

Rural Healthcare Workforce Recognition Awards

The Virginia Rural Healthcare Workforce Awards recognize and thank individuals and/or organizations for making significant contributions to rural communities through education, recruitment and retention initiatives designed to address Virginia's healthcare workforce shortage. On March 16th, the Workforce Council of the Rural Health plan awarded:

2010 Rural Healthcare Workforce Individual Award for Distinguished Service

Juliana van Olphen Fehr, CNM, PHD, FACNM

Dr. van Olphen Fehr is the creator and coordinator of the first nurse-midwifery education program in Virginia at Shenandoah University. To increase access to nurse-midwifery education in the rural areas, she developed a series of collaborative agreements with Old Dominion, Radford, Marshall, James Madison and Johns Hopkins Universities so that graduate nursing students can obtain their nurse-midwifery education through Shenandoah University while attending these universities. Dr. van Olphen Fehr has been on the forefront of utilizing distance education technology so that students can complete much of their midwifery coursework online.

Michelle Y. Whitehurst-Cook, MD

An alumna of the Medical College of Virginia (now the Virginia Commonwealth University School of Medicine - VCUSOM), Dr. Whitehurst-Cook has committed her life's work to serving the needs of the underserved. Beginning with her residency, she has always sought opportunities to gain the experiences that would prepare her to serve those that are often most marginalized and has had a passion to serve inner-city and rural populations.

2010 Rural Healthcare Workforce Organization Award for Outstanding Contribution

Virginia Appalachian Tricollege Nursing Program Part-Time Evening/Weekend Program

The Virginia Appalachian Tricollege Nursing Program is an associate degree nursing program consortium involving three community colleges, Virginia Highlands Community College (VHCC), Southwest Virginia Community College (SWCC), and Mountain Empire Community College (MECC). The purpose of the PTEW is to provide nursing education to individuals in Southwest Virginia who are "trapped" in low-paying or dissatisfying jobs or who had other responsibilities that interfere with their abilities to attend the rigorous scheduling of the traditional 2 year program.

Southwest Virginia Graduate Medical Education Consortium

Southwest Virginia Graduate Medical Education Consortium has been the premier organization in Southwest Virginia working toward improving access to and the quality of care to the medically underserved areas of Southwest Virginia through recruitment and training of resident physicians. GMEC's mission to improve access to high quality primary care for citizens of Southwest Virginia by forming educational partnerships between communities, local physicians, and primary care residency programs in the region has successfully introduced dozens of physicians to the area.

Congratulations!