

NORTHEAST NEPA AHEC

Pennsylvania Area Health Education Center

ANNUAL REPORT 2003



*Enhancing
access to
health care
through
education*

Message from the Executive Director

The Northeast Pennsylvania Area Health Education Center (NEPA AHEC) was incorporated in July 1999 with the goal of improving access to health care by ensuring that our region has the health care professionals it needs. Growing an organization in this demanding health care environment has been challenging. Every day we read of some new crisis in health care. Consequently, it can be difficult to see all the good the northeast has to offer: excellent care, dedicated providers, motivated teachers and enthusiastic students in the health care field.

In a very short time, and with your support, the NEPA AHEC has provided extensive programs and services to the region. I am pleased to present these accomplishments to you in our 2003 Annual Report.

The NEPA AHEC invites you to learn more about our organization and all that it has done for the region. We welcome your comments on how the NEPA AHEC can continue to improve access to health care for northeast Pennsylvania. Our success is your success.

As we look to the future, our mission to the region remains constant. NEPA AHEC is committed to improving the supply, distribution, retention, quality and efficiency of health professionals providing primary care to northeast Pennsylvania.

In an ongoing effort to strengthen our region's health care community, the NEPA AHEC is establishing an annual fundraising campaign. The funds received through the campaign will allow the NEPA AHEC to further its mission of encouraging

our region's students to enter the health care field, providing regional training opportunities for health professions students, supporting our practitioners and serving the community.

The NEPA AHEC would not be where it is today were it not for all our wonderful partners in northeast Pennsylvania. Thank you to our excellent board, dedicated staff, partners and community supporters.

With your help the NEPA AHEC will continue to grow. We look forward to your continued support as we enhance access to health care through education for northeast Pennsylvania.

Patricia Lawless
Executive Director

*NEPA AHEC serves nine counties:
Bradford, Lackawanna, Luzerne, Monroe,
Pike, Sullivan, Susquehanna,
Wayne & Wyoming.*

"I really liked the hands-on activities. The camp made me want to go into the health care field."



We share our office space with O'Malley.



The office of the NEPA AHEC is located on the campus of Keystone College in LaPlume, PA.

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The official registration and financial information for the Northeast Pennsylvania Area Health Education Center may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling, toll free in Pennsylvania, 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

Throughout this report we will share quotations from our *Exploring Careers in Health* campers.

Preceptors & Practitioners



Dr. Gerald Kazmerski, DDS

The NEPA AHEC provides support to the region's primary care practitioners:

- *To ensure they remain in our region as its health care providers*
- *To enable them to keep current in their field*
- *To encourage and facilitate their teaching and mentoring students, and*
- *To strengthen their connection to academic centers of education.*



Cindy Ace, BS

In 2003, **1334** health care professionals received continuing professional education through the collaborative efforts of the NEPA AHEC and its partners.

With the assistance of Clinical Coordinator William Dewar, MD, NEPA AHEC preceptors receive ongoing support, recognition, continuing professional education, faculty development and access to the Beck Circuit Library. The NEPA AHEC has **50** primary

care preceptors training students at **36** practice sites.

NEPA AHEC preceptor Dr. Gerald Kazmerski, and the Dental Outreach Program at Luzerne County Community College, were awarded the Dental Outreach Effort of the Year Award at the Second Annual Oral Health Conference held in Williamsport on September 26, 2003.

Cindy Ace, NEPA AHEC Tobacco Cessation Consultant, presented

numerous continuing education and cessation programs throughout Monroe County. Cindy's work is supported through the Tobacco Settlement Funds.

“When I came into the camp I was 100% physical therapy, but the camp really opened my eyes to the many choices you have as a nurse.”

Health Professions Programs



Medical students come into our nine county region to get hands-on medical experience.

A vital ingredient of the AHEC is the partnership linking health professions students to clinical training opportunities in our community. The NEPA AHEC partners with health

professions programs throughout the region, state and nation to facilitate the placement of students at sound clinical training sites in northeast Pennsylvania. This enables the students to gain valuable hands-on experience in the practice of primary care in our region. The goal is that, upon completion of their education, they will return to northeast Pennsylvania to practice.

The NEPA AHEC placed **222** students in 2003, representing **27,313** training hours and **24,213** preceptor in-kind hours. This included medical students, nurse practitioners, physician's assistants and graduate public health students.

“Make the camp longer.”

Residents in the Wyoming Valley Family Practice Residency Program.



Community

The NEPA AHEC supports community partnerships and initiatives designed to improve the health and quality of life for the people of northeast Pennsylvania. The NEPA AHEC:

- Convenes meetings*
- Facilitates planning and implementation*
- Provides technical support*
- Shares resources*
- Supports grant initiatives*

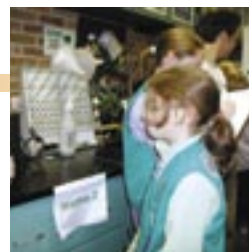
“The physician’s assistants that presented the suturing chicken breasts really caught my attention, and I eventually chose PA as my college major. I never even considered the PA program prior to the NEPA AHEC camp.”

NEPHLI

In July 2003, Vera Walline, Program Coordinator for NEPA AHEC, completed a year-long experience with the Northeast Public Health Leadership Institute (NEPHLI). The institute works to strengthen public health leadership skills working with a diverse group of public health leaders from eight northeastern states. Vera’s scholar project was entitled *Rural Physician Education: Bridges and Barriers*.

NEPA CCPH

In 2003 the Health Administration Department at the University of Scranton, the Healthy Northeast Pennsylvania Initiative and the NEPA Area Health Education Center were selected to form the leadership team for a regional network called the NEPA Community-Campus Partnerships for Health (CCPH). The main objective of the CCPH will be to establish a network of health professionals, colleges, school districts and others to form a closer knit northeast Pennsylvania, and to enable all counties to have access to the individual’s and organizations’ skills. The NEPA Community-Campus Partnerships for Health project was showcased as a Poster at the National AHEC Organization National Conference in Portland, Oregon in August 2003; and as a Presentation at the American Public Health Association National Conference in San Francisco in November 2003.



Each AHEC in Pennsylvania has a sponsoring medical school. The NEPA AHEC works with all health professional schools but the sponsoring school has made a special commitment to the support of the Pennsylvania AHEC. The NEPA AHEC’s sponsoring medical school is Thomas Jefferson University’s Jefferson Medical College. Our medical school liaisons are Michael Rosenthal, MD, Clinical Professor and Vice Chair, Academic Programs, Department of Family Medicine and Christine Jerpbak, MD, Department of Family Medicine, Instructor of Family Medicine, Co-Director of Pre-Doctoral Education and Assistant Director in the Section of Community Health.

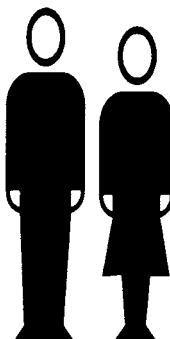
In-Kind Contributions:

In our short existence, NEPA AHEC has been fortunate to have in-kind contributions and resources which have become a substantial and growing part of our budget.

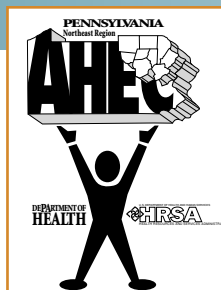
In 2003 such contributions totaled five times our budget.



BUDGET



IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS



Funding for the Pennsylvania Area Health Education Center Program is provided by the Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration, and the Pennsylvania Department of Health. The Commonwealth’s Medical Community and Communities at Large provide additional support.

K-12 School Programs

"Growing our region's health care professionals"

The NEPA AHEC realized that to have a lasting impact on the recruitment and retention of health care professionals for our community a "home-grown" candidate is ideal. The NEPA AHEC provides health career awareness programs throughout the

region, exposing students to rewarding opportunities in the health care field. We encourage them, upon completion of their education, to return "home" as our communities' health care providers. Working in collaboration with numerous community

and educational partners, the NEPA AHEC's pipeline programs have reached over **9000** students in 2003. The NEPA AHEC serves as a resource for up-to-date information on health careers and shares pertinent information with all regional schools.



Kid's Judge! Neuroscience 2003.



NEPA AHEC staffers Kate Germershausen and Amy Rowe hold the PONE award.



Connie Teel working with children at the Wyoming County Agriculture Day.



John McGeehan, MD, giving the opening address to the Exploring Careers in Health campers. Peppared with insights from his own career, he encouraged students to pursue their interests and follow their hearts in their personal journeys.

"I would recommend this camp to anyone. Can I come back?"

ECIH camper's response when asked how she liked the camp.

The NEPA AHEC website has an extensive Health Careers section with career information and links, www.nepahec.org/healthcareers.

The **Exploring Careers in Health** third annual summer camp was held July 7 – 11 on the Keystone College campus. This weeklong residential camp offered 35 high school students the opportunity to learn about 30 health careers, visit a regional health system, participate in team building activities and receive information about applying to schools. The excellent all-volunteer faculty came from the region's colleges, universities and health systems.

In recognition of our efforts, the **Exploring Careers in Health** camp was honored with a Pocono Northeast (PONE) award, sponsored by the Northeast Pennsylvania Alliance. The **Exploring Careers in Health** camp received second place in the health category.

NEPA AHEC awards provide incentives to high school students, educators and college students to develop and implement projects that address community health needs and which include science/math/health career and/or healthy behavior components.

The **2003 NEPA AHEC Educator's Award** was given to Kid's Café, a free, after-school program operated by the Commission on Economic Opportunity in collaboration with the Wilkes-Barre Area School District. Kid's Café uses the NEPA AHEC award to address the need for children to make wise food choices.

The **2003 Hearts and Hands Award** for college students was awarded to projects implemented by students attending local colleges.

- **Dental In-Service Programs in a Long-Term Care Setting:**

This program is being implemented by a group of dental hygiene students to train long-term care staff members to recognize and address the basic dental needs of their clients.

- **The Growing Tree of Life:**

To ease the stress for inpatients, outpatients and families, two Marywood University art therapy students are painting a highly visible mural in a local hospital with an interactive community component.

The **2003 Show You Care Award** for high school students went to a student who developed **Star Day: Meningitis Awareness Day**. On a state and local level this project will increase the awareness of the dangers of meningococcal meningitis, as well as offering ways to avoid the disease.

Connie Teel is the AHEC's **Farm Safety 4 Kids** volunteer chapter president and volunteer representative on Wyoming County's **Safe Kid's Coalition**. She also serves on the Wyoming County Extension Board and on the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau's State Women's Committee Board. Using interactive materials, Connie promotes farm safety at schools, libraries and fairs.

Northeast Pennsylvania Area Health Education Center

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2003 Camp Presenters:

Geralyn Adams, LPN

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John Boone

Alberto Cardelle, PhD, MPH

Jeff Dauber, CST, CTBS

Blaine Dibble, RRT

Maureen Dunne-Toubey, MS, RD, LDN

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Marilyn White, BA, CTR

Eric Wright, PharmD



The Northeast PA AHEC acknowledges with gratitude the following groups who have assisted with student housing:

Dr. and Mrs. James Caggiano

Guthrie Healthcare System

Keystone College

PCOM Sullivan County Medical Center

Pocono Health System

Wayne Memorial Health System

Wyoming Valley Family Practice Residency Program

The following are preceptors who worked with NEPA AHEC students in 2003:

Michelle Aldrich, CRNP

Frank Belardi, MD

Kevin Carey, DO

William Davis, MD

William R. Dewar III, MD

Franklyn Dornfest, MD

Craig Erickson, MD

Jonathan Goldner, DO

Gerald Kazmerski, DDS

Deborah Spring, MD

Shakuntale Varhade, MD

Joseph A. Anistranski, MD

James F. Caggiano, MD

Matthew Cusano, MD

Felix DeSio, MD

Robert Dohner, DO

Richard B. English, MD

Natale Falanga, MD

Thomas Gole, DO

Louis O'Boyle, MD

William Swallow, DO

Edward Zurad, MD

We would also like to recognize the NEPA AHEC preceptors who did not match with our students in 2003, but whose offer of service is greatly appreciated.

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