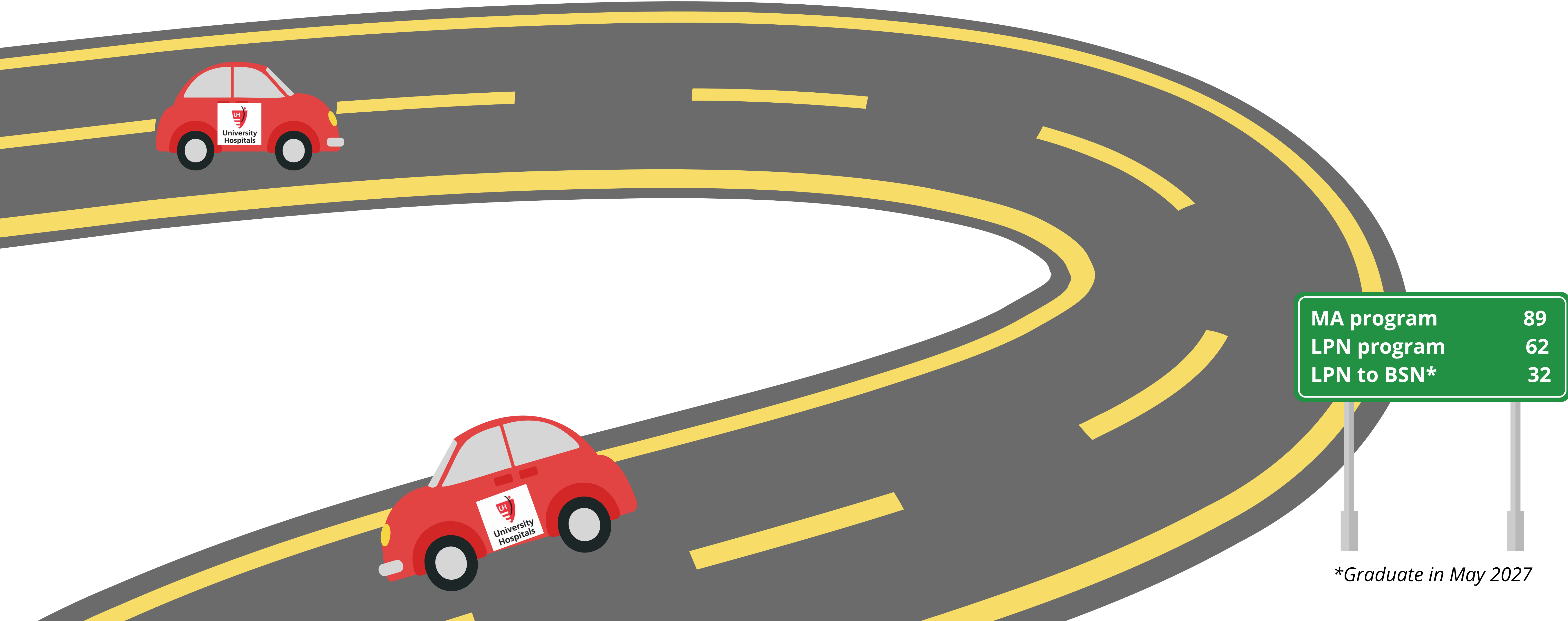


Leveraging Community & Academic Partnerships to Drive Nursing Career Paths

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As the demand for a skilled and compassionate workforce that reflects our diverse communities in our region grows, we envision a world in which all individuals are treated with dignity, humanity, and respect, in which every person has an opportunity to achieve their highest level of health and well-being. University Hospitals (UH) is committed to cultivating and sustaining an environment where all are welcome. Celebrating and upholding our organizational values of trust, compassion, and belonging is fundamental to UH's success in innovation, patient safety, and reducing health disparities. We believe this commitment is a shared responsibility of all leaders, caregivers, and community members.



MA program	89
LPN program	62
LPN to BSN*	32

*Graduate in May 2027

Building A Pipeline

Early engagement plays a critical role in shaping future healthcare professionals. In response, a series of programs were developed that engage youth at various educational stages.

UH FNA Participants*	206
UH Health Scholars	151
Youth Summit	606

*From 2023-2025



The UH Future Nurse Academy (UHFNA) for grades 10-12 was launched in 2023 to promote the pursuit of a career in nursing for high school students. The two-week immersive program offers students hands-on experiences and insights into the profession of nursing, with academic partners contributing to the curriculum.

- Success: Rapid expansion, tripling the number of cohorts and increasing participation by over 35% within the first year of inception. Several graduates from the inaugural graduating class are now starting nursing school.
- Expansion: Partnering with local high schools and offering programs at the school during breaks.
- Staying Connected: Offer ongoing learning activities for those that have completed UHFNA. Partnership with a university to offer a 2-week nursing assistant course in 2025.

The UH Future Shades in Medicine Youth Summit (grades 3-12) and the UH Health Scholars four-week internship program (grades 8-12) engages youth from across Northeast Ohio with the aim to expand health career exposure for these brilliant young minds. Our mission is to inspire, engage, and empower the next generation of healthcare professionals—future leaders who will reflect and serve their communities.



View brief videos on the UH FNA and UH Health Scholars.

Leveraging Community & Academic Partnerships

Nursing executives at University Hospitals of Cleveland (18 hospital system across Northeast Ohio, with 32,000 employees) leveraged existing community and academic partnerships to build a pipeline of healthcare workers.

Advancing Current Employees

Nursing leadership in partnership with human resources, community colleges, nursing schools, and other community organizations developed workforce development initiatives to support UH's entry level workers. Earn-and-Learn programs provide opportunities for caregivers to pursue nursing credentials while maintaining their employment. Example programs include, entry level employee pathway to Medical Assistant, the patient care nursing assistant (PCNA) to licensed practical nurse (LPN) program and a grant funded program to support LPNs in the organization to pursue their BSN.

These programs offer a unique experience allowing the employee to maintain full time benefits/pay, but working reduced hours dedicated to attend school. Additional support is available through a six-month coaching program to ensure role success. These programs are not only about career advancement but also about creating opportunity. Individuals participating in these programs are often underrepresented within the nursing profession. These programs are funded through philanthropy dollars and grants.

The results:

- Allowed employees to develop their potential
- Eliminated barriers to career development and advancement
- Increased employees' earning capacity
- Helped move families out of poverty
- Assisted the organization in meeting workforce needs
- Improved employee engagement



View a brief testimonial from a PCNA to LPN graduate.

Creating a Supportive Environment

- Launched six employee resource groups (ERGs) open to all employees to allow space to gather, connect, and create a sense of belonging. The groups include: Women, African American, Pride, Minority House Staff, Veterans/Military, and Nurses of Color.
- All are welcome, inclusive spaces, focusing on networking, professional development, and community engagement.
- The Nurses of Color ERG has become a vital component for talent development and community engagement strategies.
- ERGs develop targeted strategies that meet the unique needs of UH's growing nursing workforce.
- These programs have contributed to decreasing RN turnover more than 3% in one year, increasing talent acquisition in hard to recruit areas, and decreasing contract labor by 50%.
- Training efforts have developed cultural competence skills, equipped staff to care for diverse populations and improved employee relationships and the UH workforce culture.

Over 1000 employees actively involved in ERGs.



Destination: Individuals want to work at UH.

