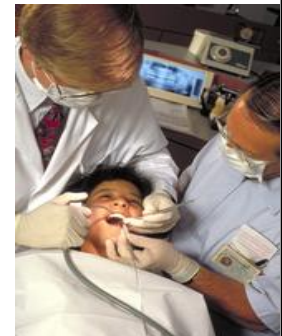
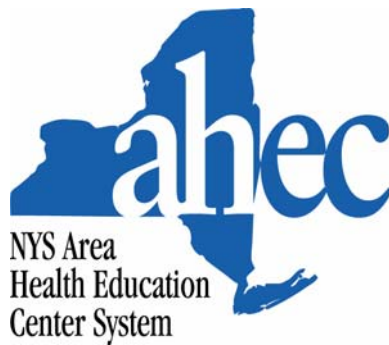




*Year 2 of Pilot
Study:*



***INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES
OF STUDENT PIPELINE
PROGRAMS***



Prepared by:

**Evaluation Unit, New York State AHEC
System Statewide Office**

July 23, 2009



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In January 2009 the New York State Area Health Education Center (AHEC) System conducted the second survey of a pilot study to track the intent to pursue and actual pursuit of health care careers by former AHEC pipeline/enrichment program participants. The results of this follow-up to year one of the pilot study (2007-2008) will provide a detailed picture of the career paths of former participants. Surveys were mailed to 2,748 students who were at the age where they would be a high school senior or in college, who had participated in at least five hours of AHEC programming, and for whom there were addresses entered into the tracking database. Two hundred and seventy four students responded and 154 surveys were returned by the post office without a forwarding address (adjusted response rate: 10.6%). The respondent population was representative of the population to whom surveys were mailed in terms of represented NYS AHECs.

Surveys queried students' current educational status (high school, college, trade school, or other), their intent to pursue further education in a health care field, whether they would consider working in an underserved region, whether they had volunteered in a health care field, and whether they were employed already in a health care field. About two thirds of respondents (65.4%) indicated that they plan to pursue a health care career. The most frequently cited planned health careers were as a physician or nurse.

The number of hours of AHEC programs that respondents had participated in positively correlated with both their intent to pursue a health care career and their perception that AHEC influenced that decision. Nearly half of the students plan to pursue employment in an underserved rural or urban region. Though not statistically significant, disadvantaged respondents were slightly more likely than non-disadvantaged students to report that they planned to pursue a health care career. Many (21%) of the respondents were already working in a health care field. Of those who provided details on health care employment, about half (15/31) were working in an area designated as HPSA, MUA, and/or MUP.

Most students (82%) who plan to or are pursuing a health care career indicated that participation in an AHEC program influenced that decision. The results of this survey indicate that NYS AHEC System is accomplishing the goal of connecting students to health care careers.

BACKGROUND

In November 2007, the New York State Area Health Education Center (AHEC) System conducted a statewide evaluation to measure the impact of its programs. As part of this statewide evaluation initiative, a survey was developed to track the intent to pursue and actual pursuit of health care careers by former AHEC pipeline/enrichment program participants. The first year of this pilot study informed a revision of the survey for year two that will provide a detailed picture of the career paths of former participants.

In the assessment of health careers promotion programs we are interested in the following outcomes:

1. Increased intention to go into a health care career
2. Interest in working in areas of need
3. Increased matriculation into health training programs
4. Completed health training program
5. Intention to practice in rural or urban underserved areas

The goal of this pilot survey is to provide information about the effectiveness of the effort to improve training, recruitment, and distribution of health care providers in New York's medically underserved communities. The survey specifically targets outcomes 1 and 5. This goal was accomplished by measuring whether former AHEC enrichment program participants had already pursued a health care career if they had completed school, and if they were still in school, whether they intended to pursue a health care career. To address outcome 5, they were asked whether they would consider working in an urban or rural underserved area.

METHODS

In December 2008, contact information for participants who were high school and college age, had attended at least five hours of AHEC programming, and for whom complete address information was available, were acquired by the New York State AHEC System Statewide Office from the data tracking system for the annual longitudinal tracking mailing. Programs that met these criteria include those targeting middle school and high school students like MASH Camp, MedStep, MedQuest, and Scrubs Club. A full list of programs in which survey respondents participated can be found in Appendix A. Past participants who were approximately ages 16-23 in December 2008 were sent a survey by the Statewide Office asking them to describe their career plans. This age range was selected because these are critical years for career decision making. This mailing also functioned to update contact information for AHEC participants. The database was updated for surveys returned due to incorrect and /or new addresses.

On the survey, students were given the option to complete it online or complete the paper form and return it in the postage-paid envelope. The survey questions were:

1. You are currently attending (please check one) high school (what school and year), college (what school, year, and major), trade school (what school, year, and specialty), or other (please explain)?

2. If in school, are you planning a career in health care?
3. If yes, what are your plans?
4. Upon completing your school/training, do you intend to pursue health care employment in an underserved rural or urban area?
5. If yes, please explain.
6. Have you volunteered in a health care field?
7. If yes, please explain.
8. Have you pursued employment within health care?
9. If yes, what field/profession?
10. If currently employed in a position in health care, please indicate the name and address of your employer.
11. Did participating in an AHEC program influence your decision to pursue a health care career?
12. If yes, please explain.

RESULTS

In January 2009, surveys were sent to students whose birthdates were between September 1, 1985 and August 31, 1992 in order to reach students between the ages of 16 and 23. It is likely that these students are between their junior year of high school and one-two years out of college. As birthdates are not known for all past participants, students who participated in a high school program between January 1, 2002 and December 31, 2005 were also included. This was a conservative estimate in order to capture only those who were high school juniors or older at the time of the survey mailing. For example, those who were in 9th grade in the Spring or Fall semester of 2002 would have been in 12th grade in the Spring or Fall 2006 semester. The 309 students who completed and returned surveys in 2007 were subtracted from the total number.

This list was distributed to all nine NYS AHECs to review and add names where appropriate, which resulted in a final mailing to 2,748 past participants. Two hundred seventy four (274) returned the survey during the data collection period, representing a 10% response rate. Forty four (44) of the 274 responded via Survey Monkey (16%), while the remaining responded using the paper form. A total of 154 surveys were returned by the post office either with or without a forwarding address. Using 2,594 as the new denominator, the true response rate is 10.6%.

Demographics:

More than two thirds (69.3%) of respondents were classified as minority and/or disadvantaged (Figure 1). Students were categorized as disadvantaged based on the fulfillment of at least one of the following criteria:

1. Attend/attended a high school with low average SAT scores or below average State test results.
2. Attend/attended a high school where at least 30% of enrolled students are eligible for free or reduced price lunch.
3. Attend/attended a high school where 50% or less of graduates go to college.
4. Person who has a diagnosed physical or mental impairment that substantially limits participation in educational experiences.

5. Person for whom English is not their primary language and for whom language is still a barrier to their academic performance.
6. Person who is first generation to attend college and who is from a rural or urban area or receiving public assistance.

Data on race/ethnicity was unavailable for ten of the students. The majority of respondents were female, accounting for 80% of those who returned surveys (n=274).

Forty two percent (42%) of respondents were high school students, 54% were attending college, and less than 1% were attending a trade school at the time of the survey. Three percent marked “other” indicating that they were not in school. Over half of this 3% had pursued employment in a health care field.

Figure 1: Minority and/or Disadvantaged Status of Survey Respondents (n=274)

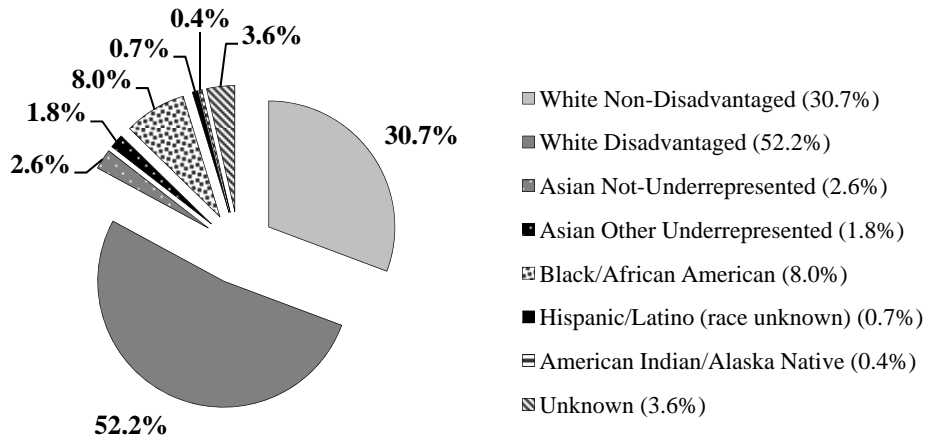
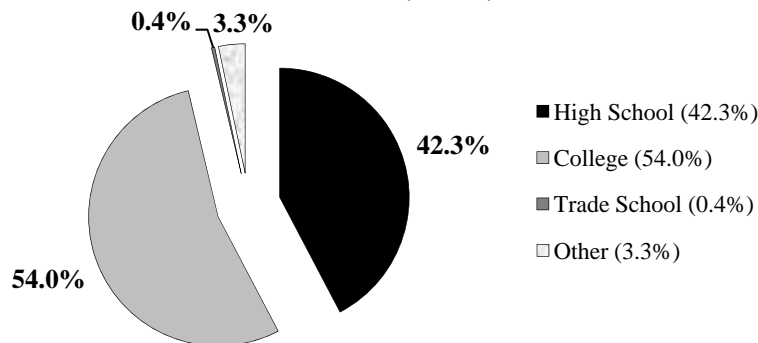


Figure 2: Current Educational Status of Survey Respondents (n=274)



AHECs Represented by Mailing:

The number of students targeted to receive a survey varied by AHEC depending on participation in programs in during the targeted years and the age requirements for the survey (Table 1 as well

as Figure 3 and 4 on page 5). All centers in the New York State AHEC System were represented in the mailing (Table 1).

AHEC attended	Surveys Mailed		Surveys Returned By Post Office (not received by students)			Surveys Received By Students		Surveys Completed and Returned		AHEC-specific response rate
	# sent for each AHEC	% of total 2,748 sent for each AHEC	# returned within each AHEC	% returned within each AHEC	% of total 154 returned for each AHEC	# received for each AHEC	% of total received for each AHEC	# completed for each AHEC	% of total 273 completed for each AHEC	% completed within each AHEC
BQLI AHEC	52	1.89%	6	11.54%	3.90%	46	1.77%	3	1.10%	6.52%
BW AHEC	19	0.69%	1	5.26%	0.65%	18	0.69%	2	0.70%	11.11%
CHAHEC	89	3.24%	3	3.37%	1.95%	86	3.32%	6	2.20%	6.98%
CNYAHEC	992	36.10%	40	4.03%	25.97%	952	36.70%	114	41.60%	11.97%
EN AHEC	207	7.53%	26	12.56%	16.88%	181	6.98%	8	2.90%	4.42%
HM AHEC	100	3.64%	9	9.00%	5.84%	91	3.51%	18	6.60%	19.78%
MSI AHEC	97	3.53%	5	5.15%	3.25%	92	3.55%	9	3.30%	9.78%
NAHEC	373	13.57%	17	4.56%	11.04%	356	13.72%	44	16.10%	12.36%
R-AHEC	819	29.80%	47	5.74%	30.52%	772	29.76%	70	25.55%	9.1%
TOTAL	2,748	100%	154	Avg: 6.8%	100%	2,594	100.00%	274	100%	Avg 10.2%

Abbreviations:
 BQLI AHEC: Brooklyn-Queens-Long Island AHEC
 BWAHEC: Bronx-Westchester AHEC
 CHAHEC: Catskill Hudson AHEC
 CNYAHEC: Central New York AHEC
 EN AHEC: Erie Niagara AHEC
 HM AHEC: Hudson Mohawk AHEC
 MSI AHEC: Manhattan-Staten Island AHEC
 NAHEC: Northern AHEC
 R-AHEC: Western New York Rural AHEC

Respondents Representative of Target Population:

As indicated previously, there were a total of 154 surveys (or an average of 6.8% per AHEC) that were returned by the post office and thus never received by the program participants. The majority of the AHECs did not deviate substantially from this average. EN AHEC and BQLI AHEC had the highest AHEC-specific post office return rates (12.6% and 11.5% respectively) – perhaps indicating that a higher proportion of their participant population has moved recently. After adjusting for the number of surveys returned by the post office, the AHEC-specific response rates (percent of program participants per AHEC that completed the survey out of those that received it) ranged from 4.4% (BW AHEC) to 19.7% (HM AHEC) with an average of 10.2% (Table 1). Even though there was a difference in AHEC-specific response rate, the proportion represented by each AHEC in the respondent population stayed similar to the original targeted population (Figures 3 and 4).

In the population represented by the returned surveys, 42% participated in a program held by CNYAHEC and 25% participated in one held by R-AHEC. Sixteen percent participated in a NAHEC program and about 7% were in one held by HM AHEC. About 3% participated in a program held by MSI AHEC and just fewer than 3% were past EN AHEC participants. About

2% were CH AHEC past participants and the remaining 2% was split between BW AHEC and BQLI AHEC participants.

Figure 3: Centers of Students to Whom Surveys Were Mailed (n=2,748)

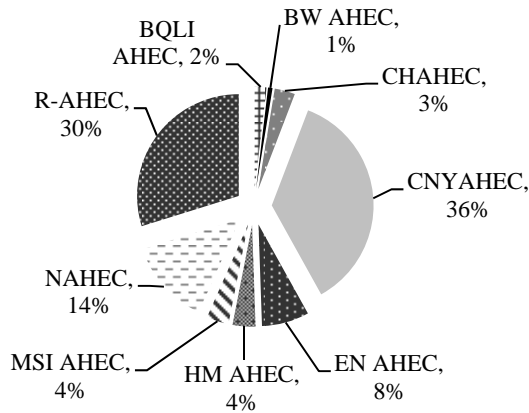
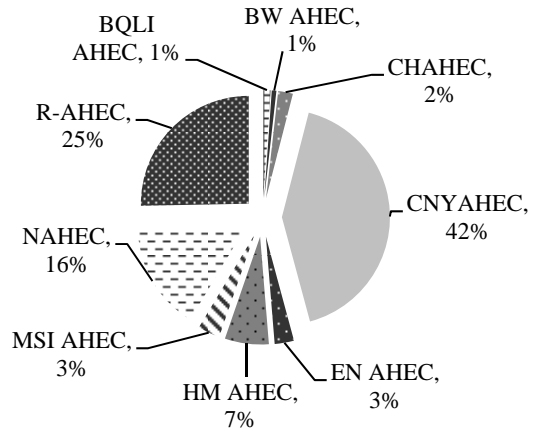


Figure 4: Centers of Survey Respondents (n=273)



Planning to Pursue Health Care Career:

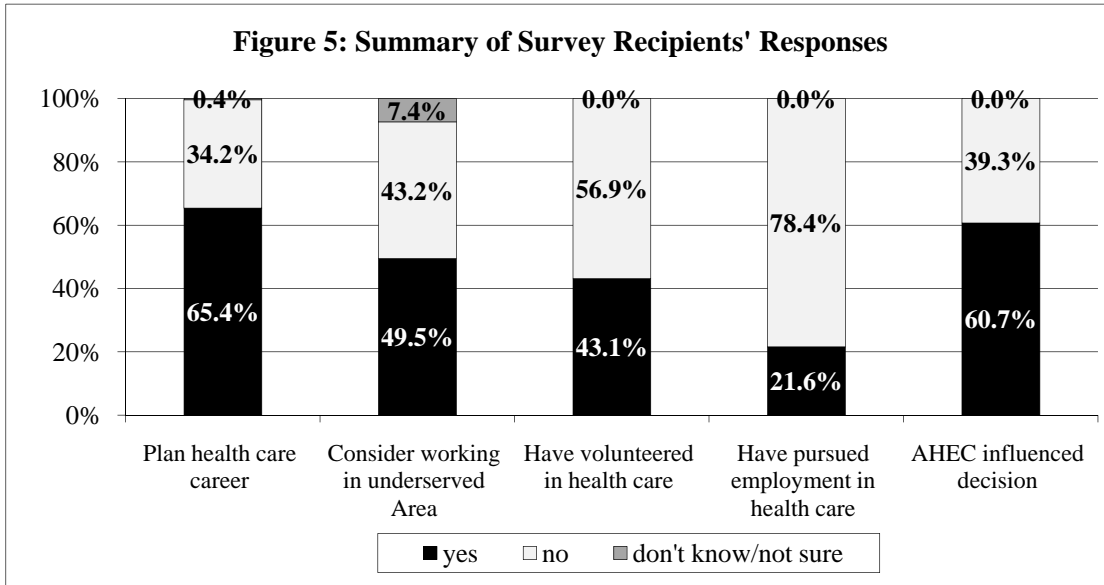
When asked, “If in school, are you planning a career in health care?” nearly two thirds of respondents (64.2%, 176/274) indicated that they are planning to pursue a health care career (Figure 5). This number includes 80% (45/56) of the respondents who indicated they had already pursued health care employment. This may indicate that nearly all of those who have already pursued employment in health care plan to continue their educations to achieve higher level careers in health care. Many may also have taken the opportunity to work for the summer in an area of interest to determine if that was the field into which they wanted to go. The eleven who did not indicate continued pursuit of a health care career may consider their current position as their career choice.

They were then asked, “If yes, what are your plans?” Respondents gave a variety of career plans (Table 2). Of the 175 planning to pursue a health care career, 169 provided details. One fourth (25%, 43/169) plan to pursue an MD/DO degree. Respondents’ answers included plans to go to college and major in premed, attend medical school, go into pediatrics, become a general practitioner, pursue a career in surgery, or work as an OB/GYN. About 23% of respondents plan to pursue a career in nursing. Careers in nursing included nursing school, obtaining an RN and/or BSN, going into a specific field of nursing (e.g. neonatal care), obtaining a Masters and/or a PhD in nursing, and

Table 2: Categories of Participant Health Care Career Plans (n=169)

Category	# of respondents
Physician	43
Premed/Medical School	20
Pediatrics	5
General Practitioner	2
Surgery	7
OB/GYN	2
Other Physician	7
Nursing	39
Nursing school	13
Nurse - RN and/or BSN	6
Nurse - specific field	5
Nurse - Masters or PhD	4
Nurse Practitioner	3
Physical Therapy	21
Pharmacy	14
Health care -Undecided	12
Dentistry	6
Physician Assistant	6
College - general	4
Psychology/Psychiatry	4
Radiology/X-ray	4
Occupational Therapy	3
Speech Pathology	3
Research	3
Chiropractics	2
Health Care Administration	2
Other	4

becoming a nurse practitioner. About 12% of respondents indicated they were pursuing a career in physical therapy. Eight percent (8%) are pursuing a pharmacy career and 7% know they want to go into a health care field but they were undecided at the time of the survey. Other careers of interest included dentistry, physician assistant, psychology/psychiatry, and radiology/x-ray. A full list is shown in Table 2.



Intend to Pursue Health Care Employment in Underserved Rural or Urban Area

Nearly half of the respondents indicated they intend to work in an underserved rural or urban area (Figure 5). When asked to explain their response, past participants mentioned staying in or returning to their home towns, going overseas for a short time, and entering loan repayment programs. Among the comments were:

“I currently live in an underserved area and would like to continue in these areas.”

“I want to go to a city where there aren't many doctors.”

“If that is where my services are needed than that is where I'll be.”

“I am looking into Doctors Without Borders, Medecins du Monde, and the Army Medical Corps. Any of these organizations might put me into contact with underserved rural and urban areas.”

“I plan to go abroad to Asia and Africa and help underprivileged people.”

Volunteered in a Health Care Field

Over 40% of respondents had volunteered in a health care field (Figure 5). Respondents were asked to explain their volunteer experience (Table 3). Most respondents described volunteer experiences in hospitals (48%, 55/115). Others indicated they had volunteered in nursing homes or retirement centers (11%), as EMTs and/or firefighters (7%), in physical therapy offices (5%), and through the AHEC-sponsored New Visions program (4%). Other responses included job shadowing, overseas work (Nicaragua, Bangladesh), pharmacy, veterinary, and health fairs/blood drives.

Category	# of respondents
Hospital	55
Nursing Home/Retirement Center	13
EMT/Firefighter	8
Physical Therapy	6
New Visions	5
Job Shadowing	3
Overseas	3
Pharmacy	2
Veterinarian	2
Health Fair/Blood Drive	2
Other	14
No Details	2

Pursued Health Care Career:

Participants were asked, "Have you pursued employment within health care?" Even though nearly all respondents were still in school (99.9%), approximately 21% (57/274) indicated they had already pursued health care employment, usually as a part-time or summer job (Figure 5). Among college students, 28% had pursued health care employment and among high school students, about 9% had done so. The one respondent who indicated he or she was currently in a trade school was also working in the health care field and over half of those who were not in school (55%) were working in a health care field.

Respondents were then asked, "If yes, what field/profession?" A variety of health care fields were pursued by those respondents (Table 4). Being an aide and/or providing clerical assistance at a medical facility was the one of the most represented of the health care fields with 10/51 (19%) indicating they had worked in this area. Ten people, or 19%, had worked in pharmacy, either as a technician, intern, or administrative/clerical assistant. Eight percent (8%) were working as EMT or ER technicians, 8% were working or had worked as patient care technicians, and another 8% were working as Certified Nursing Assistants (CNA). Past participants were also working in research (6%), in the hospital (job not specified) (6%), as a nurse (e.g. RN) (4%), in dentistry (4%), and with disabled persons (4%). The final 17% of respondents mentioned working in another health care field. Detailed responses can be seen in Table 4.

Of the 57 respondents who had pursued health care employment, 52 provided details on their employment and 31 provided the exact location. From this information, it was determined that 15 (48%) had worked or were working in an area designated as a HPSA, MUA, and/or MUP.

Table 4: Participants Who Pursued Health Care Employment (n=52)		
Category	#	Response
<i>Aide, Clerical</i>	10	Part time activities assistant at a senior independent living center
		Currently working at a nursing home.
		United Helpers nursing home as a dietary aide and receptionist.
		Hospital aide in my local hospital's emergency room
		Personal care aide
		Receptionist at Naves Hospital, currently a substance abuse counselor.
		Aide, housekeeping, clerical
		Medical assistant and nurse aide
		Medical records, filing
		Nurse's aide
<i>Pharmacy</i>	10	I have a job in a pharmacy (n=4)
		I worked in a pharmacy when I was 16 and 17
		Pharmacy technician (n=2)
		Pharmacy, administration, office work.
		Packaging tech at Omnicare pharmacy
		Pharmacy intern
<i>EMT/ER Technician</i>	4	ER technician
		AEMT critical care tech
		EMT
		I work as an EMT in the ER of a trauma center.
<i>Patient Care Technician /Assistant</i>	4	Patient Care Assistant in Surgical
		Part time patient care technician
		Technical care associate/nursing
		Lexington direct care staff
<i>C.N.A</i>	4	CNA (n=3)
		CNA student
<i>Research</i>	3	Disease research
		Research assistant summer 2008
		Research/ health awareness
<i>Hospital - general</i>	3	Glens Falls hospital, 1 year
		St. Joseph Hospital while attending school
		Summer or Bassett Cooperstown
<i>Nurse</i>	2	I am a RN working in the medical ICU
		Summer camp nurse
<i>Dental Assistant</i>	2	Dental assistant
		I am currently a dental assistant
<i>Disabled Persons</i>	2	The Disabled Persons Action Organization
		Direct Support Professional, Essex County ARC (developmental disabilities)
<i>Other</i>	9	OCO- (Oswego County Opportunities)
		SUP-A -(Syracuse University Project Advance)
		The family medical practice in my town.
		I currently work in the lab department.
		In charge of First Aid at CV Schools during night time activities
		Physical therapist
		Nutrition services
		Public health

Whether AHEC Influenced Decision to Pursue a Health Care Career

Overall, 61% of respondents indicated that AHEC influenced their decision to pursue a health care career (Figure 5, p. 7). Of those respondents who have decided to pursue a career in health care, 82% stated that participation in an AHEC program influenced their decision to do so (n=174) (Figure 6). Respondents were asked to explain the influence of an AHEC program on their decision to pursue a health care career. Responses were categorized into seven themes (Table 5).

Nearly a third of respondents (32%) mentioned that the AHEC program(s) in which they participated increased their awareness of health care careers. Comments included: “The experience opened my eyes to different fields in health care, and careers that appealed to me,” “It helped me to understand how a typical work day occurred,” and “I learned a lot about several different interesting fields that previously I did not know about.”

The second most common response, with 30% of respondents mentioning it, was that the AHEC program helped them with their career choice. Among the comments were: “It made me realize that pharmacy was the right choice,” “Job Shadowing or interning influenced and changed my decision in health care,” and “I realized that health care is what I have a passion for and a way to change the lives of people.” Many respondents said that their AHEC program participation confirmed or reaffirmed their decision to pursue a health care career (20%). One respondent said that “It really let me experience hospital life and only persuaded me more to work there.” Another commented that “MASH camp really helped to cement my decision to get into health care.”

Some respondents commented that the AHEC program was fun and that they had a great time (7%). One past participant commented, “I had a wonderful experience working in different departments of Harlem Hospital. Not many freshmen can say they have worked with a neurologist.” Another mentioned, “I loved every moment of AHEC MedQuest, so I would love to do it for the rest of my life.” A few respondents simply mentioned the program in which they participated when asked to explain how AHEC influenced their decision (4%). “I attended Med Quest for 2 or 3 years,” and “I participated in a MASH camp in the summer of 2004 at FF Thompson Hospital in Canandaigua NY” were among the comments. Four people (3%) mentioned that the program encouraged them to be better to people and/or to help people. Comments included, “It inspired me to help people” and “It made me more aware of being

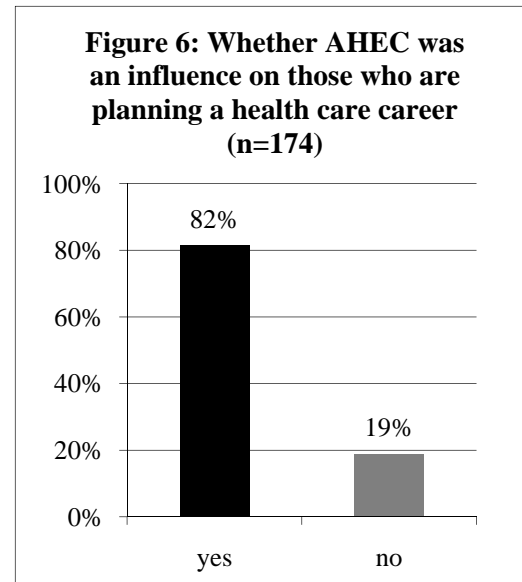


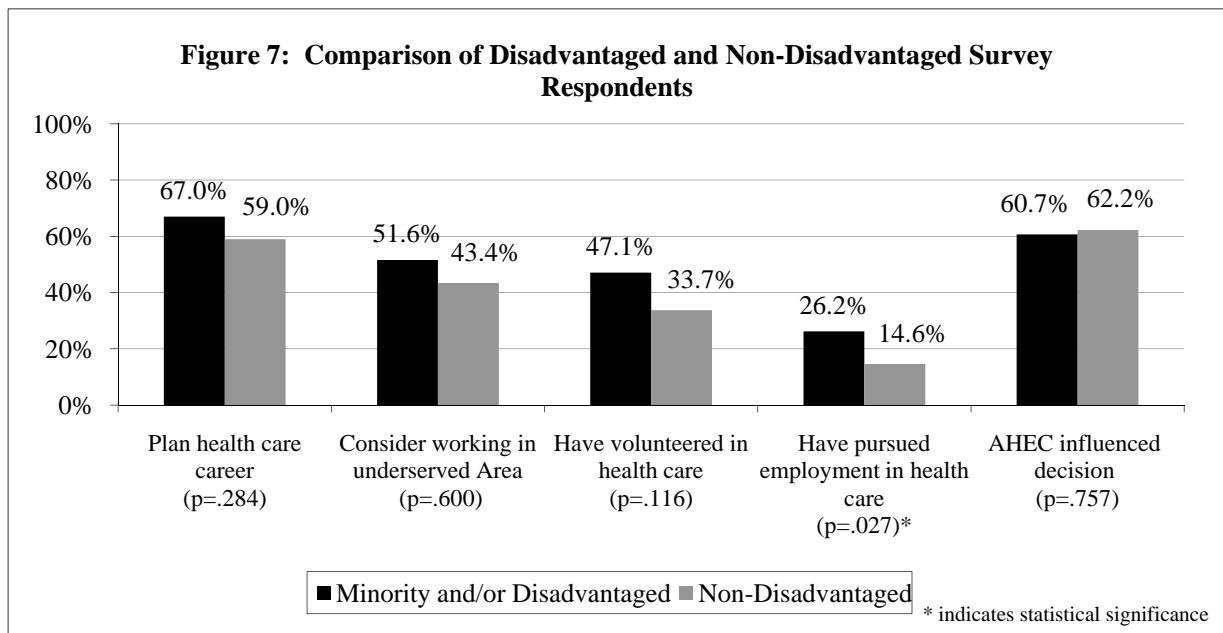
Table 5: Categories of Explanations of AHEC’s Influence on Decision to Pursue a Health Care Career (n=148)

Category	# of respondents
Awareness of Health care Careers	48
Help with Career Choice	45
Confirm/Reaffirm Decision	30
Great time, fun	11
Program	6
Help people	4
Other	4

kinder to disabled citizens. It made me a better person.” Four comments were categorized as other. These included respondents who commented about specific people or very specific aspects of their career preparation.

Comparison between Disadvantaged/Minority and Non-Disadvantaged White Respondents

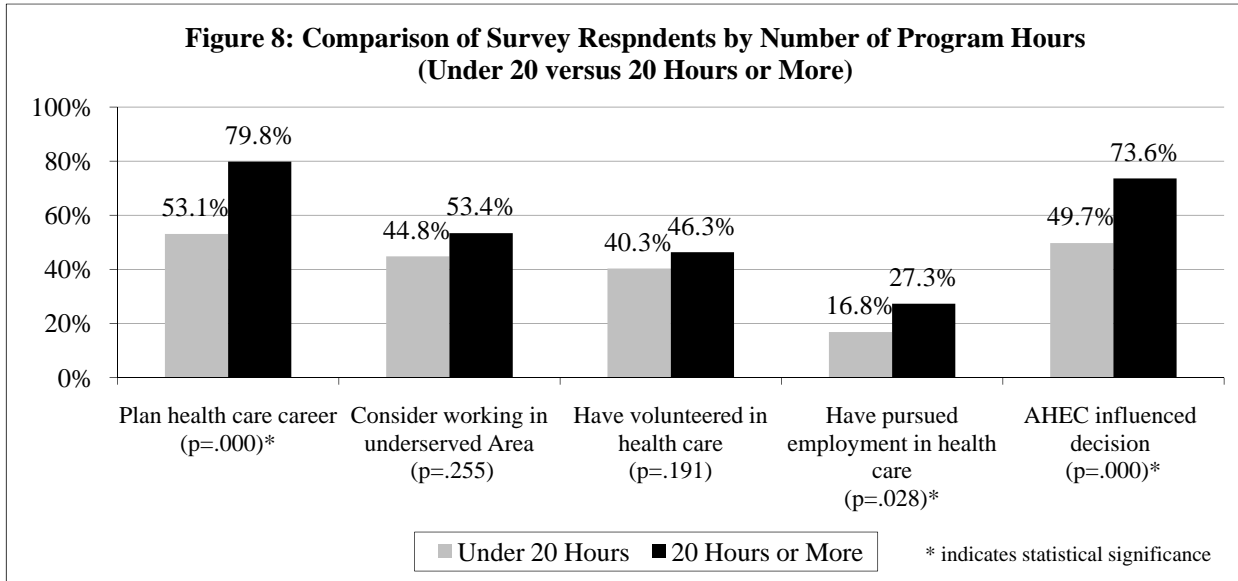
Responses were compared between past participants of disadvantaged and/or minority status to those past participants that are white and non-disadvantaged. When compared to non-disadvantaged respondents, a higher proportion of minority/disadvantaged respondents indicated that they were planning a health care career (67% vs. 59%), would consider working in an urban or rural underserved region (51.6% vs. 43.4%), had volunteered in health care (47.1% vs. 33.7%), and had already pursued employment in a health care field (26.2% vs. 14.6%) (Figure 7). The difference between minority/disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged respondents in response to “have you pursued employment within health care?” was statistically significant (p=.027). There was not statistically significant difference between minority/disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged in terms of the respondents’ perceived influence of AHEC on their decision to pursue a health care career.



Comparison of Survey Respondents by Number of AHEC Program Hours

Respondents who had participated in more than 20 hours of NYS AHEC programming (n=126) were compared to those who participated in less than 20 hours of programming (n=148). Those who had participated in more than 20 hours were more likely to indicate they were planning a health care career (79.8% vs. 53.1%), were considering working in an underserved area (53.4% vs. 44.8%), had volunteered in a health care field (46.3% vs. 40.3%), had pursued employment in health care (27.3% vs. 16.8%), and perceived AHEC as influencing their decision to pursue a health care career (73.6% vs. 49.7%) (Figure 8). As indicated by the p-value shown in Figure 8, chi-square analyses showed three of these response differences to be statistically significant.

This may indicate that students who are more interested in pursuing a health care career are more likely to pursue additional exposure opportunities or longer programs with the NYS AHEC System. It may also indicate that greater exposure to health care careers through AHEC programming results in increased interest in pursuing a health care career.



Comparison of Survey Respondents by Years since AHEC Program Participation

Respondents were also compared based on the number of years it had been since they last participated in a New York State AHEC System program. The range among the 274 respondents was 0 (participating in a program at the time of the survey) and 6.65 years with a mean of 3.1 years.

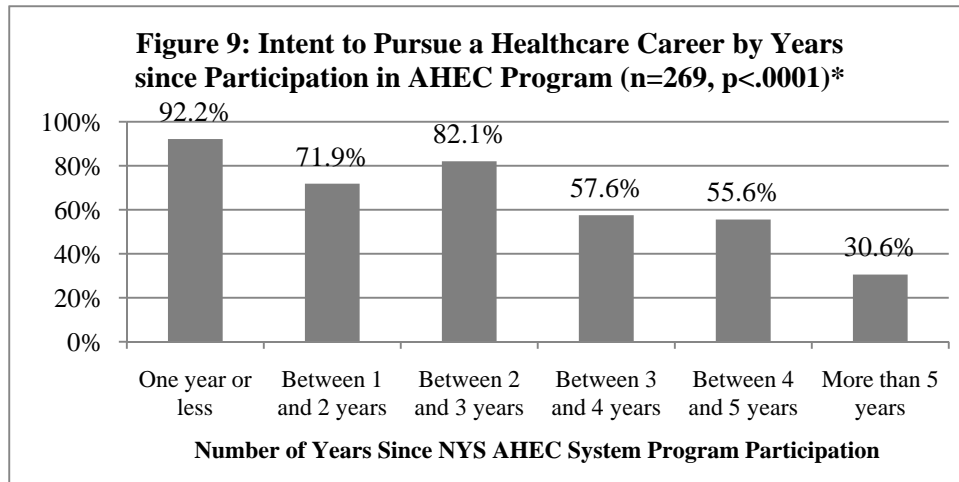
Table 6 illustrates the number in each range category for this year. Not reported in year one of the study, the range among the 309 respondents last year was 0.5-5.5 years with a mean of 2.7 years. In general, the more years that had passed since participation, the less likely the respondent was to pursue a health care career or indicate that AHEC had influenced their career choice. Retrospective analysis of last year's responses supports this trend. The following tables provide additional illustration.

Table 6: Number of Years since NYS AHEC System Program Participation (Year One and Year Two)

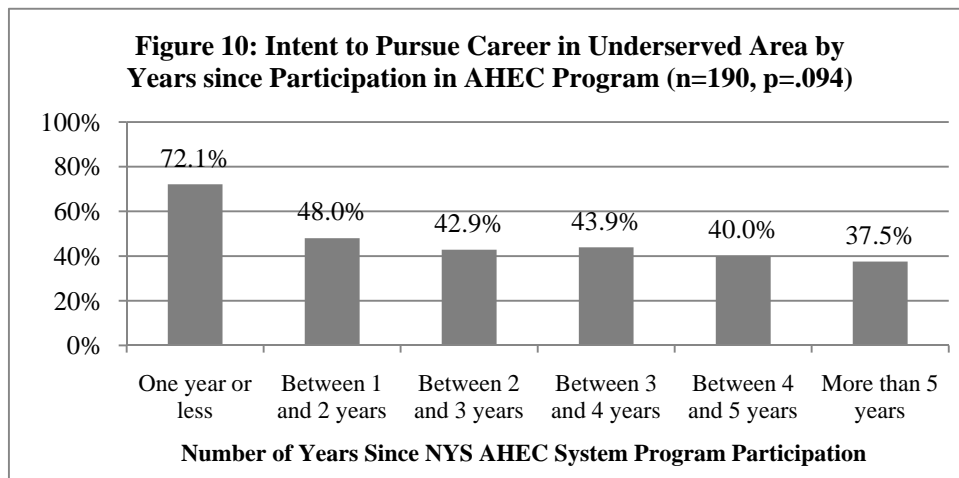
Range	Pilot Year 1: 2007-2008		Pilot Year 2: 2008-2009	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
One year or less	51	16.5%	51	18.6%
Between 1 and 2 years	38	12.3%	33	12.0%
Between 2 and 3 years	84	27.2%	41	15.0%
Between 3 and 4 years	57	18.4%	66	24.1%
Between 4 and 5 years	64	20.7%	46	16.8%
More than 5 years	15	4.9%	37	13.5%
Total	309	100.0%	274	100.0%

As Figure 9 shows, the intent to pursue a health care career steadily declined with the number of years since last participation in a NYS AHEC System program. Over 92% of those who had been

participants within the last year from the time the surveys were mailed indicated intent to pursue a health care career compared to less than a third (30.6%) of those who had participated in a program more than five years ago. This finding was statistically significant at $p < .0001$.



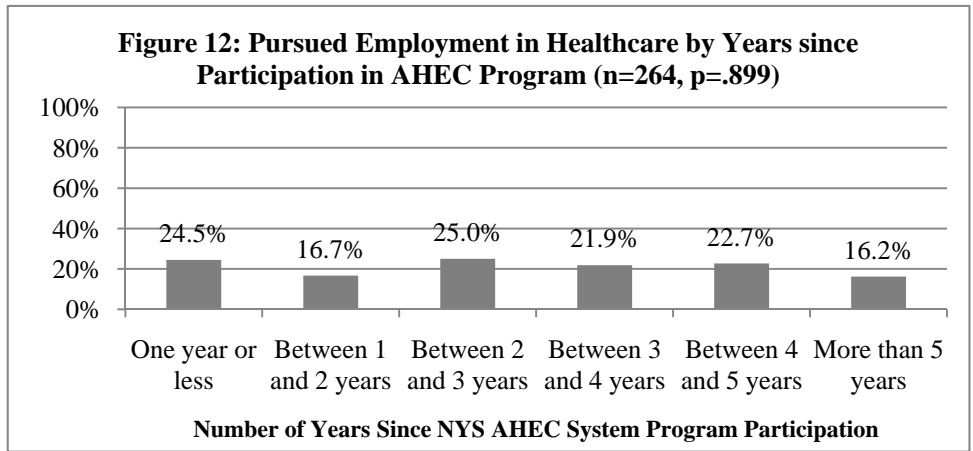
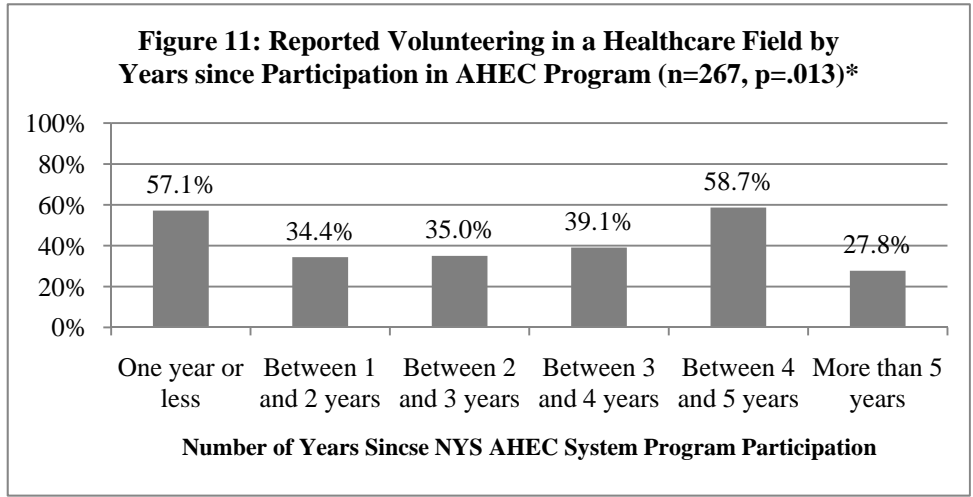
There was a mild downward trend, though not statistically significant, in the relationship between the intent to work in an underserved area and the number of years since AHEC participation (Figure 10). Nearly twice as many (72.1%) respondents who had participated in a program in the last year indicated intent to pursue work in an underserved area compared those for whom it had been more than five years since AHEC program participation (38%).



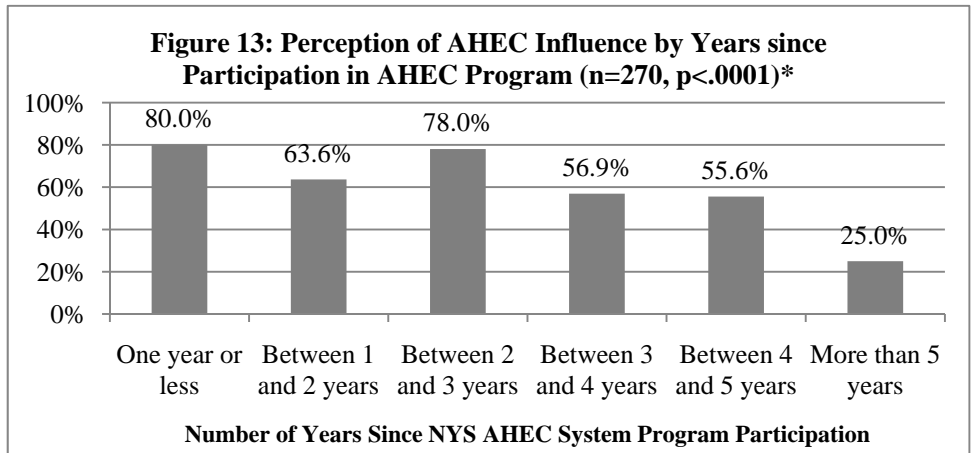
In response to whether they had volunteered in a health care field, there was an upward trend between those who had participated in a program 1 to 2 years ago (34.4%) and those who participated 4 to 5 years ago (58.7%) (Figure 11). This was significant at a p-value of 0.013. There was a spike in volunteerism (57.1%) among those who had participated in an AHEC program in the last year at the time of the survey and there was a drop in volunteerism (27.8%) among those for whom it had been more than five years since participation.

There was no relationship between having already pursued employment in health care and the number of years since NYS AHEC System program participation ($p = .899$) (Figure 12). The

percent of respondents who had already pursued employment ranged from around 16% to 25% with no discernable pattern by number of years since their AHEC participation.



Similar to the findings for the intent to pursue a health care career, the perception of AHEC influence showed a statistically significant downward trend in relationship to the number of years since last AHEC program participation (Figure 13). Nearly all (80%) of those for whom it had been one year or less since participation indicated that AHEC had influenced their career choice compared to only 25% of respondents for whom it had been five or more years since participation in an AHEC program.



SUMMARY

The results of the second annual past participant tracking study indicates that the AHEC enrichment pipeline programs have positively impacted students' career choices.

- **Nearly two thirds of respondents said they plan to pursue a health care career.**
- **Respondents who had participated in more than 20 hours of programs were more likely to indicate intent to pursue a health care career and an interest in practicing in an underserved region.**
- **Many of the respondents were already working in a health care field, yet almost all of them are still students.**
- **Of those who provided details on health care employment, nearly half were working in an area designated as a HPSA, MUA, and/or MUP.**
- **The most frequently cited planned health career was physician (MD or DO) followed closely by nursing.**
- **Minority and/or Disadvantaged participants were more likely than Non-Disadvantaged white participants to report that they planned to pursue a health care career and that they would consider working in an underserved region (not statistically significant).**
- **Most students (82%) who plan to or are pursuing a health care career indicated that participation in a NYS AHEC System program influenced that decision.**
- **Those who participated in more than 20 hours of programming were more likely to indicate that AHEC influenced their decision to pursue a health care career.**
- **Intent to pursue a health care career, work in an underserved area, and the perception that AHEC influenced career choice are highest in the years immediately after AHEC program participation.**

Past participants said that the AHEC program in which they participated increased their awareness of health care careers, helped them make a career choice, and reaffirmed or confirmed their decision to pursue a health care career. Of particular interest is the fact that, in general, this trend declines with increasing years since last AHEC program participation. This suggests that perhaps additional follow-up should be conducted by NYS AHEC System centers with participants for whom it has been more than one year since participation in order to maintain continued interest in the pursuit of a health care career and provide the resources to do so. Retrospective analysis of last year's responses supports this finding.

The respondent population was representative of the population targeted by the survey in terms of the proportion responding from each of the NYS AHEC System centers. Because the target population had high numbers of students from CNYAHEC, R-AHEC, and NAHEC, the results may be more representative of these populations compared to populations served by the other New York State AHECs. This is attributable to the number at each AHEC that met the survey participant parameters (participated in at least 5 hours of AHEC programming, were in the targeted age range in 2008, and had complete contact data entered into the tracking database).

The overall response rate was 10.5%, which is very low. This means that the results are only descriptive of that sample of participants that chose to respond but cannot be validly generalized to the past participant population. With the addition of an option to complete the survey online

via Survey Monkey, it was hoped that response would be higher than last year's 17.7%. Efforts will be made in the 2009 survey to offer incentives and improve the layout of the survey to encourage increased response. Incentives may include prizes given to a few randomly chosen respondents as well as several prizes that will be given to a larger number of respondents. Additionally, we will consider sending the survey to parents of past participants along with to sending it to past participants. The survey identification numbers will be the same on each, to eliminate repeated records in the event that both parent and participant complete the survey. In the event this does happen, the participant survey will be given preference. Also, the mailing will be repeated to non-responders approximately one month after the initial mailing. The timing of the initial mailing will be centered around a time that college students are likely to be home on break.

Even though this is not generalizable to the entire past participant population meeting the study's inclusion parameters, the results are nonetheless encouraging. Response was overwhelmingly positive, with many indicating a desire to pursue a health care career and among them, most crediting NYS AHEC System with encouraging them down that path. This supports the trends seen in last year's pilot of this survey and offers insight into how to improve our reach to this population of future health care workers. Yearly persistence in this effort will help us demonstrate to our stakeholders and funders the positive impact that the New York State AHEC System has on the health care workforce of New York State.

Appendix A: Programs Attended by Survey Respondents (by individual NYS AHEC)

Program Titles (as listed in HC Tracker)	Individual New York State AHEC System Centers									
	BOLI AHEC	BW AHEC	CHAHEC	CNY ANEC	EN AHEC	HM AHEC	MSI AHEC	NAHEC	R-AHEC	TOTAL
Brittany's Knee								13		13
BW Internship		1								1
CampMed								5		5
EN Forensic Science Fun Camp					2					2
Franklin Essex Hamilton BOCES curriculum support								1		1
Grand Rounds				1						1
Great Hospital Adventure		1								1
HC Summer Academy					4					4
Health Career Camp				1						1
Health Career Exploration									1	1
Health Career Fair									3	3
Health Occupations Student Association								3		3
Health Quest				12		3				15
Health Scholar								11		11
Healthcare Expedition					1					1
Infection Control Training								2		2
Job Shadowing								7	1	8
Job Skills Training								7		7
MASH				60	2	1			58	121
MedQuest				17		2			11	30
MedStep									18	18
Natalie's Knee				4						4
New Visions Day				26						26
Northstar Scholars								4		4
Nursing Careers with TSTT and Ossining High School								2		2
Open House/Fair			2							2
Pharmacy Scholars								2		2
Scholarship						2				2
Scrubs Club				1						1
SHIP	4	1					18			23
Short Sleep/Glucose									1	1
Summer Institute				2						2
Summer Med Academy			4	2					1	7
Summer Scholars						10				10
Understanding Addiction				1						1