

The AHEC Scholars Program is a voluntary, nationally recognized program for health professions students. It provides opportunities for students to increase knowledge, strengthen leadership skills, and gain competencies within eight broad topic areas.

## AHEC Scholars Core Topic Areas

- **Interprofessional Education/Interprofessional Practice:** team-based care delivery, patient-centered care, effective teamwork
- **Behavioral Health Integration:** services that better address the needs of individuals with mental health and substance use conditions, including training for health professionals to address burnout and resiliency
- **Connecting Communities and Supporting Health Professionals/Community Health Workers (CHWs):** increase training and development of paraprofessionals who serve as connectors between health professionals and the community
- **Virtual Learning and Telehealth:** leverage technology to improve curricula and community-based experiential training
- **Social Determinants of Health:** economic stability, education, social and community context, health and health care, neighborhood and built environment
- **Cultural Competency:** recognize and address the unique culture, language and health literacy of diverse consumers and communities, diversity, equity, and inclusion
- **Medical Practice Transformation:** quality improvement, care coordination, cost containment, rural health care, primary care, care for underserved/disadvantaged populations, patient-centered care, team-based care
- **Current and Emerging Health Issues:** opioids and substance use disorders, oral health as part of overall health, oral health integration, COVID-19

## Benefits of Participation

- Eight core topic areas provide prompts for reflection: what did you learn and how did you grow, as a person and health professional?
- Enhance educational experience by engaging with those who live in rural and underserved communities
- Gain a deeper understanding of communities through opportunities to hear from and interact with providers, policy makers, community leaders, and others who care for those in rural and underserved populations
- Gain experience and competencies in interprofessional care and care for the underserved
- Designation as a Vermont AHEC Scholar, a nationally recognized distinction (list on C.V. section "Honors and Awards")
- At Commencement, pins, and gold and white cords are worn by students who earned the AHEC Scholar distinction
- An achievement to discuss in residency program and job interviews to differentiate from other applicants

## Requirements

- Program duration must cover at least two years, with each year including 40-hours of eligible didactic education and 40-hours of eligible experiential or clinical training, for a total of 160-hours of eligible activities. VT AHEC offers a "flexible pathways" approach to meet the AHEC Scholars requirements. Only those students completing all requirements will be designated as "Vermont AHEC Scholars" at time of graduation.