



# RRPD NOV 2024 NEWSLETTER



## **Forecasted Funding Alert!**

HRSA is forecasting a Rural Residency Planning and Development Program [HRSA-25-007](#) funding opportunity to improve and expand access to health care in rural areas. Applications are forecasted to open November 19th. Visit the [grant page](#) for more information about this upcoming opportunity.

## **TAC Update**

🎉 Congratulations to our newly accredited program from this past quarter! We're excited to see the impact this program will make on rural communities! If you have any accreditation updates, please email us at [info@ruralgme.org](mailto:info@ruralgme.org).

Cohort	Specialty	Program	Location	Approved Positions
5	Internal Medicine	Marshall Community Health Consortium Residency Program	Huntington, WV	12

## **Recent Webinars**

All slides and recordings of the webinars can be found in the RuralGME [Toolbox](#). If you wish to be notified via the listserv of upcoming webinars, workshops, and other opportunities, please email us at [info@ruralgme.org](mailto:info@ruralgme.org).

September 10, 2024 – Grantee Spotlight: Baptist Memorial Hospital Internal Medicine Residency

October 8, 2024 – Exploring Residency Partnerships with Indian Health Service, Tribally Operated, and Urban Indian Health Program Sites

November 12, 2024 – Pediatric Curricular Resources and Tools that Promote Child Development and Parent-Child Relationships

## **Upcoming Webinars**

December 10, 2024 – Building the Foundation of Your Program: How to Recruit and Retain a Program Administrator

12-1pm Eastern, 9-10am Pacific

Please register for the webinar [here](#).

January 14, 2025 – Research and Scholarship for Rural and Underserved Programs

12-1pm Eastern, 9-10am Pacific

Please register for the webinar [here](#).

## **2024 Annual Grantee Meeting Recap**

The RRPD Technical Assistance Center (TAC) is celebrating the success of the 2024 Annual Grantee Meeting (AGM), held from August 21-23, 2024 in Atlanta, Georgia. This year, we hosted almost 400

registrants for opportunities in growing connections via informal and formal networking events, community learning, and sharing of experiences in graduate medical education program development. Attendees represented RRPD grantees, Teaching Health Center Planning and Development (THCPD) grantees, Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) representatives, advisors, TAC team members, subject matter experts, and for the first time, general attendees who are interested in learning more about rural and underserved GME.

The 2024 AGM featured several interactive workshops for grantee programs in all specialties and at different stages of development. We were grateful for the warm welcome to Georgia in an opening session from Dr. Patrice Harris, MD, Former President of the American Medical Association and board-certified psychiatrist practicing in Georgia. General sessions featured key updates from federal agencies (Federal Office for Rural Health Policy, the Bureau of Health Workforce, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Veterans Affairs, and Indian Health Services), accreditation updates from the ACGME and the American Dental Association, and significant topics in promoting health equity through rural and underserved GME development.

See the other educational sessions offered at the 2024 meeting by viewing the meeting [agenda](#). Presenter slide decks can be found in the [RuralGME.org](#) Toolbox. Thank you to all who attended, supported attendees, and provided valuable feedback. We can't wait to see you next year!

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### **Featured Consultant Organization**

Residency Program Solutions (RPS) has 18 physician consultants with residency education work experience as program directors, department chairs, DIOs, and other roles impacting residency education along with specific expertise in new program development and working with multiple specialties. RPS provides consultations on an array of challenges facing today's residency programs, including:

- Accreditation concerns and internal review - mock site visits
- Culture and morale
- Curriculum innovation
- Faculty development and management
- GME finance and financial issues
- Institutional and program application review
- New program development stages
- Program expansion (rural training)
- Recruitment and retention
- Strategic planning

RRPD grant recipients are eligible for up to 38 hours of TAC-sponsored consultative services through the end of the grant recipient's period of performance. Please review the summary of TAC consultants with your team and work with your TAC advisor to start the process!



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### **Grant Recipient Profile**

**Program:** Cahaba + UAB Family Medicine Residency Frontier Campus

**Institution:** Cahaba Medical Care

**Location:** Marion & Camden, Alabama

#### **What are some of the strengths and/or accomplishments of your program?**

One of the program's strengths is our ability to retain and inspire alumni. Of the inaugural class Frontier RRPD residents, one resident is staying for a fellowship, and another is interested in joining the faculty. Urban residents are showing enthusiasm for Frontier and considering relocating from Birmingham to Camden to join our team. We're proud of this growing recruitment pipeline through this program and the commitment it reflects. Another key strength is the community's support. Recently, we introduced our teaching program to the local council in Camden and we were honored with a standing ovation—a powerful acknowledgment of our team's commitment to being there, working in the clinic, and serving as doctors in the community. We're deeply proud that the community has embraced our program, and their ongoing support makes us feel truly welcomed and

valued.

**What barriers have you had to overcome in developing your program and how did you overcome them?**

One significant barrier we faced was achieving financial sustainability. The RRPD grants provided essential support, and we were incredibly grateful to transition into a GME-certified program as a Teaching Health Center. Developing a nursing home curriculum took longer than anticipated, and we're also working to support one of the rural hospitals facing financial struggles by involving some of our faculty in ER work. Our goal remains to ensure a comprehensive, robust curriculum. Faculty recruitment has been another challenge. Fortunately, our RRPD program builds on an existing rural track in Centerville in Bibb County, Alabama that has been running since 2013, and our Frontier track is now being led by two alumni of this rural track. Additionally, Dr. Sumpter Blackmon, a private practice physician with over 51 years of experience, became inspired by the program and joined as faculty. And with more upcoming graduates interested, we are hopeful this will be the beginning of a robust faculty pipeline.

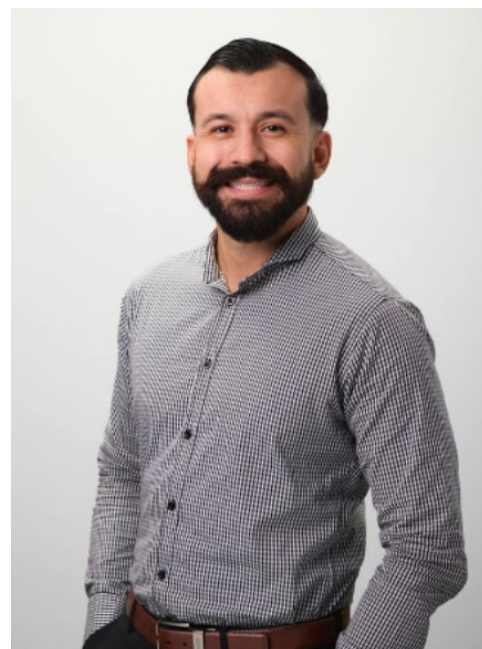
**Describe the area you serve and what appeals to you most about the location.**

Cahaba Medical Care is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit community health center that serves both urban and rural areas across Alabama. We were part of RRPD cohort one and created a family medicine rural track that we call the Frontier Track, in the Black Belt region of Alabama. It is designed to train physicians to serve in underserved, remote locations with minimal healthcare infrastructure. Known for its rich, dark soil, the Black Belt carries a complex history rooted in plantation agriculture and marked by persistent systemic inequities. Today, this area faces profound poverty, limited healthcare access, and a shortage of operational hospitals. Despite these challenges, the Black Belt is home to resilient communities and stunning landscapes. We were drawn to this location because it's an area of great need, internationally infamous for healthcare disparities, and is just an afternoon's drive from Alabama's metropolitan areas like Montgomery, Tuscaloosa, and Birmingham. We believe in being good neighbors and collaborating closely with these communities to make quality healthcare accessible.



**Featured TAC Staff Member**

Austin Palacios, B.S., serves as a Program Coordinator for the RRPD and THCPD Technical Assistance Centers, with primary responsibilities in data management and website maintenance. He compiles and distributes dissemination items, tracks upcoming dissemination opportunities, and coordinates the tracking of RRPD and THCPD grant recipient outcomes. Drawing on his 12 years of experience as a Senior Combat Medic, Austin brings a wealth of experience in efficient data management and overseeing clinical trial and patient records. He is dedicated to fostering strong relationships, promoting collaboration, and enhancing the overall workplace culture through his contributions. We are grateful for Austin's contributions, support of RRPD and THCPD grant recipients and partners, and we thank him for his amazing work!



## Select Dissemination

RRPD grant recipients and members of the RRPD-TAC have been busy disseminating information about rural GME development and the RRPD program. Check out some of their recent works below:

### Media

- Article on the [Partnerships to Establish and Sustain Rural GME, featuring Dustin Beck, DO of the OMECO/Cherokee Nation Family Medicine Residency Program](#)
- Article featuring [St. Luke's Rural Psychiatry Residency Program](#)
- Article featuring [Oregon Health & Sciences University grant and the Rural Residency Planning and Development Act of 2024](#)
- Article featuring [MAHEC Boone Rural Family Medicine Residency Program grant](#)
- Video featuring [CentraCare Willmar Rural Family Medicine Residency Program](#)
- Article featuring [KU-CHC/SEK Rural Family Medicine Residency grant](#)
- Article featuring [Geisinger Clinic Residency Program grant](#)
- Article featuring [University of Wisconsin - Marshfield Clinic Rural Training Program grant](#)
- Article featuring [UAMS Northwest Rural Family Medicine Residency Program grant](#)
- Article featuring [University of Hawaii Systems Family Medicine Residency Program grant](#)
- Video featuring [MAHEC Internal Medicine Rural Track Program](#)
- Podcast on [Rural Health Discussion on Science by the Slice Podcast](#)

### Publications

- The Making of a Physician: Pipeline Dwell Time, Knowledge Assessments, and Path to Licensure. *Rural Health Information Hub*. November 2024; [Online](#).
- Growing the Rural Physician Workforce: Decades of Federal Funding Impacts Rural Graduate Medical Education. *Rural Health Information Hub*. November 2024; [Online](#).
- Academic Medicine and Rural Health System Partnerships: Enhancing Education While Advancing Physician Workforce Priorities. *Acad Med* 99(10):p 1065-1069, October 2024; [Online](#).
- Housing Challenges and Opportunities for Rural Residency Development. *J Grad Med Educ*. August 2024; [Online](#).
- Recruitment of Residents to Rural Programs: Early Outcomes of RRPD Cohort 1. *Journal of Graduate Medical Education*. August 2024; [Online](#).

### Presentations

- From Dreams To Fruition: How to Start and Sustain a Graduate Medical Program in Rural and Underserved Areas. *Learn, Serve, Lead: AAMC Annual Meeting 2024*. November 2024; Atlanta, GA.
- Enhancing Rural Health Care Access Through Innovative Academic and Community Partnerships. *AAMC Annual Meeting*. November 2024; Atlanta, GA.
- Georgia's Strategic Efforts to Grow GME in Rural Hospitals. *Learn, Lead, Serve: AAMC Annual Meeting*. November 2024; Atlanta, GA.
- Rural and Community Based Surgery Residency Programs: An Overview of the Current Landscape and How to Leverage Opportunities. *AOGME GME Development Series*; October 2024; virtual.
- Getting Started with Rural and Underserved GME: Tools and Resources. *Delta Region Community Health Systems Development Rural GME Webinar*. October 2024; virtual.
- Workforce Partners: Updates from FORHP, THCGME, and RuralGME. *2024 3RNET Annual Conference*. September 2024; Bismark ND.
- Addressing Rural Workforce Shortages through Rural and Underserved Program Start-Up Funding and Technical Assistance. *Uniting TUFH & Rural WONCA Ubuntu 2024*. September 2024; Cape Town, South Africa.
- State Policy Solutions to Bolster Rural Physician Workforce Development. *National Organization for State Offices of Rural Health 2024 Annual Meeting*. September 2024; Niagara Falls, NY.
- Rural GME Opportunities: How Your RHC Can Get Involved. *National Association of Rural Health Centers*. August 2024; virtual.
- Education Partner of Choice: Health Centers and Interprofessional Education. *National Association of Community Health Centers CHI & Expo*. August 2024; Atlanta, GA.
- Developing a Rural Healthcare Workforce. *AHCJ 2024 Rural Health Care Journalism Workshop; Association of Health Care Journalists*. August 2024; virtual.



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