Profiles of Success

Meet Johanna Chung, DDS...

Inspired by her family dentist, Johanna Chung explored all of the health professions during her high school days. His mentorship and love of service ingrained in her a deep commitment to giving back, motivating her to take several mission trips to Mexico to help communities in need. During her dentistry schooling at the University of California, San Francisco, Dr. Chung chose to conduct her internship rotations at the Burre Dental Center located in rural Northern California. Under the guidance of Dr. Carter Wright, Dr. Chung improved her evaluation and treatment skills, along with her timing, speed, and confidence. She gained real life experience about the high demand for services and the realities of practicing in an underserved community. Most of all, Dr. Chung appreciated the stimulating, supportive, and mission-driven work environment. She loved it so much that upon graduation she accepted a position at the Burre Dental Center and moved to Eureka, California. Dr. Chung remains thankful for her AHEC rotation experience as it unveiled a career choice she did not even realize was possible, practicing at an FQHC in a wonderful community.

“Burre is a wonderful clinic. There is so much that happens from the basic to the complex—a huge spectrum of dentistry. The culture here is all about helping and learning. It is amazing and inspiring all that we are able to do for our patients and all with limited resources. I love my work.”

About the program...

- The Area Health Education Centers (AHEC) program is authorized through Title VII of the Public Health Service Act.
- The North Coast AHEC program works with several institutions of higher education to coordinate student community-based training experiences for all levels and types of health professionals: dentists, primary care providers, nurses, medical assistants, etc. The program offers students an opportunity to directly experience working in a community health center in a rural, underserved area.
- The mission of the North Coast AHEC is to provide health care professionals with informative current education resources as well as support and promote linkages for community-based training for students, with the overall goals of creating a strong health care workforce and improving the health outcomes of our underserved populations.
- For more information about the North Coast AHEC, go to: http://www.northcoastclinics.org/ahec.php

The effect of funding cuts...

- Without Title VII funding, the underserved populations who are served by the AHEC program would suffer. These patients rely on the continuity of care provided by the inpatient service and the clinic.
- If funding were cut for the AHEC program, students would lose the opportunity for exposure to a population of patients with tremendous ethnic diversity as well as a diversity of health issues.
- The opportunity to train the newest generation of dentists to provide culturally competent care would be lost without funding from Title VII.
- The AHEC program has the potential to change a student’s focus to primary care dentistry. Without the program, an opportunity to provide exposure to practicing in an underserved area would be lost.

For more information, contact: Association of American Medical Colleges, Government Relations 655 K Street NW, Suite 100 ● Washington, DC 20001 ● Ph: 202.828.0525
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