state.



COMPLETION RATE OF 1ST YEAR STUDENTS

Completed	13
Withdrawn	11

COMPLETION RATE OF 2ND YEAR STUDENTS

Completed	23
Withdrawn	0

COMPLETION NUMBER OF SCHOLARS (Inland Empire vs California)

	<i>Number of Completed Students</i>	<i>Average Number In CA</i>
1st Year Students	13	5
2nd Year Students	23	7

Student Satisfaction & Confidence

After students complete the scholars program, they are required to fill out a post survey tracked by the California AHEC office that measures their satisfaction with the program and confidence with their abilities. Below is a chart that summarizes the findings from the collected surveys.

1=Not at all confident to 5= Completely Confident
How confident were/are you in your ability to...

Question	Average Answer Before Program	Average Answer After Program
Describe the responsibilities of other professionals (health care & others) on the health team?	3	4
Demonstrate how the skills and knowledge of inter-professional team members complement and overlap?	3	4
Describe how social determinants affect the health of a community or a population (e.g. equity, income, education, environment, etc)?	3	4
Use common public health methods that prevent or address health issues in vulnerable populations?	3	5
Reflect on and describe your perceptions/biases of individuals who are from different professional or cultural backgrounds?	4	5
Respond appropriately to the needs of others based on a sensitivity to, and respect or, their cultural/ethnic backgrounds or socioeconomic status?	2	4
Describe how a patients behavioral/mental health needs may affect their care?	4	5
Describe the importance of integrating behavioral health and primary care?	4	5
Advocate for the health care needs of a community based on current policy trends (system, local, state, or national level)?	2	5
Demonstrate leadership skills (e.g., effectively communicate, inspire others, resolve conflict, accept feedback, etc)?	2	5
Work collaboratively with patients, communities, or other health professionals?	3	5
Utilize the knowledge and skills gained form the AHEC Scholars Program to provide health care in a rural, medically underserved, or vulnerable population?	3	5



Student Satisfaction & Confidence

Students responded to this next question freely.

How did the Scholars Program influence your clinical practice?

- “It helped me and gave me experience and knowledge on interacting with different underserved populations”
- “It’s made me more aware of my patient as a whole outside of lab values and clinical features. It made question their access to medications, hospitals, their culture, their beliefs. Also how their community impacts their beliefs.”
- “The Scholars Program helped me learn and practice the different aspects of healthcare outside of my immediate medical school curriculum. Understanding the different roles, services, inequities, and opportunities for healthcare workers and patients will definitely influence my clinical practice in the future.”
- “It really made me want to pursue a field that is primary care to best provide referrals to local services in my community to best serve my patients.”
- “The Scholars Program provided me with a wide variety of resources to improve my knowledge base and skills regarding caring for medically underserved populations and working in inter-professional teams.”
- “The scholars program helped me understand the different aspects of healthcare such as explanation on types of clinics, types of care, and gave me a better understanding of different cultures. This program allowed me to dig deeper in my public health knowledge and the importance of serving my community.”
- “The program encouraged me to pursue clinical hours earlier than I would have expected.”
- “Solidified my desire to practice in an underserved population and gave me the tools to be more effective in that future role.”
- “Emphasized the team aspect of healthcare, rather than regarding the role of the physician in a vacuum. The importance of collaboration and building a network of support for patients, rather than isolated clinical visits. Listening to the community about what they need instead of going in there telling them what they need, based on my own perspective and biases. How to productively have challenging conversations about bias and gaps in healthcare
- “My overall knowledge and competence grew immensely throughout my education with AHEC. The modules were applicable and useful.”
- “This scholars program provided me with information and education on positive guidance in working at clinical environment. That increased my knowledge and made me perform my task a little bit in an easier foundation when being in a clinical setting among healthcare providers and patients’ interactions.”



Testimonials



“AHEC scholars program has been an eye-opening experience that has allowed me to learn more about resources in my community and how to create a Patient Center Medical Home. The program also focuses on providers, empowering students through advocacy and leadership opportunities, and addressing burnout rates with an effective strategy. The program allowed me to discuss topics with faculty members and clinicians that I would not have otherwise. I look forward to utilizing these skills with my future patients and continuing to improve their healthcare outcomes.”

-Mariam Ghattas, CUSM MD Program



“The AHEC Scholars program was more than an opportunity to learn about health equity and social determinants of health. It was an experience that allowed me to engage with my community in a way that I have never before, through meaningful, evidence-based work. I learned about social systems that help operationalize healthcare delivery, and ways to augment these systems through highly informative modules and activities. I got involved in unique health equities research that helped shape my views on disease outside of my medical school’s curriculum. I participated in seminars and lectures that enlightened me on the resources available or being developed to shrink the equity gaps. I also realized I have a strong system of support through the program’s administrative team. I would like to specifically highlight Ms. Athena Montiel. Ms. Montiel exhibited the highest level of dedication and commitment to supporting scholars, listening to our feedback and developing a fantastic program.”

-Ojas Deshpande, CUSM MD Program



“At first, I was unsure if the time commitment would outweigh the benefits. However, my participation in this program was priceless. By putting together outreach projects and helping out at community clinics, I was able to learn skills that were very helpful. I would recommend this program for those who want to learn more about community health and how to integrate their community into their career. “

-Eunique Tucker- Cuevas LLU PHD Clinical Psychology Program



“The instruction offered in the Area Health Education Center (AHEC) certificate program has aided me in becoming an informed clinician in our diverse communities. Specifically, the program provided me with invaluable training on important topics such as health disparities. It facilitated my professional development by enhancing my communication in interprofessional health settings. The modules were thoughtful; prepared with engaging literature and relevant materials for various health providers. I highly recommend the AHEC program without reservation.”

-Amanda Saddlemire LLU Psy.D Candidate Clinical Psychology Program

Scholar Project Highlights



We had several second-year scholars submit their projects this year. Most of these students chose to work in groups. Scholars are allowed to work with other Inland Empire scholars, but cannot have a group of more than four people. Three projects that stood out this year were focused on the following topics: suicide awareness, gender inclusivity within healthcare, and basal carcinoma prevention.

Suicide awareness for teens was chosen as topic by Amanda Saddlemire and Diane Marin, Loma Linda University Clinical Psychology students. Their objective was to create a brochure that would encompass all of the warning signs, provide mental health resources, and help educate the students at Sierra High School in San Bernardino. They worked along with two clinical child psychologists at Loma Linda University to assure the brochure addressed the needs of teenagers and found that their brochure was able to reach many students. Alexandra Gacuya, a medical student from California University of Science and Medicine created a powerpoint presentation and presented it to her fellow class in collaboration with Dr. Arvizo-Zavala who is part of the Office of Equity, Inclusion, Diversity, and Partnership (CUSM). Her objective was to emphasize queer and trans narratives in the context of medicine so that her cohort can be aware of the health inequity faced by the LGBTQ+ community. Her presentation was taken well and has sparked conversations within her cohort and university medical staff. Lastly, Ojas Deshpande, a medical student from California University of Science and Medicine, developed a project that focused on community education and prevention in regards to basal cell carcinoma and worked with preceptor Dr. Ashley Molina from Arrowhead Regional Medical Center. He created a health literacy assessment tool and brochure to help educate patients during their visits. These scholars demonstrated that they could think outside of the box and were getting the community involved, which is what the scholars program strives to achieve.





Scholar Accomplishment



In October 2022, Alexandra Gacuya (second year scholar) and Kimberly Rose De Guzman and Abigail Marie Gopez (new first year scholars), medical students at California University of Science and Medicine (CUSM), notified the Inland Empire AHEC about their organization's (Filipinx Americans in Medicine at CUSM) application for a UC Riverside mini grant and asked for the support of the Inland Empire AHEC, who granted this request. The purpose of their project called The Bayanihan Project is to provide health screening by Filipino physicians and medical students at well-known Filipino American hot spots throughout the Inland Empire to educate the community and help with chronic illness prevention. These health screenings are collaboration between Perris Valley Filipino American Association, the Council of Young Filipinx Americans in Medicine, and the Inland Empire Area Health Education Center. In December 2022, we were notified that these scholars and their organization were awarded a \$5,000 grant from the UCR School of Medicine Center for Healthy Communities. We are beyond proud of their hard work and can't wait to see the outcome of this wonderful project. If you would like to follow their progress and their organization (Filipinx Americans in Medicine at CUSM), then you can follow them on Instagram using this -link: https://www.instagram.com/fam_cusm/



Alexandra Gacuya



Kimberly Rose De
Guzman



Abigail Marie Gopez

CHAISR

Center Accomplishments



The Inland Empire AHEC has strived to become one of the leading AHECs in California. This center is geographically the second largest center in California. For the year 2021-2022, the Inland Empire AHEC had the top number of enrolled scholars and completed scholars, achieving a 100% success rate. This is also the first center to create two special programs at academic institutions that embed the Scholars Program curriculum at UCR School of Medicine and California University of Science and Medicine. Additionally, it has established strong local partnerships within the region that help with recruitment. The Inland Empire AHEC was invited to be a part of the statewide strategic meeting due to its success at building school partnerships. Athena Montiel, the center director, is currently a member of the state curriculum committee and DEI committee, which creates the curriculum for the Scholars Program and provides training tools for the center directors in California. In the upcoming year, the Inland Empire AHEC plans to continue to strengthen recruitment efforts, build new partnerships, and expand its diversity.

Congratulations to the Completed Scholars!



Kylee Borger



Viviana Castañeda
Cervantes



Elizabeth Celaya-
Ojeda



Joe Chen



Violeta Covarrubias



Prathyusha Dasari



Ojas Deshpande



Lauren De Sa



Alexandra Gacuya



Mariam Ghattas



Cynthia Janku



Jane Kim

Congratulation to the Completed Scholars!



Nancy Luong



Maria Macias Lopez



Diana Marin



Brian Mcrec



Jasmine Mitchell



Tricia Nguyen



Rachel Patterson



Amanda Saddlemire



Saba Sami



Eunique Tucker Cuevas



Crystal Witherspoon

Get To Know Our New Scholars!



Gabrielle Celaya

- Fun fact: I would love to visit every MLB stadium. So far, I have visited seven out of the 30 stadiums.
- I joined IE AHEC Scholars to give back and serve the community that raised me. I want to learn how to genuinely care and help those in underserved areas as a clinical psychologist.



Navya Chauhan

- Fun fact: I love to sing!
- I joined the AHEC program to better understand how I can advocate for the health of communities in the Inland Empire and to gain more knowledge about community health practices.



Daniel Eke

- Fun fact: Father to 3 amazing boys
- I joined AHEC to be able to positively impact and contribute to the underserved community and helping them access needed healthcare with less stress.



Jeffery Ezennia

- Fun fact: My goal is to visit most countries in the world and learn a new language.
- I joined the AHEC Scholars Program because I believe that the ample opportunities for community engagement would prepare me for the difficulties of serving in vulnerable communities and will help make me a competent and compassionate clinician. I also see this as a great opportunity to get to learn more about the health needs of my local community and strengthen my skills as an advocate for my community.



Roberto Flores

- Fun fact: As a teenager, I lived and played professional soccer in Guadalajara, Mexico. I continued to play soccer throughout college and within the process, I also became an avid runner and completed several marathons.
- I decided to join the program because I wanted to advocate and learn more about the underserved communities that raised me to be the person I am today. To do this effectively, I want to garner as much knowledge revolving the needs of the communities I plan to serve, and I believe this program can fulfill that dream.



Barbara Clyburn

- Fun fact: I enjoy going to concerts and live entertainment events!
- I am very passionate about addressing oral health disparities in underserved communities. The AHEC program is a perfect fit for me to acquire the skills necessary to help address the various challenges our communities face in effective ways. I am honored to be part of the AHEC family!



Jiawei Liu

- Fun fact: I am the chief cooker in my house.
- I am always passionate about serving the underserved community and I have been doing this since my undergrad. The AHEC program definitely will train me and prepare me to engage in community health in the future.



Alia Mohamed

- Fun fact: I like to bake
- I joined the AHEC program to better understand how to provide a community-based approach to patient care and advocate for the health of underserved communities.



William Nguyen

- Fun fact: During the pandemic, I picked up sleight-of-hand magic as a hobby and it's been insanely difficult but very fun!
- I decided to join the AHEC Community Health Program because I am interested in expanding my knowledge in primary care and community health. As a future dental provider, it is an honor to be able to address the health needs of some of the most vulnerable and underserved communities. I hope to make a difference!



Genevieve Otuonye

- Fun fact: I am a mother of 4, currently in school to become a Registered nurse. I started my nursing career as a CNA.
- I join AHEC because I live in an under-served community and I want to bring what I will learn from this program to my community



Brian Sangalang

- Fun fact: One of my favorite hobbies is cooking and a life goal I have is to cook a dish from every country!
- Healthcare is a basic human right and it is unfair that certain communities are unable to access healthcare due to numerous social barriers. I want to learn the skills to be a community-focused physician and help to create lasting change from within.



Leo Taylor

- Fun fact: I graduated from the University of Colorado Denver at age 18.
- I am enthusiastic about the opportunities we all have to contribute to an understanding, compassionate state of oral health care, and believe studying community health will allow me to deepen my understanding of the challenges facing those seeking accessible dentistry.



Rahul Tuli

- Fun fact: I was born in Wisconsin.
- I joined AHEC because, as a future provider, I want to better understand how to maximize care for patients beyond the clinical setting.