

## Who is BHECN?

The Behavioral Health Education Center of Nebraska (BHECN), pronounced “beacon”, was established in 2009 by a legislative bill to address the shortage of behavioral health (BH) professionals in rural and underserved areas of the state. It is a unique partnership among the state legislature, academic institutions, and community partners to create a statewide workforce solution for the shortage of licensed BH professionals.



## BHECN’s Mission:

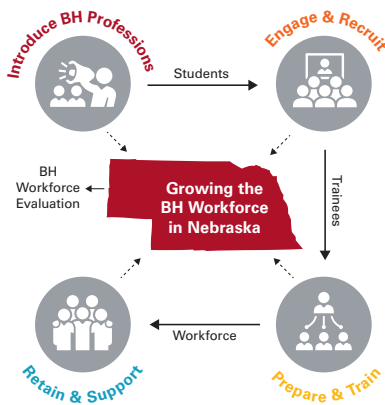
BHECN is dedicated to improving access to behavioral health care across the state of Nebraska by developing a skilled and passionate workforce.



Scan to view videos about BHECN or visit:  
<https://www.unmc.edu/bhec/about/index.html>

## Behavioral Health Workforce Pipeline Model

At the core of BHECN’s operation is the development of a pipeline of students interested in BH.

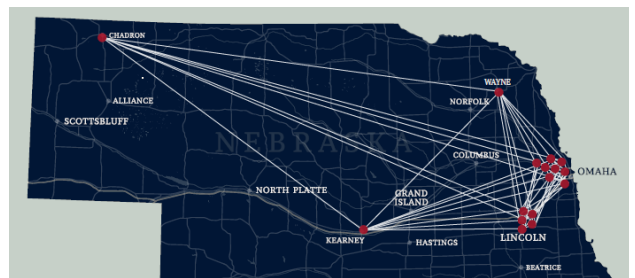


The High School Ambassador conference is the beginning of the pipeline in recruiting future behavioral health professionals in rural Nebraska.

Through the Ambassador Program, BHECN introduces students to behavioral health careers and shares information about the 18 academic programs available in Nebraska. It also connects students with resources and mentors to pursue BH careers in Nebraska.

## The Nebraska Behavioral Health Education Partnership (NeBHEP)

BHECN partners with the 18 academic institutions providing graduate-level BH education in Nebraska to track the number of students graduating and staying in Nebraska. The goals of the NeBHEP collaboration are to strengthen relationships among all of the programs, create a unified voice among the different professions and develop more interprofessional training opportunities for students across the state.



# What is ARPA?

For more information contact us at: [bhecn@unmc.edu](mailto:bhecn@unmc.edu)

In 2022, the legislature passed LB1014, which allocated American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding to various entities across Nebraska. ARPA provides federal funding to states in order to address the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

## In LB1014, BHECN was allocated \$25.5 million to help the state address the shortage of behavioral health (BH) professionals in Nebraska.

The pandemic caused a dramatic increase in need for BH services, and with providers already in short supply, many people experienced long wait times or a complete inability to access behavioral healthcare. This has become a crisis for many areas of the state, particularly in rural areas.

This one-time funding\* will be disbursed through a competitive request for proposal process based on the four major areas outlined in LB1014 (found below). Any organization/provider is eligible to apply for these awards and awards will be given on a quarterly basis (tentatively starting July 2022). The following are the four award categories:

- 1) BH training opportunities.** Projects in this award category should focus on providing training and clinical experience opportunities for BH students, trainees and professionals. Proposed budgets should not exceed \$500,000. Projects in this category could include:
  - Psychology Internships
  - Advanced Practice Provider Fellowships
  - Psychiatry Fellowships
  - BH Certification Programs
  - Licensed Mental Health Practitioner Internships and Practicums
  - Psychiatric Nursing Training Experiences
  - Executive Fellowships
  - Other Time-Limited Training Opportunities
- 2) Telebehavioral health support in rural areas.** Projects in this award category should focus on increasing access to behavioral healthcare through telebehavioral services. Proposed budgets should not exceed \$1,000,000. Projects in this category could include:
  - Telebehavioral Health Equipment
  - Technical Assistance
  - BH Consultant Network
  - Establishment of a state-wide Telebehavioral Health Network
  - Telebehavioral Health Training and Certification
  - Other Telebehavioral Health Support and/or Programs
- 3) BH workforce projects for students and BH professionals** related to BH issues caused or exacerbated by the COVID-19 public health emergency. Projects in this award category should focus on providing educational programs and recruitment and retention projects related to the BH impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Proposed budgets should not exceed \$100,000. Projects could include:
  - Education on BH impacts of COVID-19
  - Resiliency Training
  - Provider/Caregiver Burnout
  - Other BH educational programs related to COVID-19
  - Education on BH workforce impacts of COVID-19
  - Wellness Initiatives
  - Recruitment and retention initiatives for BH students and providers
- 4) Funding for licensed BH supervisors** currently employed in Nebraska. Projects in this award category should be focused on supporting supervision costs as organizations/providers supervise provisionally licensed BH professionals. Proposed budgets should not exceed \$100,000. Projects could include:
  - Stipends for supervision
  - Other support to enhance the path to licensure
  - Support for licensure application requirements

\* Applicants can request funding for up to three years (funding expires December 31, 2025). BHECN cannot guarantee funding after this date.

***This will be an online application process. The website and application will be coming soon!***