



## The Connecticut Area Health Education Center (AHEC) Program




The mission of the Connecticut AHEC Program is “to enhance access to quality health care, particularly primary and preventive care, by improving the supply and distribution of health care professionals through facilitating community/academic educational partnerships.”


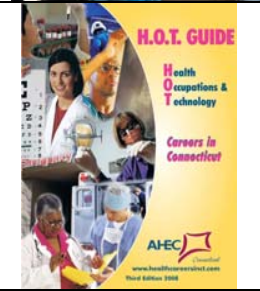





The AHEC Program and its four regional centers are part of the fabric of governmental and non-governmental agencies and organizations that work together to find creative ways to address some of the most intractable challenges facing the health care workforce. The AHEC Program is based at the University of Connecticut (UConn) Health Center and is implemented through four regional centers located in the Norwich, Hartford, Waterbury, and Bridgeport areas.







### Connecticut AHEC outcomes in FY 2007:








- **Health careers recruitment:**
  - 12,380 students, kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade participated in an AHEC sponsored event
  - Over 4000 students participated in more intensive AHEC health career programs (over 20 hours)
  - 80 percent of these students were from under-represented minority or disadvantaged backgrounds
  - Over 800 teachers, parents and guidance counselors participated in an AHEC activity
- **Continuing education:**
  - 144 continuing education programs sponsored or co-sponsored by Connecticut AHEC with over 18,000 contact hours
  - 3,392 health care providers and others participated of which the largest share of participants were from community health centers and public health departments









### Connecticut AHEC Programs (FY 2005-current):




	Program Implemented by	Program Title	Brief Description
	Connecticut AHEC Program Office	<b><i>The UConn Migrant Farm Worker Medical and Dental Clinics</i></b>	Since 1998, the clinics have provided free medical and dental screenings and health education to migrant farm workers throughout the state of Connecticut. Since 2005, a health promoter at each farm has been identified and trained to provide basic health care information and to monitor blood pressures of fellow farm workers for continuity of care. In 2007, the Health Education Outreach (HEO) Program was developed by CT AHEC in response to prevalent occupational health issues in the migrant farm worker populations. Over 70 undergraduates from UConn met with 370 farm workers to discuss preventive health care issues such as heat stress, green tobacco illness, Lyme’s disease, and safe lifting.
	Connecticut AHEC Program Office	<b><i>National Primary Care Week</i></b>	Observed by UConn School of Medicine, Dental Medicine, Pharmacy and Nursing as well as Quinnipiac Physician Assistant students with daily luncheon seminars, community outreach activities, hands-on clinical opportunities, dinners and a retreat.
	Connecticut AHEC Program Office	<b><i>Urban Service Track</i></b>	Identifies students from the UConn Schools of Dental Medicine, Medicine, Pharmacy and Nursing who are committed to caring for the underserved and provides them with training and interdisciplinary clinical experiences that support their career goals.

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	Connecticut AHEC Program Office	<b>Clinical Career Day</b>	An opportunity for high school students who have expressed an interest in pursuing a health career or have an aptitude for the math and science fields, to meet with health professionals and learn about their career options. Presenters from a wide variety of health profession disciplines provide hands-on or visual activities related to their respective careers. Over 15 health careers are represented covering a wide array of education preparation levels.
	Connecticut AHEC Program Office	<b>Health Occupations and Technology (H.O.T) Careers in Connecticut</b>	A comprehensive guide to health and biotechnology careers in Connecticut. This guide is specifically designed for those interested in learning more about health and biotechnology careers and educational opportunities for such careers in the state of Connecticut. The guide answers the following questions for over 80 different health and biotechnology careers: What will my job be like?, Where could I work?, What is the salary for this career?, What is the future of this career?, What type of education and/or training do I need?, Where can I get the education and/or training?, Do I need a license or certification for this career? and, Where can I get more information?
	Connecticut AHEC Program Office	<b>Continuous Quality Improvement Deans' Symposium</b>	Residents and third year medical students' present research projects related to continuous quality improvement. Faculty and staff of UConn Health Center attend a luncheon and dinner with addresses from field experts.
	Connecticut AHEC Program Office	<b>National Health Service Corps (NHSC)</b>	As ambassadors of the NHSC, Connecticut AHEC staff assists in the recruitment efforts and provides support services for NHSC applicants. In 2006, three NHSC scholars were named from UConn School of Medicine.
	Created by Northwest AHEC, Inc.  Implemented by all AHEC centers in Connecticut	<b>Youth Health Service Corps (YHSC)</b>	Mobilizes diverse high school students trained to provide volunteer service in health care agencies across the state. Since 2007, over 6,000 hours of volunteer service performed by more than 800 Connecticut students and three YHSC students have been awarded the President's Volunteer Service Award. The YHSC became a national program in 2007 as staff from twelve other AHECs received training, materials and support necessary to replicate the YHSC program in their respective states.
	Created by Eastern AHEC, Inc.  Implemented by: Eastern AHEC, Inc. Connecticut AHEC Program Office Central AHEC, Inc.	<b>Collegiate Health Service Corps (CHSC) of Connecticut</b>	Prepares college level health professions students to volunteer in settings that serve marginalized populations while increasing the volunteer's awareness of careers in health care delivery and public health. The Connecticut colleges and universities currently participating in the CHSC include Quinnebaug Valley Community College, Three Rivers Community College, University of Connecticut, University of Hartford, and Eastern Connecticut State University.
	Northwest AHEC, Inc.	<b>Connecticut RESC Alliance Project</b>	Provides professional development opportunities to Connecticut middle and high school guidance counselors to use tools designed to help students pursue health careers including the H.O.T. Guide and classroom activities.

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	Northwest AHEC, Inc.	<b>Providing Early Acquaintance with Careers in Health (P.E.A.C.H.)</b>	Exposes middle school students to health careers by integrating classroom curriculum, professional speaker presentations and visits to local colleges and universities.
	Northwest AHEC, Inc.	<b>Health Careers Workshop</b>	This is a six week summer course at Naugatuck Valley Community College for high school students interested in pursuing health careers. The target populations are students who need extra math and English preparation to increase performance on the accuplacer test as well as preparation for health careers.
	Central AHEC, Inc.	<b>"Careers for the Future": Summer Medical Camps</b>	Provides high school students with an opportunity to shadow medical professionals at the UConn Migrant Farm Worker Clinics, St. Francis Hospital and Medical Center, and the Hospital of Central Connecticut. Students receive college preparatory information and CPR/AED Certification.
	Central Connecticut AHEC	<b>Ryan White Mobile Health Van</b>	An integrated system of early intervention/rapid testing and outreach with triage case management, substance abuse counseling and primary care services. This program ensures that individuals in Hartford County receive culturally competent education, rapid HIV testing, and immediate engagement into services designed to stop the progression of HIV and improve quality of life.
	Central AHEC, Inc. Northwest AHEC, Inc. Southwestern AHEC, Inc.	<b>Connecticut Career Choices (CCC)</b>	Sponsored by the Governor's Office for Workforce Competitiveness as well as many public and private partners, this statewide initiative gives high school students the opportunity to learn about health careers. Professionals in the health field visited schools and provided insight and support for students, sharing personal and professional experiences.
	Central AHEC, Inc.	<b>Foreign Born Medical Professional Project</b>	An assessment of the need for a "Bridge" program, or an alternative health careers certification path for foreign born trained health professionals who may not currently have employment in the healthcare industry in Connecticut. The project aims to look at current barriers to obtaining licensure or certification in CT and thereby provide a means for the health care system to increase its workforce diversity.
	Central AHEC, Inc.	<b>Greater Hartford Fetal Infant Mortality Review (FIMR)</b>	In collaboration with a wide range of public, private, and community groups, this program implements continuous quality improvement of the health care delivery system that impacts women, infants, and families in the Greater Hartford area.

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	Central AHEC, Inc.	<b>Healthy Options for Pregnancy Empowerment (H.O.P.E.)</b>	H.O.P.E. is a preconception/inter-conception health education and empowerment program for women of African Ancestry who are at "high risk" for having adverse birth outcomes. H.O.P.E.'s goal is to reduce risk factors that contribute to adverse birth outcomes by providing case management services, educational support groups and community educational workshops.
	Central AHEC, Inc.	<b>Advancing Health Education Careers (A.H.E.C.) Summer Institute</b>	The A.H.E.C. Summer Institute is a six week career exploration and work readiness program for youth, ages 14-16. In addition to creating a reality resume and a dream resume, participants prepare to enter the workforce through independent and group research projects, guest presenters, leadership and employability skills building exercises, and health education trainings.
	Southwestern AHEC, Inc.	<b>Oral Health Bridgeport Initiative (ORBIT)</b>	This collaborative was established in 1999 with the goal of enhancing oral health and oral care access for the underserved and vulnerable of Bridgeport and Stratford. As the lead agency, Southwestern AHEC has secured funding from the Connecticut Health Foundation for the collaborative to increase the number of children accessing dental care.
	Southwestern AHEC, Inc.	<b>Connecticut's Coalition for an Oral Health Plan</b>	A group of individuals from various factions interested in oral health have developed a State Oral Health Plan for Connecticut which has been unveiled at the "Sharing the Vision" conference on June 14, 2007. The group continues to work for implementation of the plan over the next five years.
	Southwestern AHEC, Inc.	<b>Every Smile Counts</b>	The Department of Public Health conducted an Oral Health <i>Basic Screening Survey</i> (BSS) during the 2006-2007 academic year called "Every Smile Counts" which was implemented by Southwestern AHEC. This survey gathered statewide information on the oral health status of pre-school and elementary school children in Connecticut that can be used as a baseline for ongoing surveillance.
	Southwestern AHEC, Inc.	<b>Bridgeport Health Improvement Partnership (BHIP)</b>	Southwestern AHEC was invited to join the partnership to assume a key leadership and coordination role and oversaw BHIP's implementation and completion of Bridgeport's Community Health Needs Assessment, released in March 2007.
	Southwestern AHEC, Inc.	<b>Immunization Action Plan Program</b>	Designed to provide community education and outreach services to Bridgeport families whose children may need to be immunized; assist pediatricians and primary care providers to comply with state regulations, and maintain the Connecticut Immunization Registry and Tracking System (CIRTS) up to date with Bridgeport data.

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	Southwestern AHEC, Inc.	<b>Community Health Worker National Education Collaborative</b>	Southwestern AHEC is a technical assistance partner for the Community Health Worker (CHW) National Education Collaborative to support the development of educational programs at the college level. This is part of a FIPSE grant received by the University of Arizona AHEC Program to achieve a "National Community of Practice" for postsecondary programming, which is responsive to the character and needs of CHW students and their employers. Southwestern AHEC's focus is to assist the development of programs at Housatonic Community College and Essex County Community College in New Jersey.
	Southwestern AHEC, Inc.	<b>Mother's Day Social</b>	The Mother's Day Social is an event planned to provide women of child bearing age the opportunity to learn about health and human services available them in a relaxed social setting. Two topics featured at this year's social included dental care and childhood immunizations.
	Southwestern AHEC, Inc. Eastern AHEC, Inc.	<b>Community Health Outreach Worker Training</b>	Community outreach workers are trained and mentored to enhance their effectiveness in linking communities to services. This 8 week, 48 hour core-competency curriculum was developed by a community advisory group of outreach workers and employers.
	Southwestern AHEC, Inc.	<b>Saturday Academy Medical Careers Mentoring Program</b>	Designed to increase the success of students from underserved areas who will later matriculate in degree granting programs. It provides a framework for high school students to promote academic achievement, enhance communication skills, and receive assistance towards career development by working with college students.
	Southwestern AHEC, Inc. Central AHEC, Inc.	<b>Universal Health Care Foundation campaign: HealthCare4Every1</b>	HealthCare4Every1 is a statewide advocacy campaign committed to organizing an active, vibrant and diverse network of concerned residents to build public and political support to achieve universal health care in Connecticut. As a grantee, AHEC is involved in variety of efforts to help advocate for policy change for quality, accessible, affordable health care.
	Eastern AHEC, Inc.	<b>Covenant Soup Kitchen Medical Clinics</b>	This clinic provides free medical and dental screening to disenfranchised populations in Willimantic. In 2006, interdisciplinary teams comprised of students from the UConn Schools of Nursing, Pharmacy and Medicine managed the clinics. Also in 2006, an assessment tool was developed to evaluate the effectiveness of the interdisciplinary clinic model.
	Eastern AHEC, Inc.	<b>Health Literacy Class: "A Conversation with Health Care Providers"</b>	This class is designed to assist hospitals and community health centers to provide culturally appropriate services to their patients of Hispanic origin. The presentation has been approved for Nursing Continuing Education Credits.
	Eastern AHEC, Inc.	<b>Promotora de Salud (Health Promoter)</b>	A 40 hour certificate class is offered in English and Spanish. The program is free of charge in exchange for 40 hours of community service. Since 2005, 100 farm workers per week have been educated and/or screened during the lunchtime health education outreach programs administered by Eastern AHEC.

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	Eastern AHEC, Inc.	<b><i>Mujer de Mujer (Women to women)</i></b>	Women to Women Home Health Parties promote discussion and healthy behavior to enhance pre-conceptual and inter-conceptual health among Latina women to improve birth outcomes. Latino men are reached through work sites and recreational activities. This program is funded by the Connecticut Chapter of the March of Dimes.
	Eastern AHEC, Inc. Southwestern AHEC, Inc.	<b><i>Medical Interpretation Training Program</i></b>	The program is comprised of 48- 54 classroom hours, providing an introduction to the basic skills used during the triadic interview. The curriculum uses topics such as interpreting skills, code of ethics, triadic and cross-cultural communication skills, medical terminology and professional protocols utilizing role playing. A program to “train-the-trainer” is being developed and implemented to expand the resources of medical interpreters in the state.
	Eastern AHEC, Inc.	<b><i>Health Literacy Course for LEP Women</i></b>	The health literacy class is offered to the students in the Even Start Family Literacy Program. Adult students are working on their GED and English as another language. This is a highly interactive course empowering women to take care of themselves and their family’s health as well as how to access the health care system.