



Academic Health Department Learning Community Report

August 10, 2015

Overview

The [Academic Health Department \(AHD\) Learning Community](#) supports development of AHD partnerships between public health practice organizations and academic institutions. As a national community of practitioners, educators, and researchers, the AHD Learning Community stimulates discussion and sharing of knowledge; the development of resources; and collaborative learning around establishing, sustaining, and expanding AHDs. The Learning Community currently has more than 450 members.

New Resources and Tools

The AHD Learning Community is developing a number of resources and tools to support this growing membership. The Learning Community continues to organize webinar meetings to engage members in discussion about AHD partnerships, with the [most recent meeting](#) focusing on opportunities for collaboration between health departments and academic institutions related to [Public Health Accreditation Board](#) accreditation. [Learning Community meetings are now archived](#) and made available through the Council on Linkages Between Academia and Public Health Practice (Council) website. Two additional webinar meetings are being planned for later this year to highlight examples of successful AHDs. To support discussion outside of planned meetings, an [AHD Learning Community listserv](#) has been established and is now being used for all communications with the Learning Community. In addition, [AHD partnership agreements](#) continue to be gathered, and a [new webpage](#) has been created to highlight existing AHD partnerships. All of these resources and others are available through the [AHD Learning Community webpage](#), which has recently been redesigned to enhance access to Learning Community activities and information about AHDs.

AHD Mentorship Program

A significant new initiative of the AHD Learning Community is the [AHD Mentorship Program](#), which formally launched at the end of June 2015. Led by Learning Community member [Bryn Manzella, MPH](#), of the Jefferson County Department of Health (AL), this mentorship program aims to foster AHDs by building relationships between individuals involved in AHD efforts. The AHD Mentorship Program will connect individuals seeking guidance in an area of AHD development or operation with those having experience in that area, with a focus on creating ongoing relationships that support mutual learning and professional development.

A number of AHD Learning Community members have volunteered to serve as [mentors](#) through this program, and requests for mentorship are beginning to be received. Ms. Manzella is currently working with Council staff to provide mentors with orientation materials and set up mentor/mentee relationships. [Information about the AHD Mentorship Program](#) will be added to the Council website on an ongoing basis as the program develops and new mentors volunteer, and updates on progress will be shared through the [Council on Linkages Update](#). Expressions of interest in participating are welcome by email to Kathleen Amos at kamos@phf.org.