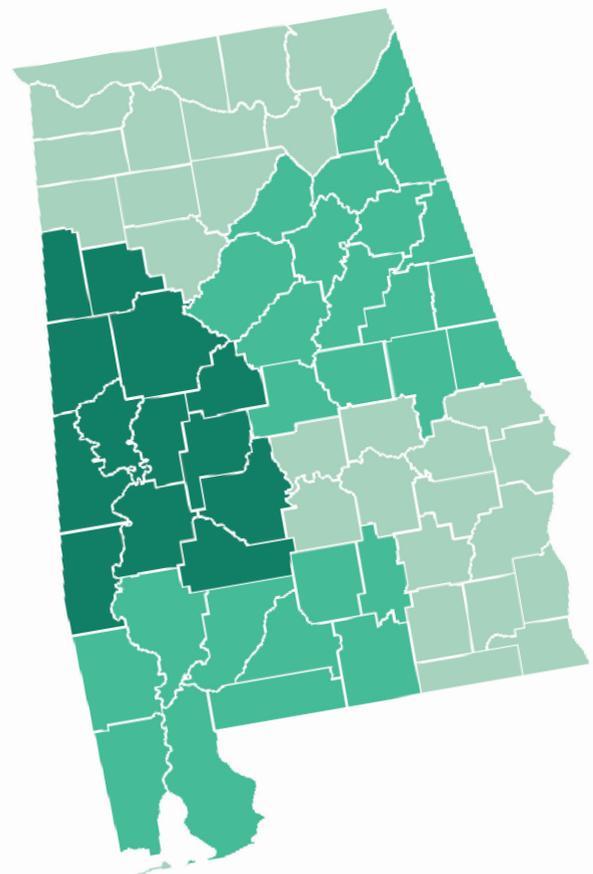


**2021**



# ANNUAL REPORT

**Alabama Statewide Area  
Health Education Center  
(AHEC)**





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# What is AHEC

The Alabama Statewide Area Health Education Center is dedicated to recruiting, training, and retaining the Alabama healthcare workforce while increasing diversity among health professionals, broadening the distribution of the health workforce, enhancing the quality of care, and improving health care delivery to rural and underserved populations in Alabama. The Alabama AHEC consists of five AHEC Centers covering all 67 counties of the state, the Alabama Statewide AHEC Program Office within the University of Alabama at Birmingham Marnix E. Heersink School of Medicine Department of Family and Community Medicine and the Statewide AHEC Advisory Council. AHEC programs are focused on reducing health and educational discrepancies and improving access to quality health care in rural and medically underserved Alabama through health care workforce development, advocacy, education, community outreach, and academic partnerships. This has been a tremendous growth period for the Alabama Statewide AHEC as we continue to support students at each step of the health professions pipeline. We're doing this by connecting students to health careers, connecting healthcare professionals to communities that need them, connecting communities to better health through access to healthcare, and connecting Alabama to better overall health.

# Message from the Program Office

The Alabama Statewide Area Health Education Centers (AHEC) team is proud of the work we have done together this year. We have served dozens of regional communities, reached underserved populations, and continued our mission of building Alabama's medical workforce through education and partnerships across the state.

Throughout the COVID-19, our teams worked to increase COVID-19 testing sites and access to information for our rural and urban underserved neighbors early in the year. Once COVID-19 vaccines were readily available, we began partnering with UAB, the Alabama Department of Public Health and others to distribute doses to vulnerable communities through collaborations with churches, local organizations, student groups, and more. For our efforts, AHEC was recognized as the 2021 Corporate Volunteer of the Year by the Community of Hope Health Clinic.

We are proud to renew our organization's dedication to meeting the needs of the State of Alabama. The renewal of our national grant was submitted in April.

As the CU2RE grant team continues to grow and innovate, AHEC endeavors to determine synergistic approaches for commonality in our missions. Pipeline programs and increased access for rural students to study medicine are on the forefront of our plans for 2022, and we look forward to continued collaboration with the Department of Family and Community Medicine.

With Associate Director Glenda Stanley's retirement comes a new chapter for AHEC, and we thank her for her incredible service to our organization. Her dedication will not be forgotten and her contributions to AHEC's mission in Alabama will have lasting impact for years to come. The Alabama Statewide Area Health Education Centers (AHEC) Program and the UAB Department of Family and Community Medicine welcomed Dr. Rebecca Reamey, to fill the position of Associate Director upon the departure of Glenda Stanley in November, 2022. Reamey joined Alabama AHEC at an auspicious time as the organization transitions back to normal operations after many months spent in COVID-19 relief. It has been a period of great growth in terms of increased outreach and potential for the development and fostering of diverse partnerships upon which Alabama AHEC hopes to capitalize in the coming months.



**Michael B. Faircloth, MD**  
Director



**Rebecca A. Reamey, PhD**  
Associate Director



**Earl Johnson**  
Program Manager

*Associate Director*  
**REBECCA REAMEY**

Rebecca A. Reamey holds a PhD in Higher Education from The University of Alabama, with an emphasis on leadership, professional, and workforce development. Her postdoctoral appointment is in the Center for Community-Based Partnerships in the Division of Community Affairs at UA. In addition, she holds a Master's degree in Communication Management from UAB and has more than 18 years of experience in curriculum design, program management, leadership development, and teaching. Her research and scholarship focuses primarily on program evaluation and training outcomes. For the last four years, Reamey has worked to improve health outcomes and research throughout the Deep South as the Center for Clinical and Translational Science (CCTS) Training Academy co-Director. Through the development of training initiatives, she has helped to ensure that the next generation of healthcare researchers gain the skills needed to lead teams, conduct research, write grants, and intentionally grow their careers. As part of her role, Reamey helped to establish the Family Medicine Faculty Development Fellowship, leading the scholarship and research modules.

As the Deputy Director of the Center of Outcomes and Effectiveness Research and Education, Reamey has been able to connect outcomes researchers to form interdisciplinary research teams and facilitate educational opportunities regarding outcomes research methods. In addition, she currently serves as an assistant professor in Infectious Diseases where she has participated in various COVID-19 projects that include the Alabama Comet/RADx-Up grant that, in turn, partners with Alabama AHEC and the COVID-19 Collaborative Outcomes Research Enterprise (CORE).

As a native of Alabama, Dr. Reamey has great familiarity with the adverse conditions facing our state, and the diverse nuances to consider in addressing those conditions, as relates to public health, accessibility to care, and health education in Alabama's rural and underserved communities.

*Program Manager*  
**EARL JOHNSON**

In January, 2022, Earl Johnson joined the Statewide AHEC Program Office after six years of service at the West Central AHEC. Mr. Earl Johnson is a small cattle farmer and native of Uniontown, Alabama. Mr. Johnson attended the University of Alabama where he earned a Bachelor of Science in Public Health with a concentration in Health Education. Mr. Johnson is a product of the Blackbelt Health Scholars, Rural Health Scholars, and Rural Minority Health Scholars programs provided by the University of Alabama College of Community Health Sciences.

"Coming from a small community I have a firsthand understanding of what it means to live in an underserved community. This is what inspired me to pursue a career in which I could help people as well as effectively impact similar communities." His experience includes interning as Assistant Executive Director at the Good Samaritan Clinic in Northport, AL. The Good Samaritan Clinic provides free healthcare services to low-income and uninsured individuals.

Mr. Johnson also brings 5 years' experience with West Central Alabama AHEC where he has designed and implemented numerous high school enrichment programs including Health Professions Academy which is a year-long high school enrichment program providing students with ACT prep, ACT waivers, mentoring, free dual enrollment, and exposure to various health careers and academic institutes. Mr. Johnson has a dedication to providing students insight into health careers and the resources needed to be a successful health practitioner in our underserved rural communities.

# Meeting the needs of Alabama

## *Alabama Statewide AHEC Mission*

To enhance access to quality health care, particularly primary and preventative care, by improving the supply and distribution of health care professionals via strategic partnerships with academic programs, communities and professional organizations.

## *About Us*

Developed by Congress in 1971 to recruit, train and retain a health professions workforce committed to serving underserved populations, Alabama Statewide AHEC and its regional offices work to creatively adapt national initiatives to help address local and regional health care issues.

## *Purpose*

The purpose of the program is to meet the needs of the communities we serve through robust partnerships with a focus on exposure, education and training of the current and future health care workforce, such as the development of programs like the AHEC Scholars Program and Health Professions Academy.

## *Learn More*

Visit our website for information about our programs, ways to get involved, contact information and more: [alahec.network](http://alahec.network).



# AHEC Scholars

Our AHEC Scholars is a longitudinal, interprofessional education program providing a defined set of didactic and community-based training activities for free to about 50 selected health professions students from various disciplines each year since 2018. The AHEC Scholars Program aims to enhance the education and training of current health professions students committed to serving Alabama's rural and underserved populations. The overall goal is to connect students from several disciplines and train them on the importance of working as a team regarding patient care. We also want these same students to graduate and become a part of the workforce in our medically underserved communities.

## South East Alabama AHEC (SEAAHEC)

Cohort 3



Scholars



Colleges/Universities



Programs

Cohort 4



Scholars



Colleges/Universities



Programs

## Southern Alabama AHEC (SAAHEC)

Current AHEC Scholars



1st Year Scholars  
Cohort 4



2nd Year Scholars  
Cohort 3

Graduated AHEC Scholars



Scholars Graduated  
Cohort 2



Scholars Graduated  
Cohort 1

## North Alabama AHEC (NAAHEC)



Participants



Hours of Training



Training  
Sessions

## East Central Alabama AHEC (ECAAHEC)



AHEC  
Scholars



Different  
Schools

## West Central Alabama AHEC (WCAAHEC)



Accepted Students



Acceptance Rate  
Increase



Graduates from the  
class of 2021



Graduation Rate  
increase

Increased  
participation  
from schools

We developed the AHEC Scholars program with six courses comprising curricula of 40 hours per year over two years, hosted on the free and widely accessible Google Classroom platform.

*Alabama's AHEC  
Scholars*

*439 students  
23 health professions  
39 counties*

# AHEC Scholars



Students are recruited from across the state and include medical, nursing, dental, pharmacy, social work, public health, nutrition/dietetics, and other health professions programs. Each of the five centers coordinates a group of approximately fifty students through discussions of the topics and helps identify the roles of each of the health professions. The students have the opportunity to discuss sensitive topics in a safe environment. The Scholars are also required to complete experiential training with the rural and underserved. Additional funding will allow for the curriculum to be revised, an in-person orientation for the 200 plus AHEC Scholars, and a statewide service learning project. We hope to continue to build this infrastructure of health professionals interested in working with the rural and underserved. Students completing the program will be able to use a team based approach and also make appropriate referrals to improve the health of the individual patient.

Alabama AHEC is training health profession students to work in teams to best address those change and better serve those communities where access to care is not readily available. Note that 58 of the 67 counties in Alabama that are considered rural (greater than 50% population). The AHEC Scholars Program is important because students learn to leverage resources working with rural and underserved populations. Collectively, citizens in rural Alabama are older, sicker, and poorer than their urban counterparts. A long history of distrust of the government, science, and health care contributes heavily to continued health inequities. Alabama will never be able to provide a hospital in every small community as was the hope in the Hill Burton days. Instead, we must focus on building a team of providers with the individual patient as the center of the team.

AHEC Scholars have been involved in both our COVID testing and vaccination efforts. The Scholars also received training in mental health first aid. Our students across the state have been under tremendous stress during the pandemic. The resiliency and mental health first aid training are more important now than ever.

"Over the past 2 years, the AHEC Scholars program has given me the tools and experiences to best serve rural and underrepresented communities as a physician. The didactics portion of the course integrated well with the didactic curriculum in the first 2 years of medical school. The modules covered topics such as cultural competency, interdisciplinary teamwork, and social determinants of health, which are not thoroughly covered in medical school. Now as a 3rd year medical student in my clinical rotations, I see the value of the skills I learned through AHEC and how I can apply them to my patients every day. The program also gave me many memorable experiences serving the community, such as providing patient education in nursing homes and providing COVID testing in underserved communities. I pursued a career in medicine to serve those who are underrepresented in our health system, and the AHEC Scholars program has provided me with the funds, support, and information to better accomplish this goal."

Maria-Camila Ochoa  
3rd year Medical Student, USA  
AHEC Scholars Graduate,  
Class of 2021

# High school Pipeline Programs

# 12,460

**INDIVIDUALS IN HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE PARTICIPATED IN PIPELINE ACTIVITIES THAT EXPOSED THEM TO HEALTH CAREERS**

Pipeline activities that target high school students for recruitment into health careers has been a significant focus of the five Centers during this initial project period. Each Center has conducted numerous health career presentations, targeted high schools for school-based health career enrichment programs, and arranged field trips and college tours. Alabama AHEC subscribed to [www.VirtualJobShadow.com](http://www.VirtualJobShadow.com) and for the past two years Centers have utilized this web-based, interactive career exploration program with students in selected counties (those without a hospital or access to actual job shadowing). Health Career Summer Camps have also been a focus for our Centers.

The Centers work closely with the Health Science Programs in their local high schools and the HOSA- Future Health Professionals chapters. In fact, the Alabama Statewide AHEC Advisory Council serves as the Health Science Advisory Council for Secondary Education as well and the administrator for the Health Science Cluster and her staff report quarterly on the Department of Education Health Science Program and HOSA activities.

During the past year, 12,460 individuals in high school and college (grades 9-16) participated in pipeline activities that exposed them to health careers and developed intent to pursue post-secondary education in a health profession. Of these, 3,118 students, representing 84 percent of Alabama's counties, participated in curriculum-based enrichment activities; 72 percent of those students were from rural Alabama.



# Health Professions Academy

A competitive, year-long academic enrichment program designed for students interested in health careers across in West Central Alabama AHEC. We are establishing partnerships to implement this program statewide.



## About Health Professions Academy (HPA)

High school students (9-12 graders) are invited to participate in HPA's year-long program that seeks to create a resource funnel for underserved students through strategic partnerships with four-year institutions, community colleges and nonprofit organizations. The program is operated at all regional offices. HPA ensures a smooth transition into college for its students in hopes that they return to serve in their communities.

## Benefits

- Improved scores on standardized tests
- Individualized academic and professional support
- Opportunities to network with healthcare providers in rural Alabama
- Exposure to primary care and practice in a rural Alabama community
- Increased financial literacy and knowledge about health careers and support mechanisms available during and after high school
- Free ACT prep and waiver
- Free dual enrollment
- Free mentoring and tutoring

## Evaluation

- On average, 52% of HPA students return
- HPA students raise their ACT composite scores by two points on average
- 85 students were selected to participate in the program for the 2021-2022 academic year.
- 50% of the students will enter a primary care profession and practice in the Alabama.

**128**  
students have  
completed a least  
one dual enrollment  
course with HPA

**92%**  
of HPA students  
pass their dual  
enrollment courses

**90%**  
of students feel  
ready to enter a  
career in healthcare

# High school Pipeline Programs

## North Alabama AHEC (NAAHEC)

### Pipeline Program for High School and Middle School Students:

NAAHEC is committed to improving the future of rural health care in north Alabama. NAAHEC understands that encouraging rural students to see the health care career opportunities in their own communities is an important way forward and provides students with several resources to serve that purpose.

### NAAHEC Pipeline Program for High School and Middle School Students:

- Provides exciting classroom presentations that promote and educate students on health careers
- Offers fun, hands-on activities, and displays for on-campus events - college and career fairs, health fairs, etc.
- Arranges professional related learning opportunities (i.e., job shadowing, hospital visits, college health program tours)
- Promotes and supports the local HOSA organizations and health science programs.

### Camp LEAP (Learn Everything About Patients):

Is a summer enrichment 5-day (normally residential but during the pandemic a virtual) program that promotes health careers exploration. It is designed for high school students in grades 8-11 who have an interest in learning about health professions. Through intensive and interactive activities, students experience basic health skills training, anatomy lab and other fun/educational workshops.

*"Our HOSA students have been able to complete several community service projects with North Alabama AHEC. Through these service projects, our HOSA students have gained confidence in organizing events, developed a compassion for others, and learned how just small acts of kindness can make a huge impact on our community. Our HOSA officers have gained additional skills through our service projects such as the ability to communicate in a professional manner. ...We are very appreciative to have a partnership with North Alabama AHEC."*

*-HOSA teacher*

# High school Pipeline Programs

## Southern Alabama AHEC (SAAHEC)

### Career and Professional Enrichment (CAPE) and Health Career 101:

Encourages high school students in grades 9-12 grades from rural and disadvantaged backgrounds to enter health careers through classroom presentations, free ACT prep classes, campus tours, career counseling, soft skills training, mock interviews, summer camps, and other health-related activities such as self-management skills to increase resiliency. CAPE began December 1, 2021 and recruited 50 students in grades 11-12 providing those students with ACT prep, health careers presentations, college tours, and resume writing/interviewing exercises.



## South East Alabama AHEC (SEAAHEC)

### Discovery MedCamp:

This program brings awareness to the vast field of health care and works to inspire our future health care leaders. Discover MedCamp provides hands-on opportunities for the campers to explore future health care career options. Discover Med Camp was held on the campus of Auburn University from June 5-10, 2022. Up to 30 campers from across the state explored 8 different health care fields through hands-on activities and tours.

### Health Careers 101:

Provides high school students with presentations to assist students with decision-making at a critical point in their lives when they're determining their career path. SEAAHEC provided 12 Health Careers 101 presentations to 371 high school students.

*"Henry Ford once said, "Coming together is a beginning, staying together is progress, and working together is a success." This statement couldn't be more factual regarding Southern Alabama AHEC and my aspiring goals as an advanced practitioner. To provide well-rounded, complete care to my patients, it will become essential for me to utilize my resources—including other practitioners and professionals who are experts in their field. Southern Alabama AHEC has not only provided reinforcement regarding this notion, but it has also opened the line of early communication and collaboration among providers of various disciplines to emphasize how crucial this element is regarding success."*

*- Jennifer Gorecki, Nurse Practitioner and AHEC Scholar*

# Community Based Educational Training (CBET)

Our Community-Based Educational Training program works to pair health care students with providers to serve as their preceptors for clinical rotations. We partner with providers in our underserved communities, as well as health professional shortage areas. Our aim is to encourage our students to complete rotations in rural communities and become a part of the local workforce. We are also able to offer financial assistance to these students for their mileage and housing costs as students complete their rotations.

We make healthcare education (including residency and student rotations) locally available, on the premise that healthcare workers are likely to remain in an area where they train. Since last year AHEC has assisted many medical, physician assistant, and nurse practitioner students by finding clinical rotations in rural and underserved areas and providing reimbursements (housing/mileage) for the expenses incurred during their clinical.

## South East Alabama AHEC (SEAAHEC)

- Southeast Alabama AHEC (SEAAHEC)
  - SEAAHEC provided funding to 5 health professions students for mileage and/or housing reimbursements for a total of \$1,859.20.
- Southern Alabama AHEC (SAAHEC)
  - Housing reimbursement received: 4 PA, 1 Medical, & 1 NP
  - Mileage reimbursement received: 4 medical & 1 NP & 1 clinical psychology
  - Preceptor Assistantship received: 9 medical, 11 NP, & 8 PA



\$1,859.20



Health Professional Students

## Southern Alabama AHEC (SAAHEC)

Preceptor Apprenticeships



9 Medical, 11 NP & 8 PA

Housing Reimbursements



4 PA, 1 Medical & 1 NP

Mileage Reimbursements



4 Medical, 1 NP & 1 Clinical Psychology



Housing



Travel

# Community Outreach

## North Alabama AHEC (NAAHEC)

### Community Health Worker Network:

The pandemic highlighted the need for trusted local health information sources. We recognized the value of having people from the community address the health needs within their own community. Organically, our network of Community Health Workers started forming. As the pandemic has continued, we've expanded that network with the goal of creating accredited CHWs to help provide rural health care access and health education throughout Alabama. The CHW program fills a gap in our most resistant communities by placing a trusted member of that community in a respected position to address health literacy and encourage the use of programming that would improve their health.

- Developed and trained CHWs on a virtual platform with multiple training modules and an abundance of resources.
- Recruited CHWs from targeted communities
- Statewide planning and coordination between the regional offices lead to 70+ trained Community Health Workers Statewide
- Hired 20 CHWs to cover North Alabama
- Engaged with local communities to provide outreach education, address misinformation, and encourage mask-wearing, social distancing, testing, and vaccines.

### HIV Screening:

NAAHEC efforts attempted to educate and screen niche groups to ultimately connect them to care. 17% of Alabamians with HIV are unaware of their status.

As a part of this program NAAHEC provided the following:

- HIV screening program using a Community Health Worker model
- Over 200+ screenings during COVID
- Identified undiagnosed cases that were connected to care from unhoused and addiction rehabilitation program populations
- Incorporated screening into our CHW screening program for overall health

### Youth Service Zone:

Encourages volunteerism fostering a lifelong commitment to better their communities. Youth Service projects emphasize gratitude for the service of others while students provide service themselves through creative and impactful community projects.

NAAHEC annual service projects include:

- Martin Luther King Day of Service
- 9/11 remembrance
- Global Youth Service Day



# Community Outreach

## East Central Alabama AHEC (ECAAHEC)

### Remote Area Medical (RAM):

The RAM program proved to have one of the largest groups seeking medical care of any RAM in recent years. RAM 2022 was the first year we've had a RAM event in Alabama, which reflects the vast rural need in our state. AHEC's expressed mission is to improve the supply and distribution of healthcare professionals in our state's rural and underserved populations. The approximately two hundred students who participated in RAM were able to see firsthand the rural healthcare need and the gratitude of those served. Dr. Maggie Bailey of the UAB School of Optometry often mentions that participating in a RAM clinic years ago, strongly influenced her career choices and made serving the rural population a priority.

The RAM program recruited 450 volunteers, 21 donors and sponsors, 55 community partners and 9 schools to participate. The ECAAHEC RAM clinic saw 612 unique patients and gave away \$337,324.00 worth of health services in two days.

### Annual Behavioral Health Conference:

In partnership with Gadsden State Community College, ECAAHEC educated 153 rural providers during the Annual Behavioral Health Conference.

## South East Alabama AHEC (SEAAHEC)

### Advancing Health Literacy Program:

Funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, in partnership with the City of Montgomery, works to promote positive outcomes and empower citizens to be proactive in their health care decisions. This program helps citizens take an active role in their health care by teaching them ways to communicate with their providers and understand the evolving world of health care.

### Health Disparities program:

Funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in partnership with the Alabama Department of Public Health, SEAAHEC serves as the liaison between the residents of the State of Alabama and the health care system. A network of Community Health Workers helps to bring COVID-19 testing to the hearts of the communities we serve through drive-up community events, daycares, schools, shelters, churches, employer-sponsored events, and several county jails, among others.



*"The first ever RAM event in Alabama was held in our town, Gadsden. It came together after four years of planning and with the support and hard work of volunteers, sponsors, health care providers, and our steering committee. We served patients from multiple counties and states. There are few things I have done that have been more gratifying than serving patients in need of care. Thanks to Angela Anderson of ECAAHEC and Lew Mitchell for having this vision and asking me to be a part of it.*

*-Carol Carlisle,  
CRNP*

# Community Outreach

## West Central Alabama AHEC (WCAAHEC)

### RCORP II and III:

The Rural Communities Opioid Response Program (RCORP-Implementation II) aims to reduce morbidity and mortality in individuals with a substance use disorder.

RCORP seeks to connect the needs of the SUD/ODU community with the necessary tools & resources by strengthening and expanding substance use disorder (SUD), including opioid use disorder (OUD) education, prevention, treatment, and recovery services in the rural areas of Choctaw, Clarke, Escambia, Marengo, Monroe, Sumter, Butler, Conecuh, Covington, Dallas, and Wilcox counties.

- Development of a member consortium
- A six-county needs assessment that assisted in the identification of target-area specific needs to address the opioid epidemic and equip professionals and communities to address SUD/ODU in year 1
- An increase in the number of DATA 2000/MAT waiver providers in the project service area by 13.3% in year 1.
- Implementation of a Community Health Worker (CHW) Program
- Access to education links and training for community members to increase awareness of opioid and substance misuse, prevention, treatment, recovery, and available resources within the community. Over
- Implementation of an SBIRT Toolkit for healthcare professionals - SBIRT is an approach to the delivery of early intervention and treatment to people with substance use disorders and those at risk of developing these disorders.
- Support and expansion of a community recovery program.
- A SAOR community resource guide that enhances discharge coordination for people leaving inpatient treatment facilities and/or the criminal justice system who require linkages to home and community-based services and social supports, including case management, housing, employment, food assistance, transportation, medical and behavioral health services, faith-based organizations.
- Increased access to naloxone within our rural service area in collaboration with the Jefferson County Department of Health
- Culturally appropriate education materials to improve family members', caregivers', and the public's understanding of evidence-based prevention, treatment, and recovery strategies for SUD/ODU while also providing community outreach to reduce stigma and minimize barriers to care associated with the SUD and OUD.
- Development and distribution of a monthly newsletter that enables individuals, families, caregivers, and healthcare professionals to have access to information and resources that support SUD/ODU prevention, treatment, and recovery
- Established the drug takeback program Operation Southwest Safe DisposAL which educates our target communities on how to safely dispose of unused medications.

# AHEC in Action: COVID-19 Response

## AHEC Contributes to RADx Project

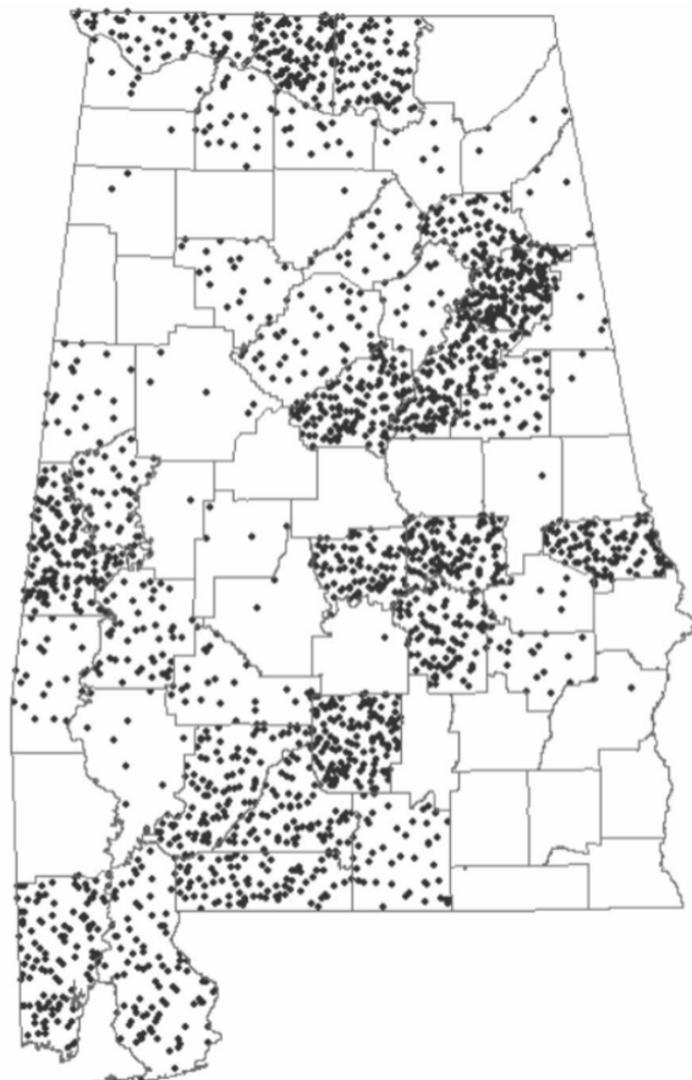
Alabama Statewide AHEC and all of its regional offices have been instrumental to the success of the RADx Project. AHEC has served as the project's primary testing partner, helping to facilitate COVID-19 rapid and PCR tests since October 2020. These tests have been administered in mostly rural areas and to hard-to-reach populations.

Testing numbers at a glance include:

- 22,000 total tests administered
- 3,500 incarcerated individuals tested
- 2,600 COVID-19 positive patients were able to follow safety protocols to keep communities safe

As testing with RADx comes to an end, AHEC is beginning to work with UAB researchers on evaluating the success of the testing effort. The evaluation will focus on:

- How successful the project was overall
- Future applications of the processes developed
- The specific and nuanced contributions of AHEC to the RADx testing project



County Jail	Sum of number
AUTAUGA COUNTY	769
BUTLER COUNTY	12
CLAY COUNTY	69
COLBERT COUNTY	5
ELMORE COUNTY	10
ETOWAH COUNTY	87
LEE COUNTY	325
MACON COUNTY	2
MARION COUNTY	24
MONROE COUNTY	364
MORGAN COUNTY	53
TALLADEGA COUNTY	544
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>2264</b>

AHEC staff members are participating in the research and actively recruiting external partners to participate to ensure the researchers are successful in capturing the data they need. This project should be complete by May 2022.

# COVID-19 Response

*"I just wanted to take a moment and praise your organization... AHEC was willing to come to us, at no charge, with PCR test and results in 24 hours. It was exactly what we needed! (Your staff) was in contact with me throughout the process with excellent communication and facilitation. (your staff) were awesome."*  
 -Local Church Member

## North Alabama AHEC (NAAHEC)

While COVID has overshadowed all health services and life, it offered NAAHEC an opportunity to extend its reach and impact on the community. NAAHEC partnered with churches, senior centers, and other non-profits to provide locations for COVID testing. The logistics needed to test in rural areas introduced us to the Civil Air Patrol and UAB Laboratory as partners. COVID testing outreach provided opportunities to add HIV screening and blood pressure screening to the events. With support from all Centers, NAAHEC created a network of Community Health Workers offering additional health screenings and establishing ourselves as trusted, accurate health information sources.

- Coordinated the initial efforts of a Statewide Testing Program
- Offered Free PCR Testing with Results within 48 hours
- Through August 2021, over 11,000 tests statewide
- Partnered with UAB lab, Alabama Civil Air Patrol, ADPH, and local leaders
- Provided Educational Outreach with accurate virus and vaccine information
- Developed a network of trained Community Health Workers.

Race	Sum of number
ASIAN	4
BLACK	959
HISPANIC	70
NOT REPORTED	15
OTHER	7
WHITE	1209
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>2264</b>

Age Range	Sum of number
18-24	366
25-49	1544
50-64	317
65- OLDER	26
NOT REPORTED	11
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>2264</b>

Sex	Sum of number
Female	526
Male	1732
NOT REPORTED	6
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>2264</b>

Results	Sum of number
NEGATIVE	2012
POSITIVE	252
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>2264</b>

Type of test	Sum of number
APTIMA	183
VISBY	2081
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>2264</b>

# COVID-19 Response

## East Central Alabama AHEC (ECAAHEC)

ECAAHEC focused its efforts on working with captive populations and make rapid testing the standard of care in jails, detention centers, free clinics, and FQHCs. This kept the testing valid and vigorous among some of the most vulnerable populations. ECAAHEC established COVID-19 testing sites at 3 detention centers, 4 free clinics, and 1 FQHC, thus covering 22 actual counties with our testing services. ECAAHEC has been responsible for approximately 6,344 COVID-19 tests since April of 2021.

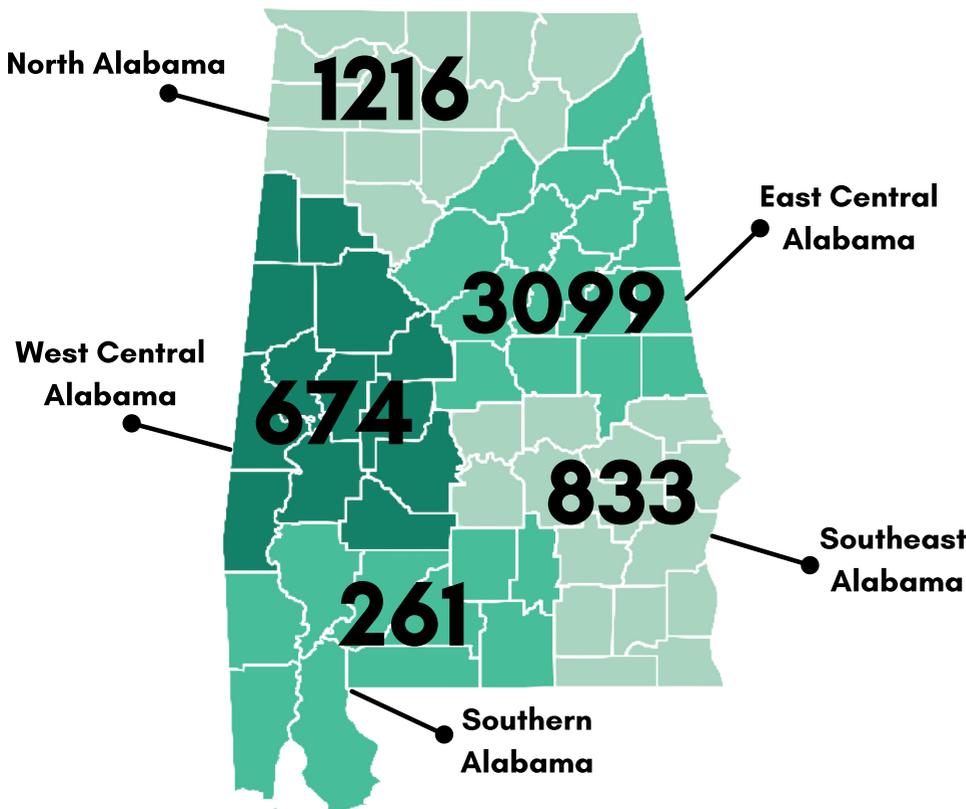
## South East Alabama AHEC (SEAAHEC)

SEAAHEC partnered with the other regional offices across the state and answered the call to provide tests to some of Alabama's most vulnerable citizens. During the first two quarters of this partnership, AHEC has worked with over 130 community partners to offer COVID-19 testing for community members in 45 of Alabama's 67 counties. SEAAHEC also provided COVID-19 testing and vaccines to home-bound citizens, distributed masks, and volunteered at vaccine clinics.

## Southern Alabama AHEC (SAAHEC)

SAAHEC provided 6124 COVID-19 tests in 83 rural testing sites for a total of 325 events. Participants were also provided vaccinations and education.

*"I am a Community Health Worker from Millbrook, Alabama which is located in Elmore County. I love being a CHW for Elmore County. I have been able to test many people including members of my church that needed testing done quickly because of showing symptoms but not being able to get tested by local medical facilities due to long lines or not having rapid tests available. Being a CHW is one of the most rewarding and gratifying jobs I have ever had."*  
-Edward Cochran, Community Health Worker, Elmore County



**6083**  
**Vaccines**  
**Administered**



# AHEC's Future

- 1** Identify opportunities for the further development of the Alabama Statewide AHEC Program that covers all 67 counties of the state with five (5) community-based AHEC Centers.
- 2** Enhance the co-curricular experiences of the AHEC Scholars Program that prepares a diverse, culturally competent group of health professions students for recruitment into primary care and practice in rural or underserved areas of Alabama.
- 3** Facilitate community-based experiential training of health professions students in rural and underserved areas of Alabama to improve workforce distribution.
- 4** Cultivate partnerships to prepare underrepresented minority, rural, and other disadvantaged Alabama youth for careers in the health professions, including public health.
- 5** Support continuing education for practicing health professionals in Alabama on the core topic areas of interprofessional education/team-based practice, behavioral health integration, connecting communities and supporting health professionals, virtual learning and telehealth, social determinants of health, cultural competency, practice transformation, and selected current and emerging health issues.
- 6** Increase and strengthen partnerships with preceptors and communities to improve workforce distribution in rural and underserved areas.

# AHEC's Future

**1** Identify opportunities for the further development of the Alabama Statewide AHEC Program that covers all 67 counties of the state with five (5) community-based AHEC Centers.

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1. Engage the Alabama Statewide AHEC Advisory Council in ongoing efforts to promote and sustain the work of the Alabama Statewide AHEC Program.
2. Involve the AHEC Centers' Boards of Directors in opportunities for board development and strategic planning for each Center.
3. Host a joint board meeting once a year for the Statewide Advisory Council and the Centers' Boards of Directors.
4. Provide onboarding opportunities for new staff, Center board members, and Advisory Council members.
5. Facilitate regular meetings with Center Directors to maintain communication, share successes and challenges and provide ongoing assistance.
6. Continue to build and strengthen strategic collaborations with key academic and community partners at the local, state, and national levels.
7. Develop communication tools to connect AHEC stakeholders between meetings.
8. Identify and secure additional funding (state, federal, foundation, fee for service opportunities) to continue to advance the work of the Centers and Alabama Statewide AHEC Program.

# AHEC's Future

## 2

Enhance the co-curricular experiences of the AHEC Scholars Program that prepares a diverse, culturally competent group of health professions students for recruitment into primary care and practice in rural or underserved areas of Alabama.

1. Create a task force comprised of academic partners and health professions student disciplines from each of the five AHEC Center service areas that will annually review the AHEC Scholars curricula to reflect current issues and solutions.
2. Enhance evaluation tools and protocols to conduct both process and outcome evaluation of the AHEC Scholars Program.
3. Increase opportunities for community-based experiential training within each of the five AHEC Center service areas.

## 3

Facilitate community-based experiential training of health professions students in rural and underserved areas of Alabama to improve workforce distribution.

1. Collaborate with Alabama rural health partners to identify clinic sites across the state that can provide team-based clinical training opportunities for health professions students.
2. Continue to facilitate community-based training in rural and underserved areas.
3. Continue to advocate for preceptor incentives and develop necessary materials to collect and report data.

# AHEC's Future

## 4

Cultivate partnerships to prepare underrepresented minority, rural, and other disadvantaged Alabama youth for careers in the health professions, including public health.

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1. Continue to identify partners for youth pipeline programs statewide.
2. Target high schools and students within each AHEC Center service area for participation.
3. Partner with the Alabama Community College System to develop a certificate for high school students who complete the courses for immediate entry into the healthcare workforce.

## 5

Support continuing education for practicing health professionals in Alabama on the core topic areas of interprofessional education/team-based practice, behavioral health integration, connecting communities and supporting health professionals, virtual learning and telehealth, social determinants of health, cultural competency, practice transformation, and selected current and emerging health issues.

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1. Develop a plan with Public Health Training Center that finalizes webinars topics, dates, and speakers.
2. Develop a robust continuing education program to connect providers.
3. Determine innovative ways to incorporate virtual learning and simulation into training opportunities statewide.

# AHEC's Future

**6** Increase and strengthen partnerships with preceptors and communities to improve workforce distribution in rural and underserved areas.

1. Develop a Community Recruitment Toolkit for recruiting and retaining healthcare workers to their communities.
2. Implement a strategic preceptor development and retention plan.
3. Identify temporary housing options in rural areas.



# Meet the Team

## Alabama Statewide AHEC Program Office

Within its outreach efforts across all 67 counties of Alabama, the Alabama Statewide Area Health Education Centers (AHEC) Program is hosted within the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) Department of Family and Community Medicine. The Alabama Statewide AHEC Program remains committed to expanding the health care workforce of Alabama by maximizing diversity and facilitating distribution—particularly within its underserved and rural communities.

The goals of the Alabama Statewide AHEC Program are to influence the training of health professions students and residents toward primary care; to provide continuing education and support for targeted health providers; and to implement programs, services, and activities that target underrepresented minorities, rural and otherwise disadvantaged Alabamians for careers in the health professions. These goals are accomplished through an innovative, collaborative and interprofessional response to the needs of our communities.



**Michael B. Faircloth, MD**  
Program Director



**Rebecca A. Reamey, PhD**  
Program Associate Director



**Earl Johnson**  
Program Manager

## East Central AHEC (ECAAHEC)

Established as a community-based 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, the East Central Alabama Area Health Education Center (ECAAHEC) began serving the healthcare needs of its region in 2015.

The aim of the ECAAHEC is to improve the quality of healthcare in by providing training, education, and resources to health care professionals, and to increase the local medical workforce by inspiring youth to pursue healthcare careers.

The ECAAHEC service region includes Blount, Calhoun, Chambers, Cherokee, Chilton, Clay, Cleburne, Coosa, DeKalb, Etowah, Jefferson, Randolph, Shelby, St. Clair, Talladega, and Tallapoosa Counties.



**Angela Anderson**  
Executive Director

**Scott Boyd**  
Office Manager & CBET Program Director

**Merry Crook**  
CHW Coordinator & AHEC Scholars Program  
Coordinator

# Meet the Team

## North Alabama AHEC (NAAHEC)

Established as a community-based 501(c)3 nonprofit organization in 2014, the North Alabama Area Health Education (NAAHEC) was established is located on the campus of Alabama A&M University in Huntsville.

The aim of the NAAHEC is to improve the health of Alabama's most vulnerable populations, particularly those who live in medically-underserved and rural communities.

The NAAHEC service region includes Colbert, Cullman, Franklin, Jackson, Lauderdale, Lawrence, Limestone, Madison, Marion, Marshall, Morgan, Walker, and Winston Counties.



**Joe Crozier, MS**  
Executive Director

**Lamont Dupree**  
Associate Director

**Salana Usher**  
Community Health Worker Coordinator

**Nancy Noever**  
Program Coordinator

## Southeast Alabama AHEC (SEAAHEC)

Established as a community-based 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, the Southeast Alabama Area Health Education Center (SEAAHEC) is a non-profit, community-based organization located in Montgomery, Alabama and part of the overall Alabama Statewide AHEC Program.

The aim of the SEAAHEC is to enhance access to quality health care, promote diversity of the Southeast Alabama Workforce, provide education opportunities for health care professionals in rural and underserved Southeast Alabama.

The SEAAHEC service region includes Autauga, Barbour, Bullock, Coffee, Dale, Elmore, Geneva, Henry, Houston, Lee, Lowndes, Macon, Montgomery, Pike, and Russell Counties.



**Paula Cheatwood**  
Executive Director

**Ayana Sterling**  
Program Manager, Advancing Health Literacy

**Cynn'e Marshall**  
Program Coordinator, Health Disparities

**Marcus Fitts**  
Program Coordinator, AHEC Scholars

# Meet the Team

## Southern Alabama AHEC (SAAHEC)

Established as a community-based 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, the Southern Alabama Area Health Education (SAAHEC) was established in 2014, and opened its doors in January 2015.

The SAAHEC is located on the campus of Coastal Alabama Community College, Brewton Campus. Its aim is to promote diversity of the Alabama healthcare workforce, and education by improving the supply and distribution of healthcare professionals in underserved Alabama communities.

The SAAHEC service region includes Baldwin, Butler, Clarke, Conecuh, Covington, Crenshaw, Escambia, Mobile, Monroe, and Washington Counties



**Vanessa Hall**  
Executive Director

**MD Ikbal**  
Director of Programs

**Chastidy Jenkins**  
Community Health & Education Manager

**Victoria Rudolph**  
Health Careers Program Coordinator

## West Central Alabama AHEC (WCAAHEC)

Established as a community-based 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, the West Central Alabama Area Health Education Center (WCAAHEC) is located in Demopolis, Alabama, and focuses on impacting the lives of vulnerable populations in the communities it serves.

The aim of the WCAAHEC is to promote diversity of the Alabama healthcare workforce, and education by improving the supply and distribution of healthcare professionals in underserved Alabama communities.

The WCAAHEC service region includes Bibb, Choctaw, Dallas, Fayette, Greene, Hale, Lamar, Marengo, Perry, Pickens, Sumter, Tuscaloosa, and Wilcox Counties.



**Rosie London**  
Executive Director

**Adrian Collier**  
Program Coordinator

**Jenell Pernell**  
Administrative Manager

**Senadhuan St. John**  
Program Manager

**Mercedes Lightfoot**  
Population Health Coordinator

the 1990s, the number of people in the UK who are aged 65 and over has increased from 10.5 million to 13.5 million, and the number of people aged 75 and over has increased from 4.5 million to 6.5 million (Office for National Statistics 2000). The number of people aged 65 and over is expected to increase to 16.5 million by 2020, and the number of people aged 75 and over to 8.5 million (Office for National Statistics 2000).

There is a growing awareness of the need to address the needs of older people, and the need to ensure that they are able to live independently and actively in their own homes. This has led to a number of initiatives, including the development of the concept of 'active ageing' (World Health Organization 1999), and the development of the concept of 'age-friendly communities' (World Health Organization 2002). The concept of 'age-friendly communities' is defined as 'communities that are designed and organized to enable all people, especially older people, to participate in, contribute to, and enjoy their lives' (World Health Organization 2002).

The concept of 'age-friendly communities' is based on the idea that older people should be able to live independently and actively in their own homes, and that they should be able to participate in, contribute to, and enjoy their lives. This requires a range of services and facilities, including housing, transport, health care, and social services. The concept of 'age-friendly communities' is also based on the idea that older people should be able to live in a safe and secure environment, and that they should be able to access the services and facilities that they need.

The concept of 'age-friendly communities' is a relatively new concept, and it is still in the early stages of development. However, it is becoming increasingly important, as the number of older people in the UK continues to increase. The concept of 'age-friendly communities' is a key part of the government's strategy for addressing the needs of older people, and it is a key part of the government's strategy for promoting active ageing.

The concept of 'age-friendly communities' is also a key part of the government's strategy for promoting social inclusion. The concept of 'age-friendly communities' is based on the idea that older people should be able to live independently and actively in their own homes, and that they should be able to participate in, contribute to, and enjoy their lives. This requires a range of services and facilities, including housing, transport, health care, and social services.

The concept of 'age-friendly communities' is also a key part of the government's strategy for promoting health and well-being. The concept of 'age-friendly communities' is based on the idea that older people should be able to live independently and actively in their own homes, and that they should be able to participate in, contribute to, and enjoy their lives. This requires a range of services and facilities, including housing, transport, health care, and social services.

The concept of 'age-friendly communities' is also a key part of the government's strategy for promoting equality. The concept of 'age-friendly communities' is based on the idea that older people should be able to live independently and actively in their own homes, and that they should be able to participate in, contribute to, and enjoy their lives. This requires a range of services and facilities, including housing, transport, health care, and social services.

The concept of 'age-friendly communities' is also a key part of the government's strategy for promoting economic growth. The concept of 'age-friendly communities' is based on the idea that older people should be able to live independently and actively in their own homes, and that they should be able to participate in, contribute to, and enjoy their lives. This requires a range of services and facilities, including housing, transport, health care, and social services.