





Centennial AHEC's MISSION

***To positively impact health outcomes
in Northeast Colorado by connecting
existing and future health professionals
and communities
with resources and education.***

For nearly fifty years, Centennial AHEC has been working “behind the scenes” to build and support the healthcare workforce and provide community health education where gaps exist. This year, we made a deliberate effort to showcase our programs by hosting two *AHEC of a Party* events - one in Burlington and one in Greeley.

While we are not considered by many as a life-or-death mission, we stop to ask ourselves, “What if we didn’t exist?” The answers are quite clear in the forthcoming pages!

Our Compassionate Care dementia curriculum is unique in its design and delivery to medical professionals and students. Our *Be Mindful* traveling mental health exhibit reached thousands of Coloradoans and provided national, state and regional resources. Our Nurse Educators conference impacts nursing educators from around the country (and world).

The next year will be challenging as we navigate federal funding cuts (and possibly state). We will be working to diversify our revenue streams and count on you to stay vested as donors, funders and ambassadors of our work.



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Board President



Melissa Jensen
Executive Director

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Programs Manager

Wendy Abbott
Compassionate Care Specialist

Jessica Weseloh
Admin Assistant

Another busy year of health education!



UNC Public Health students participated in Virtual Dementia Tour



Books sent to every elementary school in our region

HEALTH EDUCATION

'AHEC OF A PARTY'



PHOTOS BY JIM RYDBOM — STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Reece Abbott demonstrates how dementia patients can feel while wearing gloves, dark sunglasses and ear protection during the Centennial Area Health Education Center exhibit at the LINC on Friday. The event welcomed the public and community partners to get a hands-on look at the institutions long-standing work to connect existing and future health care professionals and communities to resources and education.

Event showcases behind-the-scenes work of Centennial Area Health Education Center

By Morgan McKenzie
mmckenzie@greeleytribune.com

Centennial Area Health Education Center has been working behind the scenes to support and build the health care workforce in northeastern Colorado since the 1970s.

Yet, to many, the institution remains unknown. To remind or familiarize the community, Executive Director Melissa Jensen wants to shine a light on "AHEC" of a mission to improve health outcomes in the center's

12-county coverage area, benefiting more than 750,000 people.

Centennial Area Health Education Center, or CAHEC, hosted a "AHEC of a Party" Friday at the LINC Library, 501 8th Ave., in downtown Greeley. The event welcomed the public and community partners to get a hands-on look at the institutions' long-standing work to connect "existing and future health care professionals and communities to resources and education."

The U.S. Congress established National Area Health Education

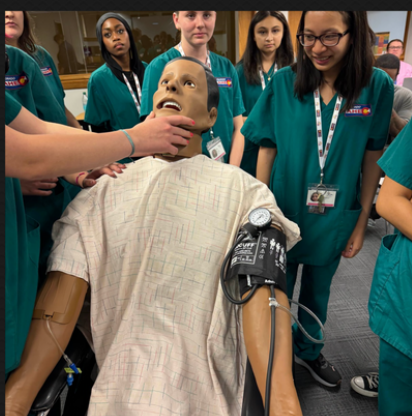
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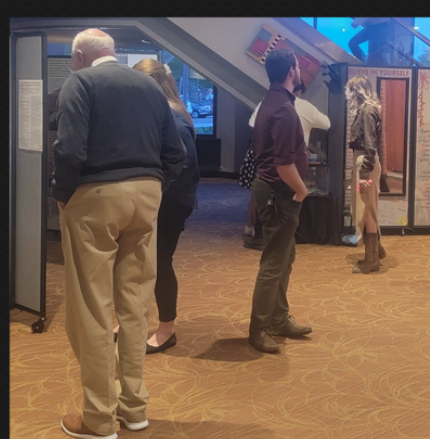
Executive Director Melissa Jensen of the Centennial Area Health Education Center talks during a dementia training seminar at the LINC Library on Friday.



One of many sessions at the Nurse Educators Conference



2025 HOPE Camp for aspiring medical professionals

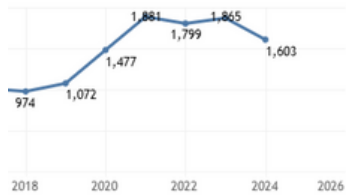


Be Mindful exhibit at the Greeley Philharmonic Orchestra's season finale

Community Health Education

There is a fatal overdose in Colorado every 4 hours, 45 minutes and 9 seconds.*

*Source: Stoptheclockcolorado.org



New provisional data from CDC's National Vital Statistics System predict a
~24% decline in drug overdose deaths

in the United States from October 2022–September 2023 to October 2023–September 2024.



COLORADO
Center for Health & Environmental Data
Department of Public Health & Environment

CAHEC Conducted 14 FREE Harm Reduction/Narcan Trainings throughout our region
560 trainees
84 Narcan kits distributed



BE MINDFUL... IT MATTERS!

A Collaborative, Community-driven Mental Health Educational Exhibit

THANK YOU Funding Partners!

Colorado Community College System
Colorado Health Foundation
988 Colorado
Baessler Homes Impact Fund

"The presence of the Be Mindful, It Matters exhibit on our campus had a profound and inspiring impact on our community. The enthusiasm shown by students, faculty, and staff to engage with such a traditionally stigmatized topic was nothing short of astounding. It was inspiring to see so many individuals not only interacting with the exhibit, but also opening up conversations, sharing experiences, and empathizing with one another."

-Shelby Gonzales, Trinidad State College
Coordinator of Student Well-Being

Traveled to 13 sites:

Burlington Farm Pavilion
Estes Park Rec Center
Foothills Mall Ft Collins
Rethinking Addiction Conference
Greeley Rec Center
Clearview Libraries
Evans Riverside Library
Nurse Wellbeing Conference
Lamar Community College
Otero College
Trinidad State College
LINC Library
Union Colony Civic Center
Greeley Philharmonic Orchestra
"A Human Experience" concert



www.cahec.org/bmim



We held two AHEC of a Party events this past year - one in Burlington and one in Greeley.

The events provide exposure to our program all in one place to bring awareness to our work and partnerships.



Our Regional Health Connector Shauna Richardson was successful in getting the Colorado Melanoma Foundation's Sun Bus out to Burlington in June. The mission of The Sun Bus is to reduce the burden of skin diseases, including cancer, through effective screening, education, and research programs.

Colorado experiences a high rate of skin cancer, including melanoma, which is likely linked to the state's high elevation and active outdoor culture.

An **estimated 2,000 new cases of melanoma** are projected each year in **Colorado**, according to the University of Colorado School of Medicine.



Supporting Healthcare Professionals

Compassionate Care Dementia Training

Building empathy and knowledge for positive outcomes in dementia care.



317
Trainees

Pilot trainings conducted at:

- Morgan Community College (nursing and nurse aide)
- Aims Community College (paramedic, nurse aide/med prep)
- University of Northern Colorado (nursing)
- Northeastern Junior College (nursing)

221 Healthcare Students
27 Healthcare professionals
69 Community Members



This session really opened my eyes and allowed me to better understand how dementia feels. I now feel more confident to approach an individual with dementia.

- Aims Community College, Nurse Aide and Medical Preparation student



This experience will significantly influence how our students approach patient care now and in their future healthcare careers.

- Nurse Aide and Medical Preparation faculty, Aims Community College



I feel all caregivers, CNAs, nurses, health care workers should participate in the VDT (Virtual Dementia Tour®). Experiences are the greatest way that education sticks with a person.

- Tonya, Morgan Community College nursing student



Understanding more about the approaches or wording to use to help with dementia patients and really knowing now how overwhelmed they can get and ways to avoid those situations was very helpful.

- UNC School of Nursing student



The SPECAL method was absolutely helpful on seeing how someone with dementia lives on a day to day basis and how to approach them.

- Morgan Community College, Nursing student



[I liked learning] how to interact with these individuals and make them feel as comfortable as possible while providing care.

- Sean, Aims Community College, Paramedic student

www.cahec.org/dementiacaretraining



This whole conference was amazing start to finish. I gained so much for all the teaching ideas shared. And thank you for hosting it in such a beautiful place.

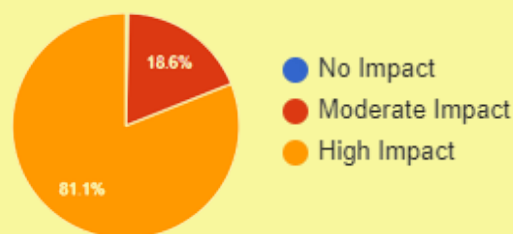
I thoroughly enjoyed every session that I attended. I will change my teaching practices based on this conference, and I will highly recommend it to my colleagues back at my college as I was the only person from my college to attend this year. This conference was invigorating and inspiring!

I Loved everything about the conference and I will recommend this to my co-workers. An abundance of awesome information and helpful tips for teaching!

440

ATTENDEES

Attendee Survey:
Impact of this conference on energy and enthusiasm for educator practice



Lola Fehr NEC in the Rockies Scholarship

In honor of our long-time board member for her decades of service to the nursing profession and years of service to our mission and the Nurse Educators Conference in the Rockies (NEC), the Centennial Area Health Education Center has launched the Lola Fehr NEC in the Rockies Scholarship Fund.

Make a donation in her honor by visiting <https://www.cahec.org/invest> or by mailing a check to CAHEC at 2105 Clubhouse Drive, Greeley CO 80634.

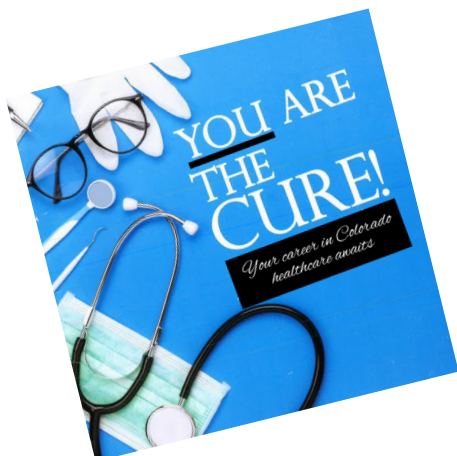
Thank you to the Colorado Nurses Association for their seed gift!

Learn more & donate



www.NECintheRockies.com

Student Programs



406 students attended *Get into the Guts* healthcare career exploration events
(Larimer & Weld counties)

1,100 *You are the Cure* booklets distributed to students in our region

***Healthcare Heroes ABCs* books mailed to
200 elementary schools in our region**

42 students registered in HOPE Program

8 students completed HOPE Institute intensive summer camp

**98 students participated
in Anatomy in Clay® lessons**

(Yuma, Wray, Holyoke, Burlington, Raymer, Estes Park, Greeley)

7 AHEC Scholars graduates



cahec.org/students-and-educators

THANK YOU STUDENT HOSTS!

Dozens of generous
student hosts
provided **188** medical
students with
5,397
nights of housing
during their clinical
rotations

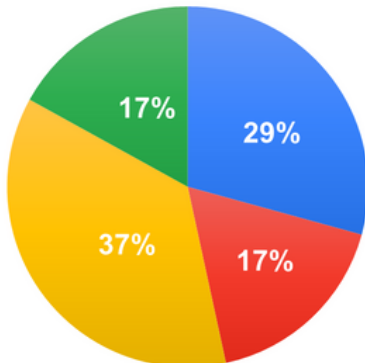
You're helping us
cultivate the future
healthcare
workforce!



www.cahec.org/host-a-student

Protecting Our Future

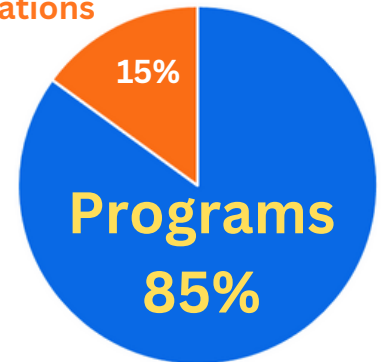
Revenue
\$1,147,203



■ Nurse Educators Conference ■ Student Housing
■ Grants & Sponsorships ■ Other Income

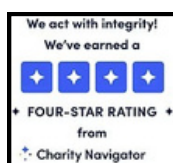
Expenditures
\$819,057

Operations



In anticipation of forthcoming federal and state funding cuts, our board and leadership have built strategic reserves to weather the road ahead. However, we are preparing to invest some funds in the next few years to diversity our funding streams (i.e., launch never-before-needed fundraising initiatives), improve operational efficiencies and maintain our operating reserves to ensure our longevity.

We are seeking opportunities to share our mission and goals for the future with service clubs. Please contact Melissa Jensen at 970.330.3608 if your club would like to learn more.



BUILDING HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES...TOGETHER

We could not accomplish our various mission objectives and goals without the help of our valuable and forward-thinking partners! THANK YOU!!!



University of Colorado
Anschutz Medical Campus



trailhead
INSTITUTE



NORTH RANGE
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH



The Colorado Health Foundation™



THE WELD
TRUST



LARIMER
COUNTY

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES



chfa®



Aims
COMMUNITY COLLEGE



MORGAN
COMMUNITY COLLEGE



NORTHEASTERN
JUNIOR COLLEGE



RED ROCKS
COMMUNITY COLLEGE



ROCKY VISTA UNIVERSITY
COLORADO CAMPUS



**UNIVERSITY OF
NORTHERN
COLORADO**



COLORADO
COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM



IMPACT

988

Colorado
Mental Health
Line



dementia
together



**SECOND WIND
DREAMS**®

Western Colorado

WCAHEC

Area Health Education Center



**United
Way**



United Way of Weld County

Interested in partnering with us?

Contact Melissa Jensen at 970.330.3608

HELP US BUILD HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES!

Investing in the Centennial Area Health Education Center (CAHEC) presents a valuable opportunity to contribute to the enhancement of healthcare education and workforce development in northeastern Colorado and beyond. By investing in CAHEC, you are supporting initiatives that aim to improve the quality of healthcare delivery and foster a pipeline of well-trained healthcare providers. Additionally, your investment can help expand CAHEC's programs, enabling them to reach more individuals and make a lasting impact on public health outcomes. This strategic investment not only benefits the community at large but also contributes to a more robust and sustainable healthcare system. Here are some ways you can support our work with a donation, sponsorship or grant...

Centennial Area Health Education Center Endowment Challenge

Once CAHEC reaches \$10,000 in donations to establish our endowment fund at the Weld Community Foundation, the Weld Community Foundation will match with a \$10,000 contribution. [Donate Here.](#)

Lola Fehr Nurse Educators Conference in the Rockies Scholarship Fund

Centennial Area Health Education Center would like to provide up to five need-based scholarships (totaling \$10,000) to nurse educators or aspiring nurse educators to attend the Nurse Educators Conference in the Rockies where they can learn best teaching practices from and network with fellow nurse educators.

Compassionate Care Dementia Initiative

Our new Compassionate Care Training educates healthcare students and professionals on how to successfully interact with and provide appropriate care for the influx of dementia patients they will encounter in their careers.

- \$100 provides 4 hours of dementia training to a student or healthcare professional.
- \$2,500 would help us purchase an aging body suit to enhance the training
- \$5,000 provides training medical students at one university or community college for one academic year



Donor Name(s): _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Donation Amount:

\$50 \$100 \$250 \$500 Other \$_____

Gift Designation:

- ☐ Endowment Challenge
- ☐ Nurse Educators Conference Scholarship Fund
- ☐ Compassionate Care Initiative
- ☐ General Operating Support

Payment Method:

- ☐ Check made payable to CAHEC enclosed. Mail to 2105 Clubhouse Drive, Greeley CO 80634
- ☐ Please call me for my credit card #