

WIRED Grant to Support UE Nursing Simulation Lab, Recruitment

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The University of Evansville has received another boost in its efforts to respond to the nationwide nursing shortage, thanks to the generous support of Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development (WIRED).

This week, WIRED awarded a two-year, \$180,000 grant to UE's Department of Nursing. The purpose of the grant is to enhance nursing education - through additional simulation experiences, through increased nursing class size, and through the recruitment of nursing students from underrepresented groups.

"Nationally, we are facing a critical shortage of new nurses entering the workforce," Penland said. "We want to do everything we can to prepare baccalaureate nurses to deliver health care and to assume positions of leadership in health care. We know that the quality of patient care is dependent upon having a nursing workforce that is well-educated as well as adequate in size. We would like to thank WIRED for their generous support, and for their willingness to be a community partner for the improved health of the population."

Funding from the WIRED grant will help support a nurse to coordinate the nursing simulation laboratory and increase public awareness of nursing as a career. Initiatives will target prospective nursing students from underrepresented groups including men, cultural/racial minorities, and students from the southwest Indiana region. The laboratory, located in the nursing department in Graves Hall, allows students to practice their clinical skills on Sim-Man or other patient simulators - sophisticated computerized mannequins who can be programmed to exhibit any illness or injury. Sim-Man is the most recent addition to the UE lab's Sim-family of training simulators, which already have been available to UE nursing students. The new simulation laboratory coordinator is expected to be on staff this fall.

"For 55 years, the University of Evansville's nursing program has been offering a high-quality education to aspiring nurses," Hall said. "Thanks to WIRED's generosity, we now have another tool to keep us on the cutting edge of nursing education."

Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development (WIRED), the grantor, is a groundbreaking approach to workforce and economic development sponsored by the US Department of Labor. Through the WIRED model, regions integrate economic and workforce development activities for the benefit of the region. Individual grants are awarded by WIRED through a competitive grant solicitation process.