



S.KY AHEC REPORT



Participants check in early Friday morning at the 20th Annual AHEC Summer Conference.

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Two decades later, still educating

To dozens of health professionals in the Southern Kentucky region, some things about June never change. They know, for example, that it will be hot and humid. They know they'll either enjoy a vacation or work extra to cover for a co-worker's vacation. And they know they'll attend the AHEC Summer Conference.

In fact, those who attended this year's conference were witness to its 20th anniversary.

Summer Conference, the brain-child of Anna Jones and James Jones, began as a four-hour respiratory therapy program at Baptist Regional Hospital in Corbin. It has

steadily grown and now is a two-day, multi-disciplinary, 12-hour event, one that many look forward to every year.

One-hundred, forty attended this year's conference, which was entitled "Where to from here?" and featured sessions on everything from the art of asthma therapy to social media in healthcare.




"We have always worked to cover pertinent topics in healthcare," Anna Jones said, "bringing up-to-date information to local practitioners. We look forward to it every year. It's so rewarding to see the education break down barriers to better healthcare."

"It's so rewarding to see the education break down barriers to better healthcare."

- Anna Jones, Outreach Education Coordinator, Southern KY AHEC

By the numbers

April, May, June 2011

-  Health careers / education participants: 3075
-  Continuing Medical Education attendees: 787
-  Community education: 1952
-  Medical Library services: 204
-  Student rotations: 103
-  AD/Special project participants: 11

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Curious kids go to camp

Twenty-six eighth and ninth grade students curious about medical careers attended Southern KY Area Health Education Center's MASH Camp 2011 (Medical Academy of Science & Health 2011) hosted at Rockcastle Hospital in June. Hospital employees demonstrated how a healthcare team is involved in the many facets of patient-care through engaging hands-on activities and equipment demonstrations as campers rotated through.

Students from Rockcastle, Laurel and Lincoln counties learned that both clinical and non-clinical healthcare professionals work as fingers to form the helping hands of patients' care. From suturing bananas in the operating room to processing bananas with hospital Chef Shannon to make healthy foods, campers explored the gamut of acute to preventive patient care.

Community relations director Arielle Reese and chaplain Luther Allen broadened campers' perspectives on essential non-clinical components of healthcare. Healthcare and marital couple Dr. Callie Shaffer and social services director Mikhael Shaffer, shared their perspectives

as well.

Dr. James Chism, local veterinarian, hosted MASH camp to expand even further the definition of healthcare patient. Just as Dr. Chism shared with campers about the diagnostic challenges of working with non-talking patients, Jasmine, his very talkative office parrot, entertained the group with her funny quips and contagious laughter. MASH campers 'climbed the wall' and roped their way through challenge courses during the Wayne County field trip to Team Leadership Center as Director Norrie Wake effectively applied these team development and leadership skills they gained as it related to the healthcare team.

On the field trip to UK, curious MASH campers explored the teamwork involved in the body's organ systems through handling and studying body organs, and practicing virtual surgery at UK's Minimal Invasive Surgery laboratory. No doubt by

the end of camp, students had broadened their healthcare perspective through this Southern KY AHEC enrichment program.



Vince Holcomb and Rajeev Jadhav take part in hands-on healthcare.

Cheyenne Gilliam of Livingston and Barrett James of Laurel County learn anatomy. At far right, Steve Griffin and Amy Navarre, EMTs with the Rockcastle Emergency Medical Service, demonstrate emergency care techniques as Rakhi Patel plays the accident victim.



camp snapshots

Understanding health literacy

The Southern AHEC is drilling down on a topic that needs attention.

Health literacy is the degree to which individuals have the capacity to obtain, process, and understand basic health information and services needed to make appropriate health decisions. Low health literacy results in outcomes that include:

- Poorer overall health status
- Higher rates of emergency department use
- Lower utilization of preventive services
- Increased difficulty in managing chronic conditions such as diabetes and congestive heart failure
- Financial costs estimated at between \$106 and \$238 billion dollars annually.

The Southern AHEC region is not immune from the need for increased health literacy education, and we've begun developing a strategy to make as big of an impact as possible with the resources that we have.

Academic Detailer Shirley Balman is spearheading our activities, which have included:

- developing educational modules to be delivered at providers' offices
- presenting to diverse groups of health professionals at continuing education conferences
- working with Rockcastle Regional Hospital on a health literacy pilot project. The goal is to develop a process that will assist hospitals in assessing health literacy awareness among caregivers, and identify barriers to



Rockcastle Regional Hospital's Tammy Brock discussed communication and health literacy with a participant of the men's health fair.

patients' understanding of the care they are receiving within the organization.

- Developing and delivering education such as "Ask Me 3" to community groups.

We are also working with the University of Kentucky College of Communication on a project that would examine communication barriers between physician and patient. In April, Center Director Dwain Harris appeared on the College's Health Literacy Colloquium to discuss AHEC's role in health literacy education.


When the menu of educational strategies is fully developed, the So. AHEC will seek more funding opportunities specific to health literacy.


Dwain Harris took part in the University of Kentucky College of Communication's Health Literacy Colloquium to discuss AHEC's role in health literacy education. Pictured are, from left, Dr. M. Raynor Mullins, Public Health Dentist and Emeritus Faculty, College of Dentistry, University of Kentucky, Harris, Dr. Dan O'Hair, Dean of the University of Kentucky College of Communications, Dr. Elisia L. Cohen, Assistant Professor of Communication, Dr. Phil Schervish, Grants Coordinator for Norton Cancer Institute




upcoming events

 **July 19-22, 2011** "HC3 Camp" — Danville, KY

 **July 21 & 22, 2011** "KRHA Conference: Getting Back to the Roots of Rural Health"— Holiday Inn University Plaza, Bowling Green, KY

 **September 15, 2011** "Pulmonary Cardiovascular Issues - Making the Connection" - Fayette County Extension Service - Lexington, KY

 **September 10, 2011** "Babies Rock" - Rockcastle High School, Mt. Vernon, KY

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