



2024 ANNUAL REPORT

**MISSION: IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF HEALTHCARE
IN OUR REGION THROUGH WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT, EDUCATION, AND RESOURCES**

VALUES:
COMMUNITY EXCELLENCE
INNOVATION PARTNERSHIP

**VISION: WE ENVISION A FUTURE IN WHICH OUR COMMUNITY IS
SUPPORTED BY HIGH QUALITY, ACCESSIBLE HEALTH RESOURCES
AND A DIVERSE, EDUCATED AND COMPASSIONATE WORKFORCE**

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



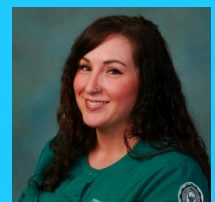
Heather Aldrich
Board President
Sunrise Courts



Kaitlin Pettine
Board Vice President
Genesee and Orleans County
Health Departments



Dr. Nicholas Apostoleris
Board Treasurer
Tri-County Family Medicine



Tiffany Yerico
Board Secretary
Heritage Ministries



Jennifer Rodriguez
Livingston County
Health Department



Dan Ireland
Rochester Regional Health,
Finger Lakes Rural Hospitals



Ann Battaglia
Healthy Community
Alliance



DeNae Gibson
Wyoming County Community
Hospital System



John Curry
Genesee Community
College



Karla Gadley
Five Star Bank



Ericka Elliott
Underberg & Kessler
LLP



Alyssa Coffey
Genesee Valley
BOCES



Melissa Pennise
Finger Lakes Performing
Provider System

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As we look back on another remarkable year, it is with gratitude that I share the 2024 Annual Report with you. This year marked a special milestone for our organization as we celebrated 25 years of advancing the quality of healthcare in our region through workforce development, education, and resources. What an incredible journey it has been!

Our 25th Anniversary celebration, a Mocktail Happy Hour, was attended by many of our friends, former and current board members and staff, supporters, and AHEC originators across New York State, all of whom have played an integral role in the success of this organization. This milestone would not have been possible without the unwavering support of the board, our staff, and our partners.

We are proud of the progress we've made and the lives we've touched, but we know there is still work to be done. Together, we are shaping the future of healthcare in our region, one student, one scholarship, and one training at a time.

Looking ahead, we remain committed to enhancing the quality of healthcare in our region through innovative programs and continued partnerships. Here's to another 25 years of making a difference — together!

Melanie Rhodes, MBA
Executive Director



WNY R-AHEC STAFF



From left, Melanie Rhodes - Executive Director

Sara Longhini - Associate Director

Holly Granger - Program Specialist, RBHN

Andrew Mills - Program Coordinator, RBHN

Erin Brauen - Program Coordinator, Pathways

Jason Fulkerson - Program Manager, Workforce

Christine Chappel - Administrative Coordinator

Liesl Schoonraad - Program Coordinator, Mental Health

Dave Prete - Program Coordinator

Peter Appleton - Program Manager, RBHN

WNY R-AHEC 2024 IMPACT

3,438

Students participated in health career exploration programs.

211

Individuals participated in healthcare related professional development events.

897

Nights provided to healthcare students, healthcare professionals & community members.

1,828

Individuals participated in OPEP Programs.

45

Health professions college students received education & support through AHEC Scholars.

1,776

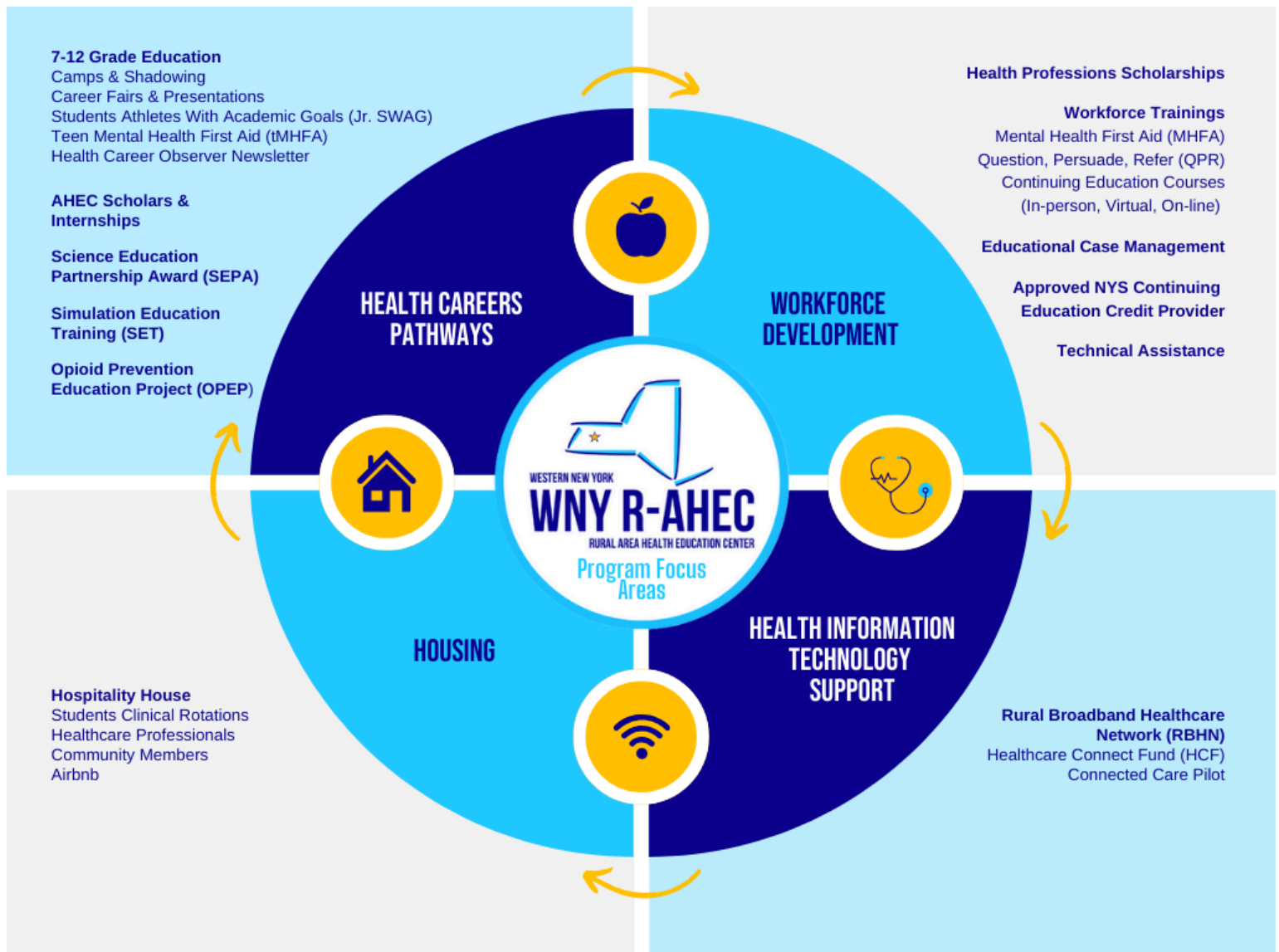
Individuals trained in Teen, Youth, and Adult Mental Health First Aid.

\$6,000

Awarded in high school health careers scholarships.

200

Active Rural Broadband Healthcare Network (RBHN) Sites.

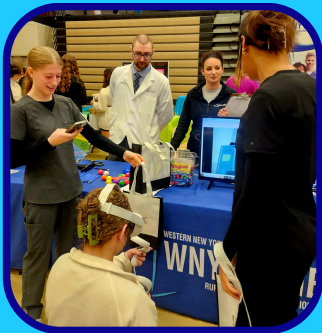




WNY R-AHEC PROGRAMS

PATHWAYS

- 3,438** Students participated in pathways activities
- 139** Schools (public/private/BOCES), receive monthly Health Career Observer Newsletters
- 10** Health Career Observer newsletters distributed
- 1,675** Students reached through healthcare presentations or career fair events



AHEC SCHOLARS

- Completed the 2-year program in August 2024, 1,120 training hours **14**
- Completed the 1st year of program in August 2024, 880 training hours **11**
- AHEC Scholars training hours **2,000**
- Recruited for year-one of program beginning in September 2024 **20**
- Partnering Colleges & Universities **11**
- AHEC Scholars stipends awarded in 2024 **\$25,725**



AHEC Scholar
Lesley Monge
St. Bonaventure University
Physician Assistant
Program

MEDICAL ACADEMY FOR SCIENCE & HEALTH CAMPS (MASH CAMPS)



"Thank you for helping me discover the healthcare field and open my eyes to the world of medicine!"

Devon O.
Camp Student

83

Youth
Participants

Number of
Camps

5

2,934
Hours of
Camp
Programming

HEALTH CAREERS OPPORTUNITIES PROGRAM (HCOP)



Five year summer program (2024-2028), students onsite at R-AHEC while spending one week on the D'Youville Campus. Students participate in a variety of programming through hands on learning experiences, shadowing opportunities, outings into the community, presentations from healthcare professionals, games and activities, CPR & FA, Stop the Bleed, tMHFA, and many others.



PARTNERSHIP WITH
D'YOUVILLE UNIVERSITY

6 WEEK CAMP,
108 HOURS PER
STUDENT

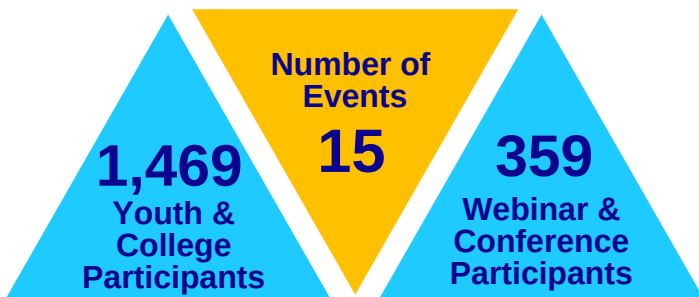
25 STUDENTS
FROM 9 COUNTIES

2,700 HOURS OF
CAMP
PROGRAMMING



WNY R-AHEC PROGRAMS

OPIOID PREVENTION EDUCATION PROJECT (OPEP)



SCIENCE EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP AWARD (SEPA)



The Metagenomics Education Partnership: Harnessing the power of Microbial Genome Sequencing. Students and teachers have the opportunity to learn how to use metagenomic data tools to conduct research about organisms in local waterways in partnership with Dr. Koury at the University of Buffalo teaching students how to prep water samples and load into sequencers.

FIVE YEAR
PROGRAM
2020-2025

13 SCHOOLS
PARTICIPATING WITH
95 PARTICIPATING
STUDENTS

CAPSTONE
PROJECT; 111
STUDENTS

SIMULATION EDUCATION TRAINING (SET)

388 Students participated in Simulation Education Training

Simulation Education Training immerses students in medical virtual reality scenarios, allowing for experiential learning in a virtual setting. Students choose between career scenarios, such as EMT, Emergency Room, Pharmacy, Surgical Tech, or performing infection prevention, taking vitals, assisting with a patient's ADL's or CPR.



PROVIDERS AND TEENS COMMUNICATING FOR HEALTH (PATCH)



10
Patch
Educators

73
Providers

35
Teens

Designed to bridge the communication gap between healthcare providers and teenagers. PATCH empowers teens to take an active role in their healthcare while equipping providers with the skills to create a more welcoming and effective environment for adolescent patients. Through workshops and peer education, PATCH builds trust, fosters open dialogue, and empowers teens in their healthcare decisions.



2024 HIGHLIGHTS



OPEP

Opioid Prevention
Education Project



PATCH

Providers And Teens
Communicating for Health



Pathway Programs

Career Fairs &
Tabling Events



Mental Health First Aid

Youth & Adult MHFA



Hospitality House

Housing for Medical Students
and Healthcare Professionals



MASH Camps

Medical Academy for
Science & Health Camp



AHEC Scholars

Anna Russell, UR
Medical Doctor Program



Pathway Programs

School Health Careers
Presentations



SET

Simulation Education
Training



2024 HIGHLIGHTS



RBHN

Rural Broadband
Healthcare Network



Statewide Office Meetings

Collaboration with sister
AHECs throughout NYS



HCOP Summer Program

Health Careers
Opportunity Program



Mental Health First Aid

Teen MHFA



HCOP Summer Program

Health Careers
Opportunity Program



R-AHEC 25th Anniversary

Celebrated with a Mocktail
Happy Hour



Health Careers Scholarship

Awarded \$1,000 Scholarships



Pathway Programs

Hands-on & Engaging
Youth Events



Internships

Provided Healthcare &
Workforce Experience



WNY R-AHEC PROGRAMS

MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID (MHFA)



Adult, Youth & Teen Mental Health First Aid trainings through the National Council for Mental Wellbeing, an international, evidence-based program that teaches people to identify, understand, and respond to signs and symptoms of mental health and substance use challenges. Teen MHFA builds a powerful community of teens ages 15-18 by teaching them how to support a friend or classmate.

69% of responding teens reported an increased level of importance in learning skills to help peers/friends with mental health challenges or crises (86% demonstrated a very high or high percentage in their level of importance in learning skills to help peers/friends with mental health challenges or crises via the post test.



"I feel more confident that I better understand signs of a mental health crisis."

Adult MHFA Participant

"Our schools need this information and help so thank you for working with us to help us meet the needs of our students and families."

Youth MHFA Participant



"I wasn't sure how to help my friends and this class helped me understand how I can help them when they are struggling with their mental health."

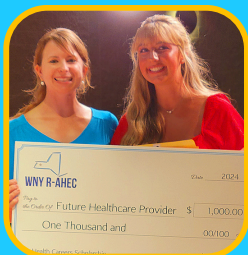
Teen MHFA Participant

HEALTH CAREERS SCHOLARSHIP

In the inaugural year, WNY R-AHEC awarded \$1,000 scholarships to six graduating seniors attending a college or certification program in a healthcare field in our 12-county catchment area. Congratulations to these promising future Healthcare Professionals!

\$6,000 in High School Scholarships Awarded

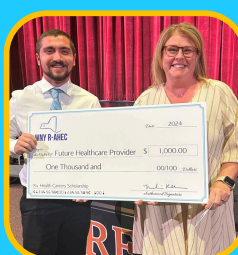
Kenna of Genesee County, attending SUNY Geneseo for Psychology
 Lauren of Wayne County, attending Nazareth University for Physical Therapy
 Jack of Chautauqua County, attending St. John Fisher University for Pharmacy
 Autumn of Cattaraugus County, attending Jamestown Community College for Nursing
 Haley of Steuben County, attending Alfred State for Radiologic Technology
 Isobel of Livingston County, attending St. John Fisher University for Nursing



Kenna, Psychology



Lauren, Physical Therapy



Jack, Pharmacy



Autumn, Nursing



Haley, Radiologic Technology



Isobel, Nursing



WNY R-AHEC PROGRAMS

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

**211 Individuals Trained
439 Training Hours**

In the following courses and partnerships:
Social Determinants of Health
Care Coordinator Certificate Program
Health Equity
Burnout and Resiliency

Partnered with:
WNYICC, Compliance Training
STWHWP & Riveon Mental Health, Care Coordinator
Finger Lakes Occupational Health, Kristin Chalmers
University at Buffalo & IHS, SDOH



RPHWTP grantee representatives from Southern Dakota State University, and Jason Fulkerson, Workforce Program Coordinator

**NYSED Approved Provider for
Continuing Education in:
Social Work, Physical Therapy,
Occupational Therapy, Licensed Mental Health
Professionals, Speech Language Pathology**

**411
Credit Hours
Awarded**

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Western New York Rural AHEC is a technical assistance provider for the Rural Public Health Workforce Training Program. This is a unique grant program in partnership with that National AHEC Organization, offered by the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy, focused on expanding public health capacity by supporting health care job development, training and placement in rural and tribal communities.

3 SITE VISITS

NY State Grantees Peer to Peer visit
Syracuse, NY
Michigan Center for Rural Health
Marquette, MI
South Dakota State University
Brookings, SD
Annual Program Meeting
Atlanta, GA

AHEC WEBINAR SERIES

Four Lunch and Learn webinars attended
by 326 total participants offered in
collaboration with:

Erie Niagara AHEC
Central New York AHEC
Northern Area AHEC
Hudson Mohawk AHEC
Catskill Hudson AHEC

Topics Included:
LGBTQ+ Cultural Competency
Motivational Interviewing
Trauma Informed Care
Race and Bias in Healthcare

**102 PARTICIPANTS PARTICIPATED
FROM THE WNY R-AHEC COUNTIES**



WNY R-AHEC PROGRAMS

HEALTH INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT, RURAL BROADBAND HEALTHCARE NETWORK (RBHN)

\$16,621,633.29 IN TOTAL COMMITMENTS SINCE FY2015

The Western New York Rural Area Health Education Center's Rural Broadband Healthcare Network (RBHN) is a consortium of health care providers (HCPs) in rural, urban and medically underserved areas that qualify and participate in the FCC's Healthcare Connect Fund. Eligible facilities include Rural Health Clinics, Hospitals, FQHCs, Health Departments, Skilled Nursing Facilities, Teaching Hospitals, Community Mental Health Centers, Data Centers, and Admin Offices. These HCPs can save up to 65% off their broadband, fiber and equipment services.

**\$2,202,102.27
IN FISCAL YEAR 2024 COMMITMENTS**

**200 ACTIVE
SITES**

**24 COUNTIES
IN NY**

**33
PARTICIPATING
ORGANIZATIONS**

**3 STATES
NY, PA, MA**

HOSPITALITY HOUSE

34 Medical Students
& Vet Students

37 Healthcare Professionals
& Community Guests

254 Airbnb Guests

Over 897 nights provided to healthcare students,
healthcare professionals & community members.

**429 additional nights provided to Airbnb guests*

“You don't know how much this
means to night shift workers
that you can accommodate our
needs”

Healthcare Professional



25TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

The WNY R-AHEC 25th Anniversary Celebration was held in August with a Mocktail Happy Hour. The Greater Rochester Health Foundation sponsored the event and the Wyoming County Chamber of Commerce who conducted a ribbon cutting ceremony. We welcomed county and government staff, past and current board members, former and current employees, representatives from the Statewide Office and sister AHECs, as well as several funders and partners. The NYS Senate issued a Proclamation signed by George M. Borrello, NYS Senator of the 57th Senate District.





2024 FINANCIAL REPORT

Income:

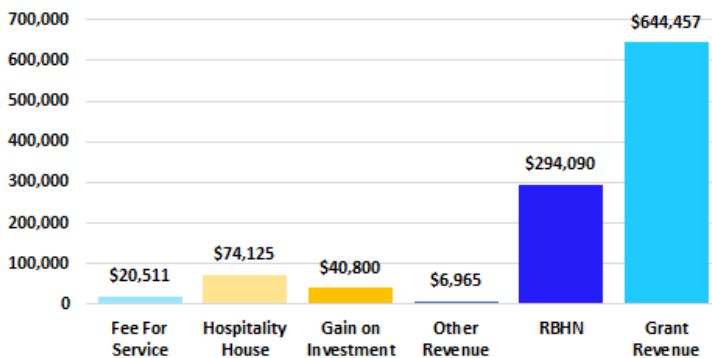
Grant Revenue	\$644,457
RBHN	\$294,090
Other Revenue	\$6,965
Fee For Service	\$20,511
Hospitality House	\$74,125
Gain On Investment	\$40,800
Total Revenues	\$1,080,947

Expenses:

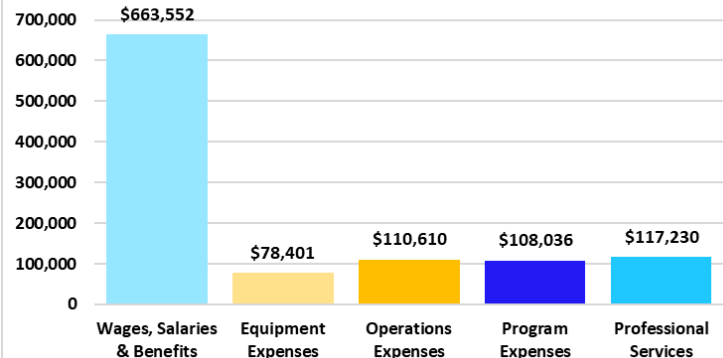
Wages, Salaries & Benefits	\$663,552
Equipment Expenses	\$78,401
Operations Expenses	\$110,610
Program Expenses	\$108,036
Professional Services	\$117,230
Total Expenses	\$1,077,830
Net Income	\$3,117

**unaudited financials*

2024 Income



2024 Expenses



INVESTMENT AGENCY ACCOUNT AS OF 12/31/24
\$411,715.77

SCHOLARSHIP ACCOUNT AS OF 12/31/24
\$36,867.55

FUNDERS

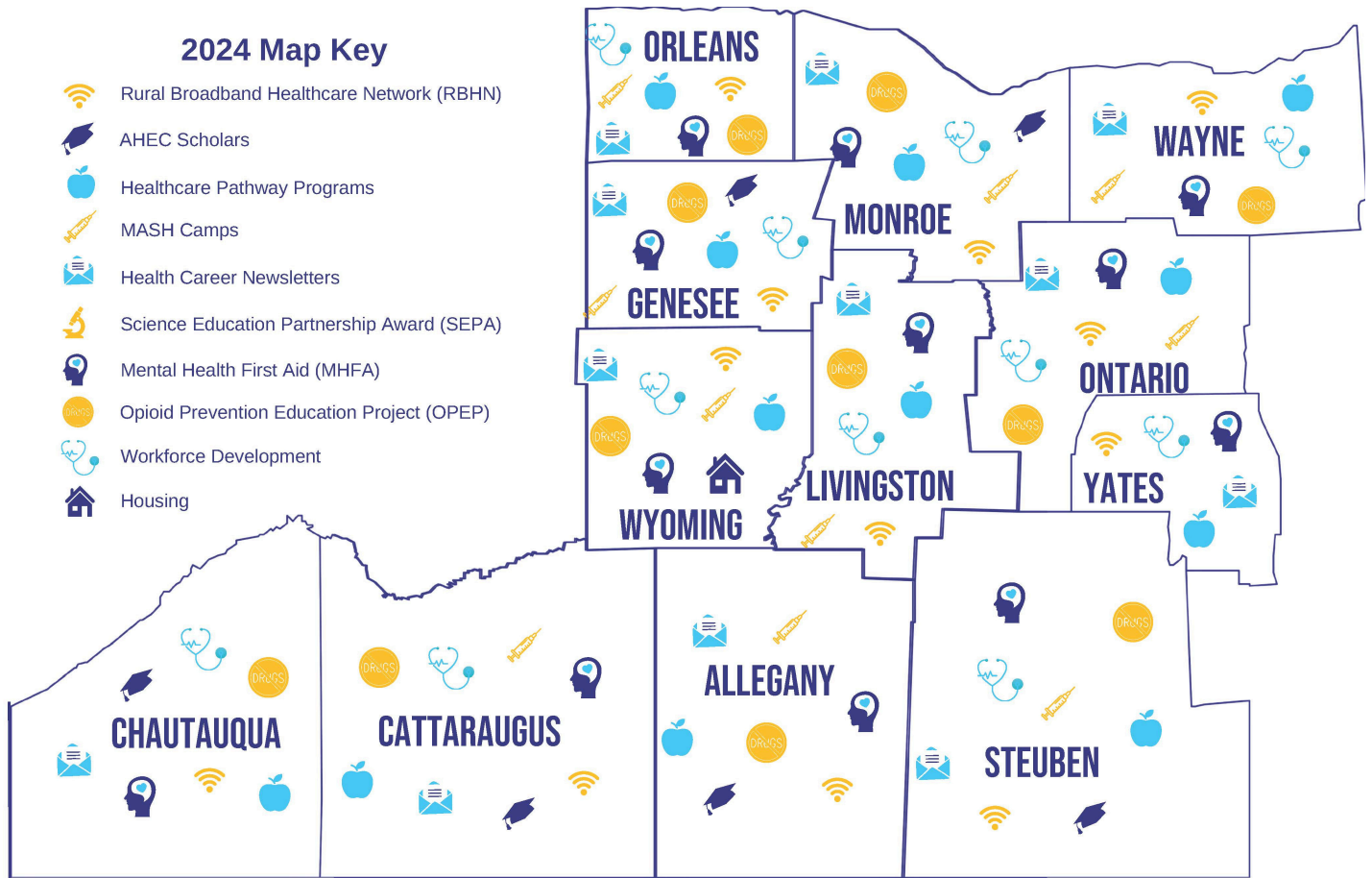
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), Mental Health Awareness Training Grant
- ESL Charitable Foundation
- Five Star Bank
- Garman Family Foundation administered by the Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo
- Greater Rochester Health Foundation
- HRSA, Federal HRSA (OPEP, SET)
- HRSA Health Careers Opportunity Program (HCOP) in Partnership with D'Youville University
- John R. Oishei Foundation
- Mary Clark Thompson Community Health Grant
- National AHEC Organization, Rural Public Health Workforce Training Network Program
- NYS Department of Health
- Rural Housing Service, USDA
- The Margaret L. Wendt Foundation
- United Way of Greater Rochester and the Finger Lakes
- University of Buffalo Foundation, SEPA
- Wayne County Community Endowment at Rochester Area Community Foundation
- Wyoming Foundation, CFGF



PROGRAM MAP

2024 Map Key

- Rural Broadband Healthcare Network (RBHN)
- AHEC Scholars
- Healthcare Pathway Programs
- MASH Camps
- Health Career Newsletters
- Science Education Partnership Award (SEPA)
- Mental Health First Aid (MHFA)
- Opioid Prevention Education Project (OPEP)
- Workforce Development
- Housing



FOLLOW US



www.facebook.com/WNYRuralAHEC

www.x.com/WNYRAHEC

www.linkedin.com/company/wny-rural-ahec

www.instagram.com/wny_rahec

www.instagram.com/thielhospitalityhouse

CONTACT US



20 Duncan Street,
Warsaw, NY 14569

585-786-6275

info@r-ahec.org

www.r-ahec.org

This organization is supported in part by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) under Grant number U77HP16459 and project title New York State Area Health Education Center System. The information or content and conclusions are those of the author and should not be construed as the official position or policy of, nor should any endorsements be inferred by HRSA, HHS or the U.S. Government.

WNY R-AHEC is an equal opportunity employer and provider.