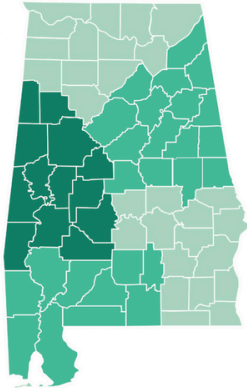


2023-2024

# ANNUAL REPORT

ALABAMA AHEC



Alabama  
**AHEC**  
NETWORK 



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# ABOUT ALABAMA AHEC

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Founded in 2012, the Alabama Area Health Education Center (AHEC) Network is comprised of five AHEC Centers serving all 67 counties of the state. HRSA and state-funded, the Alabama AHEC Network Program Office is guided by the Statewide AHEC Advisory Council and housed within the University of Alabama at Birmingham Marnix E. Heersink School of Medicine and Department of Family and Community Medicine.

The Alabama AHEC Network aims to meet the needs of the communities we serve through robust partnerships focusing on exposure, education, and training of the current and future healthcare workforce. Programs are dedicated to future career development, quality healthcare treatment, and enhanced healthcare access throughout the state.

# MESSAGE FROM THE PROGRAM OFFICE

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2023-2024 began a period of transition for the Alabama AHEC Network. The year brought unprecedented changes and unexpected opportunities. It has been the goal of the program office to capitalize on the opportunities while thoughtfully approaching the changes. We celebrated the retirement and service of Dr. Mike Faircloth, Statewide AHEC Director, and Joe Crozier, Executive Director of North Alabama AHEC. Their service, leadership, and dedication to AHEC during a public health crisis truly saved lives. Their involvement in the Alabama AHEC Network is already missed.

We explored changing our name from "AHEC Statewide Program" to "Network." We felt that rebranding ourselves as the Alabama AHEC Network better reflected our extensive reach and collaborative nature. The new name emphasizes our integrated network of partners and regional centers working together to enhance healthcare access and education throughout Alabama.

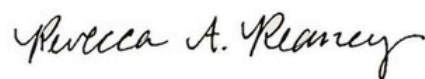
We welcomed three new centers this year as the federally funded HRSA AHEC Programs: Black Belt Alabama AHEC (hosted by the University of West Alabama), Delta Alabama AHEC (hosted by the Mobile Area Education Foundation), and Wiregrass Alabama AHEC (hosted by Troy University at Dothan). These centers replaced the sub-awards with Southern Alabama AHEC, Southeastern Alabama AHEC, and West Central Alabama AHEC. The new centers are poised to bring innovative programs and expanded resources to underserved communities, furthering our mission to recruit, train, and retain the Alabama healthcare workforce. As you will read about in our report, in addition to the productive existing centers, East Central Alabama AHEC (Gadsden) and North Alabama AHEC (Huntsville), the new centers are already making significant contributions.

After two years of advocacy, the Alabama Preceptor Tax Incentive Program (APTIP) officially launched in April. We anticipate we will provide tax incentives to a significant number of preceptors serving in rural and underserved areas of our State. This initiative will expand the number of training opportunities in the state. More students will train in rural communities, and in time, those students will return to rural communities to provide healthcare.

We would not have successfully navigated the unprecedented year without the dedication of our team. In addition to Alia Tunagur and Rachel Watts, we welcomed two new team members in February of this year; Paulisha Holt (Program Director of Finance and Evaluation) and Kala Dixon (Program Director of AHEC Scholars). Paulisha and Kala responded quickly to the demands due to the changes. They have made some innovative changes to improve both the AHEC Scholars Program and the financial and evaluation policies.

As we enter the third year of the grant cycle, we examine how we are measuring our outcomes, responding to the strategic plan, and continuing to focus on achieving our goals. We seek to discover further opportunities and face challenges head-on, and we are already planning for the next grant cycle.

In closing, we would like to extend our deepest gratitude to our partners, staff, and supporters who have been instrumental in our progress this year. The collective effort and unwavering commitment of each member of the Alabama AHEC Network have been pivotal in driving our mission forward. As we navigate this period of transition, we remain steadfast in our mission to recruit, train, and retain the Alabama healthcare workforce. Our rebranding, the addition of new centers, and the implementation of innovative programs, like APTIP, are all steps towards a brighter, healthier future for our state. We look forward to continuing this journey together and making meaningful impacts in the communities we serve. Thank you for your ongoing support and dedication.



*Rebecca A. Reamey, PhD*  
*Alabama AHEC Network*

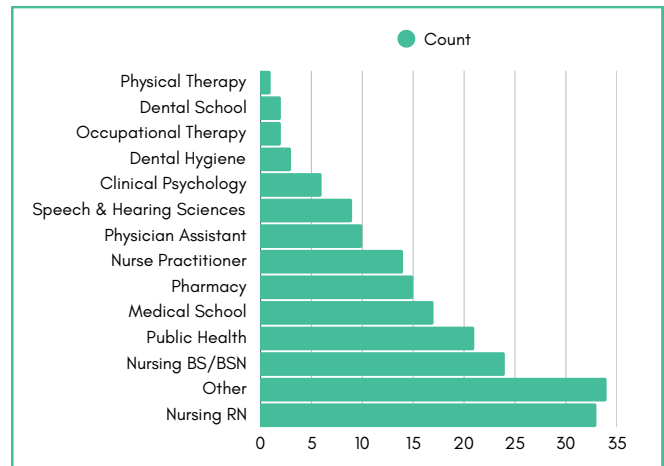
# Scholars Program

The AHEC Scholars program is a national initiative designed to improve the distribution and diversity of healthcare professionals in underserved communities. The program is open to students enrolled in healthcare professional programs who are interested in working in rural or urban underserved communities. The program offers a **two-year** curriculum, which includes **clinical experiences, didactic learning, and community-based projects.**



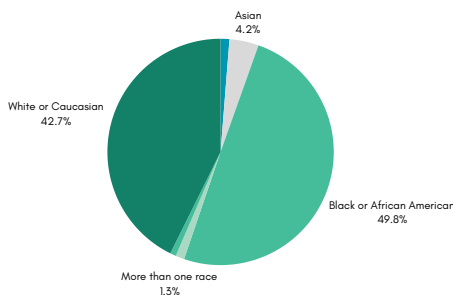
The **AHEC Scholars Program** equips health professions students for interprofessional primary care practice, focusing on serving rural and underserved populations. It includes team-based clinical fieldwork placements, networking opportunities with leaders and providers statewide, and specialized training in areas such as **cultural competency, interprofessional education, behavioral health integration, social determinants of health, practice transformation, and current and emerging health issues.** Upon completing the program, AHEC Scholars are equipped with the skills and knowledge necessary to provide quality care to underserved populations and address healthcare disparities in the communities they serve.

## During the last fiscal year, the AHEC Scholars Program achieved:

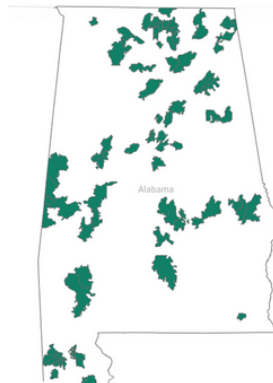
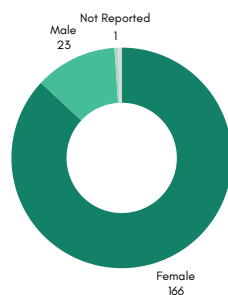


**191 Scholars Representing Over 15 Disciplines**

Scholar Breakdown by Ethnicity



Scholar Breakdown by Gender



**26**  
Educational Institutions  
Represented

**32**  
Counties  
Represented  
Across the State



**674**

AHEC Scholars  
all time

**60**

Health Professions  
Disciplines all time

**191**

AHEC Scholars  
Cohort 5 & 6

**15**

Health Profession  
Disciplines  
Cohort 5 & 6

## **Scholars Program Didactic Redesign**

AHEC Scholars requested a content review through a recent survey. The results led to the development of the Scholars Education Redesign Committee that aims to create a more enriching and beneficial experience for AHEC Scholars.

### **Student Evaluations**

Requested transparent feedback and reasons for becoming an AHEC Scholar

### **Curriculum Dissection**

Re-evaluated gaps in learning environment and professional development

### **Education Redesign Committee**

Gathered Content Experts to revitalize curriculum and address student feedback

### **Synchronous Learning**

Scholars will be offered more community-facing exposure and interdisciplinary collaboration

### **Asynchronous Learning**

Scholars moved to one Canvas course shell, as opposed to being divided by regional center

### **Continued Opportunities**

Offering mentorships, elevating interview skills, student-led statewide leadership positions, and certificate training

# Pathway Programs

Statewide, the Alabama AHEC Network seeks to develop a robust pathway for Alabama students to expand and enhance the healthcare workforce in Alabama, which is facing significant shortages in all health-related fields across the state. Pathway (pipeline) activities that target high school students for recruitment into health careers have remained an important focus of the centers. The need to better distribute health professionals across the rural areas of Alabama requires that we recruit young people from those rural areas into health careers.

## Camp LEAP

(Learn Everything About Patients)

**North Alabama AHEC (NAAHEC)** remains steadfast in its commitment to improving rural health care in North Alabama. A cornerstone of these efforts is the **Camp LEAP Health Careers Summer Enrichment** program. Since its inception in 2015, Camp LEAP has welcomed approximately 138 students, with at least three returning to serve as counselors, demonstrating the program's lasting impact.

Camp LEAP students engaged in a variety of medical technology and innovation activities. Highlights included visits to **UA Huntsville School of Nursing**, **UA Birmingham Biomedical Lab**, **Wallace State Community College**, and the **Hudson Alpha Institute for Biotechnology**. These experiences provided students with firsthand insights into the diverse opportunities within the healthcare field.

"I am so glad I had the opportunity to be with you all and experience things I've never even thought about. Thank you so much to Mr. Dupree and the counselors, and most of all, thank you to my new friends!"

**Destiny S.**  
Camp LEAP Participant



NAAHEC Pathways Achieved:

**300**  
students reached

**21**  
classroom visits  
career fairs  
& other school-based events

**18**  
students from 7 of  
NAAHEC's 13 counties  
participated

**138**  
Camp LEAP  
Students since 2015

# MAEF Workforce Center Youth Programming

**Delta Alabama AHEC**, through the **Mobile Area Education Foundation (MAEF) Workforce Center**, serves as a postsecondary re-engagement and preparation onramp for 16–24-year-old at-risk, out-of-school youth. The target population is individuals currently not enrolled in postsecondary training programs. The center offers soft and essential skills development, including communication, professionalism, work ethic, financial literacy, drug prevention, and customer service. Personal mastery topics cover critical thinking, stress management, time management, character development, and mental health awareness. Each participant receives support from an advocate counselor. Graduates serve as a pipeline to postsecondary institutions, connecting students with apprenticeships and career exploration opportunities.

**25**  
Active  
Participants

**36**  
Follow-up  
Participants

## Outreach/School Visits

**3720**  
Total Number of  
Students Served

Mobile County Career Fair 2500 participants	B.C. Rain High School 200 participants	Murphy High School 350 participants
Accel Academy 80 participants	Chickasaw City Schools 50 participants	
Mattie T. Blount High School 250 participants	Davidson High School 300 participants	

# UWA WIOA CNA Training Program

The **Black Belt Alabama AHEC**, in collaboration with the **University of West Alabama (UWA) Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)**, has launched a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) Training Program. This initiative addresses the critical need for qualified nursing assistants in the community, particularly within the Black Belt region of Alabama.

This short-term training program offers comprehensive education and certification opportunities. Designed specifically for individuals aged 18 to 24, the program aims to equip participants with the necessary skills and knowledge for successful careers in healthcare. By enhancing the local healthcare workforce, the program seeks to improve overall community health outcomes.

To participate in the CNA Training Program, individuals must meet the Alabama Commerce Department WIOA youth requirements. These include:

- Living in Bibb, Fayette, Greene, Hale, Lamar, Marengo, Pickens, Sumter, and Tuscaloosa counties
- Having a barrier to employment

## Outreach/School Visits

**3**  
Health Career  
Fair Events  
Organized

# Statewide Programs

## Alabama AHEC Network 2024 Primary Care Summit

On January 25th, the **2024 AHEC Primary Care Summit** brought together **80** healthcare professionals to collaborate and discuss the condition of Alabama’s healthcare workforce development.

The Summit featured three panels discussing “Recruiting, Training, and Retaining a Healthcare Workforce.” Attendees conceptualized the enhancement of primary care. Programs from various corners of the state provided insights into healthcare barriers within their communities and connected to the larger landscape of Alabama’s healthcare.

The 2024 AHEC Primary Care Summit was sponsored by:



Panel 1 with Moderator Michael Crouch, and Panelists Joyce Jeter, Christy Knowles, and Farrell Turner discussing Trends and Impacts in Healthcare



Panel 3 with Panelist David Hicks, Moderator David Hooks, Panelists Raquel Mazer, and Brandi Merrill discussing Healthcare as an Industry



Media produced by **UAB Department of Family and Community Medicine**

## PANEL 1 Trends and Impacts in Healthcare

### Panelist

Christy Knowles  
Joyce Jeter  
Farrell Turner

### Moderator

Michael Crouch

### Conclusion

As Alabama becomes more and more rural, we face the threat of a continued primary care shortage unless we actively work towards increasing access to quality care.

## PANEL 2 Healthcare Workforce Pipeline

### Panelist

Rebecca Cornelius  
Jeremiah Newell  
David Bramm  
Bryant Cline

### Moderator

Lamont Dupree

### Conclusion

Numerous table discussions revealed a resounding consensus: it is crucial to initiate efforts to promote healthcare fields in students’ education from an earlier stage.

## PANEL 3 Healthcare as an Industry

### Panelist

Raquel Mazer  
David Hicks  
Brandi Merrill

### Moderator

David Hooks

### Conclusion

Improved compensation packages and comprehensive benefits are necessary for recruitment and retention.

# Alabama AHEC Network Scholars Webinars

## Welcome to AHEC: An Overview of Statewide Scholars

October 27, 2023

Dr. Rebecca Reamey, Interim Director of the **Alabama AHEC Network**, welcomed the returning Cohort 5 and the new Cohort 6 to the program. Introduced to AHEC as a whole, the Scholars received an overview of the expectations and resources offered. They also networked with their fellow Scholars.

## Expansion of Medicaid

November 17, 2023

Dr. Pia Sen, of **UAB**, delved into a comprehensive exploration of Medicaid Expansion. This engaging session provided an in-depth look into the complexities of healthcare policy and its impact on communities.

## All About APTIP

December 15, 2023

Alia Tunagur, Director of the **Alabama Office of Healthcare Workforce**, provided an overview of the **Alabama Preceptor Tax Incentive Program** guiding Scholars to share the initiative with their preceptors. The session featured the program's key components, eligibility criteria, and application process.

## 2024 AHEC Primary Care Summit Recap

January 26, 2024

Led by **North Alabama AHEC's** Lamont Dupree, Scholars engaged with knowledge acquired during the **Primary Care Summit**, sharing their first-hand experiences and insights, and shedding light on the current state of primary care in Alabama.

## Intro to the Pharmaceutical Industry and Health Disparities

February 23, 2024

Dr. Joel Dobbs of **UAB** led attendees through the pharmaceutical industry's role in addressing health disparities. Dr. Dobbs expertly navigated the complexities of this crucial intersection, empowering scholars to understand the industry's impact on healthcare equity.

## Population Health Research - EDP Formula

March 29, 2024

Dr. Chip Tucker, Scholars Coordinator at **East Central Alabama AHEC** guided students through the EDP Formula to craft focused study questions, essential for impactful research in healthcare.

## Spring Virtual Networking

April 3, 2024

AHEC Scholars Director, Dr. Kala Dixon, hosted the first virtual networking event for Scholars. Scholars connected through diverse communication styles reflected on their interdisciplinary experiences within healthcare and cultivated a stronger statewide support network.

## QPR Training

April 26, 2024

Led by Dr. Angela Sullivan, Board President of the **Alabama Suicide Prevention and Resources Coalition** and assistant professor at **UAB**, students were introduced to the QPR approach to effectively intervening and supporting individuals in a mental health crisis. In the end, Scholars obtained the QPR Gatekeeper Certificate.



# Community Health Workers

Our statewide Community Health Worker efforts bridge gaps between healthcare providers and the communities they serve. They provide essential services such as health education, preventive care and support for managing chronic conditions, particularly in underserved and vulnerable populations. By building trust and fostering communication within their communities, Community Health Workers empower individuals to make informed health decisions and access the care they need.

With our Community Health Workers program, we strive to touch every county. Each center has tailored their community health workers program to address the specific needs of their communities.



**29**

**Community Health Workers**

**9000**

**People Served through Community Events**

"For some years now, Dr. Ziorelys Granges has given health seminars in our community. As church pastors and leaders, we know the importance of health for our members as well as our communities' families. Dr. Ziorelys has introduced us to AHEC for whom she works. They have been a valuable support for the well-being of the many. Dr. Ziorelys is always available, either by phone or in person, performing various tests, as well as advising in areas of health issues. On behalf of the church and the community at large, we thank Dr. Ziorelys and AHEC for their help and kind staff!"

**-Athen's community member testimonial**

**600**

**COVID-19 Vaccines Administered**

**3000**

**COVID-19 Tests Conducted**

# Community Events

## Community Health Education Initiative

The **Community Health Education Initiative** has made a significant impact in North Alabama by targeting areas with the greatest need for healthcare services. Data from the **Alabama Office of Healthcare Workforce** highlighted the top 15 towns within a 13-county service area, identified based on primary care deficits, lack of health insurance, poverty levels and minority percentages. These findings guided efforts to establish partnerships with local clinics and community organizations to provide crucial health services, including COVID vaccines and community health worker referrals.

**130**  
Attendees of the  
two highlighted  
health fairs

These fairs were made possible through partnerships with:

**2** Health Clinics

**16** Community Organizations

With a holistic approach to health, the initiative planned and hosted health fairs in two of the identified communities. The collaborative efforts brought together services such as hearing screenings, influenza and COVID vaccinations, glucose and blood pressure screenings, vision screenings and referrals, dental screenings, and health education.

## Healthcare Career Fairs



The **Black Belt Alabama AHEC**, in collaboration with the **University of West Alabama (UWA) Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)**, successfully hosted three healthcare career fairs. These events provided participants with opportunities to connect with potential employers and learn about various career paths in healthcare.

In addition to hosting their own events, they also actively participated in five community healthcare career fairs, allowing participants to engage with the broader healthcare community.

**3** Community  
Healthcare Career  
Fairs Hosted

**5** Community Healthcare  
Career Fairs  
Participated in

**4126**  
Participants

# Latino Outreach Initiative

In 2023, the **Alabama AHEC Network** collaborated with the **Community of Hope Health Clinic**, to make significant strides in expanding outreach to the Hispanic community. As a sponsor for **Fiesta Birmingham**, a major Hispanic festival that attracts thousands, the program engaged with the community through health education and services. Additionally, the team engaged in meaningful conversations about the AHEC Scholars program, job opportunities within Alabama, the Community Health Worker (CHW) program, and vaccination and testing education. This event was a vital opportunity to connect with and support an underrepresented demographic.

Distributed nearly

# 400

bilingual educational handouts covering COVID-19, influenza, shingles and proper hand washing



**67** Patients

**29** Volunteers  
including Dentists & Dental Hygienist

**\$30,000** Dental Services provided

**1**  
Cleaning

**40**  
Fillings

**67**  
Extractions

## RAM Clinic

**East Central Alabama Area Health Education Center (ECAAHEC)** and **Remote Area Medical (RAM)** provided free dental care at a Pop-Up clinic for East Alabama families on **February 24-25** at the East Gadsden Walmart.

Rising deductibles and out-of-pocket costs often force insured individuals to delay essential dental services. Additionally, limited access to nearby doctors and dentists further exacerbates health challenges, especially for marginalized groups affected by poverty, income inequality, education level, and race/ethnicity. Delayed diagnoses, and reduced preventive care results. Even when more than **94 percent of residents** have insurance, they are often two to three hours away from the closest doctor or dentist.

*RAM, an independent non-profit organization based in Knoxville, Tennessee, was the primary partner in this endeavor. Founded in 1985, RAM annually operates over 60 mobile clinics, bringing much-needed healthcare services to underserved communities both in the United States and abroad. This organization is entirely funded through donations and private grants, without any reliance on federal monies. RAM's commitment and extensive experience in delivering mobile healthcare made this event a success, ensuring that vital medical services reached those in need in Alabama.*



# Collaboration & Partnerships

## Key Collaborations

### Health Education Initiative

Through the health education initiative, the **Alabama AHEC Network** developed 18 partnerships to address gaps in medical screenings, vaccine education, testing, influenza, and COVID vaccinations.

### Community Health Worker Training Grant

As a subrecipient of a **Community Health Worker training grant**, the Alabama AHEC Network partnered with **Connection Health** to establish the **CHW Coalition**.

### Expanding the CHW Referral Network

To expand the referral network for CHWs, the **Alabama AHEC Network** contacted over 80 clinics and organizations, receiving confirmation from 22 of them to provide vaccine and other health referrals. This network expansion is crucial for ensuring that community members have access to comprehensive healthcare services.

The **Alabama AHEC Network**, in collaboration with the **UAB's Alabama Regional Center for Infection Prevention and Control (UAB ARCPIC)**, has facilitated a series of six (6) informative webinars focused on critical topics in infection prevention and control. These events underscore the importance of partnerships in enhancing healthcare education and improving public health outcomes across the state.

### Topics included the following:

Communicating Critical Infection Prevention Information Among Key Stakeholders to Improve Resident Outcomes

The Fall of Antimicrobials and the Importance of Antimicrobial Stewardship

Beyond the Basics - Cleaning & Disinfection to Mitigate the Spread of Infectious Diseases including MDROs for Healthcare Facilities

Strategies to Prevent the Spread of MDROs and the Application of Transmission-Based Precautions

Reporting Infectious Diseases & Outbreaks to the Alabama Department of Public Health

Legionella Prevention and Water System Management in the Nursing Home

**ARC  
IPC**

Alabama Regional Center for Infection Prevention and Control Training and Technical Assistance

The Role of Screening Tests for Early Identifications of Patients at Risk for Multi-Drug Resistant Organisms in Healthcare Settings

## Key Partnerships

*Our efforts would not be possible without the support of the UAB Department of Family and Community Medicine, Heersink School of Medicine, School of Public Health, School of Health Professions and School of Nursing, Troy University, The University of West Alabama, The Mobile Area Education Foundation, our five regional AHEC centers and other instrumental community partners across the state of Alabama.*



# Alabama Preceptor Tax Incentive Program

In 2023, Alabama legislature approved the Alabama Preceptor Tax Incentive Program (APTIP) to offer a tax credit 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:

## Successes

Launched in April 2024

**438** Registered Preceptors

**23** Registered Programs across the State

**25%** of rotations entered into the system occurred in medically underserved areas of the State and are currently eligible for the incentive

**105** Eligible rotations entered in for the first half of 2024

**408** Total rotations entered in the system for the first half of 2024

**\$425**

income tax-credit incentive for each eligible

**160**

hour clinical preceptorship rotation per calendar year

*for preceptors who are nurse practitioners, certified nurse midwives, certified registered nurse anesthetists or physician assistants*

with a

**\$5100**

annual maximum

**\$500**

income tax-credit incentive for each eligible

**160**

hour clinical preceptorship rotation per calendar year

*for preceptors who are physicians (MD, DO), optometrists, and dentist*

with a

**\$6000**

annual maximum

Learn more  
and register  
[alahec.org/aptip](http://alahec.org/aptip)



# Community-Based Experiential Training (CBET)

Through collaborations and partnerships, CBET students are placed in rotations and reimbursed for their mileage and housing to eliminate barriers while precepting in rural and urban underserved settings. Students training in rural and underserved Alabama are more likely they are to return to communities to provide quality care. Compensating for mileage and accommodations for CBET students is one of the many ways AHEC supports the healthcare workforce in rural and underserved communities.

## In this fiscal year, our Network achieved:

**18**  
Disciplines

**170** CBET Rotations  
Completed or Trained

**171**

CBET  
Rotation  
Clinical  
Training  
Sites

**43,839** CBET Rotation  
Hours

**335**

CBET Students  
who rotated

**665**

CBET Community  
Clinical Training Sites

**4637** CBET all time

# Continuing Education (CE) Hours

The AHEC Network Program Office has been approved by the Alabama Board of Nursing to provide Alabama nursing continuing education contact hours. This accreditation underscores our commitment to supporting the ongoing professional development of nursing professionals across the State.

## What does this mean for you?

The AHEC Program Office now offers high-quality educational opportunities that meet the rigorous standards set forth by the Alabama Board of Nursing. Nurses can earn continuing education (CE) contact hours through our programs, which are designed to enhance clinical knowledge, improve patient care outcomes, and foster professional growth.

## Get Involved

We invite nurses from across Alabama to take advantage of this exciting opportunity to earn CE contact hours through our accredited programs. Stay updated on upcoming courses and events by visiting our events page and following us on social media.

## Collaborate

If you are interested in collaborating with the Alabama AHEC Network Program Office to offer CE contact hours for your programs, please visit our website for more information or contact Paulisha Holt at [pholt@uab.edu](mailto:pholt@uab.edu).

## Learn More



# Marketing & Social Media

## Rebranding

The program office at UAB transitioned from the Alabama Statewide AHEC Program to the **Alabama AHEC Network**.

2023-2024 marks a period of transition and growth for the Alabama AHEC Network. Our new name more accurately reflects the expansive reach and collaborative spirit of our organization. It highlights our integrated network of partners and regional centers working in unison to improve healthcare access and education throughout Alabama.



## Social Media

**35,500**

People reached  
in fiscal year

Our engagement strategy continues to thrive on social media. We actively share events and informational content on Facebook and LinkedIn to foster a supportive and informed AHEC community. These platforms help us stay connected, disseminate important updates, and engage with our audience effectively.

## Newsletter

Our monthly newsletter is a key communication tool, delivering statewide updates, events, and learning and grant opportunities. We spotlight community partners and celebrate the exciting accomplishments within the AHEC Network. Additionally, we ensure our programs stay informed about national happenings through the **National AHEC Organization (NAO)**. By leveraging these communication channels, we aim to enhance engagement, build stronger relationships, and advance our mission of improving healthcare access and education in Alabama.

**610**

People reached  
monthly

Join our Mailing List

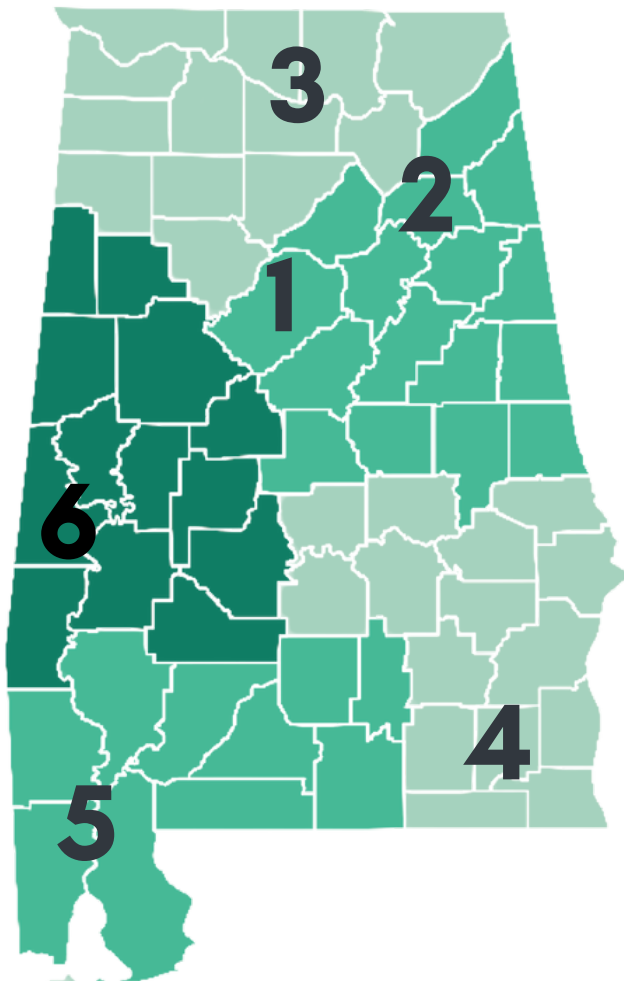


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# Meet the Team

## Alabama AHEC Network Program Office

Within its outreach efforts across all 67 counties of Alabama, the **Alabama Area Health Education Centers (AHEC) Network Program Office** resides within the **University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) Department of Family and Community Medicine**. The Alabama AHEC Network remains committed to expanding the healthcare workforce of Alabama by maximizing diversity and facilitating distribution—particularly within its underserved and rural communities.



**Rebecca Reamey, PhD**  
Director



**Alia Tunagur**  
Director of Marketing  
Program Director of Alabama  
Office of Healthcare Workforce



**Paulisha Holt**  
Program Director of  
Finance and Evaluation



**Kala Dixon, PhD**  
Program Director of  
AHEC Scholars



**Rachel Watts**  
Digital Marketing  
Coordinator

**1** Alabama AHEC Network Program Office  
Birmingham, AL

**2** East Central AHEC  
Gadsden, AL

**3** North Alabama AHEC  
Huntsville, AL

**4** Wiregrass Alabama AHEC  
Hosted by Troy University–Dothan Campus  
Dothan, AL

**5** Delta Alabama AHEC  
Hosted by the Mobile Area Education Foundation  
Mobile, AL

**6** Black Belt Alabama AHEC  
Hosted by the University of West Alabama  
Livingston, AL

# Meet the Centers

## North Alabama AHEC (NAAHEC)

Established as a community-based 501(c)3 nonprofit organization in 2016, the North Alabama Area Health Education Center (NAAHEC) is located on the campus of Alabama A&M University in Huntsville.

The aim of NAAHEC is to improve access to quality healthcare, particularly primary and preventive care, by improving the supply and distribution of healthcare professionals in underserved Alabama communities through community/academic educational partnerships.



**Lamont Dupree**  
Executive Director  
North Alabama AHEC  
(NAAHEC)

### 13 Counties in Service Region

- Colbert
- Cullman
- Franklin
- Jackson
- Lauderdale
- Lawrence
- Limestone
- Madison
- Marion
- Marshall
- Morgan
- Walker
- Winston

**Salana Usher**  
Community Health Coordinator

**Karen Leeling**  
Financial Administrator

**Cesar Hernandez**  
AHEC Scholars Program  
Coordinator



**Angela Anderson**  
Executive Director  
East Central Alabama  
AHEC (ECAAHEC)

## East Central Alabama AHEC (ECAAHEC)

Established as a community-based 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, the East Central Alabama Area Health Education Center (ECAAHEC) began serving the healthcare needs of its region in 2015.

ECAAHEC aims to improve the quality of healthcare in Alabama by providing training, education, and resources to healthcare professionals and students of healthcare.

### 16 Counties in Service Region

- Blount
- Calhoun
- Chambers
- Cherokee
- Chilton
- Clay
- Cleburne
- Coosa
- DeKalb
- Etowah
- Jefferson
- Randolph
- Shelby
- St. Clair
- Talladega
- Tallapoosa

**Scott Boyd**  
Office Manager & CBET  
Program Director

**Chip Tucker, DMD**  
AHEC Scholars Program  
Coordinator

## Delta Alabama AHEC (DAAHEC)



**Shernita Taylor**  
Center Director  
Delta Alabama AHEC  
(DAAHEC)

Delta Alabama Area Health Education Center (DAAHEC) joined the Alabama AHEC Network this year.

DAAHEC, in partnership with the Mobile Area Education Foundation Workforce Center, strives to improve healthcare quality in Alabama by providing healthcare professionals and students with essential training, education, and resources.

**Nagina Inge**  
AHEC Scholars Program  
Coordinator

### 10 Counties in Service Region

- Baldwin
- Butler
- Clarke
- Conecuh
- Covington
- Crenshaw
- Escambia
- Mobile
- Monroe
- Washington

## Black Belt Alabama AHEC (BBAHEC)

Black Belt Alabama Area Health Education Center (BBAHEC) joined the Alabama AHEC Network this year.

BBAHEC is hosted by the University of West Alabama. BBAHEC is dedicated to enhancing Alabama's healthcare quality through comprehensive training, education, and resources for healthcare professionals and students.



**LaWanda Prestage**  
Center Director  
Black Belt Alabama  
AHEC (BBAHEC)

### 13 Counties in Service Region

- Bibb
- Choctaw
- Dallas
- Fayette
- Greene
- Hale
- Lamar
- Marengo
- Perry
- Pickens
- Sumter
- Tuscaloosa
- Wilcox

**Armisha Perry**  
AHEC Scholars  
Program Coordinator





**Ian McFadden,**  
**D.Sc., FACHE**  
**Center Director**  
**Wiregrass Alabama**  
**AHEC (WAAHEC)**

## Wiregrass Alabama AHEC (WAAHEC)

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Wiregrass Alabama Area Health Education Center (WAAHEC) proudly joined the Alabama AHEC Network this year.

Hosted by Troy University at Dothan, WAAHEC is committed to improving healthcare quality in Alabama by providing extensive training, education, and resources for healthcare professionals and students across the region.

### 15 Counties in Service Region

- Autauga
- Barbour
- Bullock
- Coffee
- Dale
- Elmore
- Geneva
- Henry
- Houston
- Lee
- Lowndes
- Macon
- Montgomery
- Pike
- Russell

# Strategic Plan

## Mission

Enhance access to quality health care, particularly primary and preventive care, by improving the supply and distribution of healthcare professionals via strategic partnerships with academic programs, communities and professional organizations



### HEALTHCARE WORKFORCE:

FUTURE OF RURAL AND UNDERSERVED  
HEALTHCARE WORKFORCE

#### GOAL:

Build a ready workforce so all Alabamians have equal access to quality healthcare

#### ACTION:

- Recruit and support future workforce from rural and underserved areas and encourage their return for healthcare practice
- Increase long-term retention of healthcare providers in rural and underserved communities
- Increase participation and engagement in statewide workforce development programs and initiatives
- Promote and support Community Health Workers as an integral part of the healthcare workforce



### COMMUNITY

AWARENESS & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

#### GOAL:

Increase awareness and understanding of AHEC and strengthen partnerships in communities across the state

#### ACTION:

- Clearly articulate and share widely AHEC's purpose, value, programs and services
- Promote vibrant partnerships to expand reach and support initiatives
- Promote and expand AHEC's influence through strategic recruitment for center boards and state advisory council



### RESOURCES

CENTRALIZED SUPPORT AND FUNDING

#### GOAL:

Grow and diversify funding and leverage resources to multiply statewide impact and ensure sustainability

#### ACTION:

- Create a robust fund development plan
- Develop a centralized infrastructure to support fundraising
- Identify and leverage available resources statewide (physical plant, people, transportation, housing, etc.)



### ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

BUILDING TRUST AND ADAPTABILITY

#### GOAL:

Cultivate a collaborative culture that fosters innovation, trust, and adaptability

#### ACTION:

- Articulate and demonstrate the value and benefit of an inclusive, engaged statewide organization so all communities have improved health and wellness outcomes
- Strengthen communication and promote transparency between state program office, centers, state agencies, advisory boards, boards of directors and other stakeholders
- Increase trust and promote healthy working relationships

# FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

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- Alabama AHEC Network
- North Alabama AHEC
- East Central Alabama Area Health Education Center



- Alabama AHEC Network
- North Alabama AHEC



- [alahec.org](http://alahec.org)
- [na-ahec.org](http://na-ahec.org)
- [ecaahec.com](http://ecaahec.com)



- [alahec@uab.edu](mailto:alahec@uab.edu)
- [reamey@uab.edu](mailto:reamey@uab.edu)



Sign up for our Statewide Newsletter  
at [alahec.org](http://alahec.org) at the bottom of the page.

*The Alabama AHEC Network is dedicated to recruiting, training, and retaining the Alabama healthcare workforce while expanding the variety of health professionals, broadening the distribution of the health workforce, enhancing the quality of care, and improving healthcare 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 AHEC Network Program Office, North Alabama AHEC (NAAHEC), East Central Alabama AHEC (ECAAHEC), Black Belt Alabama AHEC (BBAHEC), Wiregrass Alabama AHEC (WAAHEC), Delta Alabama AHEC (DAAHEC).*

