

## Seattle Central to Offer Bachelor's Degree in Nursing

Accessible new pathway will train more nurses as demand for healthcare rises

To meet the growing need for more and better-trained nurses in the region, both now and in the future, the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges voted on Thursday to approve Seattle Central College's proposal to add a new Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program.

"This new degree will benefit our community in many ways," said President Paul Killpatrick, Ph.D. "People interested in nursing will have access to an affordable option to earn a four-year degree, helping

jected increase in the number of nurses, spurred in part by the expansion of healthcare to more people by the Affordable Care Act, along with the changing demographics of the United States population.

Additionally, an increasing number of hospitals and healthcare providers – including the University of Washington Medical Center and Seattle Children's – now require bachelor's degrees as the minimum level of education for all nurses. However, Nursing Education in Washington State reports that only 43 percent of Registered Nurses (RN)



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them enter a rewarding field. Residents will have access to healthcare provided in part by better-trained nurses. And healthcare providers will have access to a better-trained workforce."

The BSN program will become a cornerstone of a new Allied Health satellite campus – currently in the design phase – in the iconic Pacific Tower on Beacon Hill, which will house Seattle Central's healthcare training programs. The college will work with the Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission to meet all requirements so that instruction in the program can begin at the same time the campus is slated to open in fall of 2015. The program has been designed to allow students from South Seattle College and North Seattle College to enroll as easily as Seattle Central students.

Extensive research by Seattle Central into the healthcare labor market indicated a pro-

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jected increase in the number of nurses, spurred in part by the expansion of healthcare to more people by the Affordable Care Act, along with the changing demographics of the United States population. This means the state will need to increase the proportion of RNs with BSN degrees in order to keep pace with current needs. Seattle Central's program will provide current and aspiring nurses a new and more accessible pathway to earn this important credential. Many current RNs will be able to complete their BSN with just one to two years of additional coursework, and courses will be offered evenings, weekends and online to accommodate busy schedules. In creating the BSN program, Seattle Central will build on decades of experience from its current Associate Degree in Nursing program, which dates close to the founding of the college nearly 50 years ago.

The BSN is Seattle Central's third bachelor's degree program, joining the Bachelor of Applied Science in Applied Behavioral

Science, and the Bachelor of Applied Science in Allied Health, which recently admitted its inaugural class of students.

Two-year colleges like Seattle Central have historically offered only certificates and two-year degrees. Studies have concluded that existing universities are not able to provide enough graduates with bache-

lor's degrees to meet the employment needs of companies and organizations here in Washington. As a result, the Washington State Legislature voted several years ago to allow community and technical colleges to offer applied bachelor's degrees to meet this demand. Find out more at [www.seattlecentral.edu](http://www.seattlecentral.edu).

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