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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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R-AHEC receives grant for Rural Scholars Program

Warsaw, NY (May 16, 2019) – Western New York Rural Area Health Education Center (R-AHEC) is pleased to announce that it is the recipient of a \$6,000 grant from the Northern Chautauqua Community Foundation. This funding will support the purchase of laptop computers for the Rural AHEC Scholars Program. The computers will support student training on current healthcare issues and community-based services research. The Rural AHEC Scholars Program is part of a statewide AHEC program developed to lower costs and support patient-centered care by providing healthcare students with opportunities for interprofessional collaboration and practical experiences with providers in the community.

“We are grateful for the support we have received from the Northern Chautauqua Community Foundation. This award will support our Chautauqua County AHEC Scholars Program students to develop connections and relationships with the people and providers in the Fredonia/Dunkirk community which we hope will be strong enough to foster the desire to serve here in the future,” stated Catherine Huff, Chief Executive Officer at R-AHEC. “The NCCF is proud to be able to partner with R-AHEC on this project, allowing for more students to be able to fully engage in community-based research and training,” stated Eileen Ardillo, Grants Coordinator at NCCF.

The Rural AHEC Scholars Program is dedicated to encouraging highly qualified healthcare professionals to serve the medically underserved regions of Western New York through partnerships with educational institutions that offer healthcare-related programs. Our partnership with SUNY Fredonia is designed to support student learning while exposing future practitioners to the benefits of rural healthcare practice in the Chautauqua region. Our pilot year Scholar cohort of three SUNY Fredonia students, one studying social work and two in pre-med studies, will receive high-quality, touchscreen laptop computers in September and will keep the laptops upon successful completion of the four-semester program. Three to five additional students are expected to join the program this fall.

The NYS AHEC Scholars Program is a two-year, interdisciplinary program with a defined set of clinical, didactic, and community-based training activities. The overarching goal of the AHEC Scholars Program

is for students to gain a valuable understanding about the numerous social and cultural factors that influence an individual's overall health and their ability to access quality care. By exposing students to social, financial, and cultural issues of care, this program aims to support the development of future healthcare professionals who are able to provide high-quality, patient-centric care to all members of their community.

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R-AHEC was formed in 1999 as a non-profit organization, serving a 12-county region of Western New York. Its mission is "to improve health and healthcare through education." R-AHEC focuses on Health Workforce Development; Preceptor Development/Student Housing; Pipeline Programming; and Rural Healthcare Technology Infrastructure Development. In addition, R-AHEC operates the Western NY Rural Broadband Healthcare Network (RBHN), providing subsidies to non-profit healthcare facilities through a point to point fiber optic network. For more information, visit R-AHEC's website at www.r-ahec.org or the RBHN at www.wnyrbhn.org.

This grant was made possible through Northern Chautauqua Community Foundation's generous community-minded donors. The NCCF is committed to improving the community through the promotion of philanthropy, strategic grantmaking, and community leadership. The organization has distributed over \$14 million in the form of grants and scholarships within the community. For more information, call 716-366-4892 or visit www.nccfoundation.org