

From Employees to Nurses

This First of its Kind Workforce Solution is **Delivering Results**



A new workforce model has emerged from the rural hospital systems of California's Central Valley. Three health systems — located within roughly 80 miles of one another — have embedded nursing education directly inside their hospitals to create greater predictability and stability in their workforce.

Each hospital system chose an embedded learning solution for different reasons.

167 Bed Full Service Acute Care Hospital needed every dollar invested to stay local, and every graduate to stay in the community.

600 Bed Acute Care Facility wanted to combat travel nurse and sign on bonus expense.

Large Community Hospital System located in an educational desert where hireable nursing talent simply didn't exist.

All three systems chose to partner with **Unitek Learning who offers the only Nursing Workforce Solution on the market** that turns existing workforce into a new generation of nurses. While the idea sounds simple, the impact felt across the Central Valley is profound.

Turning Interest into Action

Like many health systems, volatile labor needs, first-year nurse turnover, and difficulty hiring permanent staff continued driving workforce costs higher each year. All three decided to take a bold approach and focus on workforce infrastructure — built inside their organizations.

The results:

- 5,300+ employees have expressed interest in becoming a nurse
- 600 employees enrolled to date – with cohorts of ADNs and BSNs graduating every few months
- 100% of graduates to date are employed as RNs within one of the three health systems — creating a stable, retained workforce rooted in the community

A Workforce Model Built for Scale

The program enables employees to remain in their current roles while progressing toward licensure. The first BSN cohort graduated in January 2026, followed by another in February and two more classes in April creating a multi-level internal pipeline of nursing talent feeding the Central Valley.

Rather than competing in an increasingly constrained external labor market, these three hospitals are **building a renewable supply of nurses from within.**



Beyond Staffing: Retention, Culture, and Readiness

The impact extends beyond filling roles. Early indicators suggest participants are:

- More engaged
- More likely to stay
- Better prepared to transition into practice within the organization

Graduates enter nursing roles already familiar with clinical environments, workflows, and culture—reducing onboarding time and improving early-career confidence.

The Strategic Opportunity

As labor costs remain volatile and workforce shortages persist, internal workforce development offers a path toward:

- Greater cost predictability
- Reduced reliance on external staffing
- Stronger employee value propositions
- Long-term workforce sustainability

Models like this are not simply education benefits. They are **infrastructure for the future of healthcare workforce strategy.**

The response to the program has surpassed our expectations. Our culture is changing for the better as team members in roles across our health system become peers with the nurses they know and work with every day

Danny Davis, MHA, BSN, RN

Division President, Hospitals
Community Health System

What Do Employees Say?

Beyond the strategic benefits, cost savings, and practical approach of embedded learning – what do the employees in the program think? The loyalty this opportunity builds with them has been one of the biggest surprises, in a great way, for all involved.

For existing employees, many have applied to nursing schools and been wait listed or couldn't manage the schedule while working full-time.

I feel like I got the golden ticket. It's a great program, and at the end I'll have my BSN. It's like I'm living my dream.

I'm already an employee and know the hospital.
It feels like home here.

Priscilla P.

Lab Assistant, Student Scholar

Employees immediately recognize the value of a nursing program designed for working adults that allows them to balance current job responsibilities while pursuing their RN license.

It's a competitive program, but I would encourage anyone interested in becoming a nurse to try for it. Everything is local, you don't have to commute for your clinical hours; and you already know all the amazing nurses you'll be working alongside.

Adriana E.

Phlebotomist, Student Scholar

Closing Thoughts

For decades, healthcare workforce strategy has largely focused on recruiting talent from the outside. But what's emerging in the Central Valley suggests a different possibility: the future workforce may already be employed inside the hospital.

The challenge is no longer whether employees aspire to become nurses. Thousands clearly do. The challenge is whether health systems

are willing to build the infrastructure that makes that advancement possible.

Because the organizations creating long-term workforce stability may not be the ones recruiting harder. They may be the ones creating access differently.

To learn more about hospital-embedded workforce education models, visit uniteklearning.com