
From: Mansilla,Kenia <mansilla@uchc.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, February 09, 2016 3:33 PM
To: AppTestimony
Subject: We need our AHEC program

My name is Kenia Mansilla-Rivera MD. I am the Medical Student Education Director for the Department of Family Medicine in the University of Connecticut. I am also a core faculty at the Urban Service Track (UST) from Connecticut AHEC and the University of Connecticut. UST is an enrichment program for health professions students enrolled in UConn's School of Medicine, Dental Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy, and Social Work and Quinnipiac University's Physician Assistant Program. The focus of UST is enhancing health profession student knowledge about inter-professional collaborative care, medical management of vulnerable and underserved patient populations, and public service. I started working with AHEC and UST program in 2007. Our department and this initiative shared the mission of training a new inter-professional work force that works as a team genuinely for the underserved population. We also wanted to increase interest in primary care and underserved care. The program has grown exponentially since then, and we continue developing curriculum and adjust our training to the students from five different schools, which includes about 25% of the medical school class. I believe this program have made a difference in many areas, just like a stone makes a ripple on water. We provide yearly thousands of volunteer hours for the community. These activities include health screening and education. Our impact is unique because in addition to identify some health problem, we provide the education on prevention, and emphasize the importance of finding a primary care physician in the community. We provide education programs in all our activities in areas like diabetes, hypertension, obesity, asthma, smoking and others.

I also want to talk about the impact in increasing primary care interest in our students. There is an urgent need to increase a primary care force that can provide patient-centered, efficient, and well-coordinated care to patients, not only in our state but in our nation. This program allows students to be exposed to dedicated faculty that works for underserved population as primary care providers. UST faculty is providing role- models for the students and also mentoring. We have preliminary data that suggest that UST has increased primary care choosing for residency on our medical students. It would be detrimental for the future of our school, our state, and ultimately, our nation, that initiatives and programs like AHEC and UST that have proven to be successful get affected and ultimately eliminated. Thank you for the attention regarding this matter.

Kenia Mansilla-Rivera MD

Director Medical Student Education

Department Family Medicine

University of Connecticut

resident of Avon CT