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School of Nursing receives $2.37M grant to help economically and educationally disadvantaged students



TYLER MIGNAULT/CHRONICLE

By AVA HIGHLAND
Managing Editor

Quinnipiac University's School of Nursing received a $2.37 million grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) to support economically and educationally disadvantaged students. The grant also helps launch the five-year Lifting Education and Advancement for Rising Nurses (LEARN) Program, preparing aspiring nurses to work in rural and underserved communities.

Educationally disadvantaged is classified as coming from a high school with a high percentage of students receiving free lunch or sending a small number of students to college, or if the student is a first-generation college student, according to the Dean of the School of Nursing Larry Slater.

Economic disadvantage is determined by family income as stated in the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), and then compared to poverty lines.

"So that's how we determine, and that's how they do it across HERSA," Slater said.

Slater will serve as the program director, alongside Angela Falcon, a clinical instructor of nursing, who will serve as the program assistant.

The larger program itself can be used for all health professions. The School of Nursing applied for the grant to support students in the accelerated nursing program and is

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Quinnipiac signs five-year agreement with New Haven senior living community, The Towers at Tower Lane

By ANTHONY ANGELILLO
Copy Editor

Quinnipiac University and The Towers at Tower Lane, a nonprofit senior community in New Haven guided by Jewish values, have made their relationship official with a five-year partnership.

The deal comes about a year after The Towers completed a $10 million renovation that included a redone dining room and cafeteria.

The agreement covers internships, capstone projects, fieldwork, site visits and job shadowing. With research on aging, health and social well-being, residents will also receive free care from the Quinnipiac EQUIP Rehabilitation Clinic and Towers employees, and their families will receive discounted tuition.

The Towers Vice President Jesse Wescott joined the community in 2018, the same year Quinnipiac occupational therapy professor Nicole Fidanza began bringing students to the building.

"She came in with, I want to say, three students to do a singular project," Wescott said.

That number passed 100 students last calendar year, according to Wescott, with social work interns, occupational therapy students, four MBA capstone groups and a communication intern spending time on site.

Most of that growth happened without a formal deal, something Associate Dean of Clinical Education and Partnerships Ken Kosior heard about soon after starting his role at the School of Health Sciences last year, when Fidanza introduced him to Wescott.



PHOTO COURTESY OF AUTUMN DRISCOLL

Residents of The Towers at Tower Lane senior living community interact with Quinnipiac University students.

"Jesse was like, 'Ken, we have this great relationship with Quinnipiac, but it'll (be) all over the place. It's a lot of different puzzle pieces that we really value, and we want to expand it,'" Kosior said.

Kosior spent six to eight months bringing schools across Quinnipiac into talks with Wescott, including the College of Arts and Sciences, the School of Nursing and the School of Law.

"We felt the timing was right to really put a stamp on it that says, 'Hey, this is what we're committing to,'" Kosior said.

Kosior's long-term goal is to have more than 300 students at the Towers each year. That count includes occupational therapy, social work and MBA students, as well as first-year students from The Grove residence hall.

Wescott said a planned third building could add 150 apartments, giving students even more residents to work with.

"If we did 100 (students) last year, in five years, I don't see why we can't do 200

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