



HEALTH CAREERS INSTITUTE 2022 REPORT

Prepared by Chelsie Begood, Tilton Dennison and Wacey Begay



 **The Future is Bright!**

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR LETTER

The SWCAHEC 2022 Health Careers Institute was a huge success with students from all areas of Southwest Colorado and the Four Corners. Like in previous years, students learned about healthcare careers and were inspired by local healthcare providers who shared their journeys into their careers and their stories about what it is like working in the health professions in our region. As always, I was humbled by the generosity of the volunteers who took the time to invest in the development of our next generation of professionals working to increase wellness for our diverse communities.

This year, though, was extraordinary because of the Institute staff whose investment and initiative made the event the most impactful that I have experienced. My Co-Director, Tilton Dennison, was dedicated to increasing the reach of the Institute and worked tirelessly to recruit diverse students whose backgrounds and perspectives enriched the experience for us all. During the event, Tilton focused on building relationships between the staff and students and between the students themselves. The other counselors, Chelsie Begood, Wacey Begay, Kendra Mahkewa, and Julien Wolf, worked with Tilton to create an environment that promoted youth wellness through physical activity, nutrition, strategies to decrease stress, and goal setting. But perhaps most importantly, the staff made the Institute fun by including humor, games, and a consistent positive high regard for the students and each other. As emerging health professionals themselves, they took mentoring to a new level and inspired us all! Thank you Tilton, Chelsie, Wacey, Kendra, and Julien!

To the students who attended the Institute, your engagement and enthusiasm in this experience revealed just how many wonderful things you have ahead. The future of our healthcare professions in Southwestern Colorado is bright!

Warm Regards,

Kate Hartzell

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF SWCAHEC

Educational Presentations and Trainings

Epi-Disease Detectives

Students were introduced to infectious disease pathology, epidemiology, and public health careers during this presentation and disease simulation done by SWCAHEC staff. After discussing infectious disease pathogens, methods of disease transmission, and how epidemiology teaches us about the effects of disease on populations, students simulated a disease outbreak and explored how contact tracing could help identify both exposures and protective measures against disease.

Cancer Research Lab



Dr. Shere Byrd introduced students to the field of medical research by sharing her most recent research on cancer and the efficacy of cancer medications to reduce metastasis. Students participated in Dr. Byrd's research in the lab, by using microscopes to count cells on wet mount slides both with medication intervention and without in controls. Dr. Byrd demonstrated how conclusions about the efficacy of medical interventions could be drawn from student results in the lab.

FLC Provost Presentation

Cheryl Nixon, the Provost of Fort Lewis College, shared her excitement about the upcoming Nursing program with students. Ms. Nixon explained the structure of the nursing program and described the incredible hands-on clinical simulation facilities that are currently being constructed at the college. Students also met with student support services staff to learn about how to navigate college academics and how experiences like undergraduate student research can enrich their education and reinforce their healthcare pathway.

Educational Presentations and Trainings

Indigenous Cooking Activity



Chelsie Begood, Community Health Programs Associate at SWCAHEC and Marnie Clay, Assistant Professor of Nutrition at Fort Lewis College demonstrated a 'Food is Medicine' food activity using Indigenous ingredients and concepts to create a 'Three Sisters' dish (corn, beans, and squash). This dish teaches the symbiotic relationship between food, environment, and health. Students were able to identify nutritional benefits, price affordability, and gain knife and kitchen safety skills. All food was then washed down by fresh fruit sparkling drinks to teach healthy food alternatives.

Exercise Science and Nutrition



Dr. Melissa Knight Maloney, of the Exercise Physiology Department at Fort Lewis College, discussed heart functions, elaborating on how oxygen and blood flow through the heart. Students proceeded to check blood pressure and listened to heart beats through a stethoscope. Students learned about the relationship between exercise physiology, psychology, nutrition and health promotion from the Health Sciences faculty. Marnie Clay, Assistant Professor of Nutrition, led students through a patient case study to introduce them to the role of a registered dietitian and how nutrition interventions can increase health.

Educational Presentations and Trainings

Opioid Education and Naloxone Training

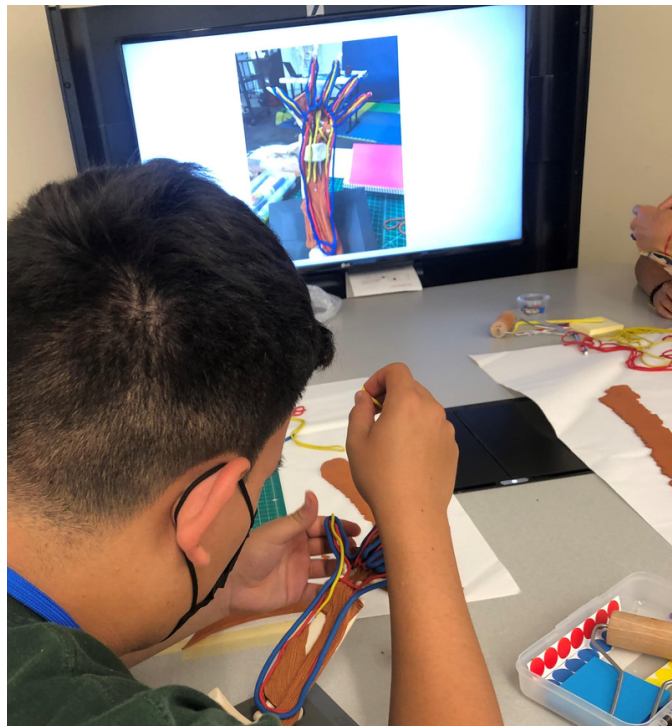
Kate Hartzell, Executive Director of SWCAHEC, gave a presentation about opioids, substance use disorder, and overdose risks and recognition. Kate trained students on Naloxone administration to save a life during an opioid overdose. This knowledge of substance abuse prevention introduced students to this important topic that has impacted our region.

Basic Life Support Training



Students received a Basic Life Support for Healthcare Professionals certification from Heartsafe La Plata. The combination of classroom learning, skills practice and assessment, gave students the tools needed to understand CPR and rescue breathing as well as some basic first aid skills to address choking among adults and babies.

Educational Presentations and Trainings



Anatomy and Clay

The Anatomy in Clay program introduces students to the science of anatomy using skeleton models and clay. Students built out anatomical features, allowing them to see muscles and organs in a comprehensive way and illustrating the relationships between form and function. Students built out some of the major muscles and vessels of the forearm, and discussed pathologies including carpal tunnel syndrome and related treatments. We also discussed different health care professionals involved in delivering care like orthopedic surgeons, phlebotomists, and physical therapists.

Durango Fire and Rescue

Scott Sholes from Durango Fire and Rescue shared his personal journey into his role as EMS Chief. As an example of someone whose career followed several steps in the EMS pathway, Chief Sholes personified this approach to career development for students. A tour of the ambulance and the many roles of EMS providers further introduced students to the many different facets of providing patient care in emergency situations.

Hands on Learning Stations

Passionate healthcare professionals volunteered their time on the last day of the HCI event. Some stations included suturing, giving injections, pharmaceutical counting m&ms science, and using an AED. Students were able to talk with behavioral health experts and nurses from many different departments about their careers. These small interactions were impactful in allowing students to learn about the pros and cons of the health professions, motivational factors, and educational training. This provided students with an opportunity to connect with mentors in their field of interests.



“I loved hearing from the attendees at the Healthcare Career Camp about their plans for the future. After attending the camp, many had a larger view of healthcare and all the various opportunities in the healthcare setting for employment. This increased knowledge seemed to broaden their eyes to all career paths available to them and the pros and cons of each path. It is so exciting to have so many youth interested in a healthcare career.”

~ Susan Tipton, RN

Healthcare Professionals

- Physical Therapy by University of Colorado Faculty and Students
- Suturing by David Greenberg, MD of Northern Navajo Medical Center
- Injections and Vital Signs by Emma Greenberg
- Mercy Regional Medical Center Pharmacy/Birth Center by Susie Tipton and Mercy Volunteer Healthcare Providers
- Behavioral Health and Indigenous Peer Recovery by Imo Succo, Frankiana Tsosie, and Harold Yazzie
- EMS Services by Scott Sholes of Durango Fire and Rescue
- Nursing by Kate Moynahan of CU College and Nursing
- AED Education with LaPlata by Kayley Smith of Heartsafe LaPlata
- Emergency Room Medicine by Cleary Wunder and Matt Difrancesca of Mercy Regional Medical Center

“I was impressed by the engagement and commitment of the students at the Health Careers Institute. They asked me thoughtful questions about what it means to be a doctor and asked pointed questions about my education and balancing work and life. I am hopeful about the next generation of healthcare providers in our rural areas.”

~ David Greenberg, MD



Building Healthy Physical Bodies and Relationships

The SWCAHEC Health Careers Institute staff implemented activities, and games that promoted positive youth and professional development. Metrics for Positive Youth Development included: Physical and mental security, nurturing connections, sense of belonging, creating social norms, incorporation of culture and community, opportunities to create change, and skill development. For this year's Institute, we decided to take a route that not only allowed for the students to get to know their peers, but to do so in building relationships, and learning to trust one another by having our students participate in ice breakers, name games, and group exercises. Counselors, health professional students themselves, served as mentors to the students. Counselors created a college-like environment by engaging in both professional conversations and by getting to know the student's lives and interests. Once students and counselors met one another, they engaged in sports and games such as volleyball, spikeball, kickball, tag, hide & go seek, hacky sack, and charades. Counselors offered morning exercise routines such as running, walking, and yoga. During our evening, they had social gatherings with scary story nights, talking circles, and charades. Counselors understood the importance of decompression, and role modeled strategies for positive mental health. The feeling of loneliness away from home can be difficult for some students, especially those who are experiencing time away from home for the first time. The college dorm experience with peers helped contribute to the student's college readiness, and the various activities created a safe, healthy, and positive space for everyone to participate, share, and learn about one another's home, school, and culture.



From the Counselors



The role of a counselor is a vital part of the Institute. Students came from rural and underserved areas so it was important that the counselors represented their specific social and cultural backgrounds to increase understanding and connection. This year's counselors came with unique qualities that resonated not only with students from the Southwest Colorado region, but with students of diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds. At this year's Institute, counselors were Navajo Nation community members from all over the four corner's region and brought their culture and understandings about health and healing to the event and the activities. Counselors also brought experience and training in Nutrition, Public Health, Education, and Psychology, so when the students saw themselves in these professional roles, they were inspired to pursue a career in healthcare.

Working with high school students has always been a passion for me, and this Institute allowed me to see that our future will be in good hands. For the past 2 years, I have assisted with this event and I wouldn't have it any other way. We really were able to come together, learn, and have fun doing it!

-Tilton Dennison

As a professional who hasn't had much experience being around high school students, I found this event to be enjoyable! We were able to learn, engage, and have fun with the students all while exploring a variety of health careers. After three days, I became even more optimistic about the future of our healthcare.

-Chelsie Begody

Being a mentor for this Institute was such a great experience, not only for the students, but for me as well. In the 3 days of this event, I met some young amazing students that makes me wonder where their love for the health field will take them.

-Wacey Begay

Student Stories

Students shared their experiences at the Health Careers Institute which gave us insight about the impact of the activities and relationships formed during the event. Every student brought a unique perspective to Health Careers Institute and their words best show what they learned and experienced.



“I’m Navajo & I come from a rural area, I want to show students that if I can go into healthcare, they can too.”
~ Naomi Bluehouse
Navajo Nation, Arizona

[Click to view full Interview HERE](#)

“It's (HCI) definitely teaching me educational pathways for sure”
~ Isabel Rodriguez
Durango, CO



[Click to view full Interview HERE](#)

Student Stories

“I can see myself coming back to grand canyon to help our community in healthcare...”

~ Ivan Kolarevic

Grand Canyon Village, AZ



[Click to view full Interview HERE](#)



“I enjoyed coming into this Institute because there are like-minded individuals, who have interests but come from different backgrounds.”

~ Mack Otter

Durango, CO

[Click to view full Interview HERE](#)

Photo Gallery



Possible
Supported
Relationship
Teamwork
Passion
Fun
Variety
Inspired
Pathways
Inspirational
Hands-on
Learning
Helpful
Prepared



STUDENT RESILIENCE 2022

SWCAHEC Health Careers Institute 2022 contributes to youth resilience through student engagement with career preparation, through skill building in community engagement, through positive relationships with caring adults and through relationships with peers that share interests and activities during the Institute and beyond.

As a result of the SWCAHEC Health Careers Institute:

- 87% of students feel a stronger connection to their community
- 90% of students feel like they have choices about their futures
- 95% of students felt that they connected with an adult who believes that they will be a success
- 100% of students felt that they have a purpose in life and goals and objectives for the future

HEALTHY BEHAVIORS

The SWCAHEC Health Careers Institute 2022 reinforced health behaviors both through the example of healthcare providers and through explicit instruction on diet, exercise, and stress reduction.



As a result of the learning at the Institute:

- 82% of students are going to try to eat healthier foods and avoid sweetened drinks
- 98% of students will exercise up to 4 times a week
- 84% of students will try to sleep up to 8 hours a day

How Many Health Careers Can You List?

Students were asked at the beginning and at the end of camp to list the names of the health careers that they knew. Many campers had some idea about possible health careers, but the number that they were able to list was larger after camp. Exposure to the different types of healthcare jobs as well as a deeper understanding of the roles and responsibilities of different jobs led to increased awareness of possible careers in healthcare.

	1-3	5-8	10+	20+
PRE-CAMP	0	12	7	3
POST-CAMP	0	0	4	16

WHAT THE TEENS SAID ABOUT THE HCI CAMP....

“I like that we were able to see and learn about the pros and cons of each healthcare career.”

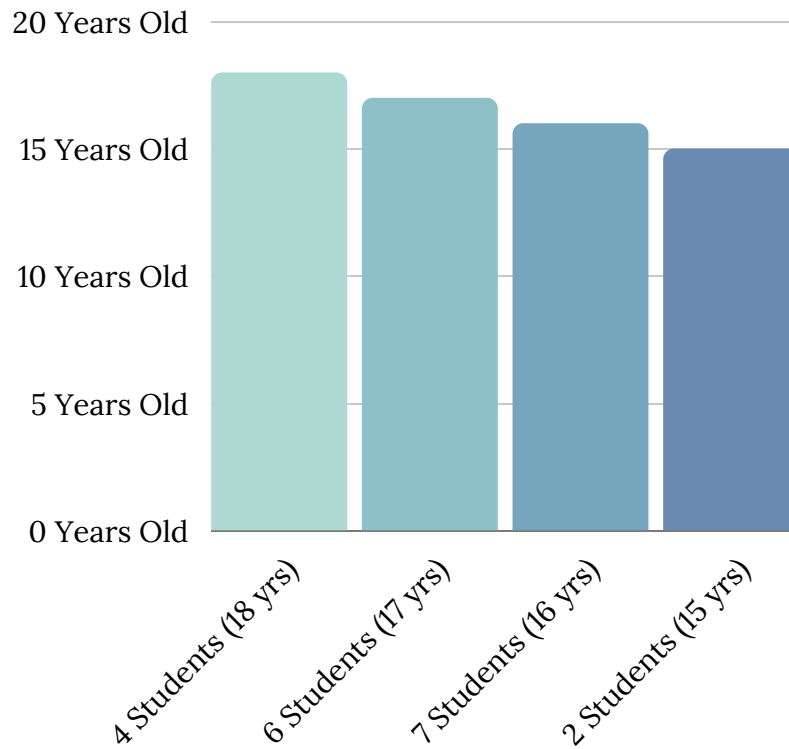
~ Siena Parr - Cortez, Colorado



[Click to view full Interview HERE](#)

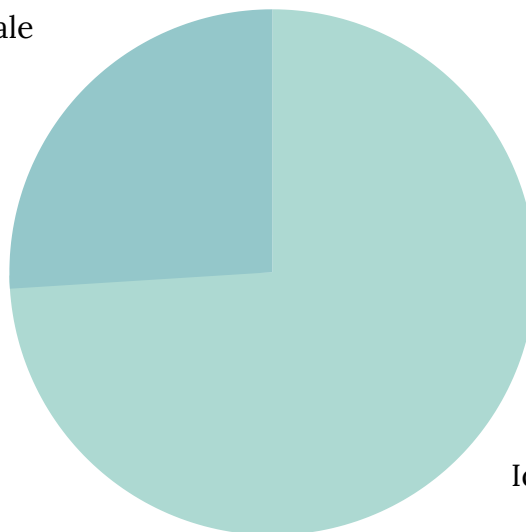
19 students participated in the Institute

AGE



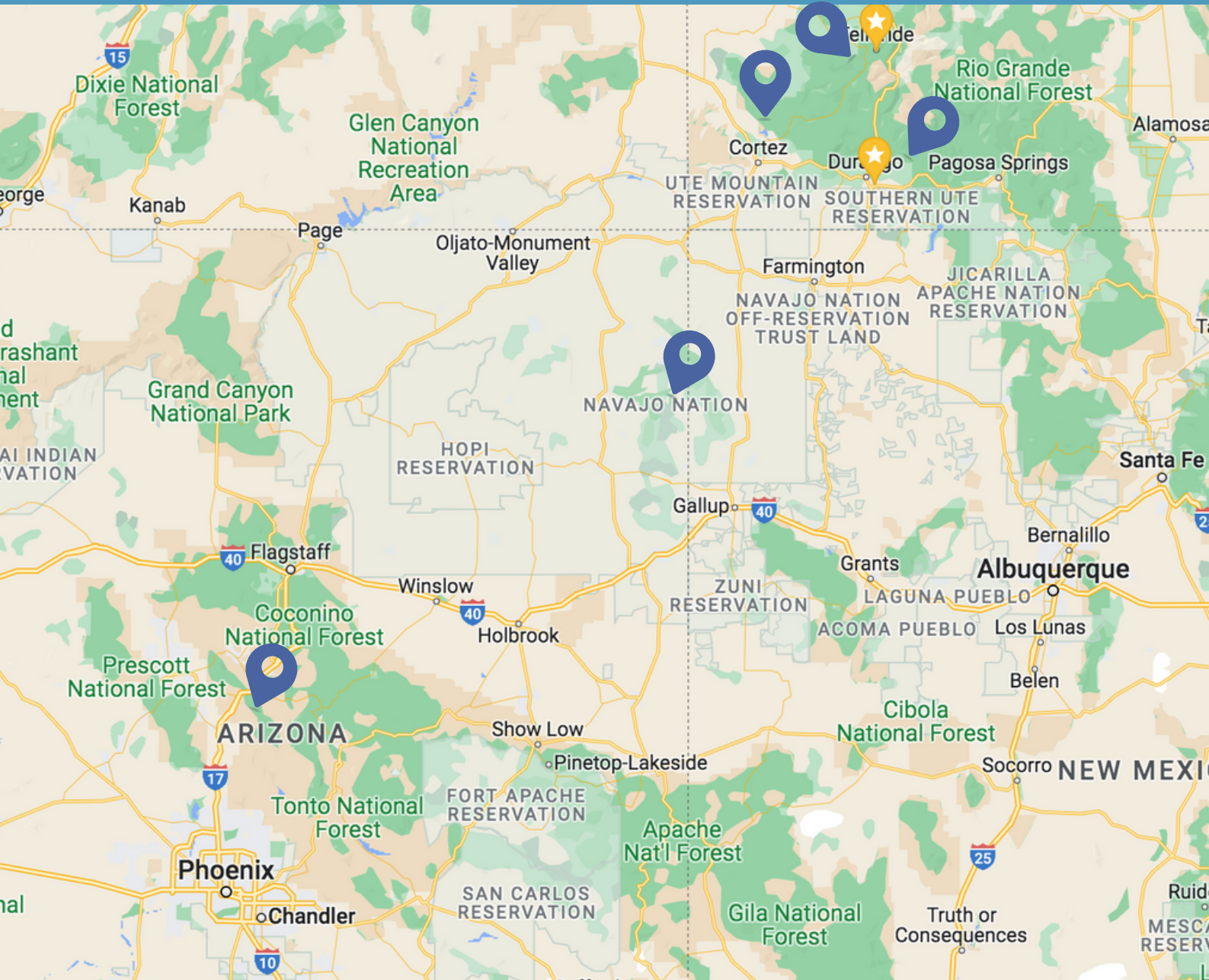
GENDER

Identified as Male
26%



Identified as Female
74%

The HCI Students Came From All Over the 4 Corner's Region



Students were from the following locations:

San Miguel (Norwood)

Montezuma County

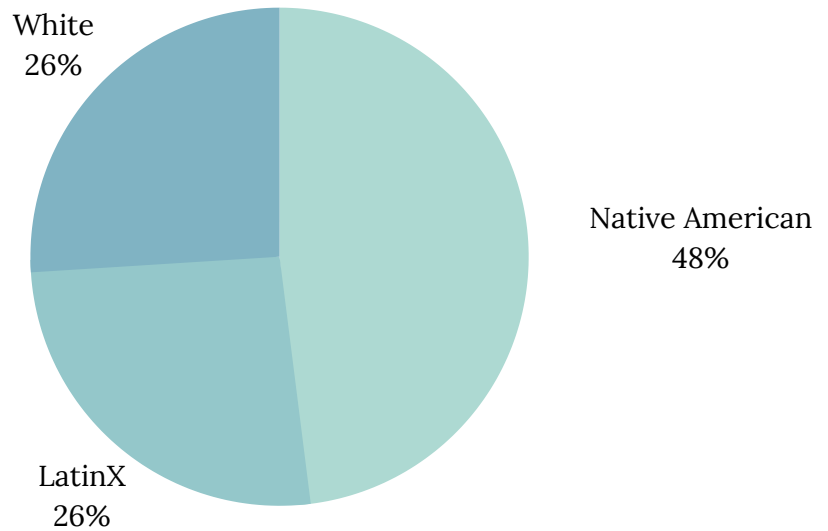
La Plata County

Navajo Nation

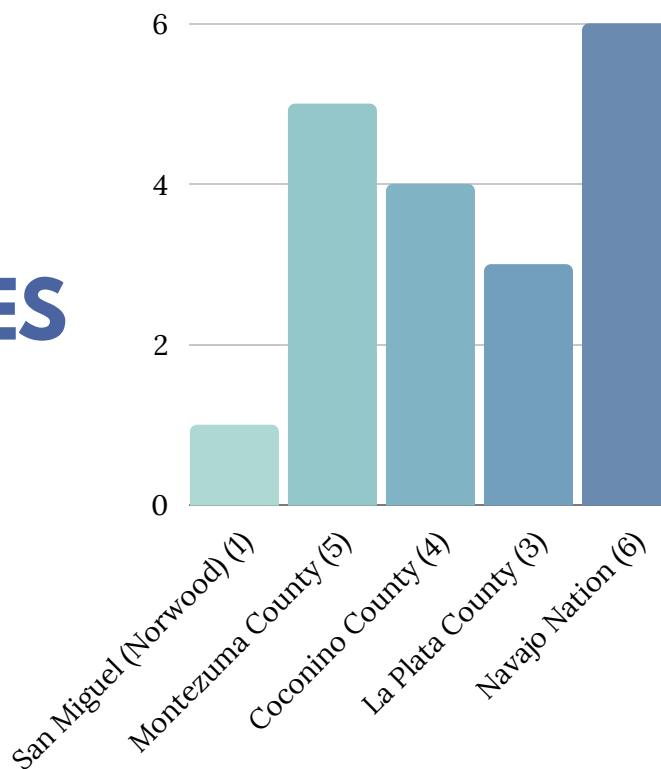
Coconino County

From 2021 to 2022, student diversity increased at the Health Career Institute.

ETHNICITY



ATTENDEES



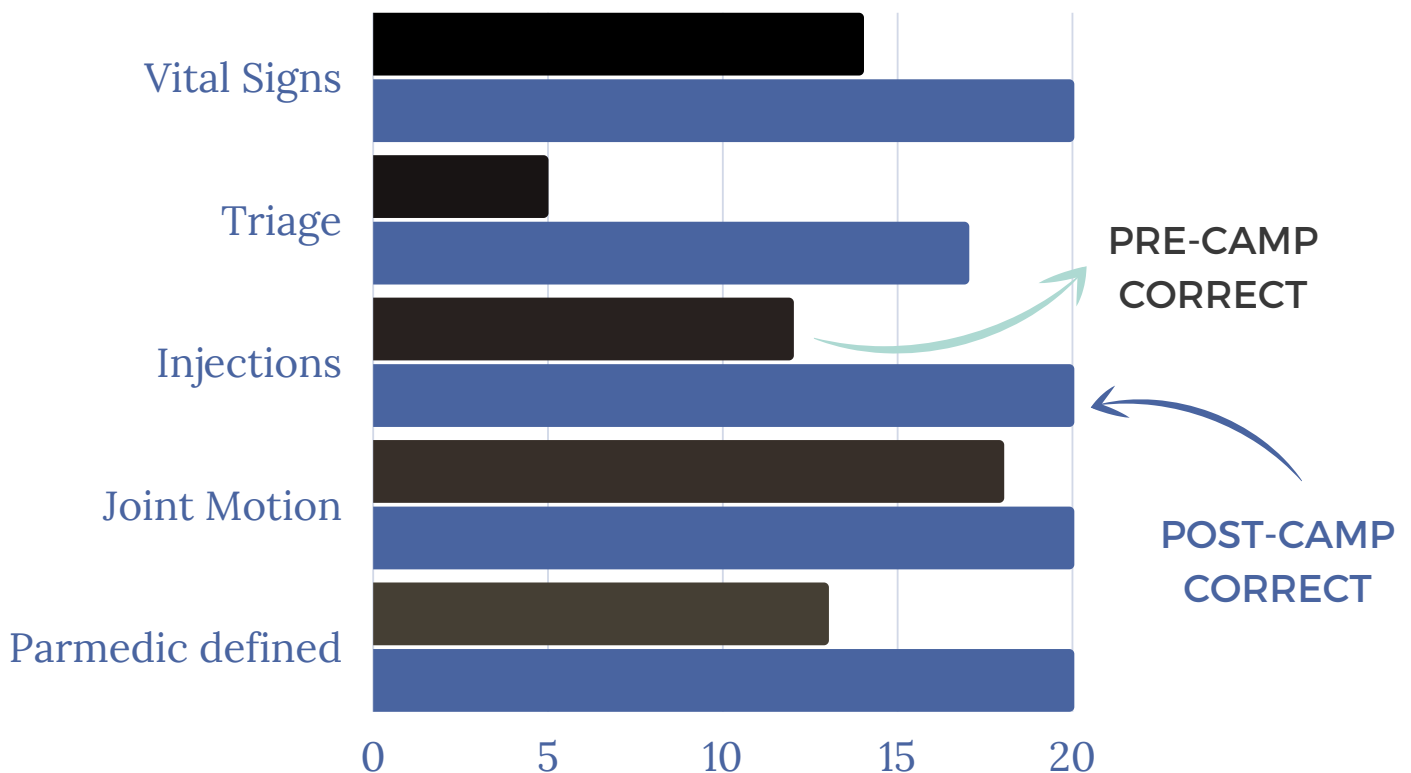
100% of students at the Health Careers Institute came from rural and underserved communities.

PRE AND POST CAMP MEDICAL QUESTIONNAIRE

Students were evaluated on their knowledge of certain healthcare related topics including giving injections, what constitutes a vital sign, how to define triage, and what the job of paramedic entails. More students answered these content-related questions correctly after the institute than did before the institute.

By the end of the Institute, 100% of students could name 10 or more health careers.

By the end of the Institute, 95% of students showed growth in specialized information related to healthcare careers including defining terms like triage, paramedic, and phlebotomy, and listing the steps for both injections and vital signs in a clinical setting.



THANK YOU!

Southwestern Colorado AHEC is committed to creating, enhancing, and maintaining a healthcare workforce uniquely qualified to address the health issues of Southwestern Colorado communities. We could not do this work without the generous support of our sponsors. We are grateful that we are able to partner with innovative and committed organizations and individuals that make an impact everyday by financing and supporting community-based initiatives.

Our success is your success. We deeply appreciate you!



Scott Sholes and Durango Fire and Rescue

David M. Greenberg, MD, Northern Navajo Medical Center

Kaylie Smith, Heart Safe La Plata

Susie Tipton, RN MSN Mercy Regional Medical Center

Lisa Benski-OR, Mercy Regional Medical Center

Kim Olguin-Pharmacy, Mercy Regional Medical Center

Emily Fields-FBC, Mercy Regional Medical Center

Melissa Knight Maloney, PhD, Fort Lewis College

Marnie Clay, PhD, Fort Lewis College

Shere Byrd, PhD, Fort Lewis College

Cheryl Nixon, Provost Fort Lewis College

Kate Coleman-Minahan, PhD University of Colorado School of Nursing

Joe Palmer, PT, DPT and Paige, Physical Therapy Program University of Colorado School of Medicine

Frankiana Tsosie, Imo Succo, and Howard Yazzie, Indigenous Peer Recovery, SWCAHEC

Cleary Wunder and Matt Difrancesca, Mercy Regional Medical Center and SWCAHEC

SWCAHEC Health Careers Institute Staff: Wacey Begay, Julien Wolf, and Kendra Mahkewa

SWCAHEC Staff: Chelsie Begoody, Imo Succo, and Kerri Cardin

Fort Lewis College Conference and Dining Staff especially Lainey Severson

Special Thank You to the SWCAHEC Health Careers Institute Co-Director: Tilton Dennison

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THANK YOU!
Article in the Durango Herald

Southwestern Colorado AHEC thanks supporters



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