

SUNY Broome to install digital X-ray system

August 21, 2015

SUNY Broome students studying radiologic technology will soon have hands-on access to the most up-to-date equipment in their field.

In late August, the college will install the Carestream Digital X-Ray Ascend system in the Decker Health Sciences Center. The ceiling-mounted unit will replace equipment that dates back to the 1970s.

“It’s so outdated it’s difficult to get parts to fix it,” said Colleen Donahue, chair of the Radiologic Technology Department, said of the older equipment.

Students in the program will now be able to train on all forms of radiology equipment they may encounter in their careers: film screen systems, computed radiography (CR) and now digital radiography (DR). While CR takes 45 seconds to produce an image, DR technology creates images instantaneously.

Medical facilities, including all of the area’s hospitals, are also increasingly switching to DR technology. The new technology has other advantages, too: newer versions are wireless and can be moved from wall to table units. Technologists can also program the unit to move into position and literally set itself up, reducing the amount of labor that goes into scans.

“It’s a lot less work for the technologists, so they can concentrate on better patient care,” Donahue said.

The purchase and installation of the Ascend system cost \$207,602. Of that, \$150,000 came from Regional Council Capital Funds through Empire State Development and \$57,602 from the Dr. G. Clifford & Florence B. Decker Foundation, with additional support from SUNY Broome’s 2014-15 Perkins IV Career & Technology Education Grant award.

“Technology has become an integral part of the teaching-learning environment, especially in areas where hands-on experience is critical to a student’s understanding. The new Digital Radiography unit will allow students to learn on state-of-the-art technology similar to that being used on real patients within the health care industry today,” said Dr. Kelli Ligiekis, SUNY Broome associate vice president, dean of STEM and acting dean of Health Sciences. “We are very thankful for the funding and donation that made this equipment purchase possible, and also very excited to offer this opportunity to our students as they prepare for careers as radiologic technologists.”

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