



RURAL TRACK PIPELINE PROGRAM

MU School of Medicine Receives nearly \$5 Million in Federal Grants to Train More Rural Doctors



The University of Missouri has received two Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) grants totaling nearly \$5 million to increase the number of doctors in Missouri and address the physician shortages in rural parts of the state.

A Missouri Hospital Association study last year predicted a shortage of up to 49,000 primary care doctors in the United States by 2030. The new grants attempt to address that gap by funding new medical programs, improving training site partnerships across rural Missouri, creating

innovative faculty programs and developing a new rural residency program based in Sedalia.

The centerpiece of the two grants is a \$4.2 million award over four years to fund expansion of the Rural Track Pipeline Program, which was established in 1995 to introduce medical students to rural health care. The grant is one of just five awarded nationwide and is the largest award for rural medicine in the school's history.

"More Missouri doctors receive their medical degree from MU than from any other institution, so we feel an urgency

and an obligation to address this growing health care crisis in our state," said Steven Zweig, MD, MSPH, interim dean of the University of Missouri School of Medicine. "We already have several unique programs designed to offer our medical students encounters and training in rural and underserved areas, and this grant will enhance those initiatives in new and innovative ways."

The funds also will pay for additional enhancements to existing Rural Track Pipeline Programs:

- **Bryant Scholars Program:** a medical school pre-admission program for undergraduate students from rural areas who wish to pursue rural medicine
- **Rural Scholars Program:** a curriculum designed to offer lectures, mentoring and clinical programs to medical students interested in rural practice, including:
 - Summer Community Program
 - Rural Track Clerkship Program
 - Rural Track Elective Program

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Kathleen Quinn, PhD,
Associate Dean for
Rural Health

The MU Office of Rural Health was awarded a 4-year, \$4 million dollar grant from Health Resources and Services Administration to broaden and strengthen our rural programs! There are three main goals of this grant:

- Develop and implement educational and training curricula to teach the broad skill set required for primary care and rural practice
- Develop and implement new and/or expanded interprofessional team-based program curricula
- Increase the capacity of faculty who train medical students in core topic areas

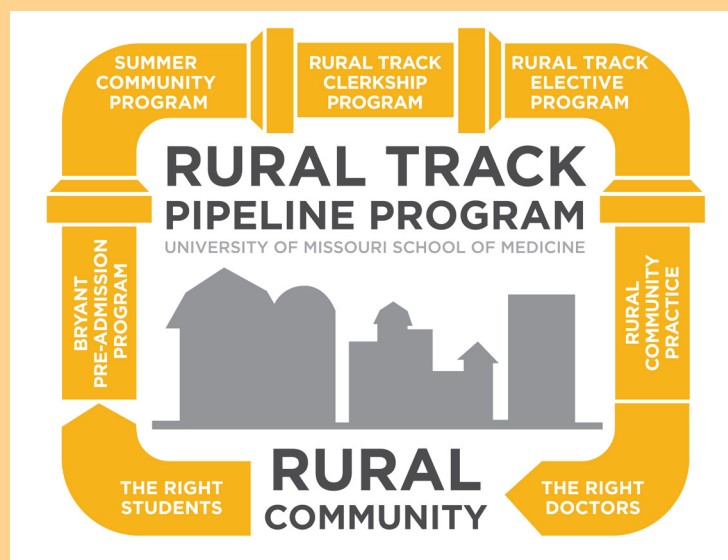
You can read about the award in our cover story and our office will continue to publish more stories about various projects over the course of the grant. The funding will benefit faculty, partner hospitals and students statewide. If you have questions or want to know more about our efforts, please contact our office.

This year the Department of Family and Community Medicine was awarded a grant to start a Rural Residency Training Track at Bothwell Regional Health Center in Sedalia. We hope over the next decade, other hospitals will partner with MU SOM to emulate the program!

It's also license renewal time for Missouri physicians! **See page 11 for the survey link.** We would appreciate if you would take the time to answer a few additional survey questions when you register. The survey results will be used to inform local and state policy makers, public and private health care providers, and workforce training programs to better meet Missourians' health care needs and ensure the best possible outcomes for Missouri's population health.

Finally, I ask you to support students interested in rural medicine. Your gift, large or small, allows the MU SOM to award scholarships to rural scholars and to sustain the Rural Track Pipeline Program.

Warmest regards,
Kathleen Quinn, PhD



Make a Gift

Help celebrate 24 years of the Rural Track Program! Make a gift to support the program and student scholarships.

To donate online, visit:
medicine.missouri.edu/education/rural-track-pipeline-program/alumni

Update Us

To update your information, visit:
medicine.missouri.edu/education/rural-track-pipeline-program/share-your-ahc-alumni-news

Having accurate practice information on Rural Track participants will assist us in illustrating program outcomes to stakeholders.

Program Outcomes

Program participants are more likely to choose a primary care specialty and twice as likely to choose family medicine as their specialty when compared to non-participants.

- 57.3% of participants practice in a rural location
- 56.3% of participants practice in Missouri
- 51.9% entered a primary care residency program

Rural Track Exemplary Student Award

Each year, the Rural Track Management Group chooses an M4 to recognize for the Rural Track Exemplary Student Award. The award recognizes MU Rural Track students who consistently demonstrate a high level of commitment and passion for learning.



Brieanna Kroeger MD '19, receives her Rural Track Exemplary Student Award from Kathleen Quinn, PhD, associate dean for rural health, and James Stevermer, MD, MSPH, FAAFP.

These students are recognized by patients, preceptors and staff as providing outstanding patient care and demonstrating an exemplary level of professionalism. They show great interest in rural medicine and actively participate in rural track-related activities. They seek out opportunities to become involved in the community and participate in service activities where available.

This year, Brieanna Kroeger, MD '19, received the award. Kroeger completed her Rural Track Clerkship rotations in Lebanon during her third year and was nominated by Emmanuel Obafemi-Ajayi, MD.

Dr. Obafemi-Ajayi, a pediatrician from Mercy Lebanon, wrote: "Ms. Kroeger was an easygoing, smart and pleasant person. She related well with our patients and always had a smile no matter what. In many ways she is what an ideal medical student is like: eager to learn, brilliant, conventional yet innovative, relatable to patients, faculty and other medical staff."

Dr. Kroeger is a first-year pediatrics resident at the University of Missouri.

Outstanding Community-Based Faculty Preceptor Award



Kevin Blanton, MD, right, receives his Outstanding Community-Based Faculty Preceptor Award from Scott Kinkade, MD.

Kevin Blanton, MD, received this year's Outstanding Community-Based Faculty Preceptor Award. Dr. Blanton is a pediatrics physician from Sikeston. Since 2005, when the Sikeston third-year training site was established, Dr. Blanton has taught 37 Rural Track medical students.

Recipients of this award must demonstrate commitment to fostering those factors determined to be critical to the success of the University of Missouri School of Medicine graduates as defined by the key characteristics.

"Dr. Blanton is an exemplary member of the community-based faculty dedicated to providing excellence in education as a rural pediatrician," said Kathleen Quinn, PhD, associate dean for rural health. "He invites students to experience Sikeston from a clinical and community point of view. Dr. Blanton is undoubtedly one of the best role models and influential physicians from Sikeston. He has welcomed students to learn in his clinic and demonstrated his role as a leader in the community to help them make an informed decision about their future practice."

Another key component of the Rural Track Pipeline funding will support rural hospitals that serve as training locations for medical school students. The grant will provide each site an additional stipend for hosting and mentoring students while also offering additional opportunities for faculty training through a statewide development conference.

“It’s extremely difficult financially for rural hospitals to train medical students, especially when you consider the cost of lost clinic time,” said Kathleen Quinn, PhD, principal investigator and associate dean for rural health at the MU School of Medicine. “This grant will make it possible for rural doctors to bring the students in and not only teach them but also talk with them about rural medicine and the resources available in a rural community. The physicians and students will have time for more meaningful interactions thanks to this grant.”

A second federal grant worth nearly \$750,000 will fund development of a new rural track residency in Sedalia, where selected candidates will spend their first year in Columbia and the last two years of training at Bothwell Regional Health Center.

“Incoming residents will have the opportunity to train in a well-established successful residency program in Columbia their first year, benefit from our experience and success rates, then take the skills learned in that first year and apply them directly in the setting where they plan to practice,”

said Erika Ringdahl, MD, professor of Clinical Family and Community Medicine and director of the Family Medicine Residency Program at the MU School of Medicine. “It’s really the best of both worlds for training.”

Funding for the two grants was included in the FY2019 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies (Labor/HHS) appropriations bill. Missouri Senator Roy Blunt serves as chairman of the Labor/HHS appropriations subcommittee and started both programs to address rural health care physician shortages.

“The health challenges in rural America are unique, and rural Americans are at a greater risk of poor health outcomes than Americans living in suburban or urban areas,” Blunt said. “Missouri is one of eight states set to have a physician shortage as of 2025. As chairman of the appropriations subcommittee that funds the Department of Health and Human Services, one of my goals has been to target federal investment in rural health care to make sure people can get quality health care close to where they live. Both grants help Missouri get a step closer to that goal by supporting physician training to meet rural health care needs.”

The HRSA grants run through 2023, but plans are already in place to sustain them after they expire.

— Article provided by
MU Medicine newsletter

Bryant Scholars Pre-Admissions Program Update

The Bryant Scholars Pre-Admissions Program began in 1995 as part of the Rural Track Pipeline Program at the MU School of Medicine to address the shortage of physicians in Missouri.

The Program encourages young people from rural backgrounds to pursue a medical education.

60% of Bryant Scholars practice in a rural location

71% of Bryant Scholars practice in Missouri

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE NEW BRYANT SCHOLARS ENTERING CLASS OF 2021!

Jeffrey Bodeen, *Aurora*
Austin Boots, *Farmington*
Devin Breckenridge, *King City*
Brooke Burton, *Hannibal*
Emily Chisum, *Niangua*
Michala Clark, *Belle*
Heaven Fowler, *Russellville*
Abigail Gann, *Miller*
Hayden Hackman, *Glasgow*
Samuel Hawkins, *Hardin*
Austin Hotop, *Perryville*
Kenlee Jonas, *Lamar*
Janie Leathers, *Cairo*
Marcus Mallen, *Maryville*
Meaghan McConkey, *Barnard*
Delaney McKnight, *Savannah*
Cameron Meyer, *California*
Ravi Patel, *Kennett*
Garren Powell, *Hughesville*
Evan Reeves, *Farmington*
Ronin Rice, *Poplar Bluff*
Lucie Trokey, *Farmington*
Rachel Ulbrich, *Marshall*
Evan Wallace, *Hannibal*



Rural Immersion

An interdisciplinary experience in Sedalia



2019 Missouri AHEC Rural Immersion students present their final projects.

The third Missouri Area Health Education Center (AHEC) Rural Immersion Program brought 21 health professions students to Sedalia, a town of 21,568, to explore what it would be like to work in a rural community. Students studying nursing, medicine, dentistry, speech pathology, pharmacy and public health participated in this interdisciplinary experience designed to highlight the social and communal aspects of life in a rural community.

“Serving in a rural setting provides several unique benefits, but unless students have been exposed to these communities, they often aren’t aware of them,” said Kathleen Quinn, PhD, associate dean for rural health at the MU School of Medicine. “Through the Rural Immersion

Program, students will explore the non-clinical aspects of life as a health care professional in a rural area.”

Students broke into groups that include members of different health care disciplines to foster diverse thoughts and experiences. Each group spent time interviewing community leaders from one of the four emphasis areas — business and government, education, health care and natural resources. Two of the students were from Sedalia and said they were proud of the opportunities their community offered health professionals.

Many organizations hosted the Rural Immersion students throughout the week, including Bothwell Regional Health Center, Katy Trails Community Health Center, Missouri Valley

Community Action Agency, State Fair Community College, Great Western Dining, the Sedalia Rotary Club, Tyson Foods, the Sedalia Police Department and Sedalia Chamber of Commerce.

“We have to make sure when they do come to visit us that they walk away saying, ‘That was such a friendly area, and everyone there was so nice.’ And they can see themselves living and working here,” said Beth Everts, director of recruitment for Bothwell Regional Health Center.

At the end of the four-day experience, students presented their findings to the community. Each group shared what it learned about the Sedalia community and how those factors may impact the students’ decisions about where to practice when they complete their schooling. Local citizens who supported the students during the week attended to hear what the students learned while in Sedalia.

“The Rural Immersion Program gave me a better understanding for the community as a whole, rather than just the hospital or facility I am interested in. It showed me a day in the lives of the patients I would be treating,” said one of the participants.

Planning for the fourth year of Rural Immersion is currently underway.

A YEAR IN PHOTOS



Bryant Scholars Laura Morris, MD '07, MSPH, FAAFP, and Luke Stephens, MD, '08, MSPH, joined Bryant Scholar Andrea Schuster, MD '14, and community-based faculty member James Felts, MD '78 to speak on the "Why I Stay Engaged" panel at the Rural Medical Educators Conclave hosted in Columbia.



Ashwath Sampath, MD '20 candidate, participated in a non-contact boxing program for his community integration project, "The Effects of Non-Contact Boxing on Non-Motor Functions of Parkinson's Disease." Sampath presented his research in May at the National Rural Health Conference in Atlanta.



J. Michael Feuerbacher, MD, received the Distinguished Community-Based Faculty Award at the 2019 Awards Convocation.



The Bryant Scholars entering class of 2019 includes, front row, Nicole Hitchcock, Riley Short and Regan Hill; back row, Jared Yates, Allison Spunaugle, Elizabeth Blanton, Shelbi Davis, Madison Bulger and Aaron Brown.



Kelly Dougherty, MD '22 candidate, presented the student perspective of the Rural Immersion Program at the WONCA World Rural Health Conference in Albuquerque, New Mexico.



The Bryant Scholars entering class of 2020.

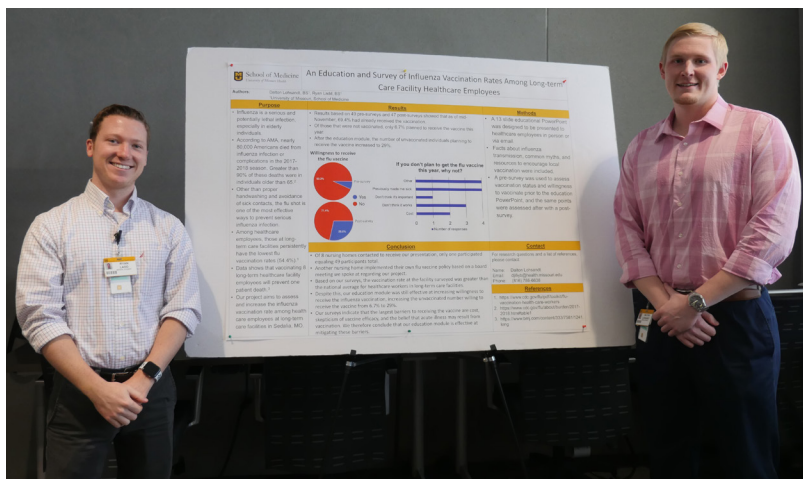


Riley Short, MD '23 candidate, participated in an IUD insertion event hosted by the Rural Medicine Interest Group.



Bryant Scholars graduating class of 2019 pictured with Kathleen Quinn, PhD, associate dean for rural health, and James Stevermer, MD, MSPH, FAAFP. Students pictured are Dane Paneitz, Jamie Phelps, Alexis Ruffolo, Dominic Haertling and Bailey Martin.

RURAL TRACK PHOTOS



Ryan Ladd and Dalton Lohsandt, MD '20 candidates, presented their community integration project, "An Education and Survey of Influenza Vaccination Rates Among Long-term Care Facility Healthcare Employees."



Second-year Bryant Scholar medical students Danielle Yantis and Heather Andrade visited with Hannibal Regional Healthcare's Student Coordinator, Brent Allen, at the Rural Track 2019 Site Fair.



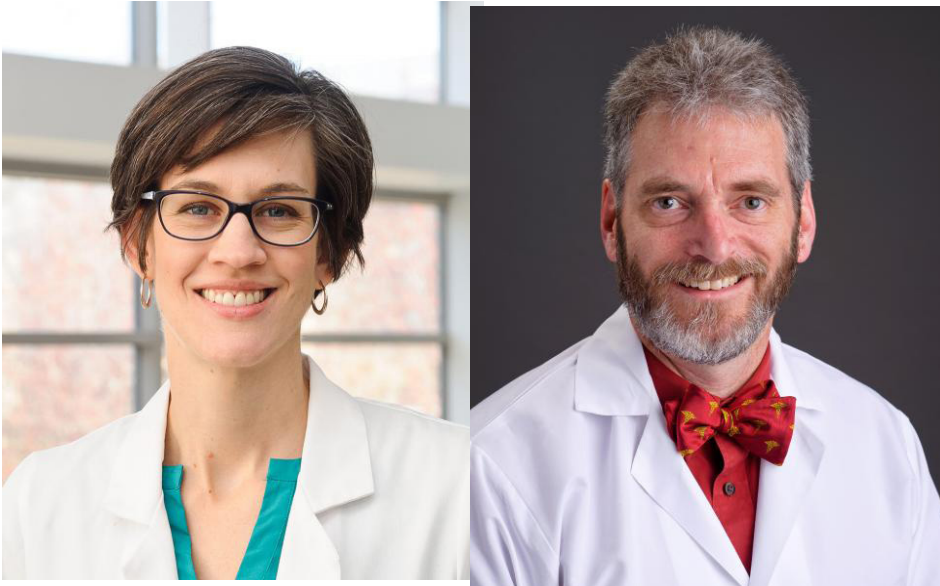
Bryant Scholar Elizabeth Blanton, MD '23 candidate, attended the Rural Track 2019 Site Fair. She is pictured with her father and community-based faculty member, Kevin Blanton, MD; Jennifer Nickell, MD '99, Sikeston Rural Track Co-Medical Director; and Fallon Mayabb, MD '11, Sikeston Rural Track Co-Medical Director.



2019 Missouri AHEC Rural Immersion students visited Bothwell Lodge in Sedalia.



Morris Named Rural Track Medical Director



Laura Morris, MD '07, MSPH, FAAFP, and James Stevermer, MD, MSPH, FAAFP.

After nearly a decade as the medical director of the MU AHEC Rural Track Pipeline Program, James Stevermer, MD, MSPH, FAAFP, is transitioning his leadership. Effective Nov. 1, he was succeeded by Laura Morris, MD, MSPH, FAAFP, associate professor of clinical family and community medicine.

As medical director, Stevermer provided leadership and faculty development to establish new training sites in West Plains, Hannibal, Sedalia, Osage Beach, Cape Girardeau, Branson and Farmington. Stevermer recruited School of Medicine faculty for Bryant Scholars retreats, designed curriculum and served as a role model for Bryant Scholars.

Morris is one such Bryant Scholar. Morris completed the Rural Track Program as a pre-admitted Bryant Scholar. She completed her Summer Community Program experience in Boonville and completed clinical rotations in St. Joseph for her third-year clerkship. Originally from Holts Summit, Morris attended Missouri State University before earning her medical degree from the MU School of Medicine in 2007. She currently practices in Fulton with Stevermer.

“Dr. Stevermer was a great ambassador and leader of our program,” said Kathleen Quinn, PhD, associate dean for rural health. “He was a vital resource for regional medical directors and community-based faculty members.”

“He has laid an impressive foundation Dr. Morris can build on. We are excited to see how the Rural Track Program will continue to thrive under her leadership.”

In addition to being the medical director, Morris will play a lead role in the development of rural longitudinal integrated clerkships at three rural training sites over the next four years and in the development of a rural training track residency program in Sedalia in association with the MU Family and Community Medicine Residency Program.

“I’m excited for the opportunity to work more closely with all of our Bryants and Rural Scholars, in particular through the development of our longitudinal integrated clerkship,” Morris said. “My experiences as a student in the rural pipeline have shaped my career in so many ways, and I’m grateful for the opportunity to serve the school and give back to our current students. Ultimately, we are working hard to improve the health of rural Missourians and I am dedicated to that goal.”

— *Article provided by
MU Medicine newsletter*

Where Are They Now?

Rural Track graduates were asked,
“What prepared you most for rural practice?”

Amanda Lewton, MD '10

Family Medicine
Mercy Family Medicine
Neosho

I came back to the Joplin area, which is the area I grew up and did my rural clerkship rotations. I think knowing the area and the opportunities really helped me make the decision to come back here. During my rural clerkship, I was able to have a lot of good hands-on experiences, including delivering babies and being first assist in easy surgeries. I really came to enjoy the people and knew I wanted to come back to this area. Growing up in this area has really helped me connect to patients.



Laura Morris, MD '07, MSPH, FAAFP

Family Medicine
Callaway Physicians
Fulton

The Rural Track prepared me for rural practice by offering multiple examples of role models and mentors working in rural settings. I was reluctant to leave my family and live on-site for my Rural Track clerkship experience, but I wouldn't trade it for the world and would've done all my clinical training there if they let me!

*Are you interested in being featured in, “Where Are They Now?”
Contact Allison Fuemmeler at fuemmeleran@health.missouri.edu*

Rural Medical Educators Meet to Discuss Engagement and Innovation

Rural health care providers and educators from across the country gathered in Columbia to discuss techniques for improving care in their communities. The National Rural Health Association held its Rural Medical Educators Conclave. The theme was “Engagement and Innovation.”

Keynote speaker Ben Anderson discussed methods he uses at Kearny County Hospital in Western Kansas to recruit doctors to be a part of the community and keep patients engaged in care. Many doctors who serve in rural communities do not stay for more than a few years, he said. His goal is to find doctors who stay engaged in the community and to help other medical providers to do the same.

The MU Rural Track Pipeline Program works to accomplish the same goals. Dr. Kathleen Quinn, associate dean for rural health at the University of Missouri School of Medicine, said the program sends rural interested students to partner hospitals across the state, where they are taken in throughout their medical education to prepare them to live and work in those communities. Quinn said, “In rural communities there are less resources and they have to be able to deal with unexpected instances and have broad spectrum practices.”

In his keynote, Anderson expressed the importance of making health care accessible to everyone. He said in order to do so, medical providers need to have a relationship with the community. At Kearney County Hospital, he conducted community surveys to learn the needs not being met by members of his community.

Those in attendance expressed a love for their work in rural communities, though they recognize the need for more providers in their communities. Dr. Jim Stevermer, a family physician in Fulton, said, “It remains extremely clear we need to train more people to provide medical and nursing care to people in rural areas. The population is still underserved, and I don’t know that is recognized nationally.”

From “Rural Medical Educators Meet to Discuss Engagement and Innovation,” by Sidney Steele, *KBIA*, February 21, 2019.



School of Medicine partners with Missouri Board of Healing Arts to collect physician workforce data

The Missouri Board of Healing Arts and the MU School of Medicine are collaborating to collect data to better understand Missouri’s physician workforce. Physicians receive a link to the survey when completing their license renewal. The survey link is also available below. The portal to renew physician licenses is open until Jan. 31, 2020.

The survey results will be used in conjunction with other health care workforce data to inform local and state policymakers, public and private health care providers, and health care workforce training programs to better

meet Missourians’ health care needs and to ensure the best possible outcomes for Missouri’s population health.

“This project is a decade-long collaboration of the Missouri Healthcare Workforce Advisory Group to plan, develop and implement a system to collect data to benefit Missourians,” said Kathleen Quinn, PhD, associate dean for rural health. “We’re monitoring trends and developing training programs to understand our state’s distribution of health care professionals and meet the needs of local communities.”

Please use this link to access the survey: https://missouri.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_50gEEUSPgnf48IL.

If you have any issues with the survey, please contact Jill Luct, survey administrator, at luchtj@health.missouri.edu.



MU Rural Track Pipeline Program
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Return Service Requested

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**Thank you for your continued
support of MU-AHEC and the
Rural Track Pipeline Program**

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