

# HEROES in Training



# Utah's Top Ranked Public Nursing Program

**T**hey've been called "Superheroes in Scrubs," and make no mistake: Those who choose to practice nursing fulfill one of the most essential and revered of all professions.

And SUU, having been named the state's top public bachelor of science nursing program, is among the leaders in preparing those men and women to engage in this wholly noble pursuit.

Ranked by the RN nursing organization as third among all programs in Utah—and the state's highest ranking public university—SUU offers a BSN with a pre-licensure emphasis and an RN to BSN emphasis.

"We were very pleased with the ranking," said Donna Lister, who has led the department since its beginnings as a stand-alone program a decade-and-a-half ago. "We have highly motivated, intelligent, and engaged students. All students receive individual attention to their progress and learning as they advance in the program."

SUU's nursing program values experiential education, offering several hands-on opportunities for students. They are able to practice nursing in hospital, care center, home health, hospice, general community, school, and

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community clinic settings.

"Our students are engaged," said Lister. "There are few clinical experiences that they can't get in and do. For the vast majority of them, it's not observation... the students are planning, they are assessing, they are assisting, they are implementing, and so to me, it really makes that learning real for them. It is engaged learning. Our students have really had clinical experiences across the gamut."

Lister said that the department expects its students to step up, and step up they do.

"Our faculty are always talking to partners and partners comment how much they love SUU students because they are there, they are engaged, they are stepping up and doing what needs to be done. They are volunteering to help and not sitting back waiting to be told what to do," she said.

Partners in the training of the University's nursing students include the Iron County School District, Hunts-

man World Senior Games, and SUU Head Start. The department hosts its own health fair each semester, and Intermountain Healthcare, both in Cedar City and St. George, long-term care facilities in Cedar City, surgical centers, the Southwest Public Health department, wound clinics, home health agencies and hospice providers all participate in the development of SUU nursing students.

The future of the program, Lister said, includes a partnership with Southwest Tech and the creation of a Health Professionals to BSN Program that will accept LPNs, paramedics, respiratory therapists and the like, who embark on an advanced and accelerated program thanks to their logged experience.

This partnership also helps students who are not accepted into SUU's nursing program. A student could then enroll at Southwest Tech, earn the LPN, and then transition in this program.

Also, in serving potential students who may not have the wherewithal to matriculate on campus, the department has instituted a full online curriculum for the RN to BSN program that has been met with great excitement.

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, Southern Utah University salutes all alumni who work in the healthcare industry and are giving quality and compassionate care. You truly are our "Superheroes in Scrubs" and we thank you for your service and work.