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## News Release

For immediate release

[www.stcloudstate.edu/ucomm](http://www.stcloudstate.edu/ucomm)

December 1, 2020

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# **St. Cloud State University, University of Minnesota School of Nursing collaborate to meet the needs for primary care in Central Minnesota**

## ***New pathway to DNP will focus on underserved communities while meeting state's current workforce needs***

ST. CLOUD, Minnesota — St. Cloud State University and the University of Minnesota School of Nursing announced a Doctor of Nursing Practice educational degree collaboration designed to improve access to primary healthcare services in Central Minnesota.

The collaborative will create a new pathway for a Doctorate of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree with a Family Nurse Practitioner specialty designed to produce graduates who will be skilled in providing comprehensive, family-based care to rural and underserved communities throughout Central Minnesota. The collaborative will also prioritize education opportunities for registered nurses already working in the CentraCare Health system, allowing them to significantly expand their scope of responsibility and impact.

The collaboration brings together St. Cloud State's Department of Nursing Science and the University of Minnesota School of Nursing, to innovate on ways to prepare advance practice registered nurses to serve rural needs, while simultaneously meeting the state's immediate workforce demands.

"This collaboration with the University of Minnesota School of Nursing will provide nurses in our region with the opportunity to engage in world-class research and advanced clinical practice," said Dr. Shonda Craft, St. Cloud State University School of Health and Human Services dean. "The University of Minnesota School of Nursing is a leader in doctoral nursing education nationally and has led the state in nursing and health innovation for more than 100 years. The combination of a rigorous educational program alongside clinical engagement with CentraCare Health will create a program that positions graduates for leadership in advanced nursing practice in the rural and underserved areas of Central Minnesota."

Some CentraCare Health clinics in Central Minnesota are located in areas designated as Health Professional Shortage Areas due rural geography and/or low income populations, according to the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration Shortage Designation website.

“We are honored to have the opportunity to partner in translating the scholarship of the University of Minnesota and engaging with St. Cloud State to focus on collaborating to address the demand for advanced practice nurse practitioners and improve access to primary care in central Minnesota,” says Connie White Delaney, PhD, RN, FAAN, FACMI, FNAP, dean of the University’s School of Nursing. “Community engaged-outreach like this partnership is at the heart of the University’s land-grant mission.”

The need for registered nurses and nurse practitioners in the Central Minnesota region through 2024 is expected to continue growing, with the projected growth rate for nurse practitioners expected to grow by 33% with more than 120 openings in the region. Additionally, the need for registered nurses is also expected to increase by 11.7% with a projected 10-year total openings of more than 1,700 through 2024 with the majority of openings for registered nurses coming from the need to replace retiring nurses, according to the [most recent DEED Central Minnesota Health Care and Social Assistance Profile](#).

“Improving access to health care through the state is a priority of the University of Minnesota, and this is an excellent example of collaboration between institutions to accomplish that goal,” said Jakub Tolar, MD, PhD, vice president for clinical affairs.

“This is a wonderful collaboration that builds on our strong foundation of academic excellence embodied in our undergraduate Nursing program,” said Dan Gregory, St. Cloud State University provost. “It is one of many exciting new programs and collaborations that will ensure we live into our ‘It’s Time’ commitment to build on our existing strengths and providing new pathways to prepare students for successful careers.”

The first St. Cloud Cohort will begin in Fall 2021 and courses will be taught by University of Minnesota School of Nursing faculty, with students completing their clinical practice at CentraCare Health affiliates. A dedicated St. Cloud State University faculty liaison will work with the St. Cloud Cohort. St. Cloud State Nursing faculty will create a dedicated DNP curriculum designed to focus on rural family nursing care that will launch in 2025. The collaboration with the University of Minnesota will continue until 2025, when St. Cloud State will begin granting degrees independently.

“The collaboration brings together St. Cloud State University’s, Department of Nursing Science, and the University of Minnesota School of Nursing, to innovate on ways to prepare advance practice registered nurses to serve rural needs, while simultaneously meeting the state’s immediate workforce demand,” said Jane Bagley, Ph.D., RN, St. Cloud State Department of Nursing Science chair.

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The collaboration is supported by a donation from CentraCare, which committed \$1.5 million to St. Cloud State in November 2019 to help the University establish a Graduate Nursing Education program and the Center for Health Outcomes and Policy Research.

This program is the first health related and second doctoral collaboration between St. Cloud State and the University of Minnesota. The institutions innovated to collaborate on the first joint doctoral program in Minnesota in 1994, when they launched the Doctorate of Education in Educational Administration and Leadership, St. Cloud State's first doctoral program. The collaboration served the need for enhanced practitioner-oriented advanced education in the field and helped to establish a successful program that continues to serve the needs of Central Minnesota schools.

### About the Program

University of Minnesota and St. Cloud State University Doctor of Nursing Practice Collaborative

**First Cohort begins:** Fall 2021 Program length: 3 years

Application process: Priority for CentraCare Health employees, Deadline to apply March 1. Apply at: [z.umn.edu/StCloudDNP](http://z.umn.edu/StCloudDNP)

### Information Sessions:

[Dec. 10 – Information Session 1](#) – 1:15-2:30 p.m.

[Jan. 14 – Information Session 2](#) – 10:30-11:45 a.m.

**Licensure:** Upon completion graduates are eligible to apply for national licensure to obtain certification as a Family Nurse Practitioner

**Clinical experience:** 900 precepted clinical hours, facilitated through CentraCare Health/Central Minnesota agencies

**St. Cloud State:** The St. Cloud State Department of Nursing prepares undergraduate students to holistically care for patients from life through death through our five-semester pre-licensure program and our 100% online RN Baccalaureate Completion program. Graduates of the program effectively care and advocate for patients in acute, long-term and home community-based health care settings.

**University of Minnesota School of Nursing:** Leading in nursing and health innovation for 111 years, the University of Minnesota is the first school to offer a Doctor of Nursing Practice degree in nurse anesthesia, nursing informatics, and health innovation and leadership. The School of Nursing has the second largest full-time DNP program in the country and is ranked in the top 10 percent by U.S. News and World Report. It was 10th in the latest ranking of National Institutes of Health (NIH) funding to schools of nursing.

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For more information, [z.umn.edu/StCloudDNP](http://z.umn.edu/StCloudDNP)