



**AHEC Scholars 80-hour Pathway: Student Interest Group Education/Mentoring**

The Office of Primary Care and AHEC Program, in partnership with Northern Vermont AHEC, offers an opportunity for LCOM students enrolled in the AHEC Scholars Program to earn credit for one year of eligible activity toward AHEC Scholars requirements (80 hours comprised of 40 didactic and 40 field/clinical hours). The overarching goal of AHEC Education and Mentoring programming is to inspire and encourage young people from all backgrounds to pursue careers in the medical professions. The program is designed to be relevant to Larner College of Medicine students interested in any medical specialty and applicable to a wide range of medical education activities. Program content highlights mentoring at all life stages – early exploration of an interest in medicine, high school through medical education, and over a medical career.

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.

The AHEC Scholars Program is part of AHEC’s longitudinal workforce research about influences on specialty selection and future practice—location, type of practice, and the patient population served.

**Table. Eight AHEC Scholars Priorities**

Topic	Emphasis or examples
Interprofessional Education	-team-based care and patient-centered care
Behavioral Health Integration	-services that better address the needs of individuals with behavioral, 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	-addressing food insecurity, economic inequality, access to education, social and community context, access to health care, neighborhood and built environment, etc.
Cultural Competency	-care that address the unique culture, language and health literacy of diverse communities
Medical Practice Transformation	-quality improvement, care coordination, cost containment, rural health care, primary care, care for underserved or disadvantaged populations
Current and Emerging Health Issues	-current HRSA-approved topics: Opioids and Substance Use Disorders, Oral Health as part of Overall Health, COVID-19

### The SIG Education & Mentoring 80-hour program is an AHEC Scholars eligible activity

The Education/Mentoring pathway includes 40 didactic hours and at least 40 field hours. To meet AHEC Scholars requirements, the 80 hours must be completed within the same academic year (Sept – Feb). Students may complete during their first or second year at LCOM.

All students complete the same 40 didactic hour curriculum, described below. For field hours, students will be assigned to one of the LCOM mentoring SIGs - **HERO SIG** or **Med Mentors SIG**. Informational sessions will be held to help students learn about the differences and determine which SIG they are most interested in.

**HERO Info Session:** Wednesday 8/14/24 Med Ed 300 and Wednesday 8/21/24 Med Ed 200

**Med Mentors Info Session:** Friday 8/16/24 Med Ed 200

### AHEC SIG Education and Mentoring pathway application

Interested students should apply by **August 30th**. Applicants commit to participating in the 40-hour didactic activities and complete 40 hours of medical education or mentoring as described in this overview.

As part of the application, students will be asked which mentoring SIG they would like to participate in. While we do our best to accept students into the program they choose, this is not always possible due to program capacity (number of mentees) or other factors. Placement decisions are made based on applicant qualifications and the needs of each program. Students will be notified/offered a spot in the program by 9/6/24 for Med Mentors and 9/16/24 for HERO mentors.

**Application link:** <https://redcap.link/SIGPathwayApp2024> Application is open from 8/9/24-8/30/24

Questions about the VT AHEC Scholars Program or this application can be directed to [Patti.Smith-Urie@uvm.edu](mailto:Patti.Smith-Urie@uvm.edu)

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### Field Activities (40 hours)

#### HERO Mentoring SIG

The HERO Mentoring Student Interest Group (SIG) was established to support under-represented high school students by exposing them to health science and careers. It is comprised of one-to-one mentoring activities with **high school students** led by Northern Vermont AHEC. By working with the HERO Mentoring Program, the HERO Mentoring SIG provides Vermont teens with firsthand experiences in health science through connection with medical student mentors. Meaningful interactions between mentors and mentees help youth gauge if a career in health or medicine would be right for them. Mentees are able to ask questions and engage their curiosity through online modules and one-to-one mentoring. The program consists of eight structured modules (75 minutes each) conducted in sequence from October through January. Participation in a final online event completes the program. HERO mentors agree to complete all required hours to meet the 40-field hour requirement.

Activity	Required/optional	Notes
HERO-specific training & coaching	Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>September 25, 6:00 – 7:30 PM</u> in-person training in MedEd 300</li> <li><u>September 30, 5:30 – 6:30 PM</u> virtual training via Zoom</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On-going support and coordination provided by SIG leaders and AHEC staff, TBD and as needed</li> </ul>
Forms completion, background checks, policy and procedure review.	Required	Independent
HERO Launch	Required	Synchronous, online event for all mentors and youth
Mentoring one-to-one online	Required	Eight sessions total at 75 minutes virtual via platform of choice
Preparation for each mentoring session	Required	Independent
HERO Celebration	Required	Synchronous, online event for all mentors and youth

### Med Mentors SIG

Med Mentors is a student-led organization that aims to support undergraduate and pre-health students on their paths to medical school. We provide one-on-one matching between medical students and pre-health students in addition to group opportunities, such as panels and skills clinics. Recognizing the importance of diversity in medicine, mentors support and encourage students at all stages of their journey - from early exploration of a possible career in medicine to all aspects of the application process. Mentors and mentees are matched based on answers to a survey that asks which factors they feel are important to the match, including shared experiences, backgrounds or identity.

Mentors completing the AHEC Scholars 80-hour pathway will choose and log activities to meet the 40-field hour requirement and participate in the 40-hour didactic. Students should not expect to meet the 40 field hours with individual mentoring alone. Field hours will be a combination of these activities:

- One-to-one mentoring matches with current or recent undergraduate students at UVM or other VT colleges.
- Pre-Health Clinics for UVM undergrads (EKG Clinic, Wound & Suture Clinic, Medical Injection/IV Clinic, Patient Assessment/Vital Signs)
- Panel presentations on topics such as: When to Apply?, Finding Research & How to get involved in Summer Opportunities, MCAT Study Tips, Gap Year Opportunities, Personal Statement Workshops
- Program leadership/program development, including opportunities to develop new programming focused on unique populations (defined by the AAMC as individuals underrepresented in medicine, LGBTQIA+, people living in rural/under resourced backgrounds, and/or people with disabilities).

View the Med Mentor 2024-2025 Activity Calendar here: [2024-25 Med Mentor Activity Calendar](#)

**Important note:** LCOM students in all four years may participate in Med Mentors without being on the AHEC Scholars Pathway track. This is a more limited commitment and does not count as an eligible activity toward meeting AHEC Scholars requirements.

## Didactic Activities (40 hours)

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The curriculum is titled “Cross-Cultural Encounters in Mentoring and Patient Care” and is led by Nicole LaPointe, MSW, EdD, Executive Director for Northern Vermont AHEC.

**Learning objectives:** Upon completion of this training, AHEC Scholars will:

- i. Understand the role of a mentor in goal-focused group and one-on-one settings
- ii. Be prepared to apply strategies for effective cross-cultural relationship building
- iii. Be able to apply methods for culturally effective and patient-centered care
- iv. Be able to articulate the importance of the national AHEC Scholar Priorities as they relate to quality and equity in healthcare

### **AHEC SIG Orientation to Mentoring Wednesday 9/25/24 5:00-6:00 MedEd 300 classroom**

Overview of mentoring in a health workforce development context, mentoring as a strategy for health workforce diversification, and types of mentoring configurations. This session is for all students participating in HERO or Med Mentors SIG activities.

Learning activities

1. **Required text:** Watson, R. (2017). *Piecing me together*. New York: Bloomsbury YA. A young adult novel about a one-to-one mentorship, winner of the Newbery Medal Honor 2018 and the Coretta Scott King Author Award. Provided by AHEC.
2. **Live, interactive book discussions:** explore the themes in the text as they relate to the experience of mentoring, the stages of mentoring relationships, and effective mentoring practices.
3. **Independent reading:** curated journal articles that address mentoring in higher education, youth development, and community-based contexts.
4. **CME activities:** Select, recorded events from the National Health Equity Grand Rounds Learning Series available through the AMA Ed Hub.
5. **Podcast episodes:** Conversations with professionals from education, health care, and youth development exploring mentoring ethics through the developmental milestones of a mentoring relationship.
6. **Online discussion board:** Response to reflection prompts aimed at synthesizing the content and applying it to one’s own mentoring practice.
7. **Professional education:** In-person (and recorded) training on topics related to culturally effective clinical practice and cross-cultural mentoring.
8. **Mentoring panels:** Opportunities for Med Mentors and HERO mentors to hear from others involved in mentoring at LCOM.

This course is a combination of asynchronous learning and synchronous activities, with backup options when students encounter scheduling conflicts. Synchronous activities will be scheduled between September and December 2024; Asynchronous activities should be completed by March 2025.