



## 2019 Unitek Learning Nursing Symposium

**In Boise, leaders in healthcare and education gathered to support the nursing profession at Unitek's Symposium.**

*Boise, Idaho – May 20, 2019* – The success of nursing education requires a strong partnership between academia, healthcare, and practice. Unitek Learning sought to build a bridge between these integral elements by hosting the 2019 Nursing Symposium in Boise, Idaho. In addition to strengthening partnerships, the event honored healthcare professionals and celebrated National Nursing Week. The Nursing Symposium, which was held on May 7, 2019, at the picturesque Grove Hotel in Downtown Boise, also addressed the dire need for Idaho nurses.

Various professionals and esteemed guests attended this multifaceted event. Unitek Learning and the offices of Senator Fred Martin of Idaho's 15<sup>th</sup> District awarded hospital, healthcare, and nursing education leaders for their dedication to quality patient care in the state of Idaho. Keynote speakers and expert panelists also discussed the future of the state's healthcare.

In 2018, the Idaho Alliance of Leaders in Nursing (IALN) released the [Nursing Workforce Biennial Report](#), which stressed the importance of change within Idaho's nursing education system. The population of Idaho is expected to increase to about 1.9 million residents by 2025, but a severe nursing shortage is also expected to start as early as 2020. In order to meet this challenge, the report called for a minimum of 400 additional nursing graduates on a yearly basis. The Nursing Workforce Biennial Report was a critical topic of discussion at Unitek's Symposium.

The event began with a warm welcome from Ms. Janis Paulson and Dr. Abdel Yosef, Chief Executive Officer and Chief Academic Officer at Unitek Learning. Nurse theorist Jean Watson, PhD, RN, AHN-BC, FAAN, LL (AAN), Distinguished Professor and Founder/Director of Watson Caring Science Institute, also provided guests with a welcome presentation. The forum featured two keynote speakers: Dr. Randall Hudspeth, PhD, APRN-CNP, FRE, FAANP – Executive Director of the Idaho Center for Nursing, and Senator Fred S. Martin, District 15, Boise, Idaho – Idaho State Health and Welfare Senate Chair. Their inspirational words set the stage for engaging discussion between academic and healthcare professionals.

The Nursing Symposium featured distinguished panelists who are experts in their field, including Kevin K. McEwan, MSN, RN, NEA-BC – Chief Nursing Officer at Madison Memorial Hospital in Rexburg, Idaho; Michael McGrane, RN, MSN – Representative for Nurse Leaders of Idaho and American Nurses Association Idaho as a lobbyist with the Idaho Legislature; Dr. Susan Odom, PhD, RN, CCRN, FRE – Associate Executive Director of the Idaho Board of Nursing and the Interim Executive Director; Jynae Clapper, RN, MSN, CRRN – Director of Nursing Operations at St. Luke's Rehabilitation Hospital in Boise, Idaho. They were joined by Dr. Randall Hudspeth during the panel discussion.

Some esteemed guests included employees of Boise VA Medical Center, the Idaho Board of Nursing, Idaho State Senate Office, Madison Memorial Hospital, St. Luke's Health System, and

Vibra Hospital, along with more than 20 other Boise and Eastern Idaho community agencies and medical facilities.

Ultimately, the 2019 Idaho Nursing Symposium strove to increase awareness and encourage change. As stated by the Nursing Workforce Biennial Report, Idaho will likely experience a significant population increase, particularly with individuals over the age of 55, who will need greater access to healthcare services. At the same time, the report found that more than one-third of working nurses are over the age of 55. Additionally, for every available nursing student school seat, there are 7-10 applicants. “Unitek Learning is committed to partnering with the community to help meet the nursing shortage and prepare safe and competent nurses,” said Janis Paulson, Chief Executive Officer at Unitek Learning.

“As a first step, Unitek’s 2019 Nursing Symposium presented an opportunity to engage in a discussion with professionals from academia and practice,” said Dr. Abdel Yosef, Chief Academic Officer at Unitek Learning. “This dialogue is needed as early as possible to shape the Unitek nursing program so that it can meet the local community and healthcare needs in the state of Idaho.”

Unitek Learning is the parent company of several distinguished learning institutions: Unitek College, Unitek EMT, Eagle Gate College, and Provo College. They are now expanding their presence to proposed locations in Idaho. Taught by experienced professionals, Unitek programs teach clinical practices and theory used in the field today. Equipped with a multitude of sought-after skills, Unitek graduates are prepared to excel in many of the fastest-growing careers in healthcare and nursing.

**Contact:**

Andy Nydegger, RN, MSN Ed, CNE  
Assistant Dean, RN Program Director  
801-818-8957  
EagleGateCollege.edu  
5588 South Green Street  
Murray, Utah 84123  
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