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Interprofessional Case Competitions Engage Students to Work Together in Teams to Learn to Treat Complicated Medical Problems

To manage the complexity of modern healthcare organizations and environments, health professionals, including physicians, nurses, behavioral health providers, physical therapists, pharmacists, etc. work as interprofessional teams. When they do so, they prevent medication errors, improve patient experiences, reduce the costs of healthcare, and deliver better health outcomes. MAHEC is one of the first workforce programs in Missouri to develop and implement interprofessional training programs.



Since 2018, MAHEC also organizes yearly interprofessional case competitions where students from across the state form interprofessional teams and compete to determine who best manages a difficult medical “case.” The competition was designed to promote the core competencies for interprofessional collaborative practice established in 2016 by the Interprofessional Education Collaborative which include communication, collaboration, roles/responsibilities, and values/ethics.

Stephanie Taylor and Brittan James of West Central AHEC engaged 25 students in this year’s competition. They were divided into 5 teams which included medicine, nursing, pharmacy, occupational therapy, speech language pathology and community health. A.T. Still University’s School of Medicine provided the case, a fictional patient named *Mia* who just got a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder. The teams were tasked with examining the life story of Mia and her family along with case notes and identifying the patient’s unique needs and challenges using a multidisciplinary approach. The students were required to work together to develop a care plan that incorporated Interprofessional Education Collaborative competencies, to ensure comprehensive and coordinated care.

The competition was judged by a panel of 8 practicing health care professionals who evaluated the videos based on their content, creativity, and effectiveness in addressing the case challenges. The judges were impressed with the quality of the submissions and commended the participants for their dedication to interprofessional collaboration and patient-centered care. The winning team, Mia’s Musketeers, stood out for their innovative approach and their ability to clearly communicate their findings. Their video presentation was praised for its engaging and informative content which effectively addressed the case challenges and proposed practical solutions.

Thanks to a sponsorship from Phelps Health, members of the winning team will receive a monetary stipend. Other notable submissions came from Pain Killers, Squadriceps, Code Blue, and Med Zeplin. The competition provided an excellent opportunity for students to showcase their skills and knowledge, while also learning from their peers and gaining valuable experience in interprofessional collaboration.

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

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