



AHEC Scholars Fall 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 posted to Canvas for each session and should take approximately one – two hours to complete. Building on the material presented in the four foundational sessions in spring, these fall sessions will be more application-based.

Session 5: September 23, 2026 – Thriving in Rural Practice

Core Topics: Behavioral Health Integration | Practice Transformation

This session addresses clinician resilience and burnout prevention using a team-based approach with specific attention to issues facing practicing clinicians. In addition to appropriate self-care, we will also explore how personal, organizational, and community factors influence professional well-being and retention.

Session 6: October 21, 2026 – Advocacy, Policy, and Professional Voice

Core Topics: Connecting Communities & Supporting Health Professionals | Current & Emerging Health Issues

In this session we'll introduce advocacy as a professional responsibility and explore how healthcare professionals working together with state and national organizations can influence policy, scope of practice, resourcing, and access to care in rural & underserved communities.

Session 7: November 18, 2026 – Quality Improvement and Practice-Based Research

Core Topics: Practice Transformation | Interprofessional Education

This session focuses on how healthcare professionals can actively improve care delivery in rural and underserved settings through quality improvement (QI) and practice-based research to highlight the role of practice-based research networks (PBRNs) in supporting rural clinicians to engage in research relevant to their communities.

Session 8: December 9, 2026 – Belonging, Trust, and Sustainability in Rural Healthcare

Core Topics: Cultural Competency | Interprofessional Education | Connecting and Supporting Health Professionals

This capstone session brings together all eight core topics to examine what it takes to build trust, support sustainable healthcare systems, and develop a professional identity rooted in service—preparing Scholars for any setting where they choose to practice. This session will also highlight the vital and collaborative role of Community Health Workers (CHWs).



Series Instructor



Christopher Owens, PharmD, MPH

Idaho AHEC Program Office Director

chrisowens@isu.edu

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.