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From: Missouri Area Health Education Centers

Missouri AHEC works with students at the undergraduate level to provide them with connections to community resources and mentoring, workshop, job shadowing, and professional skill building opportunities because they have demonstrated a commitment to healthcare careers.

Sometimes AHEC's interaction with pre-health professional students is an extension of high school programming. Undergraduates may volunteer to assist at workshops and mentor younger students. They are also eager to take advantage of AHEC visits to various professional schools across the state.

In other instances, centers may provide internship opportunities.

East Central Missouri AHEC conducts a summer internship program in several Washington University School of Medicine departments. At Crider Health Center and at Grace Hill Health Centers, students intern in dental departments.

Last summer, Traci Shipps, Maryville, worked at the FQHC in St. Joseph assisting the Quality Improvement Department with data collection and analysis. Northwest Missouri AHEC was key in making the arrangements. NEMO AHEC employs interns from Truman State University each summer to coordinate M*A*S*H Camps.

Madeline Cummings, a community health major from Kansas City, participated in programs offered in two different AHEC regions. As a student at Truman State University, Madeline first connected with AHEC through her participation in the KCOM AHEC "Interprofessional House Calls" program, a collaborative project between students at A.T. Still University-Kirksville College of Osteopathic Medicine (ATSU-KCOM) and Truman State University. IPHC is a team-based home visiting course that gives health professions students a taste of what it is like to work with a small inter-professional team including a patient. Through home visits and faculty-facilitated review sessions, students have the opportunity to learn about several patients' health challenges and the knowledge and skills of a variety of health care disciplines (osteopathic medicine, nursing, communication disorders, and health education).

While home for the summer, Madeline reached out to the West Central Missouri AHEC in Kansas City, which provided her with an opportunity to work in a rural clinic setting in Waverly, Missouri. The Live Well Community Health Center, a new FQHC operated by the Health Care Collaborative of Rural Missouri, was the recipient of a nationally funded Telehealth Outreach Diabetes and Depression program. This program was designed to improve health outcomes by teaching disease management and self-care for individuals diagnosed with diabetes, depression or both. Madeline was trained to enroll patients, collect data, and screen for A1C levels.

Programs like these allow students to take skills learned in the classroom and put them to practical use in the community.

Madeline Cummings provides patient education during her internship last summer.

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

MAHEC: Connecting students to careers, professionals to communities, and communities to better health