

RN PhorwarD: Growing the Pipeline of PhD-prepared Nurses in Maryland

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Background

- **Enrollment in PhD in nursing programs has increased by only 9.4% in the last decade.**
 - While graduation rates have risen, there remains a significant gap between students enrolled in nursing PhD programs and students graduating from these programs.
- **Much of the faculty growth in Maryland has occurred at the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) level.**
 - National statistics reflect the state level in Maryland with 9 times the number of annual DNP graduates to PhD graduates.
- **There have been positive gains during the past decade in the diversity of PhD students in nursing** from under-represented populations:
 - Racial/ethnic diversity of PhD students in nursing has increased by 56%
 - Male PhD students in nursing have increased overall by 66%

Objectives

Consistent with the Nurse Support Program II goals of focusing on the education of nurses in Maryland, the objectives of this project include:

1. Increase enrollment in UMSON's PhD program by identifying, recruiting, and mentoring students
2. Identify and engage underrepresented populations in nursing.
3. Provide academic and financial support, so that 90% of recruited PhD candidates are successfully admitted and graduate within four years of enrollment.
4. Engage in outreach activities with nursing faculty across Maryland who are seeking doctoral degrees.

Methods

Four primary methods were used during the four-year grant period:

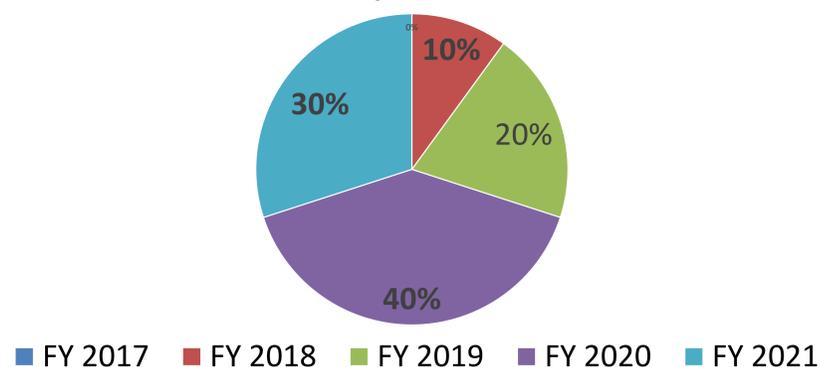
- 1) **Conducting outreach** in person and virtually to current nursing students who are eligible upon completion of their program to matriculate in a PhD program, including BSN, CNL, MSN, and DNP students
- 2) **Organizing research experiences** with nurse scientists as curricular and co-curricular opportunities
- 3) **Supporting nurses** in applying and matriculating in PhD programs.
- 4) **Engaging in outreach activities** through individual and statewide meetings, to support the doctoral education needs of nursing faculty.

Results

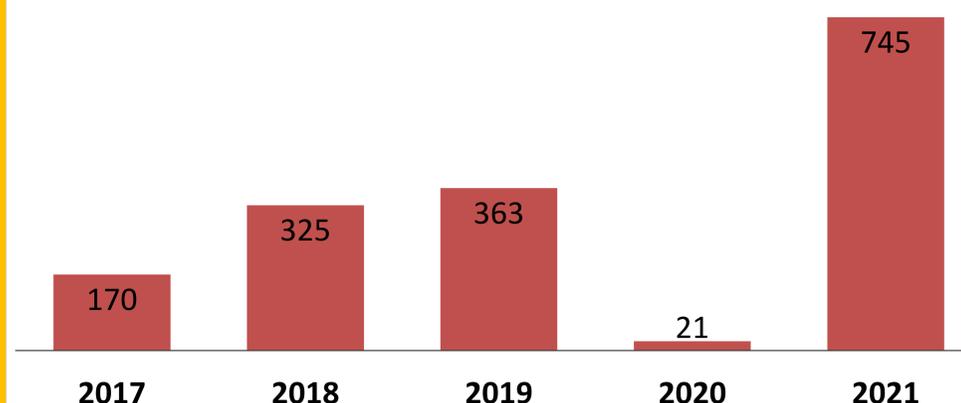
- ✓ **Over 800 students** were reached via in-person and online information sessions.
- ✓ Online learning resources were developed for sustainability and use in virtual settings.
- ✓ **Professional connections** were created between institutions across the state.
- ✓ **Seven nurses** successfully matriculated into PhD studies at the University of Maryland School of Nursing program; additional nurses matriculated into non-UMSON PhD programs
- ✓ Created a **distance-based BSN research elective** for students to gain exposure to and mentoring from nurse scientists, which successfully launched Spring 2021

Figures

Annual Outcomes: Number of new PhD Students enrolled per Grant Year



Individual Outreach per Grant Year



Conclusions

Our multi-pronged effort to enhance recruitment and retention in PhD programs in Maryland has resulted in **sustainable and scalable approaches** to grow the pipeline for nurses to pursue and complete PhD studies.

Bibliography

American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN), (2021). PhD in Nursing: PhD in Nursing Resources. Retrieved from: <https://www.aacnursing.org/News-Information/Research-Data-Center/PhD>

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