
EARN TO LEARN: ACCELERATING PRACTICE READINESS

VHC HEALTH
MARYMOUNT UNIVERSITY



PROBLEM

New graduate nurses (NGNs) struggle to integrate into clinical practice and are not considered practice-ready upon graduation from pre-licensure education programs.



Image Source: Marymount University



BACKGROUND

- Nurse Innovation Group
- Designed the Earn While You Learn Model
- Pilot Test
 - Mary Washington Healthcare / Germanna Community College (ADN)
 - VHC Health / Marymount University (BSN)
- The Commonwealth's Earn to Learn Program

AIM

Nurse to accelerate practice-readiness among new graduate nurses through an innovative clinical education model.



Image Source:VHC Health

ACADEMIC PRACTICE PARTNERSHIP



Marymount University

EARN TO LEARN MODEL

Immersive clinical rotations (MS &MH/Stipend)

Paid prn employment (24 hrs/mo)

Summer Externship/Academic credit

Internship @ VHC Health

Transition to Professional @ VHC Health

Meet Regularly with Faculty & Staff

IMMERSIVE CLINICAL ROTATIONS

Semester	No. RN Mentors	No. Immersive Clinical Shifts
Spring 2025	7	75
Summer 2025	38	291
Fall 2025	12	34

*Conducted toward the end of the scholar's clinical schedule on their regularly scheduled clinical day.

GRADUATES

AY	Cohort	No. Scholars
2022-23	1	2
2023-24	2	1
2024-25	3	8
2025-26	4	8

2025-2026

2 | Summer Externs

8 received academic credit at Marymount University

Slow and Steady Growth!



UNIQUE CHARACTERISTICS

- Med/Surg (1/2 clinical hours requirements in the ETL model)
- BSN and ABSN students

New in 2025

1. Summer Extern Program / Academic Credit
2. Mental Health (1/2 clinical hours requirements in the ETL model)

STUDENT FEEDBACK

"In this program, we're not just learning; we're gaining hands on experience, securing our future in nursing, and building a strong foundation for success"

"The Earn While You Learn program has given me an amazing opportunity to learn necessary nursing skills from an actual nurse, while also receiving a great wage to pay for tuition."



Image Source: VHC Health



CHALLENGES

- Marketing
- Mentors
- Program support

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Narrowing the Academic –
Practice Gap

More creative clinical
placements

ETL Students Presented at a
Statewide Conference

ETL New Grads attended
Statewide Conference

VHC Education Days at MU



TAKE AWAYS

“Academic–practice partnerships have demonstrated success in preparing nursing students for specific practice environments, reducing onboarding time, and strengthening readiness for practice (Hoffmann & Kaeberle, 2024).”

Earn To Learn Scholars had more opportunities to gain clinical experience than their peers which enhanced their confidence and competence.

- Better graduates (more mature professionally and more proficient)
- Better engaged in the profession
- 100% NCLEX pass rate
- High retention in the workforce
- Pilot joint appointments
- Expanded clinical sites



THANK YOU!

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