

Dear Incoming Medical Student,

Congratulations on your acceptance to the University of Connecticut's School of Medicine. As an incoming medical student, we want to make you aware of a ***two-year enrichment opportunity available to students that includes didactic, experiential, and longitudinal training focused on the medical management of the underserved.***

The University of Connecticut's Schools of Dental Medicine, Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy, and Social Work, and Quinnipiac University and University of Saint Joseph's Physician Assistant Programs, in collaboration with the Connecticut Area Health Education Center ([CT AHEC](#)), sponsor a program whose focus is care for urban and rural underserved communities. Known as the Urban Service Track/AHEC Scholars Program, this ***innovative program maximizes interdisciplinary training and learning opportunities focusing on issues specific to under-resourced communities.***

Now celebrating 20 years of operation, the ***Urban Service Track*** (UST) has engaged more than 1,000 health professions students. Students selected to participate from the seven schools are designated as AHEC Scholars. They are expected to participate in a variety of educational activities that ***complement the health professions school curriculum.*** Because the curriculum at each school is very demanding, we have been careful to plan learning retreats and educational activities with exam schedules and curricular demands in mind. See our [website](#) for typical training activities.

Graduates consistently describe the Urban Service Track/AHEC Scholars Program as a defining part of their professional journey. One recent MS-IV shared, *"I am deeply grateful for my experience as an Urban Health/AHEC Scholar. The program broadened my understanding of health disparities and strengthened my commitment to serving underserved populations. I have developed a deeper appreciation for culturally competent, community-centered care. These lessons will continue to shape my approach to patient care and fuel my long-term goal of advancing global health equity."*

These reflections reflect a broader trend: a 2024 curriculum review found that AHEC Scholars are significantly more likely to pursue careers in primary care and underserved settings. As one administrator noted, "The integration of health systems science and social determinants of health has elevated students' ability to deliver holistic, patient-centered care." Faculty echoed this impact. As one UST advisor shared, "This program doesn't just teach clinical skills—it fosters empathy, leadership, and a lifelong commitment to service." Together, these perspectives highlight the program's ability to transform academic learning into meaningful, real-world impact.

If you are interested in being part of a special learning community focused on primary care, interprofessional collaborative practice, and working with under-resourced patient populations, we invite you to complete the [online application](#) by July 3, 2026. Individuals with completed applications will be extended a virtual interview to learn more about their interests and background. Students will be notified of their application status by August 10, 2026.

Sincerely,



Petra Clark-Dufner, MA
Director, CT AHEC



Thomas Regan, MD
Assistant Dean for Admissions and Student Affairs
University of Connecticut School of Medicine