

## Area Health Education Center (AHEC)

In September 2007, Cherokee Health Systems (CHS) established a partnership with Meharry Medical College's Area Health Education Center (AHEC) program to provide education and training in east Tennessee. Tennessee currently has four regional AHEC centers. CHS currently serves as the center for east and southeast Tennessee. Matthew Walker Comprehensive Health Center in Nashville is the AHEC in central Tennessee, and Christ Community Health Services in Memphis is the AHEC in west Tennessee.

Tennessee AHEC promotes an interprofessional and coordinated approach to education and training and is committed to transforming the health care delivery system. TN AHEC and its regional partners, in collaboration with statewide and local community partners, implement an array of programs and initiatives designed to enhance health care equity and increase the diversity and distribution of health care professionals who provide culturally competent, quality healthcare services, especially in Rural and Urban Medically Underserved Areas (RUMUAs).

One key AHEC initiative is the **Scholars Program**. This unique interprofessional training opportunity is designed to prepare a diverse, culturally competent health care workforce that is representative of the communities it serves. The program involves a two-year commitment; in each year, Scholars will receive 40 hours of team-based, interprofessional clinical exposure and will participate in 40 hours of didactic learning focused on eight core topics: Patient Centered Clinical Practice Transformation; Interprofessional Education, Cultural Competence, Social Determinants of Health, Behavioral Health Integration, Virtual Learning/Telehealth, Connecting Communities and Supporting Health Professionals, and Current/Emerging Health Issues.

### **CHS invites eligible students to apply for the AHEC Scholars Program training opportunity.**

#### **Eligibility**

Eligible trainees will be in good academic standing and have at least two years remaining in their required health professions program (medical students may enroll in years 1-3). Interested applicants must commit to participate in the two-year program (40 hours of clinical and 40 hours of didactic training each year).

Each of the regional AHECs aims to admit 15 Scholars each year, and each AHEC hopes that at least 80% of AHEC Scholars will continue to practice in RUMUAs upon the completion of their health professions training program.

#### **Program Components**

The clinical training component involves at least 40 hours of clinical exposure centered on team-based care for patients from rural and/or underserved populations/communities.

The didactic component will include 40 hours of learning from a combination of readings, interactive webinars and discussion.

#### **Benefits**

- *\$500 Participation Award upon completion of Year 1 requirements and an additional \$500 Participation Award upon completion of Year 2 requirements.*
- Opportunities to participate in training programs designed for CHS staff providers.
- Information about Loan Repayment Programs.
- Opportunity to become part of a network of current and future leaders in health care.
- Upon completion, a Certificate acknowledging trainee as a TN AHEC Scholar, a prestigious honor in an increasingly competitive work environment.

