

September 2021

S.E. Missouri AHEC Spends the Summer Collaborating for Regional Improvement

Over the last several months, the Southeastern Missouri Area Health Education Center (SEMO) has prioritized “Connecting Communities to Better Health” portion of the MAHEC Mission. In addition to pipeline education and clinical student placement, SEMO AHEC has collaborated with several local organizations/institutions to provide Community Health Worker (CHW) education with Southeast Missouri State University, and tackle issues like infant mortality reduction efforts, COVID-19 vaccination efforts/misinformation, and more.



MAHEC is a partnership of seven locally governed organizations and three university-based health professions education programs working statewide to increase the numbers of Missouri youth entering stable, high-paying jobs as healthcare professionals and the numbers of professionals caring for underserved populations.

One of the current collaborations is with Bootheel Babies and Families, who partnered with SEMO AHEC to develop educational materials to help moms and babies from immigrant and migrant communities. The goal was to educate both practitioners who serve/pregnant mothers within minority populations - specifically Hispanic/Latino and migrant farm workers within the six southernmost counties with in the Bootheel of Missouri. The Center is currently applying to expand the collaboration to provide additional landscape research, resource navigation, education, casework/monitoring, and more!

Another on-going collaboration with SEMO AHEC is a COVID-19 Vaccine Project with Saint Louis University (SLU) AHEC, SLU School of Public Health & Social Justice, Health in the Heartland, and many others within the region. During this endeavor, SEMO AHEC was able to provide expansive COVID-19, vaccine, and vaccine hesitancy educational materials and training to CHW’s assisting with the efforts. These CHW’s were then able to take that knowledge and encourage their clients, neighbors, and friends to take COVID-19 mitigation efforts, mainly vaccination.

The MAHEC partners include:

- A.T. Still University Kirksville
- University of Missouri-Columbia
- Saint Louis University
- East Central Missouri ECMO AHEC – St. Louis
- Mid-Missouri AHEC – Rolla
- Northeast Missouri NEMO AHEC – Kirksville
- Northwest Missouri NWMO AHEC – St. Joseph
- Southeastern Missouri SEMO AHEC – Poplar Bluff
- Southwestern Missouri SWMO AHEC - Springfield
- West Central Missouri WCMO AHEC – Kansas City



According to Megan Murray, SEMO AHEC Executive Director, “It is our goal to be able to help alleviate some of the struggles of our communities, and it’s even better if we can collaborate with one or more of the other amazing groups in our region to accomplish this!” According to Murray, it is thrilling to work with these community experts on issues affecting vulnerable Missourians. She looks forward to all the positive impacts Missouri communities will be able to see and feel.