



**RURAL HEALTH  
SCHOLARS PROGRAM**

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**COLLEGE OF PHARMACY  
OHIO NORTHERN UNIVERSITY**

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**When the  
Community is  
the Classroom:**

Student-driven  
Community-based Projects  
in a Rural Health Training  
Program

# Objectives

01.

Outline the development and incorporation of community-based projects in a rural health training program



04.

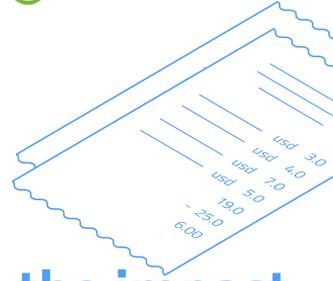
Discuss best practices and lessons learned for student-driven rural projects within a rural health training program

02.

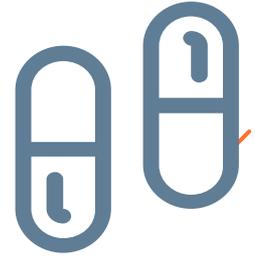
Provide examples of community-based projects developed by rural health training program participants

03.

Describe the impact of rural community-based projects



**Outline the development and  
incorporation of  
community-based projects in a  
rural health training program**



**01**



# × Background

## Ohio Northern University (ONU)

- Rural, private college of pharmacy
- Pharmacy is one of 5 colleges on campus
  - Nursing and medical laboratory science are other health care programs on campus
- Six year, direct entry (0-6) pharmacy program
  - × ■ Required service learning and experiential experiences in the curriculum



## RURAL AND UNDERSERVED HEALTH SCHOLARS PROGRAM



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SCHOLARS PROGRAM

COLLEGE OF PHARMACY  
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### Certificate Program

Preparing health care  
providers to meet the  
unmet needs of  
rural communities

Caring for the health needs of rural and underserved populations is a specialty in itself. These patients face different health issues than people in cities and towns, and to best serve them, rural health care providers should receive specialized training and hands-on experience working with these populations.

The Rural and Underserved Health Scholars Program will prepare you for rural practice by providing opportunities to develop your leadership skills, gain patient care experience and learn research techniques necessary to understand the unique needs of rural and underserved populations.

Upon completion of this multi-year certificate training program, you will be ready to face the challenges of rural practice by complementing your degree with a specialized skill set.



### WHAT YOU WILL DO

- **Seminars** - learn about various topics related to rural health, such rural health care and project development.
- **Patient experiences** - care for patients in rural settings and shadow health care providers who practice in rural settings.
- **Research experience** - design, implement and evaluate research related to rural and underserved patient populations, in collaboration with faculty members.
- **Leadership experience** - utilize our tools and guidance to solidify strong leadership skills necessary to enact change in rural and underserved communities.
- **Service opportunities** - develop and implement service-learning opportunities to address needs and opportunities in a rural, underserved community.

### HOW TO APPLY

Interested applicants should fill out the online application and submit a current CV and reference. The application period opens in spring semester of each year.

Pharmacy students can apply as third-year students. All other majors can apply as sophomores. Students must be in good academic standing throughout the program to remain eligible.



### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

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**“We did all these assignments that at the end lead us to have the whole project developed, it’s almost like Dr. Musser and Dr. Eddy planned it that way”**

- One of the First Rural Scholars



# Courses/Seminars

## Seminar #1

- Explore rural health definitions and issues (access, chronic disease, etc.)
- Introduce rural healthcare literature evaluation
- Assigned project partner, community
- Explore assigned community resources
- Complete a community needs assessment
- Community and Professional Service
- Leadership and Leaders in Healthcare Series

## Seminar #2

- Based on community needs assessment, present an initial pitch on project to address community need
- Complete a literature search, SWOT analysis, mission/vision and details on a project concept
- Present a final pitch of project concept
- Community and Professional Service
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# Courses/Seminars

## Seminar #3

- Research protocol development
- Submit IRB protocol for project
- Collaboration with local agencies
- Promotion and Public Relations for project
- Project logistics and manual creation
- Community and Professional Service
- Leadership and Leaders in Healthcare Series

## Seminar #4

- Project implementation
- Development of research dissemination plans
- Presentation of initial project results
- Rural healthcare special topics (regulation/legislative issues, mental health, elderly care, etc)
- Community and Professional Service
- Leadership and Leaders in Healthcare Series

# Courses/Seminars

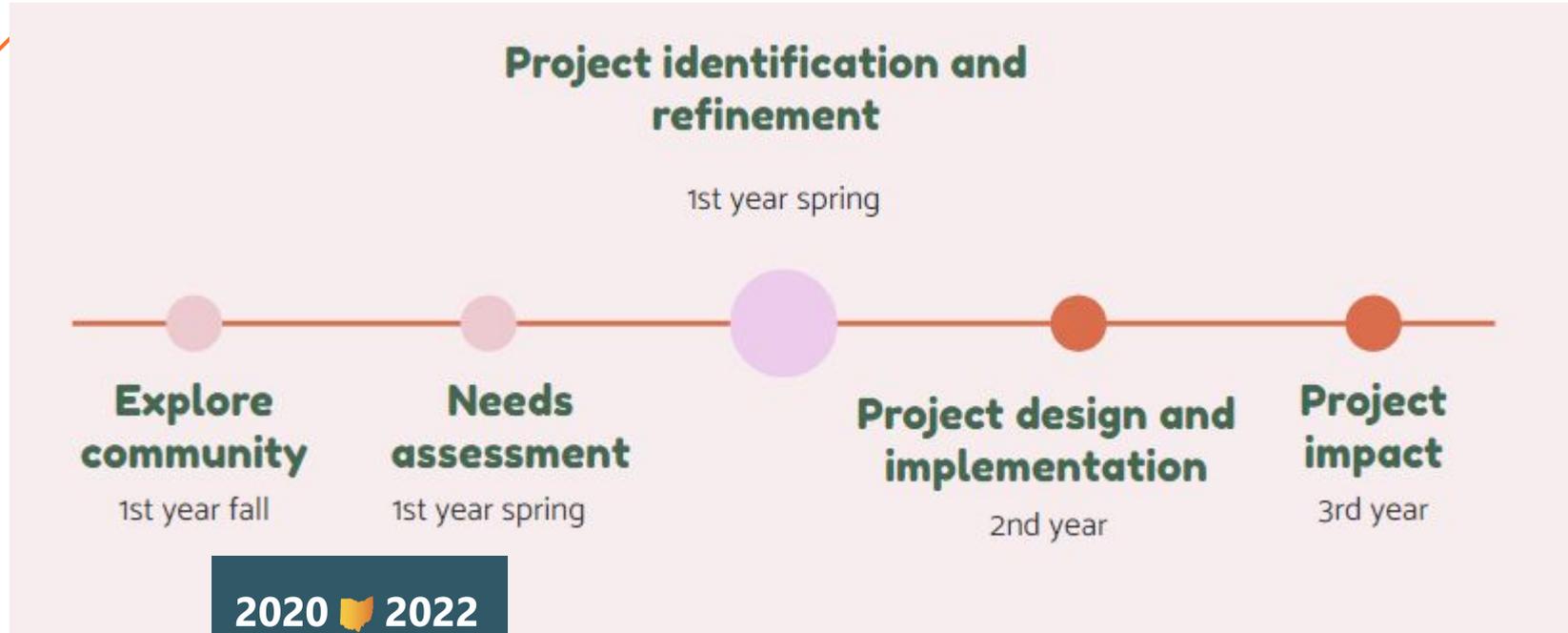
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# Timeline



2020  2022

Hardin County  
**Community Health  
Improvement Plan**



**Provide examples of  
community-based  
projects developed by  
rural health training  
program participants**



**02**



# Diminishing the Doubts

**Identified Need: Mental Health and Addiction**

## Project Description

Partnered with Ada High School to offer mental health resources for the students of the school. Researched attitudes of students prior to and after discussions of mental health and resources offered.



# Diminishing the Doubts



# One Step at a Time

Identified Need: Chronic Disease



## Project Description

Partnered with Kenton Middle School to offer a family walking program. One Step at a Time is an incentivized family-friendly walking program aimed at encouraging students and their families to be active and make strides towards better health.



# Mental Health Through Neighborly Devotion

## Identified Need: Mental Health and Addiction



## Project Description

Through a partnership with a local church the project aimed to increase the offerings of Mental Health First Aid in Hardin county. The group partnered with PASS and the local church to bring the topic of mental health to an already established community.

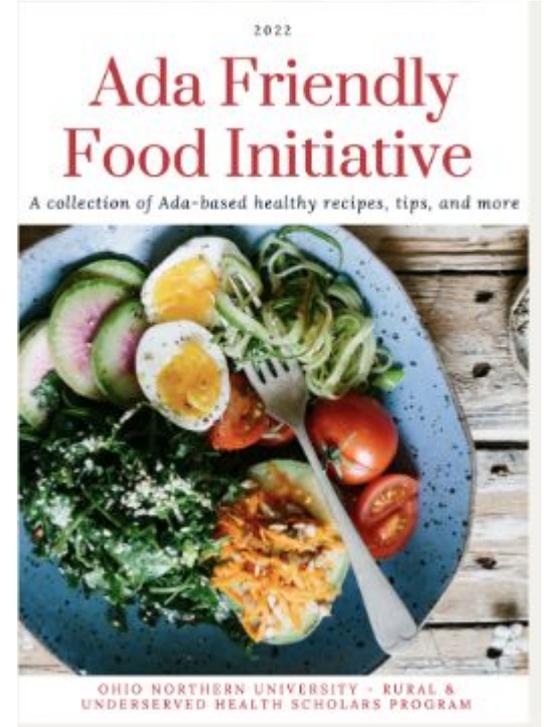


# Ada Friendly Food Initiative

## Identified Need: Chronic Disease

### Project Description

Created an online community to submit healthy recipes with local ingredients and created a cookbook full of meal planning, shopping and cooking tips that is simple and focused on chronic disease.



# Describe the impact of rural community-based projects



03

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# Student Reflection

**“Creating and implementing our walking program, One Step at a Time, through the Rural and Underserved Health Scholars Program at ONU has taught me an abundance of skills that no other class in pharmacy school could. I have learned how to perform literature reviews and needs assessments, create an IRB protocol, collaborate with community partners, present project pitches and posters, and adapt to challenges that arise.”**

- Rural and Underserved Health Scholar Student



# Student Dissemination



## Poster Presentations

- 3 groups presented at the Ohio Pharmacist Association
- 4 groups presented at the ONU research colloquium

Groups working on draft manuscripts of their research



**Discuss best practices and lessons learned for student-driven rural projects within a rural health training program**



**04**



# From the Scholars...



“Being in this program has brought me nothing but knowledge and opportunities.

The work we have done is something I never thought I would do during my college career. The fact that I was able to create a project from scratch and implement it with Ada High School is something I will forever be proud of. I have told so many people about our program and how much I have grown throughout my time in it. I am so honored to be a part of the first cohort of students, and I hope many other students consider this wonderful opportunity.”

“One lesson I have learned throughout the project planning process is it is okay to stray away from the original vision. Sometimes the original vision is not feasible based on the route the project is currently taking. It is okay to learn as you go and make decisions as new problems or opportunities arise. I would tell people to not be discouraged if you think something is not working out as planned. Taking detours is okay, and they could turn into something better. Our original plan for our project was not the plan we ended up using. But, in the end, our project was perfect for our intended target population and I am very proud of the way it turned out.”

# From the Scholars...



“We have learned lessons in how to address barriers in obtaining healthy food (and following a healthy lifestyle in general) by talking to patients face-to-face. The best way to reach people is to hear what their obstacles are, empathize with them/those reasons, and show them that progress can take a while but it is never too late to make a positive change.

We also have learned that having a broad topic/target can be difficult but it pays off to establish meaningful (not always lab results or numbers-based) outcomes that offer insight into the challenges people face day-to-day and how there are many ways to tailor rural health to individual communities.”



# From the Directors...



**Need for good partnerships  
with community contacts**



**Sustainability of multiple  
projects over time**

**Finding a win/win with  
partners**



**Pro/con of “carrying over”  
projects from previous cohorts**

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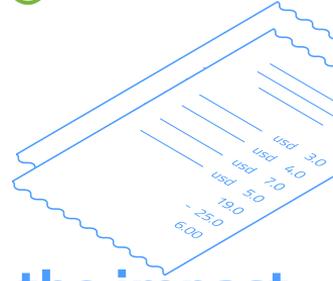
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