

Fall Health

Miami Dade College Taking Steps to Address Nursing Shortage

BY ALLISON HORTON
Miami Dade College

As the nation continues struggling with a severe nursing shortage, Miami Dade College (MDC) has pledged to grow its nursing program by 40 percent over the next three years, with generous support from the state, organizations and key partners.

To fulfill the increasing demand for nurses, MDC's School of Nursing is collaborating with Leon Medical Center, Miami Jewish Health Center and Vitas to meet their shortage of licensed practical and vocational nurses. The school is also working with magnet hospitals to provide flexible bachelor's degree in nursing courses, so that nurses with an associate degree can return to the classroom, as it prepares new nurses to join the workforce.

"We are strongly committed to addressing the local and national nursing shortage and meeting the needs of the healthcare community," said MDC President Madeline Pumariega. "That begins at home, in our own backyard, by offering top-quality education and establishing partnerships with area hospitals and medical providers to ensure students are exceptionally trained in all areas of patient care."

Starting this semester, the



Ribbon cutting of the Nursing Simulation Center at MDC. (Contributed image)

MDC is once again offering the Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) program, which provides a seamless path for Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) graduates to advance and also creates a pipeline toward the Registered Nurse (RN) and Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) programs. The LPN program will admit students twice yearly to increase the number of students participating in the program. Meanwhile, MDC's RN-to-BSN program has been ranked among the nation's Top 10 most affordable.

MDC is also growing part-time nursing programs to meet the needs of students balancing school with work and

life responsibilities. In addition, it has been investing in new training facilities, such as the new state-of-the-art nursing skills center at the Homestead Campus, a 4,850 square-foot facility featuring two simulation labs, a control room, two debriefing rooms, skills wings, and a health assessment wing. All that wouldn't be possible without essential support from the state and partners that assist students with tuition, books, uniforms, certifications, and

more. Through a partnership with the Lennar Foundation, CNA students receive free tuition, books/supplies, uniform, CPR certification, state testing fee, student stipends, and more. If a student has a CNA credential and wishes to continue their schooling, Jackson Memorial Hospital has pledged to cover the cost of the education, qualifying the student for tuition reimbursement.

In addition, Florida Governor Ron DeSantis has allocated \$2.3 million in the state budget to accelerate and grow MDC's nursing programs, and the Health Foundation of South Florida recently awarded the College \$500,000.

MDC created its nursing program over 50 years ago to meet the rapidly growing demand for registered nurses in Miami-Dade County. To this day, it has graduated about 20,000 nurses with alumni working in every hospital and most outpatient facilities in the region, and a large percentage of Hispanic nurses nationally. Many of those alumni have gone on to pursue advanced graduate and doctoral degrees. Some have even returned to teach at MDC. To learn more about MDC's nursing programs, visit www.mdc.edu/nursing. Register for classes at www.mdc.edu/enroll.



How To Protect Yourself And Your Family From Preventable Diseases

Both in the United States and globally, childhood and adult vaccination rates have seen what community health experts are calling a "concerning decline" since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. Now is the time to ensure that you and your children are up to date on all recommended vaccines to best protect you and your family from preventable diseases.

"Vaccines are among the greatest medical breakthroughs in the history of medicine. Millions of lives have been saved and severe outcomes



from various diseases have been prevented because of vaccines. At this moment, in part because of people missing routine

immunizations during the COVID-19 pandemic and in part because of misinformation around vaccines, our vaccination numbers have declined, which has impacted certain populations who are more susceptible to

preventable diseases. I urge you

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A timely mammogram
could save your life.

*I am Tamara
Béliard Rodriguez
and this is my story.*

"I'm using my voice for the Haitian community. I think it can save someone's life. Getting a mammogram saved mine."

Schedule your mammogram.

BaptistHealth.net/Mammo

844-971-2791

Prescription and appointment required.



Baptist Health

Cancer Care

If you don't have a referring provider for a prescription, call 786-596-2464 and we'll connect you with one.

Special pricing is available for patients without health insurance. If further care is necessary, you can count on Baptist Health Cancer Care to remain by your side and provide you with the most comprehensive care.