

From Preceptorship to Practice

Caroline Sullivan's Rural Success

From Preceptorship to Practice: Caroline Sullivan's Rural Success

Caroline Sullivan's path as a Nurse Practitioner was profoundly shaped by her experience with Alabama AHEC's clinical rotation placements. While attending Samford University's NP program, Caroline was connected with a preceptor at [Quality of Life Health Services](#), through [East Central Alabama AHEC](#). Originally aiming to become a Nurse Practitioner in private practice, she soon found her focus shifting. The experience revealed to her the stark realities faced by underserved communities—the uninsured Alabamians those in rural areas. It wasn't just a job anymore; she was confronted with the gaps in care she hadn't fully seen before.

During her 2016-2017 rotations in Gadsden, Sardis, Boaz, and other rural communities, Caroline worked with medically underserved patients and learned the importance of going beyond standard care. One impactful case involved a homeless woman who had medical complications due to untreated diabetes. Caroline arranged for her treatment at a local church and helped secure housing, reflecting the level of care needed in such communities.



Her AHEC clinical rotation placement led to her first job at [Quality of Life Health Services](#), where she became a provider for uninsured patients, often stepping in as their specialist when they couldn't afford one. Caroline believes every provider should have rural healthcare exposure, calling it essential to becoming a well-rounded medical professional.

Now as a Nurse Practitioner at [University of Alabama at Birmingham](#) and a professor at [Herzing University in the Family Nurse Practitioner Program](#), Caroline's story demonstrates the life-changing influence of the Alabama AHEC rural clinical rotation placements. Her experience exemplifies the importance of training in underserved areas and incentivizing rural preceptors through the [Alabama Preceptor Tax Incentive Program](#).

[Learn More about APTIP](#)

Alabama AHEC Network
Scholars

Applications Open



Applications for Alabama AHEC Scholars Program Still Open!

If you know a healthcare student who would be a great candidate for the [Alabama AHEC Scholars Program](#), approach them by highlighting their strengths and passion for serving others. Emphasize how the program offers unique hands-on experience, professional networking, and personal growth opportunities that align with their career goals. Encourage them to explore the application process. The program beings October 16th!

Benefits of Becoming an AHEC Scholar

Hands-On Experience

Gain practical skills through community-based clinical work in underserved areas.

Career Development

Gain access to workshops, seminars, and hands-on activities designed to refine essential skills like communication, teamwork, and critical thinking, equipping them to meet the demands of future healthcare careers.

Flexible Learning

Benefit from a mix of online modules and in-person workshops tailored to your region.

Emerging Issues Focus

Stay current on issues facing Alabamians' health.

Financial Support

AHEC Scholars receive a \$500 stipend annually, along with housing and mileage reimbursements for clinical rotations in rural areas, easing financial burdens and supporting your commitment to underserved communities.

Leadership Opportunities

Participate in statewide leadership roles, providing a platform to influence community impact and gain valuable leadership experience.

Interprofessional Learning Collaborate with peers from various healthcare fields, enhancing teamwork and communication.

Personal Growth

Develop cultural competence, leadership, and a commitment to health equity.

Community Impact

Make a difference by providing care to vulnerable populations in settings like free clinics, shelters, and health fairs.

Long-Term Value

Stand out in residency and job applications with specialized experience in underserved care.

Health Certification Training/Digital Badge Offerings

Engage in opportunities to earn health-related certifications and digital badges, enhancing your professional skillset and making you more competitive in the job market.

Mock Interviews and Career Preparation

The program includes mock interview sessions with feedback from professionals, helping you to hone your interview skills and confidently prepare for the job market.

Eligibility

Currently be enrolled in a health professions program with a minimum 2.5 GPA in one of the following fields:

- Medicine (MD/DO)
- Dentistry
- Clinical Psychology (PhD)
- Physician Assistant
- Nurse Practitioner
- Nurse Midwifery
- Pharmacy
- Optometry

**If you are interested in applying for the Scholars Program and your discipline is not listed above, please contact Rachel Watts at rwatts3@uab.edu.*

For More Information & to Apply

Alabama AHEC Scholars Program Internship

The [Alabama AHEC Network](#) is seeking an AHEC Scholar Intern to assist with the administration and coordination of the Alabama AHEC Scholars program. The intern will work closely with the Alabama AHEC Scholars Program Director, gaining hands-on experience in program management while supporting key activities such as student engagement, event planning, data management, and communications. This is an excellent opportunity for someone passionate about healthcare education and community impact.

Scope of Work of Student may include one or more of the following:

- AHEC Scholar Application Processing
- Research public health topics, such as population data or disease tracking
- Support program implementation
- Assist in planning public health informational and career-related events
- Assist with other AHEC projects

Apply

New AHEC Scholars Coordinators Join Alabama AHEC Network

The Alabama AHEC Network is excited to introduce two new [AHEC Scholars](#) Coordinators who will help drive the success of our programs across the state.

Cesar Hernandez, joining us as the AHEC Scholars Coordinator for [North Alabama AHEC](#), brings a wealth of experience in public health and patient care. A 2022 graduate of UAB with a degree in Public Health and a concentration in Global Health, Cesar's background as an EMT and EEG Tech equips him to support future healthcare providers as they navigate their educational journeys.

Shelly Olive, now the AHEC Scholars Coordinator for [Wiregrass Alabama AHEC](#), has a passion for healthcare education and a strong commitment to empowering the next generation of medical professionals. With her expertise and enthusiasm, Shelly will be instrumental in guiding students through the [AHEC Scholars Program](#), fostering growth and success in healthcare careers.

Both Cesar and Shelly are valuable additions to the [Alabama AHEC Network](#), and we are confident that their leadership will have a lasting impact on the [AHEC Scholars Program](#) and our mission to strengthen healthcare in underserved communities.

Meet our New Members



Shelly Olive, a native of Ozark and graduate of Carroll High School, began her healthcare career after completing the Radiography Program at Wallace College and training at the Institute of Ultrasound Diagnostics in Mobile. She worked at Flowers Hospital as a Registered Diagnostic Medical Sonographer and Registered Vascular Technologist before becoming the hospital's first PACS Administrator in 2004. After 15 years, she joined Digestive Health Specialists to establish their ultrasound department, where she worked for 16 years.

Shelly transitioned to a new career path in 2023, becoming the Dothan Affiliate Site Manager for the [All of Us Research Program through UAB Medicine](#). She is also the 2024-2025 Youth Council Advisor for the [334 Prevention Project](#).

Shelly has always been active in community service. She served as an ultrasound clinical instructor for nearly 30 years and held leadership roles in her children's school organizations. A lifelong churchgoer and pastor's kid, she's played the piano and led various church groups. Shelly and her family are members of Calvary Baptist Church.

Shelly and her husband Mark, who works at Wiregrass Electric, are celebrating 29 years of marriage. They have two children, Parker and Maci. Shelly enjoys puzzles, reading, travel, and photography. She is excited to begin her role as the [Wiregrass Alabama AHEC](#) Scholars Coordinator, combining her passion for helping others with her healthcare expertise and love for the community.

We are thrilled to welcome Shelly to the Wiregrass team, knowing her extensive healthcare experience, passion for helping others, and deep connection to the Wiregrass community will make her an invaluable asset in her new role as the [Wiregrass Alabama AHEC](#) Scholars Coordinator.



Cesar Hernandez, a 2022 graduate of the [University of Alabama at Birmingham \(UAB\)](#), brings a strong foundation in Public Health and Global Health to his new role as the [AHEC Scholars Coordinator for North Alabama AHEC](#). With a Bachelor of Science in [Public Health](#), a concentration in Global Health, and a minor in [Psychology](#), Cesar's academic journey reflects his deep commitment to addressing healthcare challenges on a global and local scale.

Even before his university studies, Cesar had a passion for healthcare. While pursuing his degree, he gained hands-on experience as an EMT for a private ambulance service, where he developed crucial emergency response skills.

As the [North Alabama AHEC Scholars Coordinator](#), Cesar is dedicated to guiding future healthcare providers and medical professionals toward achieving their full potential. His goal is to mentor and support the next generation of healthcare workers, ensuring they are well-prepared for the challenges and opportunities ahead. His experience and enthusiasm for public health make him a valuable addition to the AHEC team.

We are excited to have Cesar join the [Alabama AHEC Network](#) at [North Alabama AHEC](#), bringing his wealth of knowledge, dedication to community health, and enthusiasm for making a positive impact as he steps into his new role with us!

Alabama AHEC Network Statewide Advisory Board Nominations

The [Alabama AHEC Network](#) is seeking nominations for individuals to serve on its Statewide Advisory Board. We invite our valued stakeholders and partners to recommend individuals who can contribute their expertise and insights to address the critical workforce challenges facing Alabama's healthcare system.

The [Alabama AHEC Network](#) Advisory Board plays a vital role in guiding the [Alabama AHEC Network](#) by fostering a community-focused, multidisciplinary approach to health care training and service delivery. Board members will help identify barriers and opportunities for expanding clinical training into underserved rural and urban areas, develop strategic partnerships, and enhance the overall impact of the Network. We encourage you to nominate individuals who are committed to improving health care access across Alabama, and who can represent the diverse populations and geography of our state. Your nominations will help us build a strong and effective Advisory Board dedicated to advancing health care for all Alabamians.

Nominate

Mike Anderson joins National AHEC Organization Board

Mike Anderson, an [Alabama AHEC Scholars](#) alumnus from [East Central Alabama AHEC](#), has been selected to serve as a board member representing AHEC Scholars for the [National AHEC Organization](#) for the next two years! His appointment marks an exciting milestone, not just for Mike but also for the NAO board, as his leadership and experience will bring valuable insights. Mike's commitment to advancing healthcare in underserved communities makes him an ideal choice for this role, and we are eager to see the positive impact he will continue to make through his work. Alabama's involvement and representation on the National AHEC board will bring innovative opportunities to Alabama AHEC.

Resources & Education

PRECEPTOR REGISTRATION NOW OPEN!

Register NOW for the Alabama Preceptor Tax Incentive Program (APTIP)

In 2023, Alabama legislature approved the **Alabama Preceptor Tax Incentive Program (APTIP)** to offer a tax deduction to uncompensated healthcare professions preceptors in our State. The goal of the APTIP is to increase medical student training in rural and underserved counties in Alabama.

Administered by the [Alabama AHEC Network](#), APTIP provides a \$500 income tax credit incentive for each 160-hour clinical preceptorship rotation per calendar year for what would otherwise be unpaid work by community-based preceptors who meet eligibility requirements.

[Learn More & Register Here](#)

Student Rotations Housing Form

The [Alabama AHEC Network](#) frequently receives requests from students seeking housing in rural areas while they complete training rotations. If you know of potential housing availability for learners, please fill out the form below so that we may share this information with interested students.

[Learn More](#)

Advocate for Expanded Care for Alabamian Mothers

Grove Hill Memorial Hospital, a rural hospital in south Alabama, [closed its labor and delivery department this past month](#). As a result, women in the area may face drives of over an hour to reach a facility for childbirth, posing serious risks to both mothers and their babies. In recent years, Alabama has seen a continuous trend of labor and delivery department closures, leading to the emergence of multiple maternity care deserts across the state. [Alabama Arise](#) has provided a [fact sheet](#) outline the issues facing maternal health in Alabama.

Take Action

Learning Opportunities

2024 Alabama Rural Health Roadshow - Huntsville

When: Wednesday, October 2, 2024 from 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM

Where: First Baptist Church (Room 250), 600 Governors Drive Huntsville, AL 35801

About This Event

[Alabama Rural Health Association](#) is going on the road! We are pleased to announce our series of upcoming Roadshows taking place throughout Alabama. Register today for this opportunity to provide feedback about the future of rural health in the State of Alabama!

In these meetings, we will discuss the specifics of rural health issues and address them through three different breakout sessions: Access to Care, Community Health Needs/ Concerns in Rural Alabama, and Policy Needs for Rural Health. This event will be interactive. We want to hear your concerns, opinions and solutions!

Lunch will be provided. There is no cost to attend.

Registration

Fall 2024 West Central Mini IP Bootcamp

When: Friday, October 4, 2024 from 9:00 AM – 12:30 PM

Where: The University of Alabama, North Lawn Hall— 221 Hackberry Lane, Tuscaloosa, AL 35401

About This Event

The purpose of this course is to provide healthcare professionals in LTCFs with the knowledge and tools to run a competent and inclusive infection control program within their facility. The attendees will learn about infection prevention practices and recommendations for laundry, medication passing and carts, and UTI prevention.

Free of cost, but seating is limited, and registration is required. Seats are available on a first come first serve basis.

Registration is required by Friday, September 27, 2024

Registration

2024 Alabama Rural Health Roadshow - Northport

When: Wednesday, October 9, 2024 from 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM

Where: Northport Civic Center, 3500 McFarland Blvd, Northport

About This Event

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In these meetings, we will discuss the specifics of rural health issues and address them through three different breakout sessions: Access to Care, Community Health Needs/ Concerns in Rural Alabama, and Policy Needs for Rural Health. This event will be interactive. We want to hear your concerns, opinions and solutions!

Lunch will be provided. There is no cost to attend.

Registration

2024 Alabama Rural Health Roadshow - Mobile

When: Friday, October 11, 2024 from 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM

Where: University of South Alabama Faculty Club, Multifunction Room

About This Event

[Alabama Rural Health Association](#) is going on the road! We are pleased to announce our series of upcoming Roadshows taking place throughout Alabama. Register today for this opportunity to provide feedback about the future of rural health in the State of Alabama!

In these meetings, we will discuss the specifics of rural health issues and address them through three different breakout sessions: Access to Care, Community Health Needs/ Concerns in Rural Alabama, and Policy Needs for Rural Health. This event will be interactive. We want to hear your concerns, opinions and solutions!

Lunch will be provided. There is no cost to attend.

[Registration](#)

Mini Infection Prevention Bootcamp for Northeastern District Alabama Regional Long-Term Care Facilities

When: Wednesday, October 16, 2024 from 08:15 AM – 12:30 PM

Where: Oxford Civic Center 401 McCullars Lane, Oxford, Alabama 36203

About This Event

This course is aimed towards infection prevention and control healthcare professionals in the Long-Term Care Facility setting, located in North Eastern Alabama Region (includes the following Alabama counties: Etowah, Cherokee, Blount, St. Clair, Calhoun, Cleburne, Talladega, Clay, Randolph, Coosa, Tallapoosa, Chambers, Marshall and DeKalb) The purpose of this course is to provide healthcare professionals in LTCFs with the knowledge and tools to run a competent and inclusive infection control program within their facility. The attendees will learn about the importance of hand hygiene, environmental services, the how, when and what to report of infectious diseases and outbreaks, acquire an understanding of OSHA requirements for initial and annual N-95 fit testing and proper documentation for employees. The attendees will also be provided with a better understanding of the General Infection Control Assessment Response and how this can benefit their facilities.

[Registration](#)

WOC-Tober Fest 2024

When: Friday, October 18 2024 from 7:30 AM - 3:30 PM

Where: Grandview Hospital in the James Spann Auditorium

About This Event

Get ready for WOC-tober Fest 2024! The [Central Alabama Wound, Ostomy, & Continence Nurses Association](#) is hosting our fall wound, ostomy, and continence workshop. You do not want to miss out on some amazing speakers discussing topics including peristomal skin complications, incontinence and pelvic floor, hyperbaric oxygen therapy, and more!

Registration: Early bird \$42 (ends September 30th); Regular: \$63 (starts October 1st) Parking included. Breakfast, lunch and an exhibitor fair with vendors are included.

6 Nursing CEUs offered.

Registration

Climate Change Impacts on Vector Borne Disease Webinar

When: Wednesday, October 23, 2024 at 11:00 AM CST

Where: Virtual

About This Webinar

In this webinar Dr. Luis Chaves associate professor at the Indiana University School of Public Health-Bloomington Department of Environmental and Occupational Health will present results from his research on Malaria, Leishmaniasis and other vector-borne diseases that have illustrated the importance of climate change to understand emerging ecological and epidemiological patterns on the transmission of vector-borne diseases.

This webinar is presented by the [Alabama Regional Center for Infection Prevention and Control](#) and cosponsored by the [Deep South Center for Occupational Health and Safety](#), [Alabama AHEC Network](#), and the [Region IV Public Health Training Center](#).

The Deep South Center for OH&S is an approved provider of continuing education units for nurses by the AL Board of Nursing (Provider ABNP0420 Expiration Date 7/10/2025) and has awarded this program 1.2 ABN CEUs. All other professionals awarded .1 CEUs.

Registration

Infection Prevention Mini-Bootcamp for Alabama Long-Term Care Facilities

When: Thursday, October 24, 2024 from 11:45 AM – 4:30 PM

Where: Dothan Houston County Library— 445 N. Oates St., Dothan, AL 36301

About This Event

The purpose of this course is to provide healthcare professionals in LTCFs with the knowledge and tools to run a competent and inclusive infection control program within their facility. The attendees will learn about infection prevention practices and recommendations for detecting, testing, and reporting reportable diseases and conditions in Alabama, environmental hygiene, laundry services, and viral respiratory illness prevention and preparedness.

Free of cost, but seating is limited, and registration is required. Seats are available on a first come first-serve basis.

Registration is required by Friday, October 18, 2024

Registration

2024 Alabama Health Policy Summit

When: Monday, October 31, 2024, 10 am - 3:30 pm

Where: The Club, Birmingham, AL

About This Event

The Alabama Health Policy Summit (2.0) registration is now open. [ACHE's](#) exciting program lineup this year includes discussions of the health care landscape from both federal and state representatives, a review of the current status of health care in the state of Alabama by the [Alabama Hospital Association](#), a policy dialogue on telehealth, ethical considerations and policy implications with artificial intelligence, and more.

Registration

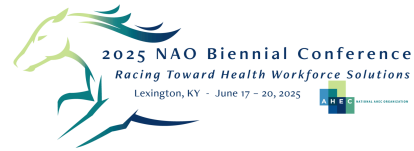
2025 NAO Biennial Conference

When: June 17-20, 2025

Where: Lexington, Kentucky

About This Event

The 2025 NAO Biennial Conference just got announced. It will be hosted in Lexington Kentucky on June 17-20th. Look out for more updates!



Registration

Narcan Training

When: Open Enrollment

Where: Online

About This Program

Sign up for the free online Naloxone training program, provided by the [Jefferson County Department of Health](#). By gaining the necessary knowledge and abilities to administer Naloxone, you'll be equipped to reverse opioid overdoses and potentially make a life-saving difference.



Registration



VISIT OUR WEBSITE



alahec.org



Visit Our Website

About Alabama AHEC Network



The Alabama AHEC Network is dedicated to recruiting, training, and retaining the Alabama healthcare workforce while expanding variety among health professionals, broadening the distribution of the health workforce, enhancing the quality of care, and improving health care delivery to rural and underserved populations in Alabama.

The following centers are members of the Alabama AHEC Network and are federally funded HRSA AHEC Programs and nationally recognized Area Health Education Centers: Alabama Statewide Network Program Office, North Alabama AHEC (NAAHEC), East Central Alabama AHEC (ECAAHEC), Black Belt Alabama AHEC (BBAHEC), Wiregrass Alabama AHEC (WAAHEC), and Delta Alabama AHEC (DAAHEC).