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From: Missouri Area Health Education Centers

Community Based Physicians as Teachers

Community based training is important for medical students. Even though many students grow up in areas of need, they are unfamiliar with community health needs or the difference between specialties. Working with community physicians allows students to experience first-hand issues affecting specific communities and how physicians, as community leaders, follow and address health trends. These physicians are role models who influence students' specialty choice and practice location. They help students understand what their future practice will be like. As students interact with them, their perspectives are developed or transformed. Students experience a family medicine rotation, for example, and realize the breadth of practice is far beyond what they expected and whether or not this appeals to them.

Missouri AHEC has developed a network of community-based physicians who also serve as teachers. From July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2014, approximately 975 physicians in Missouri served as teachers to medical students in their communities. This represents 271,618 hours (2,018 medical student rotations) for 560 different medical students. Comments from several of these physician teachers about why they teach medical students:

"Working with medical students keeps me on my toes. When I am teaching, I am solidifying a lot of concepts in my own mind as well. I also really enjoy getting to know the students and staying in touch with them, seeing them develop and grow."

"My goal is to make each student the best version of themselves they can be. In return the students make me the best version of myself."

"As a preceptor, my favorite part is watching a student perform like an all-star when she is scared to death! In my profession, I try to give them the opportunity to deliver a baby. I can see the excitement in her eyes while she talks to the patient as she's pushing. The student shows confidence, but I can see her hands shaking. Then the head comes out and she shakes more, but all is well. We clamp and cut the cord, and the student beams with the thrill of it all! That moment - when I see confidence and competence build - is my favorite part of teaching."

Missouri AHEC would like to thank the almost 1,000 physicians for their contribution to the education of Missouri's future physicians.



Julie Hancock, third year medical student from Carrollton, with Tara Brown, DO, (right) who also completed clinical rotations through NWMO AHEC.

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
- Northeast Missouri AHEC – Kirksville
- Northwest Missouri AHEC – St. Joseph
- West Central Missouri AHEC – Lexington
- Mid-Missouri AHEC – Rolla
- East Central Missouri AHEC – St. Louis
- Southeastern Missouri AHEC – Poplar Bluff
- Southwest Missouri AHEC – Springfield

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