

GVAHEC Report

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The GVAHEC@LifeBridge location in North Phoenix has helped the resource center of LifeBridge Community Alliance to develop a streamlined referral system. The social work interns at that office are learning hands-on how to refer community members to services that include housing, food, access to healthcare and other primary services. At the same time, they are collecting information to help understand what other services are needed to improve the populations' health. This is a great experience for students to improve social determinants of health in this community.

GVAHEC's work with high school students was expanded this year. GVAHEC nutrition interns and staff supported the health career class at Combs High School by providing lessons on medical nutrition specific to diabetes and gastrointestinal issues. The students in the class at Combs continued into their four-week clinical rotations over the summer at Banner Ironwood Medical Center to complete their certification as nursing assistants. In 2014, GVAHEC was the host for the Future Health Leaders Camp, held at Grand Canyon University campus with 34 students in attendance. This was the first time GVAHEC was the host, and it really was a great experience. The students were able to visit a cadaver lab, a simulation lab and the Tempe Fire Department's first responders. They were also able to spend time volunteering at the St. Vincent DePaul resource center.



MA students providing health screenings at a community food drop in Apache Junction

GVAHEC nutrition staff created a "Chopped" lesson plan where students worked in teams to use a food box and make a complete MyPlate meal. Additional activities fostered team building, college preparation and professional networking.

In August 2014 GVAHEC coordinated with Central Arizona Valley Institute of Technology (CAVIT) to bring out 64 medical assistant (MA) students to provide health screenings at the community food drop in Apache Junction. The students provided cholesterol, blood pressure, blood glucose and vision screenings. They also helped with the food distribution. Tiffany Brown, the MA instructor, felt that having the students come out and work with the community was an important part of the MA program. The partnership was so successful that plans are underway to have smaller groups of students come out every month to offer the screenings and help with food distribution.

GVAHEC is working in the Workforce Development Committee of the Phoenix Maricopa Healthcare Workforce Sector Partnership. The sector partnership is developing a virtual database of healthcare workforce supply and demand data in primary care. The information will be used by education institutions and healthcare employers to connect areas of healthcare shortages with healthcare professionals. GVAHEC is hopeful this project will help to reduce the shortages of healthcare professionals in our rural and underserved areas.

It is always great to look back over the year and see all the wonderful work the GVAHEC staff and interns do within our region. There is never a dull moment and it is so exciting to see how the work we do with our future health professionals does really get them excited and into the workforce where they are needed.



FHL campers visiting the Tempe Fire Department