

Science camp inspires native students to dream big



Reese Walker (Macy) learns physics by calculating the trajectory of flying golf balls launched using a giant wooden protractor. Looking on, are his team members (left to right), Donovan Cook (Macy), Landon Frenchman, Isiah Medina, and Darnell Smith (Winnebago).

"This is cool," said one kid as he held up the test tube of DNA he had just extracted from strawberries. It was music to Maurice Godfrey's ears.

"That's the kind of excitement we want to inspire. That's what this camp is for," said the UNMC associate professor of pediatrics.

The youth was one of 23 Native American middle school students participating in a three-day health and science fun camp in July, sponsored by UNMC through the Rural Health Education Network.

The camp is part of a \$1.3 million Science Education Partnership Award (SEPA) grant Dr. Godfrey, principal investigator and co-investigator Roxanna Jokela, director of the Rural Health Education Network

at UNMC, received in 2006 from the National Center for Research Resources of the National Institutes of Health.

The purpose of the grant is to strengthen the math and science curriculum of American Indian youths on reservations in Nebraska and South Dakota.

"It's important to introduce young people to the sciences early in hopes that it will spark a life-long interest for some of them," Dr. Godfrey said.

David Wilson, Ph.D., a molecular and cellular immunologist, agrees.

Growing up on the Navajo Indian reservation Dr. Wilson, didn't dream he'd ever become a scientist.

"I wasn't exposed to molecular science until I was a freshman in college," Dr. Wilson said.

Now he is a post-doc fellow working for the National Institutes of Health.

"Ninety-percent of the ability to succeed is having the confidence to try," Dr. Wilson said. "I came to Nebraska to tell these kids that they can do it too. I grew up on a reservation, but I made it."

RHOP provides college student multiple opportunities

Accompanying his mom, a drug rep for several pharmaceutical companies, to the numerous clinics, hospitals and doctor's offices in rural Nebraska left a lasting impression on Ryan Santin.

Santin, a native of Palmer, Neb., and senior at Wayne State College, is planning to pursue a career in medicine and one day hopes to join the ranks of the rural doctors he met.

It was on one of those visits when a doctor suggested Santin enroll in the Rural Health Opportunities Program (RHOP) through the University of Nebraska Medical Center.

The RHOP program is a collaboration between Chadron and Wayne State Colleges and UNMC. Students applying for RHOP are considered based on their academic potential, residency in a rural Nebraska community, and their commitment to practice in a rural area. The opportunities the program has afforded him are numerous, Santin says.

Through RHOP Santin learned about the Summer Undergraduate Research Program at UNMC, which allowed him to spend the summer working as an intern in the RHEN office, where he helped with several science camps.

Santin also collected data for his summer research project, which focuses on the influencing factors that led a person to pursue a career in a health profession.



Ryan Santin, right, talks to students about the components that make up the human cell.

Building networks and knowledge on tour of Nebraska's panhandle

Take 37 people from urban and rural Nebraska, add a motor coach, mix in 1,160 miles of highways and byways, and what do you get? The 14th annual legendary Ag Adventure Tour, held July 17–19. The tour was designed by members of the Leadership Omaha Alumni Association and the Nebraska LEAD Alumni Association to build networks and knowledge across Nebraska.

This year's tour wound from Lincoln to Mitchell, Neb., at the Wyoming border, to Fort Robinson, 50 miles south of South Dakota and back again. Highlights of the itinerary included visiting the Haythorn Ranch near Ogallala - the world's third largest breeder of quarter horses and Brown Sheep Company - where natural fiber yarns are produced and supplied to knitters in the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, and Ireland. Tour participants included two officers from the Omaha North High School FFA chapter along with chapter sponsor LeeAnn Vaughn, the 2007 Presidential Awardee for Excellence in Science Teaching from Nebraska.

There were several newcomers to Nebraska on the tour this year, among them was Chandran Achutan, an assistant professor of Environmental, Agriculture and Occupational Health Science at the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC). He said, "The Ag Tour was a great opportunity to get to know

other professionals and educators, but most of all, gain insight about the occupational health needs in farms, ranches, and rural industries in the panhandle communities."

Katie Fredette, a recent college graduate and a VISTA volunteer at the RHEN-AHEC office commented, "My first time on the Ag Tour was amazing! I got to see so much of the state that I never would have seen. I learned so much about agriculture in this part of the country. It's so different from in the Northeast, where I grew up in upstate New York. For example, irrigation isn't really an issue where I am from, but I was able to learn how people in the western part of this state make it work. I liked the opportunity to broaden my horizons and think about Nebraska in a whole new way!"

The tour covered a broad spectrum of topics ranging from producing textiles from biomass materials, to touring a wheat farm, to visiting a medical center and hearing their efforts to provide rural communities with better healthcare services, to witnessing oil coming out of the ground. Steve Byrne, administrator at the RHEN office said, "I am a native Nebraskan but had not been to the Panhandle before. The people we met, the towns we visited, the contacts we made, and the information we learned were priceless."

Next year's tour that will feature northeast Nebraska is scheduled for July 17–18. For more information, contact Lynda Shafer at (402) 978-7928.

MRSA Conferences Across the State

The Nebraska Public Health Laboratory, in conjunction with the University of Nebraska Medical Center sponsored three FREE Methicillin Resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) workshops this summer at Mahoney State Park, in Scottsbluff, and Kearney.

Mark Rupp, M.D., professor of infectious diseases at UNMC and director of healthcare epidemiology at The Nebraska Medical Center, presented "MRSA, Management and Prevention of a Problematic Pathogen."

Paul Fey, Ph.D., associate professor at UNMC and associate director of Nebraska Public Health Laboratory

presented "The Microbiology of MRSA and New Detection Methodologies."

Dr. Fey said: "We have an epidemic of MRSA in the United States, not only in the hospital but in the community. This conference was designed to provide health care workers the appropriate tools to address this issue; both in the microbiology laboratory and the clinic."

The Nebraska Panhandle Area Health Education Center provided assistance with the MRSA workshop in Scottsbluff. The workshop provided 3.5 contact hours to 118 participants representing 51 counties across the state of Nebraska.

VISTA volunteer gains experience through RHEN

Wanted: recent college graduates to work for very little pay in a place they have never been before.

That pretty much sums up what you get when you join VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America).



Katie Fredette

Twenty-two-year-old Katie Fredette saw something more in joining VISTA, a new adventure perhaps, the opportunity to travel, and meet new people.

The recent college graduate decided to join and chose to spend her year-long adventure in service to her country, at the

University of Nebraska Medical Center working for the Rural Health Education Network.

Fredette hopes to get into a physician assistant program and is applying at schools across the country and at UNMC. She sees the opportunity to work for RHEN as a positive step in that direction.

"I wanted to do something that involved health care," Fredette said. "And I enjoy the opportunity to work on projects that shed light on the needs of rural residents."

If you would like to contribute to the AHEC's "Grow Our Own" campaign please consider one of the following levels:

<i>Cornhusker Gold</i>	\$5,000–\$50,000
<i>The Good Life Level</i>	\$3,500–\$4,999
<i>Sower Level</i>	\$2,500–\$3,499
<i>Camp Sponsor</i>	\$1,500
<i>Classroom Sponsor</i>	\$500
<i>Program Materials Sponsor</i>	\$250
<i>Wellness Sponsor</i>	\$125
<i>Individual Sponsor</i>	\$75

Nebraska AHEC Centers are separate 501(c)(3) corporations.

All contributions are tax-deductible.

If you would like to contribute to your local AHEC, please send your contributions to the address listed on the AHEC Center pages.

Rural Health Education Network

Michael Sitortius, M.D., Director, Nebraska AHEC Program Office

Keith Mueller, Ph.D., interim dean UNMC College of Public Health

Roxanna Jokela, RHEN Director and Deputy Director of the Nebraska AHEC Program Office

Becky Tines, RHEN, Assistant Director

Liliana Bronner and Ann Kraft, RHEN Program Coordinators

Lisa Spellman, Editor (402) 559-4693

The RHEN/AHEC Focus is published three times a year by the: University of Nebraska Medical Center 986660 Nebraska Medical Center Omaha, NE 68198-6660 (402) 559-8946

www.unmc.edu/RHEN

The University of Nebraska does not discriminate in its academic, admissions or employment programs and abides by all federal, state and regental regulations pertaining to same.

Funded in part through the Health Resources & Services Administration, Bureau of Health Professionals Federal Grant #2 UH6HP00592



Kristina Derrick (center) a 1996 State Science Meet participant and current 3rd year medical student, explains blood pressure measurements to Emma Blanke of Seward (left) and Katie Meiergerd of Fremont (right).

UNMC hosts 16th Annual State Science Meet

Sixty-two students from 34 schools across Nebraska attended UNMC's 16th annual health science mMeet for eighth graders in June.

The goal of the meet is to inspire students, especially those from rural communities, to pursue careers in health care. The students qualify for the meet by submitting science projects in one of nine regional science meets sponsored by

the Nebraska Area Health Education Centers across the state earlier in the year.

The expense-paid meet exposes students to the health professions, medical research and patient care. Events included hands-on activities, presentations about a variety of health science disciplines, tours of UNMC, a team science competition and entertainment.

Students interested in applying to attend the 2009 eighth grade health science meet should contact their science teacher or principal this fall.

Workshop aimed at better science education for American Indians

Elementary school teacher Daniela Doenhoefer didn't feel comfortable teaching science. Growing up on the Winnebago Indian Reservation in northeastern Nebraska, Doenhoefer said she was never encouraged to study science.

But after spending a week in June at UNMC, immersed in a workshop focused on teaching science to young children, Doenhoefer has changed her mind.

"I'm excited about incorporating what I've learned into my curriculum," Doenhoefer said.

Doenhoefer, who teaches special education to children in grades K-4 at Winnebago Public School, was one of 17 teachers to participate in the workshop.

During the workshop, the teachers learned about American Indian content standards from Carol Rempp, coordinator of Native American Education with the Nebraska Department of Education, and how to incorporate those standards along with the state standards to meet the needs of their students. Rempp also talked about teaching in a way that matches the unique learning styles of American Indian students.

The teachers also learned simple strategies for incorporating literacy into a science curriculum through storytelling, as well as how to teach basic anatomy to the very young.

"I have a better understanding of how to incorporate science into reading and math," Doenhoefer said. "For example, I can have my students read about the birds and plants native to Nebraska and combine



Judy Walz of St. Francis Indian School (left) and Beth Stenzel of Liberty Elementary (right) learn how to use Venn diagrams in innovative ways to teach K-2 students about compare/contrast and classification.

The workshop is part of a \$1.3 million Science Education Partnership Award (SEPA) grant Dr. Godfrey, principal investigator and co-investigator Roxanna Jokela, director of the Rural Health Education Network at UNMC, received in 2006 from the National Center for Research Resources of the National Institutes of Health.

that with hands-on activities, such as going outside to look for those plants.

"It's really going to get my students engaged and provide them with a fresh perspective on science."

At the end of the workshop, each of the teachers were presented with a white lab coat, as well as supplies, such as Magiscopes, animal puppets, anatomy posters and organ vests, to take back to their classroom.

"Teachers are the front line in getting students excited about science. Through our SEPA program we hope to bring the joys of science to teachers," Dr. Godfrey said. "The teachers, in turn, will bring hands on science to their students. Having a science literate public should be the goal for all science professionals. Working with teachers will bring us closer to that goal."

Career fair exposes students to health professions



Community Hospital in McCook hosted 132 area students this summer for the third annual "Career Discovery Days" that showcase the variety of health care jobs available.

The day-long workshop was partially funded through a community grant awarded by Central Nebraska Area Health Education Center.

Fourteen health care career fields were featured this year at Discovery Days, including: surgery technician, massage therapy, pediatrics, nurse anesthetist, occupational therapy, dietitian, laboratory, nursing, information systems, pharmacy, physical therapy, respiratory therapy, radiology, and physician assistant.

One student said that having experience in the different fields allows her to make a decision about her future.

Students did many things, from suturing a laceration on raw chicken wings (a favorite activity), to practicing administering spinal anesthesia into bags of saline wrapped in pillows.

The students also tested their math skills by calculating the dosing of an IV drip. Once these calculations were completed, students actually drew up food coloring "medicine" into a syringe and injected it into an IV solution.

Respiratory therapists helped students learn

Physician assistant Jim Allen demonstrates the correct suturing techniques on a raw chicken wing.

to perform an endotracheal intubation on a mannequin. Several students testing their CPR skills through a computerized program were awarded prizes for achievement.

Another activity had occupational therapists assigning the students a different "disability" and then challenged them to dish up and eat a bowl of ice cream while facing that disability.

All of the sessions provided students with information on each profession including job requirements and opportunities, salary, schools and professional websites. During breaks, attendees visited booths from local colleges and were given information from Community Hospital of McCook.

When asked what they liked best about Discovery Days, one student said, "I loved having the opportunity to ask questions of real professionals that have so much experience."

Having the "real deal" in person is what students need to let them understand so much more about the healthcare professions that exist.

Even if these students get so much information, "their brains hurt," events such as Career Discover Days will help address the need and shortages of healthcare workers in Nebraska.



A participant of the Career Discovery Days has her CPR skills monitored by computer.

Popular telehealth conference on returning war veterans now available on DVD

The popular telehealth conference "After our War Mental Health Challenges: Returning from a War Zone" will soon be available on DVD.

This is in thanks to the continued efforts of Nebraska AHEC, Nebraska National Guard, Nebraska and Western Iowa Veterans Administration Healthcare System, and the Center for Continuing Education at UNMC.

The series was originally aired in April, 2007. The series includes segments on the "Impact of Deployment on Service Members and Families," "Understanding the Challenge of Service Members' Readjustment" and "Subsyndromal Mental Health Issues in Returning Veterans."

The series also includes a powerful interview of a returning civilian soldier and his wife talking candidly about the issues they both have faced.

There are plans to distribute the DVDs free of charge to Nebraska groups, but there will be a small fee for out-of-state and other interested organizations.

For further information on contact Roxanna Jokela 402-559-8946 or rjokela@unmc.edu.

High school girls favor health science as career choice

Data released from FutureForce Nebraska indicates Health Science is the number one career choice among the students completing the career search on the Nebraska Career Connections website.

Only five percent of the males completing the survey indicated a preference of health science. The data set is for the 2007-2008 school year and includes 9,516 students in grades 9-12. This data will be used as the base line as an indirect barometer of the work of AHECs across the state in influencing high school students interest in Health Science.

The Nebraska Career Connections is a collaborative effort of several state agencies and nonprofit organizations to coordinate

resources and services through efficient and effective online access for all Nebraskans. This site will be continually developed and expanded as a resource to assist students and adults with career exploration and planning, educational planning and preparation, job seeking, and skill development. These services provide strong support for Nebraska's workforce and economic development priorities. A new feature of the site will permit anyone to complete an assessment. Previously the site was limited to Nebraska high school students.



nebraskacareerconnections.org

Grupo de Mamas Saludables (Healthy Moms' Group)

Being a "Mama" means modeling positive lifestyle behaviors for their community and others in Adams County.

Cardiovascular disease remains the number one killer in the Hispanic population, and the Grupos de Mamas Saludables are doing their part to attack this statistic.

The "Mamas," headquartered at Head Start in Adams County have been part of CN-AHEC's Minority Health Initiative Grant.

They meet twice weekly to Zumba, dance-exercise, have nutritious foods and discuss healthy behaviors. The entire family gets involved in monthly Family Activity Nights (F.A.N.), which include educational programs, food and fellowship, followed by fun and physical activity.

A baseline health evaluation for each of the moms is offered, with follow-up assessments at six-month intervals. With cardiovascular risks being at the center of the Grupo de Mamas Saludables activities, their progress, or lack of, is noted, and lifestyle behavior changes are discussed and hopefully put into place.



Learning to make healthy choices from a variety of food groups is one way Grupo de Mamas Saludables is trying to overcome cardiovascular disease.

Two of the keys in keeping the Healthy Moms' Group an active bunch are their families and their Hispanic traditions. Being a "Mama" means modeling positive lifestyle behaviors for their community and others in Adams County.

Central Nebraska Area Health Education Center

CN-AHEC office
College Park
3180 West Highway 34
Grand Island, 68801-7279
www.cn-ahcec.org

Executive Director
Sarah Cunningham, Ph.D.
(308) 385-5074
sarah@cn-ahcec.org

Business Coordinator
Lana Lofgreen
(308) 385-6677
lana@cn-ahcec.org

Health Science Consultant
Sally K. Husen
(308) 385-6677
sally@cn-ahcec.org

Students explore health professions at summer camps

A tradition continues... Learning about health careers in the summer has become common place for many students. Northern Nebraska AHEC sponsored a variety of summer health careers camps for elementary and high school students.

The first camp was held in conjunction with the Fremont Area Medical Center (FAMC). Five days students spent over 36 hours exploring various departments, listening to a variety of health professionals and taking part in hands-on exploration activities.

The highlight of the camp was an Alien Autopsy. Using jello model aliens, FAMC's Nancy Strong, developed a complete scenario for each student team to learn about what their alien died of

after a visit to the Fremont lakes area. More importantly how involved an autopsy can be.

Students also toured various departments within the hospital, completed dissections of cow eyes and hearts and received tips on obtaining scholarships and navigating the process of applying to college.

The Norfolk camp came next. This four-day camp was filled to capacity with 25 students. Students enjoyed a day at Faith Regional Health Services touring various departments and learning about the new Hospitalists program the hospital has.

Over 35 professions were showcased, cow eyes and hearts were dissected and pigs feet were sutured.

The Norfolk camp also included a panel of nursing professions from areas that are unfamiliar to many students.



Brianne Boltinghouse, left, and Michaela Edwards, both of Fremont, carefully identify the internal organs of their alien during an autopsy procedure.

Students had the opportunity to hear from and ask questions of nurses involved in risk management, home health, public health, utilization review, case management and nursing education.

Sustainability comes with a price

Central Nebraska AHEC survived thanks to the help of the Rural Health Education Network and the Video Medical Interpreting cooperative within Central Nebraska.

The staff went from 6.5 FTEs to 3.25 FTEs and with the closure of the VMI program in July the staff now boosts 1.75 FTEs.

"It hasn't been easy, but we survived and are anxious to return to full staff," said Sarah Cunningham, executive director of CN-AHEC.

At the annual board meeting in August the board discussed ways to overcome the shortfall in funding. The ideal staff would include the ability to pay two full time salaries to the existing staff and add two ¾ time education coordinators.

According to Tanja Rasher-Miller, board president, the existing staff has worked full time but chose to be paid ½ time. In May the staff was able to be paid ¾ time thanks to the contract with Central Community College for the project management of the Healthcare Synergy project.

The center continues to work with students on rural rotations but had to reduce the number of presentations to schools and community projects. The center also continues to work with teachers on developing health science pathways for their schools with course materials, plus the distribution of the science modules and skeletons for schools in the area.

Northern Nebraska AHEC survival plan

Northern Nebraska AHEC will also see a reduction in staff from 4.25 FTE's to 2 FTE's. NNAHEC will be continuing through a variety of contracts from various sources including: National Health Service Corp., RHEN and National Institutes of Health funded projects. The center also has saved funds through various contracts with partners, product sales and services over the past five years. These funds will assist in continuing to provide services.

"Unfortunately a reduction in staff will also result in a reduction in services to our region. Our ability to meet the needs will be limited, however we plan to continue key services in a limited form in the coming year. This will be felt throughout our region by schools, students, health profession students and community based faculty." said Gretchen Forsell, executive director of NNAHEC.

NNAHEC plans to continue working with high schools students and providing job shadowing opportunities, health profession students on

rotations, and with schools and communities as they are able. Additionally NNAHEC is working to sell different health career products including coloring books, stickers and bookmarks. A new Careers in Mental Health DVD has just been released and is available for purchase.

"Diversification of our funding has always been key for NNAHEC and we will continue to operate looking at a variety of avenues for sustainability," said Forsell.

The Nebraska AHEC centers will return to the legislature this year to seek funding. The state of Nebraska funded the Rural Health Education Network beginning in 1992. The University of Nebraska Medical Center sought federal funding in 2001 because of the short fall in funding to carry out the mission of RHEN.

Federal funding continues today but Central Nebraska and Northern Nebraska AHEC do not qualify for funding under current federal legislation. The National AHEC Organization is working to change the method and the amount of distribution but in the meantime, 60 counties need help in addressing the health care crisis in the workforce.

Exploring Opportunities in Mental Health

DVD now available for purchase

For many students the most misunderstood careers are those in mental health.

This DVD demystifies careers in mental health and shows students the personal side of eight mental health professionals and how they make a difference every day.

A social worker/alcohol and drug counselor says: "These are just everyday people coming to

me with the same issues that you and I face. From my own personal life experiences, this has become more like my vocation in life. It is so rewarding to see the progress and the healing that people achieve in their lives."

The DVD is available for \$85.00 (plus tax in Nebraska). For additional information please contact NNAHEC at info@nnahec.org or 402-644-7253.



Participants at Medical Investigators Camp show off their "cell cookies."

Medical Explorer students continue to volunteer

NNAHEC is blessed to have a variety of volunteers.

"Currently we have over 25 volunteers that we can call on to assist us with activities and/or office tasks" said Marie Janke, business coordinator. "Without them it would be very difficult to provide the quality of service to our region."

Student and adult volunteers do a variety of tasks including tracking students from AHEC activities, stuffing envelopes, preparing educational materials for distribution, counting, sorting and inventorying various educational tools, among other things.

"Our Medical Explorer volunteers not only help us, but we help them," said Gretchen Forsell, NNAHEC director. "The students work at our various camps and activities with younger students."

Some of the students are working with NNAHEC for the third or fourth time and are now in charge of an activity, she said.

This opportunity provides students with a chance to be in charge, learn more about the activity and gain a wealth of experience in the areas of public speaking, planning, organizing and even what to do when things go wrong".

Volunteers will continue to be a key part of NNAHEC in the future when the staff is reduced.

"We hope that our volunteers can help us limit the impact of decreased service to the region" said Forsell.

Summer science camp a hit with students

The Northern Nebraska AHEC brought back it's popular summer camp for fourth, fifth and sixth grade students. Started last summer this camp is back by popular demand.

Thirty-six students attended Medical Investigators Camp in July. The students explored areas of science and math and then learned how those areas are part of health care.

The students took part in activities with local fire and rescue personnel, went on scavenger hunts to locate body parts for a large puzzle and extracted DNA from strawberries.

One of the students favorite activities was learning about cells and their components. Ryan Santin, a summer intern with the RHEN office and RHOP student

reviewed the key components and function of a cell, then students took large sugar cookies and various toppings (licorice, coconut, M&M's, etc) and made a cell.

The students enjoyed taking their cells home and telling their families about it.

On the final day, the medical investigators presented skits to their parents and families. Three different medical scenarios: a trip to the dentist, an athletic injury and an operation were performed.

We are still not sure who had more fun the audience watching or the students. The skits included everything from 'purple tooth disease,' to an elbow that hurt when the ankle was sprained to a toy lawnmower being used to 'open a patient up' for surgery. With so much fun we know that next summer the investigators will be back for more.

Northern Nebraska Area Health Education Center

NNAHEC office
110 N. 16th Street
Suite 2
Norfolk, NE 68701

www.nnahec.org

Executive Director
Gretchen Forsell, MPH, RD
(402) 644-7256
gforsell@nnahec.org

Business Coordinator
Marie Janke
(402) 644-7253
mjanke@nnahec.org

Former Husker Aaron Davis gives Beatrice schoolteachers pep talk



Beatrice Public School Superintendent Dale Kruse is the center for Davis' Offensive Line.

Aaron Davis, a communications and leadership consultant and a member of the 1994 Huskers' national championship team, kicked off the "Welcome Back to School" program for Beatrice's new and returning teachers. Southeast Nebraska AHEC sponsored the program.

In his funny and engaging style, Davis talked with the teachers about how to maintain commitment to their students and avoid burnout while also finding time to re-energize themselves.

Davis challenged the teachers to "be selfish, take some time for you." He also reaffirmed for teachers that it's

okay to be passionate, "especially about things that matter the most to you."

The Husker locker room was a place of great learning for Davis, he said. Davis talked about "going to the next play."

"After a bad play, Coach Osborne always told us to go to the next play." Davis said, "he helped us understand that we couldn't continue to focus on what went wrong, but rather we needed to focus on what was yet ahead of us."

In wrapping up his presentation he used members of the audience to form an offensive line.

He used this metaphor to talk about teamwork. Not only is it okay to rely on your teammates, he mused, its equally important to recognize that you really can't do your own job well *without* assistance from the team.

"Be selfish, take some time for you," said Aaron Davis, former Nebraska Cornhusker

Meet Dennis Headrick, Ph.D., a founding member of the SE-AHEC Board of Directors

Dennis Headrick, Ph.D., has been in education for over 22 years with the last 18 as an administrator at Southeast Community College – Beatrice Campus, where he serves as campus director.

He also holds the title of vice president for instruction, which includes the oversight and supervision of all of the college's programs at all locations and throughout the 15-county area that the college serves.

Dr. Headrick started in education as a K-12 business instructor and coach, along with teaching part time at the Grand Island School of Business and in continuing education for Central Community College.

He is an alumni of Southeast Community College and has earned degrees from each of the University of Nebraska campuses: a bachelor's from UNK, master's from UNO, and a doctorate from UNL.

Dr. Headrick is involved in a variety of local, state and national organizations.

Locally he is involved in the YMCA Foundation, Beatrice Library Foundation, Plymouth Community Foundation, One Stop Community Resource Center Board, Rotary Club, Beatrice Chamber of Commerce – Action Committee, and other committees and organizations.

Dr. Headrick lives in Plymouth, Neb., with his wife, Lorie and has two daughters who are married.

Dr. Headrick said AHECs are important because, "everyone needs health care at some point in their life. Not everyone can or will live in an urban area, we will always have rural areas in which people live and will need health care provided there too."

"As the baby boomer generation continues to retire, it enhances the need for health care, but also stresses the importance of getting young people and people changing careers interested in the various health care professions," he said.

Being in education, Dr. Headrick said it is easy to see the difference that training and



New Southeast Nebraska AHEC Board member, Dennis Headrick, Ph.D., believes in the work AHECs do to promote health profession careers.

education makes in a person's life, their career, their family and the community.

"Health care is one of the primary life sources of a community. We have to continue to support the work that the AHEC does in promoting healthcare education," he said.

Lincoln Upward Bound students learn new math, science concepts at workshop



Crossing the bridges of Konigsberg: Is it possible to cross all seven bridges only once and end up where you started? These Upward Bound students tried to find out during a summer workshop sponsored by SE-AHEC.

What do you get when you cross the board game "CLUE" with CSI? Lincoln Upward Bound students had an opportunity to find out this summer.

Approximately 40 Upward Bound students spent two weeks working with faculty from Nebraska Wesleyan University this summer where they discovered some really cool things!

While the students were having fun, they (oh my!) actually learned new concepts in math, science, psychology, physics, computer science, and leadership.

Using thin-layer chromatography to analyze pen ink, the students determined who was responsible for the "graffiti" left all over the new science lab counter-tops.

Although no secret spy decoder rings were in sight, students encrypted and decrypted secret messages using nothing more than (gasp) math concepts. Students also learned how to extract DNA and then made a DNA necklace using their own DNA.

They learned about the components of blood by typing their own blood and used EEGs to understand how the brain "learns and stores" information.

They learned that it is impossible to walk around Konigsberg using all seven bridges only once. But probably their favorite activity was making and eating ice cream sundaes provided on the last day.

Meet SE-AHEC Board member . . . Ted Tucker, M.D.

Dr. Ted Tucker's life has come full circle. After growing up on a farm near Lindsay, Neb., Dr. Tucker went to college, finished medical school at UNMC, got married, completed his residency in family medicine, and became board certified before finally moving back to small town Nebraska.

"My plan had always been to return to a rural area and provide healthcare," Tucker said. "This goal impacted my choice of specialty. I completed the primary care residency that combines an emphasis in internal medicine and rural medicine

allowing residents to complete two years at UNMC and then two years at a rural site."

Dr. Tucker served as an officer in the Student Association for Rural Health while at UNMC and now helps students prepare for their health care career as a preceptor and member of Southeast Nebraska AHEC's Board.

Dr. Tucker is a partner with three other physicians at the Fairbury Clinic in Fairbury where he lives with his wife, Sarah, and children Olivia, Ty, and Ellie. The growing family is expecting a fourth child soon.

Tucker currently also serves as a member

of the boards of SERPA (Southeast Rural Physicians' Alliance) and Jansen Christian Academy, in addition to being medical director of Ambulance District 33.

Dr. Tucker said AHECs are important because they have the potential to make an even larger impact on Nebraska's healthcare workforce by encouraging students from all types of backgrounds to explore and pursue all types of careers in healthcare.

"The opportunity to participate in peoples' lives by providing care is indeed very rewarding and worth the long educational process," Dr. Tucker said.

Southeast Nebraska Area Health Education Center

SE-AHEC office
5109 West Scott Road #408
Adams Hall, Room A2111
Beatrice, NE 68310

Executive Director
Robyn Henderson
(402) 228-9094
rhenderson@se-ahhec.org

Education coordinator
Connie Schmidt
(402) 228-9093
cschmidt@se-ahhec.org

Rhonda Drewes
(402) 228-0195
rdrewes@se-ahhec.org

Office manager
Deanna Duis
(402) 228-9092
dduis@se-ahhec.org

www.se-ahhec.org

Paxton Elementary School gets toy medical kits from NP-AHEC



In an effort to promote health education and acclimate children to medical personnel and equipment, NP-AHEC purchased toy medical kits to donate to area kindergarten classrooms.

Each kit contains a toy sphygmomanometer, thermometer, syringe, bandage, otoscope, a working stethoscope and storage bag.

NP-AHEC Education Coordinator Mr. Conrad presented these kits to the kindergarten classrooms, and gave a fun and informative presentation, playing songs he composed while speaking about health and education.

Mr. Conrad develops an instant rapport with children by speaking honestly with them, involving them in the discussion, and putting information on their level.

Pictured at left: Mr. Conrad, NP-AHEC coordinator, poses with students from Paxton Elementary School during his visit to drop off medical learning kits.



Students get a chance to tour an ambulance and watch a paramedic triage a fake patient.

Summer fun focus of science camps hosted by NP-AHEC

Fun was the focus for the summer camps hosted by NP-AHEC and held for elementary, middle- and high- school students in Scottsbluff, Chadron, Kimball, Ogallala, and Oshkosh. The camps centered on the topic of wounds and injuries.

Students used theater make-up and prosthetics to create wounds that were then “triaged” by local paramedics, who also provided a tour of their ambulance. Some

of the “injured” students even received the ambulance tour while secured to a gurney!

Law enforcement officers spoke to the students about safety, forensics and 911. Students also learned how to suture, using bananas in place of actual injured bodies.

Pharmacy students provided a lesson on compounding medicine, with a hands-on activity using crushed “Smarties” and canned frosting.

Nebraska Panhandle Area Health Education Center

NP-AHEC office
2620 College Park
Scottsbluff, NE 69361

Executive Director
Gary Hastings
(308) 635-6713
garyh@np-ahec.org

Office Manager
Shirley Green
(308) 635-6711
shirleyg@np-ahec.org

Education Coordinator
Conrad
(308) 635-6712
conrad@np-ahec.org



The summer of 2008 is marked with great advancement for the Omaha Urban AHEC (OU-AHEC)

Over the summer the OU-AHEC successfully conducted programming for students ranging from fourth grade through college undergraduate students, in addition to providing continuing education for health professionals.

Also, health career recruitment activities were conducted in both north and south Omaha, as well as in Sarpy County.

This summer also marked the second year of OU-AHEC participation in the biotechnology camp at King Science Center in north Omaha. During the first week of August, middle school students were exposed to topics in biotechnology, DNA, anatomy of living organisms, pollination, and similarities and differences between animal and plant cells.

The students also visited Lauritzen Gardens to observe and record varieties

of plants and to participate in educational activities led by the staff there.

Health Explore Summer Camp 2008 was a five day OU-AHEC activity for high school students from Sarpy County to learn about various health care career opportunities.

By partnering with Alegent Health, participants were exposed to careers in medicine, pharmacy, nursing, physical therapy, and occupational therapy through presentations, hands-on activities, and discussion sessions.

Students learned how to listen to the heart with a stethoscope, compound their own ointment, make sterile IVs, identify unknown drugs, and make finger splints.

Also this summer, OU-AHEC staff worked with students from the Summer Medical and Dental Education Program (SMDEP).

During June and July, OU-AHEC was able to offer service-learning opportunities for the SMDEP students at a community-based agency in south Omaha, where the students worked with children ranging in age from 5 to 14 delivering health and hygiene curriculum including smoking prevention, oral hygiene and healthy lifestyles.

Finally, the Omaha Urban AHEC partnered with Metro Community College and the Omaha Sports Medicine Alliance to offer a continuing education event for paramedics, nurses, physical and occupational therapists, athletic trainers, physician assistants, and physicians in July.

Topics included injury identification, latest rehabilitative techniques, information on patient health literacy, operation of advanced durable medical equipment and others.

OU-AHEC finds niche with two new programs

The unique thing about Area Health Education Centers (AHECs) across the nation is the flexibility they have in implementing their core mission of increasing health care professionals.

Each AHEC has the ability to adapt to their respective region and provide programming that meets the needs of their communities.

It is this tailor-made approach to health care workforce development that gives AHECs their strength and vibrancy across the country.

The OU-AHEC has identified the special needs of the urban communities it serves and that niche is direct workforce development and high school programming.

Targeted to begin the first quarter of 2009 the OU-AHEC will rolling out

two cornerstone programs that fill a tremendous gap in Omaha.

The first program, Nurses Up, is a partnership between OU-AHEC, Metropolitan Community College and Arbor Employment and Training. This program will work to take individuals currently unemployed or underemployed and on public assistance and provide them with a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) certification, a Certified Medical Aide (CMA) certification and a Basic Life Support (BLS) certification.

This trifecta of certifications will make them highly employable in the Omaha community.

The second program, Health Career Academy, is a partnership with the Omaha Henry Doorly Zoos science education department. This program will provide 24 weeks of programming annually on the zoo campus for between 40 and 60 students from

Omaha, Papillion, Lavista and Bellevue.

The students will spend part of their time learning biology, science and basic research and the other part learning about health care careers and training.

These two new endeavors are in addition to the traditional OU-AHEC programming, such as summer health career camps, presentations and training.

Any support, feedback, or help from the community is greatly appreciated. The OU-AHEC is here to serve the needs of the city and state, and to ensure that Nebraskans will always have the healthcare they deserve.

For more information about any of the OU-AHEC programs please contact Dell Gines, executive director, at dgines@ahecomaha.org.

Omaha Urban Area Health Education Center

OU-AHEC office
1823 Harney Street
Suite 203
Omaha, NE 68102
www.ahecomaha.org

Executive Director
Dell Gines
dgines@ahecomaha.org
Administrative Assistant
Amber Floyd
afloyd@ahecomaha.org

Program Manager
Rahman Strum
rstrum@ahecomaha.org

Education Coordinators
Clara Chu
cchu@ahecomaha.org
Jamal Morton
jmorton@ahecomaha.org

Education Coordinator
Rene Gosch
rgosch@ahecomaha.org

Resource Development Manager
Victoria Muli
vmuli@ahecomaha.org

The first UNMC Omaha Area Health Career Day will be held Friday, Oct. 24

This activity will provide metro-Omaha high schools students with an opportunity to learn about the multitude of health career professions available in the health sciences and learn about the programs offered through UNMC.

This career day is jointly sponsored by the UNMC Area Health Education Center (AHEC) Program Office, the UNMC Student National Medical Association (SNMA), and the Omaha Urban AHEC in collaboration with the UNMC health profession colleges.

As a pilot project, eleven Omaha area schools are being invited to participate. Additional Omaha area schools will be invited to participate during the spring semester on March 6, 2008.

Registration will be open to high school juniors and seniors through their counselors or teachers. UNMC is able to accommodate 200 students so we will limit per school participation to 10 students, with a possible alternate list.

Each school will be requested to have at least one adult sponsor accompanying the students. The adult sponsors are welcome to attend any of the sessions.

If you have questions, don't hesitate to call Clara Chu at Omaha Urban AHEC 502-1207 or e-mail the event staff anytime at omahacareerday@unmc.edu. To view the website with additional information go to www.unmc.edu/rhen and on the left hand side click on Omaha Area Health Career Day.

Spotlight on new staff: Meet Steve Byrne

Title: office manager for the Rural Health Education Network office.

Education: bachelor's degree in accounting from the University of Nebraska at Omaha.

Work experience: I have been with UNMC since 1996 with most of that time spent working in central administration. The first four years were spent working in general accounting. The next eight years I worked for Sponsored Programs where I gained my experience working with federal grants and contracts.

Family: My family consists of my wife, Beth and my two children, Jacob, 13 and Angela, 10.

Hobbies: My hobbies are running, golf and watching my kids play youth sports.

In my short two months here, the thing that impresses me the most is how smoothly the department handles the many different programs it is involved in.