THE WESTERN REGIONAL AHEC

The WR-AHEC office began in 2013, and was the 3rd of 5 regional offices in Michigan. The AHEC program focuses on strengthening the diversity of the primary care workforce through recruitment and retention initiatives, placements, and overall improvement of health services for rural and underserved populations.

This region includes the following 19 counties: Allegan, Barry, Berrien, Branch, Calhoun, Cass, Hillsdale, Jackson, Kalamazoo, Kent, Lake, Lenawee, Mason, Muskegon, Newaygo, Oceana, Ottawa, St. Joseph, Van Buren

HEALTH CAREERS ROCK!

Hot Health Career: PUBLIC HEALTH

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Public health is one of the most misunderstood fields in the healthcare industry. Services range
from direct medical care to behind the scenes health statistics and mapping to community education and outreach to animal and environmental controls. Health departments are funded by county, state and federal government allocations and grants. Some departments service only one county, while others service large, regional areas with several counties.

In this first of three newsletter articles we will share information on the Clinical Services offered at most public health departments.

HealthClinics at public health departments provide personal health services such as vaccinations and immunizations, vision and hearing screening, and pregnancy and parenting counseling. Services are provided to individuals with or without health insurance coverage. Some clinics are located within the main public health department campus, while others are set up in outlying medically underserved areas. It takes a large and diverse staff to provide these services. The list below is an example of the jobs you can find at these health clinics.

**PUBLIC HEALTH CLINIC JOB OPPORTUNITIES**

**MINIMUM EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Certificate or Associate’s degree:</th>
<th>AVERAGE WAGES**</th>
<th>JOB GROWTH EXPECTED through 2022*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Medical Assistants</td>
<td>$29,610</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lab Technicians</td>
<td>$37,970</td>
<td>29.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opticians</td>
<td>$33,770</td>
<td>23.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs)</td>
<td>$41,920</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dental Assistants</td>
<td>$34,500</td>
<td>24.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bachelor’s degree:</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Registered Dieticians</td>
<td>$55,920</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registered Nurses</td>
<td>$66,220</td>
<td>19.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dental Hygienists</td>
<td>$77,110</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Master’s degree:</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nurses (Practitioners)</td>
<td>$92,670</td>
<td>33.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical Social Workers</td>
<td>$50,820</td>
<td>26.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physician Assistants</td>
<td>$92,970</td>
<td>38.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Medical doctorate’s degree:</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dentists (DD)</td>
<td>$146,340</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physicians (MD, DO)</td>
<td>$186,850</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Colleges and universities in western and southwestern Michigan provide academic programs for all of
the jobs listed except for the dental doctorate’s degree (DDS), which is available at the University of
Detroit – Mercy and the University of Michigan.

FOR MORE INFORMATION
* This is a sampling of jobs. Some departments will have more job opportunities, some less.

FUTURE PUBLIC HEALTH ARTICLES
Western Regional AHEC – April 2016 Newsletter will cover Community Health: Biostatistics –
Epidemiology – The CDC - Health Education – and Public Relations
Western Regional AHEC – July 2016 Newsletter will cover Health and Environmental Policies and Laws
to Protect Individuals and Animals

Health Science Summer Program
The underrepresentation of minorities in the health and science professions has been long recognized,
with significant federal interventions beginning in the 1970’s (Testoff & Aronoff, 1983). Efforts to
strengthen the success of underrepresented groups in college and ultimately, in professional careers in
science and health, have aimed to decrease the highly significant and consequential disparities
between healthcare consumers and providers. However, important problems remain.

A 2004 report by the Sullivan Commission documented that “Together, African Americans, Hispanic
Americans, and American Indians make up more than 25 percent of the U.S. population but only 9
percent of the nation’s nurses, 6 percent of its physicians, and 5 percent of dentists. Similar disparities
show up in the faculties of health professional schools. For example, minorities make up less than 10
percent of baccalaureate nursing faculties, 8.6 percent of dental school faculties, and only 4.2 percent of
medical school faculties” (Sullivan, page 2). Compounding this disparity is the rapidly increasing
representation of minorities in the general population. The U.S. Census Bureau projects that minorities
will comprise 57% of the population by 2060, up from 37% today (Census, 2012).

Recent initiatives to address the underrepresentation of minorities in science and health professions
have included the proliferation of Science, Technology, Math, and Engineering (STEM) programs to
strengthen high school STEM education and provide college scholarships to high achieving
underrepresented students (NSF, 2009), as well as broad-based federal efforts aimed at achieving
health equity in the country (Johnson, 2011).

Summer Institutes and Colleges are an innovative method used for strengthening the requisite
academic and social skills for first-year college success that underrepresented students often lack.
These programs target first-generation college students, racial and ethnic minorities, and others who
may be at-risk for dropping out of college or never making it to campus, in spite of academic success in
high school. Low-income students are at particular risk for “summer melt”, that is, a reversal of plans to
attend college during the summer following high school (Castleman & Page, 2014).

Summer College programs have widely demonstrated success, both in general (Strayhorn, 2010) and
across specific fields of study (Foster & Savala, 2012; Salto et al., 2014). The programs are designed to
give students experience navigating the many aspects of campus life that are likely to be unfamiliar to
them, including living in residence halls, meeting the demands of homework and class preparation for
fast-moving coursework, and living without the direct oversight of parents or other adults (Smith-Barrow,
2013).

The Western Michigan University (WMU) College of Health and Human Services (CHHS) and its
Western Regional Area Health Education Center proposes to initiate a Summer College program for exceptional high school students interested in the allied health professions who are motivated to attend college and demonstrate academic success in high school yet are at-risk for not completing college.

For more information on this program, please contact Lisa Brennan at (616) 771-9497

SAVE THE DATES

SAVE THE DATE: MARCH 24, 2016
Western Michigan University College of Health and Human Services and Western Regional Area Health Education Center, request you SAVE THE DATE:
For: AHEC Open House
Breakfast
When: 8:00 am Thursday, March 24, 2016
Where: WMU Bellline Campus
2333 E. Bellline SE
Grand Rapids, 49546
Keynote 8:30 am: Dean Earlie Washington
9:00 am: AHEC Partners

Come to hear information on our current and future projects

SAVE THE DATE: APRIL 15, 2016
Join the statewide AHEC program in Mount Pleasant, MI on April 15, 2016 for a discussion about treating trauma for both veterans and their families. This conference is designed to provide an educational resource for healthcare professionals to better address the behavioral health issues of our returning service members. The 2016 conference will provide educational opportunities that build upon the 2014 conference.

INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACHES TO TRAUMA INFORMED CARE: MAY 6, 2016
The WR AHEC and WMU’s School of Social Work are planning a CE conference on Interdisciplinary Approaches to Trauma Informed Care Friday, May 6, 2016 at WMU’s Bellline Campus located at 2333 E. Bellline SE, Grand Rapids. This half day conference is for healthcare providers interested in learning about universal trauma-screening in primary care, as well as practical in-office trauma assessment, and the essential primary care role in the trauma-informed case planning with community mental health, private mental health, DHHS and the courts.

If you would like more information on the conference, please contact Lisa Brennan at lisa.brennan@wmich.edu
AHEC Highlights:
Treating the Whole Community: The Mind-Body Connection Conference

Due to the high prevalence of mental illness and fragmented systems of care, the integration of primary and behavioral health has gained increasing momentum.

The Western Regional Area Health Education Center in collaboration with Western Michigan University School of Social Work, hosted a continuing education conference for healthcare providers titled, “Treating the Whole Community: The Mind-Body Connection.” The conference was geared toward healthcare providers interested in learning more about physical and behavioral health care integration.

In Dr. Gregory Dziadosz's key note presentation he discussed, “The Language, Skills and Structure of Excellent Inter-Professional Care.”

WR AHEC and WMU’s School of Social Work plan to bring additional CE conferences to the region, which emphasis the importance of the integration of care.

Continuing Education was provided through Western Michigan University Homer Stryker M.D. School of Medicine and Western Michigan University School of Social Work.

If you would like more information on upcoming CE conferences or are interested in being a presenter, please contact Lisa Brennan at lisa.brennan@wmich.edu

FOLLOW UP ARTICLE WITH SAMANTHA JOHNS- WR AHEC SCHOLARSHIP WINNER 2015

WR-AHEC had a chance to catch up with our 2015 Scholarship winner Samantha Johns about her first year at Aquinas College. She is adjusting well and enjoying meeting all the different people. Samantha was scouted by Aquinas to join the Bowling team and has enjoyed traveling with the team across the Midwest, meeting new people at the tournaments. One of the hardest things about adjusting to college life is the different atmosphere, being away from home and not seeing her family daily.

Originally, Samantha had decided to major in Biology, since she has acclimated well during her first semester she has added Psychology as a double major with the hopes to go to medical school to become an oncologist. A family history of cancer has piqued her interest in oncology and a desire to help people in similar situations. Samantha will be spending her summer job-shadowing a Family Physician as well as completing internships. Advice she would give to high school seniors preparing for college is that “They shouldn’t really freak out that college will be completely different than high school. College is not much different just more homework and adjustments in scheduling.”
AHEC IN ACTION

This Fall, six Western Michigan University Physician Assistant students, in conjunction with the Western Regional Area Health Education Center did clinical rotations assisting with underserved populations. The program provides students with gas cards to assist with their travels.

The services the PA students provide in these shortage areas can include Family Practice, OB-GYN, Internal Med, Pediatrics, and Gerontology. The six student PAs did their rotations in the following specialties throughout the Southwest region of the state: Stephanie Long- Pediatrics, Scott McLaughlin- Family Medicine, Danielle Clarke-Family Medicine, Alyssa Seel- Pediatrics, Amanda White- Womens Health, and Karina Acevedo- Family Medicine.

The goal of this joint effort between the WMU PA program and WR AHEC is to provide these students with experiences that will encourage an interest to permanently serve areas of Michigan that have a higher need for primary care professionals. Rotations are the best way for students to gain familiarity with medical settings and situations, but with social and geographical settings as well. As a provider sees the kind of impact they can have on an underserved area, there is a higher possibility that they will commit at least a portion of their career to these needy populations.

To create this new program WR AHEC worked with Kathy Tuinhoff, the PA Clinical Coordinator. The two entities hope to continue this collaboration as a way to encourage as many future care providers to serve new communities as possible.

HIGH SCHOOL TO HEALTH CAREER MENTORING PROGRAM

The Western Regional Area Health Education Center collaborated with Western Michigan University’s Lee Honors College and Van Buren Career Tech Center to initiate a mentor program for high school students while utilizing the experiences of college students majoring in health and medical programs.

The program’s goals are to inform minority and disadvantaged high school students of career opportunities in health care, as well as the academic and interpersonal requirements needed to attend college and secure a job. This 6-month program will connect mentors with mentees two times each month to build friendships, alliances, personal goals and action steps, self-assessments, health literacy, and improved soft skills. All of which is aimed to guide the student toward better grades and attendance, understanding of personal and community health, building strong interpersonal relationships, and the motivation to succeed.

This program rolled out November 2015 with meetings scheduled monthly through April 2016. Individualized goals and action steps are used to evaluate the success of the mentor’s support and guidance.

INTERESTED IN ATTENDING MEDICAL SCHOOL WITHOUT PAYING TUITION?

WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY MIGHT BE YOUR ANSWER!

Wayne State University in Detroit is offering a program to high school students that covers tuition for four years of undergraduate courses plus room and board, AND
four years of medical school tuition. The Wayne Med-Direct program will admit 10 new students each year beginning summer 2016. Applications for 2016 must be submitted by Jan. 15, 2016.

Eligible candidates must have a minimum 3.5 GPA and 1340 SAT or 30 ACT score, be a U.S. citizen or permanent resident, and be an incoming freshman. Preference will be given to students from disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds who are also interested in studying health disparities.

The Wayne Med-Direct application is submitted in addition to the standard Wayne State University application. Visit the web site noted above or call (313) 577-2150.

### 2016 Calendar of Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
<th>Location/Target Audience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/14</td>
<td>KISD Project Aware Workshop</td>
<td>KISD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/15</td>
<td>Kentwood K-8 Career Day</td>
<td>Kentwood Public Schools Kentwood 6th Grade Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/16</td>
<td>MLK Celebration Day</td>
<td>WMU Diversity &amp; Inclusion Kalamazoo &amp; Calhoun HS Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/28</td>
<td>LINC Parent Essentials</td>
<td>LINC UP; GRPS; Community Members GR Area Parents &amp; Adult Job Seekers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/10&amp;11</td>
<td>MiCareer Quest SW</td>
<td>KRESA/Kalamazoo County Expo Center 8th and 9th Grade Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/17</td>
<td>LINC Parent Essentials</td>
<td>LINC UP; GRPS; Community Members GR Area Parents &amp; Adult Job Seekers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/19</td>
<td>Oral Health Enrichment Program</td>
<td>KISD; KCHD; MCD Kent County Area HS Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/23</td>
<td>LINC Parent Essentials</td>
<td>LINC UP; GRPS; Community Members GR Area Parents &amp; Adult Job Seekers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/10</td>
<td>WMU &amp; WR AHEC Fundraiser Breakfast</td>
<td>WR-AHEC Region Professionals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/15</td>
<td>Talk &amp; Tour</td>
<td>FSU Pharm; KISD Kent County Area HS Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/28</td>
<td>WR-AHEC CAB Meeting</td>
<td>WR-AHEC Region Professionals</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Newsletter Contact:** Western Regional Area Health Education Center (WR-AHEC),

**Melissa Ponstein, Program Manager,** [Melissa.Ponstein@WMich.edu](mailto:Melissa.Ponstein@WMich.edu); 616-771-9494
Western Regional – Area Health Education Center (WR-AHEC)
200 Ionia Avenue SW
Grand Rapids, MI 49503

Want to change how you receive these emails?
You can update your preferences or unsubscribe from this list.