



GUEST ESSAYS, LETTERS TO THE EDITOR, OPINION

Guest essay: Investing in our health

February 10, 2024 11:03 pm by Submitted to The Dominion Post

by Tara Hulsey

I have always said nursing is not just a career — it’s a calling.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the nursing workforce shortage was put in the national spotlight. But even now, the demand for nurses continues to grow and is projected to expand well into the next decade.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reports the projected growth for nurses is double the national average for all occupations between now and 2032. There are more than 193,000 projected openings each year for registered nurses over the course of the next eight years.

The West Virginia University School of Nursing is well-equipped to educate and train future nurses to meet these needs with nursing programs located throughout the state (Beckley, Bridgeport, Charleston, Keyser and our flagship in Morgantown) and online offerings.

The demand for registered nurses is evident, but the demand for baccalaureate-prepared nurses is even greater. In a 2011 report, “The Future of Nursing,” The Institute of Medicine called for increasing the number of baccalaureate-prepared nurses in the workforce to at least 80% to enhance patient safety. A 2020 National Nursing Workforce Survey showed that the nursing workforce is falling short of this recommendation, with just over 65% of registered nurses having a bachelor’s degree or greater. Multiple studies have shown that nurses who are baccalaureate-prepared deliver better patient outcomes.

For Abby Warnick, of Kingwood, her nursing journey took an unexpected turn that left her uniquely prepared for a career in caring for others. Abby was diagnosed with non-Hodgkin lymphoma just a few months before graduation. Her professors worked closely with her, not only to check on her health and well-being, but to also ensure she could finish her final semester on time. After her own journey with cancer, Abby now plans to work with oncology patients. She plans to use her personal experience to make a difference in the lives of others.

Supporting WVU nursing programs is also an excellent way to build a more prosperous future for state residents. For example, a career in nursing with a median pay of more than \$80,000 is well above the median household income in West Virginia of \$55,000.

We are incredibly grateful that Gov. Jim Justice has recognized this smart investment by providing funding for the Nursing Workforce Expansion Program over the last two years, which has allowed us to increase our enrollment, provide scholarships to students with financial need, and support our expert faculty in continuing education and professional development. We are hopeful for the support of Gov. Justice’s proposed \$30 million addition to this program.

We are excited to build on the strength and quality of the WVU School of Nursing programs reflected in our first-time NCLEX licensure pass rates. The most recent results from our fall 2023 graduates yielded a 100% first-time pass rate from our BSN program and our Accelerated BSN program on our Morgantown Campus. Our licensure pass rates are a testament to our excellent faculty, who are clearly preparing our nursing students with the knowledge and clinical skills they need to succeed.

The School of Nursing proudly carries the WVU land-grant mission of advancing healthcare and prosperity for all by providing access and opportunity. State support helps us advance even further.

Let’s go.

Tara Hulsey is the dean of the WVU School of Nursing.

Tags: bachelors degree, higher education, nursing, WVU School of Nursing

Author: Submitted to The Dominion Post

Need a Garage? We Build All Sizes. 2-CAR GARAGE As low as \$238 per mo. (or \$21,640 cash) Includes Concrete Floor on Level Ground & Complete Construction. "WE BUILD ALL SIZES!" HUDOCK GARAGES INC. P.O. Box 851 Uniontown, PA 15401 www.hudockgarages.com (724) 366-9425 Call for your FREE Full Color Brochure TODAY!

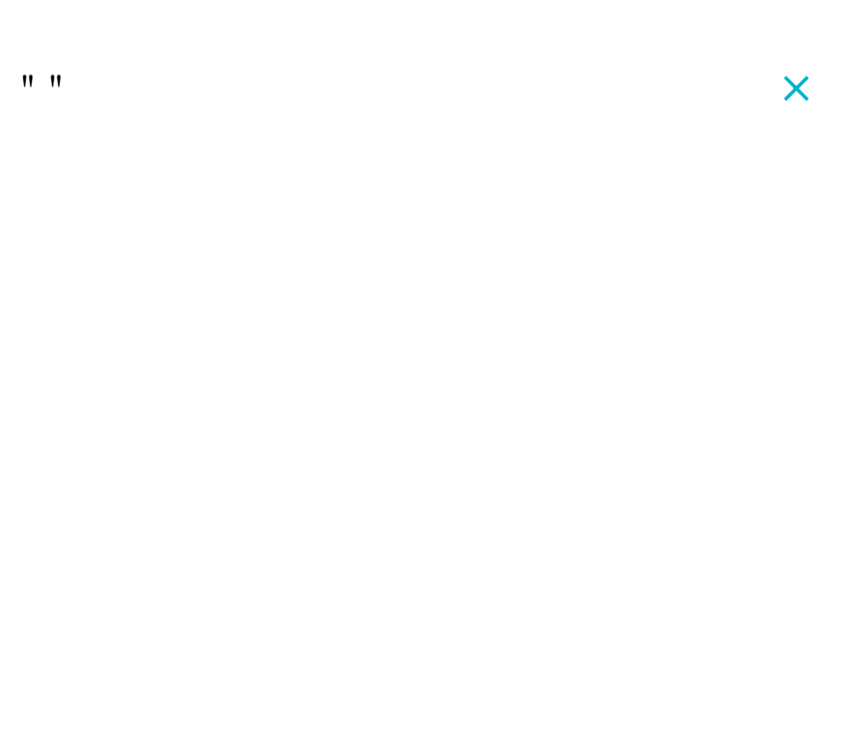
MORGANTOWN WEATHER 43°F overcast clouds

Sunday	50°F	43°F
Monday	52°F	39°F
Tuesday	48°F	32°F
Wednesday	39°F	27°F
Thursday	45°F	28°F
Friday	41°F	30°F
Saturday	34°F	23°F

Sponsored by WVU Medicine

WVU Medicine Video

We love hearing from you! Check out what we’re asking for. Submit Now



SPECIAL EDITIONS

Obituary & Service Updates Available Daily on www.hastingsfuneralhome.com

Hastings Funeral Home, Inc. Omega Crematory

Grant Hastings, Lic.

304.292.8664 153 Spruce Street • Morgantown

Local businesses open in your community. CLICK HERE