



2018 Unitek College Nursing Symposium

In Kern County, leaders in healthcare and education gathered to celebrate the nursing profession at Unitek's Symposium.

Bakersfield, California – May 24, 2018 – The future of nursing education requires a strong partnership between academia and healthcare. Unitek College sought to build a bridge between the two by hosting the 2018 Nursing Symposium in Bakersfield, California. In addition to strengthening partnerships, the event honored healthcare professionals and championed the nursing community. Unitek's Nursing Symposium was held on May 16, 2018, at the renowned Petroleum Club in Downtown Bakersfield.

Numerous professionals and esteemed guests attended the celebratory event. Unitek College and the offices of Senator Jean Fuller of California's 16th District awarded leaders in nursing education for their service and dedication to the patients of Kern county and the healthcare industry. Keynote speakers and expert panelists also discussed the future of healthcare. In 2010, the Institute of Medicine issued *The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health* report, which stressed the importance of change within nursing education. In order to meet this challenge, the report called for 80 percent of registered nurses to obtain a bachelor's degree in nursing (BSN) by the year 2020.

The 2020 BSN initiative was a critical topic of discussion at the Nursing Symposium. The event began with a warm welcome from Dr. Abdel Yosef, Chief Academic Officer at Unitek College. The forum also featured two keynote speakers with extensive experience in the nursing field: **Pilar De La Cruz-Reyes, MSN, RN** – member of the California Board of Registered Nursing, and **Mary Dickow, MPA, FAAN** – Statewide Director for the California Action Coalition Initiative at HealthImpact. Their inspirational words set the stage for engaging discussion between academic and healthcare professionals.

The Nursing Symposium featured distinguished panelists who are experts in their field, including **Margaret "Peg" Board, RN, MSA, PACMPRE, CPC** – Director of Operations at San Dimas Medical Group, **Lynette Johnson, ASN, RN, CCRN** – Clinical Nurse Educator at Delano Regional Medical Center, **Karen Huntington** – Clinical Nurse Educator at Bakersfield Heart Hospital, **Nancy Hoff, MSN, RN** – Consultant for the RN program at Unitek College. They were joined by **Pilar De La Cruz-Reyes** and **Mary Dickow** during the panel discussion.

Some esteemed guests included the Delano Regional Medical Center, Bakersfield Heart Hospital, Kern Medical, Bakersfield Behavioral Healthcare Hospital, Omni Family Health, San Dimas Medical Group, Bakersfield Healthcare Center, and over fifteen other Kern County community agencies and healthcare facilities.

The 2018 Nursing Symposium strove to increase awareness and encourage change. In addition to recognizing attendees for their dedication and service, the symposium also addressed the shortage of nurses in San Joaquin Valley. A partnership between academia and healthcare will help reduce this shortage by preparing safe, effective, and knowledgeable nurses for the Bakersfield area.

“This symposium and similar collaborative meetings are essential steps toward strengthening nursing practice,” said Dr. Abdel Yosef. “They help nurses become well positioned to lead change and advance healthcare.” Implementing such partnerships will allow academic institutions and practice settings to formally address the recommendations of the Future of Nursing Committee.

Additionally, effective partnerships between academia and practice create systems that will enable nurses to achieve educational and career advancement. In Dr. Yosef’s words, “The goal at Unitek College is to assist with the advancement of nursing education and nursing practice. In doing so, we ultimately hope to improve the health of the public.”

Unitek College is one of California’s reputable healthcare and nursing colleges. Taught by current experts, Unitek programs teach the best-practice clinical technique and theory used in the field today. Equipped with a multitude of sought-after skills, Unitek graduates are prepared to excel in many of the fastest-growing careers in healthcare and nursing. Unitek College also offers a well-established Information Technology program for computer and network support technicians.

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