

# Healthier community and a Stronger Rural Workforce: Impact of a Rural and Underserved Scholars Training Program

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## BACKGROUND

- Caring for the health needs of rural and underserved population is a specialty in itself.
- Rural and Underserved patients face different health issues than people in cities and towns or with access to more resources.
- To best serve them rural and underserved health care providers should receive specialized training and hands-on experience working with these populations.

## PROGRAM MISSION

The Rural and Underserved Health Scholars Program (RUHSP) prepares students for rural practice by providing opportunities to develop leadership skills, gain patient care experience and learn research techniques necessary to understand the unique needs of rural and underserved populations.

## PROGRAM STRUCTURE

### 5 Pillars of the Program



Rural Healthcare Delivery
Rural Hospitals and Critical Access Hospitals (CAHs)
Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) and Rural Health Clinics (RHCs)
Telehealth Use in Rural Healthcare
Rural Pharmacy Practice
General Rural Population Health
Chronic Disease in Rural America
HealthCare Access in Rural communities
Rural Health Disparities
Social Determinants of Health (SDH) for rural people
Violence and Abuse in Rural America
Hunger and Access to Healthy Food
Rural Mental Health
Rural Health in Specific Populations
Health and Healthcare in Frontier Areas
Patients on the Border and Migrant health
Patients with Disabilities
Rural Tribal Health
Children and Adolescents in rural areas

### Seminar Topics

Getting Started
Partnering with Communities
Getting to Know Your Community
Needs Assessments
SWOT Analysis
Defining Program
Defining Mission and Goals
Funding Opportunities and Budgets
Policies and Procedures and Protocols
Intro to Research 101
Collecting Data and Outcome Measures/Research and Assessment Plans
Implementation and road blocks

### WHAT YOU WILL DO

- **Seminars** – learn about various topics related to rural health, such rural health care and project development.
- **Patient experiences** – care for patients in rural settings and shadow health care providers who practice in rural settings.
- **Research experience** – design, implement and evaluate research related to rural and underserved patient populations, in collaboration with faculty members.
- **Leadership experience** – utilize our tools and guidance to solidify strong leadership skills necessary to enact change in rural and underserved communities.
- **Service opportunities** – develop and implement service-learning opportunities to address needs and opportunities in a rural, underserved community.

## PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

Pre
Participant knowledge, skills, and perceptions of rural/underserved care
Participant program interest and career goals
Post
Participant knowledge, skills, and perceptions of rural/underserved care
Participant career trajectory
Project impact, outcomes, dissemination and sustainability
Community partner feedback

## PROGRAM RESULTS

### Applications and Enrollment

Cohort	Recruited in:	Applications (n)	Accepted pharmacy students (n)	Accepted nursing students (n)
1	Spring 2020	8	8	0
2	Spring 2021	11	8	2
3	Spring 2022	20	11	1
4	Spring 2023	16	10	2

### Average Participant Perception Pre/Post Survey Results

	Rate your knowledge of rural/underserved care topics*	Rate your ability to perform skills in rural/underserved care*	I have an interest in rural health care practice**	I have an interest in underserved health care practice**	I plan to practice in a rural community**	I feel prepared to practice in a rural or underserved setting**	I am confident in my ability to provide patient care in a rural or underserved setting**
Pre (n=34)	2.3	2.5	4.5	4.7	3.8	2.8	3.0
Post (n=6)	4.6	4.6	4.2	4.5	2.7	4.8	4.7

\*1=poor, 2=fair, 3=adequate, 4=good, 5=excellent, \*\*1=strongly disagree to 5= strongly agree.

## CONCLUSIONS

A rural/underserved training program successfully enrolled students and is currently evaluating the impact of the program on student learning, community impact, and rural health workforce development. More programs should offer similar training programs.

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