

# MAHEC BEGINS SURGICAL RESIDENCY PROGRAM

WLOS, Jay Siltzer, July 18, 2017



*Mountain Area Health Education Center is trying with precision to turn around the shortage of general surgeons by starting a state-funded General Surgery Residency Program in Asheville. (Photo credit: WLOS staff)*

ASHEVILLE, N.C. (WLOS) — “There’s a big shortage nationally, there’s a big shortage in North Carolina and there’s a big shortage in Western North Carolina.”

Mountain Area Health Education Center is trying with precision to turn that around by starting a state-funded General Surgery Residency Program in Asheville.

“We hear in the news that we are missing primary care practitioners, and that’s true, but we are also missing surgeons,” explained Dr. Michael Schurr, director of MAHEC’s General Surgery Residency Program. “Right now, in the state of North Carolina, we have 25 counties without a single general surgeon in the county.”

“That’s one of the reasons I applied to the MAHEC residency is because they focus on under-served communities,” said Dr. Harold Campbell, a MAHEC second-year resident.

Campbell is among the first participants getting hands-on computerized surgical training. The expectation of this program is simple: retention. The goal is that 50 percent of graduates will stay and practice within 100 miles of the Asheville area.

“We’re really trying to get the surgery residents engaged in the different communities around (the area),” said Schurr. “That way, they can realize that not only Asheville but these surrounding communities are also good places, neat hospitals, and great places to work.”

Campbell added, “I’m sold at staying here if I had the opportunity already.”

That’s surgical success in the making.

[View video here.](#)