

ADDRESSING THE
HEALTHCARE WORKFORCE
NEEDS IN SOUTH DAKOTA
THROUGH A PARTNERSHIP
BETWEEN THE
DEPARTMENTS OF
EDUCATION, LABOR &
REGULATION, HEALTH AND
THE BOARD OF REGENTS

Healthcare Workforce Update

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HEALTHCARE WORKFORCE COLLABORATIVE

Greetings from the South Dakota Office of Rural Health. This office along with our many partners continues to work at addressing South Dakota's healthcare workforce needs. Read on to see what's noteworthy over the past few months as well as upcoming! As always, we welcome your feedback regarding these and other workforce development issues.



MEDICAL LEADERSHIP IN DISASTER PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE VIRTUAL CONFERENCE | FEBRUARY 7-8, 2024

CONTRIBUTED BY OFFICE OF RURAL HEALTH

Are you currently responsible for the medical direction of a healthcare entity in the event of a disaster? Are you interested in serving in that role in the future? The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Strategic Preparedness and Response (ASPR) [**Technical Resources, Assistance Center, and Information Exchange**](#) (TRACIE) is pleased to host the Medical Leadership in Disaster Preparedness and Response Virtual Conference on February 7-8, 2024. This two half-day virtual, interactive conference will feature individuals who have a medical direction role during disasters for their health care facility, public health department, emergency medical services agency, health care coalition, or other entity discussing the spectrum of their medical leadership responsibilities and some of the specific challenges of the role.

We encourage participants to attend the entire virtual conference, but you **MUST** register for each day you would like to attend.

Day One (February 7, 2024, 12:30-5:00 PM ET) of the virtual conference will set the stage with panels focusing on:

- Providing a framework for disaster medicine leadership
- How we can measure our effectiveness
- The intersection of clinical care and emergency management
- Preparing future leaders for the role

Day Two (February 8, 2024, 12:30-5:00 PM ET) will focus on specific topics of interest to the community, including:

- Medical Operations Coordination Centers
- Crisis Standards of Care
- Disaster medicine in rural areas
- Equitable disaster planning and access to care
- The role of public/private partnerships

For additional details and to register for the virtual conference, please visit [ASPR TRACIE's Conference Information Page](#). Attendance will be limited; register early.

SD AHEC SCHOLARS: RURAL HEALTH LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

CONTRIBUTED BY NORTHEAST SD AHEC &
SOUTHEAST SD AHEC



The eastern South Dakota Area Health Education Center (AHEC) Scholars: Rural Health Leadership Program, a national honors initiative, is now accepting applications from health profession students eager to expand their expertise in delivering care to rural and underserved communities. The program, jointly administered by Northeast SD AHEC and Southeast SD AHEC, fosters an interdisciplinary team-based approach to address health disparities.

This program focuses on preparing students with skills in 9 core topic areas within professional development, public health, and patient care to be transformational leaders in their field and communities.



Professional Development

- (1) Interprofessional Education
- (2) Leadership
- (3) Practice Transformation

Public Health

- (4) Community Integration & Resources
- (5) Cultural Humility
- (6) Social Determinants of Health

Patient Care

- (7) Behavioral Health Integration & Resiliency
- (8) Current & Emerging Health Issues
- (9) Telehealth & Virtual Learning



Throughout the program, students will engage in enriching workshops and hands-on experiences, forging valuable connections with healthcare professionals of South Dakota. We invite you to join us in our collective effort to confront healthcare disparities and emerge as a leader in the realm of rural health. Take advantage of this unique opportunity to build networks, gain insights, and contribute to the transformation of healthcare.

For more information, visit

www.nesdahec.org/scholars or contact either **Mikayla Titus** (m.titus@nesdahec.org) or **Hanna Siems** (hanna.siems@yrahc.org).

SDAHO BEGINS WORK ON RURAL NETWORK DEVELOPMENT WORKFORCE GRANT

CONTRIBUTED BY SOUTH DAKOTA ASSOCIATION OF HEALTHCARE ORGANIZATIONS (SDAHO)

The South Dakota Association of Healthcare Organizations (SDAHO) is excited to welcome Lindsay Stroman, Workforce Development Coordinator for the association. Earlier this year SDAHO was awarded the Rural Network Development Grant through the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), which is an agency of the United States Department of Health and Human Services.

The mission of the project is to create a network of healthcare organizations and community partners called the South Dakota Rural Workforce Network (SDRWN) focusing on workforce recruitment and retention. The network is developing an all-inclusive pipeline of healthcare essential workers, such as dietary, environmental services, nursing assistants, home health aides, and more.

Stroman began her position this past October and is excited about the program and the opportunities this will create for future workforce needs. "I am excited to be part of the SDAHO team, but even more excited to be part of a solution as we focus on workforce needs across the state. This program will provide real solutions to our rural healthcare facilities and communities." Lindsay Stroman, Workforce Development Coordinator, SDAHO

SDAHO's Network Development team is partnering with a consultant to facilitate a strategic planning session with Network members. This will allow all Network members to get together in one space and brainstorm ideas and develop a detailed action plan moving forward. "We have a short-term goal, which includes facilitating strategic planning sessions that will begin in January of 2024 and will include all Network members. At those meetings, we will discuss and begin implementing an action plan for our grant work. However, the long-term goal is to develop a system that can be replicated statewide and used by any healthcare facility for years to come." Lindsay Stroman

The project is targeting rural ethnic and racial minorities, refugees, second career adults and high school students to fill the healthcare essential roles. The impact will include a stable pipeline of essential healthcare workers to serve the rural healthcare facilities throughout rural South Dakota. In addition, it will help improve economic stability in those communities where new essential healthcare workers reside.

In November of 2023 Stroman was able to visit with several Network members, which included:

- Mobridge, SD – Critical Access Hospital
- Hot Springs, SD- Critical Access Hospital
- University of South Dakota: Network Partner
- Lutheran Social Services: Network Partner
- Mitchell Technical Institute: Network Partner

Meetings so far have included conversations on recruitment and retention strategies, in addition to new ideas such as an after-school program for grades 3-12th. "The idea of an after-school program is so that students can explore healthcare careers with hands-on activities. The goal is to provide opportunities where students are exposed to healthcare careers at a young age, with hopes they will be interested in joining the healthcare workforce starting in their high school years." Lindsay Stroman



SDAHO BEGINS WORK ON RURAL NETWORK DEVELOPMENT WORKFORCE GRANT - CONTINUED

Additional key partners include the University of South Dakota and Mitchell Technical College. Stroman says both are looking to potentially develop internships, apprenticeships, career exploring classes and student support services for refugee and minority students. Lutheran Social Services (LSS) already has programs in place to assist refugees with learning to read, write, and develop their professional skills in English. "At LSS they even have a class that is dedicated towards healthcare career readiness and begins to prepare students for what they may experience in the healthcare field. These healthcare classes encourage students to consider careers such as a nursing aid or certified nursing assistant. I am excited to be working with all our partners." Lindsay Stroman

To learn more about SDAHO's Workforce Development Program, visit Lindsay Stroman, Workforce Development Coordinator with SDAHO: Lindsay.Stroman@sdaho.org

SDSU PHARMACY PROGRAM EXPANDING TO ADD SECOND POST-GRADUATE RESIDENCY WITH LEWIS DRUG

CONTRIBUTED BY SOUTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY | CONTACT: JACOB FORD, 605-670-9658

South Dakota State University's College of Pharmacy and Allied Health Professions will expand its community-based pharmacy residency program from one to two residencies beginning in 2024. Since 2012, SDSU has offered one residency as part of its joint residency program with Lewis Drug. In response to growth, strong partnerships, and workforce needs, the program will add a second residency starting in the summer of 2024.

The Post-Graduate Year 1 Community-Based Residency Program is an opportunity for Doctor of Pharmacy graduates to continue their education and gain experience in a professional setting as licensed pharmacists.

Residents are placed in a Lewis pharmacy in Sioux Falls where they participate in educational opportunities and experiences allowing the resident to gain expertise as a pharmacy practitioner in the community pharmacy setting. The residency begins the summer following the student's graduation and lasts one year.

While gaining valuable hands-on experience, residents learn across four key competencies over the course of their residency, including patient care; leadership and management; advancement of community-based practice and improving patient care; and teaching, education, and dissemination of knowledge.

Jessica Strobl, vice president of professional services at Lewis Drug, said the residency program "offers a variety of experiences allowing for a diverse list of careers that our graduates can pursue. Some of our past residents are professors in colleges of pharmacy, many are clinical pharmacists, and others are community pharmacy managers." [Learn more](#)

USD FACULTY ADMINISTER PROJECT ADDRESSING ACCESS TO CARE FOR YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES

CONTRIBUTED BY USD SCHOOL OF HEALTH SCIENCES

A team of faculty at the University of South Dakota School of Health Sciences has received \$1,247,291 from the Department of Education to address South Dakota's early childhood intervention needs and train personnel to serve infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families.

The project, "Program for Advancing Childhood Early Intervention (PACE) Scholars Program: Developing an Early Intervention, Related Services Workforce," will implement a targeted training program to prepare 37 PACE scholars over the course of the five-year grant period. The scholars program collaborates with USD's Center for Disabilities Leadership in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disorders (LEND) traineeship program and draws support from the Center's LEND framework. The state contracts with 80-90 private entities to provide services throughout South Dakota's 66 counties. Over 70% of these providers are in the most highly populated counties, which creates a disproportionate number of providers in the remaining geographic areas of the state, including tribal reservations.

"The PACE Scholars Program will bolster South Dakota workforce development efforts through its financial support of occupational, physical, and speech therapy students, as well as student audiologists," explained the scholarship's Program Director, Patti Berg-Poppe, Ph.D., MPT. "PACE Scholars will enter early childhood intervention positions ready to practice and prepared to provide family-centered care for infants and toddlers with disabilities and high-intensity needs."

USD will partner in the program with the South Dakota Department of Education (DOE) Birth to Three (B-3) program, South Dakota Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) Clinic, USD's Center for Disabilities B-3 Part C program, and the South Dakota Deaf-Blind Program to serve this population of infants and toddlers receiving early intervention.



AVERA FINANCIAL SPONSORSHIPS FOR CRITICAL WORKFORCE NEEDS

CONTRIBUTED BY AVERA HEALTH

Avera is a proud industry sponsor of the Build Dakota Scholarship. Build Dakota is the South Dakota opportunity for students to enter healthcare programs in our technical colleges and finish school debt-free. The Build Dakota Scholarship's eligible programs and Avera's sponsorship includes: Respiratory Therapy, Medical Laboratory Technician, Licensed Practical Nursing, Registered Nursing, Surgical Technician, and Radiology Technician.

Scholarship Details & Student Commitment

If you receive a Build Dakota Scholarship with an Avera sponsorship, you're one step closer to a successful future. And you'll be able to get there faster and debt-free, as the scholarship will support tuition, fees, books and other required program expenses in the eligible technical college programs. Accepting the scholarship means you agree to:

1. Enroll full-time in one of the healthcare programs listed above at a South Dakota technical college.
2. Following graduation, work full-time in your field of study for a minimum of three years at an Avera location in South Dakota.

If you or someone you know is interested in the Build Dakota Scholarship program and Avera's sponsorship possibilities, request a career consultation from the Career Planning Service at [averajobs.org](https://www.averajobs.org).



2024 Rural Hospital

Virtual Performance Improvement Conferences

Save the Dates

Join us for the second annual **Hospital Performance Improvement Virtual Conferences** specifically for rural hospitals and clinics. The two regional, three-hour sessions will be hosted by Wintergreen and will highlight via hospital and clinic case studies:

- Rural Hospital Strategic and Operational Priorities
- Innovations and New Opportunities to Generate Revenue
- Recruitment and Retention Strategies
- Rural Health Clinic Best Practices and Future Direction

NOSORH Regions D and E



NOSORH Regions A, B and C



Regions A, B and C: Wednesday, January 31st at 11:00 AM Eastern

[REGISTER](#)

Regions D and E: Thursday, February 1st at 10:00 AM Pacific

[REGISTER](#)



INSPIRING TOMORROW'S EMTS AND PARAMEDICS: MEDX PARTICIPANTS EXPLORE CAREERS AT SANFORD'S CENTER FOR PRE-HOSPITAL CARE AND SIMULATION

CONTRIBUTED BY SANFORD HEALTH

The Sioux Falls MedX program is fostering a passion for life-saving skills while exploring careers in health care. In mid-December, 20 high school juniors and seniors immersed themselves in the world of pre-hospital care for an evening at the Sanford Center for Pre-hospital Care and Simulation.

Led by Travis Spier, Ryan Sittig, Robert Bass, and Travis Postma, the participants delved into the realm of emergency response and embraced the challenges that real-life scenarios pose. The simulation center provided an unparalleled setting to safely offer hands-on practice for airway management, vascular access, patient assessment, and suturing.

Beyond providing hands-on experiences, the teaching team also shared their own journey into pre-hospital care and what characteristics are important when helping people in stressful and traumatic situations. Our aspiring EMTs and paramedics learned the importance of navigating high-pressure situations with a blend of composure and compassion. They emerged with a deeper appreciation for the pivotal role emergency responders play in our communities.



Students can take the first step toward pre-hospital care while still in high school. EMT courses are offered in partnership with the South Dakota HOSA and several school districts throughout the state. High school seniors can attend hybrid courses during the fall or spring semester. Students attend hands-on lab activities one Saturday per month and achieve eligibility to take the National Registry EMT exam. Students successfully achieving NREMT EMT certification are eligible for college credit at multiple college and university campuses.

To learn more, visit

<https://www.sanfordemseducation.org/>

or contact **Travis Spier**, Director of Simulation, at

Travis.Spier@sanfordhealth.org.



SDSU RESPIRATORY THERAPY INSTRUCTOR HONORED

CONTRIBUTED BY SOUTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY | CONTACT: JACOB FORD, 605-670-9658

Citing her dedication and commitment to patients, respiratory therapist Abby Wortman has been honored with a national award by the FACES Foundation.

Wortman, of Rapid City, holds dual roles as an instructor in the respiratory care program at South Dakota State University and a respiratory therapist at Monument Health in Rapid City. After receiving multiple nominations on Wortman's behalf, Angie Haugen, director of respiratory care at Monument, presented Wortman with the PHIL Award at a departmental meeting in late October during respiratory care week. Wortman has been a respiratory therapist since 2009, which is also when she joined Monument. She added her instructional duties to SDSU's Department of Allied and Population Health in 2017.

Haugen told the gathering of some 45 other respiratory therapists that the award recipient stabilizes critically ill patients, "responding to requests for care and always being professional and kind. ... Every interaction is met with genuine concern for the patient. Patients appreciated her calm and kind demeanor and her infectious smile."

Wortman, who didn't know she was receiving the award before the presentation, said, "It's important to see the people you're caring for as an individual, not just a patient or a room number. I work primarily in ICU, so often the patient isn't able to communicate, but family members are. I try to think, if that was me or my family, what would they want to know." [Read the full story.](#)

SDSU'S SEEFELDT NAMED S.D. PHARMACIST OF THE YEAR

CONTRIBUTED BY SOUTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY | CONTACT: JACOB FORD, 605-670-9658

Teresa Seefeldt, an administrator at South Dakota State University, has been named South Dakota Pharmacist of the Year.

The Hustead Award is presented annually at the South Dakota Pharmacists Association convention, which this year was held on Sept. 16 in Deadwood, SD.

Since Jan. 10, 2022, Seefeldt has been vice provost for undergraduate education at SDSU. She still holds the rank of associate professor in the College of Pharmacy and Allied Health Professions. She began teaching in the college in January 2005, eight months after earning her Doctor of Pharmacy degree from State.

The next year, 2006, she was named teacher of the year in the college. She was so honored again in 2020 and 2021. Also in 2021, she was named Van. D. and Barbara B. Fishback Honors College Teacher of the Year. Seefeldt's nominator for the Hustead Award, Jessica Strobl, wrote, "Since Teresa obtained her Doctorate of Pharmacy from South Dakota State in 2004, she has consistently been on the move to elevate herself professionally, and in the meantime she has elevated the profession of pharmacy in ways that few others in the state have ever done."

According to the SD Pharmacists Association, The Hustead Award winner should demonstrate the dedication, resourcefulness, service and caring that has made pharmacy one of the most respected professions in the country. Strobl wrote, "I am confident that Dr. Teresa Seefeldt embodies this fully."

[Read the full story.](#)

JOIN 3RNET'S JANUARY EMPLOYER WEBSITE TRAINING

CONTRIBUTED BY OFFICE OF RURAL HEALTH



January Employer Website Training

We'll cover some easy ways for you to get the most out of 3RNET! Plus, you'll have a chance to get your 3RNET questions answered!

Tuesday, January 9
1:00 PM Central

REGISTER NOW

Helpful 3RNET links:

[3RNET PLUS TOOLS](#)

[SUBSCRIBE TO EMPLOER EMAILS FROM 3RNET HERE.](#)

[3RNET NETWORK COORDINATORS](#)

JOIN 3RNET'S MARCH EMPLOYER WEBSITE TRAINING

CONTRIBUTED BY OFFICE OF RURAL HEALTH



March Employer Website Training

We'll cover some easy ways for you to get the most out of 3RNET! Plus, you'll have a chance to get your 3RNET questions answered!

Save the Date
Tuesday, March 12
1:00 PM Central

Contact [DeAnn Sprenger](#) at for registration details.

OUTREACH JOURNEY TO STRENGTHEN CONNECTIONS WITH HEALTHCARE FACILITIES

CONTRIBUTED BY OFFICE OF RURAL HEALTH

The South Dakota Department of Health, Office of Rural Health staff is hitting the road to connect with Critical Access Hospitals, Rural Health Clinics, and other healthcare facilities by visiting with staff for each of the locations. The goal of these visits is to build relationships, learn the facilities needs and to share Office of Rural Health resources. Healthcare facilities can expect to be contacted from an Office of Rural Health staff in the coming months. If a facility wants to be at the top of the list to visit with this office, you can make a request by contacting the Office of Rural Health at Josie.Petersen@state.sd.us.

INSIGHTS AND COLLABORATIONS AT THE 4TH ANNUAL RURAL HEALTH EQUITY SUMMIT IN RAPID CITY

CONTRIBUTED BY WEST RIVER AREA HEALTH EDUCATION CENTER



The West River Area Health Education Center (WRAHEC) hosted its 4th annual Rural Health Equity Summit (RHES) September 27-28 in Rapid City. The largely rural nature of South Dakota contributes to complex challenges in bringing high-quality, timely, and equitable healthcare to the state’s residents. The purpose of the RHES is to highlight ways that various organizations are addressing these challenges, spur conversation and ideas, and facilitate partnerships that can make an impact on the health of all South Dakotans.

This year, the RHES brought together three state agencies (Department of Health, Department of Labor, and Department of Social Services), as well as the state’s three largest healthcare systems (Avera, Sanford, and Monument Health).



Leaders from the University of South Dakota, South Dakota State University, and Black Hills State University highlighted healthcare workforce development programs and unique partnerships. Representatives from USD and Sanford Health spoke about their respective, recently awarded U.S. Department of Labor nursing expansion grants, and private medical providers and non-profit agencies contributed their expertise in other sessions.

This wide array of participants highlighted how SD healthcare stakeholders are working together to address maternal health, mental health, human trafficking, rural emergency responsiveness, and more. The RHES wrapped up with Dr. Tim Cunningham’s presentation, “Keeping Well: Being Relevant in the Here and Now,” about accomplishing well-being in the workplace.



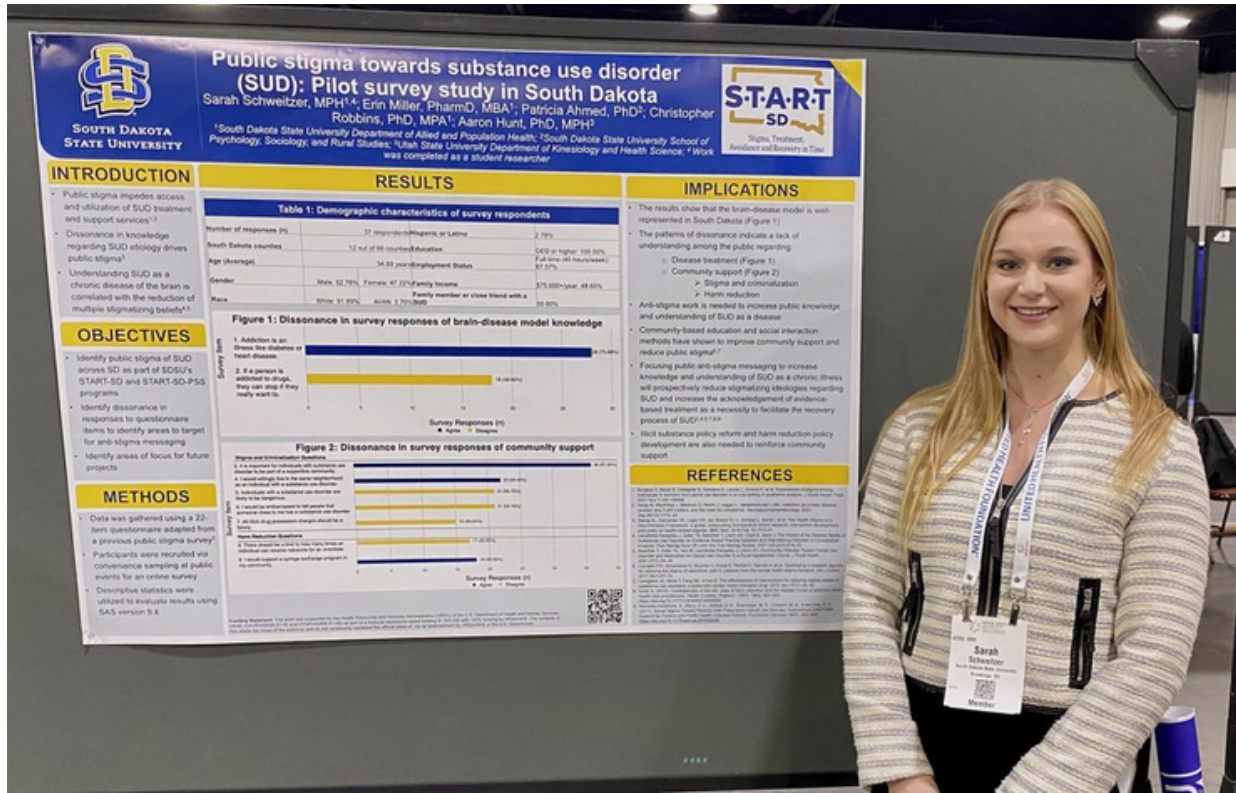
Watch for information about next year’s Rural Health Equity Summit, which will be held in Rapid City sometime in fall 2024.

For comments or questions about the RHES, contact WRAHEC at westriversdahec@gmail.com.



SDSU GRADS PRESENT SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER RESEARCH AT APHA ANNUAL MEETING

CONTRIBUTED BY SOUTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY | CONTACT: JACOB FORD, 605-670-9658



Two graduates of the Master of Public Health program at South Dakota State University recently presented research posters at the American Public Health Association 2023 Annual Meeting and Expo.

Sarah Schweitzer and Cedric Cogdill, 2023 graduates of the program, presented on research related to stigma surrounding substance use disorder, utilizing survey data.

Schweitzer's poster focused on dissonances in the responses on her survey related to public attitudes toward substance use disorder. For example, one question on the survey reported, "It is important for individuals with a substance use disorder to be part of a supportive community." Some 97.3% of respondents agreed with that statement. At the same time, however, other similar survey items had different responses, such as "I would willingly live in the same neighborhood as an individual with a substance use disorder" which only 59.46% of respondents agreed with.

Cogdill's poster focused on how social determinants of health and other factors are associated with experiencing stigma for individuals experiencing a substance use disorder. Survey results indicated that most survey participants experienced all three types of stigma: discrimination, alienation, and perceived devaluation. For survey respondents, factors significantly associated with experiencing more stigma included female gender, unemployment, or having an annual family income of less than \$51,000.

The work they presented was completed through START-SD, a program to increase access to and effectiveness of prevention, treatment, and recovery services for substance use disorders in South Dakota.

[Read the full story](#)

SDSU TO LEAD AIM-AHEAD PROJECT

CONTRIBUTED BY SDSU COLLEGE OF NURSING

South Dakota State University has been selected to lead a research project on the National Institutes of Health-funded Artificial Intelligence/Machine Learning Consortium to Advance Health Equity and Researcher Diversity (AIM-AHEAD) program titled "Developing Explainable Machine Learning and Computational Methods for Identifying Geographic and Racial Disparities in End-Stage Renal Disease."

Semhar Michael, associate professor of statistics in SDSU's Jerome J. Lohr College of Engineering is principal investigator with co-principal investigators Hossein Moradi Rekabdarkolae, assistant professor in the Lohr College of Engineering, and Brandon Varilek, assistant professor in SDSU's College of Nursing. "This project will develop computational and machine learning models to assess racial and geographic disparities in end-stage renal disease among Native American and Hispanic populations in South Dakota to develop a predictive tool," Michael said.

This two-year, \$1,091,316 project will identify factors influencing the risk of mortality for these populations. SDSU is collaborating with faculty from Dakota State University, Auburn University, and healthcare partners from Avera Medical Group Nephrology, Great Plains Tribal Leaders' Health Board, and Sanford Health. Native Americans and Hispanics are more likely to die from end-stage renal disease than other population groups, according to the United States Renal Data System. Varilek shared that "the predictive tool will provide clinicians with individualized, evidence-based care recommendations to mitigate individual social determinants to reduce mortality."

The AIM-AHEAD Program is supported by the NIH Agreement No. 1OT2OD032581, which is coordinated by the University of North Texas Health Science Center at Fort Worth. The views and conclusions contained in this article are those of the authors and should not be interpreted as representing the official policies, either expressed or implied, of the NIH.

INNOVATIVE VIRTUAL JOB FAIRS CONNECT BUSINESSES AND JOB SEEKERS/STUDENTS

CONTRIBUTED BY SD DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND REGULATION

The Department of Labor and Regulation's virtual job fairs provide a platform for employers and job seekers to connect online from wherever they are. If your business is interested in participating in or hosting a job fair, email Nathan.schlimgen@state.sd.us for more information.

Our Career Ready SD Team also hosts virtual career fairs for schools, which allow students to connect with employers online to learn about their companies, available jobs, and company culture. During Career Technical Education Month in February, Career Ready is hosting career cluster-oriented virtual career fairs every Wednesday. On Wednesday, Feb. 28, we will be highlighting the Health Sciences cluster. To participate or learn more, please email Marissa.Simonsen@state.sd.us or Katherine.Lantgen@state.sd.us.



SDSU FACULTY PUBLISHES COMMENTARY ON REGULATION IN PHARMACY PROFESSION

CONTRIBUTED BY SOUTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY | CONTACT: JACOB FORD, 605-670-9658

Shanna O'Connor, associate professor and head of the Department of Pharmacy Practice at South Dakota State University, recently published a commentary on pharmacy regulations in the Journal of the American Pharmacists Association.



The commentary discusses regulation in the pharmacy profession, noting that “the pharmacy profession has a history of overregulation ... resulting in considerable regulatory burden and confusion among professionals and regulatory bodies as to what is, and is not, allowed in practice.”

The authors discuss three different approaches to regulation including the Bright Line model, the Right Touch model, and the Standards of Care model.

The authors find the Standards of Care model to be the least restrictive of the three, noting that it “supports flexibility and innovation for the pharmacy profession and increases access to health care in a manner that is absent in both bright line and right touch approaches.”

The authors argue that the Standards of Care model is needed in the pharmacy profession, claiming it allows for “practicing at the top of a practitioners clinical ability,” and that the Standards of Care regulatory approach “has at its central focus, patient safety.”

O'Connor co-authored the commentary alongside Jennifer L. Adams, Brandy Seignemartin, Allie Jo Shipman, Wendy McConnell, Ally Dudman, Julie Akers and Veronica Vernon. The authors are part of a team that is funded through a grant from the Mercatus Center.

[Read the full story](#)



WRAHEC SCHOLARS COHORT III GRADUATION GALA HIGHLIGHTS HEALTH PROFESSION ACHIEVEMENTS

CONTRIBUTED BY WEST RIVER AREA HEALTH EDUCATION CENTER

The West River Area Health Education Center (WRAHEC) held its annual Graduation Gala for the third cohort of WRAHEC Scholars on November 11, 2023, at Western Dakota Technical College in Rapid City, SD. Nine health profession students celebrated their completion of the AHEC Scholars eighteen-month professional development program. To meet the requirements of this program, these students completed eighty hours of didactic education, eighty hours of clinical experience, and organized a Wellness Fair at Rapid City Central High School for their community health impact project. Cohort III included the following students: Bry Bach, SDSU nursing (BSN); Katherine Ballard, SD Mines biomedical engineering/pre-med (BS); Jenni Bauer, SDSU Counseling and Human Resource Development (M.S.); Taylor Brown, SDSU nursing (BSN); Ava Krush, SDSU nursing (BSN); Megan Major, biomedical engineering/pre-med (BS); Heather Rahder, SDSU nursing (BSN); Debbie Theisinger, SDSU nursing (BSN); Katherine Yous, USD nursing (BSN).

The AHEC Scholars program is designed for college-level health profession students interested in supplementing their education by gaining relevant knowledge and experiences in rural and underserved areas of SD. Program activities cover the following eight Core Topics: Interprofessional Education; Behavioral Health Integration; Social Determinants of Health; Cultural Competency; Practice Transformation; Current and Emerging Health Issues; Connected Communities and Supporting Health Professionals; and Virtual Learning and Telehealth.

[Learn more about this free program.](#)



RURAL EXPERIENCES FOR HEALTH PROFESSIONS STUDENTS (REHPS)

CONTRIBUTED BY SOUTHEAST SD AHEC

The REHPS program is designed to immerse students in the unique challenges and opportunities of rural healthcare. Participants will engage in a comprehensive 3 or 4-week experience during the summer at a Critical Access Facility in South Dakota. This immersive program incorporates 40 hours of interprofessional education, allowing students to collaborate across disciplines.

The mission of the REHPS Program is clear and impactful: Connect students to careers, professionals to communities, and communities to better health. By focusing on interprofessional education in a rural setting, we aim to bridge gaps in healthcare access and cultivate a new generation of healthcare professionals with a deep understanding of the unique challenges faced by rural populations.

The REHPS Program not only equips students with valuable skills but also encourages a sense of community engagement and a commitment to addressing the healthcare needs of underserved areas. By fostering connections between students, professionals, and communities, we are contributing to the creation of a healthier and more resilient future for all.

[More information about the REHPS Program.](#)



SDSU PHLEBOTOMY CERTIFICATE PROGRAM RANKED TOP ONLINE PROGRAM 2ND YEAR IN A ROW

CONTRIBUTED BY SOUTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY | CONTACT: JACOB FORD, 605-670-9658

South Dakota State University's phlebotomy certificate program has been ranked one of the top online phlebotomy certificate programs of 2024 by EduMed. This is the second year in a row that SDSU's phlebotomy program has been recognized.

The SDSU phlebotomy certificate program has been offered at SDSU since fall 2020. Students in the certificate program participate in a mix of online courses, on-campus lab work and clinical experience in health care settings.

The program graduated its first cohort of students in spring 2022 and first received recognition from EduMed later that year.

Stacie Lansink, program director for SDSU's medical laboratory science program, which houses the phlebotomy certificate, said it feels good to be recognized a second year in a row. "The phlebotomy certificate program is still fairly new, and this is just a testament to the hard work of the program's faculty."

Lansink added that the phlebotomy certificate is an important offering for SDSU because "it allows students to gain valuable patient experience. It also offers students the chance to see an important area of the lab and provide an opportunity to potentially become a medical laboratory scientist."

More information about the phlebotomy certificate program, including how to apply, can be found on the [SDSU website](#).

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