






The Connecticut Area Health Education Center (AHEC) Program



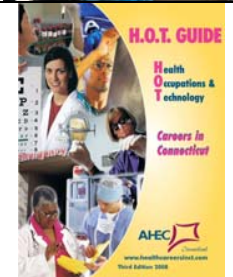



The mission of the Connecticut AHEC Program is “to enhance access to quality health care, particularly primary and preventive care, by improving the supply and distribution of health care professionals through facilitating community/academic educational partnerships.”







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 2009:








- **Health careers recruitment:**
 - A total of **3,794** students in grades K – 12 received services thru AHEC in FY 09
 - **3,114** of these students were from minority or disadvantaged backgrounds
 - **4,492** students in grades K - 16 participated in an AHEC sponsored event
 - **1,241** students participated in more intensive AHEC health career programs (over 20 hours)
 - Over **2,470** teachers, parents and guidance counselors participated in an AHEC activity
- **Continuing education:**
 - **106** continuing education programs sponsored or co-sponsored by Connecticut AHEC with over **6,000** participants








	Program Implemented by	Program Title	Brief Description
	Connecticut AHEC Program Office	<i>The UConn Migrant Farm Worker Medical and Dental Clinics</i>	Since 1998, the clinics have provided free medical and dental screenings and health education to migrant farm workers throughout the state of Connecticut. In 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. In 2009 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	<i>National Primary Care Week</i>	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, and a retreat in the Berkshires. More than 56 students and 14 faculty members participated at the 10 health community health fair sties serving over 200 patients.
	Connecticut AHEC Program Office	<i>Urban Service Track</i>	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. 56 scholars enrolled in UST in FY09.







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	Connecticut AHEC Program Office	Middle School Health Careers Awareness Program (MSHCAP)	Rising 7 th and 8 th graders are invited to explore health careers through hands on activities and exposure to medical, dental, pharmacy and nursing students. In FY 09 160 middle school students from six different school districts participated.
	Connecticut AHEC Program Office	Clinical Career Day	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	Health Occupations and Technology (H.O.T) Careers in Connecticut	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?
<p>Hhealth Occupations & Technology <i>Careers in Connecticut</i></p>	Health Careers In CT. com	Health Occupations and Technology (H.O.T) Careers in Connecticut Web Site	<p style="text-align: center;">www.healthcareersinct.com</p> <p>The newly redesigned H.O.T. Guide web site launched in December 2008. Since then the web site has received over 765,000 hits</p>
	Connecticut AHEC Program Office	Continuous Quality Improvement Deans' Symposium	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	National Health Service Corps (NHSC)	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.
	<p>Created by Northwest AHEC, Inc.</p> <p>Implemented by all Connecticut AHEC centers</p>	Youth Health Service Corps (YHSC)	The YHSC mobilizes diverse high school student trained to provide volunteer service in health care agencies. Since 2007, over 19,000 hours of volunteer service have been performed by more than 700 Connecticut high school students. NWCTAHEC implements the YHSC nationwide through the national network of AHEC centers. 1,677 high school students across the nation have completed over 48,000 hours of volunteer service.



	Program Implemented by	Program Title	Brief Description
	<p>Created by Eastern AHEC, Inc.</p> <p>Implemented by all Connecticut AHEC centers</p>	<p><i>Collegiate Health Service Corps (CHSC) of Connecticut</i></p>	<p>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, Eastern, Central, Southern and Western Connecticut State Universities.</p>
	<p>Central AHEC, Inc.</p>	<p><i>"Careers for the Future": Summer Medical Camps</i></p>	<p>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.</p>
	<p>Central AHEC, Inc.</p>	<p><i>Ryan White Mobile Health Van</i></p>	<p>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.</p>
	<p>Central AHEC, Inc.</p>	<p><i>Elders Ready for Action & Senior Ambassador Program</i></p>	<p>The Elders Ready for Action Project (ERA), funded in part by the North Central Area Agency on Aging, is an emergency preparedness outreach, education and engagement project for older Americans age 60 and over living in the towns of Bloomfield, Hartford and Windsor. ERA increases the independence of older Americans through improved access to emergency preparedness education and resources by providing outreach and education, an emergency planning workshop series, the distribution of emergency kits, and continuing education through forming of senior-staffed CERT teams.</p>
	<p>Central AHEC, Inc.</p>	<p><i>International Health Professional Bridge Initiative</i></p>	<p>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.</p>
	<p>Central AHEC, Inc.</p>	<p><i>Heart Disease & Stroke</i></p>	<p>The new Heart Strong Program is a faith-based group level and community level intervention targeting African American/Caribbean American men and women ages 40- 65 living in Hartford, Bloomfield, and Windsor. A six part educational workshop series will focus on heart disease and stroke topics by providing health screenings, address important behavioral changes individuals can make, stress the importance of seeking regular medical care and health screenings and using 9-1-1 in the event that signs of heart attack or stroke are apparent. These workshops will be held at faith-based sites, senior programs/senior centers, and professional/social organizations.</p>

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	Central AHEC, Inc.	<i>HIV Testing & Reconnect to Care</i>	HIV testing is the part of the Early Intervention Services (EIS) Program that tests individuals in the community to make them aware of their status and direct them to services if needed. Reconnect to Care is also part of the EIS Program. Reconnect to Care helps providers seek out clients who have fallen out of care for various reasons, establish contact and redirect the clients, if they wish, back into the care system.
	Central AHEC, Inc.	<i>HIV Prevention Services (Healthy Relationships and Drug treatment Advocacy)</i>	The Healthy Relationships Program is a group level intervention which assists individuals in their coping skills, condom negotiation with partners, motivation enhancement and other competencies. This intervention is targeted for Latinos/a, Afro American males and females ages 25 to 45. The Drug Treatment Advocate Program provides assistance to individuals who are HIV positive or at high risk of becoming infected. Services are: placement into detoxification programs; inpatient/outpatient treatment programs; case management; follow up services with referrals to employment, medical services, entitlements, support groups and much more.
	Central AHEC, Inc.	<i>HIV Core Services (Outpatient care, Mental Health, Substance Abuse counseling & Medical Case Management)</i>	These programs are to enhance the quality of life for individuals living with HIV; they are an essential service for those we serve. Outpatient testing for HIV, high blood pressure and diabetes are provided in homeless shelters and on a street outreach van. Referrals are also provided to primary care, with outpatient care and support services provided at a local clinic for HIV positive individuals. Having a mental health person to talk to and listen gives clients relief in their daily struggles and with being stigmatized. The Substance Abuse Counselor provides vital tools and counseling for clients struggling with the recovery process they are going through. Medical Case Managers link clients to needed resources to improve their quality of life in the hopes that they will become self-sufficient and manage their wellness. These services are not limited to medical referrals, entitlements, housing, food pantry and others on behalf of clients. All services are provided in linguistic and culturally appropriate settings for the wellness of the client.
	Central AHEC, Inc.	<i>Healthy Options for Pregnancy Empowerment (H.O.P.E.)</i>	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.	<i>Advancing Health Education Careers (A.H.E.C.) Summer Institute</i>	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.

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	Eastern AHEC, Inc.	Health Promotion After School K-4	This program provides 1 st -4 th graders with interactive and fun health related activities as part of a 4 series cycle that includes science enrichment, homework and physical fitness.
	Eastern AHEC, Inc.	Promotora de Salud (Health Promoter)	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.
	Eastern AHEC, Inc.	Mujer de Mujer (Women to women)	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.	Medical Interpretation Training Program	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. To date, 56 fluent native, heritage and second language speakers have been trained as interpreters.
	Eastern AHEC, Inc.	Bright Futures Training in Mental Health	Provides non-mental health participants with increased understanding of mental health promotion and early recognition of psychosocial problems and mental disorders leading to earlier intervention and treatment for child and adolescents in need.
	Northwest AHEC, Inc.	Connecticut RESC Alliance Project	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.
	Northwest AHEC, Inc.	Health Careers Workshop	This is a six week summer course at Northwestern 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.

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	Northwest AHEC, Inc.	Connecticut Partnership for Public Health Workforce Development	NWCTAHEC represents the CT AHEC program on this steering committee working to increase awareness of public health careers.
	Northwest AHEC, Inc. Central AHEC, Inc.	Public Health Ambassador Program	<p>Central AHEC students are provided with the opportunity to shadow public health care providers with the City of Hartford Department of Public Health. During this three week rotation program students learn about the interaction between public health officials and an urban community in a high pace and unpredictable public health setting. Students conduct job shadowing and research activities, learn about the different sectors throughout the City of Hartford. The program takes place Mondays through Fridays for three week.</p> <p>Northwestern AHEC provides workshops to over 300 high school students in Waterbury to increase awareness of public health careers.</p>
	Northwest AHEC, Inc.	PEACHES (Providing Early Acquaintance with Careers in Health Expanding to Schools)	NWCTAHEC provided health career awareness activities to over 100 middle school students from Northwestern CT including field trips to Waterbury Hospital and University of Connecticut Health Center.
	Northwest AHEC, Inc.	Waterbury Oral Health Collaborative	WOHC works to increase access to oral health care for residents of the greater Waterbury area including "Give a Kid a Smile Day", mobile health clinic and dental services at Staywell Health Center.
	Southwestern AHEC, Inc.	Oral Health Bridgeport Initiative (ORBIT)	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.	Connecticut's Coalition for an Oral Health Plan	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.	Every Smile Counts	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.

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	Southwestern AHEC, Inc.	Immunization Action Plan Program	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.
	Southwestern AHEC, Inc.	Community Health Worker National Education Collaborative	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.	Mother's Day Social	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.	Community Health Outreach Worker Training	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.	Give Kids a Smile®	Since 2007, ORBIT has organized the GKAS initiative in the greater Bridgeport region, which is a volunteer initiative to provide free dental care to children from disadvantaged families endorsed by the American Dental Association. ORBIT coordinates the identification of children in need from the Bridgeport and Stratford public schools, and social service agencies, and facilitates the delivery of free dental care by volunteer dentists. The Bridgeport Dental Association and 52 of its members are our strategic partners, who provided 444 children with free dental care valued at more than \$147,000 in 2009.
	Southwestern AHEC, Inc.	Mother's Day Social	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. Bridgeport Mayor Bill Finch attended the 2009 Social, which featured presentations on dental care and childhood immunizations,

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	Southwestern AHEC, Inc.	<i>Connecticut Health Careers Academy</i>	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 as mentors. This program focuses on guest speakers, field trips, college application process. Mentoring between the high school students and college students will enhance this program with information on transition, functioning, and surviving college. There is a component for parents to learn about careers in the health professions, and the college process.
	Southwestern AHEC, Inc.	<i>Martin Luther King Day</i>	In partnership with the University of Bridgeport and Service for Peace, Martin Luther King Day is celebrated by honoring "40 Days of Peace". YHSC students participate in community service projects for young people and adults that focus on peace and nonviolence. Congressman Jim Himes experienced the exciting event in January 2009.