A graphic consisting of two dark blue rectangular blocks. The top block is wider and contains a faint, light blue network diagram with nodes and connecting lines. The bottom block is narrower and solid dark blue. To the right of these blocks, the text "Alabama AHEC Network Updates" is displayed. "Alabama AHEC" is in a small, light green sans-serif font. "Network" is in a medium-sized green sans-serif font. "Updates" is in a large, bold green sans-serif font, with a thin green horizontal line underneath it.

Alabama AHEC Network Updates

AHEC Scholars Alumni Spotlight: Katlyn Norton, CRNP



Katlyn Norton, CRNP

*Alabama AHEC Scholar Alumni
Cohort 3 2020-2022*

For Katlyn Norton, practicing in a rural community isn't just a career—it's a calling. Originally from Millport, AL, and now living in Vernon, Katlyn has always been passionate about providing healthcare where it's needed most.

Her journey with **Lamar Family Medicine** began as a volunteer while she was an AHEC Scholar, continued through her nurse practitioner clinicals, and ultimately led to her **owning the practice in January 2023** when the previous physician retired.

With the **closest hospital 60 miles away**, Katlyn plays a critical role in ensuring her community has access to quality care. Her commitment to rural medicine is deeply personal—she recalls the fear and urgency when her father suffered a medical emergency and had to be transferred multiple times to receive appropriate care. This experience reinforced her dedication to bridging the gap in rural healthcare access.

Having worked in **the NICU in Tuscaloosa** for several years, Katlyn saw firsthand the difference in care availability between urban and rural settings. In the NICU, specialists were always nearby, making referrals and advanced diagnostics seamless. In Vernon, however, she often faces **weeks-long waits for specialist appointments**, and **many patients lack transportation** to reach them. This reality pushes her to develop a **broad medical knowledge base**, ensuring she can provide the best immediate care while coordinating long-term treatment plans.

Despite the challenges of practicing in a small community clinic, Katlyn relies on **interprofessional teamwork** every day. Communication and collaboration with **specialists, hospitals, and other providers** are essential to advocating for her patients. Knowing when to consult a **cardiologist, nephrologist, or other specialists** can make all the difference in securing timely care for her patients.

Katlyn's Advice for Future Healthcare Providers:

"Always be honest with your patients and their families. Even when delivering difficult news, be the person they can trust. Once trust is lost, it's hard to regain."

Katlyn's story is a powerful example of how **AHEC Scholars** can make a lasting impact in their communities. Her dedication to **rural healthcare, patient advocacy, and lifelong learning** embodies the mission of AHEC—to build a stronger, more connected healthcare workforce for underserved areas

AHEC Scholars

Join Us for the AHEC Scholars ARHA Pre-Conference Event!

Mark your calendars for **Thursday, April 3, 2025**, and join us from **8:30 AM to 11:00 AM** at the **Embassy Suites in Hoover** for the **AHEC Scholars ARHA Pre-Conference Event!** While designed for AHEC Scholars, non-Scholars are also welcome to attend. This is a fantastic opportunity to gain hands-on training, connect with peers, and engage in important discussions on rural healthcare. All attendees are encouraged to participate in the **ARHA Alabama Rural Health Conference 2025, taking place April 3-4.**



The poster for the AHEC Scholars ARHA Pre-Conference Event is divided into several sections. At the top left is a photo of hands performing a medical procedure. Below it, the event title 'AHEC Scholars ARHA Pre-Conference Event' is followed by the date and location: 'Thursday, April 3, 8:30 AM - 11:00 AM, Embassy Suites Hoover'. To the right is the Alabama AHEC logo. Below the title, four icons represent the event's components: 'Stop the Bleed Certification' (a heart with a pulse line), 'Advocacy Talk' (a person with a speech bubble), 'Conference Attendance' (a group of people), and 'Student Poster Session' (a person at a poster). Each icon has a brief description of the activity. On the right side, there is a registration box with the text 'Register by March 19th at alaher.org/calendar_event/arha_preconference_event-25/'. Below this is a box listing the event schedule: 'AHEC Pre-Conference Thursday (4/3) 8:30 am - 11:00 am', 'ARHA Conference Thursday (4/3) 12:00 - 6:00 pm', and 'ARHA Conference Friday (4/4) 8:00 - 11:00 am'. At the bottom, there is a box with the text 'Enhancing Alabama healthcare one patient, professional, and student at a time.' and social media links for Facebook and Twitter.

AHEC Scholars ARHA Pre-Conference Event
Thursday, April 3, 8:30 AM - 11:00 AM
Embassy Suites Hoover

Stop the Bleed Certification
Learn bleeding control techniques for injured victims in the case of emergency from UAB School of Nursing faculty using hands-on simulation to practice skills such as application of pressure, packing a wound, and use of a tourniquet. In addition, you can opt to participate in a research study with two brief surveys and leave the training with a Stop the Bleed kit.

Advocacy Talk
Discover the power of healthcare advocacy and how policy, community engagement, and strong leadership can drive meaningful change, improve access to care, and create a healthier future for all Alabamians.

Conference Attendance
On day 1 after lunch, attendees will have a rural health policy discussion, and then select 4 out of 8 breakout sessions. Day 2 offers more insight into legislative priorities to advocate for rural health.

Student Poster Session
Present on Community Impact Projects or scholarly work during a 45-minute time when conference attendees and other students can view your work.

Register by **March 19th** at alaher.org/calendar_event/arha_preconference_event-25/

AHEC Pre-Conference
Thursday (4/3)
8:30 am - 11:00 am

ARHA Conference
Thursday (4/3)
12:00 - 6:00 pm

ARHA Conference
Friday (4/4)
8:00 - 11:00 am

Enhancing Alabama healthcare one patient, professional, and student at a time.

[facebook.com/healthcarealabama](https://www.facebook.com/healthcarealabama)
twitter.com/alaherorg

This year's pre-conference event offers an exciting lineup of **interactive training, networking opportunities, and advocacy discussions**. Participants will receive **Stop the Bleed Training & Certification**, led by **UAB School of Nursing faculty**, where they will learn life-saving bleeding control techniques such as applying direct pressure, wound packing, and tourniquet use. Upon completion, participants will receive a **Stop the Bleed certificate and kit**.

The event will also feature engaging **team-building activities** and a **healthcare advocacy talk**, highlighting the importance of **policy, community engagement, and leadership in improving access to care**.

AHEC Scholars will have the opportunity to showcase their work during the **Scholar Poster Presentation Session** at the ARHA Conference from **1:30 PM –**

2:15 PM. Scholars can present their **Community Impact Projects** or **academic research**, either individually or as a group.

Scholars are welcome to attend just the pre-conference event, but we highly encourage participation in the full **Alabama Rural Health Conference 2025**.

Don't miss this opportunity to **build essential skills, expand your professional network, and engage with rural health leaders!** Be sure to **register** and indicate which days you plan to attend. We look forward to seeing you there!

Register Here

URGE YOUR MEMBERS OF CONGRESS TO SUPPORT AHEC FUNDING!

Urge your U.S. House Representative and two Senators to support federal funding for the AHEC Program!

Given the recent Executive Orders and review of federal programs by the new Administration, it is more important than ever to reach out to your legislators and make them aware of the importance of continued bipartisan support for the AHEC program through Congress and the annual appropriations process.

We must make clear to legislators that the AHEC program addresses health care challenges and shortages in some of the hardest to reach communities, particularly rural communities, and it will be those communities that will experience negative impacts if any funding for the program is cut or eliminated.

Take Action

If you are unsure of who to contact, please follow the steps below.

- Identify your Representative in the House and your two Senators in the Senate. You may find your House Representative [here](#) and your Senators [here](#).
- Once you have identified your members, navigate to their congressional website to locate their Washington, DC office phone number. (This is normally located at the bottom of their official congressional page.)
- With the office number in hand, call the appropriate office and ask to speak with the Health Appropriations Staffer. If that person is not available, ask to leave a voice mail and ask for the staffer's email address.
- If you are having trouble getting in touch with an office, feel free to reach out to NAO's Washington Representatives at the Health and Medicine Counsel (contact: Kira Flaherty, flaherty@hmcw.org).

Act Now!



Alabama AHEC Center Updates

North Alabama AHEC and the Pri-Med P.A.C.T Project with NAO

North Alabama AHEC has been selected as one of eight AHEC centers across the country to participate in the prestigious **Pri-Med P.A.C.T. (Practical Approaches to Comprehensive Treatment of Pain)** initiative, in collaboration with the **National AHEC Organization (NAO)**. The goal of this project is to recruit 30 healthcare providers from under-resourced communities, particularly those serving rural populations, to complete a specialized 4-hour Continuing Medical Education (CME) training series. The course, hosted by Pri-Med, will equip providers with practical, evidence-based strategies to manage and treat chronic pain comprehensively.

This selection underscores **North Alabama AHEC's** ongoing commitment to improving healthcare access and outcomes in underserved regions, where resources are often limited, and pain management can be challenging. By empowering local providers with advanced training in pain treatment, NAAHEC aims to address critical healthcare gaps in these communities.

If you are a **healthcare provider and would like to participate**, please reach out to Karen Leeling at North Alabama AHEC.

Contact NAAHEC

Wiregrass Alabama AHEC Awarded Rheumatology Grant

Wiregrass Alabama AHEC is proud to announce that it has been awarded the **"Developing and Disseminating Programs to Build Sustainable Lupus Awareness, Knowledge, Skills, and Partnerships"** grant. This initiative, supported by the American College of Rheumatology (ACR), aims to enhance lupus education, improve early detection, and strengthen healthcare partnerships within our region.

As part of this grant, **Wiregrass Alabama AHEC** will conduct a specialized **Lupus Awareness and Education Course** on behalf of ACR. This training is designed for **physicians (MD/DO), nurse practitioners, physician assistants, community health workers, medical students, and other clinical providers** to expand their knowledge and skills in diagnosing and managing lupus.

The course will take place **this summer**, providing an invaluable opportunity for healthcare professionals to gain essential insights into lupus care while contributing to improved health outcomes in rural and underserved communities.

If you are interested in participating, please contact **Wiregrass Alabama AHEC** for more details. Stay tuned for further updates on registration and course details!

Contact WAAHEC

Delta Alabama AHEC Awarded Grant to Expand Lupus Awareness and Self-Management Resources

Delta Alabama AHEC is excited to announce that it has been awarded the **"Developing and Disseminating Strategies to Build Sustainable Lupus Awareness, Knowledge, Skills, and Partnerships"** grant. This initiative aims to enhance lupus education, improve patient self-management, and strengthen healthcare provider knowledge and resources.

As part of this effort, **Delta Alabama AHEC** will **collaborate with one to two clinical sites—either primary care or rheumatology practices—to integrate lupus referral resources into patient care**. These sites will be supported in adopting materials from the Lupus Foundation of America's (LFA) digital self-management program, SELF, which empowers individuals with lupus to better manage symptoms, stress, and overall health.

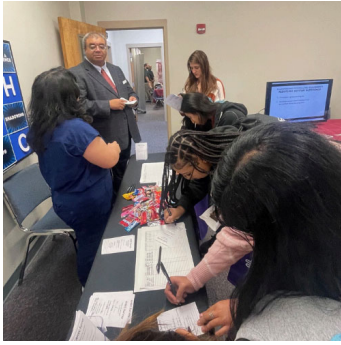
Additionally, **Delta Alabama AHEC** will provide **printed self-management guides** covering topics such as symptom management, stress reduction, and navigating health insurance, along with other valuable lupus education resources.

Through this initiative, **Delta Alabama AHEC** is committed to **improving access to lupus education and self-management tools for patients and providers alike**, ensuring better health outcomes for those living with this chronic disease.

For more information on this program or to explore partnership opportunities, please contact **Delta Alabama AHEC**.

Contact DAAHEC

WAAHEC Scholars Inspire Future Healthcare Professionals



Wiregrass Alabama AHEC Scholar **Kina Talton**, who also serves as the Alabama AHEC Statewide Scholar Secretary, and **Tyler Jaharus**, the Alabama AHEC Statewide Scholar Outreach Coordinator, recently engaged with local high school students at the **Pathways to Health Professions** event at **Troy University Dothan Campus**.

Photo Description: Dr. McFadden, WAAHEC Executive Director, and Kina Talton.

Kina shared her inspiring journey from high school to **Troy University** and on to the **Alabama College of Osteopathic Medicine (ACOM)**, while Tyler discussed his own path into **ACOM** and his experiences in medical school. Their stories highlighted the diverse opportunities available in healthcare and the importance of perseverance, passion, and mentorship.

Students also participated in a survey to share their interests in various health professions, helping AHEC better understand how to support the next generation of healthcare providers. Events like this play a crucial role in **connecting students with resources, guidance, and inspiration to pursue careers in healthcare—especially in rural and underserved areas**.

We're proud of Kina and Tyler for their leadership and dedication to shaping the future of Alabama's healthcare workforce!

AHEC Scholars

DAAHEC Hosts CEU Workshop

On **February 19th**, **Delta Alabama AHEC** hosted a **CEU workshop** led by **Eunice C. Mingo, LPC-S, Master Addictions Counselor**, exploring the distinctions between **medical and recreational marijuana**, the risks of **high-THC products**, and the impact of **social media misinformation**, especially among youth.

The session highlighted the **legal, cognitive, and behavioral effects** of marijuana use and strategies to **combat misinformation through education and regulation**.

This workshop reinforced **Delta Alabama AHEC's** commitment to **public health education**—stay tuned for future CEU opportunities!

*Participants earned **1.0 contact hour(s) of continuing education credit** through the **Alabama Statewide AHEC Program** (Provider ABNP1584, Exp. 6/14/2028).*

[Contact DAAHEC](#)

Resources & Education

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](#)

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](#)

Learning Opportunities

2025 Infection Prevention Bootcamp for Nursing Homes and Long-Term Care Facilities

When: Wednesday, February 26 (9:45 AM – 4:30 PM CST) and Thursday, February 27 (8:00 AM – 2:30 PM CST)

Where: Hyatt Regency Birmingham – The Wynfrey Hotel; 1000 Riverchase Galleria, Birmingham, AL 35244

About This Event

The [Alabama Regional Center for Infection Prevention and Control Training and Technical Assistance Center](#) is hosting an Infection Prevention Bootcamp for Nursing Homes and Long-Term Care Facilities. This is an in-person boot camp that will be held over the course of two days. Open to anyone working in or with infection prevention and control programs in nursing homes or long-term care facilities across the state of Alabama.

The [Alabama AHEC Network](#) is co-sponsoring this event.

CEUs will be offered.

Cost: Free, but registration is required by February 11, 2025.

Registration

HOSA State Leadership Conference

Where: Renaissance Hotel, Montgomery, AL

Alabama HOSA's biggest event of the year is the annual **State Leadership Conference**. Held each February or March, SLC includes nearly 2,000 of Alabama's best Future Health Professionals for two-days of competitive events, networking, the latest industry exhibits, and the election of the State Officer Team.



Learn More & Register

When: Thursday, February 28 at 5:00 PM
Where: Alabama College of Osteopathic Medicine
445 Health Sciences Blvd
Dothan, AL 36303

The **Alabama Osteopathic Medical Association** invites you to join them for CME and student presentations from **ACOM** and **VCOM**. The students will be presenting their research posters and it will allow them the opportunity to mingle with each other and with their **ALOMA** members.



Registration

Challenges & Opportunities at the Intersections of Maternal & Child Health & HIV

When: Monday, March 3 at 6:00 PM

Where: Virtual

About This Event

Join the [Maternal & Child Health Student Association \(MCHSA\)](#) for this upcoming seminar! Their guest speaker is [Rena Patel, MD, MPH, MPhil](#), Associate Professor, Infectious Diseases, School of Medicine, UAB. Dr. Patel is also a Scientist with the [UAB Center for AIDS Research](#) and a Scientist with the [UAB Center for Clinical & Translational Science](#).

In this seminar, Dr. Patel will showcase her research team's work in parts of sub-Saharan Africa at the intersections of MCH and HIV, highlighting existing challenges in the field as well as opportunities to improve the related health outcomes. The seminar will include a Q&A to discuss participant questions or experiences to-date.



Registration

Wiregrass Alabama AHEC: Stop the Bleed Training

When: Monday, March 10 at 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Where: Troy University Dothan Campus Everett Hall Room 138

About This Event

[Wiregrass Alabama AHEC](#) is partnering with the [American College of Surgeons](#) to host an in-person Stop the Bleed Training. This is a free course available to anyone that is interested in learning basic bleeding control techniques that could save a life.



Registration

Wiregrass Alabama AHEC Scholars Virtual Presentations

When: Tuesday, March 18 at 6:00 PM - 7:30 PM

Where: Virtual

About This Event

Join [Wiregrass Alabama AHEC](#) as they have 4 groups presenting on various topics from students at the [Alabama College of Osteopathic Medicine](#).

Topics will include:

- Is Emergency Medicine the New Primary Care?
- The Link Between Blood Pressure and Social Determinants of Health.
- Nutritional Disparities and Chronic Illness in Rural Communities.
- Intranasal Naloxone Education and Distribution Program.



Registration

March AHEC Scholars Webinar: Social Work and Interprofessional Collaboration

When: Friday, March 21 at 12:00 PM

Where: Virtual

About This Event

Join us for the March AHEC Scholars Webinar on Friday, March 21st, from 12:00 PM to 1:00 PM, featuring Katie Owens, LMSW, an [Alabama AHEC Scholar Alumni](#), and registered social worker. Katie will provide valuable insights into the role of social workers in healthcare and how interdisciplinary collaboration enhances patient care.



AHEC Scholars will receive 1 experiential hour.

Non-AHEC Scholars are welcome!

Registration

AHEC Scholars Pre-Conference Event

When: Thursday, April 3 at 8:30 AM - 11:00 AM
Where: Embassy Suites, Hoover, AL

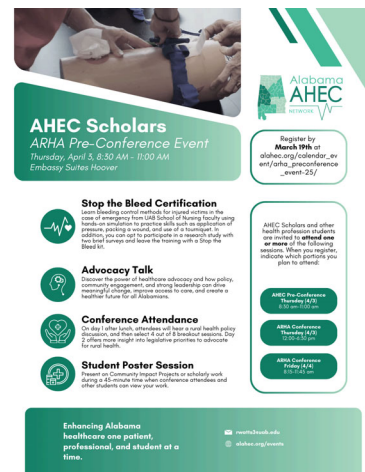
About This Event

The **Alabama AHEC Network** is excited to host a special **AHEC Scholars Pre-Conference Event** ahead of the **2025 Alabama Rural Health Conference**! The AHEC Scholars Pre-Conference Event will be on Thursday, April 3, 2025 from 8:30 AM to 11:00 AM at the Embassy Suites in Hoover. Non-AHEC Scholars are welcome to join!

Attendees will receive Stop the Bleed training that comes with a certificate and kit upon completion. Students will have the opportunity to network and participate in a talk on healthcare advocacy!

AHEC Scholars will have the opportunity to participate in a poster presentation on Thursday, during the ARHA Conference from 1:30 PM to 2:15 PM.

[Registration](#)



2025 Alabama Rural Health Conference

When: Thursday, April 3 at 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM and Friday, April 4 at 7:00 AM - 11:45 AM
Where: Embassy Suites, Hoover, AL

About This Event

The **Alabama Rural Health Association** will host its 2025 Alabama Rural Health Conference on April 3-4, 2025 at the Embassy Suites in Hoover.

Attendees can look forward to engaging presentations, panel discussions, and networking opportunities aimed at improving healthcare access and outcomes for rural and underserved communities. Mark your calendars and join us as we work together to shape the future of rural healthcare in Alabama.

AHEC Students, Alumni, and Staff may **register under Pre-Conference registration**. All others may register at the link below.

[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.

Submit your conference proposals and award nominations today!

NAO invites you to share your work and expertise with colleagues by participating in the 2025 NAO Biennial Conference. Submit an abstract to present as a speaker in an oral session or to display a poster during a scheduled viewing session.

This is a fantastic opportunity to shine a light on the great work that your AHEC is doing.

[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 (BBAAHEC), Wiregrass Alabama AHEC (WAAHEC), and Delta Alabama AHEC (DAAHEC).