

Focus on Nursing: Weekender program gives parents and workers the opportunity to succeed

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Preparing yourself for a new career can be tough – and more so if you’re juggling a job and family commitments.

For those seeking to become registered nurses, SUNY Broome’s evening and weekend program in nursing can make all the difference. The three-year, six-semester program schedules classes during Monday and Wednesday evenings and clinicals on weekends, making it a good option for those who are currently employed or taking care of children during the day.

“The program is intended for the student who already has a lot of the background. They can just focus on the practical nursing program,” explained Professor Denisa Talovic, chair of SUNY Broome’s Nursing Department.

Only offered every other year, the program will begin in January with approximately two dozen students.

Prospective students should apply by October 15, Talovic said.

Typically, students are already working in the field, often as licensed practice nurses (LPNs) or certified nursing assistants (CNAs) at local health facilities or nursing homes. Many are also parents, such as December 2013 graduate Melissa Kelley. When she began the program in 2010, she was working part-time as a nursing assistant and raising three children.

“It allowed me to take care of them during the day and go to school during the evening,” Kelley said of the program. She is now working as a registered nurse at UHS Wilson Medical Center.

For Michele Thomson, the program led to her current career path. After graduating, she then went on to earn a bachelor’s and then a master’s degree. She is currently working as a nurse practitioner for UHS cardiology.

While enrolled at SUNY Broome, she worked full-time as an LPN – a job she held for 18 years – and raised two children.

“I wouldn’t be where I am now if it weren’t for these programs on the evenings and weekends,” said Thomson. While they take place on the weekends, the nursing clinicals are no less intensive and varied. Students experience many different environments, from hospitals and nursing homes to outpatient psychiatric facilities, cardiac rehab, surgery, a methadone clinic and more. By exposing students to different venues, the program allows them to find the environment – and the career path – that best suits them.

“That’s how I, as a student, found out that I really loved psych and I became a psych nurse,” noted Talovic, who graduated from SUNY Broome’s Nursing program herself.

As part of the SUNY Broome Nursing program, the degree is challenging and expectations are high. They need to be, Talovic reflected; there are no do-overs when you’re dealing with the health and wellbeing of others.

When it comes to achieving their educational and career goals, graduates cite the program’s flexibility as a plus. A strong support system is also essential for maintaining that balance between work, family and school, they note.

“I tell people all the time, ‘It’s hard, but there are ways to do it,’” Thomson said.

Interested in applying? [Click here](#) or call Admissions at (607) 778-5001.

Nursing students at SUNY Broome

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