



San Jacinto College

Nursing

For a long time, low-income students of color in northeast Houston, constrained by transportation limitations, had trouble coming to San Jacinto College for its nursing program. So the program came to them.

In 2014, San Jac opened a new associate degree nursing program on the North Campus, which is located in a low-income neighborhood. More than 80 percent of students at the North Campus are Black or Hispanic—far higher than at other San Jac campuses.

Rhonda Bell, the dean of health and natural sciences, says the decision to expand the program—and access to

lucrative, stable nursing careers—was an easy one. “The ultimate goal was to prepare future nurses to care for the communities in which they live ...” she says. “I believe it is important to never lose sight of the responsibility we, as educators, have in creating equitable access and completion to every student who desires to enter the world of higher education.”

As a college, San Jac has made notable progress in getting students on the right path and decreasing the time it takes to earn a degree. Institutional improvement strategies include clear program maps, structured scheduling,

speedier remediation pathways, and mandatory advising touchpoints. Nursing students in particular benefit from the support of a dedicated retention specialist, who assesses students’ individual needs upon enrollment, refers them to the specific academic and nonacademic supports they need, and addresses their financial hardships.

It’s working, especially for the diverse students San Jacinto College is committed to serving well. The year-to-year retention rate for students of color and for low-income students in the nursing program exceeds that of nursing students overall. ■

93%
of students
employed one year
after graduation

Average salary
one year after
graduation:
\$63,221

