



ANNUAL REPORT 2021

Eastern Shore AHEC

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Damaris Bourland- Health Careers Coordinator

AHEC Mission Statement

Through Collaborative partnerships, AHEC shall:

AHEC MISSION STATEMENT

THROUGH COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS, AHEC SHALL BECOME THE LEADER IN PROVIDING EDUCATIONAL SERVICES AND PROGRAMS TO ASSIST EASTERN SHORE COMMUNITIES IN THE RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS

VISION STATEMENT

IMPROVED ACCESS FOR ALL COMMUNITIES ON THE EASTERN SHORE TO QUALITY HEALTH CARE

A Message from our President & Executive Director

Roger Harrell, MHA

Despite continued challenges with the COVID-19 and restrictions placed during the pandemic, the Center continued to operate in a smooth and effective manner. The Health Careers programs had over 100 students access the new virtual programs created by the Program Director, Damaris Bourland. The Tooth Fairy's Helper program was able to continue to reach children, parents and teachers via the YouTube channel created by the Program Manager, Caitlin Donohue-Vega. Clinical Education brought the AHEC Scholars program from conception to fruition helping four students' complete rotations. The program was also able to place seven medical students in housing during their rural rotation. ESAHEC's geriatric program hosted three successful virtual conferences. Other Center programs, including EARN and Connecting Kids to Coverage (CKC), were able to adapt to new pandemic restrictions and complete a successful year. ESAHEC continues its contract with Seedco, Inc. and the Maryland Health Benefit Exchange to implement the Affordable Care Act on Maryland's Eastern Shore. Program Navigators continued working remotely providing assistance for individuals seeking health insurance via telephone.

Staff operated as normally as possible complying with COVID guidelines in an effort to keep everyone safe, taking turns working in-person and remotely from home offices. Everyone became much more comfortable with the virtual world as most partner calls and meetings were held via ZOOM. As you can imagine it was challenging at times but we made it work the best way possible. Most importantly, the Center continued to serve the rural community.

Shortly after the fiscal year came to a close, the Center, and its many partners and supporters were dealt a devastating blow. In October of 2021, we lost Jacob (Jake) Frego, the Executive Director of the Center and friend to many. His presence will be sorely missed, but the staff is dedicated to keeping his vision alive and will continue to work with the Board of Directors to deliver the best possible service to the Eastern Shore region.

TRIBUTE TO JACOB FREGO

For the past 24 years, Jacob "Jake" Frego has served as the Executive Director of the Eastern Shore AHEC (ESAHEC). Prior to that position, from 1988 to 1997, he was the Executive Director of Chesapeake Planning System in Cambridge, MD.

Jake received his Bachelor's degree in Economics from the University of Michigan and he successfully completed the Mid-Atlantic Health Leadership Institute from John Hopkins University School of Public Health in Baltimore, Maryland. He has served on numerous rural health boards including Maryland Rural Health Association, MidShore Mental Health Association, the Regional Health Planning Board, Delmarva Education Foundation, and the Community Advisory Committee to the UMD Comprehensive Center for Health Resources, Training and Outreach.

Jake was a true friend to his sister AHECs in Western and Central Maryland, often offering support and ideas. He was a collaborator with a deep history, concern, and understanding of the Eastern Shore.

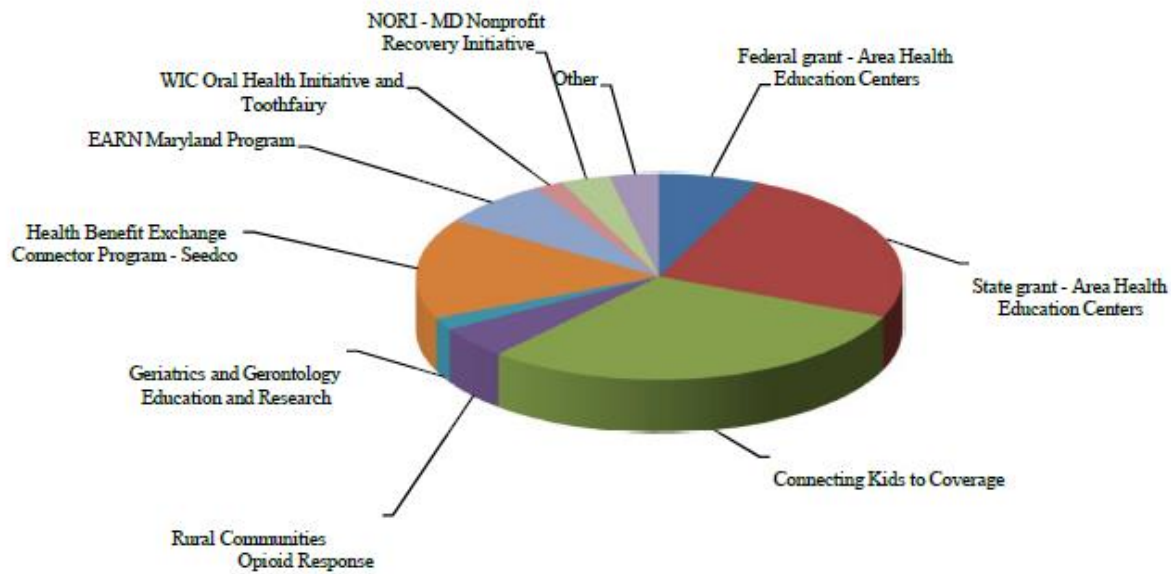
Jake was a true Renaissance man and enjoyed lively conversations (debates) on several topics. He was a staunch advocate for rural healthcare and rural Maryland and had a profound impact on the health of Maryland's Eastern Shore residents.

Jake was a dedicated husband to his beloved wife of 62 years, Marian, and a proud father, grandfather, and great grandfather to his three sons, nine grandchildren and one great grandson. He held a special place in his heart for all dogs and would often determine a person's character on whether they too shared his passion for canines.

Jake thought of the ESAHEC staff not only as employees, but as family members. He will be tremendously missed not only by his family, but staff, colleagues, and friends.



EASTERN SHORE AREA
HEALTH EDUCATION CENTER, INC.
GRANT REVENUE
YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2021



	2021	
	\$	%
Federal grant - Area Health Education Centers	\$ 103,314	6.7%
State grant - Area Health Education Centers	381,323	24.7%
Connecting Kids to Coverage	463,471	30.0%
Rural Communities Opioid Response	77,204	5.0%
Geriatrics and Gerontology Education and Research	29,330	1.9%
Health Benefit Exchange Connector Program - Seedco	244,276	15.8%
EARN Maryland Program	112,235	7.3%
WIC Oral Health Initiative and Toothfairy	30,591	2.0%
NORI - MD Nonprofit Recovery Initiative	50,000	3.2%
Other	51,162	3.3%
Totals	<u>\$ 1,542,906</u>	<u>100.0%</u>

Graph Prepared by PKS and Company, P.A.

AGING SIMULATION SENSITIVITY TRAINING

The annual sessions of Aging Simulation Sensitivity Training (ASST) offered by the Eastern Shore Area Health Education Center continue to be in high demand at our local universities.

As part of the Salisbury University (SU) School of Nursing, ESAHEC works closely with Nursing Instructors Sedonna Brown and Teena Milligan to arrange our annual ASST training for 130 third-year nursing students.

Our 2021 participation in Dr. Klima's innovative 'Aging Education' Conference provided a one-stop instructional event. Students were invited to tour the MacCenter Inc. located in Salisbury. MAC Inc. is one of the five oldest Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) in the United States. Dr. Klima arranged a panel of professionals in Aging to speak with the students on available programs to assist older adults in their efforts to live with independence and dignity in their homes and communities. The UMES students gained practical strategies and options to support their older adult clients in pursuit of better health and function.



CONNECTING KIDS TO COVERAGE

The Connecting Kids to Coverage program is focused on identifying children and families who are eligible for Maryland Medicaid and the Maryland Children's Health Insurance Program (MCHP), and guiding them through the enrollment process. The three-year grant of nearly \$1.5M is fully funded by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services and allows our team to provide enrollment assistance at no cost to the consumer. ESAHEC, in partnership with Seedco and Chesapeake Multicultural Resource Center, had a successful year despite the restrictions imposed by Covid-19.

Enrollment counselors canvassed 13 counties in Maryland through outreach and community partnerships to find eligible residents. The pandemic health emergency led to creativity and outside of the box thinking in order to reach those who needed our assistance. Virtual involvement replaced in-person participation, and our team reached approximately 2,975 consumers at 35 events.



GERIATRIC ASSESSMENT INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAM (GAIT) GERIATRIC AND GERONTOLOGY EDUCATION AND RESEARCH (GEAR)

During FY21, the Eastern Shore Area Health Education Center (ESAHEC) hosted three (3) GAIT events and three (3) GGEAR conferences; all events were held virtually and were geriatric-focused. ESAHEC utilized funding from the University System of Maryland's Geriatric and Gerontology Education and Research (GGEAR) program at University of Maryland-Baltimore which allowed the events and conferences to be free to students. The objectives of the GAIT events were to have students interact with other students and professionals from a variety of health and social science disciplines, and, participate in team-building exercises that focused on the value of an interdisciplinary approach to improve quality of care for older adults. A total of 41 students attended the GAIT events, with topics including, "Advancing Care Excellence: Special Considerations for Recovery & Rehabilitation of Aging Veterans"; and "Falls Later in Life: Risk Assessment, Prevention, and Management." The "Advancing Care Excellence: Special Considerations for Recovery & Rehabilitation of Aging Veterans" was offered twice within the year.

The GGEAR conferences held were titled "Caught in the Middle: Understanding Dementia and Recognizing the Needs of the Sandwich Generation", "The Convergence of COVID-19 and Social Justice: Promoting Health Equity in Later Life" and, "Ethical Health Care Practices: Welcoming, Understanding, and Affirming Older LGBTQ Adults." ESAHEC was specifically able to educate the community on topics such as Dementia, COVID-19, Social Justice, Health Equity, Ethical Health Care, and Geriatric Care in general. A total of 197 individuals, which included students, lay persons/caregivers, and professionals requiring CEUs, participated.

Additionally, with GGEAR support, ESAHEC was able to attend the 2021 Southern Gerontological Society Virtual Conference and collaborated with AHEC West and Central AHEC on a presentation "The Virtual Geriatric Assessment Interdisciplinary Team Project: Interprofessional Geriatric Training Against the Backdrop of COVID-19", which was held from April 20-23, 2021.



Industry-Led Partnerships

Bridging Maryland's Skills Gap, Driving Growth

ESAHEC is finishing up the final months of another successful Employment Advancement Right Now (EARN) yearlong program! This program has been generously funded by the Department of Labor and Licensing Regulation (DLLR) for four years in order for the Eastern Shore Ready to Care partnership to continue employment advancement on the Eastern Shore. The program partners consist of healthcare entities throughout the nine counties who are dedicated to helping individuals secure job placement and fill the employment gap within the industry. Grant funds are used to train, certify and place Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs) throughout the Eastern Shore in hospitals, assisted living facilities and private care. Although the fiscal year started off slowly due to COVID-10, partners and participants quickly gained momentum. Fiscal year 2021 saw twenty-five (25) trained and placed with an ultimate goal of forty-five (45) by the end of the funding period with fourteen (14) more participants in the pipeline. Many thanks to our partners, Cecil College, Chesapeake Community College, and Wor-Wic Community College for making this job program possible.

CLINICAL EDUCATION

During FY21, ESAHEC also coordinated Clinical Education programs; AHEC Scholars, Primary Care Track and Introduction to Clinical Medicine (ICM) 4. In this timeframe 14 scholars enrolled and participated in several interdisciplinary events including the ACT Immersion Weekend and the Falls GAIT event, both held in April 2021.

Several Primary Care Track and ICM 4 students completed rotations with ESAHEC. Housing was provided for seven students total, five medical and two Pharmacy.

2021 MEDICAL PRECEPTORS

Brookellen Rider, DO
Esther Elizabeth Elliott, MD
Frances Seymour, MD
Melinda Butler, MD
Timothy Sniezek, MD
Charles Stegman, MD

Brent Hofmann, MD
Eugene Newmier, DO
Thomas Biondo, MD
Hi Sim, MD
Dr. Davis
Dr. Bower

COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKER TRAINING (CHW)

A CHW is a frontline public health worker who is a trusted member of, or has an unusually close understanding of the community served. This trusting relationship enables a CHW to serve as a liaison to, link to, or intermediary between health and social services and the community. Two ESAHEC employees received Community Health Worker (CHW) training in June 2021 in anticipation of further developing our CHW training program.

AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

ESAHEC continues its contract with Seedco, Inc. and the Maryland Health Benefit Exchange to implement the Affordable Care Act on Maryland's Eastern Shore with the goal of making health coverage affordable and more accessible for Marylanders.

ESAHEC works with various partners to reach citizens of Kent, Caroline, Talbot, Queen Anne's and Dorchester Counties assisting them to enroll or maintain their healthcare coverage.

The ESAHEC Navigators are responsible and for dedicated to enroll the uninsured and providing assistance for all insurance plans and programs. The Navigators continue to work in creative ways during covid-19 and continue to work remotely providing assistance over the telephone.

Visit MarylandHealthConnection.gov or download the free "Enroll MHC" mobile App. Free consumer assistance is available by calling 855-339-3007. Deaf and hard of hearing may use Relay.

Open Enrollment 2020	Open Enrollment 2020 (11/01/20-12/15/21)
ESAHEC Navigator Activity	
# of Navigators	3
# Days	45
Household Interactions	744
Eligibility Determinations	505
MA Enrollment	121
QHP Enrollment	683
Spanish Speaking %	7%



Who We Are, What We Do

The Eastern Shore AHEC is a private, non-profit, 501 (C) (3) organization which became programmatically operational in 1997. Governed by a 16 person Board of Directors. Governed by a 16 person Board of Directors, AHEC serves the nine counties comprising Maryland's Eastern Shore.



To accomplish our mission, AHEC works to recruit and retain Health professionals in the medically underserved areas on the Eastern Shore. This includes health care education programs for both health professionals in the service area and students from colleges and universities both in Maryland and surrounding areas. The outcome of the Center is to retain and encourage jobs in health care.

AHEC develops community-based programs covering:

- Clinical Education
- Continuing Education
- Health Careers
- Oral Health
- Geriatric Training
- Community Health Worker Training

ORAL HEALTH OUTREACH

THE TOOTH FAIRY'S HELPER PROGRAM



LESSONS

- Brushing & Flossing basics
- Germs & Staying Healthy
- Nutrition & The Cavity Equation
- A Trip to the Dentist
- Special Story Time

*Guest stars: Al the Alien
Leo the Lion King
Ellie Elephant
Patsy Panda
Mr. Cookie Chef
Flossy the Frog
and many more...*

FUN AND INTERACTIVE CHILDRENS ORAL HEALTH LESSONS NOW AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

This year our much loved and adored "Tooth Fairy's Helper" program went virtual with a YouTube Channel titled, "The Tooth Fairy's Helper". Program Coordinator Ms. Donohue-Vega wrote and produced several oral health lessons and a special story time for early learners in video format.

In total 5 episodes were produced gaining 26 subscribers and 810 views. Going virtual allowed our program to expand its reach beyond the classroom. Doing this meant we could help deliver the message of oral and overall health to more children, teachers and parents nationwide. Episodes featured guest appearances from musical puppet friends as they touched on the topics of brushing & flossing, the cavity equation, nutrition, a trip to the dentist and much more. Several teachers incorporated Episode 4: "A Trip to the Dentist" as a virtual field trip. It was certainly a year of thinking outside of the box and we are so grateful to have found ways to remain connected to our community partners.

4,386 children's dental kits and educational brochures were distributed to elementary schools, Judy Centers, library playgroups and learning centers across all 9 counties on Maryland's Eastern Shore. Lastly, 80 New Mom and Baby Oral Health Care kits were supplied to local health departments in Kent, Talbot and Dorchester Counties.

If you would like to learn more about The Tooth Fairy's Helper Program please email Ms. Donohue-Vega at cvega@esahec.org.



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HEALTH CAREERS

Ms. Damaris Bourland, R.N., B.S., L.M.T, is the Health Careers Program Director for the Eastern Shore AHEC. “Aging Simulation Sensitivity Training,” and Exploring Careers in Medicine.” The goal of these programs is to nurture students’ interest in health careers and inspire them to follow their aspirations. The programs also offer career guidance through pipeline programs that encourage and support their passion. Over one hundred students have accessed this program since its launch.

Ms. Bourland is excited to be returning to the high school classroom for in-person presentations. She is also in the process of developing new programs that will be offered to students during the 2021-2022 school year both in person and online. We are excited to watch her spread her enthusiasm for careers in health care to these malleable young minds.

