Introduction:
The Urban Health/AHEC Scholars Program is an interprofessional "add-on" training program for the select health professions of Dental Medicine, Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy, Physician Assistant, and Social Work. Sponsored by the CT AHEC Program located at UConn Health, Urban Health/AHEC Scholars apply for admissions to the UConn School of Medicine, Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy, Physician Assistant, and "add-on" training program for the select health professions of Dental Medicine, Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy, Physician Assistant, and Social Work. Since 2007, 696 health professions students have participated in the Connecticut Urban Health/AHEC Scholars Program.

Aims of the Connecticut UST/Alumni Scholars (UST/AS) Program:

- To identify meaningful roles and pathways to engage with UST/AHEC Alumni to provide support to current and future Scholars.
- To utilize input from graduates and current students to grow a vibrant mentor and teaching community that shares the values and experiences of Scholars.

The Urban Health/AHEC Scholars program recognizes that alumni have different interests and capacities to participate in programming. As busy clinicians and professionals, alumni often are not available the first two years post graduation because of residency, job or family needs. The chart below shows participation willingness for the 10 most recent years of graduates (2011-2020). 91% of all graduates responded to the survey.

Alumni Participate In:

- Monthly Interest Groups
  Serve as part of the leadership team and support (Pediatrics, Adolescents, Geriatrics, Women’s Health, Behavioral/Mental Health, Healthcare Advocacy & Policy, Social Justice)
- Learning Retreats & Enhanced Training Sessions
  Provide small group discussion and instruction
- Clinical Skills Boot Camps for 1st & 2nd Year Scholars
  Develop and implement curriculum and hands-on activities
- Leadership Courses
  Bring "real life" experience as clinical trainees and leaders
- Community-based Service
  Support service activities through precepting interprofessional student teams
- Home & Community Care Program
  Support community-based immersion and knowledge about underserved communities

Significance:
Alumni are an invaluable resource to UST/AHEC Programs because of their skill and knowledge as well as shared experiences. By creating mechanisms for involvement, alumni can "pay it forward" while expanding their own skill sets as mentors and teaching faculty. Integration of alumni is a "win-win" for all: Scholars, host institutions and alumni.

Activities Involving Alumni:
Alumni and Scholar Advisory Committee
- Meets twice a year.
- Members include representation from different training years.
- Focus is to provide guidance on leadership regarding training needs of health professionals.

Lessons from the Field: Alumni Voices
- Dedicated column on the UConn UST/AHEC website provides insights from licensed healthcare providers on current and emerging topics.

Alumni Network
- Map and database of graduate residency programs
- Critical resource for online residency interviews

Social Programming – Yard Goats!
- Social events bring current Scholars and alumni together in a fun and relaxed social environment.

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Reference
CT AHEC Program at UConn Health Center
Urban Service Track/AHEC Scholars Program
uconn.edu/UST

GROWING OUR OWN:
Engaging Alumni to Build Infrastructure
Urban Health/AHEC Scholars Program
Katherine Botta1,3, Carlos Cardenas Peralta1,5, Stephanie Cook1,2, Madeleine Roy1,4
Urban Health/AHEC Scholars1, Quinnipiac-PA Program2, UConn School of Medicine3,
UConn School of Nursing4 and UConn School of Dental Medicine5
Faculty Advisor: Barbara O’Neill, PhD, RN

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