



# **Pathways to Academic Health**

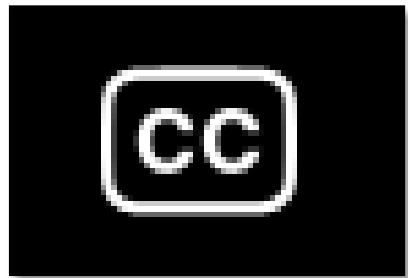
## **Department Partnerships: Successes**

### **and Best Practices**

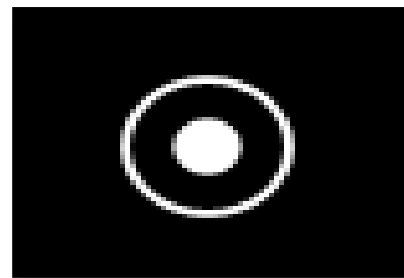
**May 1, 2025 | 2-3:30 pm ET**

# Introductions and Housekeeping

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Closed Captioning  
is enabled.



Webinar is being  
recorded.



Drop your questions  
into the Q&A box.

# Today's Speakers

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**Mayela Arana**

Senior Program  
Manager,  
The Public Health  
Foundation



**Casie  
Higginbotham**

Director, Academic  
Health Department,  
Tennessee Department  
of Health



**Jen Ricci**

Rhode Island  
Department of Health  
Scholar Program  
Manager, RIDOH  
Academic Institute



**Erika Gutiérrez  
Martínez**

Assistant Director of  
Public Health, City of  
Laredo Public Health  
Department



# Academic Health Department Partnerships





# Public Health Foundation

## **Vision:**

**Equitable and optimal health and well-being  
for all**

## **Mission:**

**Advance the public health workforce to  
achieve organizational excellence**

### *Experts in:*



***Performance  
Management***



***Quality  
Improvement***



***Workforce  
Development***

# Council on Linkages Between Academia and Public Health Practice



# An AHD Partnership...



- Joins a health department and an academic institution
- Institutionalizes collaboration
- Enhances public health education and training, research, and service



# What Does an AHD Partnership Look Like?

- **Academia and public health practice working together**
- Written partnership agreement
- Collaborative public health education or training
- Joint research projects
- Shared provision of public health services
- Shared personnel or other resources

# Why Create an AHD Partnership?

- Enhance capacity
- Prepare students for public health careers
- Support workforce recruitment and retention
- Facilitate lifelong learning
- Build and use practice-based evidence
- Maximize resources
- Meet accreditation standards
- **Improve the public health system and community health**

# Who is Involved in AHD Partnerships?

## ASTHO PROFILE OF STATE AND TERRITORIAL PUBLIC HEALTH VOLUME 4

Collaborating Agencies/Organizations	Exchange Information		Work Together on Projects		State Health Agency Provides Financial Resources		State Health Agency Has Leadership Role in the Partnership		No Relationship Yet		Organization Does Not Exist in Jurisdiction	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Higher education (e.g., universities, medical schools, community colleges)	48	98%	49	100%	31	63%	24	49%	0	0%	0	0%

### 2022 NATIONAL PROFILE OF LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENTS



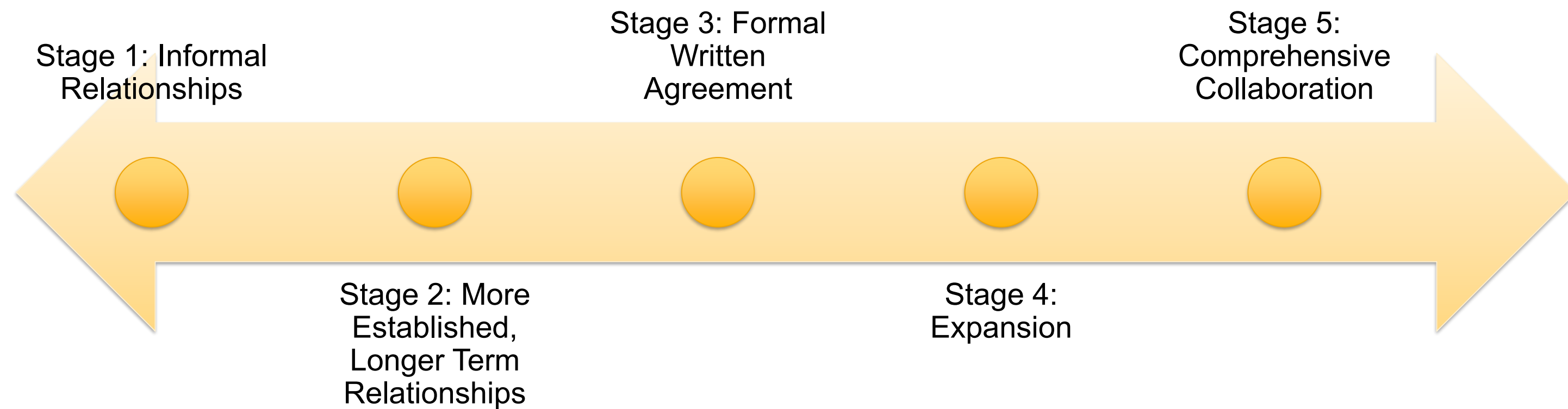
Figure 3.3 | LHD partnerships and collaborations in the past year

- Percent of LHDs working with organization in any way
- Percent of LHDs regularly scheduling meetings, have written agreements, or share personnel/resources with organization

Colleges or universities — 64% — 89%



# How Do AHD Partnerships Develop?



# No Two AHD Partnerships Are The Same...

## ┐ Different structures

- ▷ One-to-one or consortium
- ▷ Advisory board or not
- ▷ Shared staff or partners

## ┐ Different partners

- ▷ Health departments
- ▷ Schools or programs of public health, medicine, nursing, pharmacy, nutrition, public affairs, journalism, urban planning, law, engineering
- ▷ Hospitals or medical centers

# No Two AHD Partnerships Are The Same...

## ➤ Different levels of formality

- ▷ Informal
- ▷ MOU or MOA
- ▷ Contract

## ➤ Different activities

- ▷ Education and training
- ▷ Research
- ▷ Service delivery



# There Are Lots of Ways to Work Together

- Student internships and practica
- Guest lectures
- Brown bag talks, seminars, workshops
- Course auditing
- Technical assistance
- Community-based research projects
- Staffing for public health programs or events
- Surge support
- Sharing resources – library resources, meeting space
- Co-applying for grants or other funding

# And Lots of Things to Think About

- Organizational strengths and weaknesses
- Available resources and gaps
- Needs that a partnership can help fill
- Match between partner organizations' resources and needs
- Strength of prior relationships
- Organizational champions
- Partnership development experience
- Return on investment



# Helping AHD Partnerships Grow



## Academic Health Department Learning Community

- National community of practitioners, educators, and researchers exploring and learning about AHD partnerships
- ~1,400 members



Examples  
and Stories



Webinars



Partnership  
Agreements



Listserv

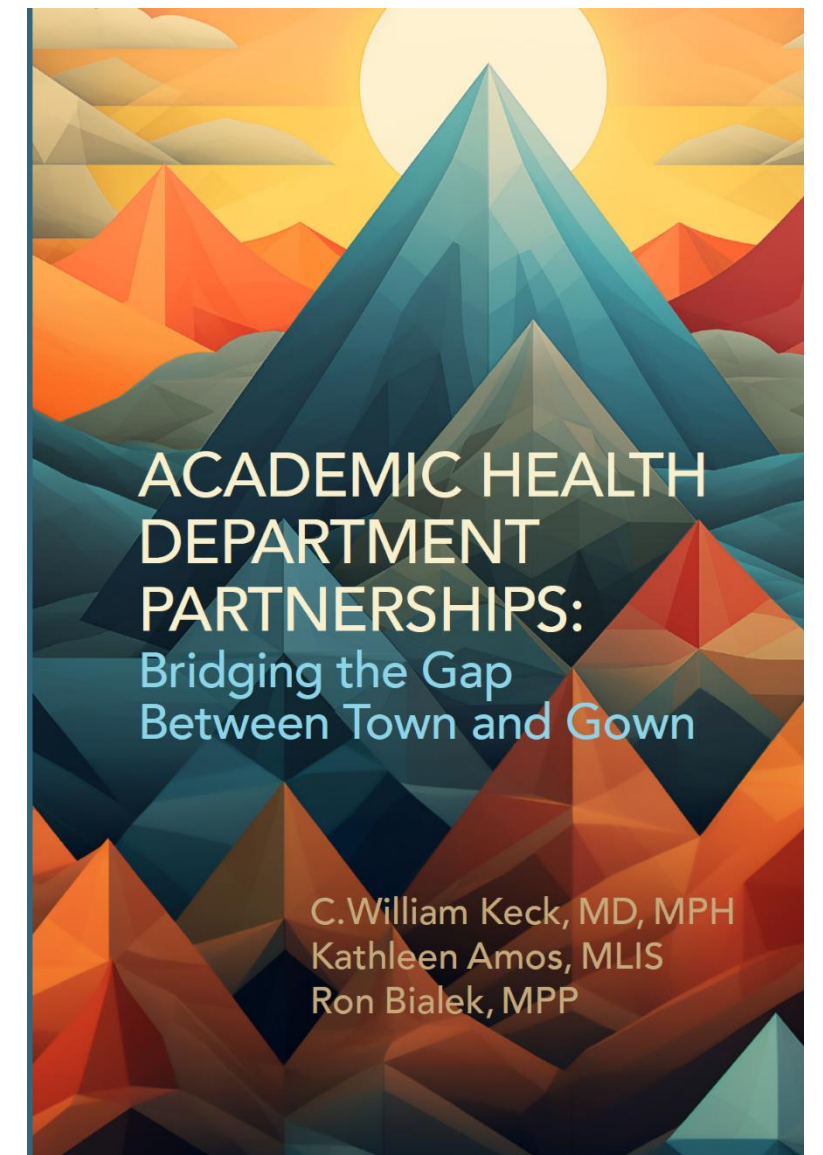


Technical  
Assistance



# AHD Partnership Resources

- AHD Learning Community: [www.phf.org/AHDLC](http://www.phf.org/AHDLC)
  - Peer community supporting public health practice/academic collaboration
- [AHD Webinars](#)
  - Webinars focused on AHD partnerships
- [AHD Resources and Tools](#)
  - Resources to support development, maintenance, and expansion of AHD partnerships
- [AHD Partnership Environmental Scan](#)
  - Remote assistance for health departments interested in exploring and enhancing AHD partnerships
- New AHD book – [\*Academic Health Department Partnerships: Bridging the Gap Between Town and Gown\*](#)





# THANK YOU!

[www.phf.org/AHDLC](http://www.phf.org/AHDLC)

For more information or to join, contact:

Mayela Arana

[marana@phf.org](mailto:marana@phf.org)



## ACADEMIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Casie Higginbotham, MS, CPH, MCHES  
Academic Health Department Director

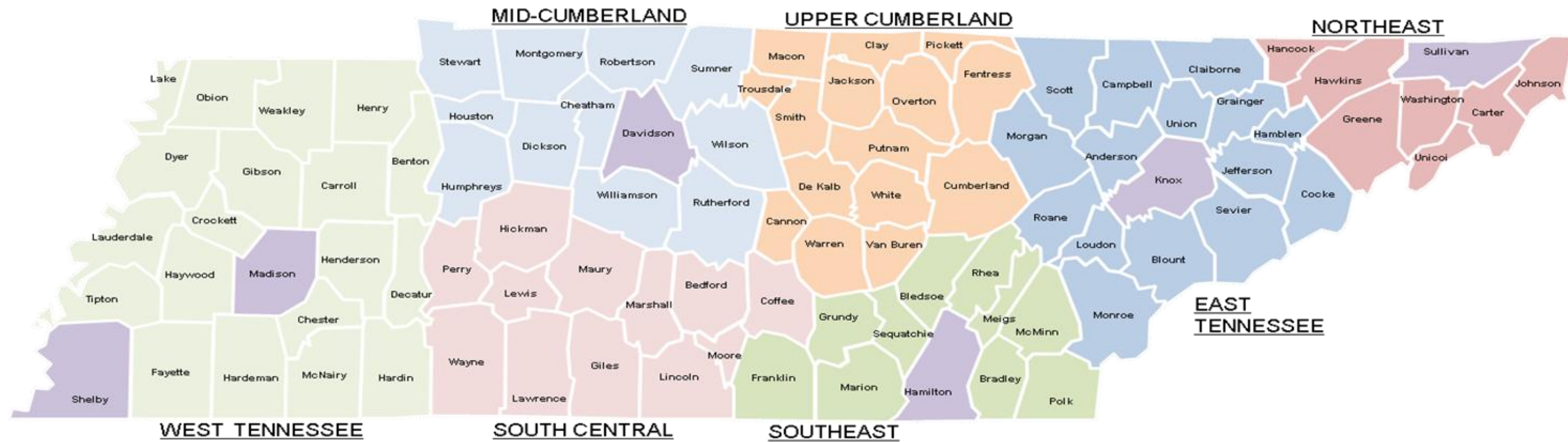






# Our Mission:

*To protect, promote, and improve the health and well-being of all people in Tennessee.*





# Academic Health Department Team



**Casie Higginbotham**  
AHD Director

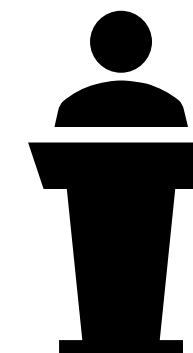
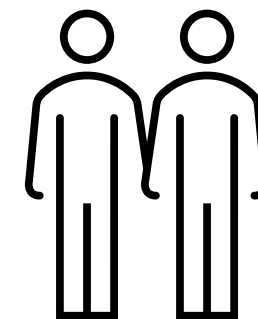
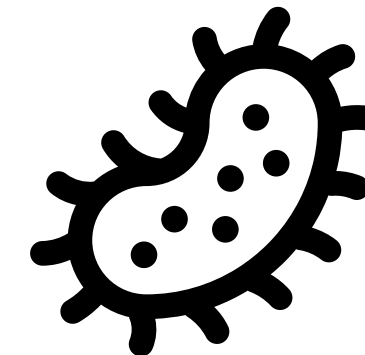
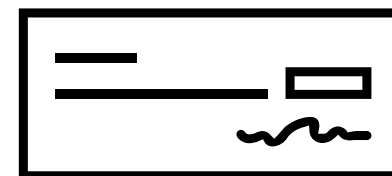
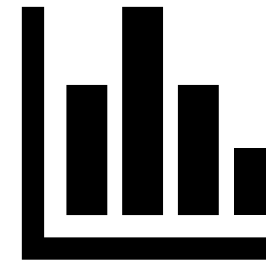
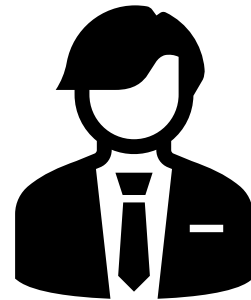
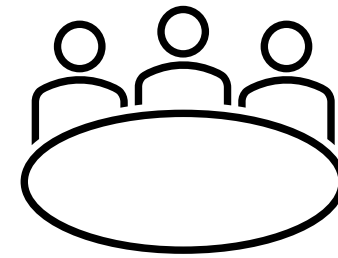


**Josh Woods**  
Public Health  
Workforce Specialist



**Joey King**  
Talent Management Director

# What TDH was already doing...



# Resource Mapping

- **REDCap survey of TDH staff to determine existing partnerships**
  - TDH staff name and office or division
  - Name of college/university
  - Faculty contact name and email
  - Description of partnership
  - Type of agreement (informal, formal, contractual)
- **38** respondents
- **112** entries



## Programs

[About the TRAIN Learning Network](#)
[Academic Health Department Learning Community](#)
[Antibiotic Stewardship](#)
[CDC Learning Connection](#)
[The Community Guide](#)
[Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals](#)
[Council on Linkages Between Academia and Public Health Practice](#)
[Drinking Water Program Improvement](#)
[Driver Diagrams to Improve Population Health](#)
[E-learning Institute Fellowship](#)
[Future of Population Health Award](#)
[Future of Public Health Award](#)
[The Guide to Community Preventive Services](#)
[HOSA – Future Health Professionals](#)
[Immunization Center](#)
[Increasing Use of Oral Health Care](#)
[Lead Poisoning Prevention](#)

## Academic Health Department Partnerships



An [academic health department \(AHD\) partnership](#) is formed by the formal affiliation of a health department and an academic institution that trains future health professionals. This relationship is sometimes described as the public health equivalent of the “teaching hospital” affiliation found between hospitals and medical schools. AHD partnerships can enhance public health education and training, research, and service and may offer a variety of benefits, both for the organizations involved and for the community as a whole.

AHD partnerships help to strengthen the links between public health practice and academia and to lessen the separation between the education of public health professionals and the practice of public health. AHDs can serve as sites for joint education, research, and practice, enabling the practice and academic communities to work together to develop the current and future public health workforce, build the evidence base for public health, and better deliver the Essential Public Health Services.

### AHD Partnerships in the United States

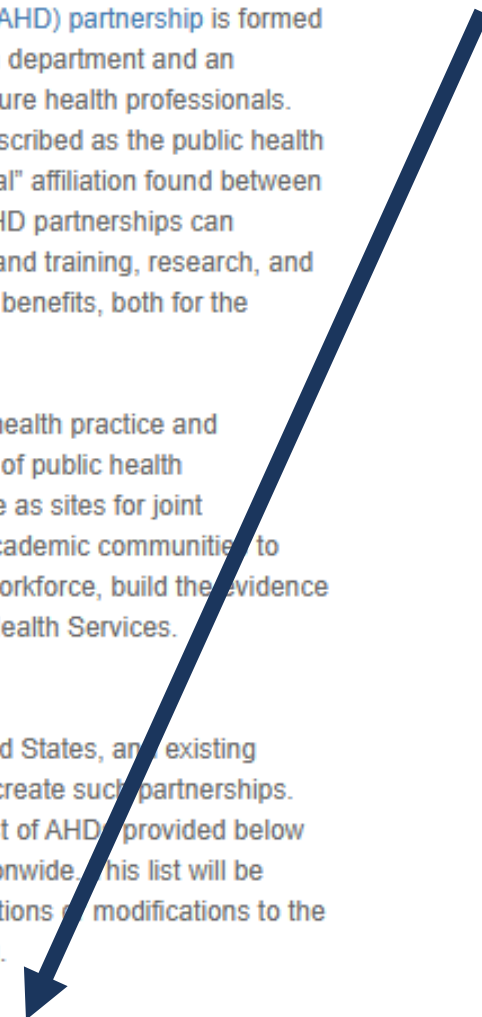
AHD partnerships are present in communities across the United States, and existing AHDs can serve as models for other organizations working to create such partnerships. The [AHD Learning Community](#) has compiled the preliminary list of AHDs provided below as a starting point for exploring how AHDs are developing nationwide. This list will be updated as new AHDs are established or discovered, and additions or modifications to the list are welcome by email to Kathleen Amos at [kamos@phf.org](mailto:kamos@phf.org).

#### Alabama

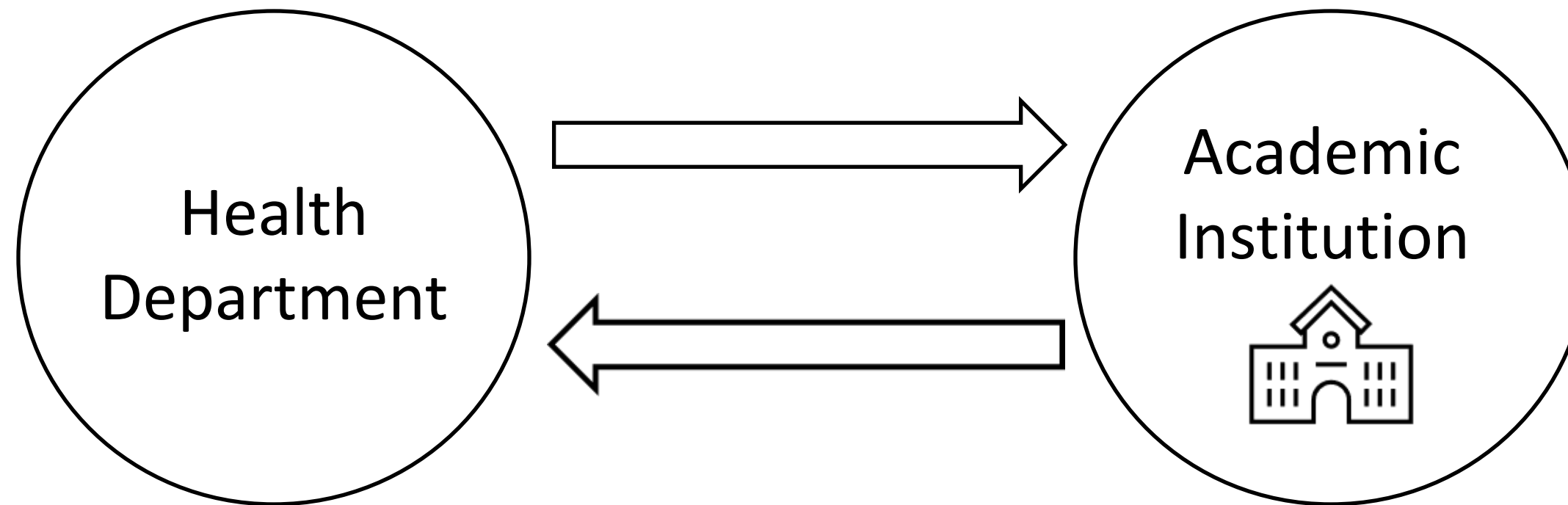
- Jefferson County Department of Health & Lawson State Community College
- Jefferson County Department of Health & Oakwood College
- Jefferson County Department of Health & Samford University
- Jefferson County Department of Health & Stanford University
- Jefferson County Department of Health & University of Alabama at Birmingham
- Jefferson County Department of Health & University of Alabama at Tuscaloosa
- Jefferson County Department of Health & Wallace State Community College

#### Arizona

- Cochise Health and Social Services & University of Arizona Mel and Enid



# Typical AHD Model





# TDH Academic Health Department Model



# TPHA Scholarships

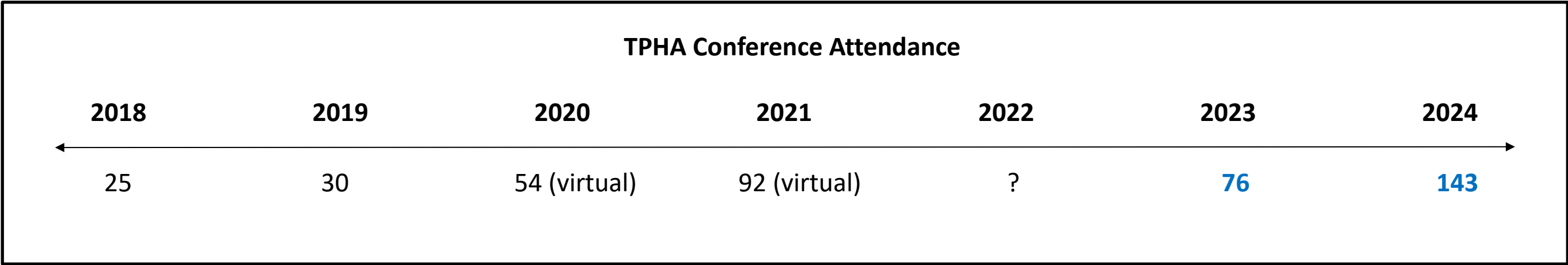
## 2023

- 50 scholarships
- Registration + Lodging
- Networking reception



## 2024

- 75 scholarships





# Internship



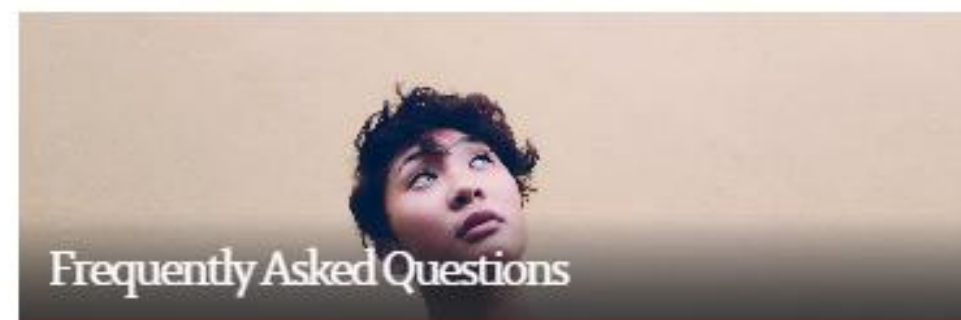
## Apply for placement

Are you a college student looking for an internship and a better understanding of what we do in public health? We offer experiences for both in-state and out-of-state students. Assisting the Department of Health (TDH) in understanding what you want to learn helps us identify the best opportunity available. If we find that your interests and our needs align, we will contact you to discuss placement. Please note all applicants must be at least 18 years old and high school graduates or equivalent at the time of placement.

The application for Fall 2024 has closed. The Spring 2025 application will open September 1st, 2024, and close September 30th, 2024, at midnight.

[Spring 2025 Internship Application \(Opens September 2024\)](#)

Please email us at [AHD.Health@tn.gov](mailto:AHD.Health@tn.gov) with questions.









# PUBLIC HEALTH EXECUTIVE FELLOWSHIP



**Mariah Horton**  
Senior Fellow



**Krista Cole**  
Senior Fellow



**Miranda Givens**  
Senior Fellow



**Benjamin Antwi**  
Fellow



**Bege Mallum**  
Fellow



# Visits to colleges/universities



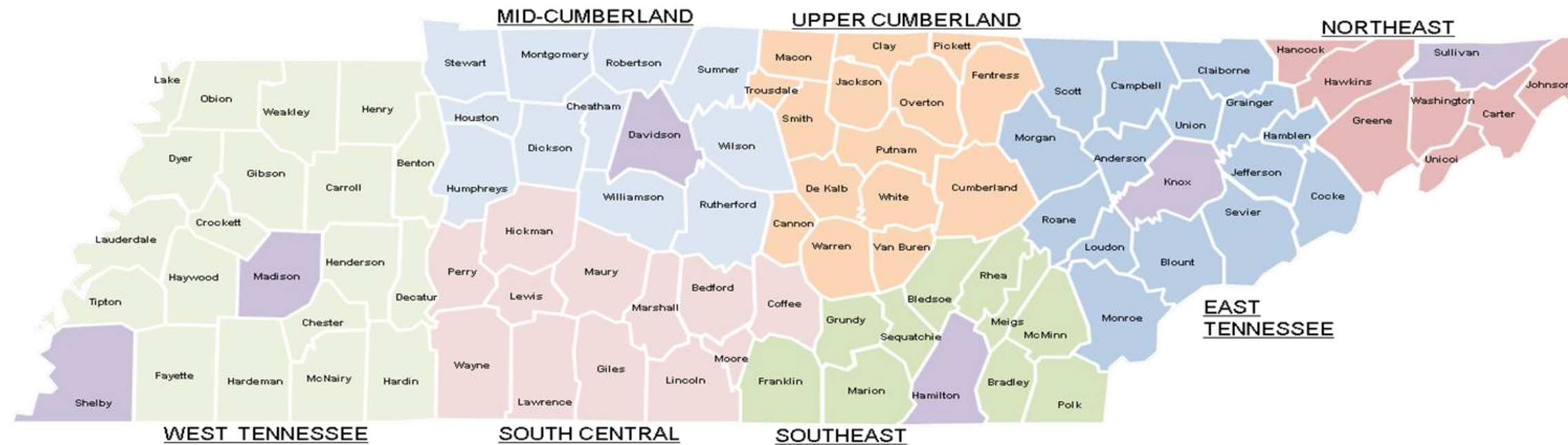
- 3 in-person presentations to classrooms
- 5 virtual presentations to classrooms
- 2 classes hosted at Central Office
- 3 in-person networking/career fairs
- 2 virtual career fairs
- 1 recorded interview
- 1 colloquium visits
- 1 student presentation feedback session

**18 total outreach engagements**





# TDH Central Office Roadshow



- **January 25 – March 20, 2024**
  - Attended all seven regional roadshow meetings
  - Shared information about the AHD and how staff can engage

# TDH Intern Preceptor Training 1118814

[< Back](#)

[> Launch](#)

[✓ Mark Completed](#)

[⋮ More Actions](#)



In Progress

Webcast (recorded)

ID 1118814

Skill level: Introductory

0.5h

[📅 Publish date Mar 13, 2024 11:00 PM CDT](#)

[📅 Expiration date Mar 14, 2026 10:59 PM CDT](#)

★★★★☆ (6)

The "Save for Later" button on a course does not register you for the course. It is simply a bookmark.

This training is specific to the TDH internship program and covers intern selection and onboarding, constructing a productive internship experience, and time approval in Covendis.

[About](#)

[Contacts](#)

[Reviews](#)

[Discussion](#)

[Certificates](#)

## Details

### Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of this training, participants will be able to describe the steps of the application and selection process for student interns at TDH.

At the conclusion of this training, participants will identify and articulate the necessary skills and requirements a student needs to meet to complete an internship with their program.

### 2021 Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals

[📄 More details](#)

#### Tier 1: Front Line and Program Support Responsibilities

##### Management and Finance Skills

- Secures human resources
- Manages human resources
- Manages programs and services
- Engages individuals and teams to achieve program and organizational goals
- Facilitates collaboration among individuals, groups, and organizations

#### Tier 2: Program Management and Supervisory Responsibilities

##### Management and Finance Skills



# Academic-Practice Linkages Symposium



# **The AHD Improving Public Health in Tennessee...**



# TDH Academic Health Department Agreements



# Academic Health Department Advisory Committee (AHDAC)



**Amir Alakaam**  
MPH Program Director  
University of Tennessee, Chattanooga



**Taylor Dula**  
Assistant Dean for Student Services  
East Tennessee State University



**Julie Grubaugh**  
Undergraduate Program Director  
University of Tennessee, Knoxville



**Garret Harper**  
MPH Program Director  
Trevecca Nazarene University



**Brad Hawkins**  
MPH Practicum Director  
Vanderbilt University



**Ilias Kavouras**  
Assistant Dean, Academic Affairs  
University of Memphis



**Miranda Sanford Terry**  
Director, Public Health Programs  
Tennessee State University



**Heather Tillewein**  
Assistant Professor  
Austin Peay State University



**Lesia D. Walker**  
Instructor, School of Global Health  
Meharry Medical College



**Christian Williams**  
Chair, Department of Public Health  
Belmont University



**Bethany Wrye**  
Chair, Department of Health and Human  
Performance  
Middle Tennessee State University




# Workforce Pathways






# Workforce Pathways cont...






2025



**Public Health  
Academic Bridge  
Scholars Program**

*Provided by the Tennessee Department of Health with  
funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.*



Knox Promise | COMPLETE Coaching and Grants | Summer Bridge and Institute | Transfer Pilot



# Intern → Full-time Employee

14 interns hired summer 2024 – present

- Child Fatality Review Program
- Grainger County Health Department
- TN Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention
- Office of Strategic Initiatives
- Maternal Deaths Due to Violence Program
- Breast and Cervical Cancer Screening Program
- Rutherford County Health Department
- Communicable and Environmental Diseases and Emergency Preparedness
- Community Health Services
- Office of Human Resources and Talent Management
- Viral Hepatitis Surveillance
- Washington County HD

# Fall 2025 Internships

- Analyzing and Enhancing Syphilis Case Detection Algorithms
- Chronic Disease Prevention
- Community Health - Health Education
- Grants Management
- Health for All
- Health Impact Assessment
- Healthy Aging Across Tennessee
- Program Evaluation & Assessment
- Revitalization of Health Councils
- Utilizing Productivity Tools & Time Studies



Chronic Disease Prevention  
*Cardiovascular, Diabetes, and Blue Zones*

**Preceptor:** Emma Davis  
**Division/Office:** Family Health and Wellness, Chronic Disease Prevention  
**Location:** Remote  
**Degree Level:** All Levels

**Hours per week:** 15 hours  
**Number of Weeks:** 16 weeks

Project Description

This internship offers a unique opportunity to gain hands-on experience in the prevention and management of chronic diseases, including diabetes and cardiovascular disease. The intern will work on various programs, such as diabetes prevention initiatives, cardiovascular disease management, and the promotion of Self-Measured Blood Pressure (SMBP) utilization. Additionally, the intern will contribute to our efforts in promoting and implementing Blue Zones projects to create healthier communities.

Skills

- Experience with health education and communication strategies
- Excellent presentation skills for delivering educational workshops and seminars
- Strong problem-solving skills and the ability to think creatively
- Experience with community outreach and engagement activities
- Knowledge of public health principles and chronic disease epidemiology

Additional Information

We are happy to let the student intern shadow and work with other programs in chronic disease prevention and health promotions, as well as the Wisewoman program, if the opportunities are available.

- Gain valuable experience in chronic disease prevention and health promotion.
- Opportunity to work with a dynamic team of healthcare professionals and community partners.
- Enhance research, data analysis, and project management skills.
- Contribute to meaningful initiatives that improve community health and well-being.
- Networking opportunities within the public health and healthcare sectors

Thank you from Tennessee!





# Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) Academic Institute

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Jen Ricci, MPH, Scholar Program Manager  
RIDOH Academic Institute

May 1, 2025

RHODE  
ISLAND



# RIDOH's Leading Priorities

Mission: To prevent disease and protect and promote the health and safety of the people of Rhode Island



Address the socioeconomic and environmental determinants of health.



Eliminate health disparities and promote health equity.



Ensure access to quality health services for all Rhode Islanders, including the state's vulnerable populations.

# RHODE ISLAND

## The Ocean State

### Smallest State

- 2<sup>nd</sup> most densely populated



### Centralized Government

- No county governments; 39 local municipalities



### Institutes of Higher Ed

- 11 schools
- 3 public; 8 private



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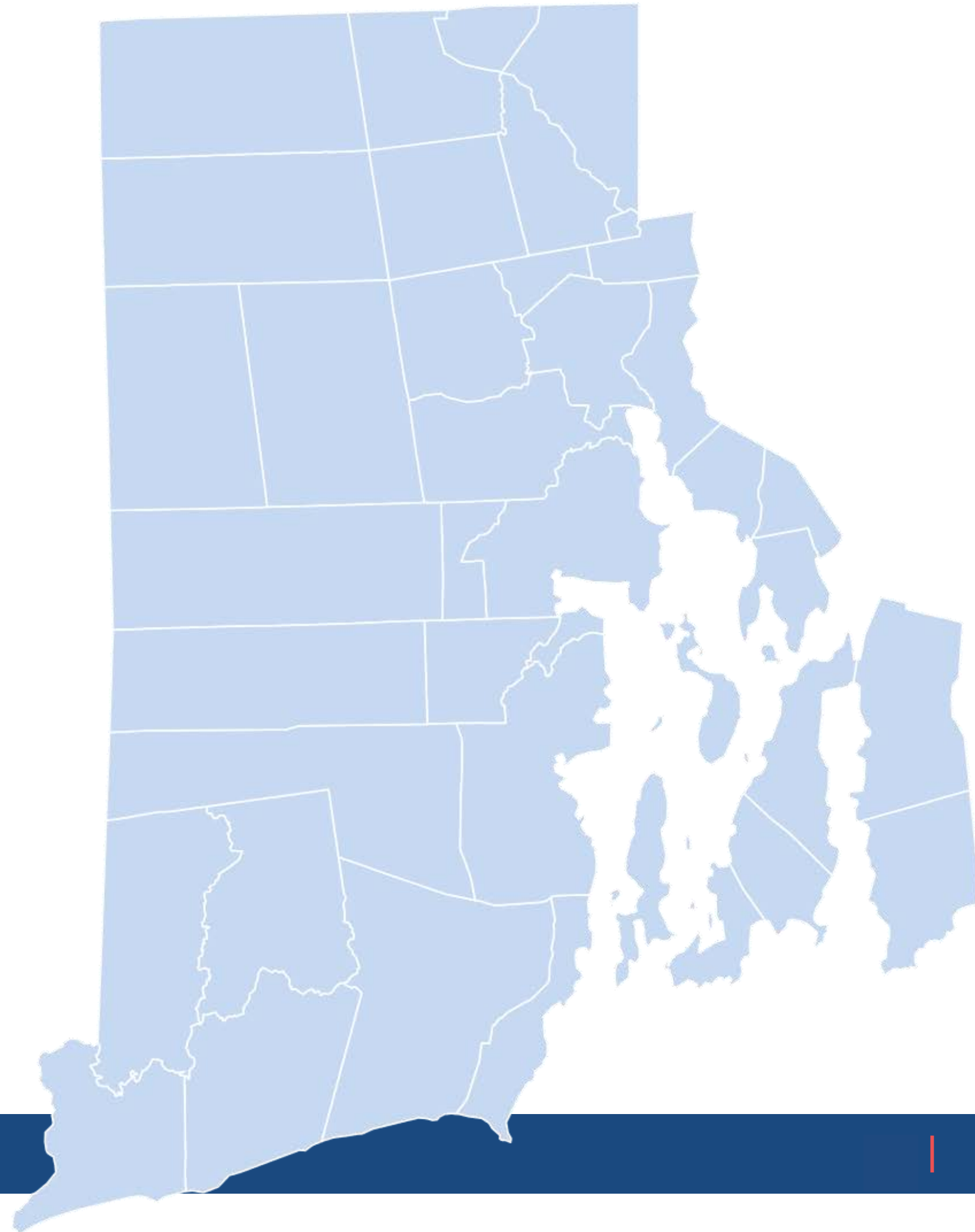
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Main Campus



Branch/Satellite



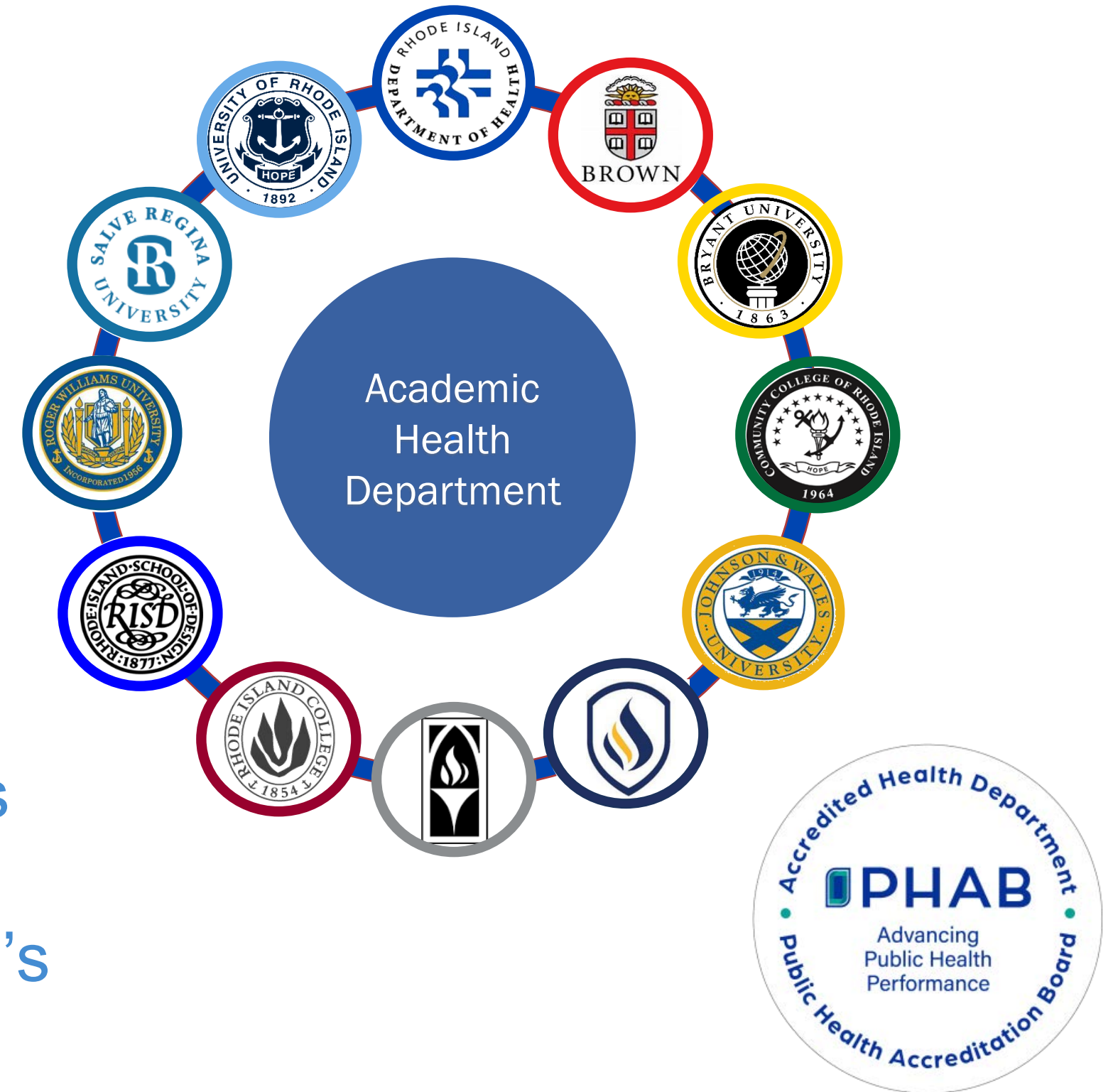
# RIDOH Academic Institute (RAI)

## Vision

Achieve excellence in public health policy and practice through academic collaborations, strategic planning, accreditation, performance improvement, and a multidisciplinary approach to public health in Rhode Island.

## Mission

Strengthen the integration of scholarly activities within public health policy and practice by instilling a culture of learning to support RIDOH's Leading Priorities.





# Collaborative Academic Partnerships



RHODE  
ISLAND  
COLLEGE



THE  
UNIVERSITY  
OF RHODE ISLAND

Need-Based Financial Aid

RI Promise Scholarship

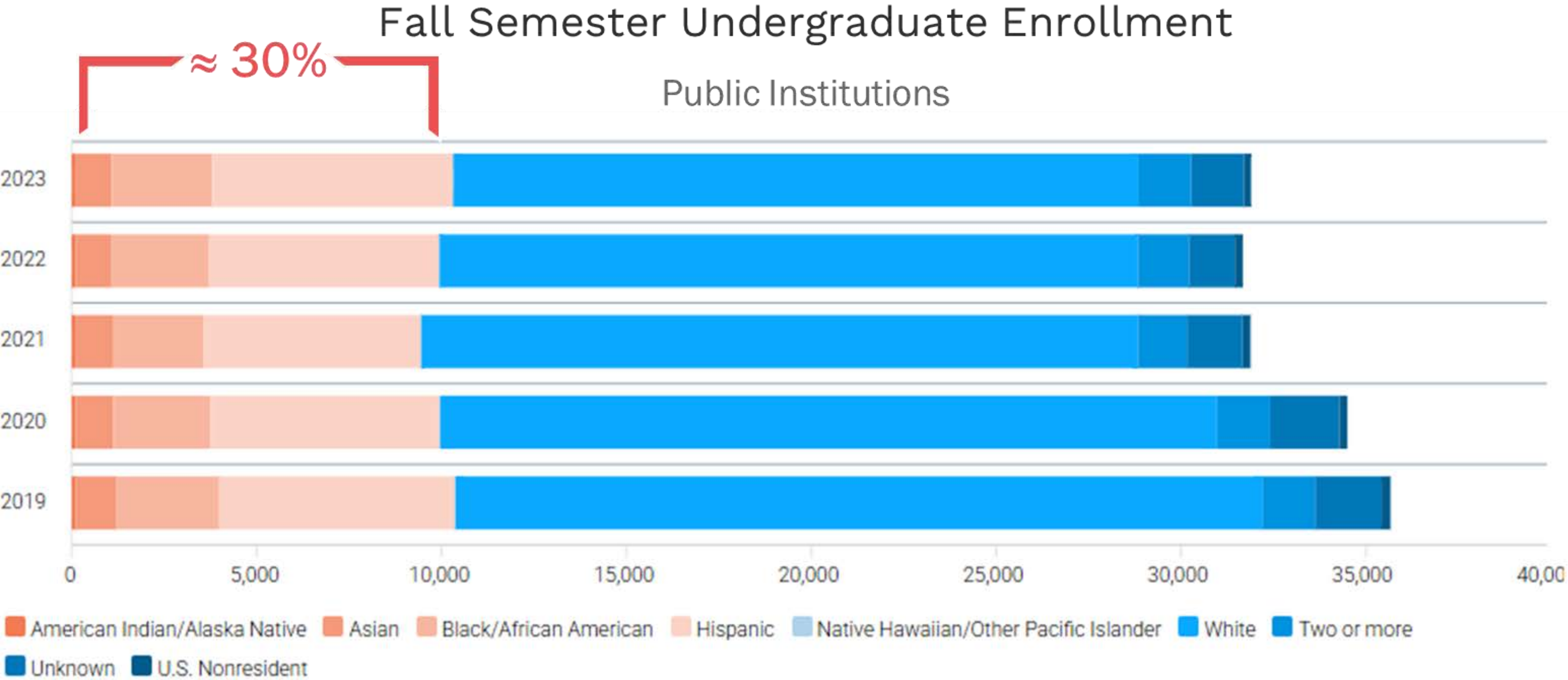
Hope Scholarship

Hispanic Serving Institution

Minority Serving Institution



# Enrollment Trends by Race/Ethnicity



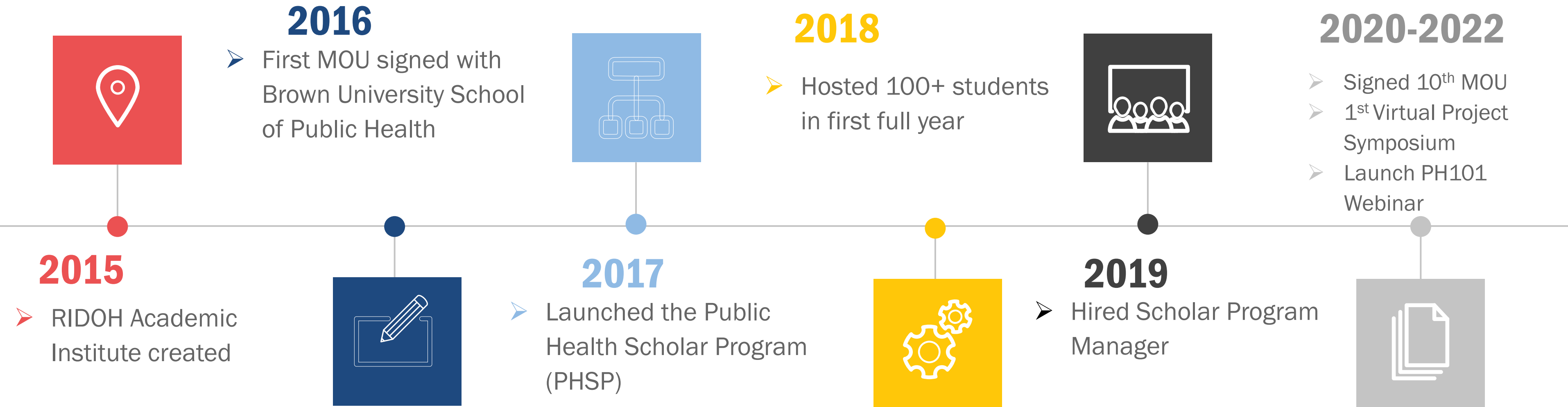
# RI's Academic Health Department AHD Structure

RIDOH Academic Institute

PUBLIC HEALTH EDUCATION AND RESEARCH	PUBLIC HEALTH ACCREDITATION	PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT	PUBLIC HEALTH + HEALTH CARE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
Collaborative Academic Partnerships	Accreditation Standards + Measures	Performance Management + Measures	Healthcare Continuing Education Program
Public Health Scholar Program	State Health Assessment (SHA) + State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP)	Continuous Quality Improvement	Welcome Back Center
Professional Recruitment + Student Engagement	Strategic Planning		Course Development + TRAIN Learning Management

# RIDOH Academic Institute

## RIDOH's Journey to becoming an Academic Health Department (AHD)





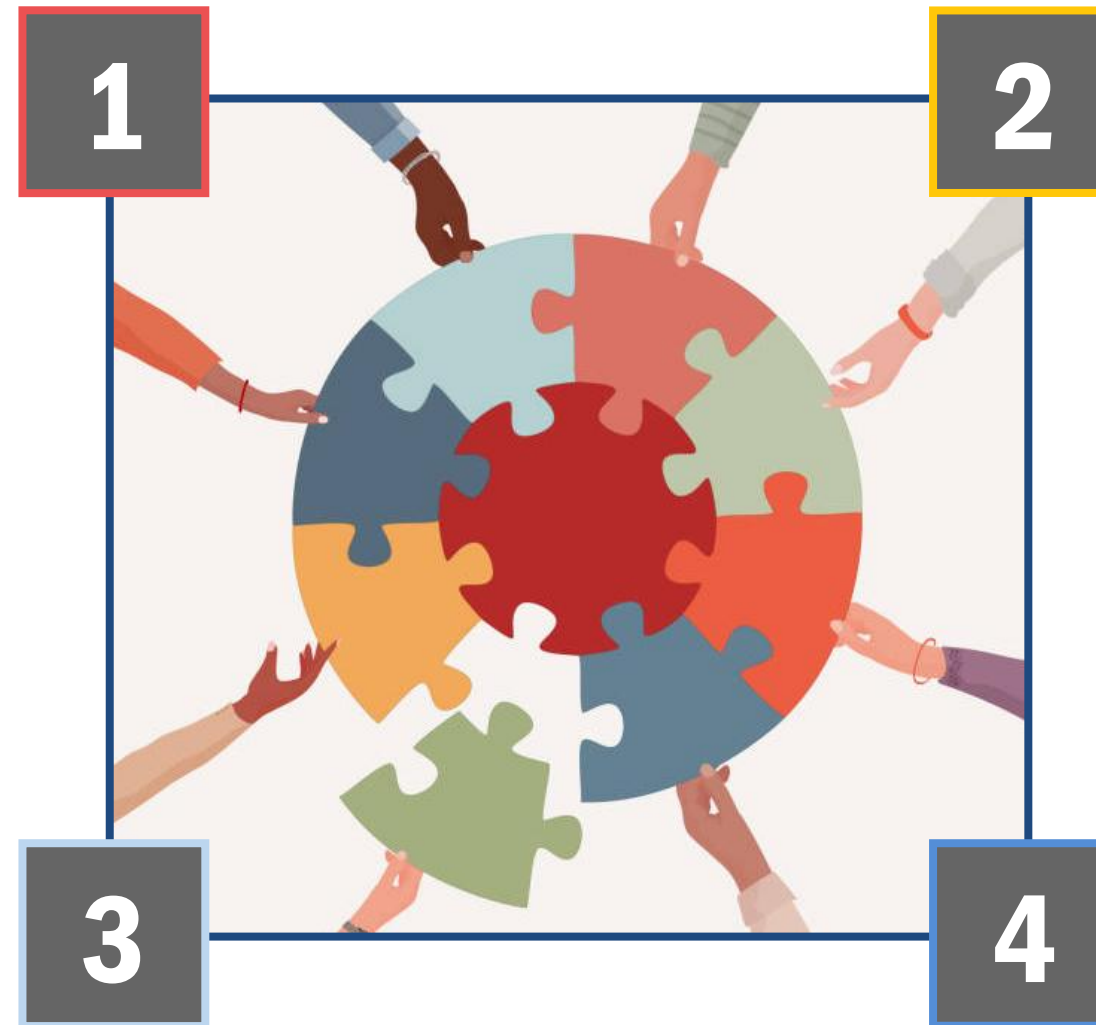
# Benefits of Academic Collaboration

## Drive Innovation Through Research

Public Health Academic & Research Group

## Strengthen Public Health Excellence through IHEs

Quarterly IHE Health Services Directors Mtg  
Public Health Scholar Program (PHSP)

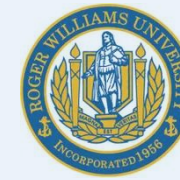


## Align Education with Practice Needs

MPH Admissions Committee Member  
Student Placement Committee

## Empower RIDOH Staff & Build Workforce Capacity

Workforce Development & Employee Engagement



# Academic Calendar (RIDOH'S Version)

Scholar Project Symposium

✓ Celebrate & showcase the projects completed by Scholars

Spring | Summer | Fall

Slide-deck Development

✓ Support development of presentation leading up to event

3x each semester

Access to 1:1 Support

✓ Individual meetings available for extra support

Unlimited

Public Health 101 Series

✓ Webinar highlighting PH topic & the RIDOH program responsible

Weekly

PH Out Loud Grand Rounds

✓ Public Health webinar offering continuing education

Monthly

Coming Soon...

✓ Journal Club

✓ Book Club

✓ Annual Statewide PH Speaker Event

# Promoting Connections to Public Health

## Engage with Students

**Career & Internship Fairs**

**Info Sessions**

**Informational Interviews**

**Shadowing**

- ✓ Connect directly with students
- ✓ Introduce RIDOH and the role of state government
- ✓ Offer opportunities for career exploration

## Collaborate with IHEs

**Guest Lectures**

**Site Visits**

**Project-Based Learning**

**Networking Nights**

- ✓ Share real-world examples with a fresh perspective
- ✓ Tangible connections to public health
- ✓ Identify areas for in-class learning

## Education & Resources

**Public Health 101 (PH 101)**

**Webinar Series**

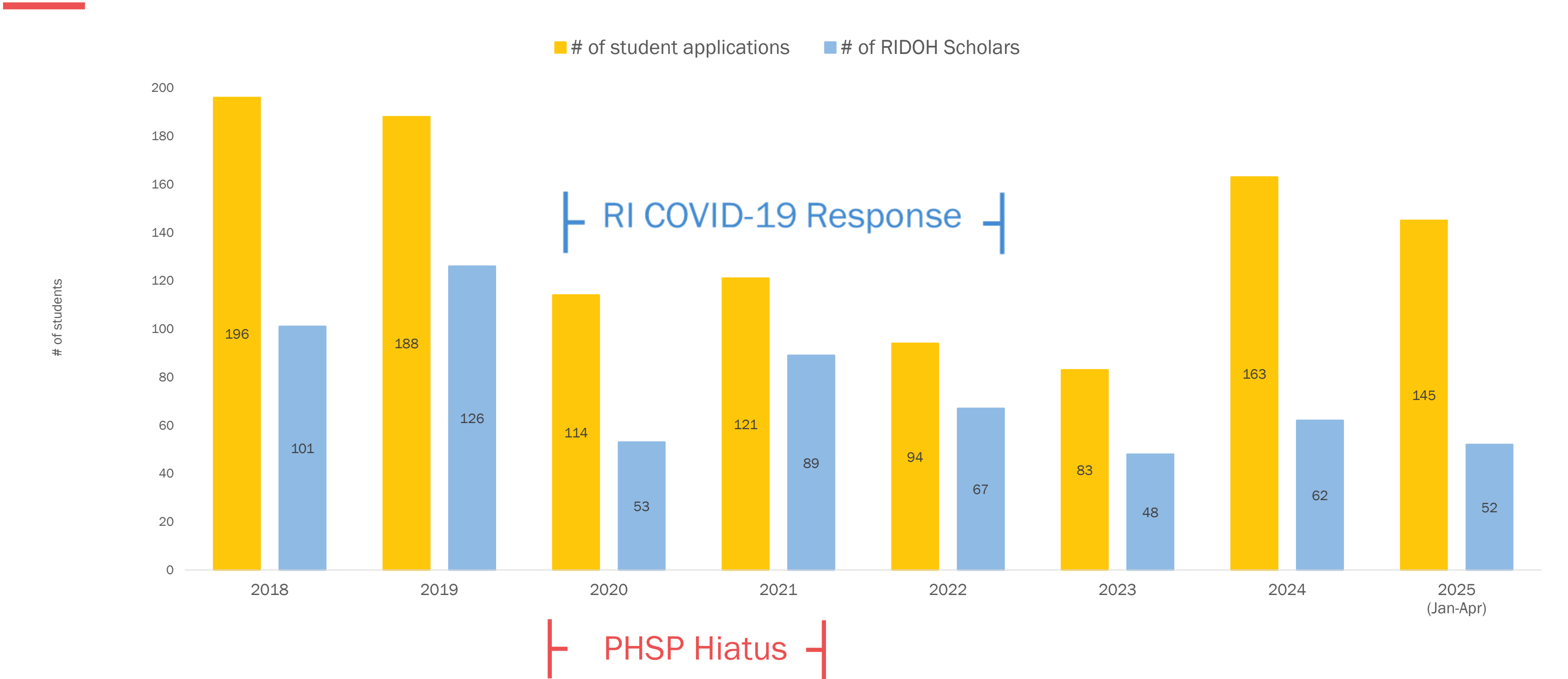
**PH Out Loud Grand Rounds**

**Career Fact Sheets**

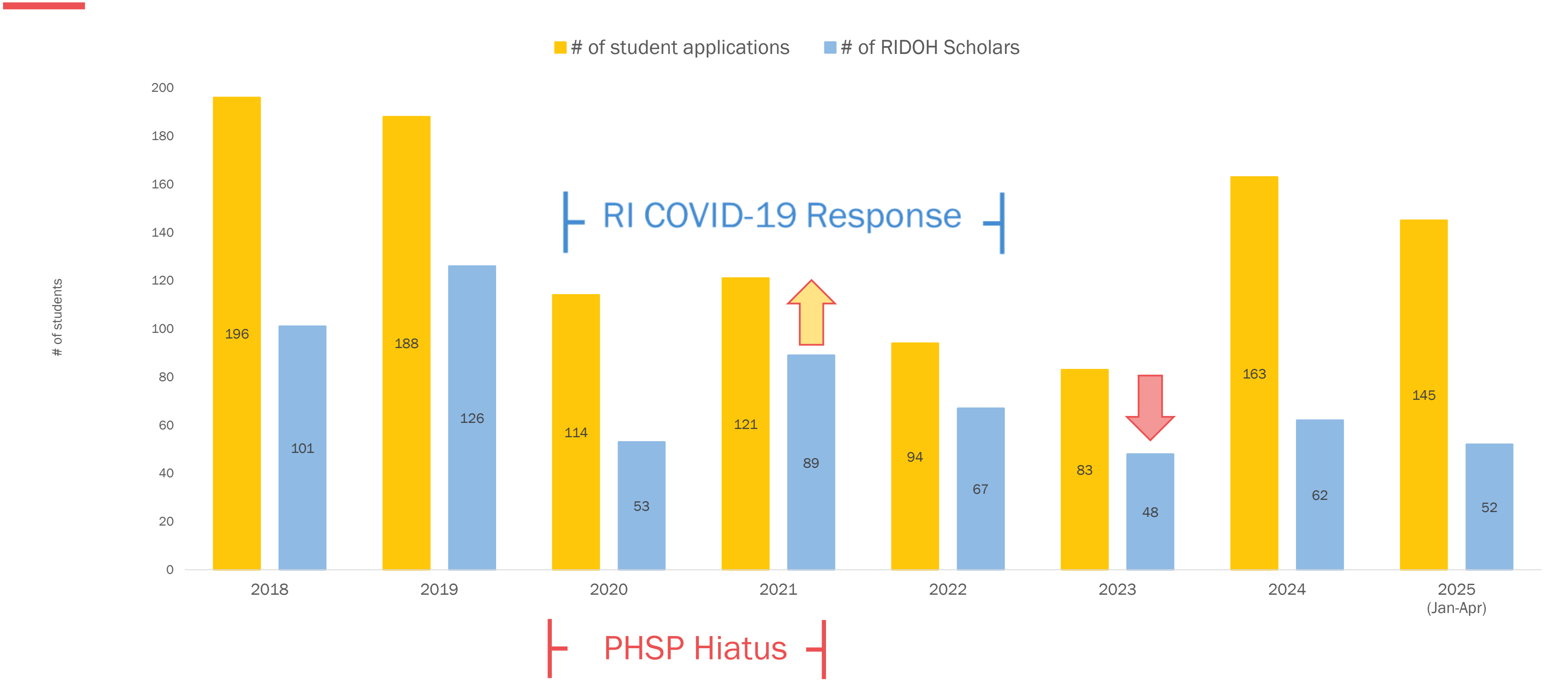
- ✓ Create accessible pathways to PH knowledge & expertise
- ✓ Use recognizable language
- ✓ Identify talking points by academic major



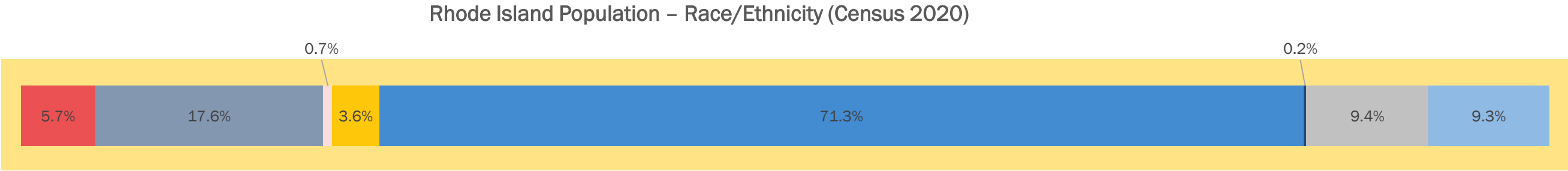
# Public Health Scholar Program (PHSP) Annual Placement Data



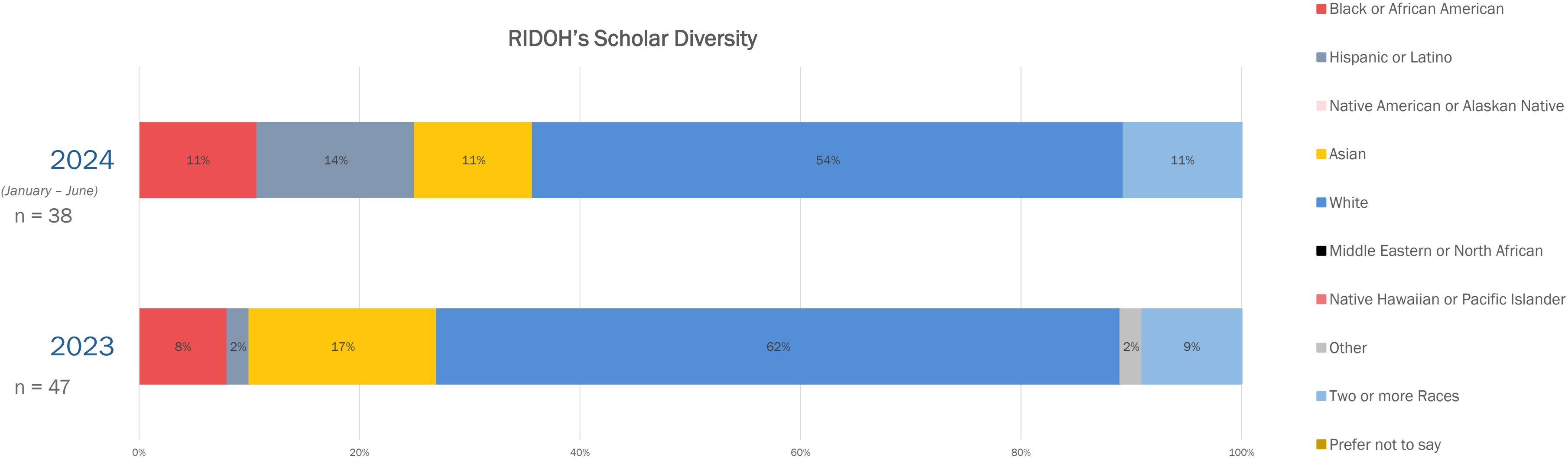
# Public Health Scholar Program (PHSP) Annual Placement Data



# Efforts to Diversify the State’s Public Health Workforce



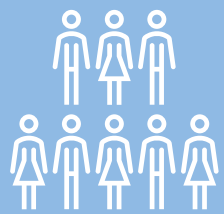
RIDOH’s Scholar Diversity





# Maximizing Impact through Academic Collaboration

We have already seen small returns on investment...



**600 students**

completed experiential  
learning opportunities at  
RIDOH



**50 sessions**

of RIDOH's Public Health  
101 webinar series



**20 formal**

academic partnerships via  
MOUs, Affiliation agreements,  
Project Labor agreements,  
Applied Practice Experiences



**76%**

of Scholars attend an  
RIDOH AHD-affiliated  
school

# Thank you!

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Jen Ricci, MPH

Rhode Island Department of Health

[Jennifer.Ricci@health.ri.gov](mailto:Jennifer.Ricci@health.ri.gov)





— **LAREDO** —  
**Public Health**

# Local Academic Public Health Partnerships

Erika Gutiérrez Martínez, MBA, SHRM-SCP, CTCM, CHW, CPM  
Assistant Director of Public Health





# CITY OF LAREDO

- Population: 257,602
- 95.2% Hispanic
- Largest inland port in North America





# LAREDO PUBLIC HEALTH

## Vision Statement

*Provide the Laredo community access to resources to achieve optimal quality of life, health and well-being.*

**47-52 Programs & Services**

**250-300 FTEs**

**78% Grant Funded**

**Serving 5 Counties**

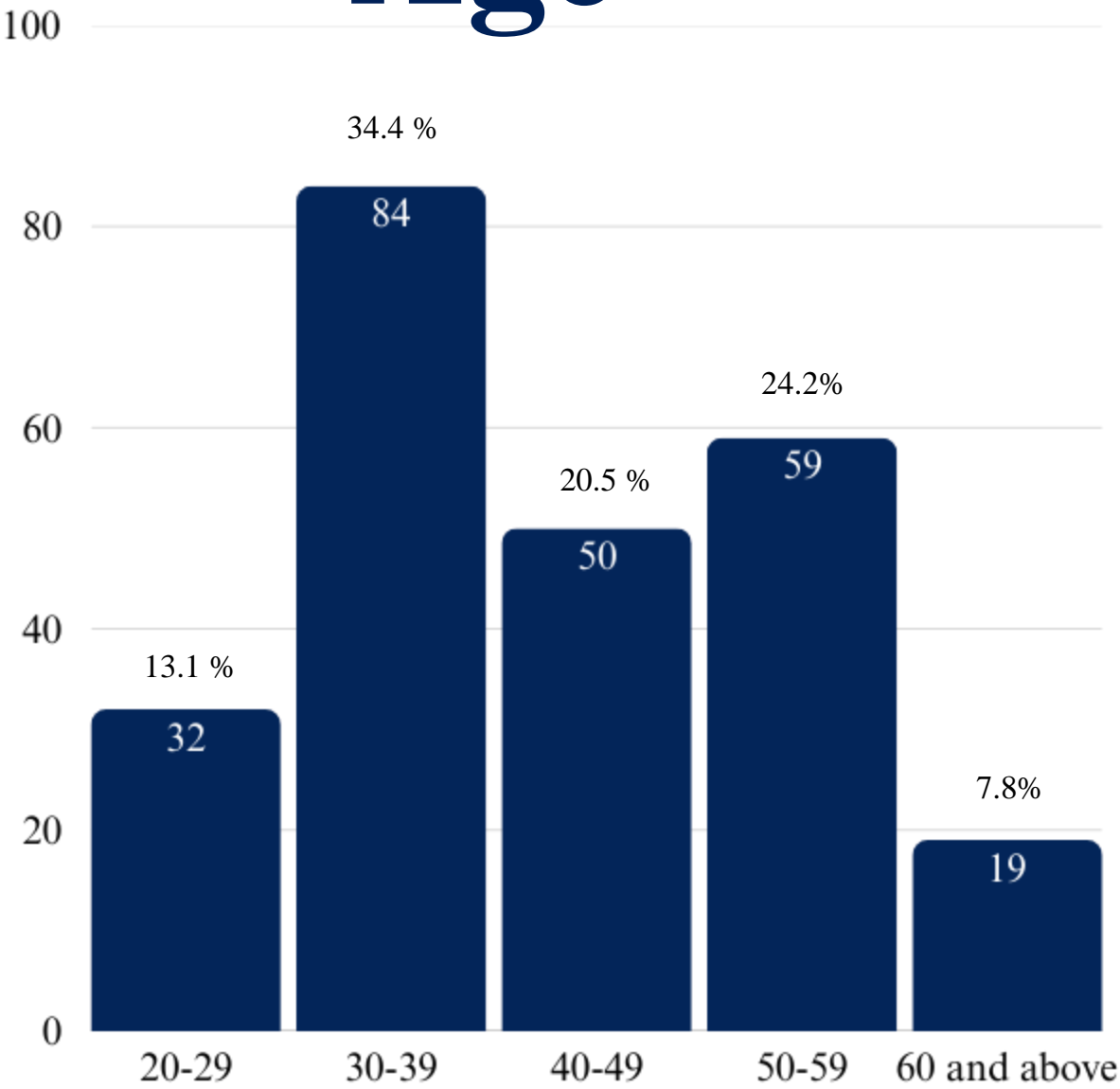


**LAREDO**  
Public Health

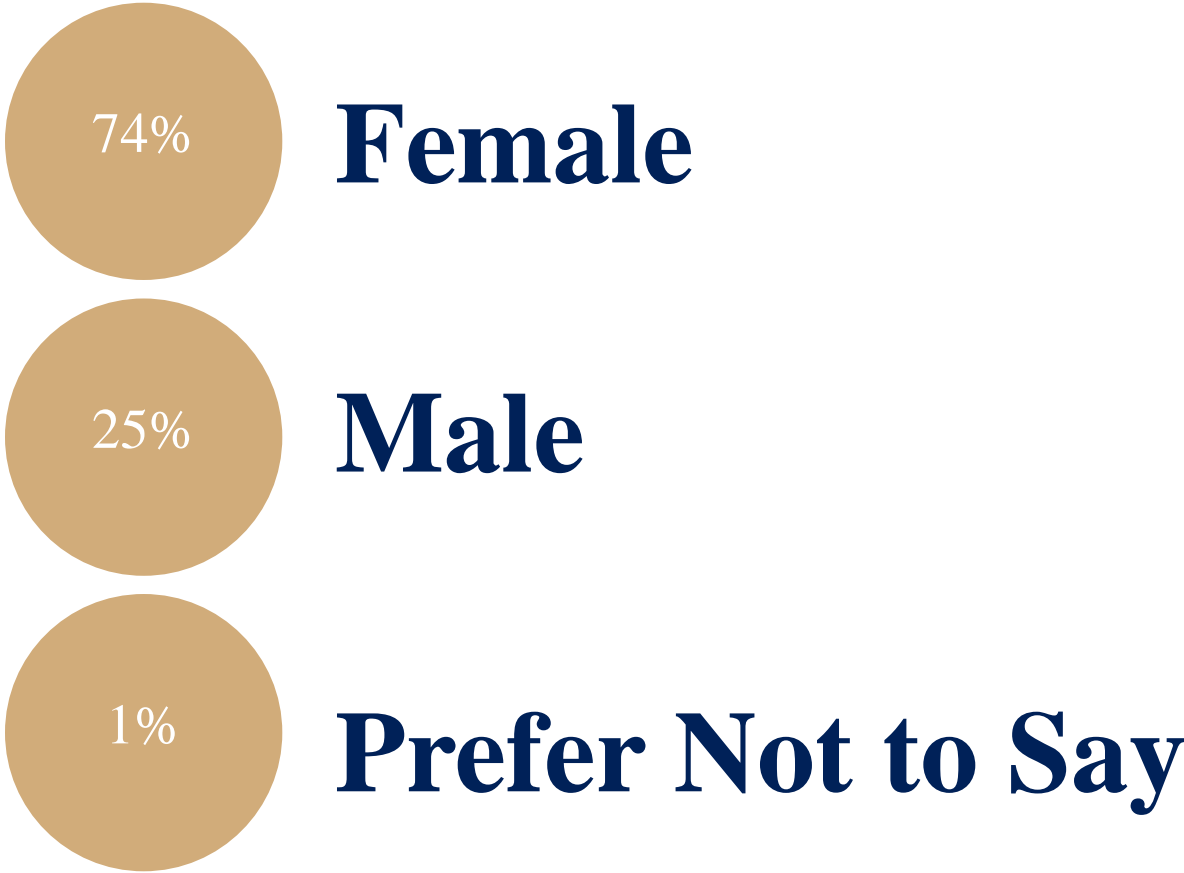


# EMPLOYEE DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

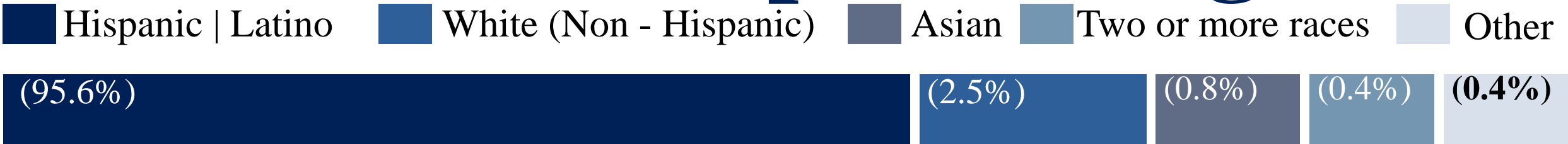
## Age



## Gender

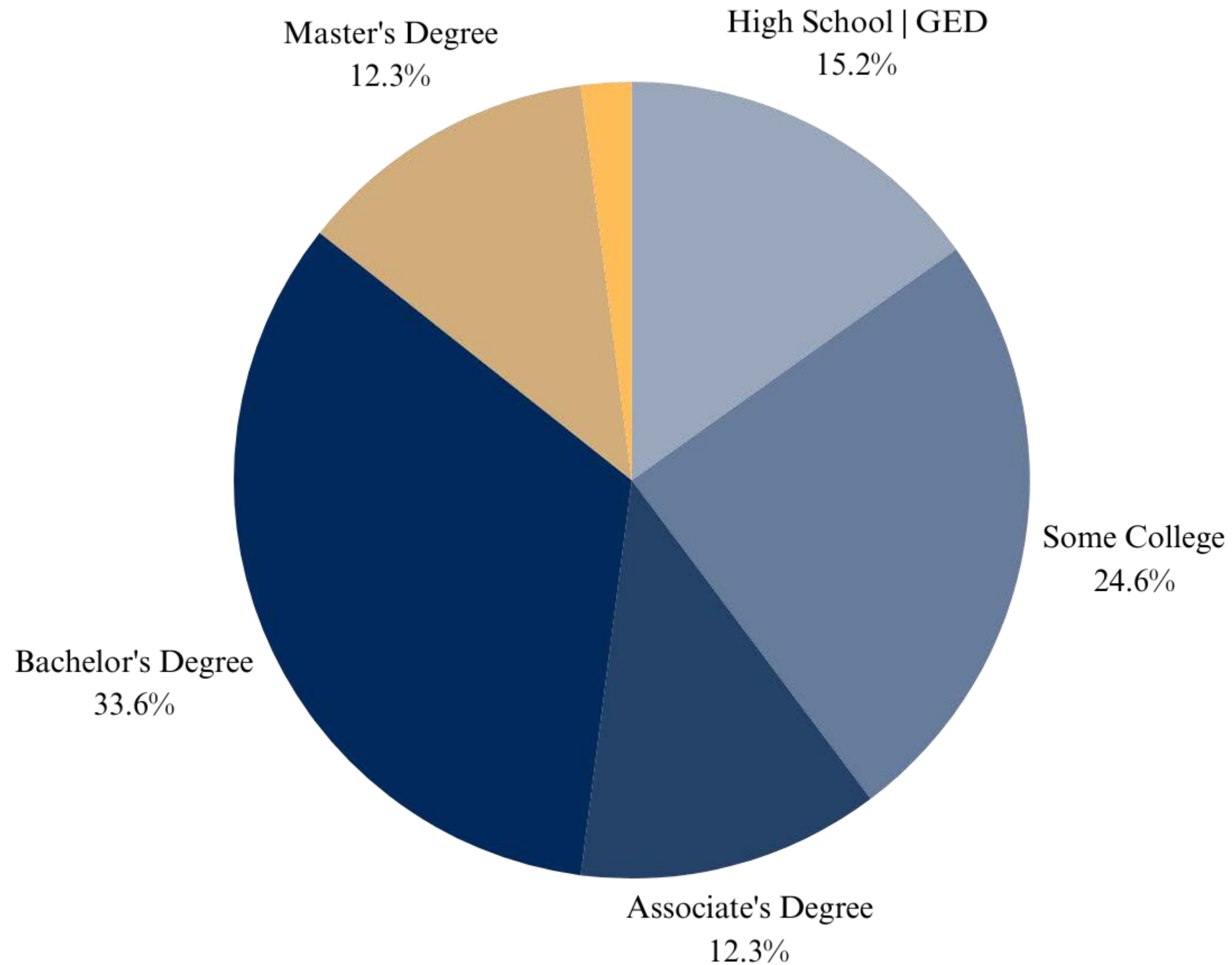


## Race & Hispanic Origin

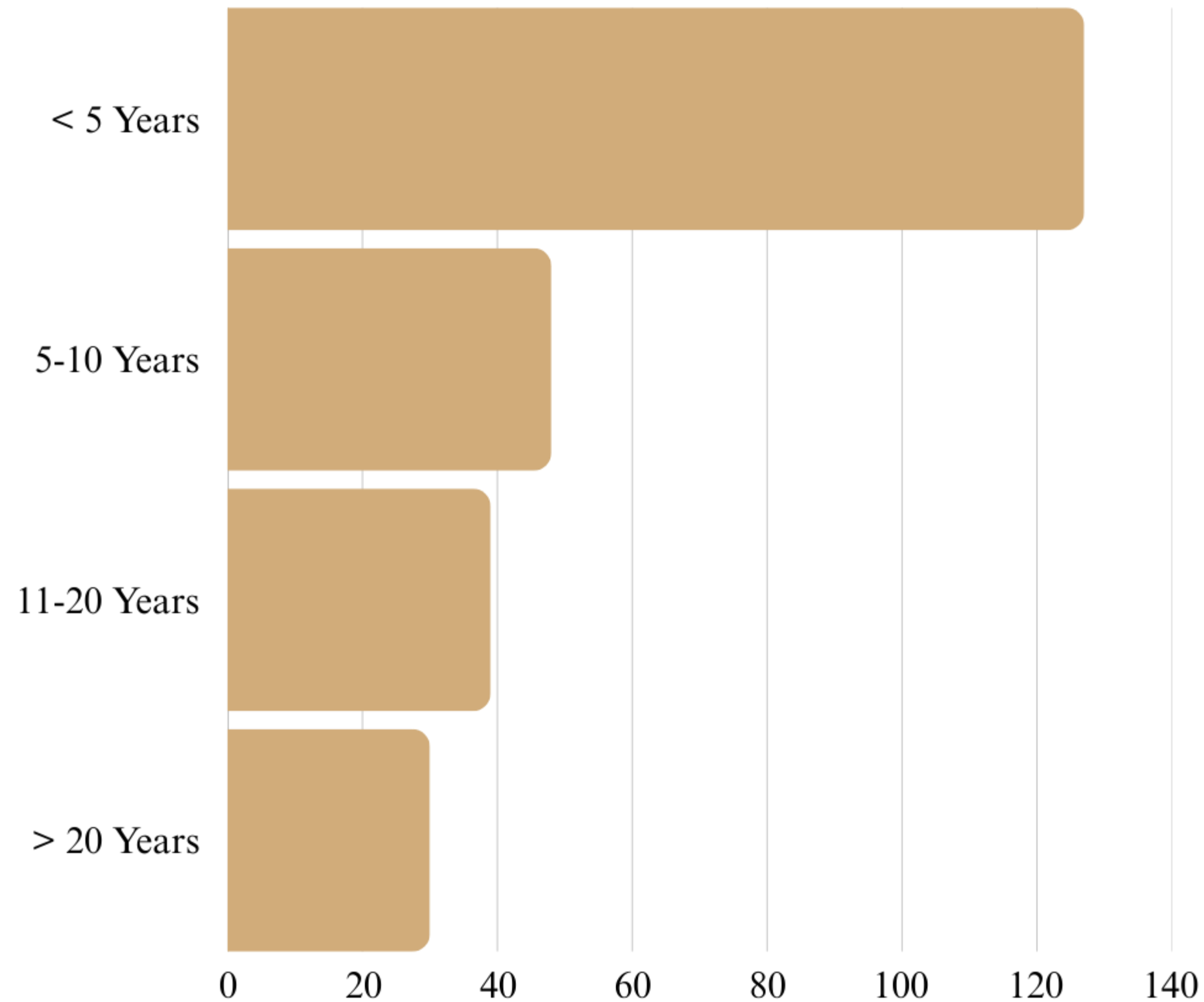




# EMPLOYEE EDUCATION LEVEL



# EMPLOYEE TENURE



# ACADEMIC PUBLIC HEALTH PARTNERSHIPS

- Designated as an APH by the Public Health Foundation in 2024
- On-going partnerships for more than a decade.
- Current Agreements (30+):
  - Local school districts
  - Colleges and universities
  - Vocational programs
  - Online programs (in-state & out of state)
  - Bachelor's Level through Medical Residency Programs
- By School, Program, or Student referral (including current staff)







# THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS SYSTEM

- Education & Research Center at Laredo provides a unique partnership dynamic
- Current Programs:
  - Public Health
  - Bio-Informatics
  - Licensed Professional Counselors
  - Social Work
  - Dentistry
- Compensated Programs:
  - Gaining Equity in Training for Public Health Informatics and Technology (GET PHIT)
  - Home2Texas





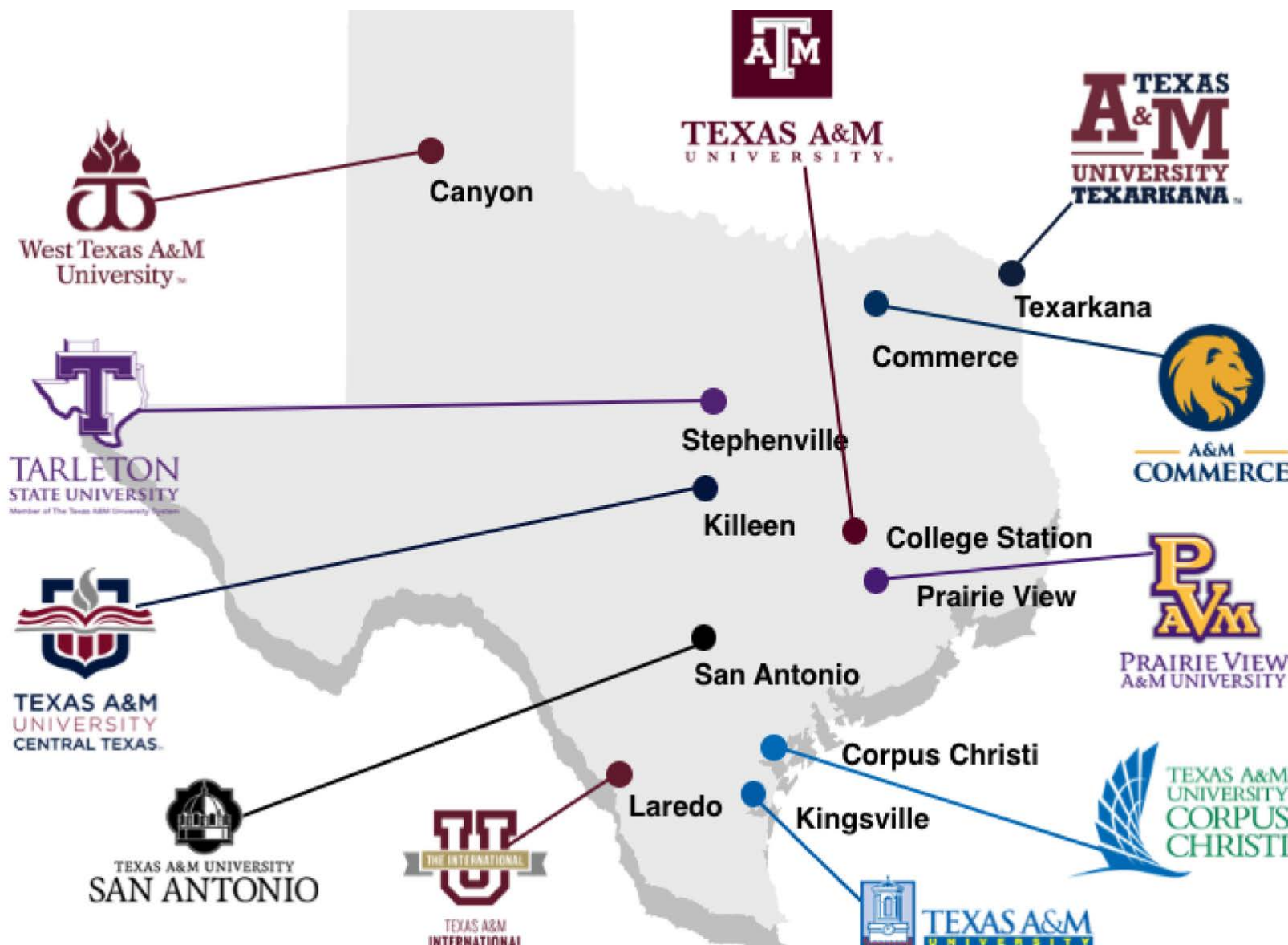


**UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS**





# TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY SYSTEM



- Texas A&M International University
- Current Programs:
  - Public Health (since 2020)
  - Nursing
  - Social Work
  - Software Engineering (2024)
- Compensated Programs:
  - Academic and Industry Readiness in Engineering and Science (AIRES)
  - Work-Study



LAREDO  
Public Health





**TEXAS A&M  
INTERNATIONAL  
UNIVERSITY**





# ACADEMIC PUBLIC HEALTH PARTNERSHIPS

## Considerations

- Evaluate existing programs
- Leverage current community partnerships
- Connect with PHF
- Highlight successes

## Benefits

- Drives educational advancement
- Strengthens workforce development and capacity building
- Promotes available services
- Improves service delivery where gaps exist







— **LAREDO** —  
**Public Health**

# Local Academic Public Health Partnerships



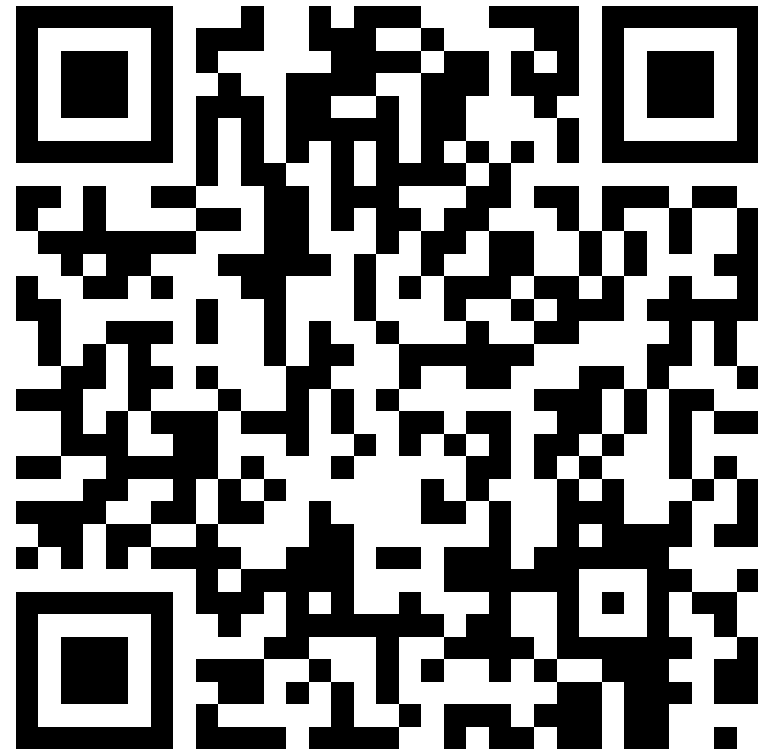
Erika Gutiérrez Martínez, MBA, SHRM-SCP, CTCM, CHW, CPM  
Assistant Director of Public Health







# Evaluation



<https://bit.ly/3GnFvuW>

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Questions: [performanceimprovement@astho.org](mailto:performanceimprovement@astho.org)

