

SLO County Educational Institutions: Healthcare Programs Offered

Comments from
Community Partner Interviews
Spring/Summer 2023

Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo

- **Destination campus** for the state (**6% to 7% are “SLO locals”**).
- **“Pre-Health Professionals:”** 10 to 12 undergraduate majors that can be pathways to health/allied health careers (e.g., pre-med, osteopathic/homeopathic medicine, emergency medicine, nursing/LVN, pre-pharmacy, etc.)
- **Healthcare Professional Programs:**
 - Undergraduate Public Health Program, Master’s in Public Policy, Master’s in Nutrition with a Public Health focus, and Master’s in Psychology.
- **Attracting diverse students:**
 - Works with HS & Community College partners to support students from lower socio-economic communities, both financially and academically.
 - Scholarship initiatives (e.g., 20% of freshman are eligible for Cal Poly Scholars Program).
 - DEI efforts focus on how diversity is reflected in the curriculum and creating a sense of community (e.g., on-campus affinity groups, out of classroom experiences, etc.)
- **Barriers for graduates who want to stay local:** Lack of opportunities and high cost of living, housing, childcare.

Cuesta College

- **Current Healthcare Programs:**
 - Nursing: CNA, LVN, LVN to RN, RN, and combined RN/BSN program through partnership with CSU, Monterey Bay
 - EMT Program (potentially: 180/year)
 - Paramedic Program (potentially 24/year with 13 currently in program)
 - Phlebotomy
 - Psychiatric Technician
 - Medical Assistant
- **Most graduates are hired in the community:** Nurses (all settings), EMT/Paramedics (hospital ERs, ambulance companies, state parks, fire services, CA Conservation Corps, lifeguards, etc.), psychiatric technicians (Atascadero State Hospital) etc.
- **Recruiting diverse students:**
 - Majority of incoming students are “local,” although a very small percentage of RNs come from out of the area and return to “home” community.
 - EMTs: almost 50% identified as Hispanic or mixed race; Paramedics: 30% Asian, Hispanic, or mixed race. Emergency Services: 30% women.
 - LVN program more diverse than RN program.
 - Student Success Program: bilingual textbooks, student skills, other supports.
- **Partnerships with K-12:** Outreach sessions to bring middle school and high school students to campus and expose them to career opportunities; dual enrollment with HS/college courses; etc.



CSU, Monterey Bay

- **Partnership with Cuesta to offer RN to BSN pathway in SLO County:**
 - ***Concurrent Enrollment (BS through CSU and RN through Cuesta):***
 - Associate's degree in Nursing (ADN): 2-year program.
 - BS obtained within 12 months after completing ADN.
 - All classes on Cuesta campus.
 - Just graduated 6th cohort, with over 100 students getting degrees since start of program in 2016.
 - ***Local Employment:*** At least 90% or more are employed in SLO County after graduation.
 - ***Benefits of BS in Nursing:***
 - Public health certificate included.
 - Leadership roles in most hospitals & VA systems require it.
 - Higher level of professional courses, more leadership, case management, global health courses.
 - Patient outcomes are higher.

Building New Career Pipelines

- **Barriers to New Career Pipeline / Pathways:** Recruiting FT tenure track faculty for Cuesta programs is a barrier due to requirements of programs not matching credentials of potential teachers, low wages, high cost of living and housing.
- **Cultivate Education & Healthcare Partnerships to Create Pathways:**
 - Identify clearly demonstrated ongoing need in the area for new graduates and professional development for existing employees.
 - Address the barriers for graduates to stay local (salaries, high cost of living, housing, childcare).
 - Consider expansion of existing programs, where needed (faster, cheaper).
 - Expand opportunities for High School dual enrollment programs.
 - Explore innovative opportunities for ongoing professional development through partnerships with various universities for medical research to entice MDs and nurses to come and stay.
 - Address health inequities vs. simply supply and demand.



Building New Career Pipelines

Creating new career pathways: Significant undertaking over several years.

- **Academic System Processes:**

- Address accreditation & regulatory body/licensing requirements.
- Develop curriculum and submit for approval.
- Build the case to support funding requests for new faculty or staff positions and solicit funding.
- Provide facilities/equipment/logistics.
- Recruit and hire the right faculty and staff by minimizing barriers.
- Recruit enough qualified students.
- Provide student supports (i.e., scholarships, financial aid, wrap around services).

- **Healthcare Facilities Processes:**

- Provide externships and internships.
- Supervise field placements.

