



January 2013

To: Missouri Legislators

From: Missouri Area Health Education Centers



**Medical Exploration of Medicine and Sciences (M.E.S.A.)** is an interactive distance learning series providing a hands-on educational opportunity to enhance skills and to academically prepare and motivate high school students who are interested in healthcare careers. Within each session, a comparison is made between an anatomical specimen and human anatomy so students can appreciate the similarities and differences that exist.

Anatomy and Education fellows at the A. T. Still University/Kirksville College of Medicine created the **Medical Exploration of Medicine and Sciences (MESA)** program and continue to develop and deliver the content. The first event was held on November 13, 2005 with four sessions scheduled per academic year. The first subject was "Special Sense" smell, taste, vision, eye, hearing and balance and an eye dissection.

Since this first session more than 1,000 students from all seven AHECs across the state have participated in these workshops, broadcast across the state from Kirksville. The next two events are **"Food Loops" - January 29, 4:30-7:00 PM** which will be an exploration of digestive tract as students follow a bite of food through the mouth, esophagus, stomach, small and large intestines. A mink specimen will be dissected to demonstrate this pathway. On March 7, the topic is **"It's All in Your HEAD"** which will cover the anatomical structures of the mouth and cranial nerves will be investigated by using replicas and models of the human face and skull.

Because of the complex nature of the training, medical students who are rotating in the area volunteer to be guides for the specimen dissections and other hands-on activities. In addition, students attending are encouraged to complete online anatomy and physiology modules to prepare for the program.

The distance education approach also allows the program to videotaped, allowing centers to repeat the workshops for additional students at later dates.

***This program is one example of statewide collaboration by Missouri AHEC on behalf of students interested in health careers.***

*MAHEC is a partnership of seven locally-governed organizations and three university-based health professions education programs working statewide to increase the numbers of Missouri youth entering stable, high-paying jobs as healthcare professionals and the numbers of professionals caring for underserved populations.*

*The MAHEC partners include:*

A.T. Still University – Kirksville  
University of Missouri – Columbia  
Saint Louis University  
Northeast Missouri AHEC – Kirksville  
Northwest Missouri AHEC – St. Joseph  
West Central Missouri AHEC – Lexington  
Mid-Missouri AHEC – Rolla  
East Central Missouri AHEC – St. Louis  
Southeastern Missouri AHEC – Poplar Bluff  
Southwest Missouri AHEC – Springfield