

## GROWING OUR OWN:

# Engaging Alumni to Build Infrastructure Urban Health/AHEC Scholars Program

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### 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 program. Scholars receive a minimum of two years of formal training focuses on 11 core competencies and seven vulnerable populations. The program centers on medical management of vulnerable populations, leadership, advocacy skills, and service.

- 696 health professions students have participated in the Connecticut Urban Health/AHEC Scholars Program since 2007.
- The curriculum and service activities have been expanded over the past 14 years to address Scholar needs and changes in the healthcare system.

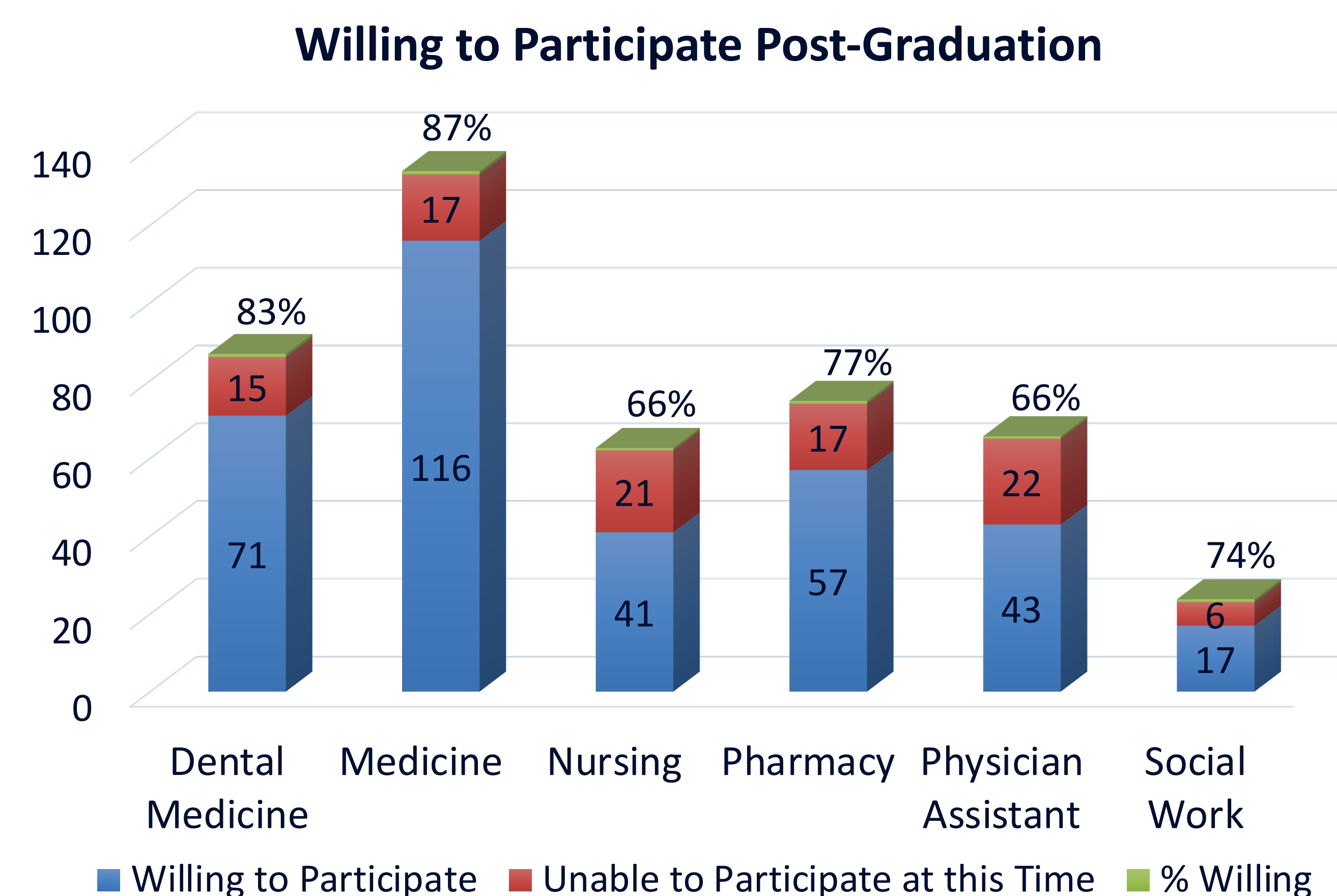


### Aims of the Connecticut UST/Alumni Scholars (UST/AS) Program:

- 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.

### UST/AS Alumni Engagement:

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.



### 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.

### 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 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> 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.

### Reference

CT AHEC Program at UConn Health Center  
 Urban Service Track/AHEC Scholars Program  
[h.uconn.edu/UST](http://h.uconn.edu/UST)

### Acknowledgements

Volunteer preceptors supporting CT AHEC COVID student projects.

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