



## **Building Bridges to Foster Support for Students Who Wish to Become Nurses at the High School Level**

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### **Abstract**

The College of Southern Maryland's (CSM) Health Science Department is actively working with local high schools by building bridges to foster support for prospective students who wish to become nurses.

The strategic goal of CSM has been to develop a seamless pathway to assist student nurses in advancing from an Associate Degree in Nursing (ADN) to a Bachelor's Degree in Nursing (BSN). The associate-to-bachelor (ATB) degree partnership, which is sponsored by the NSP II grant whose goal is to increase the number of nurses in the state of Maryland, provides CSM nursing students options to work towards their BSN degree while in their ADN program. This in turn decreases barriers to completing their BSN by empowering the nursing students with the knowledge as to how they can move forward. The ATB program gives the CSM nursing students the ability to be admitted in a four-year institution's BSN degree program with Frostburg State University or Stevenson University Online or take courses with the University of Maryland School of Nursing as a visiting student while working on their ADN. The programs are accessible in that they are fully online, giving the students the opportunity to stay in Southern Maryland while having the ability to continue their education.

The best time to begin the conversation with potential nursing students is when they are in high school as a sophomore or junior. Having the opportunity to speak to them while they are planning their final years in school lends to scheduling classes that will work towards their and, making their final years of public schooling meaningful. While in high school, they can attend CSM as a part of the dual-enrollment program and take general education courses that will count towards their ADN. This also gives them an opportunity to petition to get into the nursing program before they graduate and then, if accepted, begin the nursing courses towards their ADN once they have their high school diploma and have the option to join the ATB program towards their BSN.