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## **Kennesaw State, Floyd College partner to combat nursing shortage**

**KENNESAW, Ga. (Aug. 3)** — Kennesaw State University and Floyd College are working together to combat the growing shortage of health-care workers statewide. This partnership is part of an ongoing program administered through the Georgia Board of Regents' Intellectual Capital Partnership (ICAPP®) Health Professionals Initiative.

Announced today, Phase Two of the initiative leverages a \$2.05 million state commitment with \$1.75 million in cash and in-kind support from 26 private-employer partners charged with guaranteeing the program graduates jobs in nursing, medical technology and pharmacy. In Phase Two, 12 University System institutions will produce more than 700 fast-track graduates for the state's health-care industry, building upon the 632 newly licensed health-care providers produced by Phase One.

In the case of Kennesaw State and Floyd College, private-sector partners for Phase Two include WellStar Health System, Cartersville Medical Center, Floyd Medical Center and Redmond Regional Medical Center.

"It is important that we continue to invest in the recruitment and education of Georgia health-care professionals," said Gov. Sonny Perdue. "I applaud all of the public and private partners who have combined their resources and joined forces to tackle what is truly a national problem. The ICAPP® Health Professionals Initiative once again puts Georgia in a leadership role for finding innovative solutions to the needs of business and industry in our state."

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As part of Phase Two of the ICAPP® Health Professionals Initiative, KSU will produce a total of 50 new graduates through its accelerated bachelor of science in nursing degree program. This program was developed by the WellStar College of Health and Human Services at Kennesaw State, and is taught by KSU faculty members in classrooms on both the KSU and Floyd College campuses. As part of the collaboration, the two schools jointly support a laboratory assistant assigned to Floyd College.

When these 50 new health professionals enter the workforce, 25 will work for the private-sector partners in Floyd and Bartow counties, with the remainder filling vacancies at WellStar. Complementing those numbers will be 30 additional graduates of Floyd's associate degree in nursing program, all of whom will be working in Floyd and Bartow counties.

“We’re excited about the development of the relationship with Floyd College, because it opens up the possibility of a baccalaureate degree in nursing to students throughout northwest Georgia,” said Dr. David Bennett, chair of KSU’s WellStar School of Nursing. “We have a history of collaboration in the community, and we’re always looking to form partnerships with other healthcare providers and educational institutions. A characteristic of a good nursing school is you’re not having to go it alone; you’re out there partnering in the community, working together to meet the needs of others.”

Both KSU and Floyd College took part in Phase One of the Health Professionals Initiative, and have impressive results to show for their efforts. The KSU program, which compresses the amount of time needed to earn a bachelor’s degree from 30 to 16 months, produced a total of 34 graduates as of June 30 — half of whom did their coursework at Floyd — and 37 more are expected to graduate by December.

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For Floyd's associate degree program, the numbers are equally strong: Twelve new health professionals already have completed their degrees, and 20 more graduates are projected by the time Phase One concludes.

Statewide, Phase One of the initiative resulted in 632 new licensed health-care professionals being produced through customized University System "fast-track programs" — far exceeding the original goal of 500 new graduates. The successful endeavor represented a \$6.75 million public/private partnership between Georgia health-care providers and the University System. Thirteen University System institutions worked with medical providers in 19 Georgia communities on Phase One.

Though participants in the ICAPP® Health Professionals Initiative work toward their degrees at an accelerated pace, the quality of instruction remains high. "It's the same academic rigor as our traditional program," said Dr. Marie Bremner, a long-time faculty member at KSU who helped develop and now coordinates the accelerated bachelor's degree program offered on the two campuses. "Students have to be motivated, and they are. They realize they can make a difference in their own lives, and in the community as well."

This and other news releases detailing the ICAPP® Health Professionals Initiative may be found online at: [www.icapp.org/employees/hpi.phtml](http://www.icapp.org/employees/hpi.phtml)

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**Kennesaw State University** is a comprehensive, residential institution with a growing student population exceeding 17,400 from 129 countries. The third largest state university out of 34 institutions in the University System of Georgia, KSU offers more than 55 undergraduate and graduate degree programs.