Dear Entering 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 2-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, Social Work and Quinnipiac University’s Physician Assistant Program, in collaboration with the Connecticut Area Health Education Center (CT AHEC), sponsor a program whose focus is care for the urban underserved. Known as the Urban Service Track/AHEC Scholars Program, this *innovative program maximizes interdisciplinary training and learning opportunities that focus on issues specific to urban communities and vulnerable populations.*

Over its 15 years of operation, the *Urban Service Track* has engaged more than 700 health professions students. Students selected to participate from the six schools are designated as Urban Health/AHEC Scholars and are expected to participate in a variety of educational activities that *complement the medical school curriculum.* Because the curriculum for each of the schools is very demanding, we have been careful to plan learning retreats and educational activities with exam schedules and curricular demands in mind.

*During COVID-19,* Urban Health/AHEC Scholars came together virtually and through small group in-person activities. For *2021-2022,* students will embrace a hybrid training model that will include some in-person, virtual and experiential activities in the community. To learn more about the specific activities of our students during COVID-19, please visit [our website](#).

**Typical training activities for new Urban Health/AHEC Scholars include** a welcome reception and orientation, a Clinical Skills Boot Camp Simulation Lab, 4 learning retreats to be held on Friday afternoons, SBIRT (Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment) training and Clinical Assessment with standardized patients, involvement in *National Primary Care Week* activities, participation in student-centered and run monthly *UST Interest Groups (IGs)* and *on-line modules* addressing tools critical for today’s health professional. In addition to these didactic and clinical opportunities, students participate in *community outreach activities* (two each semester) sponsored by CT AHEC.

**UST graduates credit the program** with providing them with unique and valuable tools and experiences. After completion of the formal two-year curriculum, many students stay connected with the program serving as mentors, coaches and small group facilitators which adds to the richness of the UST/AS Learning Community.
Recent graduate have reflected on their experiences with UST. One example from a MS-IV:
“Being a part of UST has been a wonderful and transformative experience. It has not only presented me with numerous opportunities to provide direct care to underserved populations, but it has also taught me to do so in a more culturally sensitive and compassionate way. I will never forget my time spent as an Urban Health Scholar and will forever carry all these valuable UST lessons with me into the world of patient-centered care.”

To view remarks of more recent graduates about the impact of the Urban Service Track/AHEC Scholars program on their educational experience, visit this video.

If you are interested in being part of special learning community focused on primary care, interprofessional collaborative practice and working with urban underserved patient populations, we invite you to complete the on-line application by June 30, 2021 (how to apply). Individuals with completed applications will be extended a virtual interview to learn more about their interest and background. Students will be notified of their application status by August 16, 2021.

Sincerely,

Petra Clark-Dufner, MA
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Associate Director, CT AHEC

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