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Academic success program in nursing: Increasing diversity in the nursing workforce

Statement of the Problem & Aim: In the 2016 American Association of Colleges of Nursing graduation report from 851 institutions across the United States (US), the race and ethnicity of graduates is 72% White, 9% Hispanic, and 8% Black. The US census report highlights the race/ethnicity gap in the nursing workforce; the population is 73% White, 13% Black, and 17% Hispanic. To achieve the goal of high quality, safe, and accessible care the US needs a nursing workforce that reflects the cultural values of the community.

Method: The Academic Success Program In Nursing (ASPIN) is a descriptive study whose aim is to recruit, retain, and graduate students from minority backgrounds and/or are disadvantaged to earn a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree. The nature of the ASPIN program is to work with school partners and admitted nursing students offering multilevel programs to retain and graduate a diverse population. Program implementation began on July 1, 2014 with a student group of 17 Hispanic (68%), 2 Black (8%), and 6 White students (24%). The program retention rate is 84% with 3 Hispanic, 1 Black, and 1 White student who did not continue. The ASPIN program employs the social determinants of health and the ecological framework to focus on supporting students economically, socially, and educationally.

Findings: The students in this study who took advantage of academic support, faculty advising, as well as scholarship awards were successful in continuing in the nursing program. However, without adding additional cost and testing ACT reading and math scores should also be utilized to build individual student success programs.

Conclusion & Significance: Hispanic, African American, and White students need financial support, tutoring, and peer group support to succeed.

Recommendation: In addition, faculty advisors should use ACT entrance exam scores to customize an individualized academic success plan.

Biography

Angie Brindowski has her expertise in nursing program development, evaluation, and nursing student retention. Her retention program strategies and programming are grounded in an ecological framework that supports students financially, socially, and environmentally to succeed in nursing school and practice in underserved areas in the U.S. The approach utilizes multiple strategies and programs to support students across the University.

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Susan E. Tallar is the project coordinator whose work focuses on increasing awareness and recruiting pre college students who are minorities in nursing or disadvantaged to pursue nursing as a career. Sue develops and in collaboration with current nursing students implements programs to pre-college students in grade, middle, and high school.

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