

**February 2023**

## Missouri AHEC Trains High School and Middle School Teachers Across Missouri about Healthcare Careers

There are currently 327 primary care HPSA designations (i.e., shortage in healthcare workforce supply by geographic area) in Missouri and all of Missouri has a mental health HPSA designation. Three quarters of primary care HPSAs are in rural areas. The current physician and healthcare provider shortage is complicated by the aging healthcare workforce and the fact that – even though there are a number of medical, social work and nursing schools in Missouri, a fraction of graduates remain in the state. To ensure a strong pipeline from Missouri middle and high schools to health professional schools in Missouri, MAHEC will present a virtual health & science education conference for elementary and secondary educators on February 25, 2023.

This year's event already has RSVPs from over 30 teachers, counselors and administrators in Missouri who will have an opportunity to learn about the large diversity of healthcare careers, especially in emerging and in-demand fields. The goal is to ensure that teachers and administrators are prepared to mentor and advise students.



The educator conference will include a special focus on **Forensic Science**. Seven medical and forensic experts will provide training on

forensic death investigations, forensic anthropology, dental forensics, forensic crime lab, etc. Speakers will also provide connections to the State of Missouri Dept. of Secondary Education. There will also be two breakout sessions providing instruction on blood typing and DNA. Educators will be given tools to develop a curriculum unit and/or lesson plans to be utilized to mentor students interested in health science careers.

*“We train educators – so they are prepared to mentor students on how to access the healthcare career pipeline.”*

*– Tracy Bobo, ECMO AHEC Center Director*

The program will also include train the trainer didactics and materials for hands-on activities, and demonstrations will be shipped to participants in advance, so they are able to actively participate during the virtual event. The Missouri AHEC network will also assist in promotion of the event statewide to increase outreach efforts to educators.

**MAHEC is a partnership of seven locally governed organizations and three university-based health professions education programs working statewide to increase the numbers of Missouri youth entering stable, high-paying jobs as healthcare professionals and the numbers of professionals caring for underserved populations.**

### The MAHEC partners include:

- A.T. Still University Kirksville
- University of Missouri-Columbia
- Saint Louis University
- East Central Missouri ECMO AHEC – St. Louis
- Mid-Missouri AHEC – Rolla
- Northeast Missouri NEMO AHEC – Kirksville
- Northwest Missouri NWMO AHEC – St. Joseph
- Southeastern Missouri SEMO AHEC – Poplar Bluff
- Southwestern Missouri SWMO AHEC - Springfield
- West Central Missouri WCMO AHEC – Kansas City

*This work is supported by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Prevention of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award totaling \$35,569,951 with 100 percent funded by CDC/HHS. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by CDC/HHS, or the U.S. Government. Funding for this program was provided by the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services, through the Health Disparities Program Office, Contract #DH220051561.*

