



2019 Unitek Nevada Nursing Symposium

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

Reno, Nevada – August 29, 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 a Nursing Symposium in Reno, Nevada. In addition to strengthening partnerships, the event honored nursing leaders and celebrated healthcare professionals. The Nursing Symposium Luncheon, which was held on August 22, 2019, at the beautiful Atlantis Resort in the heart of Reno, also addressed the dire need for Nevada nurses.

The future of nursing education was the theme of this trailblazing event. In 2010, the [Institute of Medicine](#) issued *The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health* report. It highlighted the importance of academia meeting new challenges in healthcare. The report also found that BSN-prepared nurses were better equipped to manage the ever-increasing complexities of quality and accountable patient care. In addition, the [American Association of Colleges of Nursing \(AACN\)](#) has emphasized that many hospitals are increasing their BSN workforce to meet this initiative. The *Future of Nursing* report and the 2020 BSN Initiative were critical topics 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. Nevada Senator Jacky Rosen and 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: Naomi Duerr – Reno, Nevada Vice Mayor, and Bill Welch – President/CEO of the Nevada Hospital Association. Their inspirational words set the stage for engaging discussion between academic and healthcare professionals.

"According to the [Nevada State Demographer's Office](#), 37% of the population is over the age of 65. This percentage is expected to increase 25.3% by 2029%. Unitek Learning is committed to partnering with the community to help meet this nursing shortage by preparing safe and competent nurses," said Janis Paulson, Chief Executive Officer at Unitek Learning.

The Nursing Symposium featured distinguished panelists who are experts in their field, including Jen Richards, PhD, MSN, RN, VP, CNO – Chief Nursing Officer for Acute Care Services at Renown Health; Carla Adams, MSN, RN, COO, VP, CNO – Chief Nursing Officer at Northern Nevada Medical Center; Kim Lee, RN, BSN, DON – Director of Nursing at Alta Skilled Nursing and Rehabilitation Center; and Julie Gwin, MBA, RN – Director of Clinical Management for Community Health Alliance (CHA). They were joined by Janice Holt, Assistant Dean of Unitek's Vocational Nurse program for the state of California.

Some esteemed guests included nursing leaders from Carson Nursing and Rehab Center, Community Health Alliance, Hearthstone of Northern Nevada, Life Care Center of Reno, NeuroRestorative4kids, Nevada Health and Human Services, Northern Nevada Medical Center,

Renown Health System, Reno Behavioral Healthcare Hospital, and Nevada Offices of the Mayor and Senate along with more than 30 other community agencies and medical facilities.

Ultimately, the Reno Nursing Symposium strove to increase awareness and encourage change. As stated by the [Nevada Rural and Frontier Health Data Book](#), the state will likely experience a significant population increase, particularly with individuals over the age of 65, who will need greater access to healthcare services. At the same time, demand for licensed practical nurses (LPNs) is [projected](#) to grow faster than the available supply starting in 2022. Compared to 2009, there are [already 23% fewer](#) LPNs in Washoe County, Nevada.

“As a first step, the Nursing Symposium presented an opportunity to engage with professionals from academia and practice. The supply of licensed practical nurses (LPNs) in Washoe County is quite low, in 2018, there were only 290 LPNs in Washoe County, representing a 23% decrease compared to 2008 ([Nevada Health Workforce Research Center, 2019](#)),” said Dr. Abdel Yosef, Chief Academic Officer at Unitek Learning. “Nevada’s nursing workforce must rise to meet the challenges of a significant population increase. Dialogue is needed as early as possible to shape nursing programs so that they can meet healthcare needs in the state of Nevada.”

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 and Reno, Nevada. 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.

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