AHEC West

FY25 Annual Report















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On the cover:

- 1) AHEC West staff at our 2024 holiday party.
- 2) Peer Recovery Specialist Rachel Sloane at the Frostburg Community Block Party.
- 3) AHEC West Peers and Associate Director Melissa Clark at a Recovery Simulator event.
- 4) AHEC West staff at Community Resource Day.
- 5) Consumer Assistance Worker Rachel Rumph at a food distribution event in Hagerstown.
- 6) AHEC West staff volunteering at United Way's Day of Caring and Sharing.

A Note From Our Chairperson and Executive Director

During fiscal year 2025, AHEC West continued providing quality programs and services that support the health professions career pathway and address gaps in services related to substance use disorder.

Our AHEC programs focused on leadership skills and interprofessional education for 38 Scholars. We facilitated clinical rotations in Western Maryland for 25 health professions students and conducted 34 continuing education programs, benefiting 738 health professionals. Our dedicated preceptors contributed 7,980 hours to student training. The ECHO program reached 640 high school students and provided intensive summer programming for 24. Additionally, our Community Health Worker Training program offered professional development for 159 individuals.

The health insurance program continued outreach efforts in Frederick, Washington, Allegany, and Garrett counties, assisting 3325 individuals in their coverage search.

Our substance use prevention and recovery efforts reached over 1,000 justice-involved individuals through Peer Recovery Specialist services and 2,250 through harm reduction services. We helped 450 enter treatment, and Healthy Together participated in 106 outreach events, engaging with 7,410 individuals to address health disparities related to substance use and heart disease.

We organized an Innovative Readiness Training program with the US Army, offering a 10-day, no-cost clinic at the Allegany County Fairgrounds. Healthcare practitioners conducted 4,033 screenings and provided services such as physical therapy, eye exams, dental care, and veterinary vaccinations.

As always, we continued to work with our local, state, and national political representatives and the Maryland Rural Health Association to advocate for healthcare policy and health professions training programs. We renewed efforts to revise and build new data collection infrastructures that will allow us to manage services and participant information as well as track outcomes.

We would like to thank our community partners, Board of Directors, and staff for their efforts in developing diverse healthcare programs that benefit our community. We strive to encourage and promote partnerships and programs that we can all be proud of because they improve the health of Western Marylanders. We look forward to maintaining and strengthening current programs as well as developing new and innovative ones.

Sincerely,



Susan K. Stewart Executive Director



Y. Michelle Harman, M.S., Ed.D., NBCT Chairperson

A Message of Gratitude

As we reflect on another year of growth, collaboration, and impact, I am filled with deep gratitude for everyone who makes our work possible.

To our dedicated staff — thank you for your unwavering commitment, compassion, and creativity. Every day, you go above and beyond to serve our communities and ensure that our programs truly make a difference in people's lives. Your resilience and teamwork continue to inspire me.

To our leadership team and Board of Directors — thank you for your steady guidance, wisdom, and vision. Your support allows AHEC West to grow strategically while staying grounded in our mission to improve health and strengthen the fabric of our region.

To our partners and collaborators — thank you for walking alongside us. Together, we have built bridges between healthcare, education, and community, creating lasting pathways to care, opportunity, and hope.

Our collective success this year reflects what can happen when passion meets purpose. I am honored to work with such an extraordinary group of people who believe, as we do, that we are all in this together!

With sincere appreciation,



Melissa A. Clark, MPA Associate Director

The **mission** of AHEC West is to improve access to and promote quality in healthcare through education and collaboration.

The **vision** of AHEC West is that individuals in the communities we serve are educated, strengthened, and empowered to achieve wellness.

Core Values:

- 1. Excellence
- 2. Innovation
- 3. Collaboration



Y. Michelle Harman, M.S., Ed.D., NBCT, – Chairperson Dr. Stephanie Hutter-Thomas – Vice Chairperson Paula McKenzie – Secretary Griffin Detrick – Treasurer

Jennifer Brenneman, Garrett County Health Department

Griffin Detrick, CPA, Northrop Grumman

Heather Hall, PA-C, Frostburg State University

Y. Michelle Harman, M.S., Ed.D., NBCT, Garrett County Board of Education

Joe Hoffman, PhD, Frostburg State University

Stephanie Hutter-Thomas, PhD, CPH, CCHW, RPS, WVU School of Medicine, Behavioral Medicine and Psychiatry

Katherine Jacobson, MD, FAAFP, University of Maryland School of Medicine Department of Family & Community Medicine

Diane Martin, PhD, MA, BA, University of Maryland, Baltimore

Paula McKenzie, Allegany County Health Department

Chris Mullett, Garrett County Community Action Committee

Sara Seitz, MPH, State Office of Rural Health

Danielle Stahl, BS, Washington County Health Department

receptors

Andrea Marshall, PA-C Andrew Miller, Pharm D Anuj Bhatnagar, MD Anna Rao, MD Charles Hyre, MD Darryn Naylin, Pharm D Diana Pryor, CRNP, DNP Elizabeth Miller, MD Gentian Toshkezi, MD Heather Hall, PA-C Jared Matthews, MD Jason Layman, NP Jason Lincoln, PA-C Jill Buterbaugh, DNP Jonathan Miller, MD Julie Caler, PharmD, CGP

K. Jill Ciccarelli, MD

Katie Frantz, PA-C Katie Winner, PA-C Kennalee Herrod, PA-C Kiranjit Kaur, DO Laura Trompower, NP Logan Robertson, PA-C Mark Brown, PA-C Mary Miller, MD Michael Levitas, MD Michael Stasko, MD Natalie Williams, PA-C Nikkole Reams, CRNP Randall Stroup, PA-C Roxanne Staubs, PA-C Samuel Rao, MD Shawna Chilsom, CRNP Tiffany Bennett, NP



ECHO

Program Coordinator: Julie Teter

Sponsored in part by:





Exploring Careers in Health Occupations (ECHO) is a health professions pathways program that encourages high school students to pursue careers in healthcare and related fields, ultimately returning to practice in Western Maryland. We are growing our own health professionals through ECHO.

We conducted 13 health careers exploration presentations reaching 640 students at eight schools in the western part of the state. Students learned about careers in geriatrics, public health, and dentistry. We also conducted recruiting presentations in 10 schools for our ECHO summer week.

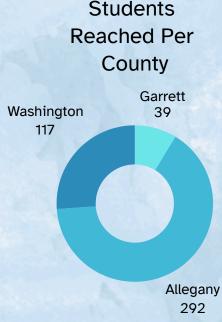
During the weeklong summer component of the program, 24 students from Allegany, Garrett, and Washington counties stayed at Frostburg State University and engaged in many hands-on activities at the following facilities:

UPMC Western MD; University of Maryland Schools of Medicine, Physical Therapy, Pharmacy, and Dentistry; Frostburg State University Nursing and Athletic Training Program; Garrett Regional Medical Center; Garrett County Health Department; and Allegany College of Maryland Allied Health programs. Students enjoyed experiences and gained knowledge of Dentistry, Nursing, Physical Therapy, Medical Lab Technician, Cardiology, Emergency Department, Athletic Training, Respiratory Therapy, Medical Assistant, and many others.



"I like how it opened my eyes to different paths of healthcare."

"It was just an overall great experience, and I'm looking forward to it next year."



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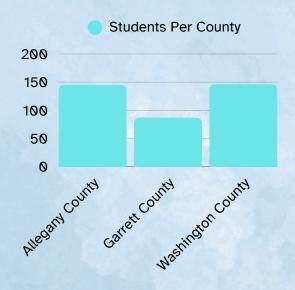
left: Top The Summer 2025 **ECHO** participants Garrett Regional Medical Center. Bottom left: Students observe how to practice respiratory therapy techniques. Right: Students practice dental techniques.

Pathways to Bright Futures

Program Coordinator: Julie Teter

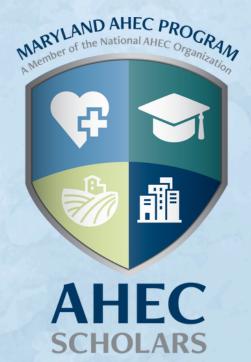
Pathways to Bright Futures (PBF) is a health professions pathways program that encourages high school students to pursue dental careers and return to practice in Western Maryland. We conducted 10 presentations at eight different schools within our service area, reaching a total of 378 students. Six students shadowed a local dentist through PBF, along with other students who want to learn more about dental hygiene through mentoring with the program coordinator.

PBF is supported by a grant from the Maryland Department of Health Office of Oral Health via the Health Resources and Services Administration.





A Mountain Ridge High School student ⁸ participating in an aging simulation.



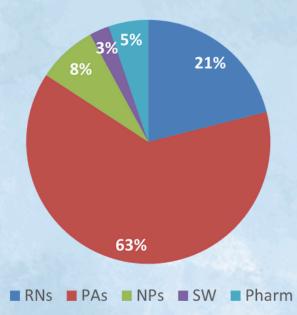
AHEC Scholars

Program Director: Joy Taylor

A national HRSA educational project implemented by AHECs across the U.S., AHEC Scholars is a program for health professions students interested in supplementing their education by gaining additional knowledge and experience in rural and/or underserved settings. AHEC West has directed and led 38 AHEC Scholars students in their journey to complete their 80 hours of community-based experiential/clinical training in rural and/or underserved regions as well as their 80 hours of didactic education that are focused on eight core topics.

Besides the clinical and didactic activities that are the foundation of the AHEC Scholars Program, students also had the opportunity to participate in a pilot Lunch and Learn "For AHEC Scholars: Understanding the Role of Community Health Workers in Improving the Health of Communities"; participate as a Panel Speaker to our ECHO students about their personal academic pathways and experiences; and participate in the nationwide "2025 Collaborative Case Competition" coordinated by the Mid-Missouri AHEC. This past year, AHEC West Scholars received a lapel pin, a T-shirt, and an AHEC Scholars graduation cord & charm, along with their certificate of completion, at graduation.

FY25 AHEC Scholar Disciplines



Right: AHEC Scholar student Kourtney Wells is conversing about PA School with an ECHO student.



2025 graduates from Frostburg State University's PA program wearing their AHEC Scholars cords and charms at their graduation ceremony.



Community Health Worker Training

Program Coordinator: Joy Taylor

The Maryland Area Health Education Center (MAHEC) CHW Training Program is accredited by the Maryland Department of Health, Accreditation No. 004-2020-G. This program is designed specifically for individuals seeking to enter community healthcare advocacy for the first time and for those already established in the field who wish to refine their skills. Our mission is to train CHWs to help bridge the healthcare gap for rural and/or underserved communities, with the overarching goal of creating a healthier community.

AHEC West, in partnership with Eastern Shore AHEC, trained 63 participants in FY25.

In addition, we:

- Provided "Oral Health for CHWs" Continuing Education training for 39 attendees.
- Provided "Community Health Workers: The Profession and Extending Services into the Community" to 57 UMB Physician Assistant students.
- Provided "For AHEC Scholars: Understanding the Role of Community Health Workers in Improving the Health of Communities"



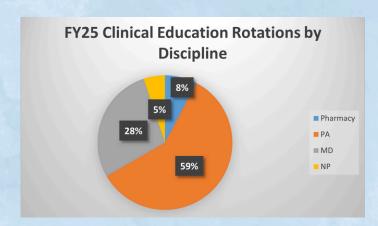
The Spring 2025 CHW training cohort in session.

Clinical Education

Program Director: Joy Taylor

The Clinical Education program at AHEC West coordinates health professions student rotations in Western Maryland, allowing students to experience first-hand the challenges, opportunities, and rewards of practicing in our rural, small-town communities. The hope is to attract more health professionals to our underserved region upon graduation. Staff coordinate rotations with volunteer physician preceptors and arrange temporary housing for students through AHEC West-managed properties in the three western counties, including apartments above our office in Cumberland. In addition to working with physician preceptors, students can spend time in the community at the local health department, The Possibility Shop, or another community-based organization.

Below is our breakdown of students by discipline for this year, along with program results.



24 volunteer preceptors from across the Western Maryland region contributed 7,980 rotation hours

Because of their AHEC West rotations...

100% of students in FY25 reported increased interest in working in a primary care setting

94% reported increased interest in working in a medically underserved area

Interprofessional and Continuing Education

Program Director: Joy Taylor

AHEC West Continuing Education planning continues to focus on providing Inter-Professional Education (IPE) experiences to our local health professional community. During FY25, AHEC West facilitated 34 IPE Continuing Education courses, providing certificates to 748 health professionals and health professions students. Evaluation results consistently show that 100% of attendees report learning something new. By providing quality, diverse, and affordable educational opportunities, AHEC West has helped retain health professionals in the region and improve the health care provided to the citizens of Western Maryland.



True You Maryland

Program Coordinator:
Michael Francis

In FY25, AHEC West's collaboration with Healthy Teen Network through the True You Maryland initiative continued to expand, engaging young adults at Frostburg State University and Allegany College of Maryland. The year started with approximately 50 students in the first quarter, and participation grew consistently throughout the year.

By the second quarter, 74 students had been reached, supported by the launch of the interactive Plan A video program, which encourages young adults to advocate for their sexual health, practice safe behaviors, and communicate effectively with providers and peers. Incentives, such as \$20 gift cards, helped motivate participation, and students often shared program links with friends, thereby increasing outreach beyond those directly involved.

During the third and fourth quarters, outreach activities continued at both institutions, directly reaching more than 60 additional students. However, the actual impact is likely higher due to peer-to-peer sharing. Students demonstrated strong engagement with the program, showing enthusiasm for both the content and the opportunity to discuss vital topics such as contraceptives, sexually transmitted diseases, and pregnancy prevention. FY25 marked the end of AHEC West's participation in the True You Maryland program, making this the final year of implementation.

Health Insurance Program



Program Director: David Stewart

In FY25, the Health Insurance Program provided critical support to consumers across Allegany, Garrett, and Washington Counties, completing more than 5,400 appointments and assisting with hundreds of applications for health coverage. Open Enrollment remained the busiest period, with navigators offering in-depth support, including Spanish-language services, which accounted for 3% of all appointments. Staff changes and promotions, including Chris McKenzie's advancement to Lead Consumer Assistance Worker, strengthened the team's capacity to meet growing community needs.

Outreach remained a cornerstone of success, with 79 events in Q1 alone and continued engagement throughout the year despite a temporary pause in Q4 due to state policy. Outreach staff connected with thousands of individuals at community events, including a new partnership with the Flying Boxcars baseball team and bilingual podcasting with Children In Need.

Social media also played a vital role in consumer engagement. Across all quarters, combined reach exceeded 56,000, with highlights including creative campaigns such as the Open Enrollment Rap video, which drew thousands of views.

Despite challenges, the program demonstrated resilience, expanded its reach, and strengthened community partnerships to ensure access to health coverage.



Above: Rachel and Lisa connect with consumers at Hagerstown Mall. Right: Rachel, Daniel, and Lisa at Hagerstown Community College.





The Possibility Shop

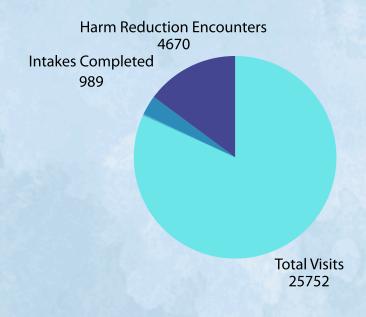
Program Coordinator: Christina Mackereth

Throughout the year, The Possibility Shop remained a vital resource for community members, averaging between 63 and 72 visits per day. Over the course of the year, the Shop recorded a total of 25,752 visits, including thousands of harm reduction encounters, intakes, and other supportive services.

In addition to daily operations, The Possibility Shop hosted its annual Soup to Coats event on November 7, 2024, in partnership with Horizon Goodwill and Maryland Wellness. The event provided 110 participants with essential cold-weather clothing such as coats, gloves, and scarves, while also offering a warm meal. This collaboration exemplified the strong community partnerships that support the Shop's mission. In January, we also helped coordinate cold-weather shelters for our local homeless population.

The Shop continued to expand the scope of services offered, including harm reduction, food assistance, health insurance applications, STI testing, housing applications, expungements, and more. With the support of a robust partner network, consumers accessed resources that met a wide range of critical needs.

This year also marked the beginning of geographic expansion. The Possibility Shop launched pop-up locations in Oakland and Westernport, extending its reach to Garrett County and beyond. These new sites promise to connect even more individuals with the care, resources, and support they need in the coming fiscal year.





Consumer Assistance Worker Steve Parsons accepts a donation of cold-weather clothes from Tammy Fox of Girl Scout Troop 15055 in Hancock

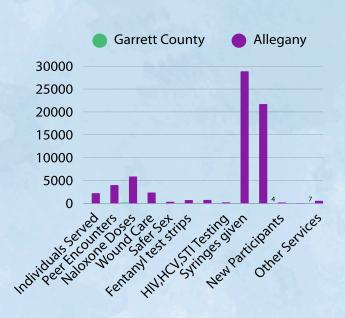


ACCESS

Program Director: Shalynn Cline

This year, the ACCESS program experienced significant growth, highlighted and supported by the establishment of a new satellite office in Garrett County. Through this new location, we have been able to expand our available services in Garrett County. We have served 26 individuals and distributed Naloxone to 82 individuals during outreach events, totaling 180 doses.

The chart below shows our overall program numbers for the fiscal year. Some highlights include the addition of 191 new participants to our Syringe Service Program and nearly 4,000 encounters in Allegany County alone through our outreach efforts. We've also distributed 5,870 doses of naloxone throughout the community. Our program also facilitated referrals for 55 individuals to inpatient treatment and connected more than 500 people with support services, including clothing, hygiene products, phone services, and food assistance. This year's achievements reflect our commitment to addressing community health needs and enhancing access to vital resources.





Autymn and Shalynn pose with one of the Narcan distribution boxes that the ACCESS team added in Allegany County in FY25.



Peer To Peer

Program Coordinator: Jim Murray

As part of the Health Department's Local Behavioral Health Administration grants for Allegany and Garrett Counties, our teams serve the Allegany County Detention Center, the Garrett County Detention Center, the Pretrial Release offices in both counties, and the Garrett County District Court. We offer peer services to individuals who are incarcerated or involved in the court system and who have substance use disorders. We aim to provide them with options, recognizing that those in recovery can share valuable lived experiences. We assist with referrals for various treatment options, ranging from mental health support to inpatient treatment, and we continue to follow up with individuals throughout their re-entry process.

We also team up with local law enforcement to see individuals who have experienced an overdose and offer them whatever is necessary so they can decide on their recovery needs, giving them a chance to change their lives.

We have a 24-hour Peer Hotline available to anyone who would like to talk to someone in recovery.



Rachel and Matt attending Cumberland YMCA's Spring Fling in May.





Healthy Together

Program Coordinator: Lydia Yoder

Healthy Together is a 5-year, \$4.5 million collaborative initiative focused on reducing social determinants of health-related disparities and enhancing health outcomes for rural residents in Allegany and Garrett Counties. The program is funded by the Maryland Community Health Resources Commission (CHRC) Health Equity Resource Communities (HERC) grant.

Over five years, the program plans to reach 7,000 unique individuals by expanding access to primary care, promoting preventive services, and lowering healthcare costs, hospital admissions, and readmissions.

Through strong partnerships with the Garrett and Allegany County Health Departments and Departments of Social Services, Mountain Laurel Medical Center, Tri-State Community Health Center, and Johns Hopkins, Healthy Together addresses key community health challenges, including substance use disorder, obesity, and heart disease.



Lydia, Nevaeh, and Taylor at Garrett County Homeless Resource Day.

At AHEC West, we prioritize community engagement and outreach by offering free health screenings and connecting individuals to vital resources like transportation, food assistance, housing support, and health education. Healthy Together works to create a healthier and more equitable future for residents in the region.







Susan Stewart **Executive Director**



Melissa Clark Associate Director



Tina Rohrbaugh Finance Director



Taylor Alexander Community Health Worker



Jackie Booth



Daniel Carrillo



Ella Ciprian Administrative Specialist Consumer Assistance Worker Consumer Assistance Worker



Shalynn Cline **Program Coordinator**



Mary Clites Custodian



Michael Francis Communications Manager



Jeff Hay Peer Recovery Specialist



Amanda Heavener HR Specialist/ **Executive Assistant**



Autymn Kifer Peer Recovery Specialist



Nevaeh Lee Community Health Worker



Lisa Lundquist Program Coordinator



Christina Mackereth Program Coordinator



Chris McKenzie Program Coordinator



Carol Morgan Consumer Assistance Worker



James Murray Program Coordinator



Steve Parsons Consumer Assistance Worker



Matthew Phillips Peer Recovery Specialist



Rachel Rumph Consumer Assistance Worker



Rachel Sloane Peer Recovery Specialist



David Stewart Program Director



Joy Taylor Program Director



Julie Teter Program Coordinator



Garett Weaver Peer Recovery Specialist



Leslee Wigfield Administrative Assistant



Lindsay Wood Program Coordinator



Lydia Yoder Program Coordinator

FY25 Financials

AHEC West Balance Sheet

June 2025

ASSETS

Current Assets GENERAL CHECKING CHRC MONEY MARKET PETTY CASH CHAPIN DAVIS DUE FROM GRANTS PREPAID RENT	71,997.42 5,704.43 55.00 115,976.95 863,166.47 3,052.40
TOTAL Current Assets	1,059,952.67
Fixed Assets LEASEHOLD IMPROVEMENTS FURNITURE & EQUIPMENT ACCUMULATED DEPRECIATION RIGHT OF USE OPERATING LEASE ASSET	167,936.71 161,283.11 (172,594.08) 320,128.00
TOTAL Fixed Assets	476,753.74
Other Assets DEPOSITS	525.00
TOTAL Other Assets	525.00
TOTAL ASSETS	1,537,231.41
LIABILITIES	
Current Liabilities TRADE PAYABLES COLONIAL LIFE INSURANCE PAYABLE CELLULAR PAYABLE ACCRUED VACATION FICA ON ACCRUED VACATION DEFERRED REVENUE OPERATING LEASE LIABILITY	272,093.37 793.82 141.96 31,604.30 2,417.72 26,869.47 315,999.00
TOTAL Current Liabilities	649,919.64
TOTAL LIABILITIES	649,919.64
GENERAL FUND - UNRESTRICTED Year-to-Date Earnings	921,021.51 (33,709.74)
TOTAL CAPITAL	887,311.77
TOTAL LIABILITIES & CAPITAL	1,537,231.41

FY25 Financials

AHEC West Funding Highlights for the year ending June 30, 2025

	FY End	F	Y Budget
Maryland Statewide Medical Education & Training System (MSMETS)	6/30/2025	\$	324,000.00
Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (MDH)	6/30/2025	\$	101,595.00
Garrett-Allegany Health Equity Alliance (HERC)	6/30/2025	\$	815,320.00
Point of Service AHEC (POS AHEC)	6/30/2025	\$	129,894.28
Allegany County Local Behavioral Health Association (AC LBHA)	6/30/2025	\$	241,986.00
Garrett County Local Behavioral Health Association (GC LBHA)	6/30/2025	\$	148,933.00
ACCESS - Center for Harm Reduction	6/30/2025	\$	425,755.00
Community Trust Foundation	6/30/2025	\$	5,000.00
Rural Maryland Council (MAERDAF)	6/30/2025	\$	25,000.00
Allegany County Opiod Restitution Funds (AC ORF)	6/30/2025	\$	60,758.55
Maryland Health Benefit Exchange Connector Entity (MHBE)	6/30/2025	\$	1,025,757.10
Local Management Board	6/30/2025	\$	19,200.00
Maryland Abortion and Reproductive Clinical Health (MARCH)	6/30/2025	\$	39,930.00
Healthy Teen Network	6/30/2025	\$	25,000.00
Allegany County Health Department - Health Disparities	6/30/2025	\$	7,000.00
Regional Oral Health Coorinator (ROHC)	6/30/2025	\$	50,000.00
Appalachian Regional Commision (ARC)	6/30/2025	\$	35, 185.00
LAA		\$	8,472.00
		\$	3,488,785.93