Aurora LIGHTS Receives HCOP Grant

We are very excited to announce that the Aurora LIGHTS program has been awarded a grant of close to $4 million by the Health Careers Opportunity Program (HCOP) of the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA).

Aurora LIGHTS (Leading in Health Sciences) is a collaboration between Colorado AHEC, the Central Colorado AHEC office and the Aurora Public School District. The new Aurora LIGHTS Career Program is a comprehensive partnership designed to help economically and educationally disadvantaged students succeed in science coursework, and enroll in pre-medical and health science school programs with the goal of becoming health science professionals. Over 60% of this substantial HCOP grant will be infused back into our surrounding community to benefit these underserved students.

With this grant, Aurora LIGHTS will be able to support programs such as a middle school Summer Health and Science Camp, a High School Saturday Health and Science Academy and Summer Institute (developed and run by Central AHEC), and support services for undergraduates at Community College of Aurora (CCA) and University of Colorado Denver (UCD), including text taking skills workshops, application support, and tutoring and counseling services. The grant will also support the current UCD-Anschutz Medical Campus post-baccalaureate program, and improve retention on the medical campus by assisting disadvantaged students in the health professional schools through increased academic support. In addition, a cultural competency curriculum is planned, to be incorporated throughout the grade levels.

A unique strength in the Aurora Public School District is their creation of health and science magnet elementary, middle and high schools that geographically surround the new medical campus. They are committed to revamping their curricula for Aurora LIGHTS students, increasing the hours of exposure to the health sciences for those students, providing more professional development for teachers participating in Aurora LIGHTS, and intentionally integrating a health professions career pathway for participating students.

Geraldo de La Garza, Principal of North Middle School, has already noticed a dramatic change in the students who have been selected to participate in the North Middle School Health and Science Academy. "You can sense that the kids are more proud about being at North Middle School. The kids are surrounded by peers who really want to be a part of this. They just feed off of each other."

Dhala, a seventh-grade student, stated that she felt it would be good for her future in medical science to participate in the Academy. "It would help me on my way to college. I want to be a nurse or surgeon." Joseylyn, also a student at North Middle School, wants to learn about hospitals and states that part of the reason she is a member of the new science Academy is that "I want to make my family proud."

Tony van Gytenbeek, Deputy Superintendent of Aurora Public Schools, is thrilled about the collaboration. "We just opened the door for these children to have whole new opportunities and a future that may never have realized."

Aurora LIGHTS is engaging a range of partners with expertise and resources to help students achieve their goals. In addition to AHEC and Aurora Public Schools, these include the health professional schools at the new UCD Anschutz Medical Campus, the UCD undergraduate campus, the CCA, and the Metropolitan Community Provider Network (Aurora’s local community health network).

Through this grant, the Aurora LIGHTS program hopes to serve between 300 and 800 students over the course of the next three years. This will be a daunting task but the partners are ready, willing and able to accomplish the goals and to strive to make the Aurora LIGHTS shine bright.

Students Participate in Philanthropy in “EPYC” Proportions

The El Pomar Youth in Community Service Program (EPYCS) is a program started in 1991 by the El Pomar Foundation to introduce high school students to philanthropy and the important role they can play in it in their community. 144 high schools across the state participate in the program. Students at each high school must raise at least $500 which is then matched by the El Pomar Foundation in the amount of $7,500.00. Students spend the entire school year learning about philanthropy working in their community doing service learning projects and fundraising. Each school also identifies community priorities for funding. At the end of the school year, non-profit organizations from those communities and across the state apply to each school individually for up to $1,000 to support a project that aligns with the community’s priorities. The program builds leadership skills and engages students in their community.

This year, the EPYCS program at John Mall High School in Walsenburg, Colorado awarded $1,000 to the Southeastern Colorado Area Health Education Center (SECAHEC) to support the Summer Health Career Institute (SHCI) students.

The program builds leadership skills and engages students in their community.

The Summer Health Career Institute (SHCI) is a long program where students learn about health careers, do job shadowing, learn about the college application process, and participate in a number of fun hands-on learning activities to pique their interests in health careers.

The Summer Health Career Institute will be held in Denver, June 22-27. Ten students from Southeastern Colorado will participate, and approximately 70 will participate from around the state. The program is held annually. This year’s program is sponsored in part by The Colorado Trust, the Colorado AHEC Office and the Colorado Regional AHEC Centers.
New Patrick and Kathleen Thompson Endowed Chair in Rural Health at the University of Colorado Denver School of Medicine

Jack Westfall, MD, Director of the Colorado AHEC System, is the first incumbent of this new chair for rural health, after having served on the faculty of this institution for twelve years. Dr. Westfall is a graduate of Sterling College, the University of Kansas School of Medicine and Graduate School, and the Rose Family Medicine Residency Program, where he served as chief resident in 1994-1995. He completed a four-year Robert Wood Johnson Generalist Physician Faculty Scholar program in 2001. Dr. Westfall is an Associate Professor in the Department of Family Medicine; he has practiced at the Rose residency practice, the University of Colorado Hospital, and most recently, in Limon and Hugo, Colorado. He currently serves as the Director of the Colorado AHEC Program, the Associate Dean for Rural Health in the School of Medicine, and the founding Director of the High Plains Research Network, an innovative practice-based research network based in rural eastern Colorado. His numerous publications have appeared in journals ranging from JAMA to Indian Artifact Magazine. He has won well over $2M in research and training grants, and has built homes with Habitat for Humanity in Georgia and Kansas.

This generous gift will help insure that rural health remains a permanent priority for this school, and that our rural health programs permanently maintain their excellence.

From the Librarian’s Desk
by Clair Birkman, MLIS
Editor-in-Chief

We have added a number of new health information resources to our website. Please stop by and take a look: http://www2.uchsc.edu/ahec/library.asp

Dan Navarro Celebrates 20 Years

Last year I reached my 20th year with the University of Colorado Denver. In that time I have seen many changes: four chancellors, numerous deans, four AHEC directors, six regional directors, three different departments and various campus identities.

In 1997, I was in the Grants and Contracts department, one of the first departments to move to the former Fitzsimmons Army Medical Center (in fact, a number of the old buildings were still used by the military). There was quite a bit of wildlife on-campus in those days: deer, foxes, coyotes, raccoons and skunks were a familiar sight.

In 1999 I transferred to AHEC. A couple more moves brought us to the new Education building on the beautiful Anschutz Medical Campus, where we now reside under the direction of Dr. Jack Westfall.

I remember sitting on the Fitzsimmons master planning committee and hearing discussions of the move taking 50 years, then 25 years, ten years and finally 13 years. It doesn’t seem like a long time, but the change from Fitzsimmons Army Medical Center to University of Colorado Denver-Anschutz Medical Campus has been tremendous.

EAS Program Director Attends Service to Science Academy

Pamela Gillen, RN, ND, Director of the Colorado AHEC Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) Program and of the Colorado Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder and Prenatal Substance Abuse Prevention Outreach Project (COFAS-POP), was recently awarded the opportunity to attend the Service to Science Academy through the Southwest Centers for the Application of Prevention Technology (CAPT) http://captus.samhsa.gov/home.cfm.

The Academy is designed to enhance the capacity of states, sub-state recipients and community-based organizations to plan, design, implement and evaluate evidence-based prevention interventions. Each Academy is customized to support the needs of the participating groups/organizations, specifically toward the development of a strong evaluation and/or research design.

Incorporating information learned at the Service to Science Academy, Dr. Gillen plans to strengthen her current evaluation of training to health and human service providers in Colorado. In addition, COFAS-POP will further evaluate their training, to select practices that will allow for measurement of actual practice changes around screening and brief intervention of substance using/abusing clients, and screening for alcohol exposure of clients or patients.

For more information on the Service to Science Academy, contact the AHEC office in your region (http://www2.uchsc.edu/ahec/) or the COFAS-POP office at 888-724-3273.

Epilepsy Foundation of Colorado: A New Way of Doing Business

The Epilepsy Foundation of Colorado (ECFO) and AHEC have had a strong partnership for seven years to reach our rural Colorado communities with meaningful services that meet the needs of children, families and adults living with epilepsy.

This past year ECFO staff, directors of the regional AHEC offices and Dr. Jack Westfall shook up the traditional way of delivering epilepsy services to rural communities and redefined “upfront and personal.” Rather than use their AHEC grant to fund one staff member to deliver services statewide, ECFO will drive the funds back down to a grassroots level by funding part-time AHEC staff in Alamosa, Pueblo and Grand Junction. An existing part-time ECFO staff member will continue to deliver epilepsy services in Greeley. ECFO will supplement the existing AHEC grant of $69,500 with an additional $30,000 to assure a full continuum of services can be provided in each community.

What services can each of these communities expect? (1) Development of local support groups; (2) school nurse trainings; (3) first responder trainings; (4) employer education; (5) education and seizure first aid for students in the classroom and; (6) full summer camp scholarships for up to 25 youth with epilepsy from rural areas; (7) statewide toll-free information and resources (1-888-379-0081). Services will launch during September and October, 2008.
National AHEC Conference comes to Colorado

The 2008 National AHEC Meeting came to Denver this summer. From June 28 to July 1, 700 AHEC folks from all over the country came to learn, teach, study, listen, play and visit. The theme for the year was Moving Mountains to Overcome Health Disparities. We were inspired by plenary talks from: Dr. Charles Cranford, who shared with us his 50 years of public service; Dr. Lonnie Bristow, who challenged us to increase the diversity of our healthcare workforce; and Dr. Howard Rabinowitz who shared his successful strategy for increasing the supply and retention of rural physicians. Attendees learned about multidisciplinary clinical rotations for students, cultural competence, preventing heart disease in the community, service learning and community development from other AHEC leaders and workers.

The Colorado AHEC community was out in full swing. Over 40 of the Colorado AHEC staff, directors and board members attended this national event. Donning their Colorado AHEC blue denim work shirts, the Colorado AHEC folks helped out wherever possible; pointing visitors in the right direction, moving boxes, staffing exhibit tables and moderating workshops and breakout sessions. Sally Henry (Centennial) not only led a seminar on oral health in the eastern plains, but she served as the planning committee co-chair and helped organize the whole conference. Carol Giffin-Jeansonne (WCAHEC) led a workshop on purposeful feedback skills, Gloria Nussbaum (Central) led a session on motivating behavior change, and Kris Wenzel (Central) assisted with workshops on emergency preparedness and pipeline programs. The Colorado System Office staff helped pull it all together by assisting in the planning, local site coordination, registration, daily trouble shooting, and managing the IT throughout the conference. My special thanks to Dan Navarro, Beth Ingram, Scott Moore, Clair Birkman, and Clint Cresawn for really pitching in to make the Colorado AHEC conference the best ever.

This year’s conference focused on overcoming health disparities. The AHEC has a unique position in helping our nation face the crisis of health disparities. As educators, the AHEC is committed to teaching students, so it is no wonder that AHEC includes so many programs aimed at improving cultural competence, gaining skills necessary for healthcare education, and providing healthcare experiences for students from educationally disadvantaged backgrounds. These opportunities strike at the very root of health disparities and promise to have a long-term impact on the workforce and healthcare community for decades. And AHEC is also committed to educating the community. We heard it over and over from collaborative efforts that help provide oral health to rural elementary students, to innovative ways to address cardiovascular risk reduction, to the many successful and exciting ways to help with tobacco use cessation. The AHEC is an essential link between the communities, public health agencies and clinical medicine. This collaborative link helps build health equity, supports the disadvantaged, and is a major source of education and healthcare for diverse groups across the United States.

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The 2008 National AHEC conference was a great success. Colorado AHECs were an integral part of that success. It is a pleasure and an honor to work with this crew. Thanks to them all. Look up your AHEC and ask them how you can help overcome health disparities. The work is hard, the rewards are terrific.

Jack Westfall, MD, MPH
Colorado AHEC Director

Exhibit booths and poster sessions generated lively interest.

A new feature at Denver’s National AHEC conference was a raffle in support of a local non-profit. A stained glass art work of the Colorado State Flower, the Columbine, was won by Dwyan Monroe, Director of the New Jersey Community Health Worker Institute. Raffle proceeds were contributed to the Colorado Coalition for the Medically Underserved (CCMU) to support rural attendees at their September conference. CCMU’s Community Leader award will be presented to Diane Miller of the Northwest Colorado Visiting Nurses Association in Steamboat Springs and the funds will allow her colleagues to be there to honor her. Congratulations to Diane and thank you to all AHEC contributors!
Nurse Educator Conference in the Rockies

The 19th Annual Nurse Educator Conference in the Rockies (NEC), sponsored by Centennial AHEC (CAHEC), was held at Beaver Run Resort in Breckenridge, July 17th–19th. The conference provides a forum for nurse educators to learn the latest information and innovative strategies to implement individually and programmatically to meet the challenges of nursing education today and in the future.

A distinguished panel of nationally recognized experts assembled again this year to present topics relevant and important to faculty from all types of programs and settings in nursing education. Themes included evidence-based teaching/learning techniques, mentoring and faculty retention, simulation and interactive technology, curriculum development, faculty role challenges, and capacity-building approaches for the future. The diverse program included three innovative and resourceful pre-session workshops, three inspiring keynote addresses, compelling networking opportunities, an impromptu show-of-hands by Saturday’s attendees, one third had been once previously, and one third had attended the conference multiple times.

Twenty years ago, Dianne Stille, CAHEC Director of Education, identified a need for a conference for Colorado’s nurse educators. Because of her passionate effort, energy, and leadership, her vision quickly became a reality and has grown NEC into the national conference it is today. On the last morning of the conference, Dianne was honored for her accomplishment of developing the conference to the national stature for which it is now recognized. Dianne retired the end of July following 20 years of service to AHEC. Sally, Donna, Anna, Jim, Carol, Jean, Gerry and Emily Jo wish her a very Happy Retirement and hope she’ll be our special guest in 2009!

Central AHEC Plans K-20 Educational Programs

We are excited about all the upcoming events we have planned in our K-20 programs:

This semester, we will be conducting a variety of activities in Colorado Springs, in collaboration with School District 11. One of these is to pilot "The Great Hospital Adventure" in two preschools. This is a fun program that uses a puppet show and characters to reduce the fears that young kids might experience with an accident and when in a hospital setting. It provides great teaching moments for the students about the difference between healthy and non-healthy choices when playing.

We are working with the Aurora Public School District (APS) in a special Health Science Collaboration. This program is focused on increasing the number of competitive candidates for graduate health care professional college entry of underrepresented and disadvantaged students. This program is being led by Jack Westfall, Director of the Colorado AHEC system, and works with target APS elementary, middle and high schools as well. Our Community Provider Network, Community College of Aurora, University of Colorado Denver, and the Anschutz Medical Center, and Central Colorado AHEC.

For our high schools, we will visit a variety of schools and introduce programs that not only teach healthy living, but also inform and assist those students in making decisions about future careers in the health field. These kids are amazing to work with because they are so eager to learn and understand what is available to help get them on the right pathway.

Another really successful yearly event that we participate in is the Mini-Med School. This is a program of sessions free to anyone and everyone, and will take place here on the Anschutz Medical Campus. In addition, people around the state will be able to participate because the lectures will be broadcast live from The Denver Museum of Nature & Science to multiple locations across Colorado. The sessions include a variety of topics from Anatomy and Physiology to Immunology and Pathology. This eight-week program will be held every Wednesday evening at 7:00 from September 17 to November 12, 2008. For more information about participating, either here on campus or at a different site around the state, go to http://www.uccs.edu/minimed/. It’s going to be a great learning experience for everyone and we are looking forward to a successful event.

On October 24-25 the Colorado Convention Center will hold the first STEM-a-palooza. “Stema what?” you say? Well, STEM-a-palooza is a two-day extravaganza to showcase Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) initiatives in Colorado. The goal is to bring industry, educational institutions and organizations together in a place where they can network, develop awareness of opportunities, build partnerships, and discuss initiatives being done in STEM education. We are inviting the senior and junior division winners from the 2008 Denver Metro Science and Engineering Fair to showcase their winning posters to this audience. This is a wonderful forum for these students to build relationships, encourage them in their math and science achievements, and

Screening and Brief Intervention Training for Healthcare Providers

Central Colorado AHEC, in collaboration with Peer Assistance Services, Inc., announces a new educational series: What Healthcare Professionals Need to Know About Screening and Brief Intervention. This will include discussions regarding the efficacy of screening for non-dependant and dependent substance abuse as a standard practice. Learn about current implementation strategies in all types of healthcare settings. Hear the most up-to-date specific data regarding prescription drug abuse, and implications for nursing and all healthcare professional practice.

This train-the-trainer series will include both didactic and hands-on program content. Role play with an established screening tool, brief conversation and brief intervention will be facilitated. Join us to enhance your learning and comfort with the SBIRT and Motivational Interviewing techniques.

This three-part series is planned for November 2008, February 2009, May 2009 (time and location to be determined). Call Kris Wenzel at 303-724-0335 to be included. February 2009, May 2009 (time and location to be determined). Call Kris Wenzel at 303-724-0335 to be included. Call Kris Wenzel at 303-724-0335 to be included. Call Kris Wenzel at 303-724-0335 to be included.

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Events and Activities in the Western Region

My name is Alexandra (Alex) Sherwood, and I am the new Education Coordinator/Program Manager of the Western Colorado Area Health Education Center (WCAHEC). I am pleased and excited to be working with the WCAHEC and its wonderful staff. My first experience with the WCAHEC was attending the National AHEC Organization (NAO) 2008 Conference in Denver this past July. It was a perfect introduction to the AHEC System, its people and ideas. By the time it was over I was ready to go back to Grand Junction and dig in! I am awed by the activity of the WCAHEC right now, including:

On July 17 & 18, the WCAHEC hosted a two-day training for nurses on Acute Care Skills, featuring nationally-known speaker Laura Gasparis Von Frolio, PhD. The presentation was a success, with Dr. Von Frolio receiving rave reviews from the participants. A Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) training class began in Grand Junction at Hilltop on August 11. The nine class participants will fill an important niche in the Grand Junction community.

On August 12, at the Caring for Minds and Bodies class, WCAHEC sponsored the keynote address, Caring for Minds and Bodies: Research and Practice, presented by Joseph Hovey, PhD, Professor and Chair, Department of Psychology, University of Toledo. Dr. Hovey spoke about health disparities nationally and in Colorado, identified risk and protective factors in minority health and co-morbidity in mental and physical health, and identified intervention strategies for reducing health disparities.

WCAHEC has also been involved in several pipeline projects this quarter. We sent 11 students to the Summer Health Career Institute (SHCI) in 2008. We hope to have two SHCI sessions in 2009, and be able to send 20 high school students from the western slope. To that end, we have been meeting with area school counselors to brainstorm ways to keep students interested in health careers.

Discussions are also underway between WCAHEC staff and Dr. Kristy Reuss, Professor of Nursing at Mesa State College regarding middle school summer programs and the Mesa Academy of Summer Health (MASH) program. The MASH program has been successful at the middle school level, and we hope to expand it to include high school students.

The CU Mini-Medical School (http://www.uwchsc.edu/minimed/) is currently being held via Webcast. Students who applied to the SHCI were given scholarships to the class, and several are attending. In all we have 57 participants. WCAHEC’s collaborative projects for this summer have included continued work with the Health-e-Solutions Cardio Kiosks projects as they continue in Glenwood Springs, Montrose and Grand Junction. They will soon be expanding as the second phase of the project begins in Montezuma County. We will be working with public health agencies to follow up with individuals identified as having moderate to high risk for heart disease.

All these events and activities provide an important service to health care providers and consumers here in Western Colorado. I’m proud to be a part of this effort.

Students register for CU Mini Med School.

A Busy Quarter in San Luis Valley

The San Luis Valley Area Health Education Center (SLVAHEC) has been abuzz with much activity, continuing with projects which began at the start of the 2008 fiscal year, and getting ready for exciting projects which will begin in the very near future.

The “Grow Your Own” Summer Health Careers Institute has successfully completed with the twenty enrolled high school students. They had a busy two weeks of academic at Adams State College in Alamosa, and at Colorado Christian University in Denver. They also participated in a 20-hour summer job in a health care institution in their home towns.

Now the “Grow Your Own” program moves into phase two: Student Health Career Guild. The SLVAHEC will work with the “Grow Your Own” students during the academic year, as well as with the students’ parents. The Guild will focus on supporting, guiding and empowering the students toward success in their current school year academics.

The SLVAHEC is also preparing to begin with the exciting project “Heart Healthy Solutions.” To that end, we have hired Rodney Sandoval from Manassa, Colorado as a Community Health Worker. Mr. Sandoval has worked as a Senior Professional Research Assistant for more than 24 years through the University of Colorado Denver Health Sciences Center/Search For Diabetes in Youth, Rocky Mountain Prevention Research Center and San Luis Valley Diabetes Study. Mr. Sandoval begins his employment with the SLVAHEC on September 15, and we are excited to have him on board.

The SLVAHEC has also hired, on a part-time basis, Dr. Gina Mollet, Assistant Professor of Psychology at Adams State College in Alamosa, Colorado, as a Rural Outreach Coordinator for Epilepsy. Dr. Mollet has authored and co-authored numerous published abstracts, presented numerous posters and participated in various oral presentations. She has a strong interest in the illness of epilepsy and brings to this position a wealth of academic resources. The SLVAHEC is excited to also have Dr. Mollet on board.

San Luis Valley Area Health Education Center
Friday Health Academy Offers New Opportunities for “At-Risk” Students

The Southeastern Colorado Area Health Education Center (SECAHEC) wrapped up its third and final year of the Friday Health Academy Program in Walsenburg, Colorado. The program funded by The Colorado Trust Health Professions Initiative trained 60 students over its three-year run. The program components include life and job skills, entry level health professional training and paid student internships. In the first semester, students learn how to communicate with each other and how to resolve conflicts in a constructive manner. Students also learn medical vocabulary, train in CPR and first aid, explore diversity, review HIPAA, and research various health careers. Following the first semester, students enter into entry level health career training. This component allows students to delve deeper into health careers exploration while learning some important job skills. Three entry level health professional programs are offered and students must participate and complete at least two of the three trainings offered, including nurse aid training, first responder training, and community health worker training. Through these opportunities students explore nursing, hospital care, nursing home care, community health, public health, and emergency medical services. Upon completion of these programs, students are encouraged to sit for the state certification exams to become certified nurses’ aids (CNAs) or First Responders. Students also participate in service-learning by participating in local health fairs and the community health worker students also do community teach-backs on the topics that they have learned. To round out the program, students are eligible to participate in a paid internship for six to eight weeks with local employers. The purpose of these internships is to provide on-the-job training and increased exposure to the health professional arena. This portion of the program is optional for students, but often provides an entrée for them into further professional arena. This portion of the program is optional for students, but often provides an entrée for them into further professional arena. This portion of the program is optional for students, but often provides an entrée for them into further professional arena.

Health Academy Continues into Fourth Year

In 2004, the Colorado Trust funded Southeastern Colorado Area Health Education Center (SECAHEC) to develop a Health Academy for high school students in Huerfano County, Colorado. SECAHEC built a program comprised of three major components.

First, students learned life skills and job skills, as well as about health career opportunities. During this component, students worked on team-building skills, communication, conflict resolution, medical terminology, personal health and hygiene, HIPAA, CPR and first aid. In addition, guest speakers from the local hospital, clinic and public health agencies and medical students presented information about their chosen healthcare field.

During the second component of the program, students completed entry level health careers training as nurse aids, community health workers, and first responders. Most of the students completed training in at least two of the three areas and several others completed the training for all three programs. The purpose of this component was threefold: 1) to build an entry level workforce to address shortages in the community; 2) to give these students a work skill that they could use to find employment; and 3) to enhance the students’ understanding of the health careers available to them.

For the third component, students participated in paid internships at agencies such as the local hospital, clinic and EMS agency. This internship provided work experience for the students’ resumes, and helped orient them to the organizations as well. Upon completion of the program, students received credit from their school that counted toward their graduation. In addition, students who completed the program in Walsenburg were eligible for a scholarship of $500-$1000 upon admission to a community college or university to continue pursuing their healthcare career. The Health Academy was funded for three years by the Colorado Trust. In year three the program was expanded to the high school in Bent County, Colorado. In-kind support from the school districts included classroom space and bus transportation for field trips. SECAHEC’s grant funded the teacher, supplies, contractors to teach the entry level programs, field trip support, scholarships and paid internships. Almost 60 students participated in the program with 38 students completing the program fully for credit. Several other students completed portions of the program including entry level skill training in at least one field. While these students did not receive science credit for completing the program, they were allowed to participate in the program.

The exciting outcome of this program is a renewed interest in the school district to implement additional vocational training for students. For the 2008-2009 school year, the Huerfano school district has incorporated the Health Academy fully into the regular school schedule. Twenty-eight students are enrolled in this year’s class and the school district is seeking additional grant dollars and “CTE” credits for the program which will insure its sustainability well into the future.

What about the students that participated? One student is enrolled at the University of Colorado with the dream of becoming a pediatric oncologist and researcher. One student is in her second year of nursing school at Trinidad State Junior College. Several are working as CNAs at the Spanish Peaks Regional Medical Center, the Walsenburg Care center and the Spanish Peaks Women’s Clinic. Three are employed as community health workers in the community. Several also continued on with their training in emergency medicine and are currently pursuing their paramedic training. SECAHEC extends its congratulations to each of these amazing students.