

## Who is BHECN?

**The Behavioral Health Education Center of Nebraska (BHECN)**, pronounced "beacon", was established in 2009 by a legislative bill to address the shortage of behavioral health (BH) professionals in rural and underserved areas of the state. It is a unique partnership among the state legislature, academic institutions, and community partners to create a statewide workforce solution for the shortage of licensed behavioral health professionals.

View our overview video:

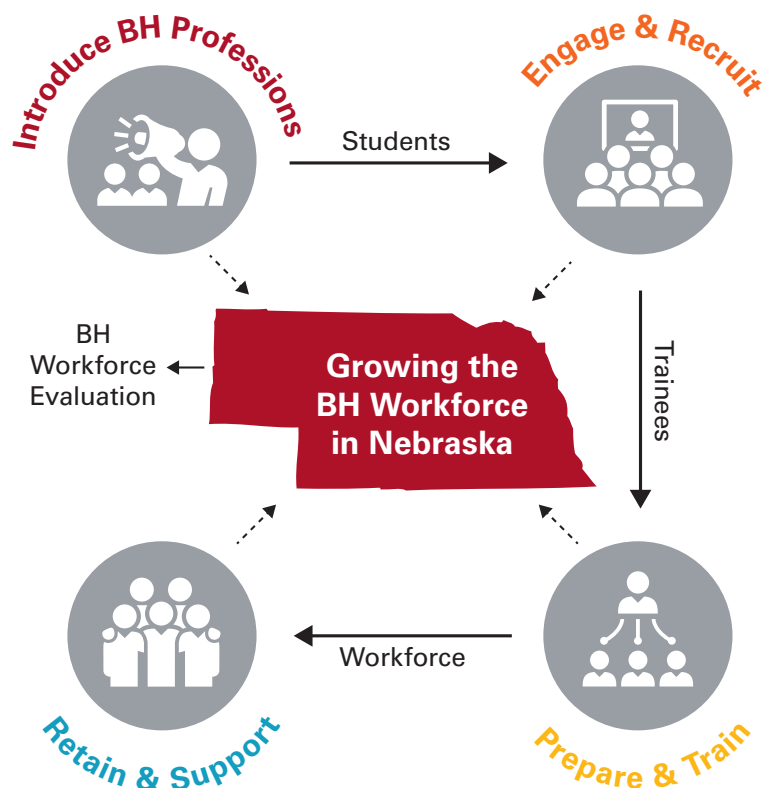
<https://vimeo.com/bhecn/aboutbhecn2019>



## BHECN's Mission:

BHECN is dedicated to improving access to behavioral health care across the state of Nebraska by developing a skilled and passionate workforce.

## BH Workforce Pipeline Model



Nearly 1 in 5 Nebraskans have a mental illness.

81 of 93 counties in NE are designated Mental Health Professions Shortage Areas.

33 counties have no behavioral health provider of any kind.

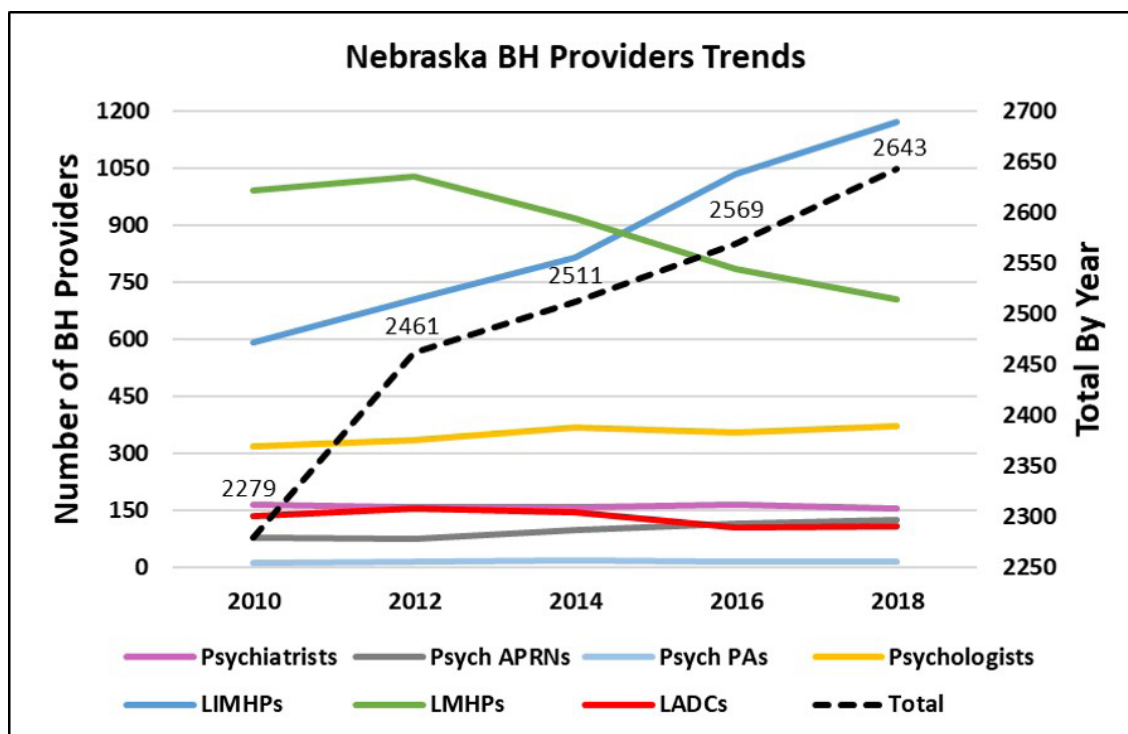
## Workforce Overview

Nebraska experiences shortages in behavioral health providers, like many states with vast rural populations. Understanding the demographic and geographic makeup of the workforce guides BHECN's efforts in workforce development, training and initiatives.

Overall, Nebraska's behavioral health (BH) workforce has seen positive growth, with the largest increase among licensed independent mental health practitioners (LIMHPs). However, the number of addiction counselors and psychiatrists has declined and shortages of rural providers still exist.

Nebraska's BH workforce is aging – with half over age 50. More diverse providers are in demand, especially those fluent in Spanish and other languages.

The need for behavioral health providers will always exist in Nebraska. BHECN is focusing on innovative ways to increase the BH workforce and address the state's workforce needs.



## BH Workforce Reports & Dashboard

To view the entire workforce reports by profession and by region, visit BHECN's website at <https://unmc.edu/bhecn/workforce/workforce-reports.html>

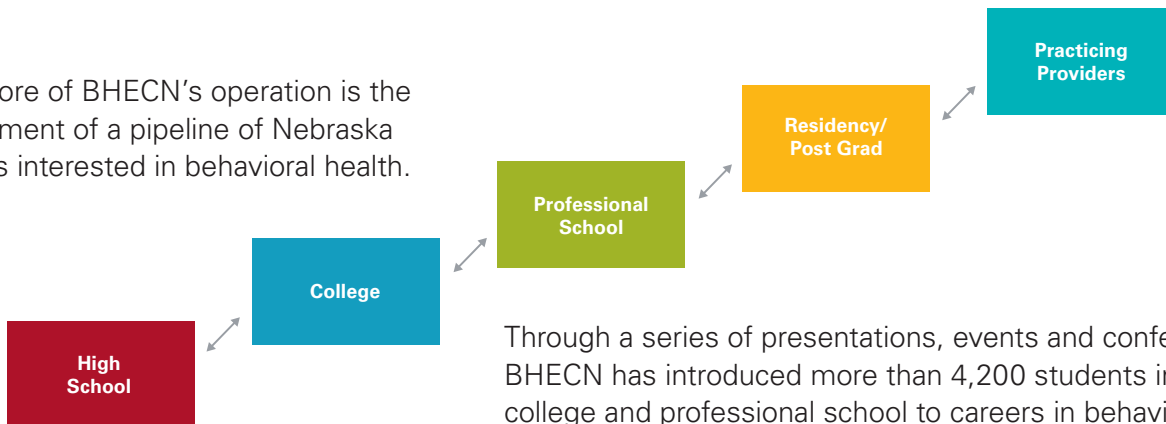
The Nebraska Behavioral Health Workforce Dashboard is an online, interactive tool that allows the user to search licensed behavioral health providers by county or region to provide an accurate assessment of Nebraska's workforce. View the dashboard here: <http://app1.unmc.edu/publichealth/bhecn/>

## Legislative Report

To view BHECN's FY 2018 & 2019 report, visit [bit.ly/BHECN\\_LegReport\\_FY18\\_19](http://bit.ly/BHECN_LegReport_FY18_19)

## Engage & Recruit

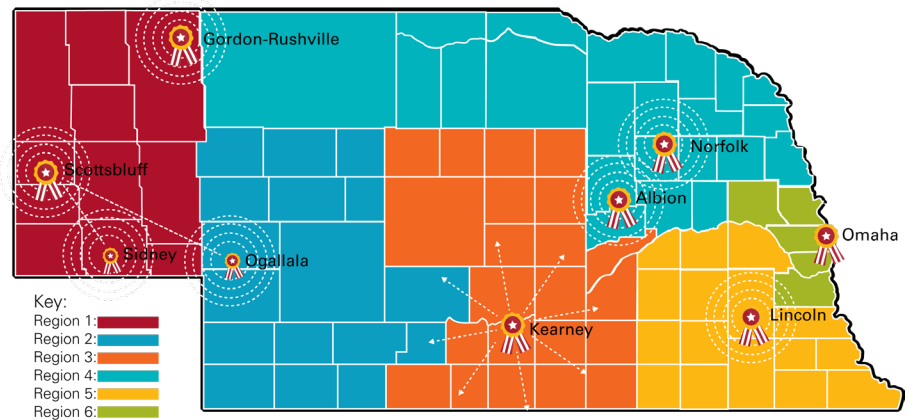
At the core of BHECN's operation is the development of a pipeline of Nebraska students interested in behavioral health.



Through a series of presentations, events and conferences, BHECN has introduced more than 4,200 students in high school, college and professional school to careers in behavioral health. The Ambassador Program aims to connect students, especially in rural and urban underserved communities, with resources and mentors to pursue behavioral health careers in Nebraska.

## Ambassador Career Engagement Awards

In June 2017, BHECN launched the Ambassador Career Engagement Awards, providing funds for community groups to introduce local youth to behavioral health professions through experiences closer to home. Learn more: <http://bit.ly/BHECN Awards2018>



Ambassador Career Engagement Award program locations



## Exploring Careers in BH

BHECN produced a brochure, Pathways to a Career in Behavioral Health, featuring eight licensed behavioral health careers and the academic pathways to get there. Download the brochure and other career videos and resources: <http://bit.ly/BHpathways>

## Retaining BH students in Nebraska

BHECN partners with the 16 academic institutions providing graduate-level behavioral health education in Nebraska to track the number of students graduating and staying in Nebraska. The goals of the collaboration are to strengthen relationships among all of the programs, create a unified voice among the different professions and develop more interprofessional training opportunities for students across the state.

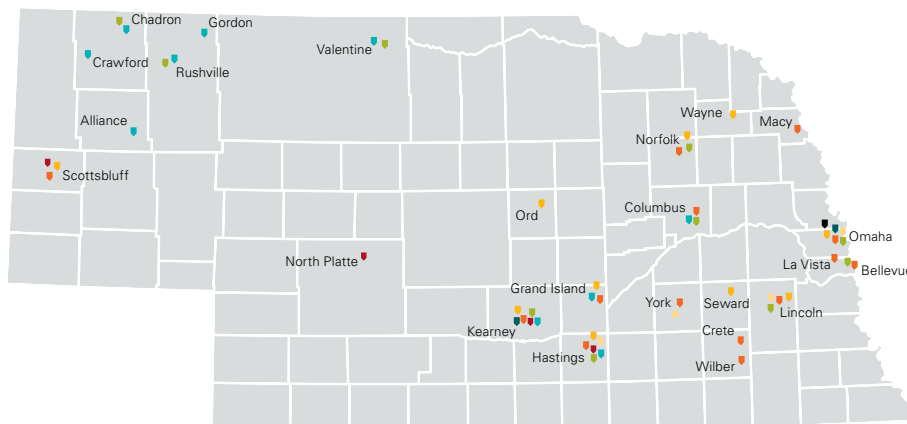
## Prepare & Train

Through multiple partnerships, legislative support and external funding, BHECN connects students to training in rural and underserved areas of the state. Types of students include: psychiatric residents, psychiatric nursing, psychology, counseling, social work, marriage & family therapy, addiction counseling and physician assistant.

BHECN supports:

- Rural psychiatric rotations in Hastings, Kearney, North Platte, and Scottsbluff
- Interprofessional clinical training rotations at Community Alliance (Omaha), Lasting Hope Recovery Center (Omaha), and Richard Young Behavioral Health (Kearney)
- Placement of student trainees in Integrated Behavioral Health in Primary Care clinics (43 clinics in NE) Visit [http://bit.ly/IntegratedBHLocs\\_2019](http://bit.ly/IntegratedBHLocs_2019) for more information
- Internships in correctional and regional center systems
- Training opportunities to expand addiction counselors (PLADCs) and community health workers (CHWs)

### Training Sites Funded by State and Federal Funds



#### Funding Sources:

■ Psychiatric Rural Rotations	■ AmeriCorps UNK-CSP Grant
■ LB 901	■ Corrections (LB242)
■ MMI AmeriCorps Grant	■ Interprofessional Training Sites
■ HRSA-BHWET Grant	
■ HRSA-BHWET Supplemental-Omaha	

Learn more about grants and funding sources online: [bit.ly/BHECN\\_LegReport\\_FY18\\_19](http://bit.ly/BHECN_LegReport_FY18_19)

## Retain & Support

BHECN supports the BH workforce through professional development, training opportunities and resources to connect with colleagues and promote retention.

From 2017-2019, nearly 3,305 individuals have participated in BHECN-provided webinars, online learning modules, conferences and live training. View training opportunities here: <https://unmc.edu/bhecn/education/index.html>

To connect behavioral health career candidates with employers in Nebraska, BHECN collaborates with Region V Systems on [NEBHjobs.com](http://NEBHjobs.com) – a free website for BH employers & job seekers.

**NEBHjobs.com**  
Nebraska Behavioral Health Jobs

### Other Initiatives

At BHECN, our goal is to expand and enhance the behavioral health workforce to improve access to care for Nebraskans. By partnering with the 16 academic programs which educate and train the future workforce, BHECN is in a unique position to follow up with graduates, conduct field research to identify trends and seek solutions to the barriers that prevent some provisionally licensed professionals from becoming fully licensed in Nebraska. We will continue to travel to each region, every year to learn and collaborate with community stakeholders to develop meaningful solutions and continue to meet the behavioral health workforce needs throughout Nebraska.

