

**ADDRESSING THE  
HEALTHCARE WORKFORCE  
NEEDS IN SOUTH DAKOTA  
THROUGH A PARTNERSHIP  
BETWEEN THE  
DEPARTMENTS OF  
EDUCATION, LABOR &  
REGULATION, HEALTH AND  
THE BOARD OF REGENTS**

# **Healthcare Workforce Update**

## **INSIDE THIS ISSUE**

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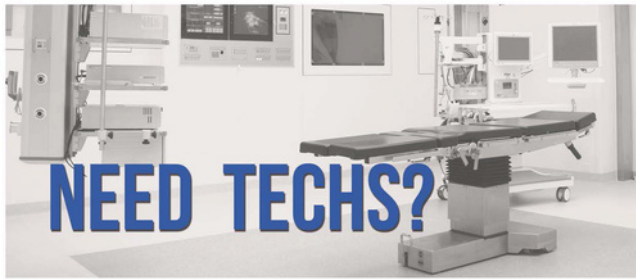
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## **HEALTHCARE WORKFORCE COLLABORATIVE**

Greetings from the South Dakota Office of Rural Health. This office along with our many partners continues to work at addressing South Dakota's healthcare workforce needs. Read on to see what's noteworthy over the past few months as well as upcoming! As always, we welcome your feedback regarding these and other workforce development issues.

# STAT 605

CONTRIBUTED BY STAT 605



AN APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM MAY BE THE SOLUTION YOU ARE LOOKING FOR!



## AN APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING PROGRAM WITH STAT 605 BENEFITS YOUR HEALTHCARE FACILITY AND YOUR APPRENTICES.

### Employers will be able to:

- Admit an apprentice anytime throughout the year.
- Allow for customizable training.
- Fill positions in facilities where it is difficult to recruit.
- Recruit and train individuals within the community.
- Reduce staff turnover.
- Demonstrate community involvement with an apprenticeship program.
- Fast track job readiness without compromising knowledge or skills.

### Apprentices will:

- Earn while they learn.
- Receive the most up-to-date related instruction to supplement hands-on training.
- Follow a structured training plan.
- Receive formal mentoring from an experienced surgical technologist.
- Provide value to the team while learning.
- Remain in the local community.
- Be prepared to sit for the national certification exam.

Are you interested in a highly skilled medical profession but find it challenging to attend a traditional college program? Are you a healthcare facility struggling to find qualified surgical technologists to fill your staffing needs? If so, [STAT 605](http://www.stat605.com), our registered apprenticeship program, might be the perfect solution for you.

As a training company, we provide the related instruction and curriculum for hospitals and surgery centers participating in the STAT 605 program, which is approved by the Department of Labor. Our program offers an additional career pathway to train surgical technologists through an apprenticeship model.

The apprenticeship program allows individuals to earn while they learn, making it an affordable option for those who cannot afford to attend a traditional college program. This is especially beneficial for individuals in rural areas who are unable to quit their job or leave their family behind to attend a costly college program for two years.

Our program can be completed in just one year, and upon completion, apprentices are able to sit for the National Center for Competency Testing (NCCT) certification exam. This certification allows them to become nationally certified and highly skilled surgical technologists.

One of the biggest advantages of our program is that apprentices are able to remain in their local community. This not only provides them with the opportunity to stay close to their family and friends but also helps healthcare facilities in rural areas fill their staffing needs. By training individuals from the local community, healthcare facilities are able to retain skilled professionals who are invested in their local community, resulting in a win-win situation for both the apprentice and the healthcare facility.

In conclusion, the STAT 605 program offers a unique apprenticeship opportunity for individuals interested in a highly skilled medical profession as well as healthcare facilities looking to fill their staffing needs. With the program's affordability, short duration, and nationally recognized certification, it is an excellent option for those who are unable to attend a traditional college program.

## EVERY TECH COUNTS

Healthcare facilities are facing workforce shortages and an increased demand for surgical technologists. Implementation of a registered apprenticeship program allows facilities to train their own techs, thereby reducing the high cost of utilizing traveling technologists.

A registered surgical technology apprenticeship program through the Department of Labor allows apprentices the opportunity to study and train in their community and earn while they learn. This approach helps fulfill the critical need for surgical technologists and facilities experience less staff turnover.

### WHAT IS AN APPRENTICESHIP?

A registered apprenticeship is a career pathway whereby employers hire and prepare individuals through a combination of paid on-the-job training and related instruction to help apprentices develop skills needed to enter the surgical technology profession.

### HOW IT WORKS

Healthcare facilities become a registered program through the Department of Labor. Once approved, the facility will hire the apprentice full-time.

The apprentice works alongside an experienced surgical technologist at the facility learning the hands-on skills while completing online coursework through STAT 605. After successful completion of coursework and meeting the requirements of the National Center for Competency Testing (NCCT), the apprentice will be eligible to sit for the certification exam.

### CERTIFICATION

The National Center for Competency Testing (NCCT) is an independent credentialing organization that has tested healthcare professionals and instructors throughout the United States since 1988. NCCT is accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA).

The coursework and experience gained through the apprenticeship will prepare students for the NCCT Tech in Surgery (TS-C) exam.



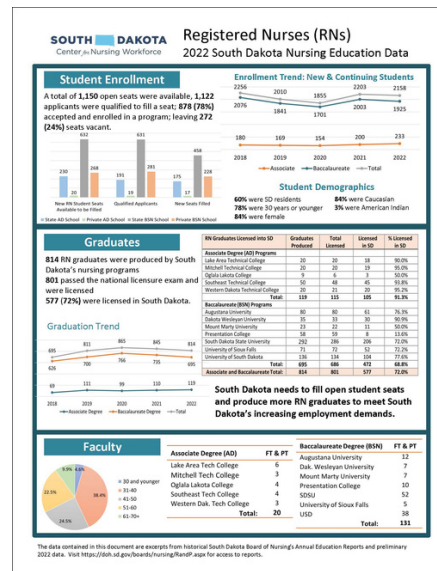
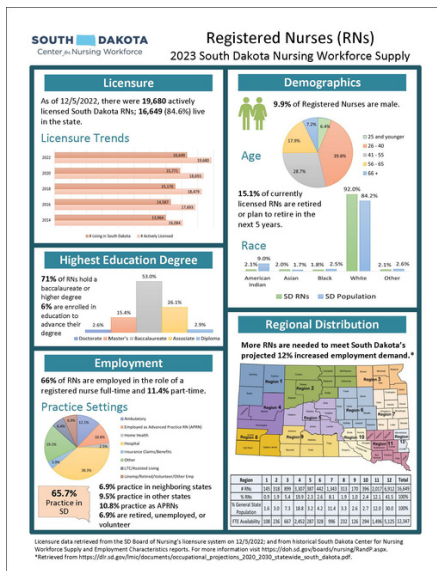
*"Achieving student success is my top priority. It's crucial to prepare competent surgical technologists in order for health care facilities to ensure patient safety and achieve successful outcomes for each patient".*

Erin Howardson, Executive Director, holds a Master's Degree and has been a Certified Surgical Technologist for 25 years. At the collegiate level, she has been a program director and instructor for 12 years; additionally, she gained experience as a traveling surgical technologist in a variety of facilities throughout the United States. Because of her passion and dedication for teaching and the profession, all of her students have passed the national certification exam on their first attempt.

For additional information on how STAT 605 can assist your healthcare facility in providing the related instruction, visit [www.STAT605.com](http://www.STAT605.com) or contact Erin (605-202-5505 or [Erin@STAT605.com](mailto:Erin@STAT605.com)).

# SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF NURSING INFOGRAPHICS

CONTRIBUTED BY SOUTH DAKOTA CENTER FOR NURSING WORKFORCE



We are pleased to share with you an exciting update from the nursing sector in South Dakota. The South Dakota Center for Nursing Workforce and the South Dakota Board of Nursing have collaborated to create infographics that showcase the 2023 Nursing Workforce Supply and 2022 Nursing Education data.

These infographics are available for LPN, RN, and APRN professionals and provide insightful data on the current and projected status of the nursing workforce in South Dakota. By visiting the [South Dakota Department of Health Website](https://www.southdakota.gov/health), you can access these infographics and gain a better understanding of the nursing landscape in the state.

The LPN infographic highlights the projected job openings for LPNs in 2023, along with the number of licensed LPNs and LPN program graduates in 2022. Additionally, it provides information on the percentage of LPNs employed in different healthcare settings and the median hourly wage for LPNs.

The RN infographic, on the other hand, provides data on the projected job openings for RNs in 2023, the number of licensed RNs and RN program graduates in 2022, and the percentage of RNs employed in different healthcare settings. It also includes the median hourly wage for RNs in South Dakota.

Finally, the APRN infographic offers data on the projected job openings for APRNs in 2023, the number of licensed APRNs and APRN program graduates in 2022, and the percentage of APRNs employed in different healthcare settings. It also highlights the median hourly wage for APRNs in South Dakota.

The information provided in these infographics is essential for anyone interested in pursuing a career in nursing or for those currently working in the nursing profession. By gaining insight into the nursing workforce and education trends in South Dakota, individuals can make informed decisions about their career path and better understand the opportunities available to them.





## **NHSC SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM APPLICATION NOW OPEN!**

CONTRIBUTED BY SOUTH DAKOTA OFFICE OF RURAL HEALTH

**Now Open: NHSC Scholarship Program**

**Accepting applications March 14 - April 27, 2023 at 7:30 p.m. ET.**

Are you passionate about providing health care services to underserved communities? The National Health Service Corps (NHSC) Scholarship Program provides scholarships to health profession students pursuing careers as primary care providers in exchange for their commitment to serve in high-need, underserved communities.

### **What does the scholarship cover?**

- Tuition and eligible fees.
- Items including books, health insurance, and equipment.
- Monthly stipends to assist with living expenses while pursuing your degree.

**Explore the benefits of the NHSC Scholarship Program** and the chance to join a community of over 20,000 NHSC members providing culturally competent care to 21 million medically underserved people across the country.

**Sign up** to receive information and reminders about the scholarship application process.

**[START YOUR APPLICATION](#)**

# SDSU COLLEGE OF NURSING RECEIVES GRANT TO INCREASE NUMBER OF QUALIFIED NURSE PRECEPTORS

CONTRIBUTED BY SOUTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF NURSING

BROOKINGS, S.D. – South Dakota State University's College of Nursing is partnering with Montana State University through a four-year, nearly \$4 million grant to increase the number of skilled, qualified clinical nursing faculty and preceptors in the region.

The funding is from the Health Resources and Services Administration of the United States Department of Health and Human Services.

The project, titled "The Nurse Education, Practice, Quality and Retention Program - Clinical Faculty and Preceptor Academies," will see SDSU implement a developed curriculum for existing nurses to become preceptors. SDSU will utilize a preceptor development course through the Colorado Center for Nursing Excellence.

"There are 3 million to 4 million nurse RNs in the nation, and with more and more nurses retiring, we need to train more," said Christina Plemmons, assistant academic dean for cooperative programs in the College of Nursing. "This program is way to support people who may be interested."

The nursing profession is experiencing a shortage in nearly every area, including preceptors, who play a vital role in training future nursing professionals. This grant will strengthen preceptor training and education across HHS Region 8, which includes South Dakota, North Dakota, Montana, Colorado, Utah and Wyoming, through workshops, trainings and other opportunities. Further, the grant has a goal of recruiting and identifying clinical faculty to work in rural and underserved areas.

The project aims to train and support nearly 900 clinical faculty and preceptors across all regions.

## LOAN REPAYMENT FOR HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

CONTRIBUTED BY SOUTH DAKOTA OFFICE OF RURAL HEALTH

The [National Health Service Corps](#) (NHSC) has opened the application cycle for three programs. Eligible clinicians providing primary medical, dental, or behavioral health care services or evidence-based substance use disorder treatment can qualify for loan repayment of up to \$50,000 with an NHSC Loan Repayment Program award, up to \$75,000 for the NHSC Substance Use Disorder Workforce Loan Repayment Program, and up to \$100,000 for the NHSC Rural Community Loan Repayment Program.

[Compare programs](#), find your NHSC program fit, and learn more about eligible disciplines, site types, and service commitment.

Application Deadline: **Tuesday, April 25, 7:30 p.m. ET.**



# USD TO OFFER CLINICAL RESEARCH COORDINATOR CERTIFICATE

CONTRIBUTED BY UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH DAKOTA SCHOOL OF HEALTH SCIENCES

The University of South Dakota School of Health Sciences, in partnership with Sanford Clinical Research, will begin offering a 12-credit Clinical Research Coordinator Certificate program that prepares students for careers as clinical research coordinators (CRC).

Led by clinician investigators, CRC are key members of the clinical research team who facilitate and coordinate the daily research activities in clinical trials/research with the primary responsibility of ensuring participant safety, protocol compliance and quality data collection and entry.

The University of South Dakota School of Health Sciences, in partnership with Sanford Clinical Research, will begin offering a 12-credit Clinical Research Coordinator Certificate program that prepares students for careers as clinical research coordinators (CRC).



Led by clinician investigators, CRC are key members of the clinical research team who facilitate and coordinate the daily research activities in clinical trials/research with the primary responsibility of ensuring participant safety, protocol compliance and quality data collection and entry.

“The CRC program will likely have impact beyond our region,” said Lora Black, executive director of Sanford Clinical Research. “With the workforce stabilized, clinical trials--which are the sole pathway to approval by the FDA for new interventions for patient care--are able to continue.”

“Clinical trials improve thousands of lives each year by finding new ways to detect and treat diseases and ensure the safety of devices and treatments,” said Amy Nelson, director of USD’s Public Health and Health Sciences programs. “The regional workforce demand in this field is expected to grow 14.4% in the next 10 years and USD is poised to help meet that need.”

The program encompasses the six areas of clinical research: research design, ethics and patient safety, product development and regulation, clinical trial operations, study and site management, and data management and informatics.

Undergraduate students can complete the certificate program to begin a career in clinical research; non-traditional students looking for a career change may also enroll. Current employees of clinical research facilities may also find this to be a pathway for career advancement in clinical research.

## SAVE THE DATE! CONNECT SOUTH DAKOTA

CONTRIBUTED BY SD GOVERNOR'S  
OFFICE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



### SAVE THE DATE

**SOUTH DAKOTA BROADBAND SUMMIT**  
WEDNESDAY, MAY 3, 2023 - PIERRE, SD  
9:00 AM - 3:30 PM CDT

A virtual option to participate will also be available along with accommodations for individuals without high-speed internet access or computer equipment.

ConnectSD, the South Dakota Governor's Office of Economic Development and the Department of Labor and Regulation are collaborating to implement the Internet for All initiative for South Dakota. This initiative is focused on improving internet deployment and digital access throughout the state.

Registration and more details will be provided at ConnectSD website:  
[www.sdgoed.com/partners/connectsd](http://www.sdgoed.com/partners/connectsd)

# SANFORD HEALTH NURSE RESIDENCY PROGRAM

CONTRIBUTED BY SANFORD HEALTH

The Sanford Health Nurse Residency Program received accreditation with distinction for our new graduate Nurse Residency Program (NRP) from the American Nurse Credentialing Center (ANCC) Practice Transition Accreditation Program (PTAP) in April 2021. Sanford joins an elite group of 201 national and international ANCC PTAP accredited organizations. Sanford is leading the way in both North and South Dakota with the 1st ANCC PTAP accredited program in each state and joining a small number of organizations in Minnesota with this level of recognition.

The NRP offers education and support to all new to practice graduate RNs with less than 12-months of experience in 4 markets and 2 south network locations of Aberdeen and Worthington. The program provides strategies to strengthen well-being and resiliency while enhancing clinical judgment and leadership capacity. Program areas of focus include leadership, professional role, and quality outcomes. The Sanford Nurse Residency Program is generally offered 3 times a year with cohorts starts in January, May, and September.

Registered nurses will be placed with a group of peers based on employment start date and most frequently follows the completion of your initial department orientation. The cohort will progress through the 12-month program with the support of experienced nurses, educators, and leaders within the organization. The expectation is that residents will fulfill the agreement to work at Sanford Health through the duration of the Nurse Residency Program.

As of September 2022, there have been 10 cohorts with 1,922 new to practice registered nurses participating enterprise-wide with 715 at Sanford USD Medical Center and 23 in our 2 network locations, Aberdeen, and Worthington.

## PIERRE RESIDENCY - PRELIMINARY OUTCOMES DATA

CONTRIBUTED BY THE CENTER FOR FAMILY MEDICINE

The Pierre Rural residency program's outcomes data, published in South Dakota Medicine journal.

- Effective at training physicians (100% first-attempt pass rate by graduates taking the American Board of Family Medicine certification exam)
- Effective at placing physicians in rural practices (100% of graduates)
- Effective at placing physicians in rural South Dakota (75% of graduates)
- Effective at recruiting physicians to South Dakota (only 25% of graduates were originally from South Dakota, but 75% were retained and entered practice in rural South Dakota upon graduating).

### Editorial

#### Preliminary Outcomes of the Pierre, South Dakota, Rural Residency Program

Mark K. Huntington, MD, PhD, and Teresa Bornmann, MD

In 2012, the Governor's Primary Care Task Force developed recommendations for ensuring access to primary care for all the state's inhabitants. Among these recommendations was the development of additional primary care graduate medical education (GME) residencies in South Dakota. Specifically, development of Family Medicine GME in a new, rural location was determined to offer a significant part of the solution to the state's needs and the Center for Family Medicine in Sioux Falls was contracted by the South Dakota Department of Health to develop and implement such a program.<sup>1</sup> The resulting program, the Pierre Rural Family Medicine Residency, received accreditation in Fall 2017 and the first class of interns matriculated the spring of 2018. We present here a brief update on the residency program, with preliminary outcomes for graduates of the program.

Recruitment of resident physicians for the new program has been successful through the National Resident Match Program and the Supplemental Match. For the current (2023) entering class March, there were 270 applications of whom approximately 40 were offered interviews for the two open positions.

An early indicator of the efficacy of the program in placing physicians into rural practice is that 100% of the graduates of the Pierre residency's first two classes are in rural practice, 75% in rural South Dakota (Figure 1). This in-state placement of graduates increases to 85% when incorporating the upcoming graduating class of 2023, who have both signed contracts to practice in rural parts of the state upon graduation.

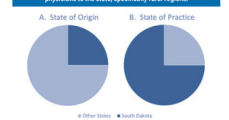
This high proportion of graduates retained in the state highlights that not only does the program attract physicians who will practice in rural areas, it also attracts physicians who specifically relocate and enter South Dakota medical practices. Three of these first four graduates were originally from other states; thus, there was a net gain of two physicians by the state as a direct result of the residency program.

In addition to practice location, academic quality is

important. The program boasts a 100% first-attempt pass rate for the American Board of Family Physicians' specialty certification exam. While the ability to pass a written exam is distinct from clinical competence, it is an important indicator of quality.<sup>2</sup> As graduates of the program progress in their careers, other measures of physician quality are worth monitoring and comparing.<sup>3</sup>

Naturally, the Pierre Rural Family Medicine Residency Program has encountered a number of significant challenges, inherent to new programs, but these early signs suggest it has the potential to succeed in fulfilling its mission. It continues to evolve as a partner in the community while choosing the state's future rural physician workforce.

Figure 1. State of origin and destination. (A) Graduates of the first two residency cohorts were predominantly from out-of-state. However, (B) The majority of graduates are practicing within South Dakota resulting in a net influx of physicians to the state, specifically rural regions.



1. Bornmann T, Huntington MK. Development of a new South Dakota Rural Family Medicine Residency Program. *S Dak Med J*. 2019;94:261-264.  
2. American Board of Family Medicine. *ABFM Certification Exam Statistics*. Available at: <https://www.abfm.org/certification-exam-statistics>. Accessed 2023 Oct 10.  
3. American Board of Family Medicine. *ABFM Certification Exam Statistics*. Available at: <https://www.abfm.org/certification-exam-statistics>. Accessed 2023 Oct 10.



# BUILDING RESILIENT COMMUNITIES THROUGH ACES AWARENESS & ORGAN DONATION ADVOCACY

CONTRIBUTED BY WEST RIVER AREA HEALTH EDUCATION CENTER



The West River Area Health Education Center (WRAHEC) held a one-day Spring Institute for its current cohort of AHEC Scholars. Tifanie Petro, MS, Director of Advocacy and Prevention for the Children’s Home Society of South Dakota (CHSSD), and her associate, Jessica Broullire, opened the day with a presentation on ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences) and resilience. “Understanding adverse childhood experiences is just a part of the process of creating self-healing and empowered communities. The stories of our past and the neuroscience of the impact of hard experiences can help give insight into the behaviors we see, but



those experiences do not get to write the story of where we are headed. When we all share an understanding of how we got to where we are, we can start to better understand what will be necessary to continue to heal and grow,” Tifanie said. After the ACEs presentation, the Scholars

traveled to the Black Hills Children’s Home (BHCH) near Rockerville for a tour of the facility and presentations by Freddy Maseman, Program Director, and DJ Toczek, HR Representative.

Scholars learned about the residential treatment and special education programs offered at BHCH. In addition, they toured the residential and school facilities that serve families and children, many of whom are victims of domestic violence, abuse and neglect, or other traumatic life events. To find out more about CHSSD and BHCH, go to <https://chssd.org/>.

The final presentation of the day was given by Emily Larimer, RN, MSN, BA, Hospital Partner Liaison for LifeSource. Just in time for National Donate Life Month, which is observed in April every year, Emily spoke about how organ, eye, and tissue donation saves lives. Emily’s personal testimony about the profound impact of organ donation on both the recipients and the donor’s family was particularly powerful. For more information about LifeSource, visit <https://www.life-source.org/>.



The AHEC Scholars program is designed for college-level health profession students interested in supplementing their education by gaining relevant knowledge and experiences in rural and underserved areas of SD. Program activities cover the following eight Core Topics: Interprofessional Education; Behavioral Health Integration; Social Determinants of Health; Cultural Competency; Practice Transformation; Current and Emerging Health Issues; Connected Communities and Supporting Health Professionals; and Virtual Learning and Telehealth.

Learn more about this free, professional development program at <https://www.westriversdahec.org/higher-education-students/sd-ahec-scholars/>.



# HAARBERG 3D CENTER ANNOUNCES PILOT GRANT AWARDS

CONTRIBUTED BY SOUTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY, PHARMACY & ALLIED PROFESSIONS

South Dakota State University's Haarberg Center for Drug, Disease and Delivery, housed in the College of Pharmacy and Allied Health Professions, has announced its second round of funding for research projects through the Haarberg 3D Center's Pilot Grant Program. The Haarberg 3D Center is funded by the South Dakota Board of Regents, with a goal of advancing interdisciplinary research and research commercialization of biomedical technologies through university, industry and clinical collaborations. Recently, the center also received a \$1.1 million gift from Kevin and Lorie Haarberg and a planned gift of \$10 million.

"The goal of the pilot grant program is to fund promising pilot projects from the participating institutions," said Omathanu Perumal, director of the Haarberg Center for Drug, Disease and Delivery. "The funding helps researchers to generate the initial proof-of-concept and develop larger proposals for external funding."

Last year, four projects were funded through this program. This year, the center received 17 proposals from researchers at participating institutions. The proposals were evaluated by external reviewers, and the top-four ranked applications were recommended for funding by the center's steering committee. The research proposals have a significant technology development component that aligns with the Haarberg 3D Center's mission of advancing research commercialization of biomedical technologies.

**Article Link:** [Haarberg 3D Center announces pilot grant awards | South Dakota State University \(sdstate.edu\)](#) | **Contact:** Kristy Ullom, 605-688-5591



## SDSU PHARMACY GRADS LEAD REGION, NO. 5 NATIONALLY

CONTRIBUTED BY SOUTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY, PHARMACY & ALLIED PROFESSIONS

Calculation of first-time pass rates by U.S. pharmacy graduates show that the Class of 2022 at South Dakota State University topped the region and is fifth nationally. According to data from the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education, the pass rate for SDSU students was 94.4% (68 of 72). That puts the class first in the five-state region of South Dakota, North Dakota, Nebraska, Iowa and Minnesota and fifth nationally.

Nationally, the first-time pass of the North American Pharmacist Licensure Examination was 79.8%. Dan Hansen, dean of the SDSU College of Pharmacy and Allied Health Professions, said, "I know the goal in every one of the college's programs is a 100% first-time pass rate, but I want to provide a little perspective. This is the second year of the new NAPLEX blueprint and the first year the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy instituted a new and higher scale score for passing."

The national pass rates were 86% in 2020 and 82% in 2021 while SDSU pass rates were 97% both years. "The 2022 result is a continuation of the excellence SDSU has shown on the NAPLEX since moving to a Pharm.D. (six-year doctor of pharmacy degree), and we should all be proud of this achievement," Hansen told his colleagues.

**Article Link:** [SDSU pharmacy grads lead region, No. 5 nationally | South Dakota State University \(sdstate.edu\)](#) | **Contact:** Kristy Ullom, 605-688-5591

# SDAHQ SPRING CONFERENCE 2023

CONTRIBUTED BY SDAHQ

## SDAHQ Spring Conference 2023

**Tuesday, May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023 - Hilton Garden Inn South  
Sioux Falls 9am-3:30pm**



Donna Wright, MS, RN, NPD-BC

### Agenda

#### Health Equity Discussion Panel

We have invited health equity experts from Sanford, Avera, and Monument to have an open discussion on what they are doing at their facilities to improve on health equity efforts per CMS and TJC guidelines.

#### Roadmap after Covid: Finding Joy in Work Again

Join Donna Wright as she shares her wit and humor about our current healthcare climate. She will give us strategies to help us re-discover our passions and re-energize ourselves and our teams. You will not want to miss this presentation. Donna Wright is an international speaker and will bring us lots of fun stories.

### REGISTRATION

Registration is :  
Non-SDAHQ member = \$75/person  
SDAHQ member = \$50/person  
Lunch and snacks provided

**REGISTER**



Can also scan QR code above to register.

5300 South Grand Circle  
Sioux Falls, SD 57108

Hotel room blocks available through April 9<sup>th</sup>  
Click [here](#) to reserve hotel room

### SDAHQ Info

SDAHQ is a quality professional organization within South Dakota. It works in concert with the National Association of Healthcare Quality, the nation's leading organization for health quality professionals. Its mission is to improve the quality of healthcare and to support the development of professionals in healthcare quality.



# AVERA COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKER FINDS JOY IN SERVING

CONTRIBUTED BY AVERA HEALTH

Nyareik Choul's journey from production work to community health worker at Avera is a testament to the opportunities and growth potential available at the health system. She is passionate about serving as a bridge between underserved groups and healthcare systems, and her role provides her with a sense of fulfillment knowing she is making a positive impact. Avera's employee benefit programs and growth opportunities have made a significant difference in Nyareik's life. She encourages others to pursue their dreams with Avera, and her story shows how the organization is changing lives.



[View the full story](#)

## THE COMMUNITY PRACTICE INNOVATION CENTER SEES MAJOR GROWTH IN FIRST FIVE YEARS

CONTRIBUTED BY SOUTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY

The Community Practice Innovation Center (CPIC) is a resource and collaboration center that has seen remarkable growth over the last five years. The center, which is housed at South Dakota State University, brings together faculty, staff, students, researchers, practitioners, and collaborators from across the state to “lead change within community practice.”

Where CPIC began, however, is far from where it is today. Five years ago, CPIC was little more than an idea for Dr. Sharrel Pinto, department head for Allied and Population Health, as she drove around the state meeting South Dakotans. “When I was on the road that first year,” Pinto explained, “we saw there was a need for infrastructure, and a need for a center in order to make innovative projects happen.”

Today, CPIC has brought in around 8.5 million dollars to the state, is made up of more than fifteen faculty and staff, and is actively engaged in four major grant-funded projects that address topics including increasing awareness and resources for care of patients with diabetes and CVD, work to increase access to and effectiveness of care for patients with substance use disorders, and strengthening and growing the respiratory therapy and public health workforce in South Dakota. As the CPIC work continues, Pinto is focused on growing the partnerships CPIC has already made and continuing to do project work that benefits South Dakotans.

Learn more about CPIC and ways to connect: <https://www.sdstate.edu/cpic>



# SOUTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY'S PHLEBOTOMY CERTIFICATE OFFERS STUDENTS UNIQUE HEALTHCARE WORK OPPORTUNITIES

CONTRIBUTED BY SOUTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY

South Dakota State University's Phlebotomy Certificate has been offered since Fall of 2020. "The certificate is a great place to start if someone is interested in healthcare," said Stacie Lansink, program director for the Medical Laboratory Science program. "It's useful when applying to nursing, pharmacy, medical, or laboratory science programs, especially those that may require an applicant to have some patient interaction, as it is a skill to be able to draw blood from a patient."

Phlebotomy is an important part of many aspects of health care, from drawing blood for donations or transfusions to using samples to conduct laboratory tests. According to Lansink, 70%-80% of a patient's medical history comes from the lab, indicating the important role a phlebotomist can play in a patient's health journey.

Deidre Cross, a Phlebotomy student, said she chose to pursue a Phlebotomy Certificate to increase her involvement in healthcare. "I enjoy the analytical and detailed side of healthcare and found that phlebotomy is a great combination of direct care and knowledgeable experience."

The program has also been named the Top Online Phlebotomy Classes and Certification Program of 2023 by EduMed. Dr. Sharrel Pinto, department head for Allied and Population Health, said, "We continue to see a rising need for Phlebotomists across our state and country. We are glad to have a program that trains high quality phlebotomists to meet the growing needs of our healthcare partners."

Learn more at: <https://www.sdstate.edu/pharmacy-allied-health-professions/medical-laboratory-science/phlebotomy-certificate>

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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH



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Contact [Josie Petersen](#), Department of Health

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