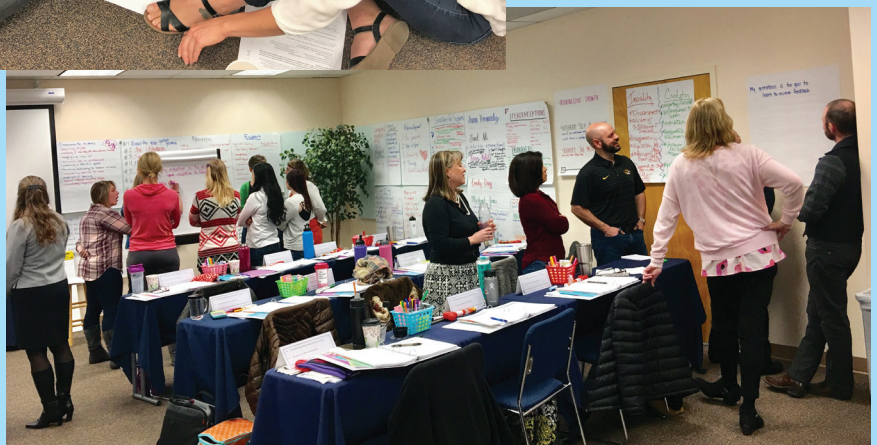


2003-2018 Fifteenth Anniversary Report

Fulfilling a Promise: Transforming Healthcare Together



COLORADOCENTER
for Nursing Excellence



Children's Hospital Colorado



Daniel and Janet Mordecai Foundation



Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

Thank you to our funding partners

Ongoing support from multiple foundations and health systems has been essential to our ability to serve Colorado. Partner funding has enabled the Center to develop innovative leadership and team training for over 7,500 nurses and healthcare staff, policy and workforce analyses, and bridge building partnerships since 2003.

The Center's Vision

Transforming Healthcare Through Workforce Innovation

The Center's Mission

Building upon a foundation of evidence, the Center advocates for and provides professional education, leadership development, coaching and data analysis to continually strengthen a diverse nursing and healthcare workforce. Our defining strategy is to convene and engage the right people, at the right time, to develop and implement innovative solutions to emerging healthcare challenges.

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For a PDF of this report and to access additional information, see: www.ColoradoNursingCenter.org

Cover photos: Top left picture of the Center staff was taken at the 2017 National Nursing Workforce Forum. The middle picture is from Clinical Scholars small group work. The bottom is a Clinical Scholars communication exercise. Top right is a picture of the 2017 Presidents Award.

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FACTS ▶

3,200

The Center's twenty-two 2013-2017 programs and activities provided training and development to at least 3,200 individuals.

2.4M

The Center's 2017 budget was \$2.4 million. 37% came from public sector grants, 40% from foundations, 23% from earned revenues and contributions.

Fulfilling a Promise: Transforming Healthcare Together (2003-2018)

Beginning in 2001, a diverse group of healthcare and community leaders came together to identify actions Colorado could take to address the cyclical but growing shortage of nurses in the state.

Led by Joel Edelman (former CEO of Rose Medical Center) and Mary Anstine of the Health ONE Alliance (now The Colorado Health Foundation) these wise strategists decided that an independent organization, politically neutral, but focused on "rising tide" strategies, could provide the support and results needed to address this growing workforce challenge.

With initial funding from The Colorado Health Foundation, and the Colorado Permanente Medical Group., Sue Carparelli, founding CEO, and Karren Kowalski, current CEO, worked together to bring the first HRSA grant to the Center in 2003. This began the tradition of not just collecting and analysing data but addressing nursing workforce issues through educational interventions and futuristic problem solving.

Since 2003, the Center has worked directly with over 7,200 nurses, 175 healthcare facilities, 35 schools of nursing, and indirectly supported thousands of nursing students.

Over the past 15 years, the Center has worked to always be on the cutting edge of healthcare workforce issues and trends. That intention presents significant challenges in terms of balancing the sometimes competing demands of

fundors, education stakeholders, employers, the nursing and healthcare workforce and the policy environment.

When the IOM Future of Nursing Report was released in 2010, the charge from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation was to implement the eight recommendations in each of the 50 states.

These recommendations served as the foundation for the work of the Center beginning in 2011 when Colorado was also identified as an Action Coalition partner with the co-sponsorship of the Colorado Hospital Association.

1. Remove scope of practice barriers
2. Expand opportunities for nurses to lead and diffuse collaborative improvement efforts
3. Implement nurse residency programs
4. Increase the proportion of nurses with BSN to 80% by 2020
5. Double the number of nurses with a doctorate by 2020
6. Ensure that nurses engage in lifelong learning
7. Prepare and enable nurses to lead change to advance health
8. Build an infrastructure for the collection and analysis of inter-professional healthcare workforce data

2,100

Over 44% percent (29,000) of Colorado RNs are over 55. Each year 2,100 nurses turn 65. Some retire before 65, some after, but unavoidably they will leave the workforce.

500%

Until 2027 Colorado's over-65 population will grow by 15,000 each month. In 2000, this number was 3,000. Has our senior healthcare capacity also increased by 500%?

36%

Thirty-six percent (5,900) of Colorado physicians are 55 years or older. Twenty-five percent (4,100) are already over 60. Who will fill their shoes?

“ We work today to craft innovative solutions to nursing workforce and health care challenges that will arrive tomorrow. ”

In 2014 the Board of Directors adopted the full implementation of these eight recommendations as their long term strategic goal for 2025. In 2016, the IOM reviewed the progress of the first five years of the implementation of this important work, funded by the RWJF and discovered that definite advancements had been made.

The ensuing recommendations for the final five years of this concerted effort included:

- 1. Remove Barriers to Practice and Care.** Support legislation that allows all APRNs and RNs to practice to the full extent of their education and training.
- 2. Transform Education.** Support academic pathways toward the baccalaureate degree, promote the pursuit of doctoral degrees, with an emphasis on the PhD and promote interprofessional and lifelong learning.
- 3. Collaborate and Lead.** Encourage nurses to serve in executive and community leadership positions so that they may be involved in the redesign of health care delivery and payment systems.
- 4. Promote Diversity.** Work with multiple partners to increase the diversity of the nursing workforce and that of the health professions more broadly.

- 5. Improve Data.** Work with multiple partners to collect data that can define the numbers and types of health professionals, where they are employed, and what roles they fill.

Succeeding in this work requires an incredible team, which we have.

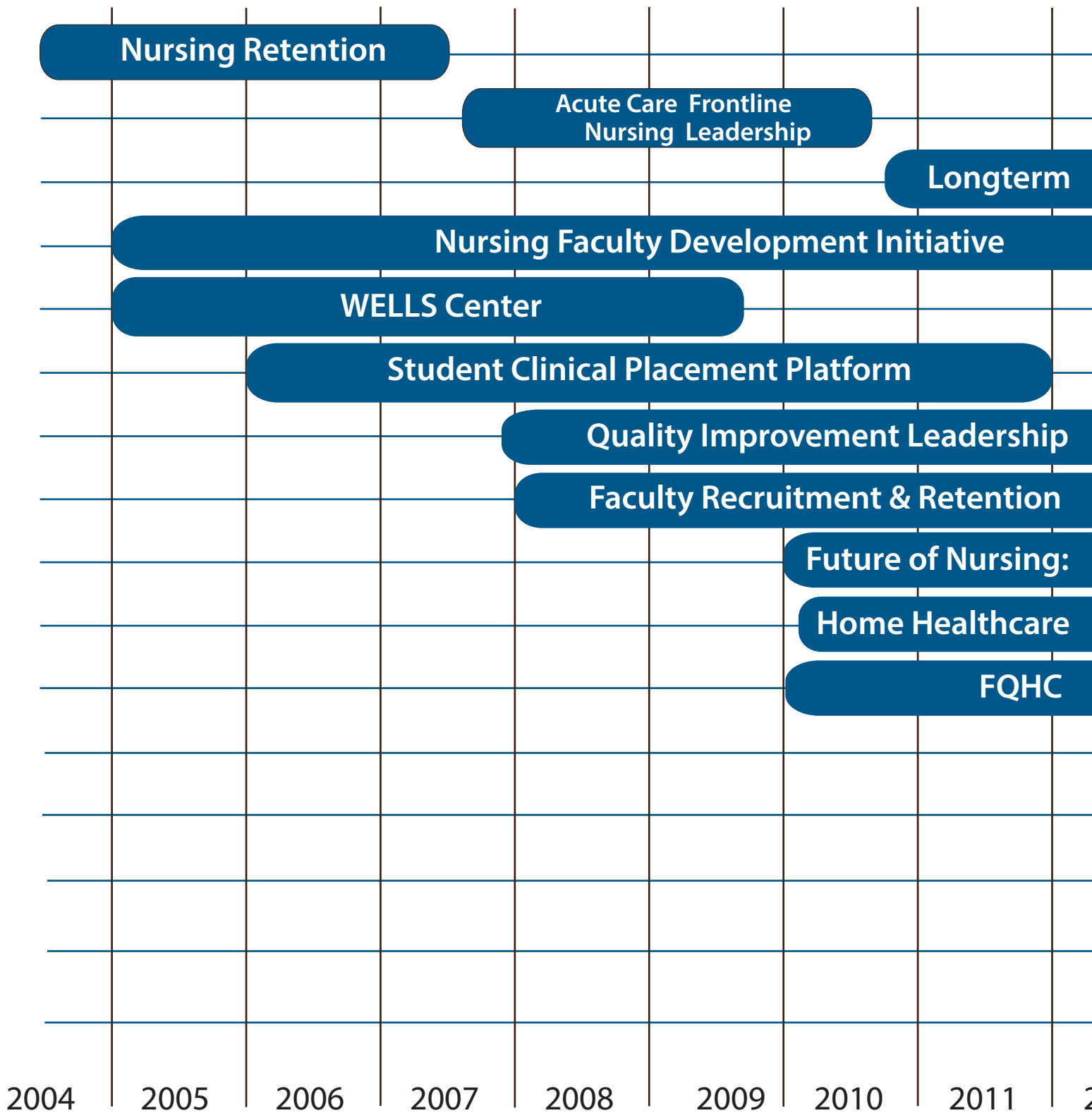
The efforts of the Center have made a significant and tangible difference for the nurses and patients of Colorado.

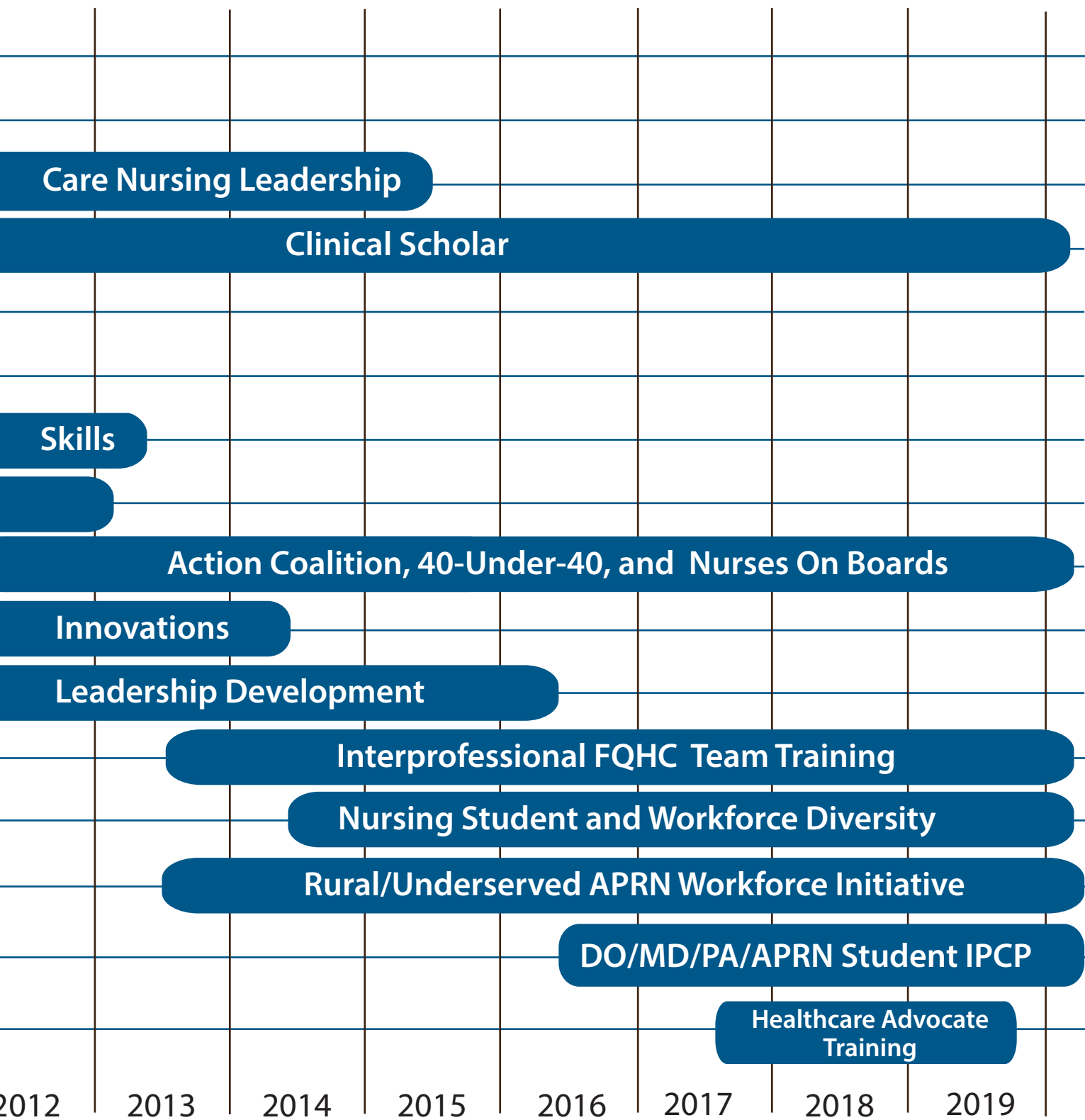
While the challenges remains significant, the Center stands as an example of what a community can do to address the access to healthcare and healthcare workforce challenges we face as a state and a nation.

We thank you for joining us for this celebration and for your continued support of nursing in Colorado, which is a pillar upon which all care is based.

Tom Boyer, Board Chair
Karren Kowalski, CEO and President

A Summary of Center Activities Since 2004





2013-2017 Program Summary: 22 Programs With Over 3,200 Participants

Since its creation in 2003, the Center has worked to both understand the challenges facing Colorado’s nursing and health care workforce and then to craft innovative responses. The Center’s operating principals have been to consistently engage multiple partners and develop collaborative and enduring solutions. Drawing on insights from nursing practice and education leaders, from 2013-2017 the Center and its partners designed and delivered a wide range of at least 22 nursing and healthcare workforce and leadership development programs for over 3,200 health care professionals across Colorado. The following pages provide some detail about some of the Center’s 2013-2017 activities and programs.

2013-2017 Program	Participants	2013-2017 Program	Participants
40 Under 40 Conference & Networking	388	Leadership Excellence for Academic Development (LEAD)	161
APRN Rural and Underserved Fellows	47	Mentoring Program	95
Building Skills for Effective Teams	228/42 teams	Mentee Support Program	113
Centura Advanced Leadership	18	National Nursing Workforce Center Forums	373
Clinical Scholar Workshops	322	Nurse Leadership Institute	51
Diversity Summit	153	Nurses on Board Salons	467
Diversity Leadership/AARP	35	Powerful Presentations	56
Emerging Talent Leadership	215	Preceptor Training	24
Health Care Advocate Training	16	Service Education Statewide Meeting	301
Labor and Delivery Orientation	10	Team Skills for Students	25

2013 - 2017 Activity Summary: Innovative Programs for Turbulent Times

The five years of 2013 to 2017 were a time of tremendous change and turmoil for Colorado’s healthcare environment and the thousands of employees that provide healthcare services to Colorado’s over 5 million residents. This 15th Anniversary Report gives a small but hopefully illustrative snapshot of some of the Center’s many program activities and initiatives during this period.

Perhaps the best phrases to describe these five years are: “risk taking innovation and leadership”, “working to stay on the cutting edge without losing too many fingers”, “increasing access to care in underserved communities,” “changing the face of Colorado nursing” and “supporting the interprofessional healthcare team of the 21st century.”

One hallmark of this period was a deeply expanded commitment to and partnership with Colorado’s Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) and the communities they serve. Whether it is the extensive work to develop the capacity of FQHC interprofessional teams or implementing the “Grow Your Own” program that supports rural BSN nurses as they work to acquire their APRN degree, the Center’s focus on underserved communities has grown tremendously.

Another intensified theme for these years is the Center’s growing focus on increasing the diversity of Colorado’s nursing workforce. From programs focusing on recruiting and sup-

porting diverse students and mentors to helping to grow an expanded generation of diverse nursing faculty, the Center has been at the forefront of helping Colorado’s nursing workforce catch up to the growing diversity of the state’s population.

More than in any previous years, the Center was active in supporting and informing statewide collaborative efforts focused on key nursing workforce policy issues. Notable among these are statewide efforts focused on APRN regulation and scope of practice, encouraging nursing school holistic admission practices and the Enhanced Nursing License Compact. In each of these areas, the Center took a leading role in informing, shaping and supporting change to meeting the workforce demands of a rapidly changing healthcare environment.

Another program theme has been the recognition and support of the increasingly interprofessional and team-based nature of healthcare. Shifting from the ‘top down’ leadership and workforce practices of the past, the Center has trained hundreds of FQHC staff in the new and challenging skills needed to effectively develop, support and lead effective healthcare teams that include many healthcare professionals in addition to nursing.

From an organizational perspective, the Center has been fortunate to bring on board a new generation of younger and very talented staff, while at the same time continuing to broaden and diversify its funding and resource base. Overall, the Center has worked hard to remain true to the future-oriented vision that created the Center in 2003.

Center Staff: Karren Kowalski, PhD, RN, NEA-BC, ANEF, FAAN - President & CEO

"In 2011, it was my privilege and honor to accept the challenging role of President and CEO of the Center. One of the more exacting aspects of the CEO position has been the necessary focus on innovation, risk-taking and building broad coalitions of groups that have not worked together previously. Each of these aspects require that we stretch, consider new and untried approaches and take risks. The good news is that the Center's team has excelled at moving into these unexplored spaces, in search of "where the puck will be". I have learned so much about developing a team that can respond to complex issues impacting both the workforce and the profession. This serves me well when I co-teach a summer course, "Leading Teams," to doctoral students at Texas Tech.



"I received a phone call the second day on the job suggesting that the Center apply to be an Action Coalition focused on the implementation of the IOM Future of Nursing Recommendations. I am proud to lead a team that responds to these kinds of challenges. We focused on the IOM eight Recommendations and we did it futuristically. What will nursing and Colorado need in the next 10 years? How do we implement the eight recommendations in the state? Such issues as access to care in rural Colorado, using the full scope of education and training, and addressing the diversity of the nursing workforce have been critical to the work of the Center. The Board of Directors has been so supportive and in 2014 made their 'Big Hairy Audacious Goal' for the next decade the full implementation of the eight recommendations of the IOM Future of Nursing Report. We are more than half way to completing this goal.

"A significant part of the leadership development goal is to assist nurses in serving on boards, commissions and councils at the local, state and national levels. We have worked to have nurses appointed by the Governor to public entities. I have been especially privileged to draw on my experience as an Army nurse in Vietnam, and to serve our veterans as first a member and now the chair of the Veterans Commission for Community Living Centers – the five long term care facilities for veterans here in Colorado - and to help shape the future of care for these amazing veterans.

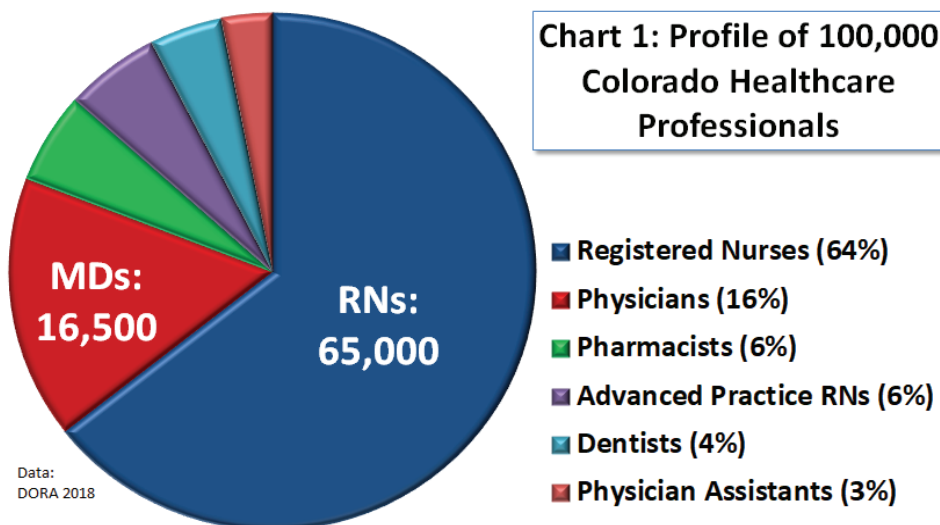
"In conjunction with national speaking, writing and service with professional organizations, I have also had the privilege of representing Colorado in multiple national nursing organizations and as a Magnet Hospital Appraiser. These experiences have made it clear to me that Colorado is on the cutting edge of creating a futuristic vision of healthcare solutions for 21st century patients and families and the Center has a lead role in this re-design."

A Summary Profile of Colorado's Healthcare Workforce

Providing healthcare services to Colorado residents is very much a team effort and the term healthcare professionals covers a wide variety of specialists and professionals. Chart 1 provides one summary perspective of 100,000 Colorado-based healthcare professionals that have active licenses.

While there are many different healthcare professionals, this graph illustrates the relative size of six professions that would generally be described as essential to provide primary care.

Registered Nurses are the largest single healthcare profession in Colorado with 65,000 or 64% of this subset of 100,000 healthcare providers. Additional to this RN workforce is the Advanced Practice RN (APRN) workforce of 5,900 or an additional six percent of this group. These two nursing groups are followed in volume by Physicians with 16,600, Pharmacists with 5,800, Dentists with 4,500 and Physician Assistants with 3,200.



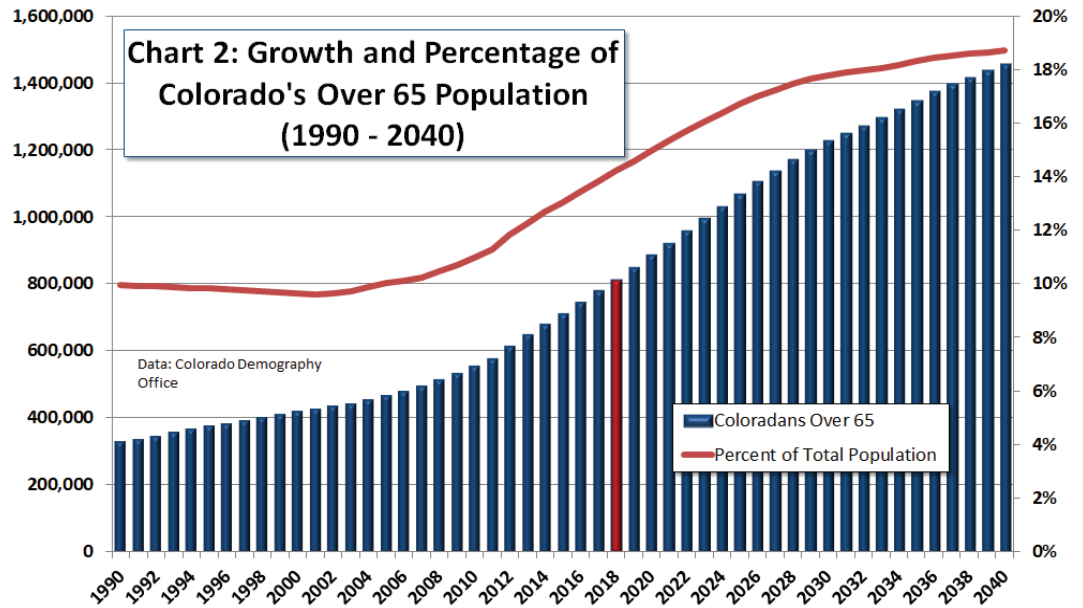
In addition to information about the Center's programs since 2013, the following pages of this 15th Anniversary report will provide additional information to help inform readers about the nature of Colorado's healthcare professionals and the overall workforce.

Data:
DORA 2018

Colorado's "Aging Tsunami" and the Impact on the Healthcare Workforce

Underlying any discussion of Colorado's healthcare workforce must be an understanding of the demand for healthcare, which is fundamentally driven by the overall growth and the demographic profile of the population. Overall, Colorado is entering a period of massive change with respect to its demographics and the resulting demand for healthcare.

As of 2015, Colorado had the sixth lowest share of all states in US (13% of state population) while at the same time having the third fastest growing 65+ population in the US. This lopsided profile is the result of Colorado's migration patterns over the past decades, in which a continuing stream of relatively young people moved to Colorado in the last century, starting heavily in the 1970s. As of 2015, there were 1,360,000 Boomers in Colorado (25% of population). As these boomers and others age, by 2030 Colorado's population 65+ will be 72% larger than it was in 2015, growing from 711,000 to 1,200,000. (see Chart 2 above). This 72% growth rate is compared to the less-than-65 population growth rate of only 20%.



The Colorado State Demography Office projects that the state will gain 1.2 million residents between 2017 and 2030, or roughly 97,000 people per year. Population growth alone will significantly increase healthcare demand. However, given the reality that older individuals consume healthcare services at a rate of up to 400% greater than younger individuals, the strong growth of the over 65 population will contribute at least as much if not more to the demand for healthcare as population growth.

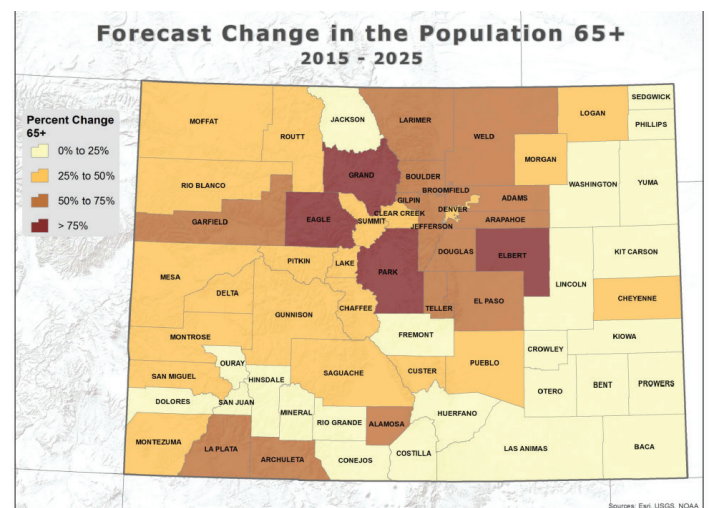
	Percent	Population
0 to 17	-2%	149,111
18 to 24	-1%	68,200
25 to 44	1%	444,048
45 to 64	-2%	151,241
65+	4%	448,604

As Table 1 indicates, the percent of the 0 to 24 and the 45 to 64 year old populations will shrink between 2017 and 2030, while at the same time the 65+ population will increase by four percent or nearly 450,000. That means that over 34,000 Coloradans will turn 65 each year for the coming 13 years!

The Colorado Demography Office estimates that every ten additional 65+ residents creates one additional healthcare job, so the projected 2017-2030 growth of 450,000 additional 65+ Coloradans will create an additional 45,000 healthcare jobs over this time period.

There is significant variation across Colorado counties in terms of the growth of the 65+ population, as Map 1 indicates (map courtesy of the State Demography Office). While the 65+ population of the front range counties will increase 50 to 75% (already a very significant amount), there are selected counties in which the increase will be over 75%, which is an extraordinary rate of increase.

The core question is will Colorado's future healthcare infrastructure and workforce increase to meet this very significant growth in older resident's healthcare needs?



Center Staff: Deborah Center, RN, MSN, CNS, CTA-CC - Senior Director for Education and Coaching

"When I first learned about the Center, I was drawn immediately to the mission and the organization's unique ability to be a neutral and trusted convener. I continue to be amazed at how so many stakeholders, often with opposing points of view, would come together to hold tough conversations and identify real solutions for the collective good of the state.

"My first project in 2006 was to develop Colorado's first electronic clearinghouse for nursing student clinical placements. My job was to facilitate the coordination, training, and implementation of the platform to expand clinical placement opportunities. I thought it sounded like such a simple task when I started but it became one of the most challenging jobs of my career. While the platform we created did not endure, many of the lessons learned continue to inform the ongoing process for expanding clinical placements.

"Over the years, my skills for facilitating and coaching groups have expanded. I have led other programs such as Nursing Faculty Recruitment and Retention, Home Health Workforce Initiative, Frontline-leadership Coaching Programs, a Nurse Leadership Institute and am currently leading a program focused on interprofessional teams. Each project has allowed me to learn more about different healthcare sectors, gaining a deeper appreciation for the challenges and complexities of our industry.

"One thread I see present across most organizations is the challenge of incivility and bullying in the workforce. Witnessing first-hand the negative impact of incivility on team cultures, quality and safety, employee turnover and patient outcomes has allowed me to become a champion for civility. Since 2007, the Center has included topics related to promoting a culture of civility, growing emotional intelligence, resiliency, perseverance, and enhancing team communication in almost every program offered. My passion for the topic caused me to return to school for my PhD in Organizational Development and Leadership Psychology and also to pursue several certifications in leadership and executive coaching.

"I am often reminded through the work at the Center of an African Proverb that states, "If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together." I believe that through the Center's collaboration with so many partners across Colorado, that we have come far together in the last 15 years and are excited about the next phase of the journey. "



Interprofessional Collaborative Practice (IPCP) Training and Development

Our journey into the world of interprofessional collaborative practice training began in 2010 when the Center developed a partnership with the Colorado Community Health Network (CCHN). When we started, many questioned the ability of "nurses" to lead such an initiative, especially when attempting to engage physicians and executive leaders in educational programs. We quickly learned that with the right partners, the Center could become a credible resource and were positioned to be expert leads for such work.

The initial plan for the partnership was for the Center to provide interprofessional leadership development and team training to all levels of staff in federally qualified community health clinics (FQHCs). The collaboration has evolved over the years and has been supported by many local and federal funding sources.

The Frontline Leader and Coaching Program was the first interprofessional program developed and offered by the Center. The six-month program supported the development of new frontline clinical and operational leaders and leaders

with coaching skills. Together, the frontline leader and the coach worked together to complete a quality improvement capstone project. Many lessons were learned about training and developing interprofessional groups that have not only helped the Center grow, and also had far-reaching positive outcomes on job satisfaction, employee retention, and increased quality and patient safety.

In 2014, CCHN approached the Center to create a leadership program for FQHC "emerging leaders and frontline staff" that have the potential for future leadership roles. The plan was to hold three training events for up to 90 medical assistants, front-desk and phone triage staff, patient navigators and others that are overlooked for leadership training.

The program design included a three-day experiential face-to-face class that was followed by three months of group coaching to integrate concepts into practice. The Emerging Talent Leadership Development Program exceeded expectations and recruited participants beyond those intended to engage a variety of new manager roles, operations, and clinical staff, as well as a few executive leaders. We held a total of five cohorts of emerging leaders with a total of 215 participants!

In 2013, the collaborating partners, along with Metro Community Provider Network, were awarded a three-year grant



Mountain Family FQHC Team BSET Presentation

from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) to support two programs focused on improving Inter-professional Collaborative Practice (IPCP) in FQHCs. The two programs include the Nurse Leadership Institute (NLI) and Building Skills for Effective Teams (BSET).

The NLI provided a year-long leadership intensive for a total of 51 nurse leaders from FQHCs involved in leading inter-professional teams. Nurse leaders attended four days of experiential classes and were provided 1:1 coaching. Midway through the program, each participant had the opportunity to complete the “Breakthrough Experience” to support their individual growth and completed a capstone project to develop their leadership.

Many participants have been promoted to higher leadership positions within their organization and attributed the advancement to their enhanced confidence and skills attained by attending the NLI program.

Building Skills for Effective Teams

Building Skills for Effective Teams (BSET) provided an intense year-long IPCP team-building program to teams from Colorado FQHCs. The initial HRSA funding supported the training of 124 interprofessional healthcare staff representing 25 teams from 16 urban and rural Colorado FQHCs. The program includes a series of four 2 ½ day face-to-face learning sessions, team coaching, and the completion of a team capstone project focused on improving two quality measures.

Program outcomes included a variety of qualitative themes including confidence, trust, emotional intelligence and having skills for life to quantitative results specifically to the Uniform Data Set (UDS) quality measures specific to FQHCs. Clin-

ics in the program saw an average improvement in their scores by 14% (the goal was for a five percent improvement).

Examples of some UDS measures targeted by teams for improvement include:

- Improving colorectal cancer screenings
- Increasing the number of dental screenings for patients under age 12
- Diabetic care fo-

cused on the number of diabetic patients with an A1C less than nine

- Improving cervical cancer & Pap screening rates
- Increase number of patients with PCP
- Develop dental care for kids through local school
- Increase tracking HTN measures
- Measures of BMI and counseling ages 3-17 and weight screening for follow-up adults
- Increase measures of depression screening,
- Increase number of mammograms

In July 2016 the Center was awarded additional funding from HRSA’s Division of Medicine and Dentistry for five additional years to continue the IPCP team development. This Primary Care Training Enhancement (PCTE) funding includes four key elements for IPCP training.

The first element continues the BSET Program with a heavier focus on clinical teams. The Center continues to collaborate



BSET High Ropes Team

with CCHN to provide this FQHC program. Each team must have a minimum of two providers (MD, DO, DDS, PA or APRN). The teams will focus on improving two UDS quality measures and will also address patient engagement and satisfaction. As of April 2018, the Center has hosted three Cohorts with teams from medicine, dentistry, behavioral health and included both rural and metro clinics.

The remaining three elements involve collaboration with Rocky Vista University, the University of Colorado School of Medicine and Physician Assistant Programs, Red Rocks Community College Physician's Assistant Program, University of Colorado School of Medicine, Nursing and Pharmacy, and all the Colorado Schools of Nursing with APRN programs.

IPCP Leadership Seminar for Students

IPCP Team Leadership Seminar for Students is a three-day program for provider-level students focused on developing knowledge, skills, and competencies to lead an IPCP team. Students participate in experiential training with extensive time to network with other professions. Programs include reflection between each session to help integrate concepts into their classroom and clinical experiences.

Our goal will be to host one cohort per year and have had a variety of DO, PA, APRN, Dental and Pharmacy students engage with the program. Student testimony at the end of the program consistently reveals the value of having a shared learning opportunity with other professions that is not something they have experienced within their school. Most identify how the program has increased their trust and confidence in working with other professions.

IPCP Team Skills Seminar for Students

IPCP Team Skills Seminar for Students is a two-day IPCP team skills workshop focused on learning skills needed to be an effective IPCP team member. Often this is not a role most providers think is essential to their learning, as they see their role as the leader of the team and not a member. As a result, students are exposed to the need to have a high level of emotional intelligence, clear communication and being willing to listen to others in the team. The program concludes with a high-ropes element to build self and team-trust.

All participants take a pre-post IPCP assessment to evaluate the level of change in interprofessional collaboration. With all the students that have completed to date, the participants demonstrated a statistically significant difference in five out of the six domains. These five domains were: Communication, Collaboration, Roles and Responsibilities, Conflict Management/Resolution, and Team Functioning. The only domain which did not change is related to content on Patient-centered care, which is not the focus of the training.



BSET/PCTE Ropes Course Participant

IPCP Clinical Educator/Faculty Workshop

The final program is the IPCP Clinical Educator/Faculty Workshop, focused on training preceptors for student clinical rotations and developing IPCP competencies. The five webinar series is delivered in partnership with ECHO Colorado. Faculty include a variety of disciplines to promote a high level of interprofessional practice. Due to the tremendous response to the program, we have been able to offer multiple events each year successfully.

Now, eight years later, we have learned a lot about interprofessional collaborative practice and are seen as leaders related to this topic by many organizations. In addition to these specific programs, members of the Center faculty have also presented programs for a variety of clinics, academic settings, local and national conferences, and with the Colorado Medical Society on topics relevant to interprofessional teams. This demonstrates once again the value of nurses leading interprofessional teams!

Rural and Underserved APRN Project

Following the success of the 2015 efforts to decrease statutory barriers for advanced practice registered nurses (APRN) to obtain full prescriptive authority (RXN), the Center applied for funding to increase the number of APRNs working in rural and underserved communities.

The Daniel and Janet Mordecai Foundation responded with funding to support a demonstration project designed to assess if nurses already living and working in a rural community could be recruited to return to school and become APRN providers within those communities. This is called a "Grow Your Own" project because of the community place-based nature of the project.

The initial project was aimed at funding ten nurses in rural communities. Within a few weeks of launching the project, forty applications had been received. This served as proof

Center Staff: Ingrid Johnson, DNP, MPP, RN, Coach-CTI - Senior Director of Operations and Policy

Ingrid Johnson has been with the Center since 2012, starting as the project director on the Long-Term Care Nurse Leadership Project. She came to the Center with a Master's Degree in Public Policy from the University of Denver and always has an eye on how policy impacts practice. "We are living at a pivotal time in healthcare, and nursing is at the epicenter of much of that change."

Since starting at the Center, she identified a recurring pattern of challenges surrounding leadership and health access. This prompted her to earn her Doctorate in Nursing Practice with a focus on innovation and leadership at Arizona State University. Her experience at the Center highlighted the importance of collaboration outside of nursing. She went to ASU to work with Tim Porter-O'Grady and Kathy Malloch, two very accomplished nurse leaders.

Since 2013, Ingrid has been leading multiple APRN workforce initiatives. "I am humbled at the strength and commitment of Colorado's rural nurses, as they go through the lonely struggles to go back to graduate school to get an APRN degree while still handling the responsibilities of family and work. As I travel around the state, I am worried about the future of rural healthcare and am hopeful that these new APRNs will help to mitigate the challenges facing our rural communities."

While a DNP student, Ingrid interned for State Senator Larry Crowder who was sponsoring a bill to lower APRN transition to practice barriers. "Senator Crowder always reminded me that the policy wasn't just about nursing, but about health access." At the Center, Ingrid advocates for strong, evidence based workforce policy not as a lobbyist, but as an objective educator and provider of reliable data. She is often called upon to analyze healthcare policies from a non-partisan perspective. The role necessitates the Center to collaborate across health professions. Included in this work was recent support for the quick passage of the Enhanced Nurse Licensure Compact in 2018.

"This is work I could only do at the Center. The trusted, collaborative and data driven nature of the Center's culture exemplifies how nurses, when empowered to lead, can change the world for the better."



that there are many nurses already living in rural and underserved communities who are not only willing and able, but excited to have the opportunity to become providers in their communities. Using this data, the Center approached The Colorado Health Foundation (TCHF) to request funding to add another 30 nurses. TCHF agreed, creating a new goal to fund 40 new APRN providers in underserved communities.

The project provides between \$10,000 and \$20,000 in funds



Regis University Rural and Underserved Students

to help lift some of the financial burden of returning to school. Additionally, each nurse accepted into the project is provided coaching/mentoring, assistance with school applications, tutoring, and employment and educational support.

All APRN Fellows are contractually obligated to work in a rural/underserved community for a minimum of two years for every year funding is provided. Each is asked to serve in primary care and/or behavioral health during those years. Additionally, the project aims to attain one dollar in matching funds for every four dollars funded. Over 200 applications were received from nurses around Colorado through March of 2017, when the project hit capacity of 40 nurse fellows.

Responding to the clear need for this program, TCHF provided funding for an additional 30 nurses, including six behavioral health specialists. This will allow a total of 70 APRNs to be educated in areas of need across the state.

The request was funded in October of 2017, providing added capacity of 30 more APRN Fellows. Since the funding was received, seven new Fellows have been accepted, with three planning to specialize in behavioral health. When these projects complete in 2021, they will have funded and placed 70 new APRN providers in underserved communities across the state. See Map 2 for the location of current APRN Fellows.

An unexpected challenge was the (continued on page 16)

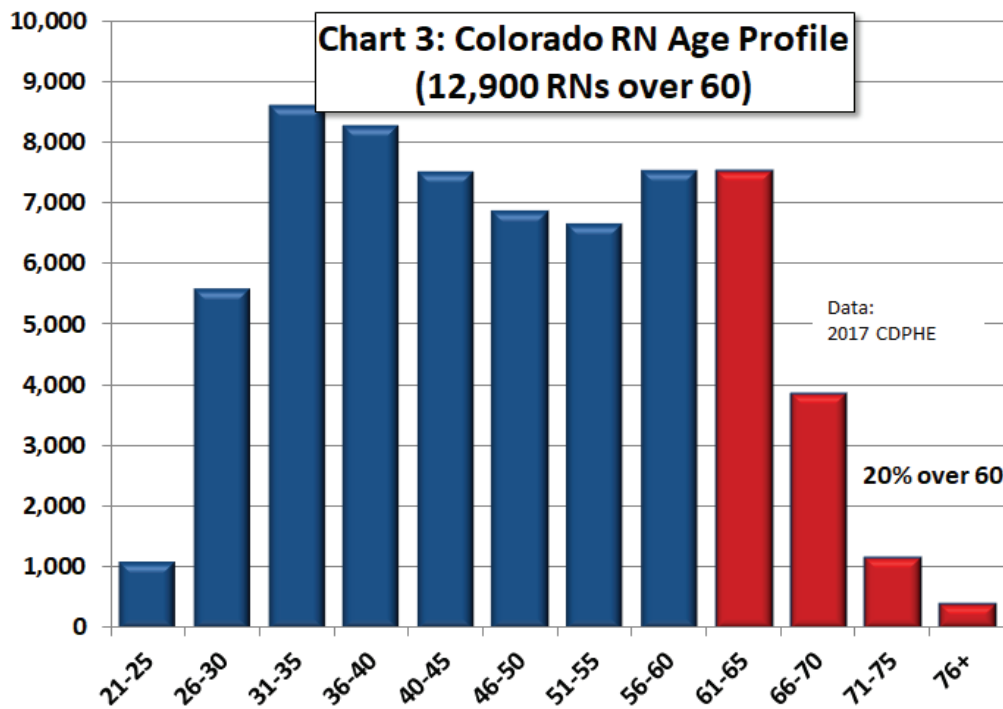
The Demographics of the Nursing Workforce: 20% over the Age of 60

Colorado's nursing workforce is an increasingly mature workforce and is facing a significant retirement "cliff" over the coming decade. As Chart 3 indicates, 20% (12,900) of the nursing workforce is over 60 and so are likely to leave the workforce within five years. 5,400 RNs nurses are already over the age of 65.

Based on this data, it is possible to estimate that an average of 1,300 currently working nurses are expected to retire annually over the next 10 years.

This means that each year the equivalent of 65% of the entire graduating class of all of Colorado's schools of nursing are necessary just to "stay even" with the current nursing workforce by just replacing retiring RNs.

Another insight from this profile is that the three younger RN cohorts (40-45, 46-50 and 51-55) are all smaller than the older cohorts, so as the older and larger cohorts retire, a total workforce "gap" will be created.



Colorado Nurses Foundation Presidents Award

In a very unexpected honor, the Colorado Center for Nursing Excellence was named in 2017 as the first recipient of a newly established annual President's Award from the Colorado Nurses Foundation.

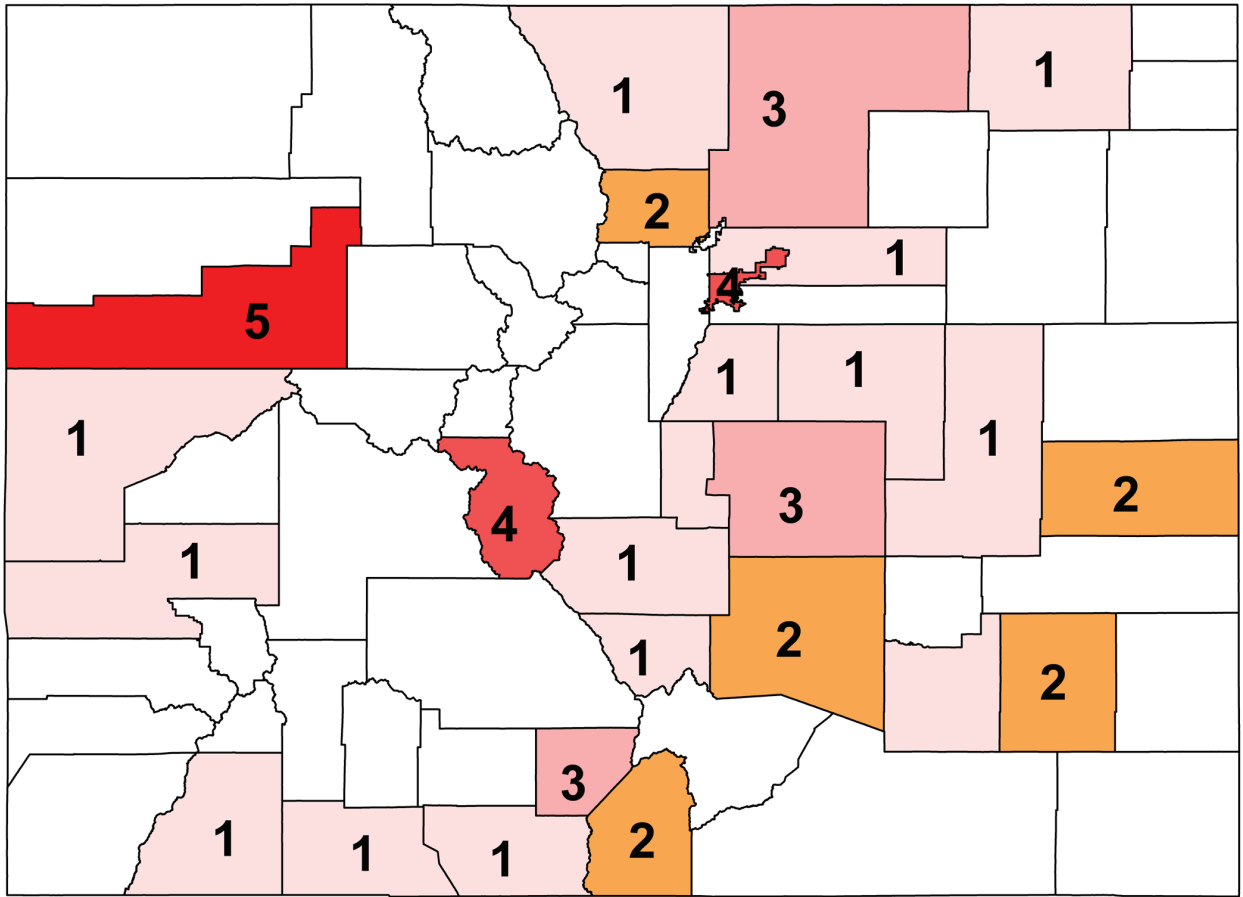
The Center's President and CEO, Karren Kowalski, was so surprised she was nearly speechless, making it difficult to deliver the gracious response that is a part of any positive acknowledgment process. She did manage to make it to the platform and did provide a most sincere expression of appreciation as well as recognition of the entire staff at the Center for the accomplishments that contributed to this honor.

This award recipient is suggested by the President of the Colorado Nurses Foundation and ratified by vote of the Board of Directors. It is to be given to an individual who is not a nurse or to a Colorado organization that supports nurses with the purpose of improving healthcare and nursing practice in Colorado. The recipient will have demonstrated being an advocate for the nursing profession, promoting the education of nurses, and providing recognition for nurses and the profession.

The Colorado Center for Nursing Excellence expresses its gratitude to the Colorado Nurses Foundation for being the recipient of this honor. The Center also acknowledges the many partners who work with us to assure a bright future for nurses and healthcare in Colorado.



President's Award Recipient



Map 2: APRN Fellows per County (April 2017)



need to find accredited academic programs that specifically addressed the educational needs of the rural based provider. All the fellows in the program report a need to retain employment as a nurse while attending school. Most have families and are involved in their communities.

A successful return to school required an educational program that worked with those challenges. The APRN Fellows (see Map 2) are successfully attending several APRN programs around the state. This includes CSU Pueblo, CU, UCCS, UNC, and Regis as well as schools not located in Colorado such as Frontier, Simmons, Chamberlain and UT Arlington.

Loretto Heights School of Nursing at Regis University has moved a step further to support this project by creating a rural and underserved APRN program designed to provide education for nurses interested in serving this population. It is a hybrid program, requiring students to attend on campus classes once a semester for three days while attending synchronous on-line classes the rest of the semester. Additionally, all students were accepted under a holistic review process that weights life experience and intent to serve in rural and underserved heavily, with less reliance on past grades. This partnership has served this project significantly, and 19 of the Fellows are participating in this specialized program.

Health Care Advocate Training Program (HCA)

Partnering with other mission driven health care organizations has been a hallmark of the success the Center has experienced over the past several years. Recently, one of those partners, the Colorado Community Health Network (CCHN), approached the Center about partnering in a Colorado Health Foundation (TCHF) grant funded leadership program. The Health Care Advocate Training Program (HCA) is focused on teaching both leadership and community/political advocacy to providers working in the community health centers across the state.

CCHN represents all the Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) in Colorado. These centers serve as safety net clinics and provide care for some of the most underserved citizens in the state. There are many challenges involved in ensuring all residents have access to a safe, qualified provider, and the FQHC's face them all.

One of the patterns facing healthcare in general and especially FQHCs is the intersection between local, state and federal policies and the capacity of the clinics to provide care to

the large number of people within their communities. They face constant funding cliffs, local ordinances that can impact practice, transportation challenges for their patients, access to needed prescriptions, and many more challenges.

This program was designed to support providers in learning



Healthcare Advocate Training Program Planning

to influence policies that impact the ability of their patients to access the care needed to move them from a sick-care model to a well-care model.

The program is focused on rural providers in southeastern Colorado, but is open to all providers who work in FQHCs. Sixteen providers (APRNs, physicians, clinical psychologists, physician assistants, pharmacists and RNs) are enrolled in the program which will wrap up in February 2019.

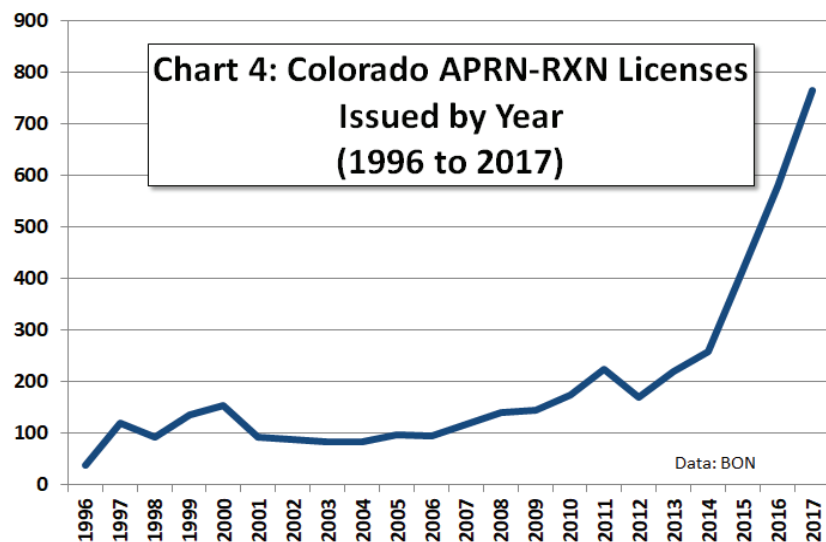
Participants attend web-based interactive learning sessions and day-long workshops throughout the program. The program includes two days in Denver with a day at the Capitol to teach advocacy. They are actively learning how to be impactful leaders within both their work places and communities as well as how to be civil and positive advocates for change.

Each will present a capstone project at the end of the program, illustrating how they have been involved in an advocacy role that helps their communities. The group began by creating a grand vision. That vision is, "Collaborate and advocate to empower all to wellness." CCHN has been an instrumental partner in ensuring the success of this work.

Nursing Leadership at Work: 2015 APRN RXN Legislative Changes

Advanced Practice RNs can acquire a RXN license that enables them to provide prescriptions to patients, and thus can provide more full-service healthcare. Unfortunately, 2014 survey data gathered by the Center indicated that as many as 60% of new APRN Colorado graduates planned to leave the state because of statutory APRN practice barriers related to prescriptive authority, exacerbating workforce shortages and wasting state education resources.

Together, with the support of The Colorado Health Foundation, a Center-organized APRN Workforce Collaborative worked to convince the Nurse Physician Advisory Taskforce for Colorado Healthcare (NPATCH) to recommend changing the relevant statutes and decreasing transition to practice barriers facing APRNs in Colorado.



The Department of Regulatory Agencies then brought a bill to the Legislature that decreased practice barriers with the aim of increasing the number of APRNs practicing in Colorado. That legislation was signed into law May 2015.

One insight into the impact of this nursing-led effort is indicated by Chart 4, which illustrates the number of APRNs that have acquired prescriptive (RXN) authority since 1996. Since the legislative change, there has been a significant increase in the volume of Colorado-licensed APRNs that have prescriptive authority and thus can more effectively provide access to health care in underserved and rural communities, where many of them practice.

Salons and Nurses on Boards

Preparing nurses to lead change to advance health was one of the top three priorities of the 2010 IOM Future of Nursing. One of the strategies for preparing nurses was the establishment of monthly salons.

The idea underlying the salon process is to bring nurses into

an informal conversation around a key issue that affects practice and the profession. For the Center, salons help increase the number of nurses influencing health care decisions. Many nursing leaders have been invited to the salons to share their experiences in being effective change agents, particularly in service on boards.

Nurses are needed on hospital boards where their experience in patient care and quality is invaluable. However, boards should not be limited to ones containing the word “health”

or boards related to health professional practice. School boards and those planning for recreation, transportation, and safety are all related to health.

Salons present information defining the different types of boards and related legal responsibilities. However, all boards need a process of decision making that every nurse knows—assessment, planning, implementation, and evaluation. Nurses are valued board members, not representing the nursing profession, but bringing a nursing lens to the discussion.

Basic skill development in reading financial reports and strategic planning has been presented along with related topics such as the ability to ask powerful questions.



National Board for the Nurses on Boards Coalition

Consultant: Lola Fehr, MS, RN, CAE, PRP, FAAN, Gallup Strengths Coach

“I have been honored to hold various positions since the Center’s inception in 2003. During the startup months I traveled the state conducting interviews to describe the Center’s mission and elicit concerns about the nursing workforce. That was a time when the Center was looked on with suspicion by some who were unsure of how this “upstart” group would support or compete with their interests. In 2008, I served as Interim CEO for a six months. A highlight of this time for me was observing Center leadership in developing simulation as an educational tool.

“Since my return in 2011, leadership development for nurses continues to be one of my passions. My background in leading professional nursing organizations provides the foundation for this work. I view those association roles as “providing nursing care for the nurse” through education and policy development.

“Nurses must be effective leaders to fulfill their responsibility to be patient advocates, but many nurses do not see themselves as leaders. Nurses belong in key positions where health policy is discussed. Gallup has ranked nursing as the most honest and ethical profession for the past 16 years. I know Florence Nightingale would be pleased, but I think she would be dismayed to know that nurses’ voices have not been woven into the fabric of health care systems design.

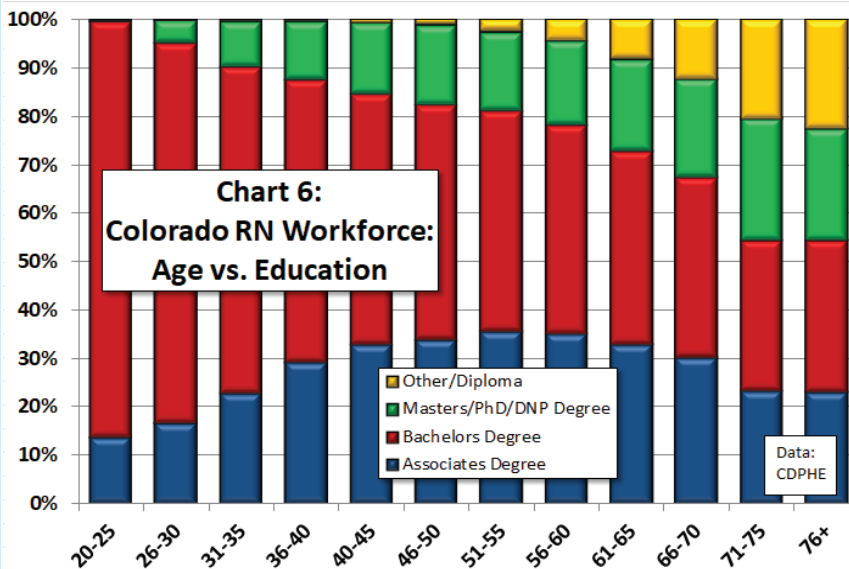
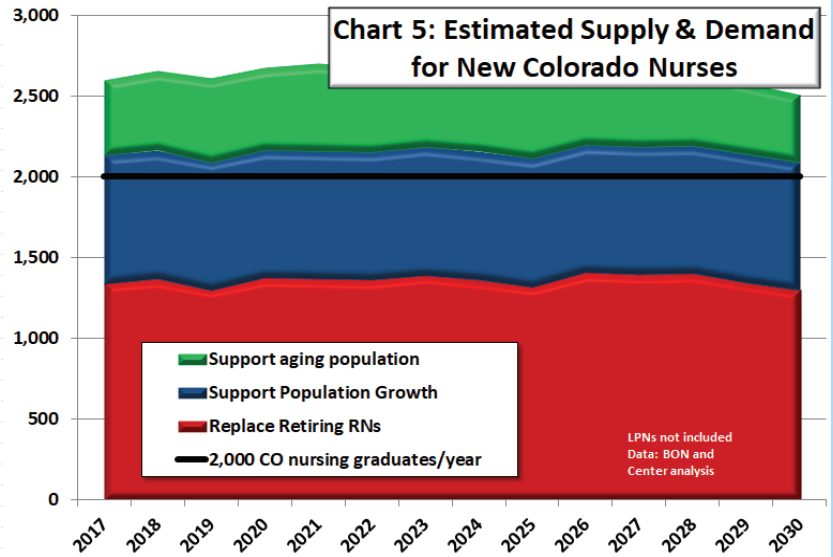
“I also very much appreciate the opportunity to support the Center as a provider of continuing nursing education. It is very satisfying when the learners in the Center’s programs describe how that education has changed their lives in many positive ways. Through leadership development and nursing continuing education the Center has helped nurses gain knowledge, skill and confidence in ‘Leading Change, Advancing Health’. I’m glad to be on the journey with them.”



Nursing Workforce: Supply, Demand and Education

The demand for new nurses over the coming decades will be driven by at least three factors: back-filling for retiring nurses, supporting Colorado's population growth of 95,000 per year, and providing for the increasing health care needs of an aging population. Based on conservative assumptions, Chart 5 provides an estimate of these nursing workforce factors, indicating an annual shortage of around 600 nurses.

The supply of new nurses comes from graduates of Colorado's schools of nursing (averaging 2,000 graduates annually) and in-migration of nurses from other states. A Colorado Health Institute 2008 survey indicated that 57% of Colorado nurses had received their nursing education outside of Colorado. For decades, Colorado has been able to recruit nurses without having to support the expense of investing in their education.

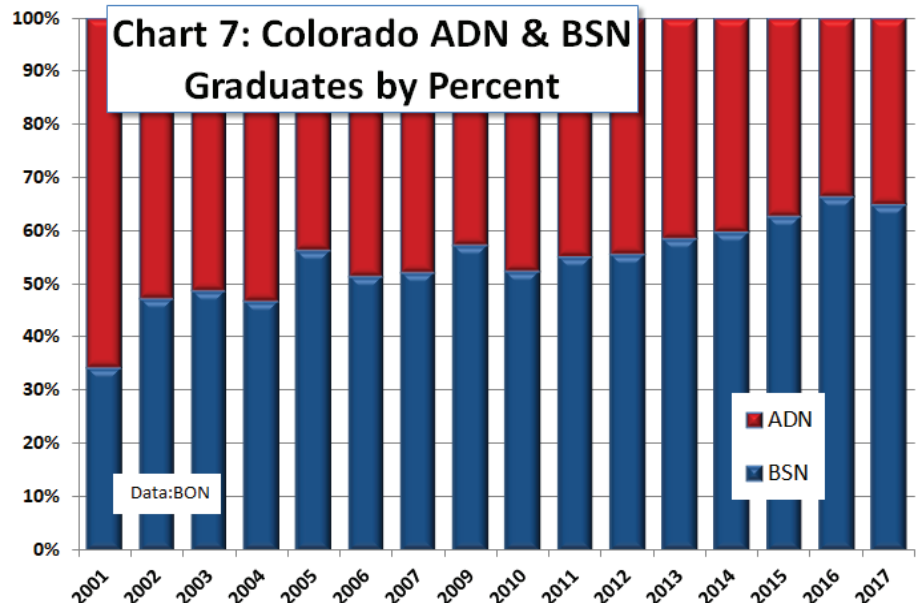


Given that every state in the country is facing an increasingly serious nursing shortage, as well as education budget shortfalls, it is unlikely that Colorado will continue to be a beneficiary of other states' educational generosity. For a host of reasons, other states simply will not produce a surplus of nursing graduates. In a change from the past, Colorado will increasingly be responsible for educating its own nurses.

Even if schools are able to maintain the 2,000 nurse annual graduation rate, the state still faces an average annual shortage of at least an estimated 600 nurses. A nursing shortage in this analysis is defined as the gap between Colorado nursing demand and the number of in-state graduates.

Nurses can practice nursing with either a two-year Associate Degree in Nursing degree (ADN) as well as four-year Bachelor's degree (BSN). Chart 6 illustrates education levels vs. nurse age and Chart 7 indicates how the rate of BSN vs ADN nursing graduates has changed over time. Younger nurses have been increasingly focused on acquiring a BSN degree to a greater degree than the older nursing workforce.

This shift in the education profile of Colorado nurses is clearly an insight into the changing nature of healthcare and workforce requirements.



IOM/Future of Nursing

The Center has been leading a state-wide effort to implement the recommendations in the Institute of Medicine's report "The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health" Originally, funding was provided through State Implementation Program funds from Robert Wood Johnson, AARP, Kaiser Permanente Community Foundation and the Colorado Nurses Foundation. In 2017 this initiative no longer had grant funding, however the Center Board, in alignment with our Mission and Vision, has continued to support these efforts and recognizes the importance of continuing to move the IOM's recommendations forward.

In 2015, IOM priority number one, increasing the number of baccalaureate prepared nurses was identified as an area of focus for Colorado. In support of this recommendation, a Service Education meeting has convened annually. Nurse Educators and Service (healthcare agency representatives) instrumental in clinical placements and staff development have come together to discuss strategies for increasing clinical placements and to reach the goal of 80% BSN prepared nurses by 2020.

The theme for 2017 was simulation, with the intent on seeking answers to why simulation is not being used to its full potential in Colorado. From this, the Colorado Simula-

tion Collaborative was created. The mission of the collaborative is to bring those working in simulation together to share resources and to enhance the quality and amount of simulation in healthcare throughout Colorado.

The second priority for Colorado was identified as IOM recommendation number seven, prepare and enable nurses to lead change to advance health. Due to a spike in turnover rates of deans and directors of nursing schools, a workshop was designed for nurse leaders in academic settings. This four day workshop, now named Leadership Excellence in Academic Development (LEAD), focused on increasing resiliency and reducing turnover in these positions and was held annually from 2013-2016. In 2017, a one day (LEAD) preconference was held in conjunction with the November annual Organization of Associate Degree Nurses (OADN) National Conference in Phoenix, Arizona. Forty five participants from across the nation attended.

Another element of this priority is developing emerging nurse leaders. To enhance the skillsets of young nurse leaders the 40 Under 40 Initiative was established in 2015 and continues with an annual conference and three networking events held in a social environment with facilitated discussion on leadership topics. In 2017 the annual conference was held in May with 82 participants attending.

Center Staff: Susan Moyer, RN, MS, CNSPH, Coach-CTI - Project Director



"The best part of working for the Center is the culture. We really try to practice what we teach and that makes for a culture of trust, good communication and fun! I started at the Center in November of 2012, shortly after funds had been received to carry out the Institute of Medicine's landmark recommendations for the Future of Nursing in America. What a herculean task, zeroing in on initiatives that would be impactful and sustainable and move the IOM recommendations forward! Many projects have grown from this work.

"My favorite project since 2015 has been the 40 Under 40 initiative, which is a project designed to develop young nurse leaders and young nurses aspiring towards leadership. I think developing young nurse leaders is important for me personally because I plan on aging for a good long while and want strong nurses leading healthcare when I am going to need it the most!

"I also enjoy the opportunity to infuse myself in the many other projects the Center has and teaching in many different workshops. The Center also supports the development of staff to role model professional service in leadership roles. For me, serving as Vice-President for the Colorado Nurses Association since 2014 is an example of leading the profession through board service and professional membership.

"Before coming to the Center I obtained my Master's degree at the University of Colorado with an emphasis in public health nursing and am a Clinical Nurse Specialist in Public Health. I truly believe this is the reason they hired me to work at the Center. I feel it is my mission to bring the public health perspective to the organization. With a wider lens I see how our work and innovative new initiatives may impact the community beyond nursing.

"I am constantly looking at the needs assessment behind a grant, its potential impact on the nursing workforce, population health and health equity. Being the voice of public health for the organization also allows me to attend my favorite conference every year, Public Health in the Rockies., which is a wonderful opportunity to stay connected to public health and public health nursing workforce needs. I am always excited and proud to represent the Center at this conference and everywhere I go."

Increasing Nursing Diversity

In 2014, the Center began to address the lack of nursing diversity in Colorado through innovative initiatives supported by The Future of Nursing, Campaign for Action State Implementation Program (SIP). Building on the SIP work, the Center received funding from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) in 2015 and again in 2017 to expand its efforts to reduce the nursing workforce diversity disparity. According to the 2016 US Census, Colorado's population is 31% diverse. In contrast, it is estimated that only nine percent of Colorado's RN workforce is diverse.

Over the last four years, the diversity work has evolved from simple awareness about RN diversity issues to implementation of programs to address those issues. The Center now has a very robust undergraduate nursing mentoring program, has provided financial assistance and coaching to graduate students earning a degree in nursing education and leadership, and has conducted a transition to practice course for new associate degree nurses in critical care.

through coaching and webinars from the National League of Nursing. The intent is for schools to retain and graduate diverse nurses and to develop and implement an organizational culture that is welcoming and supportive of incoming diverse nursing students.

Since the inception of the Center's diversity work, a total of 95 clinical nurses have been trained to be effective mentors for 113 diverse nursing students across Colorado. Mentors come from all specialties of practice throughout the state and are strategically matched with nursing students based on similar cultural backgrounds, geographic location, and similar clinical practice interests.

Throughout the one year mentoring period, mentors and mentees form close relationships. One student stated that she sees her mentor as a positive role model and wants to give back to this program after she gets established in clinical practice. This student comes from a broken family where her mother was an alcoholic and never around. She admitted that her mentor has become like a mother to her and she is forever grateful. Some of the Center's early program partici-



Academic Success Course Participants

In 2015-2017, undergraduate students were recruited from over 10 nursing schools across Colorado to participate in the mentoring program. Currently, students are from both urban and rural areas, private and public schools, and associate degree and baccalaureate degree programs. During this grant cycle, the Center has partnered with CSU-Pueblo, Trinidad State Junior College, Arapahoe Community College, Front Range Community College, Denver College of Nursing, and Regis University. Through this partnership, students receive one year of mentoring and over \$3500 financial assistance. Partner schools receive cultural competence training from the Spring Institute for Intercultural Learning as well as holistic review and admission training with follow up support

participants are now mentors. One mentee is now in a MSN program so she can become the diverse faculty role model that she wished she had during nursing school. One student stated that she felt all alone in nursing school until this program. She now feels like she has family of peers who understand her and who she can reach out to. There are many stories similar to these that show the program's impact.

Peer relationships were established in the Academic Success Course where all students gathered for a one-day orientation and were taught the basics of how to navigate through the rigor of nursing school. During that time, a social networking platform was established for students to support

one another. Via this platform, 72% of the students provide each other with encouragement and self-care reminders, share study strategies, test taking tips and other academic resources, keep one another accountable for meeting mentor program expectations, and invite one another to professional organization meetings.

Partnerships have also been established with Worklife Partnership and Catholic Charities of Pueblo who help students find resources to mitigate any issues associated with social determinants of education. All 40 students have received a needs assessment by Worklife Partnership. Several non-academic needs were addressed to mitigate non-academic challenges that would hinder success. Such needs included: financial counseling, household budgeting, health insurance, food, housing, transportation and child care assistance.

Many students travel greater than 90 miles to attend classes and clinicals and some have experienced financial hardship as a result. One student was essentially living in her car when her money ran out for those well-needed hotel stays in order to get enough rest between 12 hour clinical shifts. Because of the resources provided by our partners this challenge was corrected. The Center continues to build relationships with other organizations that may have an impact for certain student populations, such as single mothers and veterans.

Another resource available to students is tutoring, which has been very valuable. Over the past year, seven students have utilized the Center's tutoring services. Thus far, all students who were on the verge of failing have passed and continue in the program as a direct result of this service.

The mentoring program has been very successful and has been highlighted nationally at several professional nursing conferences. In collaboration with the Center to Champion Nursing in America, the AARP Foundation, and Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the Center presented a three-day Mentor Training Program to nurse educators and Action Coalition members for the Rocky Mountain States in October 2017.

In addition to the student-focused programs, the Center has also hosted several conferences which explored cultural competence, implicit bias, micro-aggressions, privilege, oppression, and holistic review and admission. These conferences inspired many organizations to make changes to their student admission practices. Two nursing schools, Platt College and University of Colorado have both changed their admissions processes to reflect a more holistic approach. The Center anxiously awaits outcomes from this change to see the impact of this project.

Center Staff: Amanda Quintana, DNP, RN, FNP, Coach-CTI - Project Director



"I first learned about the Colorado Center for Nursing Excellence over 10 years ago. I was living in the San Luis Valley when a team from the Center visited me at Adams State. I remember Lola Fehr setting up video equipment in my office as she was interviewing Colorado nurse leaders. The Center certainly made an impression on me because I began doing volunteer work for them soon after those visits. I sat on the planning committees for both the Deans and Directors workshop as well as the diversity project. I taught content for LEAD and was also engaged in the action coalition.

"I began working full-time as the Project Director for the Nursing Workforce Diversity in June of 2015. I was trained as a Co-Active Coach through CTI shortly thereafter. Prior to that time, I was fortunate to have a 26 year nursing career filled with various experiences in acute care, ambulatory care, academia, and leadership in both rural and urban areas. Throughout those years, I built many important relationships with nursing leaders across the state in both academia and clinical practice.

"In my role, I have been charged with decreasing the gap between our diverse nursing workforce and our rapidly growing diverse patient population. This is not something I can do alone, so I'm forever grateful for the Center team and our local and national network of colleagues who share our passion and vision. I am proud to report that together we have created and implemented a robust mentoring program to help diverse nursing students achieve success and transition smoothly into practice. Additionally, we have explored strategies for helping nursing schools look at their current admission practice and consider changing to a more holistic admission approach and we continue to foster cultural humility among our nursing colleagues through our intercultural partnerships.

"Diversity can be a very sensitive topic for many and I'm always saddened to hear stories of misfortune in diverse communities. Students in our mentoring program come from underserved and disadvantaged backgrounds and their stories are real. The Center is fortunate to have the opportunity to tackle some of the issues that typically impedes student success. These moments are challenging at times, but when I hear the stories of success, I can smile and say, 'I made a difference today and what a privilege that was!' I am truly blessed to work for an organization that allows me to inspire others and grow both personally and professionally every day."

Clinical Scholar Nursing Faculty Development Initiative

The Clinical Scholar workshop was introduced in 2005, supported by the state of Colorado. As grant funding ended, the workshop transitioned into a fee-based program. Recognizing the value of this preparation, a number of schools and clinical agencies have paid to send blocks of participants



Clinical Scholar Program Participants

to this workshop. Thirteen years ago the notion of preparing Clinical Scholars was met with a good deal of skepticism. Now, it is almost a community standard for clinical teachers in our community, with over 1,000 Scholars.

One of the initial assumptions was that most nurses who

found themselves in the role of clinical teachers had no formal preparation for a role that was significantly different from their usual nursing functioning. This led to dissatisfaction and burnout among these clinical teachers, and large variation in the quality of the education provided to the nursing students.

The concept of developing specific didactic preparation to prepare for this role drove the development of this completely unique program. Leaders from service and education came together to craft the curriculum that was taught by the most experienced faculty members from around the state.

The content of the Clinical Scholar course falls into a couple of categories. The first has to do with providing participants with the tools, know-how and the “nuts and bolts” to allow them to confidently begin teaching rotations of nursing students. The other category of content has to do with expanding the horizons of these often narrowly focused bedside nurses. Examples of these topics include, innovations in contemporary nursing education, becoming a citizen of the profession, changing faculty roles, civility, interprofessional communication, to name a few.

The hard skills that are always included are what the participants come for. What they leave with are skills as well as a whole broadened vision of their profession and what their evolving role as a nurse can be. This is generally quite surprising for the audience who often become much more open to the notion of continuing their formal education and envisioning a future for themselves in our profession that may not have been at all evident previously.

Center Staff: Marianne Druva Horner, MS, RN, CNM, Coach-CTI - Project Director

“I was so very fortunate to have joined the Center in 2005 to support the Faculty Development Initiative. Although I had significant experience entering this position, I have learned so much and grown tremendously during this time. Working in an innovative environment where we attempt to solve some of the most perplexing problems that present themselves for nurses and other healthcare professionals has truly fed my professional ‘soul’. One of my favorite activities at work is to be a part of the brainstorming sessions when we begin to work in a new area. Each of us bring a different set of thoughts and experience to those sessions. What emerges is always something that none of us, singly, would have ever generated. It is truly magical to watch!”

The intent of what became known as the Clinical Scholar project was to develop a new model of clinical teacher called Clinical Scholars who would ease the clinical faculty bottleneck in bringing new nurses through the educational system. This highly successful model benefits students, schools of nursing, clinical units, the Clinical Scholars themselves and most all, patients who are safer when student are supervised by agency employed expert clinical nurses. “We assumed that the marketplace would have been totally saturated with these clinical educators long ago. What didn’t realize, though, is that becoming a Clinical Scholar tends to be a talent identifier and these nurses often move right through and beyond their original roles so that demand continues and has actually grown. Work on the Clinical Scholar project has been the centerpiece of my work here at the Center.

“During my tenure at the Center I have had the opportunity to spearhead several other projects including the Advanced Leadership Development Program for Centura, Building Advanced Skills for Leading Quality Initiatives, Labor and Delivery Transition to Practice, among others. Additionally I have supported work in a number of other projects and am on the board of directors at Florence Crittenton Services of Colorado. “I am blessed and privileged to have had the opportunity to be a part of this amazing organization for the last thirteen years!”



Center Staff: Brian Kelley, MBA - Director of Development and Research

Brian Kelley has been with the Center since 2008, serving as the Director of Development and Research. Drawing on previous experience in the private, public, nonprofit and philanthropic sectors, Brian has led the Center's development and sustainability efforts. "A core challenge for any nonprofit is to balance the tension between short term revenues from multiple funding sources and a desire to achieve significant community impact on complex and sometimes contentious issues that may take decades to resolve."

By their very nature, some workforce interventions in year one often do not yield significant impact for several years. This delay presents a difficult challenge to funders and their non-profit partners.

With the exception of four year federal funding opportunities, most funders and service contracts only provide short-term six to twenty-four month funding. Given that having a lasting impact on healthcare and nursing workforce issues takes years, the temptation is to focus on short-term projects, but this would not be responsive to the long-term needs of Colorado residents or the Center's stakeholders. The Center's ultimate resolution has been to strive to develop a multiple program portfolio of value-added, high-impact initiatives built on a consistent vision supported by a diverse set of successful funding partnerships. That strategy has enabled the Center to increase its \$600,000 budget in 2003 to \$1.8M in 2017.

"It's been my privilege to work with the Center's excellent team. With everyone's strong capacity for innovation, we have kept our focus on 'where the puck is going to be' by developing programs in leadership development, interprofessional teams, increasing access to healthcare, rural workforce, and improving nursing diversity. In addition, we have been able to develop a range of fee-based program services for healthcare partners to generate 20% of our budget."

The Center's workforce research and analysis role is especially important given the complex nature of the healthcare and nursing workforce. No entity in Colorado is either collecting workforce information or in any way 'in charge of' the overall workforce system. The absence of useful workforce information puts policymakers, educators and employers at a disadvantage when trying to manage their workforce needs and how to meet Colorado's healthcare needs. The Center has worked as best it can since 2003 to try to fill this workforce information gap.



Center Staff: Callie Anne Bittner, MS, RN, Coach-CTI, Assistant Project Director



"My introduction to the Center was in 2008 as an attendee of the "Frontline Leaders" workshop. I was a manager at a home health company in Denver, and struggling (drowning!) with the challenges the job presented. The Center's mission and content was exactly what I needed at that time, and it changed my life! I was so impressed with the staff and the curriculum, I wrote on my evaluation at the end of the Frontline Leaders workshop 'I would like to work for you!'"

"As the years went on the Center has given me the opportunity to consult with them as a Subject Matter Expert, Facilitator and the staff has continued to mentor me, which has been monumental in my growth professionally and personally. After obtaining my Masters in Nursing Education from Regis University in 2016 and continuing to gain experience as Affiliate and Clinical Faculty, and staff nurse, I have recently accepted a position as Assistant Project Director at the Center.

"The staff at the Center exemplify true leaders! Their mission to advocate for and provide education, development, coaching and analysis to strengthen the nursing workforce touches my heart.

The Center's values of integrity, empowerment, passion, innovation and credibility directly align with my values. And the innovative approach to workforce solutions empowers and inspires me to change the world of nursing in Colorado. I am grateful to be surrounded with such powerful, compassionate, like-minded and open-minded individuals such as the staff at the Center, and I am looking forward to the future at the Center!"

Center Staff: Meet Our Team



Born and raised in Louisiana, **Liana Camacho, BFA** began her career in the marketing department at the Coca-Cola Company in New Orleans, coordinating local company sponsorships, promotions, and events. Colorado had been calling for many years, so Liana finally said goodbye to humidity and hurricanes and made the move out west. After planning events at the Denver Athletic Club and the American Council of the Blind of Colorado, she made her way to the Colorado Center for Nursing Excellence in 2012, and has been Assistant to the President & CEO for six years.

Along with managing Karren's busy schedule and coordinating several Center initiatives, Liana has enjoyed planning two Denver conferences for the National Forum of State Nursing Workforce Centers, and is planning a third conference for 2019. She loves to travel, and has Cuba at the top of her bucket list to reconnect with her ancestry and experience authentic Cuban food.

Before beginning his journey with the Center in May 2015, **Gil Catbagan, BS** earned his Bachelor's Degree in Business Management from Colorado State University. His current position with the Center is Director of Operations, which includes the tasks of financial management and reporting, human resources, and facilities.



In addition, Gil is currently an Advisory Council Member for Financial Curriculum at Emily Griffith Technical College. He and his lovely wife have been married for 31 years, and have 2 amazing sons and an adorable 4 year old puppy.



Michelle Chevront, BS, CTA-CC started with the Colorado Center for Nursing Excellence at the WELLS Center in the beginning of 2006. In 2008, she then moved over to the main office to coordinate various projects such as the Nursing Faculty Recruitment and Retention Project, Clinical Placement Clearinghouse, Building Public Will and Home Health Innovations projects. She is currently working on the HRSA PCTE Inter-professional Collaborative Practice team development project.

She completed her coaches training with Coach Training Alliance in October 2015. Michelle was the program coach for the Emerging Talent program and has experience coaching individuals and working with teams through our PTCE program. When she is not in the office she enjoys family time with her husband and three daughters.

Ashley Gitchel, BA joined the Center in December 2017 as a project coordinator. She is a Kansas native. Ashley earned her Bachelor's degree in Psychology in Salem, Oregon at Willamette University. Launching from Seattle, Ashley moved to the gorgeous island of Jeju in South Korea to teach English. After experiencing a life-changing backpacking trip to Europe, Ashley settled in the country of Colombia where she met her fiancé.

The two have since moved to Colorado with their dog (who has been to three countries!) and their fluff-ball cat. Ashley enriches her life through hiking in the mountains, practicing yoga, and visiting family. Ashley loves her job at the Center and thrives on the challenges presented to her.



Mollie Strand joined the Center as a Project Coordinator during the summer of 2015 after 15 years with a large global corporation. She has enjoyed the change of pace that comes with working for a small, not-for-profit company, and especially that she can feel the impact of her work within her beloved hometown community.

The Center supports an incredible work/life balance that has allowed Mollie and her husband to make the most of the "little years" with their precocious and active nine year old son. Mollie knows and loves many nurses and feels blessed to be able to give back to this honorable profession.

Thank You to Our Education Partners

The foundation of Colorado's nursing workforce are the many schools of nursing that graduate nearly 2,000 new nurses each year. The Center is honored to have them as ongoing and important partners, and to help them support the nursing workforce of the future. Thanks to all!

Adams State University
Aims Community College
Arapahoe Community College
College America
Colorado Christian University
Colorado Mesa University
Colorado Mountain College
Colorado Northwestern CC
Colorado State University
Colorado Technical University
Community College of Denver
Concorde Career College
Delta-Montrose Technical College
Denver School of Nursing
Emily Griffith Technical College
Front Range Community College
Lamar Community College
Morgan Community College
MSU Denver
National American University
Northeastern Junior College

Otero Junior College
Pickens Technical College
Pikes Peak Community College
Platt College
Pueblo Community College
Regis University
Southwest Colorado Community College
Trinidad State Junior College
UCCS Beth-El College of Nursing and Health Sciences
University of Colorado College of Nursing
University of Northern Colorado
University of Phoenix



Thank you to our healthcare partners

The Center is in the partnership business. Fifteen years of working with nurses and nursing leaders has afforded the Center many opportunities to be of service to Colorado healthcare organizations. We thank them all for this honor and privilege, and for their support.

Avista Adventist Hospital
Centura Health
The Children's Hospital
Clinica Family Health
Colavira Hospitality
Colorado Coalition of the Homeless
Colorado Community Health Network
Craig Hospital
Denver Health
Denver Health Community Health Services
Exempla Healthcare
Good Samaritan Medical Center
Home Care Association of Colorado
Home Care of Grand Valley
Littleton Adventist Hospital
Longmont United Hospital
Lutheran Medical Center
McKee Medical Center
The Medical Center of Aurora
Memorial Health System
Metro Community Provider Network
Montrose Memorial Hospital
Mountain Family Health
National Jewish Health
Northern Colorado Medical Center
Parker Adventist Hospital
Parkview Medical Center
Marillac Health

Northwest Colorado Health
Peak Vista Community Health Centers
Penrose-St. Francis Health Services
Porter Adventist Hospital
Rose Medical Center
Salud Family Health Centers
SLV Regional Medical Center
Sky Ridge Medical Center
St. Anthony Hospital
St. Joseph Hospital
St. Mary-Corwin Hospital
St. Mary's Hospital
Summit Community Care Clinics, Inc.
Sunrise Community Health
Swedish Medical Center
Presbyterian/St. Luke's Medical Center
University of Colorado Health
University of Colorado Hospital
Valley Wide Health Systems, Inc.
Visiting Nurse Association



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AARP Multi-state Diversity
Leadership Training



Mentoring Participants Preparing Food for
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