

## WVU Medicine United Hospital Center nursing program students ace NCLEX exam 2nd semester in a row

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CLARKSBURG, W.Va. — For the second consecutive year, Bridgeport Campus graduates from the West Virginia University School of Nursing have earned a 100% first-time pass rate on their 2025 National Council Licensure Examination Registered Nurse (NCLEX-RN), the nationwide licensing examination for registered nurses.

The Bridgeport Campus offers the Accelerated Bachelor of Science in Nursing (ABSN), an 18-month program for current bachelor's degree holders who wish to become baccalaureate-prepared registered nurses. The Bridgeport Campus is housed at WVU Medicine United Hospital Center (UHC).

"The Bridgeport campus is new. We have graduated two classes already. We're getting ready to graduate our third this August," said Veronica Gallo, chairperson of the Bridgeport Campus WVU School of Nursing.

Many local students opt to choose a school closer to home than the main WVU campus in Morgantown, she said.

"We have students that come from as far south as Summersville and then as far north as Morgantown," Gallo said.

"So I think the appeal is for those who are in the Harrison County and southern areas, it's nice to have a school that's close to home that offers that bachelor's degree and has that WVU brand. And then for our students, we do have students who come from Morgantown."

The accelerated 18-month program provides a more streamlined course load by building on the foundation of students' existing bachelor's degrees.

"Our students are all second degree students. What that means is they have a bachelor's degree in something else. Some of them come to us with bachelor's degrees in some type of



*The BSN program is a traditional four-year degree offered on the Beckley, Keyser and Morgantown campus locations of the WVU School of Nursing. The ABSN program is offered at the Bridgeport and Morgantown campuses.*

science field like biology, chemistry. We've had former teachers come through our program," Gallo said.

"So they come to us with a four-year degree, and then we offer a program where if they go full time for 18 months, they will graduate with a second bachelor's degree. And then this, of course, is a bachelor's degree in nursing and it makes them eligible to sit for the NCLEX and become a registered nurse."

For some students, this program is just another step in their journey to becoming a medical professional.

"I would say because our student body is a little bit older and they are second degree, they're non-traditional students, they have a really good idea of what they want their futures to look like. So many of them want to become an RN and stop at the bachelor's level," Gallo said.

"But there's also many of them who know that they want to go on and become a nurse practitioner or a nurse educator or go to become a CRNA, certified registered nurse, anesthetist. So this gives them the opportunity to do that without an additional four years of schooling."

Many students of the program end up practicing locally, using their knowledge to help their community.

"Most of our graduates, honestly, they either work at United Hospital Center or WVU Medicine in Morgantown. And I would say, depending on the class, it's probably a 50-50 split," Gallo said.

"We do occasionally have students who have come from out of state who will want to go back closer to home. But the majority of our students are staying here in West Virginia and in this region and many times at United Hospital Center and practicing."