

**VA NEW YORK HARBOR HEALTHCARE SYSTEM
APPLICATION FOR THE VA NURSING ACADEMY:
ENHANCING ACADEMIC PARTNERSHIPS PROGRAM**

Abstract

VA New York Harbor Healthcare System (VA NYHHS) and Pace University Lienhard School of Nursing (LSN) propose an innovative approach to nursing education via the VA Nursing Academy. VA NYHHS and Pace University have enjoyed a long history of collaboration through clinical affiliation. Students have had a wide variety of clinical experiences at VA NYHHS. Leadership at both institutions have long-established relationships in the above context, in professional organizations, and most recently, in a regional evidence-based practice initiative.

This joint collaborative venture will be situated within the accelerated undergraduate program and will provide a unique opportunity for students to be preceptored by talented and experienced VA staff members while working in patient care areas. Of note is the fact that students will have virtually all of their clinical experiences at VA NYHHS, with the exception of pediatrics and obstetrics. Because the accelerated program is attractive to highly motivated, focused individuals, students will have the opportunity to self-schedule their experiences in collaboration with both VA-based faculty and VA staff mentors, and university faculty. Thus students will become “embedded” into the daily work life of actual clinical practice units.

Special outreach to the veteran population is extended by Pace University through its innovative Veteran Tuition Scholarship Program in which tuition is significantly discounted by 50% to all admitted veterans who provide a copy of their DD-214 form. This allows for a focus on “veterans caring for veterans” and is augmented by the fact a significant portion of the VA staff population is composed of veterans. All of these features will contribute to the students’ perception that VA NYHHS is a desirable place to begin their professional employment after graduation.

The program directors at each organization will lead the collaborative development of specific curricular experiences; develop VA-based and university-based faculty; mentor novice VA-based faculty; and evaluate student progress. This proposal describes workshops and directed learning experiences to mentor VA-based faculty. The long-established Rudin Programs for faculty development will provide the vehicle for this development. Thus the goals of the partners are congruent in that the university increases its enrollment, the health care system enriches its clinical practice environment and patient care, mutual goals for program/research development are furthered and the VA Nursing Academy goal of increasing the number of registered nurses is achieved in an innovative curriculum model.