

Coastal Neighbors Network, UMD College of Nursing form partnership

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2018-19 nursing students to gain valuable clinical practice experience assisting CNN members

DARTMOUTH — Coastal Neighbors Network (CNN) and the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth College of Nursing have established a partnership for the 2018-2019 academic year that will give students valuable clinical experience and bridge generations, officials said.

Up to 10 community nursing students will be assigned to the CNN organization as a site for clinical practice. This practicum is designed to help the student meet the learning objectives of the Community Health Nursing course needed to meet the requirements for a degree in nursing, a news release said.

The arrangement is mutually beneficial, with students gaining essential clinical skills and members contributing to student learning as well as receiving basic health assessments, officials said.

“In the spirit of service learning, we anticipate that this collaboration will benefit both our students and the CNN membership,” said Jessica Mitchell, clinical assistant professor, Community Nursing Department, in a statement. “Our students will gain invaluable, hands-on experience working with CNN members, enabling them to expand their skill set with the older community.”

Following a pilot last spring, the program kicked off Sept. 5, the first day of the fall semester and will continue through Dec. 10. The spring semester clinical will begin Jan. 22, 2019, and will continue until May 1. CNN Board Chair Kate Fentress and CNN Executive Director Andy Pollock will help orient the students to relevant policies and procedures, the release said.

Professor Marianne McAuliffe serves as the UMD faculty point of contact and provide direct supervision for the students as well as plan a specific schedule that covers specific course objectives.

“We are thrilled to be working with the College of Nursing,” said Fentress in a statement. “We feel it’s a win-win. Our members are contributing to the education of these nurses, which is extremely gratifying for them. The students are getting a wonderful introduction to community nursing. They are also learning how to talk to older people.

“Our hope is that an ongoing partnership with the school will eventually become a model we can share with other villages, many of which are in cities where health professionals are trained,” she said.

Coastal Neighbors Network is one of a rapidly growing network of Villages across the country offering older adults options for staying at home and staying active even after transportation and household chores become challenging, the release said. CNN is a community-based, nonprofit organization that provides services and information to enable Dartmouth residents to live safely, independently, and comfortably in their own homes for as long as possible.

According to the release, CNN is dedicated to the National Aging in Place movement and a member of the Village to Village Network. The Village concept started on Beacon Hill in 2002 and has blossomed into a robust movement that’s sweeping the country. Currently, there are 350 villages either up and running or information, officials said.

The UMass Dartmouth College of Nursing offers a nationally recognized comprehensive nursing program where students will develop nursing values, skills, and competencies foundational to a future nursing career. With modern nursing labs, outstanding faculty and local clinical partners, students are well positioned to begin a nursing career or to continue with graduate study, the release said.

UMass Dartmouth College of Nursing is accredited by the Commission on College Nursing Education.