



**State University System  
2022-2023 Linking Industry to Nursing Education (LINE) Fund  
Proposal Form\***

<b>University:</b>	<b>University of West Florida</b>
<b>Healthcare Partner:</b>	<b>Baptist Health Care</b>
<b>Date Proposal Approved by University Board of Trustees:</b>	<b>08/18/2022</b>
<b>Amount Requested:</b>	<b>\$192,500</b>
	<b>David Bellar, Dean, Usha Kundu, MD College of Health, 850-474-2951, dbellar@uwf.edu</b>
<b>Please check the boxes below as appropriate:</b>	<i>All boxes must be checked in order to be eligible to participate.</i>
<b>Healthcare partner making contribution is located in and licensed to operate in Florida?</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes
<b>Healthcare partner making contribution is a health care provider as defined in Section 768.38(2), Florida Statutes?</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes
<b>Nursing programs met or exceeded a first time NCLEX passage rate of 70% for the prior year based on the 2022 Accountability Plan?</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes
<b>The funds will be used for an eligible purpose per Section 1009.896, Florida Statutes?</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes

### **Background**

The LINE Fund is intended to incentivize collaboration between nursing education programs and health care partners and to meet local, regional, and state workforce demand by recruiting faculty and clinical preceptors, increasing the capacity of high-quality nursing education programs, and increasing the number of nursing education program graduates who are prepared to enter the workforce. Subject to available funds,

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for every dollar contributed to an institution by a health care partner, the fund shall provide a dollar-for-dollar match to the participating institution for approved proposals. **Funds may be used for student scholarships, recruitment of additional faculty, equipment, and simulation centers to advance high-quality nursing education programs throughout the state. Funds may not be used for the construction of new buildings.** To participate, an institution must submit a timely and complete proposal to the Board of Governors for consideration.

**Proposals must be submitted with a total of no more than three pages of narrative for the following sections.** Proposals with more than three pages of narrative will be rejected.

## **Proposal Details**

*Provide detailed narrative for each section below.*

**I. Use of Funds** - *Describe in detail and with specificity how the institution plans to use the funds, including how the funds will be utilized to increase student enrollment and program completion.*

Currently, a significant shortage of nurses exists in the State of Florida, and projections suggest that the deficit will continue to increase in size in the coming decade. In particular, the Florida panhandle is one of the areas with the most significant shortage. Geographically, the School of Nursing at the University of West Florida (UWF) is well positioned to address the need in the Florida Panhandle. The BSN program at UWF is well respected in the local and regional community and consistently produces graduates who pass the NCLEX on the first attempt. With this track record, an investment in growing the student population of the BSN program at UWF is highly likely to impact workforce needs in regional areas.

Currently, the on-campus Bachelor of Science in Nursing program at UWF graduates approximately 120 students per year who enter the workforce. The funds from this proposal will increase this number by enrolling more students in the BSN program and ensuring that existing students have the financial resources to complete their degrees. Additionally, an enhanced preceptor engagement is planned to strengthen the preparedness of this new pipeline of students to enter into sustained employment with our partner, Baptist Health Care.

To increase enrollment, one new clinical cohort per admission cycle of eight students will be accepted into the BSN program. The education of these new students will be supported using funds from this program. Specifically, we will utilize \$70,000.00 to fund additional part-time faculty to support the 24 new students per year planned for this program. These students will also have opportunities to engage with Baptist Health Care to enhance their understanding of our partners' organizational culture and practices. Once they have reached the final semester of their course of study, it is intended that these students will be assigned the maximum number of clinical rotations at Baptist Health Care. These clinical rotations will ensure they are ready to onboard upon graduation and successful completion of the NCLEX examination.

To ensure that all qualified, enrolled students have the support to complete the BSN program and successfully onboard as nurses with our healthcare partner, we propose initiating a Funds to

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Finish (F2F) scholarship program and an enhanced clinical experience. Targeting financial aid to students as a reward for their success is known to increase graduation rates, and students entering into clinicals have demonstrated their success by completing most of the BSN program. By funding scholarships for students who have completed all but the final clinical component of the BSN program, it is anticipated that the program will see an increase in the 4-year graduation rate. As such, this will increase the number of nurse graduates to address the workforce gap. It is planned that 90 senior clinical students will be recipients of these F2F scholarships. The students will each receive a scholarship of \$3000 to cover tuition and fees during the period of their clinical experience. Total funds allocated for F2F scholarships are \$270,000.

In addition to investing in the students' ability to complete the program, these students will receive an enriched clinical experience with nearly all the clinical education at Baptist Health Care locations. Nurse preceptors are a critical component of the teaching of BSN students. However, there is currently an issue with Nurses leaving the profession due to burnout. At present, preceptors are not compensated for the additional time and effort to help train a BSN student. It is crucial at this time to avoid engaging in practices that might exacerbate the stress and burnout among existing nurses. Therefore, we propose to provide compensation for nurses who agree to serve as clinical students' preceptors at Baptist Health Care locations. By incentivizing these nurses, we can guarantee the BSN students have a clinical experience that enhances their preparation for practice. Also, this enhanced experience is planned to include more elements that will assist the students in having a realistic understanding of employment with our healthcare partner upon graduation and onboarding. To facilitate this experience, we propose to allocate \$500 per preceptor for each of the 90 students who receive F2F scholarships.

Costs:

- 1) \$70,000 to fund additional adjunct faculty to support increasing cohort size
- 2) \$45,000 preceptor incentives for senior clinical students.
- 3) \$270,000 (3000\$ per student) Funds to Finish Scholarships for senior students in clinicals

Project Total: \$385,000

Baptist Health Care has agreed to fund \$192,500 of this project. We are requesting a \$192,500 match from the Board of Governors in order to fully fund this project.

## **II. Onboarding & Retention of Graduates - Describe in detail and with specificity how the health care partner will onboard and retain graduates.**

According to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 17.5% of RN's leave their first job in the first year of employment. Healthcare organizations incur high costs due to nursing turnover. A 2020 NSI National Health Care Retention and RN Staffing Report concluded that the average cost for turning over a bedside RN is just over \$44,000. Exit survey data from a recent study (Kurat-Thoma et al. 2017) suggested that only 40% of Nurses leaving employment felt they had a realistic understanding of their job before onboarding. Based upon this finding and other reports in the literature, it is evident that there is a critical period in the transition between nursing students and first-year nurses. The importance of onboarding is well understood in the Human Resource literature. According to the Society for Human Resource Management, 69% of employees are more likely to stay with an organization for three years if they have had a positive onboarding experience. Additionally, hospitals that have implemented preceptor and mentor

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programs in the first year of employment for new nurses have seen reductions in the turnover rate of nearly 20%.

Much research has focused on the transition period after employment has already begun. While this period does warrant attention, there is an opportunity to address preparation for the transition to employment earlier when students are near completion. We are proposing to work with our healthcare Partner to provide the start of onboarding during their clinical experiences in the Baptist Health Care System, targeting the transition to employment before the students graduate. The experience will be facilitated by the incentivized preceptors and additional engagements with Baptist Health Care. The goal will be to provide students with a realistic understanding of the job they will have upon graduation, an understanding of the organizational culture and values, and immersive exposure to the day-to-day experiences of nurses at Baptist Health Care locations. We believe that through this enhanced clinical experience, students will be better equipped to handle the transition to nursing practice in the Baptist Health Care System and will be more likely to be retained through the critical window of early career employment.

**III. Program Expansion** - *Describe in detail and with specificity how the funds will expand the institution's nursing education programs to meet local, regional, or state workforce demands. If applicable, include advanced education nursing programs and how the funds will increase the number of faculty and clinical preceptors and planned efforts to utilize the clinical placement process established in Section 14.36, Florida Statutes.*

The funds for the program will be used to expand the UWF BSN program by addressing the two ends of the student lifecycle, program entry, and program completion. We will use the funds specifically to support additional part-time faculty to enroll more students into the program during each of the three admission periods during the academic year. This will result in up to 24 new enrollments in the nursing program. At the other end of the student's career, we will use funds to provide financial support to students so they can complete the program successfully. We will also incentivize the preceptors that are part of our clinical placement process. These actions will enhance the retention and graduation rate of the program. Even a modest increase in 4yr graduation rate can positively impact the number of new nurses who enter into employment in the regional area. For example, an increase of 5% would generate 12 additional graduates per year. With the F2F scholarships, we are hopeful that we can increase the number of nursing graduates in the final year to nearly 100%, which would significantly impact the ability of UWF nursing to be part of the solution for local, regional, and state workforce needs. In total the combination of increasing new enrollments

In summary, we will produce a greater number of BSN graduates through both new enrollments and increased graduation rate. The UWF BSN program has consistently produced very high NCLEX pass rates. Therefore, as the pipeline of new BSN students is strengthened from both ends, the educational preparation of the students will ensure that these additional students will pass the NCLEX and become an RN. Further, these students will be well prepared for a career in nursing to address workforce need overall and with our healthcare partner.