



PITT COMMUNITY COLLEGE

# 'REAL WORLD' SIMULATION TRAINING

**N**ewly-renovated facilities and state-of-the-art equipment are giving Pitt Community College health sciences students a real-world environment in which to develop the proficiency and confidence necessary for providing high-level care in real-life medical situations.

During a November open house, PCC administrators showcased the results of a \$1.61 million-project to renovate the college's William E. Fulford and Herman Simon buildings and purchase new equipment. According to PCC Health Sciences Dean Donna Neal, much of the funding came from Vidant Medical Center, which gave Pitt a \$500,000-grant for highly-advanced human patient simulators, and the Golden LEAF Foundation, which provided a \$200,000-grant.

Mark Sorrells, senior vice president of the Golden LEAF Foundation, said his organization's support stemmed from its commitment to investing in "the physical and human infrastructure" of North Carolina and its rural communities.

"Part of what we do in working with community colleges ... is to invest in the talent and the programs that align to the high-need employment areas of the state," Sorrells said. "Our state is growing and, with that, the health needs and employment opportunities in health care are really exploding."

Renovations began in 2017 and resulted in a 10-bed simulation hospital, Emergency Medical Science classroom and laboratory, Medical and Cardiovascular Sonography classroom and scanning lab, and Nuclear Medicine hot lab.

The simulation hospital, which PCC began utilizing regularly in January, features a pair of five-bed hospital units with a control room in between that allows instructors to observe students as they run simulations. Neal says the exercises can be recorded and played for students during a debriefing period.



*Students in PCC's Health Sciences programs now have the opportunity to train in a state-of-the-art simulation hospital to gain 'real world' experiences.*

"The simulation hospital offers students the experiential learning they can't always engage in during real-life patient care," she said. "It also serves as a clinical placement site that allows students from multiple health sciences programs to work together like they would in an actual hospital."

Neal says the renovations have also allowed several health sciences programs to expand enrollment. Nursing, for example, can now serve up to 300 students annually, she said, adding that many of PCC's health sciences graduates will find work at Vidant

and other local health care agencies.

"Most of our health sciences students are from this region, and they want to find jobs here to remain close to their families," Neal says. "For many of our graduates, that's easy to do, given health care is a leading industry in Pitt County and eastern North Carolina."

