

Georgia  RURAL MEDICAL
SCHOLAR PROGRAM

an Archway Partnership and Georgia Statewide AHEC Network initiative

*Georgia Rural Medical Scholars:
Past, Present and Future*

Laura Bland, MPH, Archway Partnership
Erin Mundy, MPA, Georgia Statewide AHEC Network

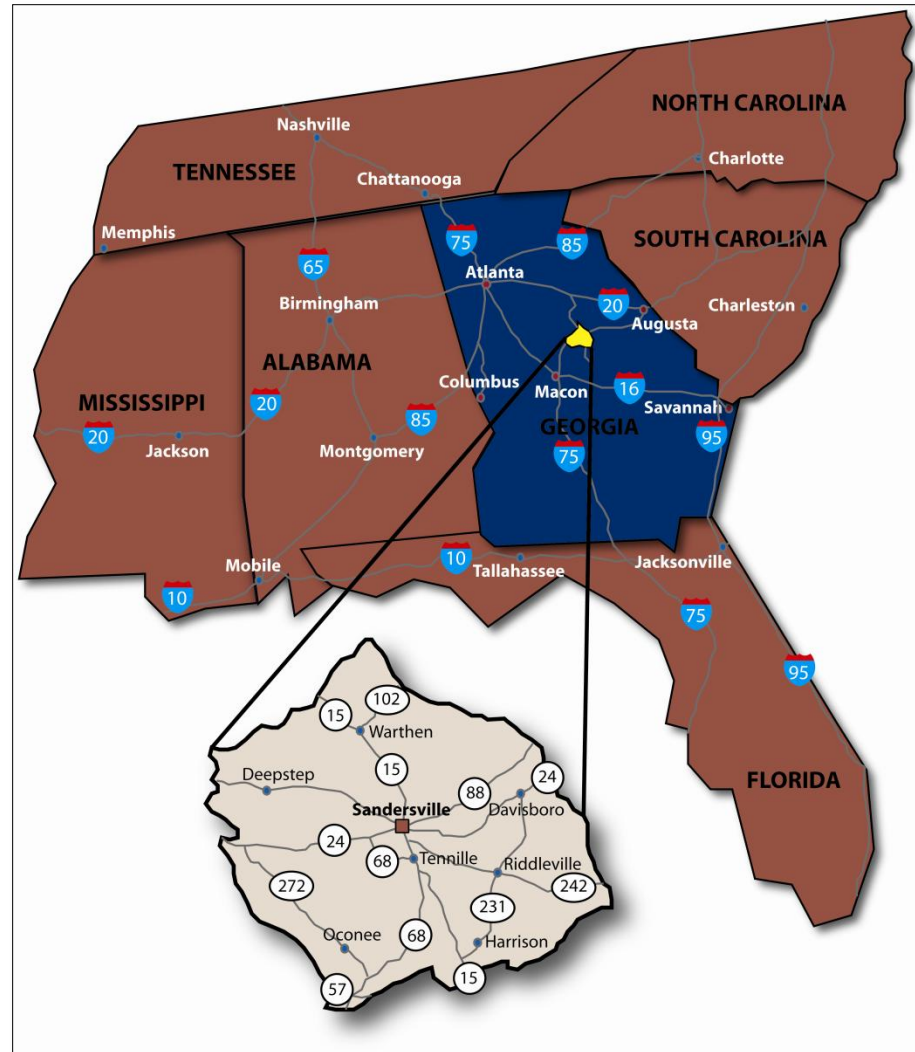
What is the GRMSP?

- A community based program designed to:
 - Identify Georgia medical students **with a strong interest in rural medicine**
 - Provides clinical rotation experiences in a rural community on a **repeated basis**
 - Provides a glimpse of life in a rural community through social events and professional networking

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Washington County, Georgia



How does the GRMSP work?

1. GA Rural Medical Scholars identify clinical rotations that they will be able to complete in community clinical settings throughout their remaining years of medical school
2. Students live in the community during the selected clinical rotations and participate in community events

GRMSP in Washington County, Georgia

– Available Rotations

- Internal Medicine
- Pediatrics
- Family Medicine
- Community Medicine
- Practice Management Elective
- Special Elective Opportunities



Housing in Washington County, Georgia

- Free for GRMSP Students
- Two Bedroom/One Bath furnished apartment
 - Kitchen necessities
 - Linens/Bedding
 - Students responsible for personal care items and cleaning supplies
- Mixed Gender Housing
- Wireless internet connection provided
- Telephone and television not provided

Why was the GRMSP established?

- To improve access to healthcare professionals in rural GA
- Provide medical students hands on experience in rural medicine
- Provide medical students the opportunity to experience living a rural community



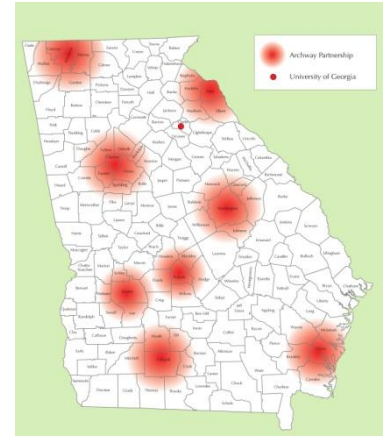
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Who is involved in the GRMSP?

- Archway Partnership
- The Georgia Statewide AHEC Network
- Washington County, Georgia
- Mercer University Medical School



Archway Partnership

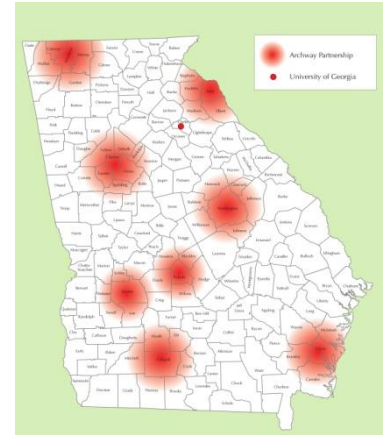


What is Archway?

- Community based outreach initiative from UGA
- Works with local stakeholders to address priority needs utilizing higher education resources
- Improving access to healthcare professionals is a high priority for the leaders of Washington County, GA



Archway Partnership



Archway's Role in GRMSP

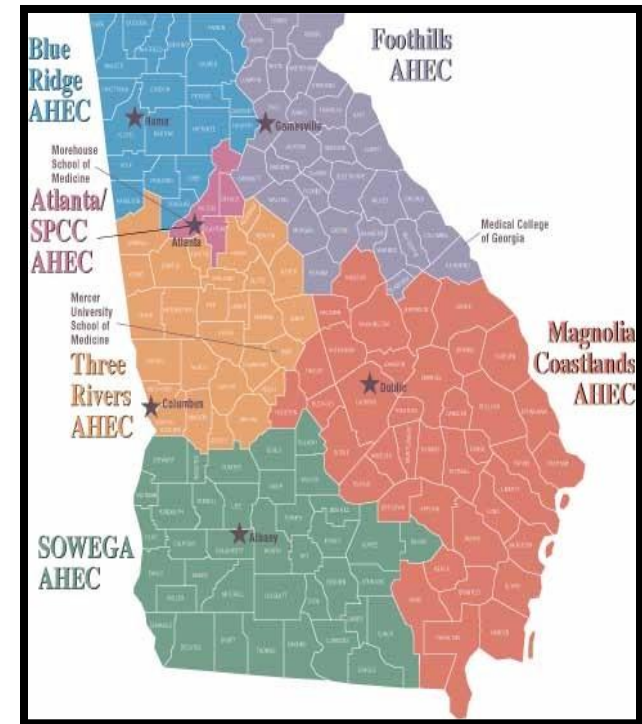
– Archway Partnership: Health Committee:

- Local coordination and facilitation
- Engage local healthcare community to provide clinical rotation sites
- Provide opportunities for local student housing
- Organize social opportunities
- Be a local resource to the student as they live in the County during
- Establish structure for local sustainability



What is the Georgia Statewide AHEC Network?

The Georgia Statewide AHEC Network is a nonprofit organization that was created to respond to the challenges of limited supply and distribution of health professionals in rural and underserved areas of the state.





What does the AHEC do?

Since 1984, the Georgia Statewide AHEC Network has represented a growing partnership with local communities and educators to increase the quality, supply and education of health professionals. They have combined their efforts to resolve these challenges by providing educational support to health professionals and students through four program areas:

- Health Careers Recruitment
- Community-Based Clinical Training
- Information Services
- Continuing Education



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AHEC's role in GRMSP?

- Assistance in site recruitment and faculty development for preceptors
- Provide students with orientation to a rural rotation experience
- Provide financial aid, scholarship and loan repayment information
- Access for students and preceptors to online medical journals and databases
- Student support while on rotation
- Preceptor support

GRMSP and Mercer University

- Approached MUSM with concept
- Mutual benefit: community need and large/expanding class sizes
- One year pilot in Internal Medicine
- Success resulted in approval to expand to all willing departments in MUSM

How is the GRMSP unique?

- Established from expressed community need to address issue of access to healthcare professionals in rural GA
- Students return to the same community several times to build on their academic experiences
- Opportunities to experience social aspects of the community is a key component

Engaging Local Stakeholders

- Need identification
- Mutual need for everyone
- Developing solution to meet
- Identified existing entities that aligned with local need and could contribute to the solution
- Mobilizing community
- Effort required by coordinator to sustain engagement and keep process moving forward
- Liaison between all parties to create a smooth process is vital
- Different worlds colliding

Who are the GRMSP students?

- All Mercer School of Medicine students
- All residents of Georgia and graduated from Georgia high schools
- From cities of Athens, Cartersville, Dalton, McDonough, Smyrna and Thomasville

GRMSP Evaluation Results to date:

Question 1: Did the welcome packet you received provide you with adequate information about the rotation site and housing? 100% answered yes

Question 2: Was the clinical site prepared for your arrival on the first day of your rotation? 100% answered yes

Question 3: Was there any information that you did not receive about your rotation experience or housing that would be helpful to future students? 84% answered no

QUESTION 4: Please describe your clinical experience in Sandersville as compared to others you have completed in Macon. For example, the positives and/or negatives of being away from campus for this rotation:

“I had a great experience. The biggest difference from being in Macon is the one-on-one relationships with the attending. It allows the attending to adequately assess my knowledge and there is an opportunity for more direct teaching.”

“I loved that I didn’t have to compete with other students or residents to do procedures or have time with patients.”

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“My Sandersville experience was not even comparable to my clinical rotations in Macon. Dr. Sumner took me under her wing and taught me more in one month than I learned in six months in Macon. The ability to have more hands on and be the only student as well as not having residents really makes the Sandersville rotation great. The small town feel as well as the hospitality that was given to me in the hospital is incomparable to Macon.”

“It was nice to see what it would be like to practice internal medicine outside of academia. It is a different experience and I really enjoyed getting to work with the physicians one-on-one.”

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“The independence as a member of the medical team was apparent from day one. There were no students or residents to lean on. I feel this entire experience gave me great skills and autonomy that will benefit me greatly.”

“Really the only negative was not being in Macon in person for the lectures. Most of the lectures came across the internet were fine, but there was one where a physician used actual x-ray films and I was unable to see them. The rotation in Sandersville is different in that, due to the fact that Macon is a teaching hospital, there is a lot of competition for learning experiences. I was able to see and do a lot more in Sandersville compared to Macon.”

Question 5: The GRMS Program works hard to not only provide students with quality clinical rotation experiences in Sandersville but also socially integrating students into the local community. Do the planned community activities make a difference in your overall experience in Sandersville? 84% answered yes

Question 6: Are there too many social integration activities planned? 100 % answered no

Question 7: What did you like best about your experience in Sandersville?

“I enjoyed the autonomy. It helped me build confidence about decision making when it come to patients.”

“Dr. Sumner. She sums up Sandersville. She is a great person, great teacher and great doctor and really made me feel at home.”

“Getting to work with Dr. Sumner. She is amazing.”

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“I really enjoyed getting to meet new people. Everyone was extremely inviting and kind.”

“Getting to work one-on-one with the attending and getting to know the patients’ lives and concerns more so than I would have in Macon.”

“I loved the people. Everyone I met was so welcoming and kind. I also really liked the vast amount of communication within the hospital as doctors, nurses and other healthcare professionals worked together for better patient care.”

Question 8: If given the opportunity to return to Sandersville for another rotation in a different specialty would you consider returning? 100% answered yes

Question 9: Are you considering a career in rural or medically underserved area in Georgia?
100% answered yes

Question 10: Would you consider returning to the Washington county area to practice as a physician?
66% answered yes

Win/Win Situation

- Addresses community need
- Fulfills mission of
 - MUSM
 - AHEC
 - Archway
- Assists medical students in professional networking



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For additional information contact:

Laura Bland, MPH

lvbland@uga.edu

706-612-3479

Erin Mundy, MPA

emundy@georgiahealth.edu

678-232-3759