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Arizona AHEC Leadership Transition

June 28, 2019



Sally Reel, PhD, RN, FNP

I am writing with a mixture of regret and deep gratitude to announce that Dr. Sally Reel, PhD, RN, FNP, has decided to step down from her role as associate vice president for community engagement and director of the Arizona Area Health Education Centers program (AzaAHEC), effective Sept. 30. Dr. Reel will continue as a clinical professor in the UA College of Nursing and as a University Distinguished Outreach Professor.



Dan Derksen, MD

I am, however, pleased to announce that Dan Derksen, MD, has agreed to serve as acting director, effective July 1, as part of his responsibilities as associate vice president for health equity, outreach and interprofessional activities at the University of Arizona Health Sciences. Dr. Reel, who has served as AzaAHEC director since 2006, will provide assistance to Dr. Derksen and the AzaAHEC program as we conduct a thorough search for a successor.

As AzaAHEC director, Dr. Reel secured funding from multiple federal grant competitions; led the development of a robust Rural Health Professions Program across the five UA Health Sciences colleges, as well as the Colleges of Nursing at Arizona State University and Northern Arizona University; and coordinated activities of five regional AzaAHEC centers that serve all 15 Arizona counties, among many other accomplishments.



Michael D. Dake, MD

Under Dr. Reel's leadership, AzaAHEC significantly advanced in its mission to improve community health and develop a critical health-professions workforce for Arizona's rural and urban underserved communities. The program has grown to address all levels of health care education and career development, from career pipeline programs, to undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate health professions programs, and continuing education for practicing professionals.

Please join me in congratulating Dr. Reel for her many achievements during her years of AzaAHEC leadership. Her tireless efforts across the state truly have made a difference in the health and education opportunities for Arizona residents.

Michael D. Dake, MD
Senior Vice President, UA Health Sciences



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