

East Indiana Area Health Education Center

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Mental Health First Aid Comes to EI-AHEC

The Covid-19 pandemic has been challenging for everyone. For some families in the EI-AHEC region, it has meant the loss of loved ones. For others, the economic impacts, the loss of valued in-person social activities, or the stress of performing essential jobs have created real hardship.

Across the region and the country, mental health professionals report an increased need for their services and more people struggling with mental health challenges during this time.

In response, all EI-AHEC staff members as well as some partners in organizations EI-AHEC frequently collaborates with are receiving training to become Mental Health First Aid instructors. Mental Health First Aid is a national, skills-based training course that teaches participants about mental health and substance-use issues. The training gives participants the skills they need to reach out and provide initial help and support to someone who may be developing a mental health or substance use problem or experiencing a crisis.

This spring, EI-AHEC's Mental Health First Aid training initiative will include a youth-specific Mental Health First Aid program for groups of teachers as well as regular Mental Health First Aid for Nursing and Human Services students at Ivy Tech Richmond. From there, we will continue to offer Mental Health First Aid training to targeted groups of health professions college students and working professionals in our region to help them better support the patients, clients, and students they serve and better collaborate with the behavioral health professionals who work in our region.



Ripley County teachers participate in Youth Mental Health First Aid training at the Southeastern Career Center in Versailles, IN, in early March 2021.

East Indiana AHEC Scholars Interstate Collaborations



One of the benefits of the AHEC Scholars Community Healthcare Fellowship is the opportunity to learn with and get to know peers in health professions college programs not only across Indiana, but across the country.

In recent weeks, the East Indiana AHEC Scholars Cohort has collaborated with Scholars from Central Nebraska AHEC to explore the Social Determinants of Health in a rural context.

Additionally, our Scholars connected with Scholars from the other two AHEC centers that serve the greater Cincinnati Tri-State area (North Central AHEC in KY and UC AHEC in Ohio) to discuss their experiences as health professions students during the Covid-19 pandemic and learn about coping strategies and resilience from a panel of healthcare professionals from across the Tri-State area. Later this spring, we are looking forward to again meeting with the Central Nebraska AHEC Scholars to look at what the COVID-19 vaccine rollout has looked like in rural Indiana and rural Nebraska.

Recruiting 2021-2023 EI-AHEC Scholars



We are now accepting applications for the fourth cohort of the AHEC Scholars Community Healthcare Fellowship. This is open to applicants who will be in the final two years of an accredited health professions program. The fellowship begins Fall 2021 and runs through May 2023 and Scholars receive a \$750/year stipend for participation. Learn more and apply online at: <https://eiahec.org/health-professions-students/ahec-scholars/>

For more information or questions about AHEC Scholars reach out to Becky Niese (becky.niese@eiahec.org)

High School Student Health Careers Exploration Preview - Summer 2021

Many high school students use their summers to explore career options through camps and similar events. East Indiana AHEC Pipeline Programs Coordinator Jenny Koors is working on compiling a menu of Health Careers learning opportunities for students to select from. Each session will highlight a specific health career through a virtual environment where students can hear from professionals in a Q&A format, learn about a day in the life of that profession and also participate in hands-on activities while still being virtual. We are also exploring the possibility of taking tours of campus simulation centers or hospital facilities, be it in person or virtual. Students will be able to select which days they would like to participate, with those who take part in multiple sessions qualifying to do in-person shadowing at a local hospital. We hope to schedule these virtual sessions with professionals once a week throughout the course of the summer. More information and specific details will be posted to our website and social media sites in the near future.



Registration is now open for the Indiana AHEC Network virtual conference on April 16, 2021.

EI-AHEC friends and stakeholders are invited to attend!

Registration is free at tinyurl.com/y33h7d9g

El-AHEC Spotlight - Dr. Sarah McMullen

Regional AHEC Center across the state work with the IU School of Medicine, Department of Family Medicine to recruit community Family Medicine physicians who are willing to serve as preceptors for IU School of Medicine 3rd year students.

Dr. Sarah McMullen of Margaret Mary Health in Batesville is one of East Indiana AHEC's family medicine preceptors. Even during the Covid-19 Pandemic, she and her fellow family medicine preceptors continued to teach medical students.



Dr. McMullen is a southeastern Indiana native and an IU School of Medicine graduate herself, so rotations with her are particularly valued by medical students who are also from the El-AHEC region. This past January, Dr. McMullen precepted IUSM student Emily Sampson who grew up in Ripley County and attended Lawrenceburg high school. Helping place a local student with a preceptor whose ties in El-AHEC communities run deep is a key strategy in the Indiana AHEC Network's approach to training and retaining local health professions talent and we sincerely appreciate the efforts of preceptors like Dr. McMullen!

Do you have a student learning opportunity or staff development project in collaboration with East Indiana AHEC that you'd like us to highlight in a future newsletter?

We'd love to hear from you!

Send article ideas or photos to info@eiahec.org!