

# INTERIOR ALASKA AHEC

Healthcare Workforce Development for the Interior

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## A partnership with Fairbanks Memorial Hospital/Denali Center and the University of Alaska Anchorage

- *Recruitment into Health Careers*
- *Assistance to Students Scheduling Clinical Rotations*
- *Retention of Rural Providers through Expanded Continuing Education Opportunities*

## PROGRAM LAUNCH: TEACHER—INDUSTRY EXTERNSHIP

Three teachers from the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District will be spending part of their summer vacation in the hospital. The Teacher-Industry Externship (TIE) Program for healthcare careers is a partnership between the Interior AHEC and the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development. The three successful applicants will each spend a two-week session in job shadowing activities at the hospital and completing a special project.

The most exciting aspect of the externships is that the teachers will have a direct and first-hand opportunity to upgrade their knowledge, skills and understanding of the health care environment, and to learn how they can impact their students' career decisions. "This will result in the teachers discovering ways to increase relevancy and apply real-world skills to the classroom, resulting in

a better prepared workforce," said Gerald Munyon, Career and Technical Education Coordinator for the school district. The teachers will earn a stipend as well as three continuing education credits from University of Alaska Anchorage upon completion of the course requirements.

During the three-week application period in April, Interior AHEC received 15 applications. The review committee had their work cut out for them, with many qualified teachers interested in the opportunity. The plan was to award two positions, but the choice was too hard! So with a slight budget readjustment and help from the Program Office, the committee was able to inform the top three applicants of the decision to award three positions. Successful applicants are Amy Brown, Math teacher at Hutchison High School; Kim Kelly, Special Education

## INTEGRATION AND OUTREACH

The Interior AHEC team has a big job to do: integrating our program and services for Fairbanks Memorial Hospital/Denali Center staff, and at the same time finding ways to extend our reach throughout the Interior region of the state.

Our strategy follows this plan: **creating relationships** as we make and maintain con-

tacts with partners; **creating programs** as we learn more from our partners about what they need and how we can help; and **finding funding** to implement the program ideas in the real world.

It is gratifying to watch awareness of the program grow in the hospital. We are now the first to be called when a staff person is ap-

proached for a job shadow opportunity, or if a student needs to arrange a clinical rotation in a department.

The most exciting part is realizing the role the hospital is taking as a regional teaching facility, sharing the tremendous resources of this skilled and caring staff to help Alaska's Interior build a healthcare workforce ready to serve every one of us.

## Contact Us:

Lillian Ruedrich (907)458-6417  
Director  
[lillian.ruedrich@bannerhealth.com](mailto:lillian.ruedrich@bannerhealth.com)

Tania Clucas (907)458-6416  
Education Specialist  
[tania.clucas@bannerhealth.com](mailto:tania.clucas@bannerhealth.com)

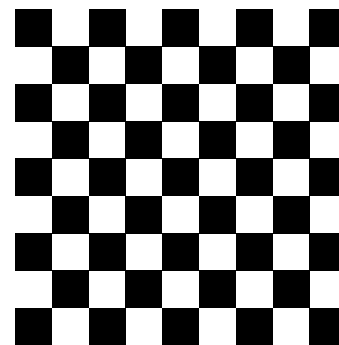
Russell Amerson (907)458-6409  
Clinical Rotation Coordinator  
[russell.amerson@bannerhealth.com](mailto:russell.amerson@bannerhealth.com)

Kitty Griffin (907)458-6953  
Administrative Assistant  
[kitty.griffin@bannerhealth.com](mailto:kitty.griffin@bannerhealth.com)

[www.interiorahec.com](http://www.interiorahec.com)

teacher at Two Rivers School and adjunct faculty at UAF; and Dave Schmitz, Science teacher at North Pole High School. Congratulations!

Hospital staff are looking forward to working with these individuals to inform them of the many healthcare career options for Alaska's youth, and Interior AHEC looks forward to the project results that will undoubtedly help to spread the word further through the school district community of educators.



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## INTERIOR ALASKA AHEC

### 58 CERTIFIED NURSE AIDE STUDENTS ROTATE THROUGH DENALI CENTER

This spring semester, the Denali Center long-term care facility co-located with Fairbanks Memorial Hospital provided 58 certified nurse aide students the clinical rotation experience required to complete their coursework and sit for their state certification exam. One group of students traveled to Fairbanks from Dillingham for the hands-on work after completing the classroom work in a distance format, and the remainder are enrolled in regular classes at Hutchison High School and the Tanana Valley Campus Center (TVCC) of UAF. All class sections are part of the TVCC program, and result from partnerships between the campus, Denali Center and various agencies.

This successful collaboration involves some very dedicated individuals, including the UAF-TVC Allied Health faculty member Cathy Winfree and the staff development coordinator at Denali Center, Beverly McClendon. “If it weren’t for Beverly McClendon at Denali Center and Cathy Winfree at TVC, this program would not happen,” says Russ Amerson, Interior AHEC Clinical Rotations Coordinator.

The students must each spend 48 hours doing their clinical rotation, and since some of the classes are compressed into a shorter timeframe, total hours are scheduled over the course of a semester for some and in a two-week period for others. The scheduling can be quite a challenge, but Bev works it out on the Denali Center end and Cathy gets her students ready on the classroom end.

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An exciting development with the program is the interest being shown by other potential partners, and a return engagement partnership with UAF’s Nome campus and NACTEC. Interior AHEC will be able to assist with two groups coming in from Nome in May and September in a repeat of a successful experience from last year at this time. Ilisagvik College in Barrow is organizing a class, as is the Galena residential high school and the Yukon-Koyukuk School District. There will be an additional group traveling to Fairbanks from Dillingham later this spring as well.

It’s wonderful to be a part of this collaboration, bringing healthcare education to so many students. For more information, call Russ Amerson (458-6409).

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## YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES FOCUS GROUP



Interior AHEC will convene a group of Fairbanks youth workers and professionals in early June to discuss ideas on how to reach youth who may be interested in learning about behavioral health careers. This activity will allow us to plan more specifically how we can assist the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority in their goal of promoting careers that serve their beneficiary groups: mental and behavioral health, long term care and disabilities.

We hope to identify various populations of young people accessible through established youth programs, and the agencies with dedicated staff in place available to deliver

the information about health careers. Our target for group membership will be behavioral health agencies, school programs, and any other relevant agencies that may already have outreach activities and programs to which we could add value with our job shadow program or a speakers bureau.

We are looking for partners to engage with us as we investigate the issue and plan a program. If you have an interest or know of someone who might contribute to our effort, please contact one of us: Lillian Ruedrich (458-6417) or Tania Clucas (458-6416).