

BC3 @ Brockway's selective registered nursing program sets information session

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Nick Mancuso, of Brockway, and Alaina Horm, of Falls Creek, students in BC3 @ Brockway's registered nursing program, are shown during a lab at BC3 @ Brockway in this Nov. 27, 2018, file photo.

(Brockway, PA) An Aug. 29 nursing information session at BC3 @ Brockway will introduce prospective students to the college's selective Nursing, R.N., associate degree program, which next May will graduate its first class and help to address a shortage in one of the top high-priority occupations in six northern Pennsylvania counties.

Prospective students can apply for fall 2020 admission during the session, which will begin at 5:30 p.m. at BC3 @ Brockway, 1200 Wood St., Suite D, Brockway. They can also access a print application at bc3.edu/admission/healthcare, which must be completed and returned by mail or in person by Oct. 31 for fall 2020 admission consideration.

Licensed practical nurses and students previously enrolled in registered nursing education programs can apply for fall 2020 admission beginning March 2, 2020.

More than 103 registered nurses are needed annually in the North Central Workforce Development Area, according to the state Department of Labor & Industry's Center for Workforce Information and Analysis.

"That's a 12 percent increase," through 2026 for Cameron, Clearfield, Elk, Jefferson, McKean and Potter counties, said Pamela A. Streich, director of strategic planning and project management for Workforce Solutions for North Central Pennsylvania. "Employee attraction and retention is definitely an issue across all industries, but it is consistently reported that we need more nurses here."

"Definite need and shortage" of nurses

Added Jill Martin Rend, BC3 @ Brockway director: "All of the hospitals in our area have reported a shortage of nurses. They are having to hire traveling nurses, which are very expensive. There is a definite need and shortage in our area of nurses."

BC3 @ Brockway is the only of Butler County Community College's five additional locations to offer the 20-course, 70-credit associate in applied science degree program in Nursing, R.N.

Thirty-four students are enrolled in BC3 @ Brockway's program this fall, said Dr. Patty Annear, dean of BC3's Shaffer School of Nursing and Allied Health, a division renamed after a \$1 million gift to BC3's healthcare programs in February 2018 from former state Sen. Tim Shaffer. Twelve students will be entering their third of four semesters this fall.

Among application requirements for BC3 @ Brockway's Nursing, R.N., program are students having a grade-point average of at least 2.8 and one unit of biology and one unit of chemistry, each with a lab and a final grade of a C or higher.

BC3 @ Brockway's nursing information session, according to Morgan Rizzardi, BC3's associate director of admissions, "will give a general overview of the nursing requirements for the program because it is one of BC3's selective programs.

"Usually there are fair amount of questions about what students need to do to be successful, as well as the expectations once they are in the program and clinical experiences."

Simulation lab home to SimMan 3G

BC3 @ Brockway's registered nursing students gain clinical experience at Penn Highlands DuBois, Martin Rend said.

Prospective students who attend BC3 @ Brockway's nursing information session may also "want to know if there are any pre-nursing classes they can take ahead of time or what they need

to get on the right track with advising and scheduling due to the time commitments and demand of the program,” Rizzardi said.

“A lot of times students are working part time and they are trying to balance work with school. They need to know what the schedule is going to be like.”

Prospective students can also tour the program’s 2,000-square-foot suite that includes a skills lab featuring six hospital beds with headwalls to simulate those found in hospital rooms, five nursing skills manikins, and a state-of-the-art simulation lab that houses a SimMan 3G, a computerized patient similar to that used on BC3’s main campus.

The nursing suite within the 77,000-square-foot Parkside Complex was repurposed for BC3’s program by the owner of the building, Guardian Elder Care.

BC3 @ Brockway’s registered nursing students follow the identical program offered on BC3’s main campus, which in 2015 was reaccredited through 2022 by the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing, headquartered in Atlanta, Annear said.

Grads’ NCLEX-RN success rate 93% in past 2 years

Graduates of BC3’s registered nursing program had a 90 percent success rate on the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses in 2018, Annear said, and a 93 percent success rate over the past two years.

The average student loan debt for those achieving an associate degree in nursing in Pennsylvania is \$15,570.13, according to rncareers.com. Seventy-five percent of BC3 graduates are debt-free. BC3 also had the highest salary-to-cost ratio among 43 colleges and universities in western Pennsylvania in 2018, according to the U.S. Department of Education’s College Scorecard.

Students who attend BC3 @ Brockway may be eligible for the Varischetti Family Scholarship for five semesters, and 10 named nursing scholarships from the BC3 Education Foundation.

BC3 @ Brockway was established in fall 2013 and is the only community college location north of Interstate 80 in the 268 miles between BC3 @ LindenPointe in Hermitage, Mercer County, and Luzerne County Community College in Nanticoke.

Prospective students can RSVP for the nursing information session at bc3.edu/br.