

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

## NSP II Grant # 17-123

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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:

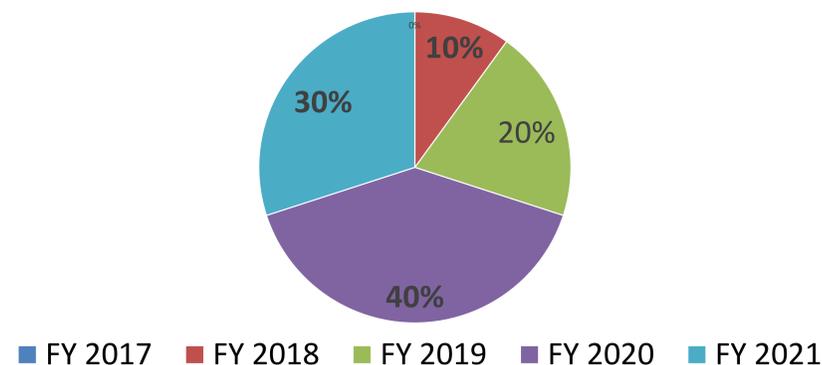
- 1) **Conducting outreach** in person and virtually to current nursing students who are eligible upon completion of their program to matriculate in a PhD program, including BSN, CNL, MSN, and DNP students
- 2) **Organizing research experiences** with nurse scientists as curricular and co-curricular 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

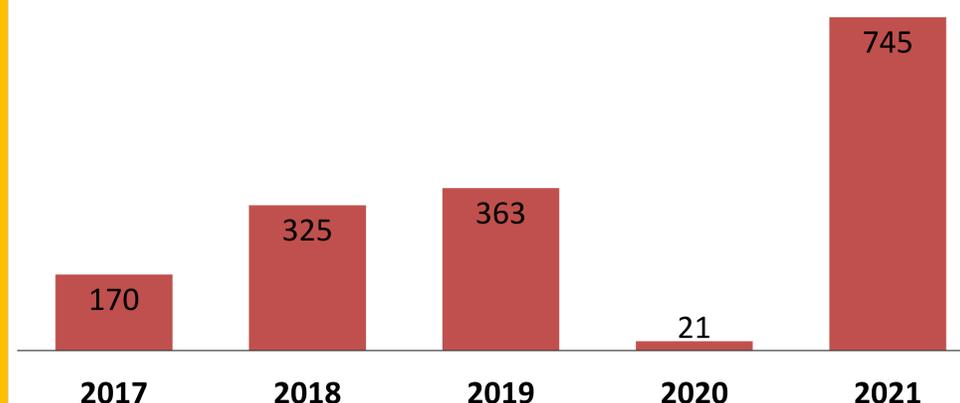
- ✓ **Over 800 students** were reached via in-person and online information sessions.
- ✓ Online learning resources were developed for sustainability and use in virtual settings.
- ✓ **Professional connections** were created between institutions across the state.
- ✓ **Seven nurses** successfully matriculated 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>

#### Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge the vision and leadership of Dr. Meg Johantgen, Associate Professor Emerita, in developing and launching this project.