



MARYLAND ACTION COALITION

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FUTURE OF NURSING™ CAMPAIGN FOR ACTION

LeadNursingForward.org: An Online Resource to Expand the Nursing Workforce

Judith Jarosinski, PhD, RN; Lisa Seldomridge, PhD, RN, CNE; Kaynabess Freda, EdD, RN, CMSRN; Lynn Marie Bullock, DNP, RN, NEA-BC; Abigail Johnson, BS

Abstract

Purpose

LeadNursingForward.org is a resource for aspiring nurses and nurse educators, linking them to information and open positions. Additionally, this website continues to remain current and relevant for Maryland nurses.

Background

The outlook for remission of the nurse faculty shortage is not promising. Contributing factors are: 1) aging and retirement of current faculty, 2) fewer nurses enrolled in PhD programs, 3) non-competitive teaching vs. practice salaries, and 4) lack of qualified applicants, especially among underrepresented groups. Nurses, based on their experiences as students, may not view teaching as attractive, but, without sufficient nursing faculty, nursing programs cannot adequately educate the next generation of nurses.

A 2016-2017 Maryland needs assessment explored the statewide shortage of nursing faculty. Findings identified the need for a single source for information about educator roles, paths to advanced degrees, and available educator positions.

Methods

The Schools of Nursing at Salisbury University and University of Maryland collaborated on a one-stop-shop web resource for information about nurse educators, educational pathways, types of educator positions, and financial resources as well as a searchable interactive career portal to assist job seekers with finding positions in Maryland. To keep the website current and relevant, additional content and new features were developed.

Results

This website features: 1) videos and photos showcasing nurse educators from community colleges, universities, and hospitals; 2) information on educational paths to an educator career, financial resources, and types of academic and clinical appointments; and 3) a free, searchable career portal allowing job seekers to create personal profiles to connect with open positions.

Similarly, Maryland academic and health care organizations can create profiles to post open positions, available educational offerings, and events, including professional development opportunities.

To spotlight current events and news of interest, a new feature called Trending Now launched in early 2021. On this page, content is added on a regular basis to inspire, uplift, and shine a light on the stories of nurses and nurse educators. Posts to date have celebrated nurses during events such as Black History Month, Women's History Month, Certified Nurses Day, and more. Additionally, posts highlight nurses in the news as well as Maryland nurse educators from hospitals and nursing programs across the state.

Conclusion

This single-source website expands awareness of the nurse educator shortage, facilitates information-seeking, publicizes available positions, and helps develop the next generation of nursing educators and registered nurses to meet Maryland's workforce needs. Finally, LeadNursingForward.org is an innovation that addresses the existential nature of nursing, who we are and what we hope to accomplish.