



HEALTH OCCUPATIONS EDUCATION CONFERENCE:

A Lesson In Innovation



Health Workforce Initiative

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Fresh from the holidays, more than 150 health care educators convened at the Double-Tree by Hilton Ontario Airport for a two-day, activity packed conference to provide health occupations educators the shot in the arm needed to achieve success in the classroom.

Those who came found the right prescription at both peer and instructor levels to innovate their classroom teachings.

The Second Annual Innovations in Health Occupations Education Conference, spearheaded by the Health Workforce Initiative (HWI), offered a cost effective, dynamic continuing education conference that empowered those on the front lines of health care education with tools, tactics and techniques to ready their students for the current and future demands of their profession.

“Our job is all about connecting community colleges, educators and employers to what they need. Each of the Deputy Sector Navigators knows the schools and their challenges. It became clear from conversations that this conference was very much needed,” said Linda L. Zorn, RD, MA, Statewide Sector Navigator for HWI.

Zorn and her staff organized the program with the primary purpose to provide an opportunity for everyone — attendees and presenters alike — to share best practices. HWI’s team witnessed a plethora of innovative learning techniques educators implemented in their classroom. They created the Innovations in Health Occupations Conference to offer a forum to showcase that work with peers.

The second annual workshop saw attendance grow by nearly 20 percent, in large part due to focusing on enabling colleagues to talking with other

colleagues about real life experiences. They shared the unique experience of teaching in California as well as an unwavering goal to help more students succeed.”

“This event provided a lot of information that is relative to our current practices. We came out rejuvenated about what we want to use in our classroom,” said Connie Kunkler, the Director of the Health Careers Resource Center at Mt. San Antonio College, who attended the HWI conference the past two years. “When they announced this year’s conference at last year’s event, I immediately put it in my phone.”

The program fulfills a significant need by educators whose passion for mentoring others into the health care field led them into the education arena, but without much preparation.

“When I got the job, they gave me the curriculum and three days to prep,” said Lauren Crume, LVN, a teacher at Marie L. Hare Continuation High School in the Garden Grove Unified School District for the past three years. “I looked at some lessons online and asked my fellow teachers for pointers. I tried to replicate some observations I had when I was in high school and knew that just reading the textbook wasn’t an easy way to learn.”





“It was quite different dealing with novice students than with nurses. The transition was quite an eye-opener,” said Kunkler. “I had to look within myself to change my teaching perspective. This conference helped me grow and become a better educator. There are so many people — and not just those in the front presenting — that stand up and share their experiences. We can take those ideas and try to improve on our end. The ultimate end is that we want to produce quality nurses who know what they’re doing when they walk out of our doors.”

“One tip I received was to use a five-page pad with an idea on the first page and have folks draw a picture on that idea. They then passed along to another person who draws a picture based on the first illustration,” said Mayuri Desai, RN, an instructor at Garden Grove High School with home health, hospice and pediatric nursing experience. “What you end up with is completely different and showed us how important communication is and how to be clear and concise when doing so. I’ll use that in my class. I like conferences that teach us. This program was one of those.”

The key to the event was the interaction between presenters and attendees in multiple ways.

During the call for proposals phase, presenters were encouraged to include interaction and hands on activities in their presentations. Evaluations from the 2017 conference verified that the participants valued this type of learning environment.

PRE-CONFERENCE WORKSHOP

The program began the day BEFORE, with a pre-

conference workshop, “Intersecting Populations: Using team-based learning to reach new and first-generation students.” This demographic now comprises the dominant college-going population in the United States and include individuals that delayed college entry, second-language learners, true freshmen — known as iGen — and returning older students. Many boast extensive work experience that has not translated into college and require different approaches to teaching. This kind of diversity impacts teamwork.

“We gave the keynote in 2017, and were invited back this year,” said Catherine Haras, Senior Director for the Center for Effective Teaching and Learning at California State University Los Angeles. “We wanted to focus on hands-on training and not talk at them for very long. If all you’re doing is talking to people, nothing will change. We made sure that faculty is actually doing stuff. Our workshop emphasized active learning and was experience-based.”



The pre-conference program consisted of two phases; the first focused on practicing active learning strategies to increase the first-generation and “nontraditional” students’ self-efficacy. Haras and her presenters shared a first-generation teaching checklist. The second part engaged educators in real-time teamwork activities to learn what works and — as necessary — what doesn’t work to create the best learning environment for team-based learning.

“This group was open-minded to change and learning new things,” said Maria Fernandez, an Instructional Designer at California State University Los Angeles. “Sometimes their comfort zone got challenged and made them feel vulnerable.”

“The audience was very appreciative of the content that was ready-made for their class-room. It wasn’t theoretical, so it was well received,” said Jeffrey Suarez-Grand, an Instructional Designer at California State University Los Angeles.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS



Dr. Casey Scudmore, RN, MSN, Nursing Professor and Assistant Director of the Nursing Program at Antelope Valley College, emphasized innovative instruction for students and teachers in her keynote address to kick off the formal conference the following day. Her interactive presentation solicited insights and feedback on how better to prepare students and how to present information in new and creative ways.

"When I began teaching, I started going to conferences and saw examples of the type of teacher that I wanted to be. The presenters were dynamic, fun to listen to and seemed like they cared about what they were doing. I decided that I wanted to be like them when I grew up," said Scudmore. "So I started to be brave and try new things in my class-room. I incorporated pictures and video. My presentations got better, and the students seemed to like it."

"When you do something that's fun where the students are engaged and learning, there's an energy in the room that reminds you why you're teaching. Those are the moments that you want to reach every day," said Scudmore. "We're certainly not doing it for the money. We're doing it for those moments."

MORNING BREAKOUT SESSIONS

In addition to the continuation of Scudmore's talk in a breakout format, attendees chose between two other sessions to partake in over the course of the morning. The first, "A Picture Is Worth A Thousand Words," demonstrated how the use of pictorial case studies, instead of endless words on hundreds of PowerPoint slides, can be used to drive meaningful

learning in health care education classrooms. "Pictures can invoke different thoughts and emotions than just words alone," said Tammy Want Hul, Ph.D., RN, ACNP, CNE, Professor of Nursing, Department Chair, ADN Program, and Student Outcome Specialist at Riverside City College. "Pictures allow students to experience the knowledge they acquired through their reading, explore their understanding of and finding meaning in all types of content, and allow the transference of knowledge to permeate into their clinical practice." "Those of us who attended the 'Picture' session already have downloaded pictures we can use in our classrooms to help our students' better comprehend the information," said Kunkler.

"Pictorial case studies allow faculty to bring clinical experiences right into the class-room while allowing students to 'simulate' how they would respond in different clinical situations," said Kimberly Reimer, Ed.D, MSN, RN, FNP, CNE, Associate professor of Nursing at Riverside City College. "With the emphasis in health care education pro-grams to 'flip' the learning, the use of pictorial case studies offers faculty a methodology that will fit perfectly with the flipped learning model."

The third morning breakout session, "How to Make the Boring Stuff Fun," highlighted Deborah O'Dell, BSN, MSN, RN, PHN, who offered ways to involve students in the learning process so they will enjoy the subjects and retain the required materials.

"My class is lecture heavy because it's a UC-approved course. Trying to make them more project-based was a great take away from the 'Make the Boring Stuff Fun' session," said Crume.



EARNING AFTERNOON BREAKOUT SESSIONS

The early afternoon workshops continued the innovation theme. Louise Jones, DNP, RN, CCRN, CNE and Elenor Papa, MSN, RN, discussed "CBC and Flipped Classroom: Learning the Ropes." CBC stands for Concept-Based Curriculum, a program developed by the presenters. The session explained the teaching method along with pros and cons of each with feedback received by students.



Mary McHugh, Ph.D., RN, conducted the "How To Study: The 3-Reading Method" workshop. Attendees received an overview of the approach with the full appreciation that every student who used this method passed every course with a grade of B or higher. The third workshop, "Holism: Recipe for Nursing Student Success," showcased Melynda Ruckels, RN, MSN, and the positive impact her Student Success program provides students in the American River College's ADN program. The six-week outline showed how the methodology increases confidence, learning and retention in both the classroom and clinical.

"I took away a role-playing idea where you give students four situations to create a skit and act out a real-life example," said Jared Hartel, EMT, a teacher at Los Amigos High School. "That was fun."

MID-AFTERNOON BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Attendees chose between three workshops before ending the day; the first being one by Dr. Sarah Farrell, Ph.D., RN entitled "Mobile devices in Health

Science Programs and Digital Learning." The presentation focused on how digital learning can empower students and faculty to communicate, create and collaborate in new ways through the use of mobile devices in health science programs. Dr. Carel Mountain, DNP, RN, CNE, presented "Electronic Medical Record: Using an Academic EMR to Promote Increased Understanding." The workshop showcased practical application of EMR and helped educators identify and create ways that the academic EMR would benefit the students they teach. The final option, "The Brain, Heart, and Gut of Learning" highlighted Evangeline Artates, MSN-Ed., RN, PHN, CHSE, CHEP, and Mary Juliano, MSN-Ed., RN, CHEP, helping educators explore effective learning techniques that may heighten students' motivation to promote retention of learning. The workshop also examined practical exemplars used in teaching mental health concepts in a BSN program while also employing a simulation activity to immerse the audience in an experience focused on realigning attitudes, perceptions and values.

"I'm able to use the tips for both my students and fellow nurses," Sylvia Duncan, RN, a 23-year nurse and full-time faculty member with the College of the Canyons. "I'll definitely come back next year to this conference."





IMPACT

Positive reaction to the conference came from a wide variety of educators and reflected the diversity of the audience. Educators in attendance spanned high school and community college backgrounds.

"I had a first responder course in high school, and that got me to where I am today. Sometimes folks get into the health care business for the wrong reasons. I wanted to shed light on what it truly entails," said Hartel. "I incorporate real-world situations in addition to the book learning. I got some new ideas from this conference with other people's approaches that I'll use in my classroom, particularly the role-playing idea."



"The innovation we see isn't with product manufacturers like us. It's with the educators in attendance who are coming up with new ideas. It was exciting to be here," said Craig Rockel, Senior Sales Manager with Kyoto Kagaku America, one of the corporate supporters at the conference.

"We should be producing the best nurses this year. My rule is one new thing per semester, and then I'll share it with my colleagues. We need to help each other succeed," said Scudmore.

CORPORATE SUPPORT

The Second Annual Innovations in Health Occupations Education Conference came together, in part thanks to the generosity of three corporate supporters:

Anatomage. The San Jose-based company makes a 3-D digital direction table that digitizes actual cadavers for high schools, colleges, trade schools and hospitals. The system utilizes the tools to simulate the environment in a similar way a pilot uses simulations to learn how to fly.

"The way that this technology is produced is by slicing the cadaver layer by layer and taking thousands of photos to create the digital images," said Kingston Yi, Regional Sales Director for Anatomage. "The whole process for each cadaver takes six months to a year."

Kyoto Kagaku America. The subsidiary of a Kyoto, Japan-based company is the largest medical simulation company in the world. "We cover ultrasound, radiology and several of the task trainers in medical schools," said Rockel. "Everything is handmade. The products longevity and quality are the highest in the industry."

Shadow Health. The five-year-old Gainesville, Fla.-based company manufactures a cloud-based health assessment simulation technology to help nursing students with their clinical reasoning skills to gain the confidence they need for real-life clinical settings.

"We have a patented conversation engine to rate their clinical reasoning skills objectively. Nursing students will receive immediate feedback on their performance, and faculty members will also get these results on areas the students did well and areas for improvement," said Hannah Collins, West Coast Sales Representative Shadow Health. "Previously, the option was to go to real-life settings, which may be hard to come by. With high-fidelity simulations like this, it's a great way to do that when they don't have those clinical opportunities."

The age of traditional methods of teaching now give way to the use of digital media, flipped classrooms, quality learning and other approaches. More than ever, the process involves collaboration in online discussions where the teacher acts as much as a facilitator as they do an instructor. This learner-centered model gives educators the opportunity to empower students to explore topics in a variety of forms and redefine in-class activities that offer the ability to develop necessary higher order thinking skills, such as problem finding, collaboration, design and problem solving. Unlike historical school environments, students work in groups, research, and construct knowledge with the help of their teacher and peers.

For educators, particularly those in healthcare, the opportunity to make an impact in the lives of students has never been greater. Their classrooms can transform into a more personal setting and less didactic. The level of activity by students will increase as will their knowledge acquisition and construction as they participate in and evaluate their learning.

HWI's Innovations in Health Occupations Education Conference took this edict to heart, and created a program designed specifically for educators in this field to leverage their collective talents to improve the classroom experience. The multiplier effect can be seen not simply on the campus, but in the industry as a whole. More engaged students translates directly to a burgeoning workforce that can meet the healthcare demands of medical facilities, hospitals and other institutions in great need to talented professionals that have a passion for doing good work.

"We need to provide positive encouragement and get excited about teaching again. If we're excited about it, the students will get excited about it. When you're excited about something, you'll learn more. We can do this," said Scudmore.

ABOUT HWI

Mission:

To promote the advancement of California's health care workforce through quality education and services.



Purpose:

The purpose of the Health Workforce Initiative is to identify health care work-force needs and cultivate solutions. The role of the Health Workforce Initiative is to facilitate a community college response to workforce needs.





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CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

Doing What MATTERS™

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