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Britt Commins, of Ogallala, tries on a burka as her peers, from left, Jenna Derr, Rhiannon Sorenson, Joanna Luebbert and Amanda Perry, look on.

## Learning to Provide Culturally Competent Care

During a one-week workshop hosted by the Nebraska AHEC Program Office, 21 pre-health profession college students from across Nebraska learned about the growing diversity in the state and health professionals' role in providing culturally competent care.

At the January workshop, which was held at the University of Nebraska Medical Center in Omaha, students learned about differences and similarities among ethnic populations, the factors that determine health disparities and how to be culturally responsive.

Students also worked on a research project to examine a clinical issue affecting underserved populations.

On the final day of the workshop

participants presented their findings during a student forum.

"The workshop provided me with a wake-up call to poverty and ethnic diversity," said Travis Rump of Fremont. "I am now more culturally sensitive and a better person."

"This was an eye-opening opportunity to gain exposure to the various cultures that comprise this country and state," he said.

The workshop was first offered five years ago through funding from the Nebraska Healthcare Cash Fund (tobacco settlement).

It is now supported in part through the Rural Health Education Network and Area Health Education Center funds from the Health Resources and Services Administration.

# RHEN and Nebraska AHECs Award 28 Small Community Grants

The Rural Health Education Network Office at the University of Nebraska Medical Center and the Nebraska Area Health Education Centers awarded 28 small community grants to fund projects aimed at improving community health and introducing Nebraska youth to health care careers.

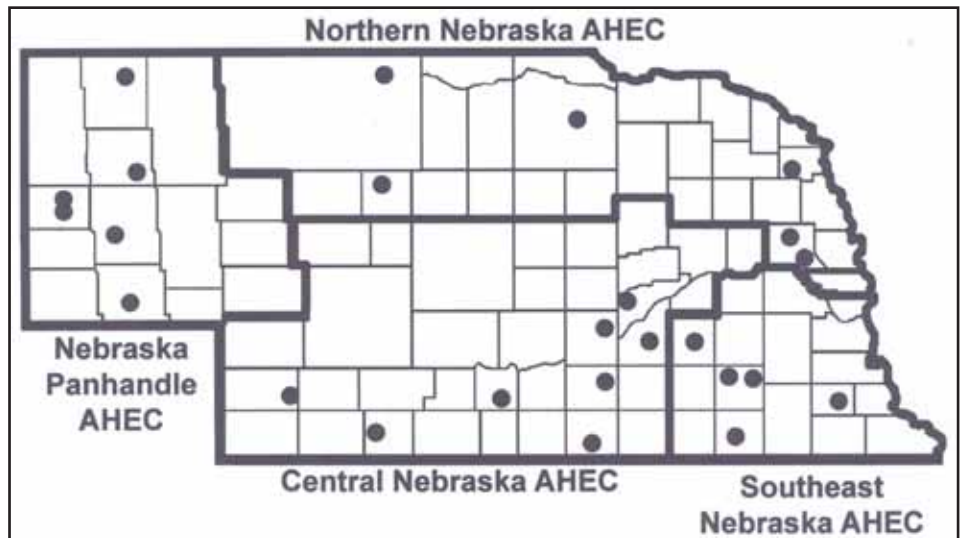
The grants, which total nearly \$45,500, range between \$1,500 and \$3,000.

The small community grant program was started in 1998 by Roxanna Jokela, director of RHEN, to make funds available so Nebraska communities could develop programs to benefit their local areas.

The addition of the Nebraska AHECs increases the amount of available funds and makes it possible for more communities to benefit from the grant program.

To be considered for funding, the applicant agency must partner with at least one additional local organization or institution.

Funds can be used for improving



The 28 communities that received grants are marked on the map above.

community health, promoting health care career awareness, or providing continuing education programs.

Applications are available in the fall from your local AHEC office.

Funding decisions are made in January and some communities received more than one grant.

The following communities were awarded grants:

Alliance, Aurora, and Bridgeport,

Chadron (two grants), Crete, Fairbury, Fremont, Friend, Gering (two grants), Grand Island, Hastings, Holdrege, McCook, O'Neill (two grants), Palmer, Pender, Red Cloud, Scottsbluff, Scribner, Sidney, Tecumseh, Thedford, Valentine, York and Wauneta.



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## Upcoming Continuing Education Conferences

May 22-23

“Eliminating Health Disparities: The Role of Cultural Competency”

May 24-25

“Latino Health Issues for Primary Care Providers: Achieving Better Health Outcomes”

Target audience: physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, public healthcare professionals and educators and clinic managers.

For more information contact:  
Brenda Ram, UNMC Center for Continuing Education, (402) 559-9250 or via e-mail bram@unmc.edu

# Grant Helps to Promote Interest in Health Sciences

Through a five-year Science Education Partnership Award (SEPA) from the National Institutes of Health, Maurice Godfrey, Ph.D., associate professor of pediatrics at the University of Nebraska Medical Center, will introduce American Indian youths on reservations in Nebraska and South Dakota to the health sciences.

“The long-term goals of this project are to promote student interest in health and science, foster a more science literate public, and ultimately increase the number of Native Americans entering health careers,” said Dr. Godfrey, principal investigator of the grant.

Teachers will have input on the development of health science education modules to insure that they are age appropriate and adequate for classroom use.

“They will learn how to best implement those modules during a summer workshop,” said Roxanna Jokela, co-investigator of the grant and director of the Rural Health Education Network.

To engage students, the curriculum will adapt materials to provide cultural models with input from tribal leaders and local community boards.



Students from the Rosebud Indian Reservation in South Dakota work on a science experiment.

It will take a year to get the program established. Several months have already been spent visiting the reservations in South Dakota and Nebraska to establish partnerships with the participating Native American communities, tribal leaders, administrators, and teachers from K-8 schools.

SEPA grants are designed to

improve students' knowledge of life science by bringing together biomedical and behavioral researchers, educators, community groups and other interested organizations in partnerships to create and disseminate programs that give students and their teachers a better understanding of science.

## Geriatric Conference Speaker Emphasizes Patient-Oriented Care

The spread of the disease has been stopped but the pain remains.

Chronic dizziness continues but the patient's hypertension is under control.

While the doctor's focus is on curing or stabilizing the patient's condition through a disease-based model of medical care, it may not be the best approach in geriatric medicine, says Terri Fried, M.D.

“The traditional model of care does not work with this population,” Dr. Fried said, “because clinical decision making is focused primarily on the diagnosis, prevention and treatment of individual diseases and not on the priorities and preferences of the

patient.”

Dr. Fried, who is a specialist in geriatrics at the Yale School of Medicine, spoke to 221 health care providers at the “Advances in Geriatric Care” conference held in Omaha in February.

The conference, which was supported by the UNMC Center for Continuing Education and the Northern, Central and Panhandle AHECs, was transmitted to six sites across Nebraska through the state's telehealth network.

Conferences such as this one, said Dr. Fried, are critical to imparting information about geriatric care.

“The conference did an amazing job of addressing a large number of topics that are critical to high-quality care of older patients,” Dr. Fried said.

Jane Potter, M.D., a professor in geriatrics at the University of Nebraska Medical Center, was particularly impressed with Dr. Fried's presentation.

“Terri Fried was fabulous,” Dr. Potter said. “In a day and age when every disease seems to call for one or more medications and guidelines push providers to prescribe more, the approach that she describes returns the emphasis to patients, their goals and preferences.”

# Nebraska LEAD Delegation Visits UNMC

On Feb. 25, participants of the 24th class of the Nebraska LEAD program spent the morning at the University of Nebraska Medical Center hearing from various campus leaders and touring select facilities.

David Crouse, Ph.D., associate vice chancellor for academic affairs and associate dean for graduate studies at UNMC, gave the LEAD participants an overview of the medical center.

Other presenters and their topics included:

- Liliana Bronner, program coordinator of the Rural Health Education Network, on the various activities of that program, the Area Health Education Centers and the Rural Health Opportunities Program.
- Gloria Borgstahl, Ph.D., associate professor, on protein crystallization to develop specific therapies for each



Philip Smith, M.D., (center) shows Nebraska LEAD class members Matt Alexander (left) and Andrew Stock (right) some of the protective gear that needs to be worn around patients in the Biocontainment Unit.

cancer.

- Susanna Von Essen, M.D., professor of pulmonary and critical care medicine, on the effects of hog confinements and feedlots on community health.

- Anthony Sambol, M.A., coordinator of the Biosecurity

Laboratory, on preparing for biosecurity threats and emerging diseases.

The visit concluded with tours of the Nebraska Biocontainment Unit and The Lied Transplant Center.

Philip Smith, M.D., chief of infectious diseases and co-director of the Center for Biopreparedness Education, gave the LEAD class a tour of the Nebraska Biocontainment Unit.

The 10-bed unit, which opened in 2005, is equipped to safely care for people exposed to highly contagious and deadly infectious conditions.

It is by far the largest in the nation, as there are only two other two-bed units that have similar capabilities.

“If our state experiences an infectious disease outbreak, this facility has a plan and is equipped to receive the sick patients and take care of them,” Dr. Smith said.

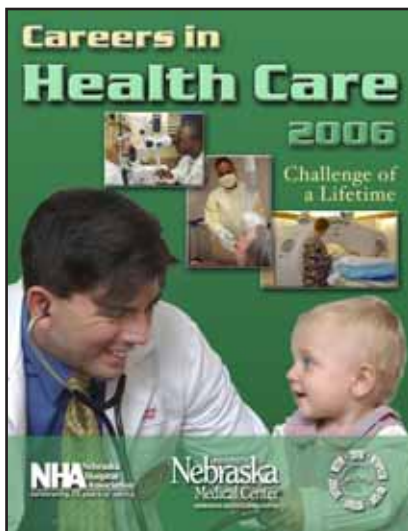
The delegation ended the morning with a tour of the Lied Transplant Center (LTC).

The LTC opened in 1999, and has led the way in cooperative care, an innovative approach that allows patients and their care partners to learn the skills they will both need when they return home.

“One of the biggest challenges facing our society today is that of health care,” said Allen Blezek, Ph.D., director of the Nebraska LEAD program.

“We have been honored to bring a new LEAD class to UNMC year after year, it has helped us to better understand current innovations in healthcare and learn more about the University of Nebraska Medical Center, a tremendous state resource.”

## “Careers In Health Care 2006” Now Available!



A booklet that lists every health care profession with an educational program located in Nebraska is now available from your local Area Health Education Center.

The book was published by the University of Nebraska Medical Center in partnership with the Nebraska AHEC centers, the Nebraska Hospital Association and the Nebraska Community College Association.

# UNMC Honors Rural Doctor with Preceptor Award

Scott Ehresman, M.D., of Holdrege, Neb., received the first Theodore H. Koefoot Jr., M.D., Outstanding Preceptor in Rural Family Medicine Award March 9 from the University of Nebraska Medical Center.

The annual award recognizes outstanding teaching and mentoring by a UNMC family medicine volunteer community preceptor.

“It’s a privilege to receive such an award and to continue Dr. Koefoot’s ideals and philosophies,” Dr. Ehresman said.

Theodore H. Koefoot Jr., M.D., was a family practice physician in Broken Bow for 30 years and a 1943 graduate of the UNMC College of Medicine.

“Medicine was his life and his love,” said Dr. Koefoot’s daughter, Gretchen Vondrak of Hastings. “He devoted all of his time and energy to his practice in Broken Bow.”

Dr. Ehresman has practiced family medicine in Holdrege for 16 years. A 1987 graduate of the UNMC College of Medicine, he also serves as a preceptor — a physician who provides medical students with



Dr. Ehresman poses with two students at the March 9 luncheon held in his honor where he received the award.

practical experience and training — in the UNMC Rural Family Medicine Preceptorship.

Among the students who nominated Dr. Ehresman for the award, one wrote: “Dr. Ehresman embodies everything that this award aims to honor. He takes great pride in mentoring and teaching the students

during their family medicine rotation.

“Through his remarkable commitment to patient care, Dr. Ehresman reminded me of why I chose medicine as my life’s work. He takes interest in every patient and will go above and beyond the call of duty to take care of their needs.”

## Broken Bow Doctor to Receive J.G. Elliott Award

The University of Nebraska Medical Center has selected Loren H. Jacobsen, M.D., of Broken Bow, Neb., as the 2006 recipient of the J.G. Elliott Award.

Dr. Jacobsen will receive the award May 6 at the UNMC commencement ceremony in Omaha.



Loren Jacobsen, M.D.

A 1967 graduate of the University of Nebraska Medical Center, Dr. Jacobsen was nominated for the award by the UNMC Board of Counselors.

“Dr. Loren Jacobsen’s contributions to the education of students interested in the field of health care has made a definite impact on UNMC and the health care of Nebraskans,” Chancellor Harold M. Maurer, M.D., said.

The J.G. Elliott award is given annually to an individual who has made significant contributions to medicine and health programs for Nebraska. It is given in memory of Elliott, a former Scottsbluff resident who served on the University of Nebraska Board of Regents for 20 years until his death in 1974.

“Dr. Jacobsen embodies the epitome of a rural practitioner,” nominators

wrote. “Not only would he know the names of his patients, but also the names of their family members and what ball teams their kids were playing on.”

“You just treat people like you would like to be treated,” Dr. Jacobsen said.

A point he clearly made with each student who rotated through his clinic.

“Dr. Jacobsen was one of the first physicians in Nebraska to be a volunteer preceptor and accept medical students from UNMC to rotate through his office,” Dr. Maurer said. “And has done an exceptional job of mentoring more than 90 medical students personally.”

## Eighth-Graders Impress Judges with Science Projects

Have you ever pondered which tile cleaner removes soap scum the best?

Or how music plays a part in the rhythm of a heart rate?

These were just two examples of the outstanding science experiments that were developed and presented at the 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Regional Eighth Grade Health/Science Meet held March 16 at College Park in Grand Island.

This was the fifth year that this event was sponsored by Central Nebraska Area Health Education Center and the University of Nebraska Medical Center.

Students that participated represented Silver Lake Public School and the Adams Central School District.

Students demonstrated their knowledge by developing the abilities needed to do scientific inquiry.

Each participant was required to complete a science project including developing a poster board display and maintaining a log book.

Research documentation, applied scientific methods, oral presentation and visual display are all part of the



Students from Silver Lake Public School and the Adams Central School District participated in the 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Regional Eighth Grade Health/Science Meet held March 16 in Grand Island.

judging process.

The three top winners selected from the outstanding group of projects were Silver Lake Public School students Ronny Sorensen with his project titled: "Corrosion," and Jennifer Mahoney with her project titled: "Irradiation," and Alicia Zeeck from Adams Central

Public Schools with her project titled: "Separation."

The top winners from all of the regional Eighth-Grade Health/Science Meets held across Nebraska will be invited to attend a state meet at the University of Nebraska Medical Center in Omaha in June.

## An Insider's Perspective of the Video-Medical Interpreting Services

Belkin González, one of the video medical interpreters for Central Nebraska AHEC, said that the linguistic demographics of Nebraska are rapidly changing from monolingual to multi-lingual.

Although this is very positive in the long run (think of Europe where educated persons speak a minimum of three languages), in the short term it poses numerous demands on a society ill-prepared for this change.

One of the areas where this linguistic reality is very noticeable is in the delivery of health care services.

Limited English speaking patients (LEP) may not be receiving adequate healthcare services because they cannot communicate with providers in an effective and efficient manner.

In Nebraska, the prevalent non-English language spoken by the population is Spanish.

Other languages include

Vietnamese, Laotian, and several Sudanese dialects.

State statistics indicate that there are more than 140 different languages spoken in homes around Nebraska.

How can health care providers handle this situation?

The alternatives include the use of language interpreters, which is a short term solution to the addition of more bilingual professionals in healthcare.

See VMI continued on page 7

# Productive Year Ahead for Central Nebraska AHEC Says Director

“It seems like only last year that CN-AHEC opened its doors, yet we are in our fifth year of funding,” said Sarah Cunningham, executive director.

Though this is only one of the many agencies working to complete the telehealth network, we have been able to help 76 locations make over 280 connections for video conferencing workshops and meetings using the video switch purchased as part of AHECs original funding.

We also have down-linked over 40 continuing education programs for health care providers in the past six months.

We were fortunate to receive an additional \$60,000 from The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to help us continue the great work of the video medical interpreting project with our hospital partners.

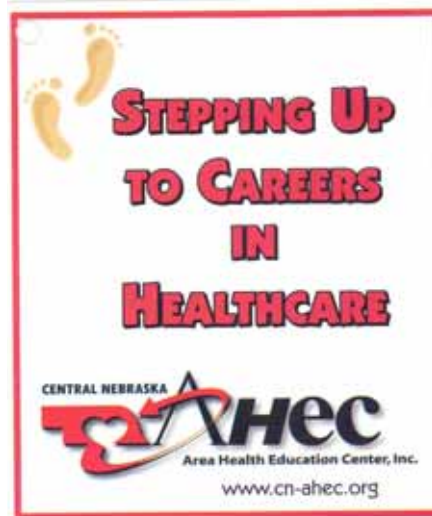
This will enable us to expand our services to additional hospitals, public health departments, as well as primary care clinics within the next few

**Video Medical Interpreting**  
continued from page 6

The latter solution will take many years.

Central Nebraska Area Health Education Center (CN-AHEC), through its participation in a grant initiative funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, implemented a video-medical interpreting service (VMI).

The VMI service provides an adequate short-term solution to the



months.

None of this could be accomplished without the continual support of our board of directors, our many partners too numerous to mention and the dedication of our staff.

Our latest project is “Stepping Up to Careers in Healthcare” flashcards.

Each card contains an illustration of a part of the body with information

language barrier encountered by area healthcare providers.

After almost one year in operation, the eight staff interpreters concur about the benefits that the VMI service offers the patient and the provider.

Jessica Calderón and Amy Rowilson emphasize that the virtual presence of an interpreter has helped to build a trusting relationship between the healthcare provider and patient.

about each health science pathway on the reverse side.

They were a big hit with the teachers, as well as students involved in the eighth grade science meet.

There are a variety of flashcard themes including: “Stepping Up to Breakfast,” “Stepping Up to a Serving Size,” “Stepping Up to Physical Activity,” and “Stepping Up to Injury Prevention.”

We are also excited about the nine community grants that were funded this year with the help of the Rural Health Education Network.

Thanks to Shirley Schall with the Southwest Distance Learning Association, we now have four science modules housed at ESU 15 in Trenton so the schools in our western counties have better access to the materials.

In the near future we will have skeletons available to the schools as well to provide a hands-on activity to teach the central nervous system and bone structure to students.

Even though interpreters are not physically present in the exam room, their virtual presence is the next best thing and maintains the patient’s privacy.

One of the obvious advantages providers have when using services such as those offered by CN-AHEC is what Gerardo Martinez (another staff interpreter) calls the “user-friendly” characteristic of the system.

The Central Nebraska Area Health Education Center’s mission is to enhance access to quality health care in Central Nebraska, particularly primary and preventive care.

CN-AHEC offices are located at College Park, 3180 West Highway 34, Grand Island, 68801-7279. With questions, please visit the CN-AHEC Web site at [www.cn-ahec.org](http://www.cn-ahec.org), or contact one of the following:

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Northern Nebraska AHEC program coordinator, Donovan Roy, talks to elementary school children about how to properly brush their teeth.

## Education Program Spotlights Oral Health

Northern Nebraska AHEC and the Elkhorn Logan Valley Public Health Department have joined forces to bring oral health education to 1,100 elementary and junior high students.

“It is a wonderful program and I would highly recommend it to any school,” said Tricia North, the school nurse at Madison and Winside Elementary.

The elementary school students were taught how to properly brush and floss their teeth, and when to use mouthwash. The junior high school students were taught about the dangers of smoking and smokeless tobacco along with the basics.

For many students the best part of the presentation was working with the hard boiled eggs, which were used to simulate tooth enamel.

The eggs were placed in various solutions to show the

effects that certain substances have on teeth.

Some eggs were soaked in a fluoridated mouthwash to simulate healthy, strong teeth and others were soaked in orange, cola or grape soda for two days causing them to stain. Students were then asked to remove the stain from the eggs using toothpaste and a toothbrush.

Finally the students were shown different dental molds with missing teeth to show what can happen due to poor dental hygiene.

“The NNAHEC presentation by Donovan Roy was wonderful,” North said.

“It can be hard to keep the attention of elementary students but this program not only kept the children entertained, it also provided a great way for the kids to learn about the importance of oral hygiene,” she said.

# Women and Heart Disease Focus of Feb. 6 Event

Northern Nebraska AHEC was honored to participate in “The Heart Truth and Red Dress Style Show” held Feb. 6 in Oakland.

The event targeted health care providers and women in the Burt and Cuming county areas. Approximately 100 women attended the event.

Dr. John Peacock, a cardiologist from the Cardiovascular Association in Sioux City, Iowa, was the guest speaker.

Dr. Peacock spoke about the growing numbers of women affected

by heart disease.

He also talked about the signs and symptoms of heart disease and how to prevent heart related disorders.

The attendees were served a heart healthy dinner and presented with information concerning heart disease, diet and exercise.

After dinner they enjoyed a fashion show in which each model wore something red to remind the women of heart disease.

The style show was unique in that all of the women modeling in it had

been affected by heart disease in some way.

Many of the door prizes given away during the evening also encouraged healthy living.

Prizes included gift certificates to exercise facilities and day spas.

Partners of the event included: Goldenrod Hills Community Action, Elkhorn Logan Valley Public Health Department, St. Francis Memorial Hospital and Oakland Memorial Hospital.

## Health Professions Highlighted at Expo

Northern Nebraska AHEC and the Loup Basin Public Health Department co-sponsored the Sandhills Health Occupation Expo December 12<sup>th</sup> in Burwell, Neb.

The expo provided 140, 8<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade students from Garfield and Loup counties an opportunity to take part in a career workshop highlighting local health professionals.

The message Lynette Larsen, a health educator from the Loup Basin Health Department, hoped students received from the expo was “how important it is for students who decide

to pursue a career in medicine to return home to provide care for their community.”

Presenters made students aware of the numerous opportunities available locally to find a job as a health provider.

“The health career fair was a great opportunity for Loup County students to learn about different health occupations, education and work involved in each area,” said Loup County Guidance Counselor Shirley Armbruster.

## Northern Notes

Gretchen Forsell, executive director of the NN-AHEC has recently been appointed chair-elect for the Nutrition in Complementary Care Dietetic Practice Group, a Practice Group of the American Dietetic Association serving over 2600 dietetic professionals interested in the study of alternative and complementary therapies.

Northern Nebraska AHEC will again be offering Summer Health Careers Camps.

Camps planned so far include:

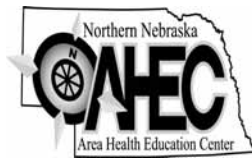
Fremont: June 19-23 at the Fremont Area Medical Center.

Norfolk: July 10-14 at Northeast Community College.

This year an advanced residential camp will be offered in conjunction with Midlands Lutheran College for students who have previously attended a health careers camp.

For more information or applications contact NNAHEC at 402-644-7253 or [www.nnahec.org](http://www.nnahec.org)

Additional summer camps and activities are being planned please check back with NNAHEC frequently.



The mission of the Northern Nebraska Area Health Education Center (AHEC) is to promote, recruit and retain health care professionals through partnerships among health care, education and community providers in Northern Nebraska. NNAHEC offices are located at 110 N. 16th St., Suite 2, Norfolk, NE 68701. The fax number is (402) 644-7254. For further information please visit the NNAHEC Web site at: [www.nnahec.org](http://www.nnahec.org), or contact one of the following:

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# NEWS

Volume 3, Issue 3

May 2006

## The Nebraska Panhandle AHEC Re-Opens

The Nebraska Panhandle AHEC is once again open for business, said Gary Hastings, executive director.

The staff has wasted no time getting down to business holding its first Eighth Grade Regional Health/Science Meet, coordinating health fairs and attending board retreats.

Education Coordinator Melissa Schaub, who is also a registered nurse, taught third-graders about keeping their bones healthy during the "Body Walk" health fair.

Office Manager Lynette Schleicher has been busy organizing the office.

Several goals were set at the board retreat, one of which is to develop a strategic plan. Other items included:



Gary Hastings



Melissa Schaub



Lynette Schleicher

job shadowing, health fairs and developing summer health career camps for junior/senior high school students.

The NP-AHEC staff is especially grateful for the support of the board of directors: Jan Fitts, board president, Panhandle Community Services; Jane McConkey, vice president, Box Butte General Hospital; Dan Doherty,

treasurer, Western Community College; Joyce Hardy, secretary, Chadron State College; Gloria Gross, Ph.D., Northfield Retirement Communities; Milton "Pete" Johnson, M.D., Horizons West Medical Center; Roxanna Jokela, director of the Rural Health Education Network; Shelly McCoy, M.D., Western

Family Medicine; Pam O'Neal, Western Nebraska Community College; Julie Pengelly, Scottsbluff Public Schools; Laura Richards, Region I Medical Health and Substance Abuse; Linda Shoemaker, Memorial Health Center and Teresa Ross, Regional West Medical Center.

## Healthy Bones are the Focus of Third Grade Health Fair

The Third Grade Health Fair, "Body Walk," was held at Western Nebraska Community College (WNCC) in Scottsbluff, Neb. in March.

This was the 14<sup>th</sup> year for the "Body Walk" and proved to be successful with 494 students attending from elementary schools throughout the Panhandle.

The event is sponsored by Educational Service Unit #13, WNCC, The University of Nebraska Medical Center College of Nursing, UNL Extension Service, Regional West Medical Center, Panhandle Substance Abuse Council, Morrill National Honor Society and the Gering Middle School Drug-Free Clowns.

Melissa Schaub, education

coordinator for the Nebraska Panhandle AHEC and a registered nurse, presented a program on the skeletal system using a puppet.

Through "Ashley" the puppet, Schaub told the children how good nutrition maintains strong and healthy bones and why they should wear helmets and other protective gear when riding a bike or playing sports.

After the program the children were able to handle the puppet, as well as some real bones provided by the Anatomy and Physiology Department at WNCC.

Schaub also explained the function of the NP-AHEC to the students, teachers and parents present.



The Nebraska Panhandle AHEC office is located at:

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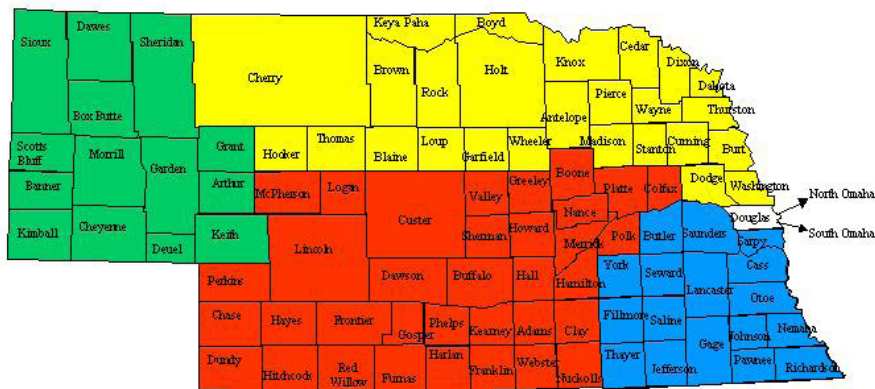
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# SE-AHEC NEWS

Volume 1, Issue 1

May 2006

## Nebraska Area Health Education Centers (AHECs)



The Southeast AHEC will serve 17 counties including: Butler, Saunders, Sarpy, York, Seward, Lancaster, Cass, Otoe, Fillmore, Saline, Thayer, Jefferson, Gage, Johnson, Nemaha, Pawnee and Richardson.

## New AHEC in Southeastern Nebraska

“The Southeast Nebraska AHEC (SE-AHEC), located in Beatrice, Neb., is now in operation,” announced Dale Gruntorad, president of the SE-AHEC board of directors.

“We have been planning for this day for a long time, and we are excited to see it come to fruition. The communities in southeast Nebraska have been incredibly supportive of this effort,” he said.

The new AHEC opened on April 3 and will serve 17 counties in southeast Nebraska.

The board of directors comprises a wide cross-section of community members from across the 17-county area.

The members are: Dale Gruntorad, board president, Lincoln Medical Education Partnership; Marty Fattig, vice-president, Nemaha County Hospital; Dennis Headrick, treasurer,

Southeast Community College Beatrice Campus; Eileen Krumbach, secretary, UNL Extension in York County; Carol Andringa, Lincoln Public Schools; Gene Bradley, Community Medical Center; Susan Chrastil, Crete Area Medical Center; Vicki Duey, Four Corners Health Department; Sherrie Geier, Senator Combs’ Office-District 32; Mary Ann Holland, Cass County Cooperative Extension; Richard Hovendick, Griffiths-Hovendick Chapel; Roxanna Jokela, Rural Health Education Network; Kay Oestmann, Southeast District Health Department; and E.J. Shoemaker, Public Health Solution.

The SE-AHEC is located on the campus of the Southeast Community Campus in Beatrice. The address is 5109 West Scott Road, #A211, in the One Stop Community Building, also known as Adams Hall.

## Robyn Henderson Named Executive Director of SE-AHEC

Robyn Henderson has been named executive director for the new Southeast Nebraska AHEC (SE-AHEC), located in Beatrice, Neb.



Robyn Henderson

Before taking this position, Henderson was formerly the assistant director of the Rural Health Education Network at the University of Nebraska Medical Center.

She was also the program director for the Nebraska SEARCH program.

Henderson has a master’s degree from Johns Hopkins University and a bachelor’s degree from Nebraska Wesleyan University.

She spent 15 years in Washington, D.C., first as a legislative assistant to the late U.S. Senator Jim Exon and then for a variety of non-profit associations doing policy analysis and coalition development work.

Henderson has worked for the National Rural Health Association in Kansas City and at the University of Nebraska Public Policy Center in Lincoln.

She grew up in Scottsbluff and graduated from North Platte Senior High School.

# Omaha Urban-AHEC NEWS

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## Greetings from the Omaha Urban AHEC Director

Hello! My name is Camille Johnson-Arthur and I am pleased to introduce myself as the new executive director of the Omaha Urban Area Health Education Center.

Though I have had AHEC on my mind since accepting the offer, I officially began on April 3.

I am excited about the opportunities and challenges of the position and I am roaring to go with many ideas for the promotion of the AHECs.

The bulk of my professional background is in non-profit programs ranging from housing authority administration to private school admissions to several other genres of human service programs.

I was born and raised in Omaha and earned my bachelor of arts degree



Camille Johnson-Arthur in sociology from the University of Nebraska at Omaha, where I also focused on statistics and religion.

Before relocating back to Omaha from Atlanta, Ga., I was co-owner of a grant writing business.

Our mission was specifically to aid small businesses, not-for-profit organizations and to help individuals

obtain resources necessary to promote wellness in inner cities.

Most recently, I worked to provide services for senior citizens and the chronically ill in Nebraska and southwest Iowa.

It is my hope that my passion for helping others will be exemplified as my vision for the Omaha Urban AHEC Center unfolds.

I look forward to utilizing my people skills to forge partnerships and collaborations for the benefit of the medically underserved, child-mentoring initiatives and the greater Omaha community.

My expectation is to connect with many or all of you soon as I strive to become an integral part of the AHEC network.

## UNMC Summer Health Professions Career Workshop

High school students entering their junior or senior year are encouraged to apply to attend the University of Nebraska Medical Center's Summer Health Professions Career Workshop August 2-5, 2006.

Twenty students will be selected to spend four days at UNMC in Omaha to learn more about career opportunities in health care.

Interested students can get an application from their school counselors. Applicants are chosen based on their grade point average, outside interests and an essay expressing why they want to attend the workshop. Applications should be returned to the UNMC Youth Learning Center by June 1, 2006.

There is a \$250 registration fee and some scholarship money is available.

For more information, contact Lisa Jewell  
UNMC Youth Learning Center (402) 599-6357 or [ljewell@unmc.edu](mailto:ljewell@unmc.edu)



Course instructor Col. John Mercier, Ph.D., at right, shows Nancy Hansen, Kathy Marchant and Mark Irland how to use a radiac survey meter. He also explained how to distinguish the differences between alpha, beta and gamma radiation.

## Two-Day Course Explains the Effects of Radiation

A Medical Effects of Ionizing Radiation (MEIR) course took place on March 18 and 19 in Omaha.

The course, coordinated by the University of Nebraska Medical Center's Rural Health Education Network, is sponsored by the Center for Biopreparedness Education.

"This course provides military and civilian operational personnel with up-to-date information concerning the biomedical consequences of radiation exposure," said Sharon Medcalf, associate director for the Center for Biopreparedness Education.

"It also provides information on how the effects of radiation exposure can be reduced and the medical management of casualties," Medcalf said.

The course covered two days of the fundamentals of ionizing radiation, the ionizing radiation interaction with cells and organs, and diagnosis and treatment of acute

radiation syndromes.

It also covered the combined injuries and psychological factors of radiation exposure.

Participants also learned the best protection against radiation.

Experts from the U.S. Armed Forces Radiobiology Research Institute (AFRRI) in Bethesda, Maryland, taught the course.

Col. John Mercier, Ph.D., from the AFRRI, showed participants how to use a radiac survey meter and how to distinguish the differences between alpha, beta and gamma radiation.

Attendees were composed of 39 Nebraskans from 11 cities across the state.

There were also individuals present from Iowa, Illinois, Missouri, and Montana.

## UNMC Library Produces How-to Video on Accessing Health Care

Making a doctor's appointment, visiting a physician or finding current health information can be confusing for children and adults unfamiliar with the U.S. health care system.

The University of Nebraska Medical Center McGoogan Library of Medicine wants to help.

The library recently produced "Following the Clues: A Visit to the Doctor and the Library," a 12-minute video narrated in English, Spanish and the Sudanese dialect Nuer. The video shows viewers how to navigate the health care system and find health information at the library.

"This is our gift back to the state," said Teresa Hartman, one of five McGoogan Library faculty members who spearheaded the production. "It's what libraries should do – make sure information is understandable to the user."

The public service video, available



in DVD or VHS format, follows Alana as she and her grandmother make a doctor's appointment, see the doctor and look up health information at the library.

"The video explains how to access health care in our country, as well as

signals to those not familiar with the U.S. system that it is done differently here," Hartman said.

Funded by UNMC, the video is being distributed free to librarians, community health providers, immigrant support agencies and elementary school professionals.

"Following the Clues" was produced and written by Alison Bobal, Heather Brown, Marty Magee, Cindy Schmidt, M.D., and Hartman, all members of the library's diversity project team.

A streamed version of the video is available on the Internet at:

<http://www.unmc.edu/library/clues/>

For more information or to obtain a copy of the video, contact the McGoogan Library at 559-6221 (Omaha metro) or 1-866-800-5209 (toll-free) or visit the McGoogan Library Web site at: [www.unmc.edu/library/clues](http://www.unmc.edu/library/clues).

## Roxanna Jokela Selected to Chair National Group

Roxanna Lynn Jokela, director of the Rural Health Education Network and deputy director of the Nebraska AHEC Program Office at the University of Nebraska Medical Center, was



Roxanna Jokela

elected chair of the Education and Research Constituency Group of the National Rural Health Association (NRHA) effective Jan. 1.

In this capacity Jokela represents the constituency group on the NRHA board of directors, representing its membership of more than 300 in the research and education group.

The goal of the organization is to ensure affordable and accessible

quality health care for rural Americans and to provide leadership on rural issues.

The NRHA's broad membership represents people from a variety of professions and interests, including: health care providers, administrators, clinicians, academicians, researchers, hospitals, students and many other subgroups.

The Research and Education Constituency Group is the largest in the NRHA.

Its membership includes practitioners and scientists located at academic medical centers as well as persons involved in health professions education in rural communities.

The group is responsible for managing sessions at the annual national conference, co-sponsorship of other conferences throughout the year and providing support for the NRHA publication, "The Journal of Rural Health."

## The Next Geriatric Care Conference is Set for July 28 and 29

The next "Advances in Geriatric Care Conference" will be held July 28-29 in Grand Island, at the College Park facility.

The conference will also be distributed in real time, across the state to Omaha, Scottsbluff, North Platte, Norfolk and possibly other sites.

For more information contact Kate Oelke Turner, project coordinator with the Geriatric Education Center, at (402) 559-3964 or via e-mail at: [kfturner@unmc.edu](mailto:kfturner@unmc.edu).

## Nebraska SEARCH Program Attracts Students from Other States

The Nebraska SEARCH Program, an outreach program designed to expose health profession students to rural medicine, has expanded its draw to several students from outside of Nebraska.

“Since November, we have had six physician assistant students from the University of South Dakota,” said Robyn Henderson, SEARCH program manager and executive director of the Southeast Nebraska Area Health Education Center.

“We also have had inquiries from students in Indiana, New York, Tennessee, and Maryland.”

The Northern Nebraska Area Health Education Center also recruits students to Nebraska from Iowa, Henderson said. Some of those students have also applied to become SEARCH participants.

“Of course, we would love to fill our slots with Nebraska students, but we are excited to have students from out-of-state,” she said. “This gives us the chance to showcase the state and perhaps entice them to come back to Nebraska to practice when they have finished their training.”

While the SEARCH program is only in its second year, already more than 50 students have participated.

“SEARCH programs are valuable opportunities for students to experience a culture or geographic location that is different from what they are used to. It expands the participants’ horizons and provides great life lessons,” Henderson said.

The program provides an interdisciplinary experience that many students do not routinely encounter in their training programs, she said.

Students who are in the first year of their health profession education are recruited.

These students must also be focusing on primary health care.

Those areas include: medicine,

residents and fellows in family medicine, general internal medicine, OB-GYN, general pediatrics, family medicine physician assistant, nurse practitioner in the family medicine or psychiatry programs, dental and dental hygiene and pharmacy.

The program also recruits a variety of students in the behavioral health field, including those individuals

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**“SEARCH programs are valuable opportunities for students to experience a culture or geographic location that is different from what they are used to. It expands the participants’ horizons and provides great life lessons,” Robyn Henderson, manager.**

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studying clinical psychology, master’s level social work, family counseling, psychiatry residents and fellows.

“Meeting a variety of staff members and getting to see what each one did is very interesting to me,” said one student from South Dakota. “It also reminds me how much is involved in providing health care and how important each job is to the overall system.”

The Nebraska SEARCH program has a variety of locations and types of sites in which participants can be placed.

These include rural communities, Hispanic and Native American communities, as well as inner-city and underserved areas in Omaha and Lincoln.

Several of the students, who are not from Nebraska, have done rotations on the Omaha, Winnebago and Santee Sioux Indian reservations.

An observation all of the students

had was that different cultures have different expectations regarding their healthcare.

Many of the individuals that seek health care didn’t really need services, they commented, but due to other limitations and life situations, they simply needed a friend or someone to talk to.

One student noted: “As a health professional we need to learn to listen and be a friend; to genuinely show concern and compassion about a patient’s feelings.

Many people come for emotional purposes rather than physical.”

In addition to the clinical experience, the program helps place participants in clinical and community service opportunities.

“SEARCH participants are encouraged to work with school students by sharing information about their chosen profession and why they decided to pursue it,” Henderson said.

“We also like to have the SEARCH participants get involved with community-wide efforts, such as health fairs, community celebrations, and working with special populations such as seniors, parents, and young children.”

This kind of participation provides students the opportunity to see what life is like in a small community.

Limited financial assistance is available to participants, as well as assistance with finding housing.

To see an overview of the program check out the Web site at: [www.unmc.edu/rhen](http://www.unmc.edu/rhen). Click on “NHSC SEARCH” and then click on “Orientation/Overview.”

The overview is also available on CD, which you can request by contacting the Rural Health Education Network-Area Health Education Center program office at 402-559-1979 or by e-mailing Robyn Henderson at: [rhenderson@unmc.edu](mailto:rhenderson@unmc.edu).

# Providing Job Shadowing Experiences that Comply with HIPAA

Over the past few years, the Rural Health Education Network Office and many of the Area Health Education Centers have received calls from Nebraska hospitals about the concern of students “shadowing” at their facilities.

The main concern revolves around maintaining compliance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996, also known as HIPAA. But with a few simple guidelines, medical providers



can offer job shadowing experiences without violating HIPAA regulations.

1. Establish a minimum age requirement for shadowing. (At the University of Nebraska Medical Center, that age is 16).
2. Explain to the student or adult participant what HIPAA means and describe the consequences for violating patient confidentiality.
3. Describe why it is important for patients to trust medical providers completely with personal or health information.
4. Have the student take a short quiz or sign a document to demonstrate that he or she fully understands HIPAA regulations and that he or she agrees to maintain the confidentiality of patient

information.

5. Limit the student’s access to patient information as much as possible.
6. Identify clinical areas where shadowing is most feasible and does not disrupt patient care. For example, shadowing is not feasible in intensive care units.

**Finally, and most importantly, ask the patient’s permission – in private without the student around – whether the person would consent to a student observing the medical examination or procedure.**

For more information contact Ann Kraft in the RHEN Office at (402) 559-3398 or e-mail her at: [akraft@unmc.edu](mailto:akraft@unmc.edu).

Visit our Web site at [www.unmc.edu/RHEN](http://www.unmc.edu/RHEN)

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