FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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AHECs to receive increase in FY23 federal funding

Leaders of the National Area Health Education Center (AHEC) Organization announced last week that the federal government has appropriated $47 million for the AHEC program for FY ’23, an increase of $2 million from FY ’22.

“The increase of federal funding is a clear testament to the impact AHECs have on improving workforce diversity, enhancing health care quality, and increasing access to care in underserved communities,” said Jennifer Taylor, DHEd, president of the National AHEC Organization.

Through academic and community partnerships, AHECs develop and train a diverse healthcare workforce prepared to deliver culturally appropriate, high-quality, team-based care, with an emphasis on primary care for rural and underserved populations.

Last academic year, AHECs across the nation and U.S. territories reached more than 659,000 students and health professionals with programming such as health career education, clinical rotation support, and continuing education for healthcare professionals.

AHEC, created by Congress more than 50 years ago to improve U.S. healthcare availability and delivery, is an important part of the nation’s health workforce development infrastructure.

The need to strengthen the healthcare workforce, particularly for the underserved, continues. According to the Association of American Medical Colleges, the U.S. could see a shortage of up to 124,000 physicians by 2034, and the American Hospital Association says more than 200,000 new registered nurses are needed each year to meet increasing health care needs and to replace nurses entering retirement.

“Looking at our continued health workforce shortage, our work is far from complete,” Dr. Taylor said. “Now we are tasked to use the funds to engage and equip those we serve with the tools to advance access to quality health care in an everchanging society. “

AHEC federal funding has risen 17 percent since 2019, when the appropriation was $39.25 million.

Visit nationalahec.org or email info@nationalahec.org to learn more about AHEC.

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