

**Western Washington Area Health Education Center
Annual Report
2009**

***Connecting Students to Careers,
Professionals to Communities,
And
Communities to Better Health***

Western Washington Area Health Education Center continues to respond to the needs of our constituents to realize a healthier life. Focus areas include workforce development, health professions education, continuing education for health professionals, community assessment and development of health systems, health promotion/disease prevention/health education, and advocacy for rural and underserved populations through public policy development.

Mission Statement: The Western Washington Area Health Education Center works to assure equity of and access to health care for underserved rural and urban populations in western Washington through education and workforce development.

This mission is accomplished through the following services:

- ❖ Planning for tomorrow's providers through **recruitment of students** into health professions schools and training programs
- ❖ Providing **community-based education and training opportunities** for health professions students
- ❖ Developing healthy community-based service delivery systems through **technical assistance programs**
- ❖ Creating **learning opportunities for providers** in underserved communities
- ❖ **Forming community/academic linkages** which respond to community-identified health care needs
- ❖ **Advocating for public policy** that addresses the needs of rural and underserved communities

Developing Tomorrow's Workforce

PLANNING FOR TOMORROW'S PROVIDERS THROUGH RECRUITMENT OF STUDENTS INTO HEALTH PROFESSIONS SCHOOLS AND TRAINING PROGRAMS

The Health Care Industry is the fastest growing industry in the world. National shortages of health career professionals are reported in every discipline. In addition, the diversity of members of health careers does not match the diversity of the general population of this country, nor this state. WWAHEC programs focus on recruiting underrepresented

minorities, rural residents, economically challenged individuals, and members of underserved populations into health careers, with a special focus on those who will serve rural and underserved populations.

Health Careers Ambassadors

This program recruits mentors for middle and high school students in rural and underserved communities. The mentors are also resources for their community schools for activities such as classroom presentations and career fairs. Mentors have resource materials through WWAHEC including a notebook manual and video tapes.

- Utilizes local health professionals
- Complete guidance for career fairs, mentoring, classroom presentations
- Builds local relationships

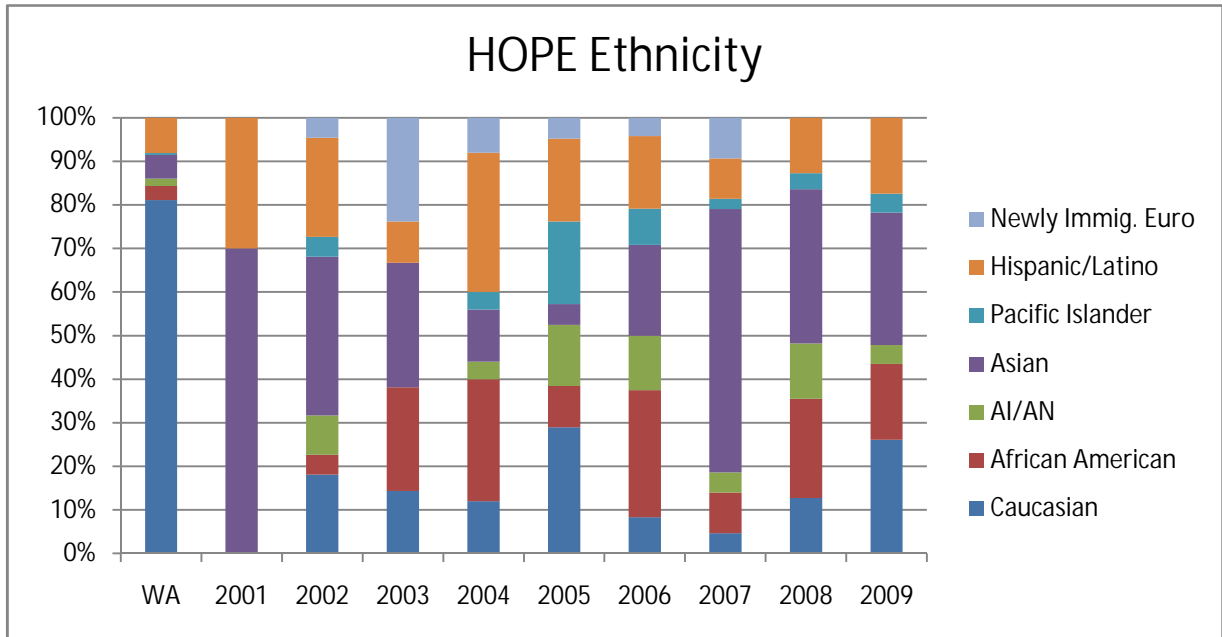
Project H.O.P.E. Health Occupations Preparatory Experience:



Summer Internship experiences are for 11-12 grade students. The internships are six weeks long, 20 hours per week, and are in a number of clinical sites to optimize the student's experience. There is a stipend attached to the program, equivalent to minimum wage. Students from underrepresented populations, first generation college-bound or rural areas are especially encouraged to apply. The program is run in partnership with the State Department of Health and the Higher Education Coordinating Board. Applications are received by early March each year.

- Summer Internship
- High School Juniors and Seniors
- Variety of health care settings & occupations
- Encourage applications from culturally, ethnically, socially and/or economically diverse; Rural; or first generation college-bound students
- Collaborative with Department of Health

Washington Population and Project HOPE in Western Washington



Project HOPE Data

	WA State	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Caucasian	81.8%	18%	14.3%	12%	29%	8%	4%	14%	24%
African American	3.2%	4.5%	23.8%	28%	9.5%	28%	8%	25%	16%
AI/AN	1.6%	9%	0	4%	14%	12%	4%	14%	4%
Asian	5.4%	36.3%	28.6%	12%	4.8%	20%	52%	39%	28%
Pacific Islander	0.4%	4.5%	0	4%	19%	8%	2%	4%	4%
Hispanic/Latino	7.5%	22.7%	9.5%	32%	19%	16%	8%	14%	16%
Newly Immig. Euro		4.5%	23.8%	8%	4.8%	4%	8%	0%	0%

HOPE SUCCESS!

A 2009 Survey of all previous HOPE participants showed lasting positive results:

- 100% of respondents completed high school
- 96% continued their education in a health career
- 100% believed their HOPE experience to be helpful in their decision to pursue a health career

Service Learning Opportunities for High School Students



Youth Health Service Corps

The Youth Health Service Corps (YHSC) mobilizes diverse high school students to provide volunteer service in health care agencies. Students provide valuable services within their community while increasing their awareness of the health care issues facing underserved communities, public health careers and primary care opportunities such as the National Health Service Corps (NHSC). Student volunteers complete a six module curriculum and perform 50+ hours of volunteer service including Leadership & Service, Website Training, Vulnerable Populations/Cultural Competency, Ethical & Legal Issues, Health Career Exploration & Health Care Skills. Students also complete CPR Certification. 2009 was the inaugural year for YHSC in western Washington. Student groups were recruited from high schools in LaConnor, Kelso, Snoqualmie, Gig Harbor and Peninsula. More than 100 students participated in the program this first year.

Service Learning Opportunities for Health Professions Students

PROVIDING COMMUNITY-BASED EDUCATION AND TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES FOR HEALTH PROFESSIONS STUDENTS

Rural/Underserved Nursing (RUN)

This program coordinates rural clinical nursing rotations for an urban based community college. The rotations are for inpatient OB and also allow students their only opportunity to experience public health, through well baby visits with a public health nurse. The program goals are:

- Promote in students a positive attitude toward rural nursing
- Provide nursing students with an exposure to rural maternity and postpartal care.

Rural/Underserved Opportunities Program (RUOP) is a four-week, elective experience for students between their first and second years of medical school. Students immerse themselves in rural or urban underserved communities.

The program goals are to:

- Provide students with an early exposure to the challenges and rewards of practicing primary care medicine in a rural or urban underserved setting.
- Promote in students a positive attitude toward rural and urban underserved community medicine.
- Provide students with an opportunity to learn how community healthcare systems function.

Preceptors for the program are exemplary primary care physicians practicing in clinics serving the rural or urban underserved. Preceptors volunteer their time to mentor and

supervise students. All are eligible for clinical faculty appointments at the UW School of Medicine.

Besides providing housing for many R/UOP students, community leaders have welcomed R/UOP students and shared time and expertise. Local newspapers often feature “the visiting medical student” in a summer article.

Students are placed in a variety of settings for experiences in serving rural and urban underserved communities. For 57-68% of students, this AHEC-sponsored experience affects their future place of employment.

Dental RUOP: This was a new program for WWAHEC in 2006. Dental students are placed for a 4 week community-based rotation during the summer of their first year.

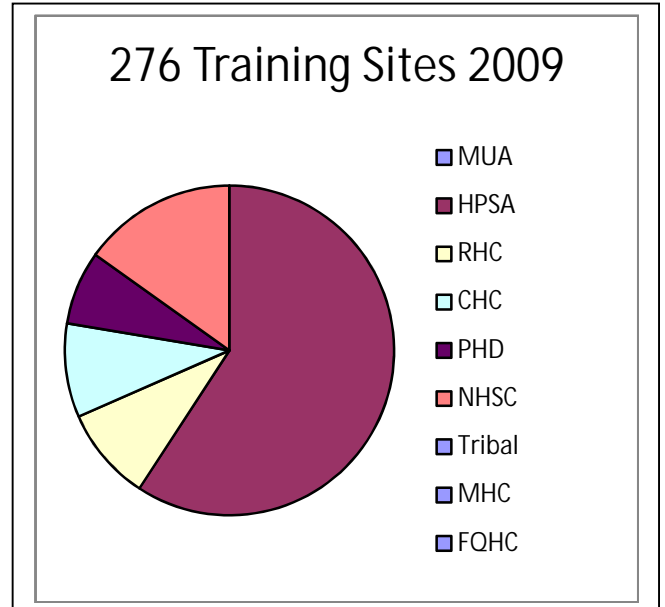
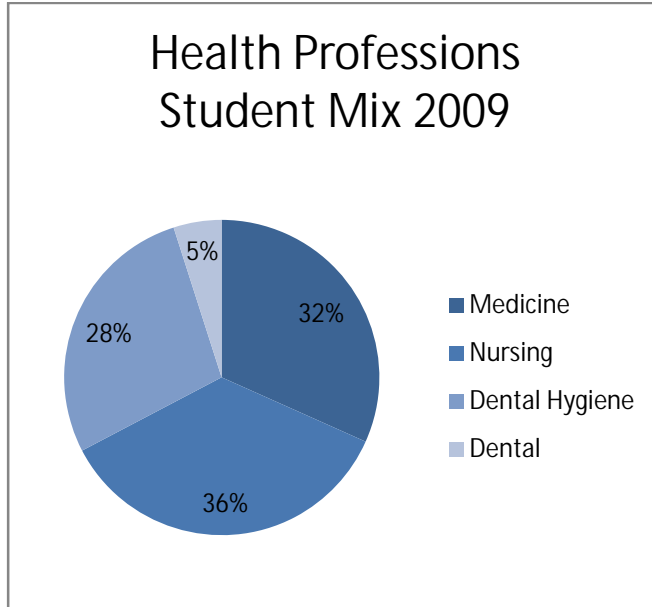
Dental Hygiene Clinical Rotations: Seattle Central Community College started a new program to attract minority students into dental hygiene. WWAHEC arranged for shared experiences for the students at the University of Washington, School of Dentistry, the first collaboration of its type in the country. The student experiences allow the Dental School to offer hygiene services to their patients for the first time.

Dental Clerkships for 3rd Year Students: The School of Dentistry at the UW needed additional sites for clerkships this year. WWAHEC augmented their program by developing additional sites for students.

In 2009, various health professions students served a total of 9834 clinical hours in community settings. Value added calculations established by the University of Florida for students show indicates this is a total of **\$169,238 in value to communities.**



Health Professions Student Rotation Sites:



Student clinical rotations occur in sites classified as those that traditionally serve populations who are most in need – the underinsured and the uninsured. Experiences in these sites frequently lead to careers in these communities, as evidenced by our annual survey of all of the students we have placed over the years:

Results of Students Completing WWAHEC clinical rotations

	2010	2008	2006	2004	2002	1999	1997
Response rate	32.4%	34.2%	32.4%	34%	39%	24%	29%
Of those students still in school:							
Future plan include working in rural or underseved setting, in spite of them seeing barriers to rural employment	73.7%	78.8%	73.7%	72%	70.8%	61%	78%
See barriers to rural employment	76.3%	72.7%	76.3%	84.6%	64.6%	68%	78%
See barriers to urban underserved employment	45.7%	42.4%	45.7%	44%	35.4%	49%	41%
Are currently working with underserved populations	70%	24.2%	70%	68%	26.9%	49%	51%
Their AHEC rotation contributed to their current employment choice	66.7%	NA	66.7%	56.5%	39.6%	32%	62%
Of those who have completed their academic program:							
Future plan include working in rural or underseved setting, in spite of them seeing barriers to rural employment	75%	70.8	75%	66.7%	81.5%	62%	72%
See barriers to urban underserved employment	57.1%	50%	71.4%	65.2%	44.4%	17%	52%
Are currently working with underserved populations	75%	62.5%	75%	64.3%	59.3%	51%	54%
Their AHEC rotation contributed to their current employment choice	57.1%	54.2%	57.1%	66.7%	65.4%	47%	48%
Currently working in a setting with a population under 10,000	14.8%	10.4%	14.8%	20%	7.7%	13%	12.5 %
Currently working in a setting with a population of 10,000 – 25,000	3.7%	8.3%	3.7%	8%	7.7%	6%	12.5 %

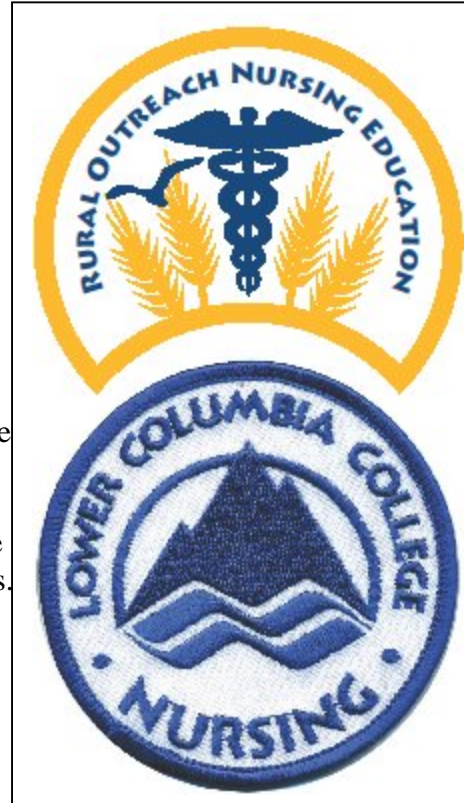
Currently working in a setting with a population of 25,000 – 50,000	11.1%	6.35%	11.1%	4%	0	6%	8%
Currently working in a setting with a population of 50,000 – 100,000	11.1%	14.6%	11.1%	12%	26.9%	15%	12.5%
Currently working in a setting with a population of over 100,000	59.3%	56.3%	59.3%	56%	57.7%	53%	54%
<i>In total, % currently working in a setting with a population of under 50,000</i>	29.6%	25%	29.6%	32%	15.4%	25.5%	33%

Creating New Educational Opportunities:

Rural Outreach Nursing Education Project

Recognizing the difficulty in providing entry-level nursing education for incumbent workers in rural communities, WWAHEC lead a statewide consortium of education providers, rural healthcare agencies, and professional associations to develop on-line access for potential nursing students with a Rural Outreach Nursing Education (RONE) Project.

Through the RONE program, Lower Columbia College partners with rural health care providers (hospitals, nursing homes, clinics) to identify potential nursing students and allow them to obtain an Associate Degree in Nursing while remaining in their home communities. The student enters the program through the work environment as a certified nurse assistant, progressing to an Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) certification and can continue on to acquire an Associate Degree in Nursing (ADN).



Clinical and simulation experience are made available in or close to the rural communities where these students work and reside. Funding for the program been made available through grants from the Washington State Board of Community and Technical Colleges, the Regence Foundation, Johnson and Johnson Promise for Nursing Washington funds, Washington Department of Health through the Washington State Hospital Association, and the State Legislature through a Health Employee Education and Training grant.

Creating learning opportunities for providers in communities

Eight separate Continuing Education Conferences, ranging in time from 2 hours to three days, reached 1618 Health Care Providers received 21,111 Contact hours of continuing education, updating skills and knowledge Evaluations of programs continue to be high,

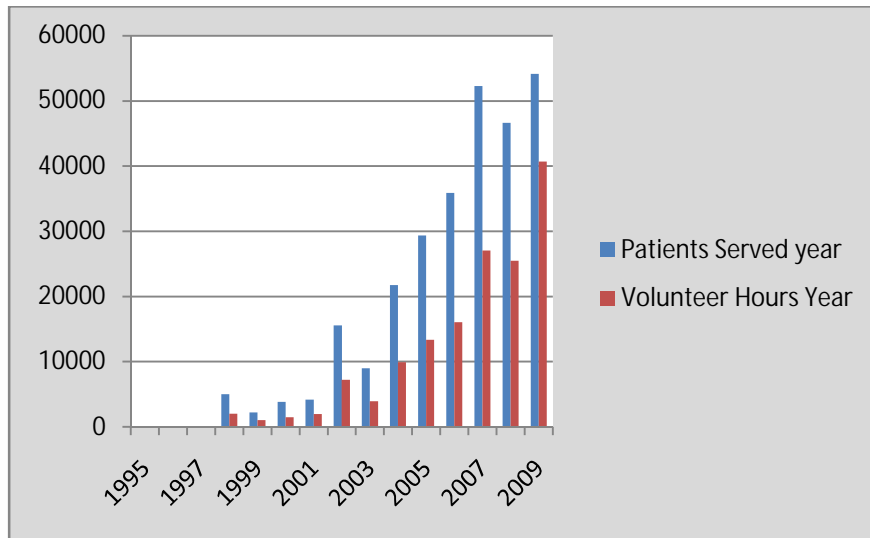
with an average score of 4.5 on a scale of 1-5. New activity this year was the introduction of real time video conferences for place-bound staff at rural critical access hospitals.

Project Management- Increasing Access to Care

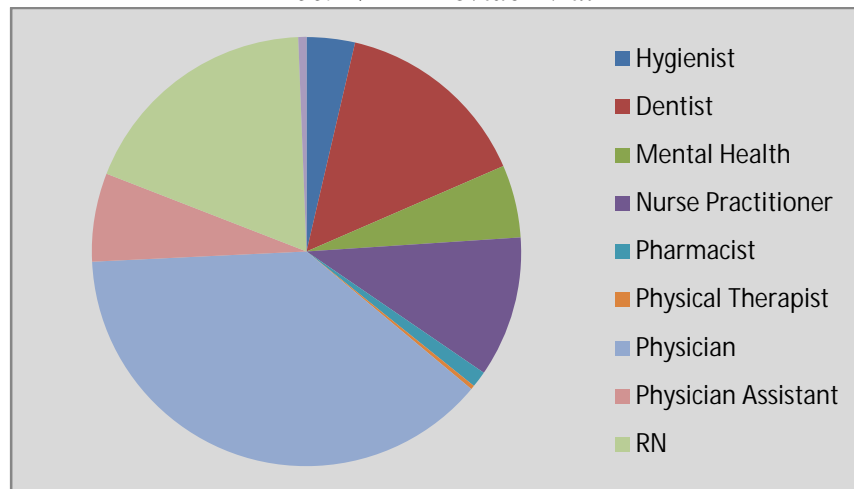
Provider Malpractice Insurance Program

Since 1991, WWAHEC has managed the Volunteer/Retired Providers Program. Funded through the Washington State Department of Health, this innovative project provides **free** malpractice insurance to primary health care professionals who volunteer to serve low income urban and rural underserved communities in Washington. Currently, insurance is provided for doctors, dentists, dental hygienists, physician assistants, nurse practitioners, registered nurses and pharmacists. Retired providers can be assisted with free professional license renewals, paid for by the Department of Health. The program continues to grow in the number of providers volunteering and the number of sites participating in the program.

Volunteer/Retired Provider Service



2009 VRP Provider Mix



Advocating through public policy

Western Washington AHEC staff represents a voice for the health needs of rural and underserved communities in local, state, and national policy-making venues. We work as individual advocates, as well as with coalitions.

- **Partner in Statewide Office of Rural Health**
- **Member of Washington Rural Health Association**
- **Member of National Rural Health Association**
- **Routinely inform State and National leaders of the needs of rural and underserved communities and suggest solutions**
- **Member of National AHEC Organization (NAO)**
- **Provides leadership for NAO Public Policy Committee**
- **Past Member of National Health Service Corps National Advisory Council**
- **Secretarial Appointment as Member of DHHS Advisory Committee on Interdisciplinary, Community-based Linkages programs**
- **Reviewers for federal grant programs for rural and underserved communities**

Board of Directors

Myrtle Mitchell, PhD, RN, *President*

Dean Emeritus, Professional & Technical Education,
Seattle Central Community College
Bellevue

Kennethia Ishman, MS, *President-elect*

Group Health Senior's Silver Sneakers Program
Kent

Jim Lowery, *Immediate Past President*

Project Director, Green Energy
Centralia

Louise Parker, PhD, MS, *Secretary*

Director of Extension Family Programs
Washington State University
Puyallup

Rosa Franklin, RN

State Senator
Tacoma

Ki Shinn, M.D.

Rural General Internist
Montessano

Staff

Laurie Wylie, MA, RN, NP

Chief Executive Officer/Executive Director

Jodi Palmer, MSW

Assistant Director

Christine Lindquist, MPH

Program Manager

Frank Kohel

Office Manager/Executive Assistant

Kimberly Greene, BA

AmericCorps Volunteer, YHSC Program Coordinator

[VISIT OUR WEBSITE OR CALL US FOR GREATER DETAILS.](#)



Western Washington Area Health Education Center

2033 Sixth Avenue, Suite 310

Seattle, Washington 98121

206-441-7137 FAX: 206-441-7158

wwahec@wwahec.org

www.wwahec.org