

Michael Evans

How has the School of Nursing grown in the past 40 years?

00:06

So after we graduate, the 475 graduates that we are, that are completing their program in May of this year, we will have almost 17,000 graduates who have gone through our program over the last 40 years. And we've grown from very small, first class was very small, all the way to, we have nearly 2000 students across the state right now. And 17,000 graduates, the way we have grown has been because of a great demand, there's been a great demand across the region and across the state for outstanding BSN prepared, nursing graduates in that need, has only grown over the years. So that need married with our outstanding quality has caused us to grow very, very quickly, over the over the last 40 years.

How did the School of Nursing and its students respond to the COVID-19 pandemic?

01:08

You know, I couldn't have been, I could not be more proud than the way our faculty and students and staff responded to the COVID-19. imperative last year, just exactly a year ago, we basically closed everything down on campus, and we became virtual, all of our programs became virtual, the programs that are face to face became virtual, over a weekend, our faculty were able to do that very quickly. And we did not lose quality, none of our quality suffered whatsoever. Students were very resilient, they were very open, they wanted to make sure that they their education was not interrupted, they wanted to stay on track. And they did. We had two classes of students graduate during COVID. So far, and they both had very, very high pass rates on their licensing examination. And they had no trouble at all finding good jobs, and doing very, very well in those jobs. So from a from a process and the graduation standpoint, we didn't miss a beat as a result of COVID. I'm very proud of the faculty and staff and students that helped make that happen.

What makes students apply to the School of Nursing?

02:28

I think the best the best indicator for students wanting to apply to our school are the lived examples of people they know who have gone before them, versus if nurses they work with a nurses they know in their community, in their churches, they know that, that we educate the very, very highest quality, but we also screen for very, very high quality applicants, people, people who want to go into healthcare, into nursing for the right reasons, they want to be there to improve the human condition to leave the world a better place than it was when they got there. And they know that they can learn to do that, through the programs and the curriculum that our faculty have developed, that those are the kind of students that we want to attract. And we do in very large numbers, you know, you come to us with good grades, good transcript, and all of that. But the last thing you have to do is go through a high stakes interview with faculty. And that's where we really select, we select based on personality, we based on ability to be able to communicate, nursing and all the healthcare professions, right on the back of communication. You know, if you can't communicate very well, you're not going to do well in healthcare. So we were very selective about those, those, the grades and the transcripts and all of that, but also on the human connection pieces that you really can't, you can't fake that it's there, or it's not going to be there and we look for it. And our students have it.

Michael Evans

What has been the health care community's response to School of Nursing graduates?

04:12

They have absolutely flourished in their care in the care of our students. We hear nothing but the very highest accolades from other health care providers, but most importantly, from the patients who derive care from our students. They are very very congratulatory to us for helping them to become those kinds of nurses and to those students who have excelled in the programs to be able to deliver the highest quality of compassionate care that can be provided anywhere.

How did the Larry Combest Community Health and Wellness Center clinics and Abilene Community Health Center come to be and what makes them different from other clinics?

04:53

So I'm the fourth Dean of the School of Nursing in 40 years. I'm the fourth Dean and I've been here almost 10 years. Our first Dr. Teddy Langford Jones had a passion for creating a community health clinic. That will be based on a wellness model that people come to keep people coming to the clinic to stay well, not just to address an illness, but through addressing the illness, you help them to understand their bodies, understand their lifestyles, and to be able to stay well over the course of their lives. And that program or the clinic was opened in East Lubbock, has flourished over the years. And in the early 2000s, it became a federally qualified health center, which means it's one of the health centers that HRSA Health Resources Services Administration recognizes as one of the clinics that they that are so excellent that they help to provide the dollars to fund the care for underserved populations in East Lubbock and all kinds of those communities across the country. One that makes us very different is ours is nurse managed, nurse run. The providers there are nurse practitioners, we refer to other providers, but the care is provided by nurse practitioners, our students, our faculty, participate in the care there. The we have three clinics one is in East Lubbock, one is in central Lubbock, it's called Combest Central. The main one is called the Larry Combest health and wellness center, the one in central Lubbock is called the Combat Central than the one in Abilene is the Abilene Community Health Center. And that was the most recent one to open several years ago, four or five years ago, because of a tremendous need in the Abilene community. These people would never get care if we weren't there. We provide care for approximately 10,000 lives, not just visits in a year, many, many, many more visits than that the 10,000 people derive their care from these three clinics, and they wouldn't be getting care anywhere else in a structured way. They'd be getting their care through hospital emergency rooms, if we weren't there to provide a longitudinal path to wellness for them.

What's in store for the next 40 years for the School of Nursing and nursing in general?

07:23

I think the nursing profession in general is going to become more and more and more in demand as the society ages. And as people have learned what outstanding nursing care looks like they're going to want more and more of it. I believe that our school will continue to grow. We continue to go to other parts of Texas and beyond. I think our campus in the Dallas Fort Worth area with all of our programs

Michael Evans

will continue to grow. They're the you know, the program in Mansfield that we're creating right now, if you haven't been to South Suburban Dallas Fort Worth lately, go there and you won't believe the exponential growth there. I mean, it's explosive. All across that Southern corridor of cities, Cleburne Midlothian Mansfield Waxahachie all across that southern tier of cities outside of DFW is absolutely burgeoning and in ways that we've never seen before, and they need it. They need health care providers, they need everything. Housing is a big housing boom there. I recently said to someone that you can always tell a Texas City that's growing fast when there's a Home Depot and Lowe's across the street from each other. You see that all across that southern tier of cities in DFW we anticipate our programs are rolling there. Our pharmacy program is there. Our nursing programs are there. Our health professions programs through their Texas Tech is a major anchor in the healthcare market in Dallas Fort Worth is going to continue to be a major presence.