

SUMMER 2018

RURAL HEALTH UPDATE

PARTNERSHIPS IN ACTION

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Honoring Our Executive Director

LARRY RHODES, MD, JAMES H. WALKER, MD, CHAIR IN PEDIATRIC CARDIOLOGY

On Monday, April 2, 2018, the WVU School of Medicine held a ceremony to honor Larry Rhodes, MD. He was appointed to the James H. Walker, MD Chair in Pediatric Cardiology. Dr. Rhodes has also been named assistant dean for health sciences programs at the WVU Institute of Technology in Beckley, WV.

Rhodes will be the lead administrator for all current and future health sciences programs on the campus. WVU offers professional and pre-professional programs in nursing and several other health fields in Beckley, including health services administration and psychology.

WVU Tech Campus President Carolyn Long said that the addition of Rhodes to the team will allow the institution to expand its expertise and offerings in regional health care.

"Dr. Rhodes comes to us with an already storied career in health care and we look forward to working alongside him as he continues those efforts in our part of the Mountain State. Our mission is to expand our programming to meet the needs of Southern West Virginia. There are few needs more important than the health of our people, and no one more uniquely suited to help us tackle those needs," she said.

Clay B. Marsh, MD, WVU's vice president and executive dean for health sciences, made the appointment. "Larry is a West Virginian who has always looked for ways to give back to our state and our University," Dr. Marsh said. "In this new role, he'll be serving where the need is greatest and the potential is unlimited. We expect him and the health sciences community in Beckley to thrive."

Rhodes is not a new arrival in Raleigh County. Since the 1990s, as a professor in WVU's pediatric cardiology program, he has held regular clinics in Beckley to follow up on patients treated at WVU Medicine Children's for congenital heart problems. Many of his earliest patients are now adults in the community.

Last year, he joined a team of WVU doctors and Southern West Virginia community leaders in creating Tomorrow is Mine – a week-long summer camp for 10- to 13-year-olds, held on the WVU Beckley Campus. The camp will return to campus this summer.

"Our goal for the students who attend Tomorrow Is Mine summer camp is to reinforce their dreams and goals and instill a true belief that anything is possible," Rhodes said. "Last year we had several science-based activities and a very well received STEM challenge, as well as speakers from several fields including art, law and medicine."

Rhodes is the executive director of rural health programs in the WVU Institute for Community and Rural Health. Several years ago, in recognition of his services to patients across the state, he was named Rural Health Practitioner of the Year by the National Rural Health Association.

Earlier this year, WVU awarded him an endowed chair – the Walker Chair in Pediatric Cardiology – named in honor of the physician who started the University's first children's heart clinic in Beckley.

Rhodes earned a medical degree from the WVU School of Medicine and completed residency training in pediatrics at WVU. He also completed fellowship training in pediatric cardiology and pediatric electrophysiology at Boston Children's Hospital and served for ten years as a heart specialist at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia.

—Tara Scatterday, WVU Health Sciences



WELCOME ABOARD, JESSICA STIDHAM!



The WVU Institute for Community and Rural Health welcomes Jessica Stidham to our staff. Jessica is the Program Coordinator, WV AHEC Rural Community Health Scholars

1. Tell me a little about the WV AHEC Rural Community Health Scholars Program.

The WV AHEC Rural Community Health Scholars (RCH Scholars) program is designed as a two-year program with one goal in mind: to

enhance each scholar's ability to make a difference in health care by facilitating clinical, didactic, and community based activities in rural/underserved areas of WV, and to positively impact the lives of WV's communities. Scholars will complete the program prepared to enter the workforce with an astute understanding of how to best implement health care services in rural or underserved populations, work in an interprofessional team, and provide meaningful patient care.

The program is available to West Virginia's top health professions students interested in practicing in rural or underserved communities; this year, we are accepting 75 RCH scholars that are currently enrolled in a health professions field from WVU and other WV institutions. Once accepted, RCH Scholars will be required to complete 40 hours of didactic education via online learning modules and 40 hours of community-based experiential or clinical training in a rural or underserved area annually (160 hours total over the course of the two-year program). Each scholar will receive a stipend of \$650 annually for participation as well.

2. What inspired you to apply for this new position?

The collaboration between the Area Health Education Centers (AHEC) and the Institute for Community and Rural Health (ICRH) is inspiring, to say the least. They have a wonderful reputation on campus for their focus on enhancing West Virginia's health care workforce, as well as for consistently supporting health professions students as they fulfill their passions to work in rural health care. Both organizations promote community, interprofessional development, and philanthropy in the most progressive ways, and their reach goes far beyond WVU's student body into the communities in which we live. Accordingly, I was excited for the prospect to not only to help develop and promote RCH Scholars, but also contribute to student success and support West Virginians in my community in a new light.

3. How long have you been with WVU?

My husband and I moved to West Virginia in 2015 from Chicago, IL, so I've been with WVU for nearly three years now. Prior to accepting this position, I spent two years as a Developmental Advising Specialist and First Year Seminar Instructor with the Center for Learning, Advising, and Student Success. There, I focused on working with student veterans, active military, dependents, and transfer students as they transitioned to WVU.

4. Have you ever worked with rural communities? If so where and in what capacity?

I don't think that I truly experienced rural communities until I moved to West Virginia; as you can imagine, WV is a bit different than IL (but in the best of ways – it's why we moved here!). Through traveling the state, I realized rural living was at the epicenter of nearly every WV community, and my students (when I was an advisor) often discussed their rural upbringings. Additionally, talking to community members, students, staff, and faculty from all over the state helped me understand the challenges rural communities face; those conversations (coupled with a desire to help my new community) also impacted my decision to apply for the RCH Scholars position.

5. So far, what have you found to be the most challenging and most exciting about your new role?

The most challenging component of this position, at first, was creating a concrete action plan that captured and monitored all of the moving pieces involved "behind the scenes" of the RCH Scholars program. At this time we've developed a promising strategy, and I am confident that we've put together a program with an interdisciplinary focus on rural health care that students will enjoy.

The most exciting piece, for me, is two-fold. Firstly, I look forward to working with community members and faculty, both to develop new online modules for the didactic component of RCH Scholars, as well as hear how our scholars are impacting the rural and underserved areas of WV. Secondly, I also can't wait to meet with students and faculty/staff at WVU, the AHECs, and other institutions to expand the reach of RCH Scholars; I am encouraged that we can successfully promote the program and help students as they continue to build their skillset in preparation for future rural practices.

For more information:

Web: <http://www.hsc.wvu.edu/west-virginia-area-health-education-center/rural-community-health-scholars/>

Email: RCH_Scholars@hsc.wvu.edu

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/RCH.Scholars/>

Twitter: https://twitter.com/RCH_Scholars

SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED

Five WVU medical students and two dental students were selected for the 2018 Institute for Community and Rural Health Scholarships. Quintin Brubaker (MS3), Brandon Glover (MS1), Kyle Miller (MS4), Lauren Norris (MS3) and Grace Walkup (MS2), will receive \$25,000 each in exchange for a one-year commitment to practice in a rural or underserved area of West Virginia. Fourth year dental students Shawn Ballard and Colter Taylor will receive \$50,000 each in exchange for a two-year commitment. Shawn has indicated that he would like to practice in Southern WV particularly, Boone or Logan County and Colter plans to pursue practice in Braxton, Calhoun or Clay County. The purpose of scholarships are to lessen the financial burden of medical and dental students and to recruit and retain them in the most disadvantaged areas of the state. Since 2011, the Institute has provided \$1.8 million in scholarship funding to WVU students.

C.A.R.R.S.

The Institute for Community and Rural Health (ICRH) piloted a new student stipend program in the Spring of 2018: **Community and Rural Rotation Support (CARRS)**. CARRS is designed to provide a financial stipend for students interested in rural practice when they are going out on rural rotations. While out in the rural communities students have the opportunity to participate in meaningful community-based projects with local community mentors. This creates opportunities for rural communities to recruit these students while they are engaged in community events.

The first “class” of CARRS students included three third-year medical students and two fourth-year dental students. These students completed clinical rotations and CARRS community projects in Boone, Fayette, Logan, McDowell and Tucker Counties. Four of the five students worked with local Health Sciences Technology Academy Coordinators and Teachers as mentors and one student worked with Project ECHO (Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes) with a local clinician as the mentor.

Building on positive feedback from students and community mentors, the ICRH intends to continue the program, with funding for six student stipends during the 2018-2019 academic year.

Summer Camp

TOMORROW IS MINE

“Tomorrow is Mine” is a free summer camp held at the WVU Institute of Technology campus in Beckley for 10-12 year old children from the southern West Virginia Coalfields. The inaugural camp was held in June 2017 with 25 students from Boone, Mingo, Wyoming and Raleigh Counties participating. Students enjoyed some traditional summer camp activities such as campfires, crafts, and swimming. Other activities included magic shows, forensics classes, STEM challenges, demonstrations by the Carnegie Science Institute, CPR training from the Beckley Fire Department, Dutch oven cooking and fishing at Lake Stevens. Campers were exposed to a parade of winners from all walks of life in hopes of providing positive role models and inspiration to believe a successful life is possible no matter where you grow up. Campers had an opportunity to have an open and honest discussion with the Honorable Judge Thompson, Prosecuting Attorney Keith Randolph and Assistant Prosecuting Attorney Justin Marlowe about the dangers of substance use and how choices about substance use can negatively affect lifestyle. One of the highlights of camp was a sculpting demonstration by Jamie Lester, internationally known artist and native of Wyoming County. By the end of the week, many campers expressed their desire to come to camp again. The 2018 Tomorrow is Mine camp will be June 24-30, 2018. We look forward to providing this wonderful opportunity to campers again this year free of charge. If you would like to volunteer or make a donation, please contact Larry Rhodes at larhodes@hsc.wvu.edu.



RURAL HEALTH DAY



Research on healthcare workforce demand completed by the West Virginia Rural Health Association states that the importance of proximity of primary care workforce will be ever more important as the number of individuals with health insurance seek access to primary care. With 14.1 percent of the U.S. population 65 years of age or older (West Virginia 18.3 percent) the need for healthcare is growing. Factoring in the demographic changes from the newly insured accessing care relative to safety net providers will be key in helping inform policy and decision makers in targeting their efforts. Healthcare is provided in regional patterns often controlled by geographic barriers, access to transportation and access to specialty providers.

The purpose of WVU Rural Health Day is to tackle this growing need for such a specific workforce.

The third annual event, held on April 14, 2018 at the West Virginia University Health Sciences Center, brought nearly 50 pre-health undergraduate students from four-year institutions or community colleges in West Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania and Ohio. The idea is to introduce future health care professionals to a hands-on rural health experience. The hope is that the experience matriculates into students choosing a rural track curriculum and then a career in rural health. The morning sessions allowed students to learn how to navigate through the journey of medical school and hear the personal stories of primary care physicians working in rural communities. The medical student panel discussion featured current rural track medical students. This delivered first-hand experiences of rural track curriculum and upcoming next steps. The panel discussions have proven to be invaluable. They give curious students a chance to really ask the most intricate, detailed questions, and have actual one-on-one dialogue. The afternoon sessions rotated students through hands-on practices such as suturing and ultrasound, demonstrations of intubation and wilderness medicine. WVU Rural Health Day would not be possible without the many volunteers of staff, physicians, students and rural physicians. We sincerely thank everyone for donating time and expertise.

WVU SOM RURAL TRACK: NUTRITIONAL CHALLENGE

In June of 2017, the West Virginia University School of Medicine Rural Track students traveled to Pocahontas County, West Virginia to participate in a Rural Immersion trip with the support of the WVU Institute for Community and Rural Health.

Students visited Cass, Greenbank and Arbovale, WV where they learned basic dietetics, nutritional standards and proper meal preparation techniques. This trip was implemented to educate students about health issues specific to rural West Virginia.

Various didactic sessions and experiential learning opportunities were included in the immersion. One of the activities involved a discussion about the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Students were then challenged to purchase and prepare a meal from local stores based on a budget from the National SNAP Challenge. According to SNAP, low income Americans live on an average daily allowance of \$4.40 per day. Each group was provided enough money to feed the entire group a healthy meal on a budget of \$1.47 per person/per meal = \$22.05 (15 people).

Students were introduced to resources and skills helpful for improving their patients' diets. Upon reflection, students discussed what they had learned and how it would influence their future practices. The knowledge, skills and experiences students gained during the Nutrition Immersion will be beneficial for their future as they advise patients on how to access supplemental nutrition resources and navigate food deserts.



R.U.S.H. 2018

Sometimes, it is perfectly fine to be in a rush.

The Rural Undergraduate Shadowing in Healthcare Program (RUSH) provides participants with a unique experience that offers insight into what it is like to practice a health profession in rural West Virginia. Students eligible for RUSH are currently enrolled at WVU, in good academic standing and must be planning to pursue a healthcare career in family medicine, pediatrics or dentistry with the long-term goal of practicing in rural or underserved areas of the state.

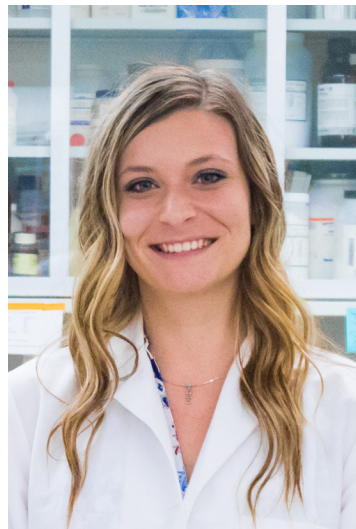
The WVU Institute for Community and Rural Health placed four students for 2017–2018 RUSH season. They each shadowed a rural practitioner for a total of 20 hours.



MACY FREY

My name is Macy Frey, a current senior in the Exercise Physiology program at West Virginia University, from Alma, West Virginia. During my RUSH experience, I shadowed Dr. Stephanie Sisler, a pediatrician, in Terra Alta, WV at Wellspring Family Medicine. As I embarked on my drive to Terra Alta on my first day of shadowing, I was filled with anxiety and apprehension for the roads were not only completely snow covered, but this was my first shadowing

experience. The small town I arrived upon greatly reminded me of home with little resources but a comforting feeling. After reaching my destination, every staff member greeted me with smiles and I felt as though they were sincerely interested in me as I was in them and their experience in rural medicine. The more I shadowed Dr. Sisler, the more I was reassured that this is exactly what I wanted to do with my life. Dr. Sisler had endless energy and positivity as well as a genuineness for her patients unlike any other. With Terra Alta being a rural town, many barriers existed such as patients having to walk or find a ride to the clinic. However, this did not influence Dr. Sisler, for she treated every patient and family fairly taking time to discuss with her nurse and investigate into the patient's chart before walking in the examination room, allowing a deeper connection to the patients. Patient cases ranged from flu to ADHD allowing me to get a broad view of doctor-patient interactions and treatments. Dr. Sisler also allowed me to perform simple hands-on techniques such as listening to congested chests and examining severe strep throat. From my RUSH experience, I wanted to see firsthand how rural areas in my home state were provided for and understand the pediatric practice in which I hope to pursue. I believe I got this and more and cannot thank the RUSH program, Dr. Sisler, and the Wellspring Family Medicine employees and patients enough for allowing me to have my first shadowing experience and for restoring my confidence in not only my future endeavors but our great state!



COURTNEY AMEND

My name is Courtney Amend, I am a junior immunology and medical microbiology major from Wheeling, West Virginia. I decided to apply to the RUSH program because I thought it would be a good experience to see the impact that rural health has on our West Virginia community. I will forever be grateful for this opportunity to travel through my state, and see how rural healthcare is changing the lives of patients. I had the

chance to travel to Pineville, WV to shadow Dr. Bailey over the course of three days at the Pineville office and the Gary Clinic. Over those three days, I experienced the support and enthusiasm the medical professionals had for their patrons. Everyone that I met with were so welcoming and really helped me feel comfortable in this new environment. Dr. Bailey allowed me to sit in on patient appointments, observe procedures and showed me the everyday work of a family physician. This experience opened my eyes about the importance of rural health, and how rewarding it is to have a personal connection with every patient. I loved the small town environment and seeing how Dr. Bailey made a huge difference in everyone's lives. While I was in the southern portion of the state, I saw the difference in culture and the way of life of individuals, that did not have the most sanitary living conditions or big city healthcare opportunities. I would advise anyone interested in the medical field, and especially rural health, to apply for this program.

DAVID BUCH

My name is David Buch; I am a senior Math and Physics major from Beckley, West Virginia.

From December 19-22, I had the distinct honor of shadowing Dr. Joanna Bailey, a family practitioner by training whose range of responsibilities and diverse caseload make her a Swiss-army knife for her employer; Tug River Health Association. Dr. Bailey primarily works from two offices: the Catterson Center in Pineville and Gary Center outside Welch. The first of those two, Catterson, is structurally no more than an expanded doublewide trailer, but in the two days, I spent shadowing I was shocked to see generations



WEST VIRGINIA COLLABORATION SELECTED FOR CMS ACCOUNTABLE HEALTH COMMUNITIES MODEL

West Virginia has been selected as one of 32 recipients for the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) Accountable Health Communities (AHC) Model award. The goal of the AHC project is to establish a network to improve health and overall patient well-being by identifying and leveraging community resources to address unmet health-related social needs such as food insecurity and unstable housing. Partners in Health Network, Inc. (PIHN), will serve as the bridge organization to manage the 5-year model test designed to provide tailored assistance to high-risk participants that have unmet social needs and assess the impact of this intervention on health outcomes. Melanie Horn, Screening and Referral Specialist for the program said, "This program has the potential to bring communities together. I think the AHC will shed light on programs people may not have known were there and help residents who may not have known where to look." Hilary Payne, the AHC Program Director at PIHN, views the program as an opportunity to work with many wonderful organizations across the state as well as an opportunity to see the impact that providing navigation services can have model participants' overall health.

The network is composed of 48 clinical sites within nine health systems serving all 55 counties of the state that will actively screen patients for health-related social needs and work collaboratively with a public-private partnership to address those needs. Health centers include Charleston Area Medical Center (CAMC), Community Care of West Virginia, Highland Hospital, Jackson General Hospital, Minnie Hamilton Health System, Prestera Center, Summersville Regional Medical Center, West Virginia Health Right, WVU Hospitals and WVU Medical Corporation. These health systems will work with PIHN, WV Department of Health and Human Resources, CAMC Education and Research Institute, WVU Center for Excellence in Disabilities, WVU Institute for Community and Rural Health, Quality Insights, West Virginia Family Resource Network, and Try This West Virginia to implement this holistic approach to wellness for West Virginia residents. Pilot testing for the project is currently underway.

The project is supported by Funding Opportunity Number CMS-1P1-17-001 from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. The contents provided are solely the responsibility of the author and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) or any of its agencies.

of patients from all corners of Wyoming County walk through its doors. Dr. Bailey herself was a patient at the Catterson Center growing up, and her familiarity with the locale and its residents underlies the high esteem the community clearly holds for her. Talking with Alice, a longtime member of the Catterson nursing staff, I was pleased to realize that I also had been a patient there as a toddler. I am sure I was in good hands.

The Gary Clinic, a ways out of town with respect to Pineville, serves McDowell County. The building is significantly larger than Catterson and sees a high volume of cases throughout the day. It was at this clinic that between patients Dr. Bailey found time to join a regularly scheduled statewide conference call with other rural physicians to discuss interesting patient cases. The program appears to be an important opportunity for collaboration among physicians who rarely have that luxury. I am deeply grateful to have been able to shadow Dr. Bailey and see rural medicine firsthand. I look forward to someday having the chance to help in the area myself.



KASEY COMBS

My name is Kasey Combs and I am a senior exercise physiology student from Romney, WV. This past December I had the privilege of shadowing Dr. Ariel Mooney of Minnie Hamilton in Grantsville, WV through the RUSH program. Because of RUSH, I was given the unique opportunity to see what it's like to work in a rural setting on the far side of the state which I have never visited before. I was able to observe several procedures being done

such as extractions, restorations, impressions and crowns. While I was shadowing Dr. Mooney, I was given the rare opportunity to speak to and work with two fourth-year dental students who were working on their rural healthcare rotations. These two students gave me great advice about the challenges of dental school, what it's like to be a dental student at WVU and what they do during their rural rotations. I had always hoped to one day be a dentist working in rural West Virginia because these areas are so medically underserved and there is a huge lack of education about oral health. My RUSH experience validated my goals and made me more determined than ever to work to make my dream come true. I would encourage all students to apply to the RUSH program. My RUSH experience was amazing and I am so thankful to be a part of it!

Alumni Spotlight

STEPHEN YOUNG

Stephen Young, PT, DPT, OCS, knew he wanted to be a physical therapist. At an early age, he saw the positive impact that physical therapy could have on quality of life. Young's grandfather had a stroke. He watched his grandfather gradually improve as he walked up and down the hallways of the nursing home with him. His grandfather recovered from a stroke and was able to return home and enjoy his life because of adequate physical therapy.

Young also had personal experience about the importance of good physical therapy following a high school football knee injury. As a soon to be collegiate football player, he needed a good physical therapist that understood the correct conditioning needed in order to compete on a NCAA Division 1 level. It was his physical therapist, John "Spike" Spiker that suggested he become a physical therapist. Dr. Young completed his degree in exercise physiology and then his MPT from WVU in 2000. He then completed his doctorate in 2013. Young is a board certified specialist in orthopedic physical therapy. He started as a physical therapist in Pocahontas County and then opened his private practice, Mountaineer Physical Therapy and Sports Medicine, Inc., in Summersville, WV. He currently serves as the Vice Chair of the WV Board of Physical Therapy. Dr. Young has been teaching physical therapy students since

2000, receiving the Sandy Burkhart Clinical Instructor award in 2013 and recognition in April 2018 for providing more than 5,000 hours of quality clinical education to students. "I wanted to practice in the state I grew up and love. I have always enjoyed the people of my state and feel it was my duty and passion to bring highly skilled physical therapy services to rural West Virginia," said Young.



▲ Left to right: Ralph Utzman, Stephen Young, Matt Madrid, Chris Moore, Mark Hose