Medical Student Scholarly Project Mentoring: Toward Better Rural Physician Satisfaction, Recruitment and Retention.

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Introduction
The Arizona Center for Rural Health reports that currently half of rural Arizona physicians are age 50 and over and therefore nearing retirement. Replacing them and recruiting the additional 400 primary care physicians needed to bring physician-patient ratios into parity with urban areas are challenging recruitment objectives. For rural residents the lack of available health care is more than an inconvenience— it may in fact contribute to lower life expectancy. We propose rural physician-mentor participation in medical student Scholarly Projects as a way to improve work satisfaction and ultimately improve physician recruitment and retention in rural Arizona.

UA College of Medicine-Phoenix Rural Certificate of Distinction Requirements

Years 1 and 2
• Application to participate in Rural Certificate of Distinction October 1.
• Initiate four-year Scholarly Project
• Required 16 noon seminars over two year period, rural health topics
• 4 week summer rural clinical placement in June, between years 1 and 2

Year 3
• 19 week rural clerkship experience. Internal Medicine (6 weeks), Family Medicine (6 weeks), Pediatrics (3 weeks), Surgery (4 weeks)

Year 4
• Successful completion of Rural Certificate of Distinction (noted on Dean’s Letter and official transcript-helps with residency application).
• Successful completion of rural topic Scholarly Project. Findings presented in March.

Scholarly Project Examples

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<td>It's about the Heart: A Qualitative Study of Rural Family Physician Training needs.</td>
<td>Samantha Varner, UA COM-Phoenix. ’16</td>
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<td>Analysis of Knowledge Retention of the Rural Trauma Team Development Course</td>
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<td>Challenges affecting implementation of salad bars in rural vs. urban Arizona public schools</td>
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Discussion and Conclusions

- Given the critical need for physicians in rural communities new effective strategies toward recruitment and retention must be pursued.
- UA COM-P conducts ongoing Rural medical education programs that place students for months in the same community
- A requirement of the program is the Scholarly Project, pairing a student with a mentor physician on a research project.
- Our hypothesis is that rural physicians who take-on the mentoring role will experience greater job satisfaction and will more likely to remain in their rural job placement.

References