

1974 - 2024



50 years
of amazing
moments





Welcome!

We're thrilled that you could join us as MAHEC celebrates 50 years of ensuring that the people of our mountain region have access to compassionate, high-quality healthcare, especially those in rural communities.

From humble beginnings as a small group of visionaries five decades ago to a nationally recognized leader in healthcare, education, and innovation, today MAHEC is one of the largest nonprofit employers in Western North Carolina with more than 1,000 employees.

Our mission-driven organization is a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) and provides patient care at family medicine, ob/gyn, internal medicine, psychiatry, and dentistry offices in various locations across our 16-county service area. MAHEC is also the home of UNC Health Sciences at MAHEC, an academic health center with branch campuses of UNC schools of medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, and public health.

A private, 501(c)3 nonprofit organization anchored here on our main, 14-acre campus, MAHEC is the largest of nine Area Health Education Centers in North Carolina. Our residency and fellowship training programs have graduated more than 800 doctors, dentists, and pharmacists since our founding in 1974. Our continuing professional development programs reach over 39,000 participants per year. We invite you to learn more about our work at mahec.net.

As we prepare for our next 50 years, we offer our deepest gratitude for your support, your contributions, and for celebrating this milestone anniversary with us.

Sincerely,

William R. Hathaway, MD
Chief Executive Officer
MAHEC

Casey Cooper, MBA, FACHE
Chair, Board of Directors
Chief Executive Officer
US PHS Indian Health Service
Cherokee Indian Hospital

Leadership

William R. Hathaway, MD
Chief Executive Officer

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Deputy Secretary, Office of Archives & History
NC Dept. of Natural & Cultural Resources

Carla Henry
Senior Vice President
First Citizens Bank

William R. Hathaway, MD
Chief Executive Officer, MAHEC
(Ex-Officio)

Our impact



\$1.32 MILLION
IN CHARITY CARE

\$3.63 MILLION 
in prescriptions
filled at no cost to eligible patients



\$21.4+ MILLION
IN GRANTS & GIFTS
RECEIVED



247,320
patient visits

- family medicine
- internal medicine
- ob/gyn
- psychiatry
- dental

2,500+ 
babies delivered

SINCE 1978

800+   

**MEDICAL, DENTAL
and PHARMACY**

GRADUATES from MAHEC
residency and fellowship programs

\$641 MILLION
ECONOMIC IMPACT
IN WNC
of MAHEC graduates

**SIMULATION
CENTER** 

300 simulation programs for
5,000 participants



**CONTINUING
PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT**

925  **39,000+**
events participants

6 RURAL FELLOWS

placed in **5** WNC counties



11 RURAL TEACHING

sites in **8** rural counties

1,000+ high schoolers attended
**HEALTH CAREER
PROGRAMS**



13,800+
school nurse encounters
in **62** schools

1,500
students provided
school-based therapy
in **44** schools



14,000 **LIBRARY**
service interactions



1,000+ EMPLOYEES
AT MAHEC
FULL- AND PART-TIME

ALL DATA SOURCED FROM JULY 2023-JUNE 2024

Stories from



"I can't imagine what I would have done without Project CARA. My family and I are so grateful."

-Cailyn

SUPPORTING WOMEN'S HEALTH

MAHEC improves women's health, maternal, and infant outcomes in WNC by expanding access to essential prenatal, childbirth, and postpartum care. As the region's only provider for high-risk pregnancies, we offer specialized care through programs like Project CARA, Centering Pregnancy®, Centering Parenting®, and the Just Us: Before, Birth, and Beyond podcast, ensuring women and families receive the support they need.



"We searched for help for over two years, but no one would listen—until MAHEC's school dental program found her. We didn't know what we were going to do."

-Family of a 5-Year-Old

CARING FOR THE MOST VULNERABLE

MAHEC supports children, families, and older adults through initiatives like school-based behavioral health, School Smiles Mobile Dentistry, the Center for Healthy Aging, and care for individuals experiencing homelessness—ensuring access to care, regardless of ability to pay.

n the region



"I am living my childhood dreams."

-Bryanna Williams

INSPIRING THE NEXT GENERATION

MAHEC's Health Professions Education Programs inspire and equip young people starting as early as middle school to explore medical careers through education, mentorship, and hands-on learning opportunities. Key initiatives like the MAHEC Medical Mentoring Program, Project P.R.O.M.I.S.E., and the Health Careers Academy nurture the next generation of healthcare professionals, especially from rural communities.



"I feel an incredible amount of responsibility and connection, not just to WNC, but to access to healthcare and other issues."

-Rivers Woodward, MD

IMPROVING ACCESS TO CARE

MAHEC increases access to primary care throughout Western North Carolina, particularly in rural areas. Through partnerships with UNC Health Sciences at MAHEC, regional hospitals, and social service organizations, MAHEC trains healthcare professionals and serves as a safety net provider to make healthcare more accessible and affordable.

Learn more about our work and ways to support it.



Moments in

1970s

1974: MAHEC is incorporated with Henry Uhl, MD serving as first Executive Director.

1975: Ground-breaking ceremony takes place for the \$2.5M MAHEC Bridge Building, which opened in 1977.

1975: First cohort of Family Medicine residents begins.

1975: MAHEC has one of the first nurse practitioner programs in the US.

1978: MAHEC Health Science Library established with the donation of Buncombe County Medical Society's medical library.

1978: First four Family Medicine residents graduate from the three-year program.

1978: Dan Reimer, MPH is named Executive Director after serving in the interim role upon departure of Dr. Uhl in 1977.

1980s

1980: Family Practice patient visits total 13,000; employment hits 100 for the first time; Library and Learning Resource Center services double.

1982: Tom Bacon, DrPH is named Executive Director after the departure of Dan Reimer in 1981 and Hettie Lou Garland, RN, MPH, EdD serving in the interim role.

1984: 10 years after incorporation, a total of 48 family medicine residents had graduated from MAHEC.

1988: Department of Obstetrics/ Gynecology is established in response to the need for safety-net and high-risk ob/gyn care in WNC.

1989: Arson results in \$1M of damage to Bridge Building.

1990s

1991: First class of Ob/Gyn residents begins the four-year program, graduating in 1995.

1992: The new MAHEC Family Health Center opens near UNCA.

1995: Suzanne Landis, MD, MPH spearheads the creation of Project Access.

1996: First class of Family Medicine-Hendersonville residents begins.

1996: MAHEC is an early adopter of electronic medical records.

1996: First Rural Medicine fellow graduates.

1997: Teck Penland, PhD is named President & CEO after departure of Tom Bacon in 1996 and Hettie Lou Garland serving in the interim role.

2000s

2002: With partners, the Pharmacy residency program is established.

2003: Plans begin for development of a unified campus for MAHEC.

2005: The MAHEC Medical Mentoring Program for high schoolers is launched as a collaboration with Mission Hospital, Western Carolina Medical Society, and physicians John P. Holt, MD and Albert Anderson, MD.

2006: MAHEC Family Health at Cane Creek opens.

2007: First class of four General Practice Dentistry residents begins the one-year program, graduating in 2008.

2008: Site work begins on the new 14-acre Biltmore campus.

2009: UNC School of Medicine Asheville Campus opens at MAHEC with four students.

our history

2010s

2011: New Ob/Gyn and Education buildings open on Biltmore campus.

2011: UNC Eshleman School of Pharmacy opens branch campus at MAHEC.

2012: Jeff Heck, MD is named CEO of MAHEC upon retirement of Teck Penland.

2013: Biltmore campus is named in honor of former Rep. Mary C. Nesbitt.

2013: MAHEC Family Health Centers at Biltmore and Newbridge open, followed in 2014 by Enka-Candler.

2014: Project CARA perinatal substance use treatment program launches.

2015: First Sports Medicine-Asheville fellow begins.

2016: Simulation Center opens in the Education Building, expanding to current 15,000-sq-ft location in 2018.

2017: With state appropriations, construction begins on new 37,000-sq-ft UNC Health Sciences at MAHEC academic center.

2017: First class of Psychiatry residents begins the four-year program.

2017: First General Surgery residents begin the five-year program.

2018: UNC Asheville-UNC Gillings Master of Public Health Program opens at MAHEC.

2018: MAHEC Dental Health Center at Columbus opens.

2019: UNC Health Sciences at MAHEC building opens, with space for the new Center for Psychiatry & Mental Wellness.

2020s

2020: MAHEC takes lead role with other community partners in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic.

2020: First class of Family Medicine-Boone residents begins; first Addiction Medicine fellows begin.

2021: First classes of Internal Medicine and Transitional Year residents begin; first Surgical Critical Care and first Consultation-Liaison Psychiatry fellows begin.

2021: UNC Adams School of Dentistry establishes the AROW Scholar program at MAHEC.

2021: Satellite Ob/Gyn offices open in Franklin and Brevard.

2022: First fellows in Sports Medicine-Boone and Maternal-Fetal Medicine begin.

2022: William Hathaway, MD named CEO of MAHEC upon retirement of Dr. Jeff Heck.

2022: MAHEC designated as FQHC Look-Alike.

2023: First fellows in Addiction Psychiatry and Child & Adolescent Psychiatry begin.

2023: 457-space parking deck opens on Biltmore campus.

2023: Community retail pharmacies open at Biltmore and Enka-Candler.

2024: First Internal Medicine residents graduate; IM becomes largest residency program.

2024: The MAHEC Annual Fund launches as part of the 50th anniversary.

Leadership legacy

MAHEC EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS & CEOS

Henry Uhl, MD

Executive Director | September 1, 1973 – June 30, 1977

Daniel Reimer, MPH

Interim Executive Director | July 1, 1977 – June 30, 1978

Executive Director | July 1, 1978 – December 31, 1981

Hettie Lou Garland, MPH, RN, EdD

Interim Executive Director | January 1, 1982 – June 30, 1982

Thomas J. Bacon, DrPH

Executive Director | July 1, 1982 – May 31, 1996

Hettie Lou Garland, RN, MPH, EdD

Interim Executive Director | June 1, 1996 – July 31, 1997

Teck Penland, PhD

President and Chief Executive Officer | August 1, 1997 – February 1, 2012

Jeffery E. Heck, MD

Chief Executive Officer | February 4, 2012 – February 4, 2022

William R. Hathaway, MD

Chief Executive Officer | February 7, 2022 – present

BOARD LEADERSHIP

John A. McLeod, MD, President | 1974-1976

William E. Highsmith, President & Chairman | 1977-1978

F. Maxton Mauney, Jr., MD, President | 1979-1981

Alexander Maitland, MD, President | 1982-1983

Cary Owen, President | 1984-1985

W. Otis Duck, MD, President | 1987-1990

Robert F. Burgin, President | 1991-1995

Thomas T. Atkinson, MD, President | 1996-1997; Chair 1998-1999

K. Ray Bailey, Chair | 2000-2007

Dale Fell, MD, Chair | 2008-2013

Ron Paulus, MD, Chair | 2014-2019

William R. Hathaway, MD, Chair | 2019-2020

Alan Stiles, MD, Chair | 2020-2023

Casey Cooper, MBA, Chair | 2024-present



Thank you to the generous supporters

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Elizabeth Cozart
John Crumpler
Dale Curriden
Nathan C. Daniel
Carol Duermit and Tom Crook
Angela Durkin
Richard and Bridget Eckerd
Miles and Millie Elmore
Kay and Tom Finger
Lauren Flickinger
Alston Gardner
Hugh and Susan Greene
Drs. William and Sharon Hathaway
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Campaign for Southern Equality
The Community Foundation of Western North Carolina

- The Ramble Charitable Fund
- Suzanne Landis Geriatric Medicine Fund

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North Carolina GlaxoSmithKline Foundation
North Carolina Healthcare Association
The Pew Charitable Trusts
Pisgah Health Foundation
Psychoanalytic Center of the Carolinas
WNC Bridge Foundation

As we look to the next 50 years and beyond, we have launched the MAHEC Annual Fund to accelerate our vision to transform healthcare and improve lives through programs and community-led collaborations that fill gaps in care across our 16-county region.

Learn more about how you can get involved:
<https://mahec.net/giving/support-us>





Cover photo of Sandy List, FNP courtesy of James Richardson.
Photos were taken for the article on MAHEC's FNP program
that appeared in the November 1979 issue of LIFE magazine.