

PROJECT DIVERSITY
A FINAL REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY
JULY 2010

The Power of Partnership



*The Heart & Soul of
Health in New Mexico*



The Power *of* Partnership

PROJECT DIVERSITY A FINAL REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

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“The quality of outcomes the patients have and their safety in the hospital is directly related to the number of Nurses we have.”

—PAT BOYLE,
Executive Director, Center for Nursing Excellence

Background and Overview

As the cornerstone of the health care workforce, Nurses offer care and comfort. Their vigilance is critical to keeping patients safe and healthy. When people are most vulnerable—experiencing chest pains in a hospital emergency department, recuperating from stroke in a skilled nursing facility, learning to care for a newborn at the pediatrician’s office, or managing a chronic condition in their own home—they depend on nurses.

MOVING DATA TO ACTION – CON ALMA HEALTH FOUNDATION

As a result of their 2006 report, “Closing the Health Disparity Gap in New Mexico: A Roadmap for Grantmaking,” Con Alma Health Foundation is committed to investing their resources to address Nursing workforce issues. The study revealed that New Mexico has the most significant shortage of health professionals in the nation in its rural, geographically remote Hispanic/Latino and Native American communities.

Con Alma Health Foundation was selected as one of 11 foundations nationwide to receive funding from Partners Investing in Nursing’s Future (PIN), a partnership of the Northwest Health Foundation and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The two-year grant of \$250,000, along with matching funds from Con Alma and the New Mexico Community Foundation, supported Project DIVERSITY, a nursing pipeline to increase the number of ethnically diverse nurses in New Mexico.



“We are empowering our underserved youth by exposing them to Nursing careers and giving them the tools they need to not only graduate from high school, but enter and succeed in college.”

—DOLORES E. ROYBAL,
Executive Director, Con Alma Health Foundation



Watch [a video about Project DIVERSITY](#) on YouTube.

New Mexico's Nursing Profession

NURSING SHORTFALL

New Mexico has a projected 5,000-Nurse shortfall by 2020. It is estimated that by 2016, New Mexico will need an additional 2,200 RNs and 3,146 LPNs. ⁱ

Nursing is not attracting youth and the age of graduates from RN programs has increased. Over 41% of New Mexico's RNs and 43% of LPNs are over the age 50, which is older than the national average of 46.2 years.

INCREASING THE DIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO'S NURSING WORKFORCE

New Mexico is one of a handful of minority-majority states, with a population that is 44 percent Latino and 10 percent Native American. To make sure all of the state's residents receive quality health care, providers must be able to communicate with patients and understand their culture.

Data shows that minorities make up 57% of the population, but only 11% of the nursing workforce. This discrepancy has contributed to decreased patient satisfaction in these minority groups.

Project DIVERSITY is tackling these challenges by building an educational pipeline that reaches out to historically underrepresented middle- and high-school students with an interest in joining the health care workforce.

ⁱ "Nursing in New Mexico,"
Center for New Mexico Nursing
Excellence, January 2009



PROJECT DIVERSITY OBJECTIVES

1. To recruit and train 40 underserved ethnically diverse students who are interested in Nursing into an educational pipeline for Nursing as a career.
2. To educate and prepare students for college and nursing as a career by providing them with tools they need.
3. To introduce students to Nursing as a career choice and expose them to Nursing in a health care setting. Help students to understand the advantages and issues of the work world.
4. To establish working community partnerships of health institutions, schools and foundations to develop a diversity pipeline network in school systems that will encourage diverse students to become interested in Nursing.



Project DIVERSITY Objectives and Achievements

RECRUITMENT

OBJECTIVE

To recruit and train 40 underserved ethnically diverse students who are interested in Nursing into an educational pipeline for a career in Nursing.

METHODS

The criteria used to recruit students focused on students who are historically, educationally or financially disadvantaged and are interested in the Nursing field. High schools and middle schools were chosen based on their minority and underserved student demographics.

Project DIVERSITY developed a team approach with teachers, counselors and administrators at Highland High School, South Valley Academy Charter School and the Native American Community Academy Middle School to identify potential students. Meetings were held with both students and parents.

ACHIEVEMENT

- 63 High-School Students
- 120 Middle-School Students
- 90% Ethnically Diverse

EDUCATIONAL PREPAREDNESS – COLLEGE PREPARATION AND TUTORING

OBJECTIVE

Educate and prepare students for college and nursing as a career by providing them with tools they need.

BACKGROUND

Evidence exists that many minority middle school and high school students lack knowledge of the current roles of nurses and how they need to prepare academically.

The majority of disadvantaged New Mexico high school students are academically unprepared to enter college. In fact, few of them consider college as an option due to financial constraints and lack of preparation. Most of their parents have not attended college, so it is not part of the student family culture.

METHODS

- Tutoring in math, science, English & reading
- Quarterly transcript review
- Quizzes, essays, and exams
- ACT classes and quarterly progress testing
- College Cost and Financial Aid Instruction with students and parents
- College advisor oversight
- Guidance on high school classes needed to meet college entrance
- Research colleges, grants & scholarships
- One-on-one conferences with students
- Monthly Parent Meetings

BACKGROUND

Pre-testing demonstrated program students were not at the academic level for nursing careers. For example, the average college entrance test ACT score for the program students was 15, whereas New Mexico colleges typically encourage an ACT score of 18.

Highland High School, not unlike other New Mexico high schools, has one academic counselor for every 600 students, resulting in extremely limited academic guidance for students. Even if students have high GPAs, they were not taking core courses such as biology, chemistry and math necessary to enter college.

ACHIEVEMENT

- 100% of all eligible students graduated from high school.
- 100% of all graduated seniors are enrolled in college.
- 100% of all current high school seniors have applied to college.
- 100% of all current high school juniors have participated in a college search and are investigating scholarships.
- Over 368 hours of ACT and college-level academic preparation
- ACT scores increased an average of 3 points, and in some cases as much as 7 points.
- College Academic Counselor worked closely with students to prepare for college.
- 52 weeks of tutoring, 3-5 times per week were provided to program students.

EXPOSURE TO NURSING – MENTORING AND JOB SHADOWING

OBJECTIVE

Introduce students to Nursing as a career choice and expose them to Nursing in a health care setting. Help students to understand the advantages and issues of the world of work.

BACKGROUND

Exposure to Nursing in an actual health clinic or hospital department helps students develop a realistic vision for their future in the Nursing field. The students are able to play an active role and build confidence and excitement when they are able to job shadow and have a Nurse mentor to help guide and support them.

METHODS

- UNMH job shadowing with nurse mentors during summers & school year
- Off-site clinics job shadowing during the summer
- Practical knowledge such as blood pressure, pulse and heart monitoring, etc.
- Workshop activities related to Nursing practices
- Workshops on work-related issues, behaviors & ethics
- Pay for Performance & recording attendance
- Guest speakers at workshops
- Focus groups, interviews and role playing exercises



ACHIEVEMENT

Nurse Mentoring and Job Shadowing

- 44 Nurses acted as mentors
- More than 300 hours of job shadowing took place over the two-year grant period
- More than 80 hours of nurse/health-related workshops were conducted over the two-year grant period

Summer Academies

Students participated in two six-week summer programs:

1. Health Careers Academy held in the UNM Health Sciences Center
2. UNM Nurse Career Academy

The Health Careers Academy is for high school freshmen, sophomores and juniors and designed to prepare students academically for college and improve their chances for college admission. Course work includes math, science, English, critical thinking, and ACT instruction. In addition, students attend health profession presentations, leadership and communication development sessions, and tours of medical and research labs.

The Nurse Career Academy provided job shadowing experiences for students paired with nurse mentors who worked in a variety of areas including the emergency department, orthopedics, neuroscience, pediatric cardiology, adult oncology and the children's psychiatric hospital.

“My favorite thing was we actually got to open a real rat and that was fun for me. It gave us more hands-on for us to know how it feels to work with someone.”

–LIZETH MEZA,
age 18, currently attending the University of New Mexico.

The Power of Partnership

OBJECTIVE

Only by harnessing the power of partnership and sharing expertise, coordinating programs and creating a unified agenda can we address the long-term challenge to enlarge the Nursing career pool of underrepresented minority students and ensure a competent, experienced and diverse Nurse workforce. No one organization has all of the resources to single-handedly tackle these issues.

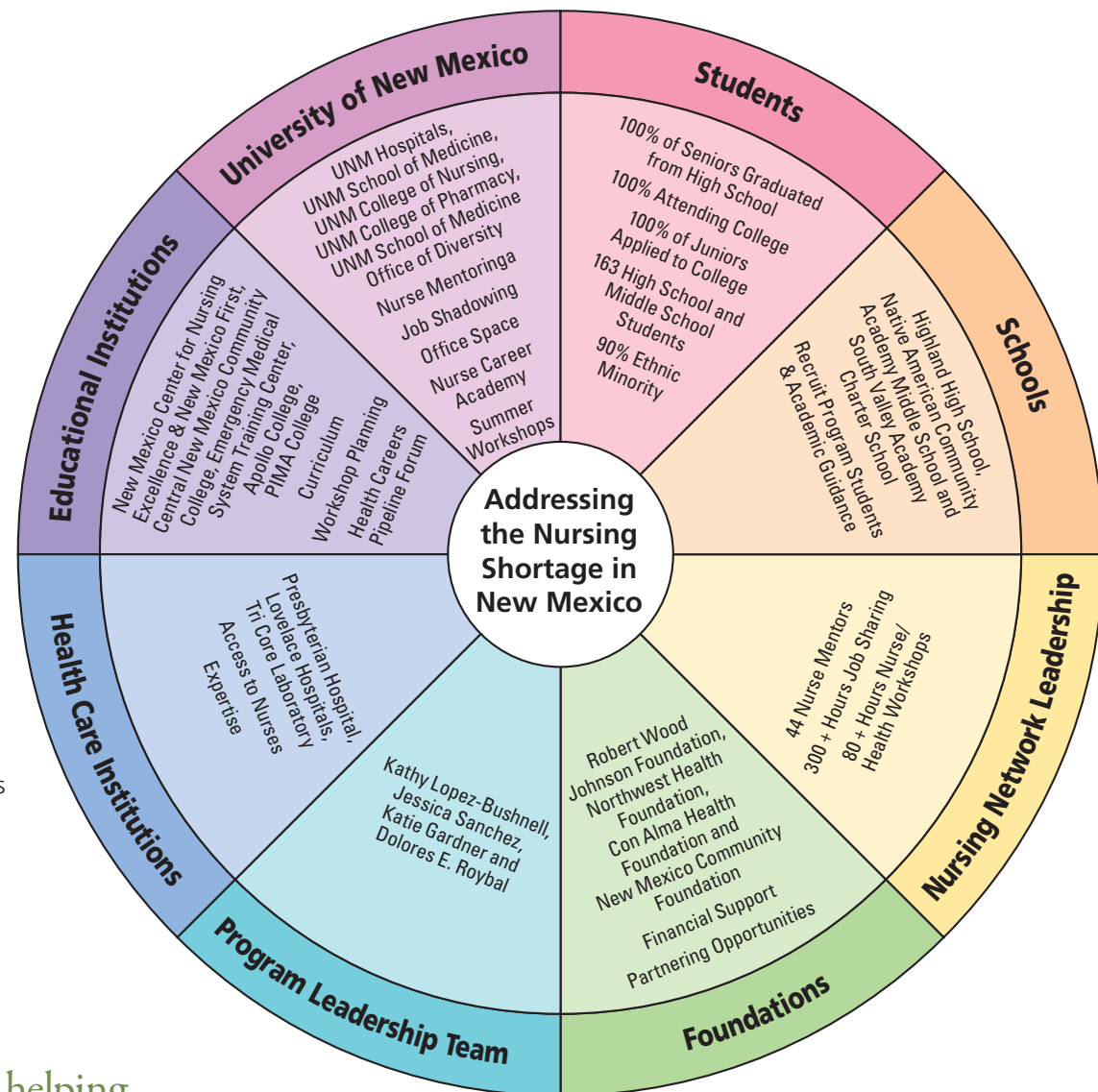
METHODS

To tackle the challenge collectively, a unique collaboration bringing together Con Alma Health Foundation, New Mexico Community Foundation, the University of New Mexico's Medical (UNM) School Office of Diversity, UNM Hospitals and UNM Hospitals Nursing Division, UNM's Health Science Center, and New Mexico First is building a "pipeline" and strategic bridges for minority students from middle school to college.

The effort is supported by Partners Investing in Nursing's Future (PIN), a partnership of the Northwest Health Foundation and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to support local and regional philanthropies as they develop and test solutions to America's nursing workforce shortage.

Con Alma Health Foundation was selected as one of 11 foundations nationwide to receive funding from PIN in its second funding cycle.

Con Alma was awarded a two-year grant of \$250,000, which was matched with another \$125,000 - \$105,000 from Con Alma and \$20,000 from the New Mexico Community Foundation (NMCF)—for a total project budget of \$375,000.



“It is not always about the funding, but also helping us link with others to be synergistic in our efforts.”

—PAT BOYLE,
Executive Director, Center for Nursing Excellence

ACHIEVEMENTS

As a result of the PIN grant, partnerships were established with the Con Alma Health Foundation, University of New Mexico School of Medicine Office of Diversity, University of New Mexico Hospitals and New Mexico First. These partnerships provided the resources and expertise needed for program workshops, mentoring, job shadowing and summer academies.

Strong relationships between Project DIVERSITY staff, school teachers and administrative staffs made possible close supervision of students and academic readiness for college entry.

The foundation became invested in nursing and expanded its financial support to establish the Nursing Council of New Mexico and to establish statewide community action teams; the New Mexico Grants College of Nursing Education; and the New Mexico State School of Nursing.

A job shadowing program was initiated at the University of New Mexico Hospitals in 2008/2009, which will continue after the completion of this program.

UNM Hospitals was a critical partner in the program's success, providing and supporting nurse mentors, job shadowing experiences and office space and email systems.

The New Mexico Center for Nursing Excellence and New Mexico First organized and conducted a two-day statewide Health Careers Pipeline Forum with over 100 participants from schools, colleges, universities, professional schools, healthcare employees, health providers and citizens from rural and tribal communities from all regions of New Mexico. The forum provided more than 20 recommendations for nursing and other health careers in New Mexico.

SUCCESSFUL MODEL

Project DIVERSITY has developed a model program that helped vulnerable students achieve academic success and introduce them to nursing as a career. The program included academic readiness, college preparation, summer academy programs and committed nurse mentoring. These aspects of the program overcame barriers such as lack of academic and family support. All students completing the program entered college, applied to college or are researching college opportunities.

This model may be replicated wherever a similar underserved population exists and resources are available.

“The collaboration and joint problem solving between higher education, teaching hospitals and foundations provided a strategic link and bridging model that has been the key to Project DIVERSITY’s success.”

—DOLORES E. ROYBAL,
Executive Director, Con Alma Health Foundation





Keeping the Nursing Workforce Wheels Turning

The foundations are committed to supporting nursing and health careers. University of New Mexico Hospitals will continue with mentoring and job shadowing and partnering with other groups that will support nursing and health careers. These partnerships will be maintained through common interests and dedication to the support of minorities in New Mexico.

The partnerships team is currently implementing additional programs to bring nursing to all students in New Mexico and help address the problem of limited clinical placements for nursing students.

Present staff is researching how to continue and make the program sustainable.

New Mexico Health Scholars is being informed of how the program works and is researching how the program can remain free standing and replicated in schools.

Keeping the Health Workforce Wheels Turning

CATALYST FOR OTHER HEALTH WORKFORCE PROGRAMS

Con Alma Health Foundation's health disparities report helped move them in the direction of workforce development solutions. The Partners Investing in Nursing's Future (PIN) grant catalyzed Con Alma Health Foundation's involvement in nursing shortage solutions.

As a result, Con Alma Health Foundation has invested in nursing pipelines and other health career initiatives—including Nursing, Medicine, Pharmacy, Oral Health and Community Health Workers—throughout New Mexico.

As the state's largest private health foundation, Con Alma Health Foundation was in a unique position in 2008 to have granted over \$300,000 to ten programs who, in calendar year 2009, addressed New Mexico's significant health care workforce challenges through action, innovation, education, partnership and research that will pay-off for years to come as New Mexico builds a 21st century health care workforce to meet our unique and growing community health needs.

Read Con Alma Health Foundation's full report, ["Building a 21st Health Care Workforce in a Diverse Rural State"](#)

CATALYSTS THAT KEEP THE NURSING & HEALTH WHEELS TURNING

Con Alma Health Foundation Health Workforce Grantees

Center for Nursing Excellence, New Mexico Nursing Council Statewide Community Action Teams

Dreamtree Project, Youth Up Youth Exposure to Nursing and Health

New Mexico State University, Grants Pathway to Nursing

Coming Home Connection, Training Youth & Young Adults for Home-Health

Community Coalition for Healthcare Access (CCHA), Promotoras: Community Health Planners & Navigators for the Underserved

Las Cumbres Community Services, Early Childhood Mental Health Training Institute

NM Community Health Worker Assn., CHW Certification Project

New Mexico Highlands University, Ben Lujan Institute, Family Medicine Residency Collaborative Training

St. Vincent Hospital Foundation, Healthcare Exploration Program

UNM School of Pharmacy, UNM/ NMSU Cooperative Pharmacy Program Summer Experience

Thank You

PROJECT DIVERSITY TEAM

Con Alma Health Foundation is deeply grateful for the commitment and exemplary work of many people involved with Project DIVERSITY, but notably Project Director Jessica Sanchez and Clinical Nurse Researcher Kathy Lopez-Bushnell, Katie Gardner, Diane Miller, Natalie Sanchez, and Sheena Ferguson, Chief Nursing Officer of UNM Hospitals said Dolores E. Roybal, Executive Director, Con Alma Health Foundation. The successful outcomes of this initiative are a direct result of their dedication.

STUDENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES

Con Alma Health Foundation would also like to express thanks to the Project DIVERSITY students and their families who went to great lengths to make the program a priority in their lives. It was an honor to be a part of the foundation of your future endeavors.

NURSE MENTORS

To the 44 Nurse mentors, who shared their knowledge and their wisdom, and who gave so generously of themselves to the young people in this program, mil gracias!

CON ALMA HEALTH FOUNDATION ALSO THANKS THE FOLLOWING INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANIZATIONS FOR THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS:

Schools

- Highland High School
- Native American Community Academy Middle School
- South Valley Academy Charter School Apollo College
- Central New Mexico Community College
- PIMA College

Foundations

- Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
- Northwest Health Foundation
- New Mexico Community Foundation





University of New Mexico (UNM) Health Science Center

- UNM Hospitals. Kathy Lopez-Bushnell, Director of Nursing Education
- UNM Hospitals Nursing Department, Sheena Ferguson, RN, Chief Nursing Officer
- UNM B.A.T.C.A.V.E.
- UNM College of Pharmacy
- UNM EMS Academy
- UNM Phlebotomy
- UNM Respiratory Therapy
- UNM School of Medicine Office of Diversity, Valerie Romero-Leggott, M.D.
- UNM School of Nursing and Dental Hygiene

Community Partners

- Lovelace Hospitals
- Natural Resources
- New Mexico Center for Nursing Excellence
- New Mexico First
- Partners Investing in Nursing
- Presbyterian Hospitals
- TriCore Laboratories
- Terry Schleder

“Project DIVERSITY was a successful model to academically prepare high school students for careers in nursing and demonstrated collaborative partnership efforts work when trying to reach similar missions and goals.”

–Valerie Romero-Leggott, M.D.,
Vice President for Diversity,
UNM School of Medicine Office of Diversity



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