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ADVANTAGE
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Reflection on Serving as an Evaluator

Be A Star: Spreading Joy and Compassion in the Community

A Partnership for the Futures of our Students
Message from the Chair

“Life moves pretty fast. If you don’t stop and look around once in a while, you could miss it.” This quote from Ferris Bueller’s Day Off remains relevant today. It’s hard to believe that I have been involved with ABHES since 2007 and have been a commissioner for five years! Let me take a moment to “look around” and acknowledge those who have made an impact at ABHES.

I want to express my gratitude to the past Chairs, Thomas Kenny and George Grayeb, who have been excellent examples of leadership. They have navigated difficult periods and put ABHES in a great position through their tireless work. I’m also thankful for my fellow commissioners who dedicate time away from their jobs to focus on our organization.

The ABHES staff are the foundation of our organization’s excellence. Many travel across the country, leaving behind the comforts of home, all the while completing site visits with consistency and high standards. Others have dedicated themselves to hard work and educational excellence by serving our member schools daily. ABHES staff are unparalleled at providing service to our schools. Finally, I’m very grateful that we have India Tips, our Executive Director, leading this passionate and dedicated group. The quality of the ABHES staff reflects her leadership and focus on developing a solid team.

I’m very proud to be the Chair of ABHES. For many years, individuals and leaders in the organization have invested in me, and this is my opportunity to pay it forward. As we celebrate ABHES’s current state, I’m just as excited about the bright future ahead. In the next few years, we aim to improve the technological infrastructure and enhance our external communications. We will continue initiatives that foster engagement, compliance and build on our staff and culture.

And remember, life does move pretty fast, so don’t forget to mark your calendar for the 20th annual National Conference in Las Vegas. The conference will be an exciting time to learn from each other and share ideas about issues facing healthcare education.

I’m thrilled to be a part of the ABHES community and look forward to helping advance our mission!
Membership Satisfaction: Results That Speak Volumes

Membership satisfaction is a crucial metric for ABHES and any organization. It reflects the quality of services and experiences provided to accredited institutions and programs. The recent membership satisfaction survey yielded a 25% participation rate and included valuable insights into membership experiences and areas ABHES can enhance. Among the notable findings:

- Service: 100% of the responses noted overall satisfaction with the services provided by ABHES.
- School Evaluation Process: 98% of responses noted satisfaction with the school evaluation process.
- Accounting: 99% of the responses were satisfied with accounting services, including invoicing, response time, and customer service.
- Website: 100% of responses noted satisfaction with the ABHES website, including layout, education for prospective schools, content, and ease of navigation.
- Annual Report: 98% of the responses noted satisfaction with the rollout, layout, preparation time, and content of the ABHES Annual Report.
- Workshops: 100% of responses were satisfied with the ABHES Workshops and Webinars.
- Conference: 99% of responses were satisfied with the ABHES Annual National Conference on Allied Health Education.
- Membership Portal: 99% of the responses noted satisfaction with the layout, features, content, ease of navigation, and use of the ABHES Membership Portal.
- Applications: 100% of the responses were satisfied with ABHES applications and the overall process.

The survey also provided insights into important areas our accredited institutions and programs are facing in the health education industry. These challenges encompass emerging technologies used to deliver education, the availability of qualified staff and faculty, drops in enrollment, evolving regulations, and the delivery of distance education and other innovative teaching methods. These findings shed light on key focus areas presently and in the foreseeable future.

Thank you to all who participated in completing the 2023 Membership Satisfaction Survey. Please be on the lookout for ABHES initiatives incorporating survey feedback.
It is with immense pleasure that I announce the relaunching of the ABHES Advantage Newsletter. As we step into the latter half of the year, I wanted to also take a moment to reflect on the dynamic landscape of higher education for institutions offering healthcare programs.

In today’s rapidly evolving healthcare landscape, the demand for skilled and compassionate healthcare professionals has never been greater. ABHES stands at the forefront of ensuring that the education imparted by our member institutions and programs remains steadfast in their commitment to excellence, innovation, and relevance.

The past year and a half have presented us with unforeseen challenges and remarkable opportunities. The global pandemic has underscored the pivotal role of healthcare professionals, highlighting the importance of equipping them with comprehensive and up-to-date knowledge. In response, ABHES has been working to adapt our accreditation processes to reflect the evolving needs of the industry while maintaining the highest standards of quality assurance.

ABHES remains dedicated to fostering a community of collaboration and growth among our accredited institutions and programs. Through workshops, webinars, and the annual conference, we aim to facilitate the exchange of best practices, insights, and strategies that will empower our institutions and programs to thrive in this complex educational landscape.

Looking ahead, we are excited to announce a series of initiatives designed to increase membership services and propel health education institutions and programs forward:

1. **Enhanced Resource Center:**

ABHES has launched expanded digital resource tools to increase membership’s understanding of ABHES’ application processes by providing updated guidance for change applications; ensuring the formatting and wording of applications are clearer and more user-friendly; and enhancing our internal systems for managing and responding to school inquiries.

2. **Workforce Development:**

ABHES has begun to explore the possibility of creating a workforce element to its standards that might allow for flexibilities that are not currently supported in the ABHES Accreditation Manual. In Stage 1 of the process, ABHES conducted roundtables in March 2022 at its annual conference. In March 2023, based on membership input, the first Workforce Development Taskforce was launched. The Taskforce met with local workforce officials from workforce boards and the governor’s office to learn more about health education needs.
Participants were able to ask the government and nonprofit officials broad questions about workforce partnering opportunities with ABHES schools, potential obstacles, and the needs moving forward.

The participants discussed apprenticeship programs, funding opportunities, employer needs, industry partnerships, and stackable credentials. The Taskforce will host additional meetings this fall to continue its effort in conducting the necessary research and propose revisions to the accreditation standards so as to stay ahead of emerging trends that are shaping the future of health education.

3. Webinar Series:

ABHES continues to strive to provide quality services to its accredited institutions and programs year after year. Based on feedback obtained from ABHES’ annual satisfaction surveys, ABHES will be launching additional webinar trainings in an effort to increase membership and evaluator understanding of ABHES standards and accreditation requirements. As a reminder, new and revised accreditation standards will go into effect on January 1, 2024. To review final revisions in track changes, visit https://www.abhes.org/resources/#accredManual.

As we embark on these endeavors, I encourage ABHES accredited institutions and programs to actively engage with ABHES, leverage resources, and contribute to the ongoing conversation about shaping the future of health education.

In closing, I want to express my gratitude to the ABHES staff who accomplish amazing work on behalf of the organization, and to ABHES accredited institutions and programs for their unwavering commitment to excellence in health education. Together, we have the power to mold a generation of healthcare professionals who will shape the future of healthcare with competence, compassion, and integrity.

Let us navigate the journey ahead with renewed vigor and enthusiasm.
Reflection on Serving as an Evaluator

The work at ABHES would be impossible without the diligence, dedication, and determination of our volunteer peer evaluators. Our volunteer evaluators bring a diverse background of expertise and knowledge to ensure that our accredited institutions and programs are succeeding in providing the highest quality education to their students. An evaluator that we would like to recognize is Tibby Loveman. Tibby served with ABHES faithfully for 26 years and has recently retired from serving on site visits. Over the years, Tibby has established a reputation of integrity, excellence, professionalism and kindness, and has without a doubt left a lasting legacy amongst her peers and staff members at ABHES. We have asked Tibby to reflect on her time as an evaluator, and what it has meant for her to be a part of ABHES throughout the years.

Tibby Loveman
Retired ABHES Evaluator

“As it happened, I was introduced to ABHES in 1997 when I did my first evaluation visit to St. Louis with India Tips as the accreditation coordinator. At that time ABHES was a much smaller accrediting agency with a total staff of three individuals. That first visit was the beginning of a beautiful relationship, a fantastic ride of incredible experiences, including lots of laughter, travel to a variety of interesting and not-so-interesting places, forming meaningful relationships with professionals within the accreditation family, and growing professionally. According to my records I went on to do 43 more visits with India after that first one, 40 with Christopher Eaton, 20 with Amy Rowe, 17 with Mary Margaret Coughlin, and 14 with Kelly Costello, as well as countless visits with other amazing staff members. Another treasured privilege afforded to me was serving on the Preliminary Review Committee for over 15 years.

Today ABHES has proudly positioned itself as a leading institutional and programmatic health education accreditor by means of thorough and systematic program assessment processes to determine the quality of training based upon compliance with the valid Standards it has developed. The success of ABHES can be attributed to the dedication of its leadership team and staff who believe in the integrity of the accreditation process and are committed to ensuring that the Standards remain current and relevant in the changing healthcare environment.

In looking back over the years, I believe that ABHES’ success is based upon the following factors:

- ABHES takes continuous improvement seriously and systematically reviews and revises its policies, procedures, and Standards to that end.
- ABHES has an unwavering focus on student outcomes as a measure of program success.
- ABHES has developed and implemented effective training initiatives to assist...
institutions in preparing for accreditation and for assessing and analyzing program effectiveness for the purposes of continuous improvement. In addition, ABHES provides relevant training for new evaluators and regular updates for veteran evaluators when policy and Standard changes occur. Professionalism, confidentiality, and objectivity are emphasized.

- ABHES regularly solicits input from healthcare professionals and practitioners and encourages their participation on committees, such as the Preliminary Review Committee for file review and the Standards Review Committee for systematic Standard review.

- The ABHES Accreditation Manual documents relevant Standards that clearly describe the requirements and expectations for sound institutional oversight.

- Thanks for the memories! I am proud to have been a part of the ABHES family.”

Empower Excellence: Shape the Future of Higher Education as a Peer Review Evaluator

While serving as an evaluator requires time away from work and home, the benefits of participating in on-site accreditation visits have proven to be a valuable investment for the participating evaluators, their home institutions, and the institutions being visited.

Five Reasons to Become an ABHES Evaluator

**Awareness**
Not only does participation as an evaluator heighten one’s level of awareness and understanding of accreditation requirements, it also provides the ability to observe from the inside how other institutions and programs operate and gain insights into best practices and innovative approaches.

**Networking**
Participation in site visits builds a vast network of fellow in-field specialists. The relationships you build, whether it be with a team member or a staff member, can last a lifetime.

**Increased Credibility**
Being a recognized peer review evaluator can enhance one’s professional credibility and reputation within their field and open doors to additional volunteer opportunities within ABHES, such as serving on committees and even the Commission.

**Personal Growth**
The role of a peer review evaluator often involves critical thinking, communication, and problem-solving. These skills can be transferable to other aspects of an evaluator’s personal and professional life.

**Satisfaction of Service**
Many individuals find satisfaction in contributing to the improvement of educational quality and helping institutions reach their goals. It’s a meaningful way to give back to the healthcare education community.

Please consider becoming an ABHES evaluator or refer viable evaluator candidates by sending an email to evaluator@abhes.org with the subject line, Evaluator Referral. In the body of the email, include your name, title, email, and specialty areas for yourself and any individuals you are referring and we will contact them directly. Applicants must complete the evaluator application and register for training.

For more details, visit [https://www.abhes.org/evaluators/#BecomeEval](https://www.abhes.org/evaluators/#BecomeEval).

Participating on an evaluation team is an invaluable experience. Check out this video to hear from some of our current evaluators on their experience with ABHES.
Investigating And Promoting Learning Opportunities Through Emerging And Immersive Technologies

Innovative education is crucial in a fast-changing world, with technology and job competition. Building an innovative culture and effective learning methods are key to preparing professionals for the dynamic today’s job market. This article acknowledges how emerging technologies like virtual environments reshape education and develop skills.

As static models are inadequate in the face of technological evolution, higher education institutions must embrace disruption and innovative tools to redefine teaching and fulfill professional demands. To bridge the learning-workplace gap, innovative educational strategies are crucial.

Emerging technologies like simulations and virtual environments help students immerse themselves in realistic situations, developing practical skills, creativity, and problem-solving capabilities.

These technologies simulate real-world contexts and prepare learners for professional challenges, fostering a holistic learning approach that encourages experimentation, critical thinking, and collaboration.

Modeling and simulation provide a practical and effective way for students to learn through hands-on experiences. In healthcare, students can practice procedures through simulations to gain confidence and competence prior to real-world application.

Dewey University’s Pioneering Efforts:

Dewey University is a leader in innovative education. Using virtual reality and simu-
By harnessing emerging technologies, the institution is poised to redefine learning experiences, propelling students toward success in a rapidly evolving professional landscape. This transformative journey exemplifies the fusion of immersive learning and innovative technologies, shaping a brighter and more engaging future for education.
**HER STORY IN HER OWN WORDS**

Anna Saliasi, RN  
Graduate, Fortis Institute

Someone once said, “Nothing worthwhile is ever easy”. This was completely true regarding earning my Nursing Degree from Fortis Institute. My story began more than ten years ago when I migrated to the U.S. from Ukraine. I came to this country without speaking any English. I worked various jobs but wanted a career.

I ended up falling in love and getting married. Being a military spouse meant I would have to move frequently, which could deter employers from hiring me. I needed a career that would allow me to work anywhere. We finally settled in Florida. I knew I wanted to become a nurse. I researched and found that Fortis in Pensacola, Florida, was the best option for me. I had just given birth to my first-born child. Once my child began attending daycare, I immediately applied to Fortis Institute and was accepted. I was excited and scared. I had never attended school in America. I had learned English by myself, without any formal training or classes. I had never taken a college exam or written any college papers.

The first semester of school was nerve-wracking for me. Not only did I have to overcome the language barrier, but I had also just found out I was pregnant with my second child. I wanted to cry and quit as everything was crashing down on me. However, I had already committed to completing school and did not want to quit on myself and those who believed in me.

Halfway through the program, I had my second child. My husband was constantly deploying, and this made it even more difficult.

Any free time that I had was used to study. I stayed up late nights writing papers and preparing for exams. As I look back, I often question how I did it all. It was by far the most difficult thing I have done.

The truth is, I was successful because of the strong support system I had. Fortis was extremely challenging. They held us to a high standard. The staff was amazing and supportive beyond words. As I faced all these life challenges, the professors were always there when I didn’t understand something. They pushed us to learn and become knowledgeable, not just to pass the program.

Even more amazing was that one of the professors attended my citizenship ceremony for support when she learned that my husband was away on duty and that I would be all alone. It was at moments like these that I realized how kind gestures from the instructors had an everlasting effect on my life.

Ultimately, it was my effort that made it possible for me to graduate and overcome many challenges along the way. However, if it were not for the staff members at Fortis Institute and their commitment to my success, I would not be here today.
Elevate Your Impact: The Benefits of Serving as an ABHES Commissioner

For as long as I can remember, I have been the person who volunteers for things. Now, I know many of you may not be “that person,” but bear with me…I promise this article is for you too!

I began my “service journey” in the third-grade volunteering as a lunchroom monitor. (And if you think that sounds high stakes for a seven-year-old, you’d be right). Somehow, I pulled it off, and from that moment on, I was hooked. For the next 20 years, I proceeded to volunteer for every leadership role I could find. When I heard a speech at the ABHES Conference in 2017 encouraging attendees to run for a Commissioner position, my first question was, “Where do I sign up?” I did not really know much about what I was signing up for, but it felt like a natural next step, and I nominated myself shortly thereafter.

Fast forward six years to the present day. I just concluded my two-year term as Chair in June and began my final year of service as Past Chair in July, and I can confidently say that serving on the ABHES Commission has been one of the most impactful experiences of my life. I know that is a bold statement, but it is my truth, and it could be yours too.

Below are the three most important reasons why I think everyone reading this article should consider service as an ABHES Commissioner.

1. You have a very real opportunity to shape the future of your community and our country. The decisions made by the Commission have a direct impact on the quality of higher education, the healthcare system, and numerous other industries in the communities nationwide where our schools provide career-focused training. It is incredibly fulfilling to know that your service has such a tangible real-world impact.

2. You will learn how to leverage the accreditation process to help your institution become the best version of itself. Serving as a Commissioner helped me reframe my understanding of the Accreditation Manual. I realized it is more than a set of “rules” to follow...it can also be a playbook. It offers guidance on how to adopt a “continuous improvement” mentality, based upon the collective wisdom of countless experts in the education field. It is incredibly powerful if you trust the process.

3. You will have the privilege of working with some of the best people you will ever know. Being a Commissioner gives you the opportunity to learn from and collaborate with other incredible professionals from across the country. I have such a deep respect for my fellow Commissioners, committee members, and the ABHES staff, and I am a better leader for having known them.

In conclusion, if there is only one thing you volunteer for this year, volunteer to be an ABHES Commissioner. And if you are still on the fence, email me at thomas.kenny@northwestcareercollege.edu. I would be happy to answer any questions you might have.
I’m Kelly, and standards are my jam. Welcome to my column about all things standards! Chapters IV-IX of the 2023 Accreditation Manual contain over 250 standards. This short column cannot cover them all, but I would like to highlight two about student satisfaction. As an accreditor, ABHES believes there is no better source of information than the students our schools serve. Their satisfaction is paramount to the success of an institution and our mission as an agency.

As you likely know, Chapter IV applies to institutional members and applicants and Chapter V applies to programs offered at institutional and programmatic members and applicants. The two chapters are complementary but have different requirements. For example, it may seem like the two standards below are identical.

However, if you look closely, you will see IV.I.1. speaks to satisfaction with administrative and student services while V.D.3.b. looks at satisfaction with training and educational services.

What does this really mean? For IV.I.1., it asks the institution to assess if students have access to and feel the administrators and management team of the campus are responsive to their needs. In other words, institutions should be seeking student feedback regarding services like admissions, financial aid, career services, and so on as to assess whether students are being supported in the way they need? For V.D.3.b., it asks each program to assess if students feel their classroom and clinical experiences are preparing them for jobs in the field, and whether program faculty and management are available to assist them as needed.

In preparing a Self-Evaluation Report (SER), Institutions must distinguish which of their surveys (if surveying students in multiple ways during their program) asks students about administrative and student services.
and which asks about the training and educational services of their program. Many Institutions conduct surveys at different intervals; some schools survey students at the end of a course, after an external clinical experience, once a quarter, or annually. Each survey may serve a different purpose. As a reminder, V.I.1.e requires students to be surveyed regarding their satisfaction with at least four areas: instruction, educational resources, student services, and clinical experiences. Use the title of the applicable survey in your SER narratives so the team knows where to look when conducting their review. For example, an Annual Student Satisfaction Survey might be part of an Institution’s narrative for IV.I.1. and a Course End Survey might be part of V.D.3.b’s narrative. For purposes of completing the SER, it is also important to explain who is responsible to review and act upon the data obtained from the surveys.

During an accreditation visit, the team assesses compliance with both standards. To assess compliance with IV.I.1., the team reviews the most recent surveys conducted by the institution to ensure that schools seek input from students regarding its administration and campus-wide services. The team looks to see that the institution compiles and analyzes the results of their survey to identify any deficiencies and then initiates actions to remedy the deficiencies identified.

To assess compliance with V.D.3.b., the team administers the ABHES Visitation Student Satisfaction Survey to students in every program just prior to a scheduled site visit, which are then included by the team in their reports. One of the questions on the ABHES survey asks, “Overall, are you satisfied with training and educational services?” If the team notes that more than 30% of the students indicate that they are not satisfied, the standard is cited for non-compliance.

At ABHES we collect compliance data. The violation percentages for these two standards over the past four years are as follows:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>IV.I.1.</th>
<th>V.D.3.b.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Times Marked Non-Compliant by a Team</td>
<td>Times Assessed by a Team</td>
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<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>95</td>
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<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>32</td>
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<tr>
<td>2021</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>101</td>
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<tr>
<td>2022</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>99</td>
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<tr>
<td>4-YEAR TOTAL</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>327</td>
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The above chart signifies lots of satisfied students!

If your school is cited for either standard on a visit or in a Commission action letter, it is critical to resurvey the students to assess current satisfaction data, analyze the data for any areas with low satisfaction (generally below 70% on any given question), and identify deficient areas that require immediate action. Documentation of implemented actions should be submitted to show that the school has corrected or is actively working to address identified satisfaction concerns. Actions that can make the biggest impact, include holding forums for students to speak with administration, remediating poor performing faculty, purchasing supplies, repairing equipment, and so on. Let me know which standard(s) you would like to learn about next! Email me your suggestion at kcostello@abhes.org.
Attention to all institutions and programs with ABHES approved Separate Educational Centers (SECs)! A new form will be added to the ABHES website on September 18, 2023.

The purpose of the form, titled Notification of Separate Educational Center (SEC) Changes, is to provide member institutions and programs a formal way to notify ABHES of any proposed changes to already approved SECs, including, but not limited to, the discontinuation of a program or programs offered at an SEC; the increase of the approved percentage of a program’s courses at or above 50%; the addition of a program or of programs not currently included on an SEC approval; and to report the discontinued use of an SEC.

For those unfamiliar with the SEC facility designation, it is an educational facility that is approved as such by ABHES and is considered an extension of an ABHES approved main or non-main campus, or approved location of an ABHES accredited program. A separate educational center is also considered an additional location when more than 50% of a program is offered at the facility as described in II.B.3.a. of the Accreditation Manual. This new form aims to align the process for which institutions and programs notify ABHES of any SEC changes in a more comprehensive way with accreditation requirement, III.B.4.a. of the Accreditation Manual.

When an institution or program is considering making a change to an SEC that is outside of the details specified on the ABHES approval letter, it should review the new Notification of Separate Educational Center (SEC) Changes form and determine whether the impending change warrants formal notification to ABHES. If so, the institution or program should then submit the completed form with the corresponding exhibits in accordance with the submission directions contained on the form. Once reviewed, the corresponding ABHES staff member will contact the institution or program to advise of next steps.

The Notification of Separate Educational Center (SEC) Changes can be found under the Forms – Resources tab on the ABHES website or at https://www.abhes.org/resources/#accredManual. So, be sure to check it out!
MedQuest College, Lexington KY
Earns Prestigious Recognition

Dr. Russell Mauk

MedQuest College’s Lexington location has seen a year of many positive outcomes. Through the hard work and dedication of its Diagnostic Medical Sonography Program Director, Jean Roberts, RDCS, and faculty, our DMS program earned the distinction of becoming CAAHEP accredited in May, which strengthened its place in the community as a leading program of study in echocardiography and vascular sonography.

Kathy Khoshreza, MSN, RN, our Practical Nursing Program Administrator, not to be outdone, and after several years of hard work, she and her committed faculty earned full approval status from the Kentucky Board of Nursing as a direct result of the program’s retention and placement rates combined with outstanding NCLEX pass rates.

Ever committed to our community and the success of the future healthcare workers who trust MedQuest College with their education, our Student Services department implemented quarterly Narcan training and distribution of Narcan to those who completed the course as well as introducing this fall the first of many QPR training for suicide prevention. We are committed to the community for which our graduates serve.

As validation of the hard work and commitment of the staff and faculty, MedQuest College was voted by the community for the second year as Best of Lexington as a technical college and took Silver in the College and University category.
In a world often dominated by personal pursuits and fast-paced routines, the significance of community outreach is critical now more than ever. Mandl School, the College of Allied Health, is committed to giving back to society through its long-standing and heartwarming initiative: the **Be A Star Program**.

This remarkable endeavor, undertaken by the Mandl School community, encompasses an annual tradition of donating gifts to the elderly in nursing homes, gifting toys and books to children, and organizing can drives to support neighborhood soup kitchens. This is done via non-profit organizations like Little Flower Children and Family Services of New York during the holiday season.

The impact of this outreach resonates deeply, fostering a sense of compassion, camaraderie, and social responsibility among the students and faculty alike and brings immeasurable joy to both the recipients and givers.

The **Be A Star Program** exemplifies the spirit of service learning that Mandl School strives to instill in its students. The initiative not only benefits the elderly and the young but also nurtures empathy among the participants, a virtue critical to the Allied Health field.

The process of thinking about what to select as a gift, buying it, and wrapping the gift becomes a work of love. It allows our students to think of the elderly who might be struggling with loneliness, isolation, and medical conditions. This act of kindness enables our students to appreciate the wisdom and experience seniors bring to the community.

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**Prof. Sandra Monteiro**
Assistant Dean of Academic and Student Affairs
Mandl School, The College of Allied Health

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In the same way, donating toys and books to youth spreads holiday cheer and nurtures a love for learning and creativity during a critical period of their lives.

The act of giving becomes a valuable lesson in empathy and understanding as students recognize the significance of brightening a child’s day and contributing to their growth and development.

The Canned Food drives to support soup kitchens in the community benefited all those in need of all ages, making their Thanksgiving holiday a little brighter. Through participating in this program, the Mandl School community becomes an agent of positive change, sowing seeds of kindness and compassion.

Furthermore, the Be A Star Program fosters a sense of unity within Mandl School itself.

Working collaboratively to bring joy to others strengthens the fabric of the school’s community, emphasizing the importance of collective effort and the fulfillment that arises from serving others, thereby creating a more connected school.

Beyond the direct recipients, the Be A Star program creates a ripple effect that extends throughout the community. It showcases the potential for collective action to cause change.

Seeing young individuals dedicated to making a difference is a powerful reminder that everyone can impact lives.

It inspires others to join the cause, sparking a spirit of helping that transcends a single institution and transforms into a shared endeavor to improve the world.
Ultimate Medical Academy (UMA) and the Crisis Center of Tampa Bay hosted a mock critical incident exercise on Wednesday, Nov. 16 to put UMA’s first cohort of Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT) to the test through various emergency response scenarios at UMA’s Tampa campus.

Developed and launched in partnership with the Crisis Center of Tampa Bay, UMA’s newest clinical program is designed to equip and empower learners to fill vital roles as EMTs in the Tampa community. The need for skilled EMTs in Tampa Bay is significant and growing, with an estimated 20 to 30 percent industry turnover rate. The Crisis Center of Tampa Bay’s TransCare Medical Transportation Services provides apprentices with on-the-job training while UMA provides classroom instruction to prepare students for the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians exam while earning an Emergency Medical Technician diploma.

Through apprenticeship, participants in the program can “learn while they earn” by gaining professional development, skills, and qualifications while they work in other roles. Funds from the Florida Department of Education’s Pathways to Career Opportunities Grant as well as CareerSource Tampa Bay and Health Career Advancement Program (HCAP) support this initiative.
“UMA has a long history of working with industry to solve their employment needs through the creation of workforce development programs. The EMT program is a great example of how apprenticeships benefit both employers and job seekers as well as the community they serve, said Dr. Rebecca Sarlo, Tampa Regional Chief Learning Officer, UMA. “Through this program, we project we will be able to fill 200 EMT vacancies by 2025-26.”

“The Crisis Center of Tampa Bay greatly values our partnership with Ultimate Medical Academy as we work together to meet the rapidly growing demand for EMTs in Tampa Bay. These apprentices are joining a profession that is critical to public safety, and we are excited to work alongside them as they begin their careers,” said Clara Reynolds, President & CEO Crisis Center of Tampa Bay.

Attendees had an exclusive “behind the scenes” look at the new Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) diploma program during National Apprenticeship Week. Registered Apprenticeships, a proven and industry-driven training model, train our workforce and build a pipeline into good, quality jobs to address pressing workforce challenges. This new partnership between UMA and the Crisis Center of Tampa Bay is helping the recruitment and retention of EMT’s for the Crisis Center of Tampa Bay’s TransCare division.
Membership Training Updates

Amy Rowe
Associate Executive Director of Membership Services at ABHES

Over the past year, ABHES expanded training options for ABHES-accredited institutions and programs, initial and potential applicants, and the public. We provided two new workshops pre-conference titled “SER Writing” and “The Lifecycle of a Program.”

We also offered a complimentary webinar series focused on Accreditation Standards. This series delved into the details of Advisory Boards, Catalogs, Disclosures, and Surveys, providing insights into a total of 26 standards. Furthermore, we introduced a new engagement opportunity, a webinar dedicated to the Call for Comment Review on Proposed Revisions to the Accreditation Manual. This webinar provided an opportunity for the program revisions to be explained prior to the call for comment period closing.

Currently, ABHES is planning our membership training and initiative schedule. This upcoming schedule will encompass a diverse range of both paid and free workshops and webinars, available for in-person attendance or virtual participation.

We invite you to submit requests and suggestions for additional workshops and webinars. Whether you propose a session to be led by ABHES staff or industry peers, your input is invaluable.

To submit your ideas, please contact Amy Rowe at arowe@abhes.org. We will accept emails continuously to ensure an ongoing process of engagement and enriching educational experiences.
“Fortis was a whirlwind journey from start to finish. Last July, I experienced a panic attack stemming from not knowing what I wanted to do in my life. At the time, I was working somewhere that I enjoyed, but knew it was not my forever. That panic attack led to me searching for the requirements to work in the massage field. I ended up scheduling an online orientation at Fortis Institute in Pensacola, Florida, the next day, and before I knew it was enrolled in the massage program.

I was not looking forward to being in school for a long time after already receiving my bachelor’s degree in Exercise Science from the University of West Florida. Shortly after starting my program, I was involved in a car accident and a change in jobs that almost put a halt to all my progress. I could not have endured it all if it were not for the support from Fortis’s massage teachers, librarian, counselors, administrators, career services, and my amazing classmates.

My class was wonderful, and together we share memories of potlucks, rainy clinic days, funny presentations, a car-pooled trip to Panama City, picking our very own Oakworks table, Gallery Night chair massages, library hangouts, walks and stretches around the building, class debates, multiple building disasters, room changes, and more. But best of all, we created everlasting friendships and relationships.

Without this community, I would not have been able to finish the program, attend a world massage leader’s workshop, get inducted into the National Technical Honor Society, pass the MBLEX on the first try, and start my own business right out of the gate. My time at school was life changing. I gained an incredible support system, and I will forever be grateful for my Fortis Pensacola experience.”

Devany Brennan, B.S., LMT was selected as Valedictorian for the July 2023 Commencement. She graduated from the Massage Therapy program at Fortis Institute in Pensacola, Florida in March 2023.
In a collaboration that reflects the true spirit of community, Pima Medical Institute’s veterinary program in Renton, Washington, has forged a remarkable partnership with the Doney Coe Clinic of Seattle. The clinic, renowned for its services to low-income and unhoused communities, welcomed students from Pima during the pandemic.

Students spent their externship assisting the Doney Coe Clinic with veterinary procedures for its established network of at-risk pet owners. This partnership not only underscores Pima Medical Institute’s commitment to quality medical career education but also resonates with its mission to improve the quality of people’s lives.

At the heart of this initiative is Dr. Jamie Petersen, a dedicated veterinarian and the Veterinary Technician Program Clinical Director at Pima Medical Institute. Dr. Petersen’s account of the beginning of this collaboration beautifully exemplifies the interconnectedness of veterinary medicine within a community.

During the challenging times of the pandemic, Pima’s usual source of animal resources, a local animal shelter, faced limitations in providing animals. Recognizing the need for resources, an instructor engaged in dialogue with a veterinarian at her clinical job, which eventually led to a conversation with Dr. Kathryn Kuehl, an instructor at Washington State University College of Veterinary Medicine (WSU CVM).

This dialogue between passionate professionals launched the visionary partnership with the Doney Coe Clinic.

One of the most significant impacts of this partnership has been on the educational front. Students now engage in a range of procedures, including spays, neuters, dental cleanings, and surgeries. Dr. Petersen explains that these experiences offer students a unique glimpse into the deep bond between pets and their owners, a facet often missed in shelter settings.
The partnership offers more than practical experience. Dr. Petersen highlights that students now actively communicate with clients, gathering pre-surgical histories, addressing questions, and providing post-procedure instructions. This hands-on interaction bridges the gap between classroom theory and real-world practice, developing students into compassionate and effective communicators.

Several graduates have even chosen to work in similar areas, focusing on increasing access to care for vulnerable pet owners. The partnership has also touched the hearts of students through heartwarming experiences. Dr. Petersen recounted an instance where students extended their working hours to accommodate an owner's transportation challenges, resulting in a lifesaving surgery. This act of kindness not only solidified camaraderie but also reaffirmed dedication to the profession's intrinsic values.

In a world where compassion and education intertwine, Pima Medical Institute’s partnership with Doney Coe Clinic stands as a shining example of how a shared vision can transform lives and education simultaneously. Through their joint efforts, they have not only provided invaluable veterinary care but also shaped the careers and perspectives of aspiring medical professionals.
It’s happening! ABHES will host its 20th Annual National Conference on Allied Health Education on March 27-28, 2024 at The ARIA Resort & Casino in Las Vegas. Still deciding if you should attend? Read on to learn the top five reasons you NEED to be there!

1. Make Connections:

The ABHES conference is a great opportunity to network with peers, industry experts, and old friends. By engaging in discussions and sharing experiences you will build a supportive network of like-minded professionals who understand the challenges and achievements in healthcare education.

2. Stay Informed

Get current updates on industry trends and best practices. Attending breakout sessions and interacting with ABHES staff, commissioners, and industry experts allows you to gain valuable insights and knowledge to implement in your organization.

3. Discover New Educational Materials and Technology

Visit vendors showcasing the latest educational materials and technology in the field. Preview new products and explore innovative solutions to enhance your institution’s educational offerings.

4. Support and Encouragement

As the designated compliance person in a small organization, it’s easy to feel isolated. At the ABHES conference, you’ll realize you’re not alone in your journey. Connect with ABHES Commissioners and staff members to gain insight and find the support and encouragement you need to excel in your role.

5. Celebrate 20 Years of ABHES Conferences

Let’s not forget that this will be ABHES’ 20th annual conference, which is grounds for celebration! Be prepared for surprises, special programming, and a fun atmosphere that will make this conference one for the books. Whether you want to network with your peers, meet ABHES staff, explore new technologies, or seek industry updates, the 2024 conference promises to be both informative and entertaining for all.

Registration opens this October!
Today’s pharmacy technician plays an essential role in the delivery of pharmaceutical care to patients. The role of the pharmacy technician has evolved from the individual accepting a patient’s prescription at the pharmacy, or the patient picking up their filled prescription. Today’s entry-level pharmacy technician assists the pharmacist in performing various pharmacy tasks to include inputting a prescription into the pharmacy information system, retrieving medication from the shelf, pouring and counting medication into a container, and returning medication to the shelf and ordering medication for the pharmacy. The evolved functions of today’s pharmacy technicians permit flexibility for the pharmacist to be more engaged in providing direct patient care.

Pharmacy employers value the pharmacy technician’s technical and soft skills and as a result have created new career opportunities for them. Examples of these opportunities include, but are not limited to, compounding sterile preparations, participating in collecting a patient’s medication history, conducting medication therapy management, and immunizing patients. In October 2020, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) published guidance approving trained pharmacy technicians in all states to administer immunizations during the pandemic, until December 2024.

However, Pharmacy technicians must adhere to their state board of pharmacy’s regulations to include certification, registration, licensure if required, as well as any required additional educational training beyond what is presented in an entry level pharmacy technician program and experience in performing these specific tasks. With authorization expiring in 15 months, states must adopt their own legislation or regulations to continue supporting immunization efforts.

Much has changed in the practice of pharmacy in recent years, especially in the role of the pharmacy technician being transformed at a rapid pace. Advanced pharmacy technician roles are being developed by employers which will result in further opportunities for pharmacy technicians. The Pharmacy Technician Certification Board (PTCB) and the National Pharmacy Technician Association (NPTA) recognize the importance of additional pharmacy technician education and certification as the field grows and evolves. The PTCB and NPTA have developed tools to meet the requirements established by employers to provide advanced pharmacy technician training. Both the PTCB and NPTA require credentialing prior to completing a certificate or obtaining an additional certification.

These opportunities will be stimulating and fulfilling to the pharmacy technicians of the future, allowing the field to continue to grow at its current pace.

James Mizner, JR., MBA, BS, RPh
Owner Panacea Solutions
Creating a pathway to success for American Medical Sciences Center’s (AMSC) students represents the primary objective of the school. Beyond merely imparting knowledge, the institution aspires to facilitate immense growth. AMSC’s mission transcends conventional Sonography education; it encompasses knowledge of ultrasound, fostering connections, and recognizing enrollment as a commitment to a collective journey toward a triumphant future.

Thankfully to a valuable partnership with RadNet, an ultrasound imaging company, the college has succeeded in supporting its students not only during their enrollment but also beyond. RadNet embodies the future of Radiology, with a workforce of over 9,000 employees, operating across 357 locations in seven states, and backed by 35 years of experience. The company’s growth and advancement are constantly encapsulated in its motto, “Leading Radiology Forward.” In the Radiology world, continuous technological strides redefine machinery and best practices.
These enhancements are designed to elevate the standard of care for all ultrasound patients, particularly those served by the institution’s future graduates.

Upon completing their coursework at AMSC, students engage in externships to acquire real-world experience outside the institution. In anticipation of transitioning to the daily demands of externships and following into full-time employment, students undergo specialized training to prepare them for positions within organizations like RadNet.

The institution collaborates closely with site managers and supervisors across various RadNet locations, gathering insights to enhance student preparedness for their prospective roles. This collaboration includes identifying the desired qualities in future externship candidates and preparing student readiness for success by establishing a broad training regimen.

These externships immerse students in interactions with actual medical professionals and real patients, exposing them to their future sonography careers. The institution is honored to collaborate with RadNet, jointly shaping the trajectory of Sonography.

This collaboration ensures students benefit from secure, comprehensive externships, fostering experiential learning and professional growth. Some students even secure full-time positions as ultrasound technicians within RadNet, highlighting the company’s stature as a pioneer in ultrasound technology that seamlessly merges cost-effectiveness with high-quality care. The institution takes immense pride in its partnership with RadNet, which magnifies the transformative influence students can wield within the healthcare industry. Collectively, AMSC and RadNet chart a course, illuminating the path for students and guiding them toward their envisioned milestones when joining AMSC.
In an era marked by rapid societal changes and growing awareness of the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), the Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools (ABHES) reaffirms its unwavering commitment to advancing these essential values within healthcare education. We believe that fostering a diverse, equitable, and inclusive environment is not just a goal but an imperative that underpins the future of healthcare.

**Our Commitment to Diversity**

At ABHES, we recognize that diversity encompasses a broad spectrum of backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives. Our commitment extends to ensuring that all individuals, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, ability, or any other characteristic, have equal opportunities to access and excel in healthcare education. We believe that fostering a diverse, equitable, and inclusive environment is not just a goal but an imperative that underpins the future of healthcare.

**Equity as a Foundation**

Equity should serve as the foundation upon which our institution’s build their educational framework. Equity requires recognizing and rectifying historical disparities and systemic barriers that have disadvantaged certain groups. ABHES is dedicated to working with our accredited institutions and programs to create equitable educational environments that provide the necessary resources and support to all students, ensuring their success regardless of their background.

**Inclusion for Collective Growth**

Inclusion means more than simply increasing representation. It means fostering an environment where all voices are heard, respected, and valued. ABHES institutions and programs are encouraged to cultivate inclusive classrooms and workplaces that celebrate differences and encourage open dialogue. By doing so, creates spaces where individuals can learn from one another, challenge their preconceptions, and ultimately contribute to a healthcare system that provides the best care for everyone.

**Our Journey**

As part of our commitment to DEI, ABHES is taking steps to ensure progress:
ABHES encourages our accredited institutions and programs to increase the diversity of their faculty and leadership teams, reflecting the world in which healthcare professionals will practice and to prepare students for the complexities of patient care in an interconnected world.

By embracing these principles, ABHES accredited institutions and programs will contribute to shaping a healthcare workforce that is not only skilled but compassionate, culturally competent, and capable of addressing the needs of all patients.

ABHES is proud to stand alongside its institutions and programs that are championing diversity, equity, and inclusion as cornerstones of a brighter and more inclusive healthcare future.
ABHES EMPLOYEE MILESTONES

Congratulations and a big thank you to Amy and Kelly Costello for their hard work and unwavering commitment to ABHES.

In August 2023, Amy Rowe, Associate Executive Director of Membership Services, celebrated an impressive 20 years of employment with the organization! She began her career at ABHES as an accreditation coordinator in 2003 and has served in many different capacities through the years. Today, Amy oversees the membership services department, where she currently supervises the Manager of Membership Services and Senior Accreditation Coordinator.

She manages the initial and renewal accreditation processes and develops and maintains the accreditation training curricula in addition to leading accreditation workshops and membership service trainings. Amy is a valuable member of the ABHES Leadership Team and is much appreciated for the contributions she has made to the organization in the span of her 20 years of service.

In June 2023, Kelly Costello, Associate Director of Accreditation, celebrated 10 years of service! Kelly began her career at ABHES as an accreditation coordinator in June 2013. Through the years, Kelly has assumed a variety of positions and fulfilled many different job functions.

In November 2021, Kelly was promoted to her current position where she supervises entry-level accreditation coordinators. Since assuming the position, she has been instrumental in overseeing onboarding, training, and continuous development for newly hired accreditation coordinators and other staff as needed. Recently, she completed a Certificate in Facilitation course and utilized the knowledge and skills she acquired to create and lead in-service trainings she designed to be inclusive and beneficial for all staff.
NEW ABHES STAFF

Vicmar Paz
Manager of Operations
vpaz@abhes.org

In April 2023, ABHES welcomed Vicmar Paz, Manager of Operations. In her role, she oversees the day-to-day operations of managing the Accounting Department, Vendors, Events & Conferences, and Human Resources-related matters.

Vicmar has dedicated her career to supporting the professional and academic advancement of young professionals. Her experience within non-profit management includes seven years with the Hispanic College Fund where she served as Development Coordinator and Director for the College and Career Institute. And ten years’ experience in higher education; in her previous positions, as Director of Financial Aid and Student Services Manager, she was responsible for ensuring all students receive a comprehensive academic and financial plan of study as well as managing all aspects of the Student Services Department. She was responsible for counseling students in order to determine their eligibility for Title IV funding and assisting with the administration, compliance, and reconciliation of federal, state, and institutional financial aid programs. Vicmar also worked closely with the Career Services Department to prepare students for rewarding careers in programs that meet the changing needs of employers in high demand industries.

Vicmar earned her Bachelor of Communications from Marymount University and a Project Manager Certificate from Georgetown University.

Hasna Elhoudaigui
Junior Staff Accountant
helhoudaigui@abhes.org

In February 2023, ABHES welcomed Hasna Elhoudaigui, Junior Accountant. Hasna previously worked for ABHES as a temporary employee between November 2021 and April 2022. During this time, she made tremendous contributions that advanced the operations of the accounting department. So, when the opportunity presented itself for her to join ABHES full-time, we were so fortunate to have her. Hasna’s career spans 10 years in the accounting field. She has comprehensive experience in managing accounts payable/accounts receivable, general ledger, journal entries, reconciliation, accruals, and month/year-end closings and a proven record of providing a superior level of service and ensuring top-notch accuracy. Hasna is multilingual in English and Arabic. Her primary responsibilities at ABHES include support for annual audit and financial tax compliance records and assisting in the annual budget process.

Hasna earned a bachelor’s in business administration from the Institut Supérieur de Gestion et de Commerce (ISGC) in Casablanca, Morocco, and recently completed additional coursework in Financial Statement for Decision-Making; Effective Bookkeeping and Payroll Certificate; and Core Excel Essentials for Accountants.
In September 2023, Alison Roope was promoted to Senior Accreditation Specialist. Alison joined the ABHES staff as a full-time employee in April 2022, after years of working with the organization through her work as an evaluator and program advisory committee member. In her brief tenure, she has made substantial contributions by enhancing and reforming critical several internal processes for the benefit of the organization and accredited institutions and programs.

Her new role will include many of her former duties, along with a few new functions. We congratulate Alison on her promotion and look forward to her continued growth and commitment to the organization.

Questions
The ABHES staff are available to address any specific questions regarding accreditation requirements.

Please visit the Our Staff page on the ABHES website for specific staff member contact information.

If you are unsure of where to direct your questions, please email info@abhes.org or call (301) 291-7550.

Are you submitting an application in the Application Center and have questions?

Check out our Application Knowledge Base for NEW videos, instructions, and directions at https://portal.abhes.org/appcenter/appsfqa/