



AHEC Scholars Spring 2026 Interprofessional Learning Series

Sessions will take place on Wednesday evenings from **6:30 to 8:00 PM** (Mountain Time) via Zoom. Pre-work will be required in preparation for each session that should take approximately one hour.

January 28, 2026 – Understanding Rural Health Disparities

Core Topics: Social Determinants of Health | Cultural Competency

Explore how social, economic, and cultural factors impact health outcomes in rural communities. Engage in discussions that highlight the real-world challenges and barriers faced by underserved populations.

February 18, 2026 – Mental Health is Health

Core Topics: Behavioral Health Integration | Telehealth | Current & Emerging Health Issues

Learn about the integration of behavioral health with primary care and how telehealth has been utilized to expand access. Learn from real cases that illustrate current and emerging mental health concerns in rural areas and how mental health affects overall health.

March 11, 2026 – What is Interprofessional Practice?

Core Topics: Interprofessional Education

Learn what makes effective healthcare teams work. This session introduces interprofessional education, team roles, and collaborative care models through practical, team-based problem-solving based on IPEC best practices.

April 8, 2026 – Designing the Future of Healthcare

Core Topics: Practice Transformation | Current & Emerging Health Issues | Connecting and Supporting Health Professionals

Imagine new models of care delivery for underserved populations. This session emphasizes innovation (from telemedicine to artificial intelligence), as well as the role of community health workers and how healthcare teams utilizing technology can transform practice to better serve patients in rural and underserved areas.



Series Instructor



Christopher Owens, PharmD, MPH

Idaho AHEC Program Office Director

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In 2024, Dr. Christopher T. Owens, PharmD, MPH, became the Program Director of Idaho AHEC. He also serves as Associate Vice President for Health Sciences at Idaho State University and is a Professor in the Department of Pharmacy Practice and Administrative Sciences at the L.S. Skaggs College of Pharmacy. He is Adjunct Faculty, and holds a joint appointment in the ISU School of Nursing.

Dr. Owens has over 20 years of teaching experience, and has published on professionalism, ethics, evidence-based integrative health, and population health topics. He has been instrumental in advancing inter-professional education and collaborating on curriculum development and delivery with the Idaho College of Osteopathic Medicine.

Dr. Owens earned his Doctor of Pharmacy (PharmD) from Idaho State University in 2002, his Master's in Public Health (MPH) in 2013, and a Certificate in Biomedical Ethics in 2017. From 2003-2009, he served as the Drug Utilization Review (DUR) program coordinator with Idaho Medicaid and as a clinical pharmacist at the Health West Pocatello Clinic.

With a focus on pharmacotherapy, public health, ethics, and geriatric care, Dr. Owens is committed to enhancing healthcare workforce training in rural and underserved areas. His work with the Southeastern Idaho Medical Reserve Corps, and various community initiatives, demonstrates his dedication to improving healthcare access and quality.

As the Idaho AHEC Program Director, Dr. Owens aims to leverage his experience and expertise to further AHEC's mission of addressing healthcare disparities in underserved communities across Idaho.