



**HEALTHCARE WORKFORCE  
DEVELOPMENT**

A SPECTRUM OF SOLUTIONS

**Senate**

**Labor & Commerce Committee**

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# Healthcare Workforce Shortages



Medical



Behavioral Health



Administration



Education

**These shortages are exasperated in our rural communities**



# Impact of Workforce Shortages

- Difficulty accessing healthcare
- Long wait lists for appointments
- Increased cost of care
- Decrease in quality of care
- Closure of facilities
- Reliance on itinerant staffing
- Impaired relationships of providers and patients
- Increased reliance on emergency care
- Health inequity

# A Spectrum of Solutions

## **PIPELINE PROGRAMMING**

Health career exploration for youth in rural and underserved communities

## **COMMUNITY BASED LEARNING**

Health professions student exposure to practice in rural/underserved communities

## **CONTINUING EDUCATION & LOAN REPAYMENT**

Training, education, loan repayment and direct incentives to current providers

**All solutions must be implemented simultaneously and seamlessly across sectors to make an impact**



# A LITTLE ABOUT ME

 **AlaskaAHEC**  
Area Health Education Centers

From Bronx,  
NY to  
Utqiagvik,  
AK



Rural  
Communities  
can be HOME  
for just about  
anyone!





Let's Take  
a Step Back:



# The History– Area Health Education Centers

- 1970 Carnegie Commission Report: *Higher Education and the Nation's Health*
  - 1971 Congress enacts the Comprehensive Health Manpower Training Act (funding AHECs)
  - 1972 US Department of Health, Education & Welfare awards first ever AHEC contracts in 11 states (1st Generation AHECs)
  - 1978–Present: AHEC Network continues to grow
- Recommended development of AHECs to address workforce shortages and maldistribution of providers in rural/underserved communities
  - Recommended federal funding for communities without academic health centers
  - Goals to enhance supply, distribution & quality of healthcare in these communities
  - Leverage federal, state & local resources
  - Engage community connections to industry and academia
  - Increase diversity in the healthcare workforce
  - Improve retention of healthcare professionals in rural communities

# Pipeline Programming

Career Exploration  
Camps & Activities

Pre-Apprenticeship  
Training

Career Preparedness





# Community Based Learning

## AHEC Scholars

- Open to all health professions students
- Two year program (some 1 year exceptions)
- 40 hours/year of extracurricular didactic training
- 40 hours/year of community experiential learning

## Community Experiential Learning

- Opportunities for rural/underserved rotations or clinical experiences

## Rural Immersion Institute of the North

- Opportunities for students from the Lower 48 to explore Alaska







# CE & Loan Repayment

- Training webinars, conferences & events for health professionals
- Continuing Education Credit for licensure
- SHARP Loan Repayment Program



# Investment in Existing Solutions

AHEC is integral to  
**alleviating to Alaska's  
Healthcare Workforce Crisis!**

The AHEC model can be utilized for any industry.

QUESTIONS?

COMMENTS?

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