

## PAIRED to ExCEL

In order to advance healthcare and pharmacist career opportunities in rural areas, it is essential for students to enhance core skills to include leadership development, creativity, entrepreneurship, and collaboration. The "PAIRED to ExCEL" program provides interactive didactic and experiential opportunities across the pharmacy curriculum. The program will engage P1 and

P2 students through promoting rural career development on Introductory Pharmacy Practice Experiences (IPPEs). P3 students will complete Rural Healthcare and Leadership modules devoted to these core skills. P4 students will complete Advanced Pharmacy Practice Experiences (APPEs) in a variety of rural pharmacy settings to apply these skills through development of a Rural Health Action Plan (RHAP) that meets the needs of their respective community's needs, and engagement in a P4 student Rural Leadership Advisory Council (RLAC) which will serve as a "think tank" to share and solve RHAP implementation dilemmas. P4 students will collate these experiences to develop a Rural Health Career Plan to plan for a career in a rural area. "PAIRED to ExCEL" will build upon and continue the prior successes of the "PAIRED with PEEP" initiative sponsored by the SCCRPH. This new initiative will equip pharmacy students to become healthcare providers to ensure better health outcomes in rural communities.

### Project Aims

- Develop a pipeline of pharmacy graduates with leadership skills who are equipped for the challenges of practice in rural healthcare settings
- Develop a pipeline of pharmacy graduates who are resourceful and able to create and financially justify pharmacist career opportunities in rural areas
- Develop a pipeline of pharmacy graduates who are equipped with interprofessional collaboration skills to optimize healthcare access and provision for patients in rural areas
- Provide a prototype for a new Rural Health Track, which will be proposed to the USC COP curriculum committee for review
- Continue providing the "PAIRED with PEEP" program for first (P1) and second (P2) year students to bolster pharmacy student interest in completing P4 rotations in rural areas.

### Successes

- Statistically significant improvements in student perceptions regarding rural health care, including patient needs, barriers, interprofessional team dynamics, and opportunities to practice in rural areas.
- Increased utilization of rural experiential rotation utilization
- Student commitment to longitudinal training at rural institutions, citing the program as the rationale for the commitment
- PAIRED with PEEP Outcomes Abstract accepted to American College of Clinical Pharmacy Virtual Annual Meeting

### Future Directions

- Develop a UofSC COP Rural Health Curricular Track Plan

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