

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 and health literacy of consumers
- **Medical Practice Transformation:** quality improvement, care coordination, cost containment, rural health care, primary care, 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 communities
- Gain a deeper understanding of communities through opportunities to hear from and interact with providers, policy makers, community leaders, and others
- Gain experience and competencies in interprofessional care
- 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.