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VT AHEC is a network of academic and community partners working together to increase the supply, geographic distribution, diversity, and practice transformation of Vermont's health workforce. Established in 1996, VT AHEC has a statewide infrastructure with a program office at the University of Vermont Larner College of Medicine and two regional centers, each a 501c-3 non-profit organization. The overarching goal of VT AHEC is to provide statewide programs that support an appropriate, current and future, health workforce so that all Vermonters have access to primary care, including disadvantaged populations and those who live in VT's most rural and underserved areas. VT is made up of 14 mostly rural counties and has an estimated state population of 645,570. The Northern VT AHEC serves 8 counties (est. pop. 237,256), the Southern VT AHEC serves 5 counties (est. pop. 239,449), and the UVM AHEC Program serves 1 county (est. pop. 168,865). Vermont has 11 Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC) with 73 practice sites. One in every four Vermonters receives care at an FQHC.



VT AHEC is funded through grants and gifts including federal HRSA, VT Department of Health, University of Vermont, Vermont's 14 hospitals, and private foundations.

VT AHEC works to **increase access to primary and preventive health services in Vermont through health workforce development by providing programs and services that promote an adequate supply and distribution of a trained and diverse health workforce.** The federal HHS and HRSA clinical priorities targeted by this project are 1) *Transforming the Workforce by Targeting the Need* and 2) *Enhancing health equity and reducing health disparities*. Each AHEC initiative has specific measurable objectives, including the number of participants and % from underrepresented communities or disadvantaged background. VT AHEC works across the health workforce pipeline from middle school students to practicing health professionals. AHEC has specific goals, milestones, and measures for each objective and activity. VT AHEC's robust evaluation plan tracks participant numbers and demographics in the wide range of programs that we provide. These programs include health careers exploration for youth to interprofessional continuing education, educational loan repayment, scholarships, physician recruitment service, and the AHEC Scholars Program. VT AHEC's Shared AHEC Network Database and Infrastructure (SANDI) system allows longitudinal tracking of program participants, which enables analysis of the short- and long-range collective impact on the VT health workforce.

**In 2020-2021, VT AHEC provided continuing education to 2,792 participants, generated more than 800 high school and undergraduate student connections, and involved all medical students at the UVM LCOM, including 292 enrolled in the AHEC Scholars Program. VT AHEC will meet HRSA's requirement to graduate a minimum of 30 AHEC Scholars annually. VT AHEC supported 832 health professions student clinical rotations. VT AHEC worked with 167 primary care practice sites in the state, almost half of which precepted UVM LCOM students. AHEC processed 167 applications to the VT Educational Loan Repayment Program for Healthcare Professionals and disbursed \$1,603,911 in federal, state, employer, and private funds. Additionally, VT AHEC's physician recruitment service directly facilitated 13 new physician placements in VT: 10 primary care and 3 specialty care physicians (6 placed in rural counties, 3 of which were placed at FQHCs).**

VT AHEC is an essential health workforce development infrastructure in the state working to "Connect students to careers, professionals to communities, and communities to better health."