



**Minnesota**  
STATE COLLEGES  
& UNIVERSITIES

INSTITUTION

PROJECT/REQUEST

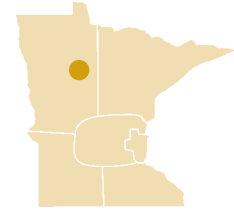
LOCATION

## Bemidji State University

Bemidji

Baccalaureate  
Nursing

\$2,200,000



### Project at a Glance

- Increase the number of nurses entering the workforce in northwestern Minnesota and surrounding areas
- Implement a four-year baccalaureate degree nursing program at Bemidji State University
- Provide for program development needs including curriculum materials and equipment for skills laboratories

### Project Description

Minnesota State Colleges and Universities are turning away eligible students who wish to pursue a traditional four-year degree program in nursing. Yet, workforce data show that increased demand for nurses, along with an aging nursing workforce, are contributing to an alarming nursing shortage in Minnesota.

Nurses manage an increasingly complicated workload because of the complexities of rural health care, and unique needs of minority populations require nurses to have a culturally competent approach to patient care.

The quality of rural health care in Minnesota will be

improved with the addition of a four-year baccalaureate degree nursing program at Bemidji State University. The university's current bachelor's degree program for registered nurses effectively serves nurses who wish to complete a four-year degree, but no full four-year baccalaureate program is available in northern Minnesota to train new nurses.

Bemidji State University is uniquely qualified to carry out this initiative. Statewide higher education institutions and health care providers agree that this program is needed in northern Minnesota. Bemidji State University is the only four-year Minnesota State Colleges and Universities institution in this area. The university is situated centrally to seven American Indian reservations and is a regional hub for all of rural northern Minnesota.

The university also has a history of delivering strong American Indian and rural health issues education in its nursing curriculum and of having excellent relationships with area bands and American Indian public health care agencies and other public health programs.



*Bemidji State University proposes a new four-year degree program to help fill the region's need for nurses.*

The university hosts the American Indian Resource Center, a regional focal point for American Indian education and community development, and is a partner in a regional Tribal College

Consortium promoting cooperation among institutions and quality higher education for Indian people. The university's Nursing Department is on the cutting edge of nursing education

delivery, including offering an innovative articulation model with area two-year institutions.

Bemidji State University has invested significant time and resources in exploration, needs assessment and planning for this new program and, with basic infrastructure support, is positioned to deliver this greatly needed program to students of Minnesota.

Graduates of the program will:

- Have added skills specifically related to care of American Indian patients and the complexities of rural health strategies
- Be eligible for Public Health Nurse certification
- Have an opportunity to attain the credential of Certified Diabetes Educator
- Be prepared to take the examination offered by the Minnesota Board of Nursing to become registered nurses
- Qualify for employment opportunities to provide professional nursing care for individuals, families and communities

The proposed undergraduate nursing program will deliver substantial and affordable educational opportunities that enhance student access to leadership roles in nursing, encourage responsible citizenship and present new ideas and skills to prepare baccalaureate nurses for the 21st century.

## Project Outcomes

- Provide for the needs of traditional four-year students entering Bemidji State University with an interest in pursuing a degree in nursing
- Deliver a holistic and culturally sensitive curriculum that will prepare students for careers in all health care settings, with special competencies in rural health care and the needs of American Indian people
- Reduce the current and projected statewide shortage of nurses
- Relieve pressure on Minnesota State Colleges and Universities institutions unable to meet student demand for a four-year nursing program
- Build cross-cultural partnerships with health care institutions
- Serve up to 150 students annually within four years of startup

## Community and Regional Support

- The Bemidji State University Department of Nursing Advisory Board, representing all types of nursing settings and services as well as students and consumers
- North Country Regional Health Services and Administrator Jim Hanko
- Leech Lake and Red Lake Tribal Councils
- Dr. Kathy Annette of the Indian Public Health Services regional office

- The Northern Tier and Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Nursing Education Council
- Public Health agencies, including Mary Marchel, director of Beltrami County Public Health
- Bemidji State University has 80 contracts with health care agencies throughout Minnesota for RN student practicums, including tribal and American Indian Health Services care agencies
- The new baccalaureate nursing program has been designed to meet the Minnesota Board of Nursing and American Association of Colleges of Nursing Essentials of Baccalaureate Education (1998) standards
- The presidents of Bemidji State University and Northwest Technical College at Bemidji, Northland Community and Technical College, Minnesota State Community and Technical College at Fergus Falls and Minnesota State University Moorhead requested work begin on a baccalaureate nursing program at Bemidji State in a 2003 letter to the nurse educators at these institutions
- The Minnesota Association of Colleges of Nursing, which represents the dean, chair or director of every public and private baccalaureate and higher education nursing program in the state, included the development of a baccalaureate nursing program at Bemidji State University in their recommendations to the chancellor in February 2003

## Participating Institution:

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