The BHECN Ambassador Program hosts annual conferences to encourage high school and college students to pursue careers in mental and behavioral health. The Virtual Mentorship Network is designed to keep conversations about these career choices going throughout the year between interested students and behavioral health professionals.

Selected high school and undergraduate students will use distance technology and meet monthly to ask questions, discuss behavioral health topics, and connect with four professionals who are in the final stages of their psychiatry or psychology training programs. In addition to participating in six seminars broadcast live over the Internet, students will engage in fun projects and interact on a regular basis through a secure private blog. Participants from this year’s pilot project will be invited to share their experiences at the 2015 BHECN High School Ambassador Conference on April 10 - 11 in Kearney. The development of the Virtual Mentorship Network was made possible with funding from the Rural Futures Institute.

BHECN’s goals are to keep students and trainees engaged with mentors who can answer questions and encourage their career aspirations and to continue to build the virtual network in the future.

For more information, contact:  Dr. Heidi Keeler  hkeeler@unmc.edu  
Ann Kraft  akraft@unmc.edu  
Ko Niitsu  kosuke.niitsu@unmc.edu

BHECN’s Virtual Mentorship team: (left to right)  
Kosuke “Ko” Niitsu, College of Nursing Ph.D. candidate  
Heidi Keeler, Ph.D., BHECN Director of Educational Design  
Mentor: Brea Banks, psychology intern, Munroe-Meyer Institute  
Mentor: Tara Sjuts, Ph.D., postdoctoral fellow, Munroe-Meyer Institute  
Mentor: Nathan Bruce, D.O., 4th year psychiatry resident  
Mentor: Marin Broucek, M.D., 4th year psychiatry resident  
Howard Liu, M.D., BHECN Medical Director  
Ann Kraft, BHECN Ambassador Program Coordinator

Mentorship Seminar Dates
Noon - September 26, 2014
Noon - October 24, 2014
Noon - December 5, 2014
Noon - January 23, 2015
Noon - February 27, 2015
Noon - March 27, 2015

Participating students attend:
Grand Island High School
Kearney High School
Lexington High School
Creighton University
University of Nebraska at Kearney
University of Nebraska-Lincoln
University of Nebraska at Omaha
Wayne State College