

Partnership will help train nursing instructors

by **Elias C. Arnold** - Nov. 12, 2008 06:44 AM
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Two Southwest Valley schools are partnering to train nurses to take care of students as well as patients.

Estrella Mountain Community College and University of the Incarnate Word want to chip away at Arizona's nursing shortage by training qualified instructors.

In Nursing Education Enhanced District-wide, or NEED, students would train to become nursing instructors in a four-year, cohort-style program. Officials hope to start training their first class of nursing teachers next fall.

"It's almost like a family structure," said Cyndi Wilson Porter, vice president for extended academic programs at University of the Incarnate Word, a San Antonio-based Catholic school planning to establish a permanent campus in Goodyear.

Students would earn an associate degree from Avondale's EMCC in about two years and bachelor's and master's degrees from University of the Incarnate Word in about two more. Students would be encouraged to get practical experience during the program by

working as registered nurses.

Valley nurses average \$60,700 a year, compared with \$44,680 for nursing instructors, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Despite the salary gap that has kept some nurses from becoming instructors, college administrators believe graduates would go back to the classroom for the opportunity to train the next generation of nurses.

"It's a very giving profession," said Clay Goodman, EMCC's vice president of occupational education.

Adding to the equation is Cancer Treatment Centers of America, which will contribute classroom space and instructors for the nursing classes. The hospital chain is building a facility southeast of Interstate 10 and Bullard Avenue in Goodyear.

University of the Incarnate Word is one of two new private institutions offering college instruction in the city. The other is New Hampshire-based Franklin Pierce University, which is planning a campus northwest of Estrella Parkway and Yuma Road.

For information on NEED, call 623-523-3226 or visit www.arizona.uiw.edu.

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