

Marquette College of Nursing: Receives nearly \$2.2 million to continue Project BEYOND-2

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MILWAUKEE — The College of Nursing at Marquette University has received a nearly \$2.2 million grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to continue [Project BEYOND-2](#), which builds equitable youth opportunities for nursing diversity.

Project BEYOND-2 aims to improve nursing workforce diversity by increasing the numbers of students and graduates from economically and educationally disadvantaged backgrounds, including underrepresented minorities, who will graduate with undergraduate nursing degrees. The award is a four-year continuation of the program, which started in 2007.

“One way to mitigate health disparities is to assure that we have a nursing workforce that better mirrors the population, and Project BEYOND-2 is filling that diversity gap with students educated in Marquette’s Catholic, Jesuit values and with a mission to serve others,” said Dr. Janet Krejci, dean of the College of Nursing. “Our communities are faced with such inequities as high poverty and limited access to health care despite many chronic illnesses. At the same time, nursing workforce diversity in our state is lower than the national average. Marquette and the College of Nursing make an ideal location to help address these issues with our commitment to serving others and to helping to create a more just society.”

Students in Project BEYOND-2 receive financial aid through scholarships and stipends and participate in a variety of academic and informal sessions, as well as professional and peer mentoring opportunities. Project BEYOND-2 students are also encouraged to ask questions, request discussion topics and become actively

involved in study groups.

“This is exciting news for BEYOND-2, which has been incredibly successful for both Marquette and the hundreds of students that have come through the program,” said Dr. Leona VandeVusse, who has served as director for Project BEYOND-2 since its inception. “Through this program, the College of Nursing is serving a pressing need to add to the diversity in the nursing workforce in our communities.”

Dr. Terrie Garcia, Project BEYOND-2 coordinator, will transition to director of Project BEYOND-2 on July 1, 2021, where she will oversee all three HRSA diversity awards in the College of Nursing.

“We are pleased that this award will continue supporting our Project BEYOND-2 students,” added Garcia. “These resources have been so critical by offering valuable mentorship opportunities and removing of the financial hurdle many students face with scholarships and additional financial aid.”

The Health Resources and Services Administration is the primary federal agency for improving health care to people who are geographically isolated or economically or medically vulnerable. This award is funded through the HRSA’s Nursing Workforce Diversity Program, which increases nursing education opportunities for people from disadvantaged backgrounds. This includes racial and ethnic minorities underrepresented among registered nurses.