

STATE OF ARKANSAS  
**Department of Finance  
and Administration**

**C**  
**OFFICE OF BUDGET**  
1509 West Seventh Street, Suite 402  
Post Office Box 3278  
Little Rock, Arkansas 72203-3278  
Phone: (501) 682-1941  
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[www.arkansas.gov/dfa](http://www.arkansas.gov/dfa)

February 26, 2025

Senator Kim Hammer, Co-Chair  
Representative Aaron Pilkington, Co-Chair  
PEER-Review Subcommittee  
Joint Budget Committee  
State Capitol Building  
Little Rock, AR 72201

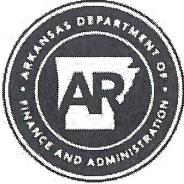
RE: FY 25 American Rescue Plan Act Request

Dear Co-Chairs:

Pursuant to Section 36 (01) of Act 152 of 2024, I am forwarding the attached American Rescue Plan Act request(s) that have received my approval as Chief Fiscal Officer of the State.

1. Arkansas Tech University – Arkansas Linking Industry to Grow Nurses Program \$327,208
2. University of Arkansas Community College at Batesville – Higher Industry Readiness through Educational Development \$5,000,000
3. Arkansas State University – Arkansas Linking Industry to Grow Nurses Program \$2,598,396
4. Henderson State University – Arkansas Linking Industry to Grow Nurses Program \$761,200
5. Northwest Arkansas Community College – Arkansas Linking Industry to Grow Nurses Program \$2,110,901
6. Northwest Arkansas Community College – Arkansas Linking Industry to Grow Nurses Program \$656,512
7. University of Arkansas Community College at Batesville – Arkansas Linking Industry to Grow Nurses Program \$368,614
8. Arkansas State University – Mountain Home – Arkansas Linking Industry to Grow Nurses Program \$625,175
9. Southern Arkansas University – Technical Branch – Higher Industry Readiness through Educational Development \$5,000,000
10. University of Arkansas Community College Rich Mountain – Arkansas Linking Industry to Grow Nurses Program \$645,850





STATE OF ARKANSAS  
**Department of Finance  
and Administration**

**OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY**  
1509 West Seventh Street, Suite 401  
Post Office Box 3278  
Little Rock, Arkansas 72203-3278  
Phone: (501) 682-2242  
Fax: (501) 682-1029  
[www.arkansas.gov/dfa](http://www.arkansas.gov/dfa)

11. University of Central Arkansas – Arkansas Linking Industry to Grow Nurses Program \$476,100
12. Arkansas State University – Newport – Higher Industry Readiness through Educational Development \$250,000
13. Arkansas State University – Three Rivers – Higher Industry Readiness through Educational Development \$2,819,250

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. L. Hudson', is written over a horizontal line.

James L. Hudson  
Secretary

Attachment(s)

**AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT OF 2021 PROGRAM APPROPRIATION  
AND PERSONNEL AUTHORIZATION REQUEST  
SECTION 36 OF ACT 152 OF 2024**

**C1**

Agency: Arkansas Tech University Business Area Code: 0130  
 Program Title: Arkansas Linking Industry to Grow Nurses (ALIGN) ARPA  
 Granting Organization: Arkansas Office of Skills Development CFDA #: 21.027  
 Effective Date of Authorization: Beginning: 5/17/2024 Ending: 6/30/2025

Purpose of Grant / Reason for addition or change (include attachments as necessary to provide thorough information):  
 The project plan for Ozark Campus, in partnership with Johnson County Health and Rehab (JCHR), is structured around an academic-practice partnership with the practical nursing (PN) program and long-term care. This partnership will allow for increased program capacity, initially by four students per cohort for the first year, and six more per cohort the second year if outcomes support additional increase. The PN program accepts two cohorts per academic year, which would result in eight to twelve more students accepted annually. The partnership guarantees clinical rotations at the facility to support additional students, and the healthcare partner has guaranteed adequate staffing to support quality clinical experiences for the students. The additional staffing and guaranteed clinical access for students is the source of in-kind funding. The matched funding will be used in four ways to support the program and provide additional opportunities for students. The funds will be used to pay for the additional adjunct faculty required to support the increased program capacity while maintaining the program standards. The program will also need technologies, furniture, and supplies to support the increased capacity. Funds will be used to support PN students by paying for students who have completed the pharmacology coursework to take the MA-C test, if desired. The program serves many non-traditional and low-income students. Providing this additional funding will allow students access to an increased income while completing the program and while filling a gap for local healthcare facilities.

**American Rescue Plan Act Program Funding**

Func. Area: UNIV Fund Code: new Direct Funding: X  
 Funds Center: D80 Internal Order/WBS Element: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Continuation: \_\_\_\_\_

|                              | Program Funding Amount |
|------------------------------|------------------------|
| Regular Salaries             | 97,200                 |
| Extra Help                   |                        |
| Personal Services Matching   | 23,000                 |
| Operating Expenses           | 207,008                |
| Conference & Travel Expenses |                        |
| Professional Fees            |                        |
| Capital Outlay               |                        |
| Data Processing              |                        |
| Grants and Aid (CI: 04)      |                        |
| Other:                       |                        |
| Other:                       |                        |
| Total                        | \$ 327,208             |

Anticipated Duration of Federal Funds: 12/31/2026

**DFA IGS State Technology Planning** Date \_\_\_\_\_  
 Items requested for information technology must be in compliance with Technology Plans as submitted to DFA IGS State Technology Planning.

**Positions to be established: (list each position separately)**

| Org Unit | Pers Area | Pers SubArea | Cost Center | Position Number | Cmnt Item | Position Title | Class Code | Grade | Line Item Maximum * |
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State funds will not be used to replace federal funds when such funds expire, unless appropriated by the General Assembly and authorized by the Governor.

Approved by: Suzanne McCall 2/13/25 Robert Brech 2/26/25  
 Cabinet Secretary/Agency Director Date Office of Budget Date Office of Personnel Mgmt Date



**AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT OF 2021 PROGRAM APPROPRIATION  
AND PERSONNEL AUTHORIZATION REQUEST  
SECTION 36 OF ACT 152 OF 2024**

**C2**

Agency: University of Arkansas Community College Batesville Business Area Code: 0168  
 Program Title: HIRED Energy Infrastructure and Utilities for OSD  
 Granting Organization: Office of Skills Development CFDA #: 21.027  
 Effective Date of Authorization: Beginning: 11/14/2024 Ending: 6/30/2025  
 Purpose of Grant / Reason for addition or change (include attachments as necessary to provide thorough information):  
 See attachment.

**American Rescue Plan Act Program Funding**

Func. Area: UNIV Fund Code: New Direct Funding: X  
 Funds Center: D62 Internal Order/WBS Element: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Continuation: \_\_\_\_\_

|                              | Program Funding Amount |
|------------------------------|------------------------|
| Regular Salaries             | 337,500                |
| Extra Help                   |                        |
| Personal Services Matching   |                        |
| Operating Expenses           | 335,500                |
| Conference & Travel Expenses |                        |
| Professional Fees            | 450,656                |
| Capital Outlay               | 3,876,344              |
| Data Processing              |                        |
| Grants and Aid (CI: 04)      |                        |
| Other:                       |                        |
| Other:                       |                        |
| Total                        | \$ 5,000,000           |

Anticipated Duration of Federal Funds: 12/31/2026

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**DFA IGS State Technology Planning** Date \_\_\_\_\_  
 Items requested for information technology must be in compliance with Technology Plans as submitted to DFA IGS State Technology Planning.

**Positions to be established: (list each position separately)**

| Org Unit | Pers Area | Pers SubArea | Cost Center | Position Number | Comnt Item | Position Title | Class Code | Grade | Line Item Maximum * |
|----------|-----------|--------------|-------------|-----------------|------------|----------------|------------|-------|---------------------|
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State funds will not be used to replace federal funds when such funds expire, unless appropriated by the General Assembly and authorized by the Governor.

Approved by:

Brian I. Jenkins CFO 2/13/25

Cabinet Secretary/Agency Director

Date

Office of Budget

Date

Office of Personnel Mgmt

Date



February 10, 2025

Mr. Jim Hudson, Secretary  
Department of Finance and Administration  
Office of the Secretary  
1509 West 7th Street, Suite 401  
Little Rock, AR 72203-3278

RE: American Rescue Plan Act Funding –Act 152 of 2024

Dear Secretary Hudson,

The University of Arkansas Community College at Batesville (UACCB) appreciates the opportunity to utilize funds from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), as authorized under Section 36 of Act 152 of 2024. UACCB hereby submits a supplemental appropriation for these funds to be used in FY2025.

UACCB has access to \$5,000,000 through the Arkansas Office of Skills Development (OSD) Higher Industry Readiness through Educational Development (HIRED) grant program. We propose to allocate these funds as follows:

Personnel Costs: \$337,500  
Equipment: \$916,344  
Supplies: \$335,500  
Construction: \$2,960,000  
Contractual: \$450,656  
Total Appropriation Request: \$5,000,000

Our primary initiative is to construct an educational working farm to support a precision agriculture program. The personnel costs are estimated at \$337,500, with equipment and supplies amounting to \$1,251,844. Additionally, \$450,656 will be allocated for contractual services focused on curriculum development.

Furthermore, UACCB proposes to renovate a 100,000 square foot industrial building from the 1960s. This project will concentrate on the renovation of approximately 30,000 square feet in the front/east section of the building. The renovation includes:

Upgrading utilities  
Constructing six offices, restrooms, two multi-use rooms/classrooms, and one computer lab  
Adding necessary storage, maintenance, custodial, and common areas  
Developing a comprehensive master plan for the entire 55-acre property, which includes various structures for the educational farm

The budget for this construction project is set at approximately \$2,960,000.

**University of Arkansas Community College at Batesville**

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P.O. Box 3350 / Batesville, Arkansas 72503-3350 / 870-612-2000 / Fax 870-793-4988

UACCB is an equal opportunity/affirmative action institution.



Thank you for considering this supplemental appropriation request from UACCB. I am available to discuss any questions or provide further clarification. Please feel free to contact me by phone at (870) 612-2001 or via email at [brian.shonk@uaccb.edu](mailto:brian.shonk@uaccb.edu).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brian Shonk". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Brian" and last name "Shonk" clearly distinguishable.

Brian K. Shonk, Ed.D.  
Chancellor

**AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT OF 2021 PROGRAM APPROPRIATION  
AND PERSONNEL AUTHORIZATION REQUEST  
SECTION 36 OF ACT 152 OF 2024**

**C3**

Agency: Arkansas State University (Jonesboro) Business Area Code: 0125

Program Title: Arkansas Linking Industry to Grow Nurses (ALIGN) Program

Granting Organization: Arkansas Office of Skills Development (OSD) CFDA #: 21.027

Effective Date of Authorization: Beginning: 5/17/2024 Ending: 6/30/2025

Purpose of Grant / Reason for addition or change (include attachments as necessary to provide thorough information):

**Arkansas Linking Industry to Grow Nurses (ALIGN) Program, \$2,598,396**

- 1.) A 2-1 match by the state for every dollar contributed to a college, technical or vocational college or a university by a healthcare partner
- 2.) Office of Skills Development (OSD) will manage the grant program
- 3.) Grants shall be aimed at upskilling lower-level professionals, expanding nursing apprenticeships, increasing nurse educator recruitment/retention, expanding clinical rotations, increasing nursing program capacity where relevant, tuition reimbursement, equipment purchasing, simulation centers, etc.
- 4.) See attached grant proposal for more information, but please be aware that the proposed budget (and categories) in that document

**American Rescue Plan Act Program Funding**

Func. Area: UNIV Fund Code: NEW Direct Funding: X

Funds Center: D81 Internal Order/WBS Element: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Continuation: \_\_\_\_\_

|                              | Program Funding Amount |
|------------------------------|------------------------|
| Regular Salaries             | 296,879                |
| Extra Help                   |                        |
| Personal Services Matching   | 84,428                 |
| Operating Expenses           | 1,509,089              |
| Conference & Travel Expenses | 120,000                |
| Professional Fees            |                        |
| Capital Outlay               | 588,000                |
| Data Processing              |                        |
| Grants and Aid (CI: 04)      |                        |
| Other:                       |                        |
| Other:                       |                        |
| Total                        | \$ 2,598,396           |

Anticipated Duration of Federal Funds: 5/17/2024 - 9/30/2026

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**DFA IGS State Technology Planning** Date \_\_\_\_\_

Items requested for information technology must be in compliance with Technology Plans as submitted to DFA IGS State Technology Planning.

**Positions to be established: (list each position separately)**

| Org Unit | Pers Area | Pers SubArea | Cost Center | Position Number | Cmnt Item | Position Title | Class Code | Grade | Line Item Maximum * |
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State funds will not be used to replace federal funds when such funds expire, unless appropriated by the General Assembly and authorized by the Governor.

Approved by: [Signature] 2-17-25

Cabinet Secretary/Agency Director Date

Robert Brech 2/26/25

Office of Budget Date

Office of Personnel Mgmt Date



## Expanding the Arkansas Nursing Workforce: Recruit, Retain, and Reimagine (R<sup>3</sup>)

*Proposal to the Arkansas Linking Industry to Grow Nurses (ALIGN) Program  
Arkansas Department of Commerce, Office of Skills Development  
February 16, 2024*

**Lead Institution:** Arkansas State University, Jonesboro, AR

**Project Lead:**

Scott E. Gordon, PhD  
Dean, College of Nursing and Health Professions  
Arkansas State University, Jonesboro, AR  
[sgordon@astate.edu](mailto:sgordon@astate.edu)  
870-972-2757

**Project Co-Lead:**

Sarah J. Davidson, DNP, RN, CNE  
Associate Dean for Nursing, College of Nursing and Health Professions  
Arkansas State University, Jonesboro, AR  
[sarahdavidson@astate.edu](mailto:sarahdavidson@astate.edu)  
870-972-2748

**Subaward Academic Institution and Contacts:** Arkansas State University-Beebe, Beebe, AR

Jason Goodner, EdD, Vice Chancellor of Academics ([JSGoodner@asub.edu](mailto:JSGoodner@asub.edu))  
Cindy Smith, DNP, RN, Director of Nursing ([casmith@searcy.asub.edu](mailto:casmith@searcy.asub.edu))  
Joseph Scott EdD, Dean of Math & Science ([jlsconfig@asub.edu](mailto:jlsconfig@asub.edu))

**Requested Budget:**

|   |                            |
|---|----------------------------|
| Arkansas State University, Jonesboro (A-State) ALIGN Funding Request: | \$ 2,936,652               |
| A-State Healthcare Partner In-Kind Contributions:                     | \$ 1,468,351               |
| <i>St. Bernards Healthcare Sub-Total:</i>                             | <i>\$ 861,471</i>          |
| <i>NEA Baptist Health System Sub-Total:</i>                           | <i>\$ 606,880</i>          |
| Arkansas State University-Beebe (ASU-Beebe) ALIGN Funding Request:    | \$ 2,375,857               |
| ASU-Beebe Healthcare Partner In-Kind Contributions:                   | \$ 1,196,240               |
| <i>Unity Health Sub-Total:</i>  | <i>\$ 819,720</i>          |
| <i>ARcare Sub-Total:</i>  | <i>\$ 237,500</i>          |
| <i>The Crossing at Riverside Sub-Total:</i>                           | <i>\$ 139,020</i>          |
| <b><u>Total ALIGN Funding Request:</u></b>                            | <b><u>\$ 5,312,509</u></b> |
| <b><u>Total Healthcare Partner In-Kind Contributions:</u></b>         | <b><u>\$ 2,664,591</u></b> |

## Introduction

It is no secret that the United States faces a critical shortage of nurses in the workforce due to a confluence of factors such as retirements, burnout, the COVID-19 pandemic, and the expanding healthcare demands of an aging population. More specifically, the Arkansas Division of Workforce Services estimates 2862 nursing position openings in Arkansas in 2024 (1), with a projected further increase to 3002 openings by 2030 at our current trajectory (2). By far the vast majority of these positions are for Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs) and Registered Nurses (RNs). Filling the Arkansas nursing workforce demand inherently begins with greater entry-level production of LPNs and RNs. As Arkansas institutions of higher education, we are morally obligated to lead efforts to produce more, and higher-quality, graduates from our LPN, AASN (RN-producing), and BSN (also RN-producing) programs.

Accounting for over one third of the State, the Arkansas Delta Region (running North-South, generally parallel to the Mississippi River and extending as far west as Little Rock) has strikingly low health outcomes compared to the rest of the State (3). Thus, addressing the nursing workforce shortage in the Arkansas Delta Region is particularly urgent. To that end, we assembled a team of nursing program leaders and healthcare partners to implement targeted efforts to recruit, retain, and graduate more high-quality LPN- and RN-eligible students in the Arkansas Delta Region and beyond. Extending across much of the Delta Region and into other parts of the State, our committed healthcare partners on this proposal (St. Bernards Healthcare, NEA Baptist Health System, Unity Health, ARcare, and The Crossing at Riverside) currently cite over 580 vacant nursing positions at their institutions.

For this proposal, Arkansas State University in Jonesboro (A-State) and Arkansas State University-Beebe (ASU-Beebe) partnered with deliberate intent to expand and enhance our 3 levels of LPN- and RN-producing programs. A-State operates BSN and AASN Programs (the AASN Program includes a robust cohort on the ASU Mid-South campus serving West Memphis, controlled and operated exclusively by A-State in Jonesboro), while ASU-Beebe operates programs on their Searcy (LPN and AASN) and Heber Springs (LPN) campuses. Combined, the A-State and ASU-Beebe programs serve a large portion of the Arkansas Delta Region.

## Outline / Executive Summary

In addition to enrolling more students, our plan to enhance student preparation before and during program enrollment will translate to higher student retention, higher graduation rates, and higher Arkansas State Board of Nursing Licensure (NCLEX) Exam pass rates. Implementing our expanded and enhanced educational plan in collaboration with our healthcare partners will produce significantly greater numbers of high-quality LPNs and RNs entering the Arkansas workforce. Moreover, it will enable our graduates to transition more quickly through their education as well as through the employer onboarding process to independent patient care at hospitals, clinics, long-term care facilities, and other healthcare employers. Lastly, our project includes elements that reimagine the future of nursing student recruitment and education in Arkansas, providing a sustainable element to this project if successful. To accomplish these objectives, our proposed “Recruit, Retain, and Reimagine” (R<sup>3</sup>) project will use a 3-pronged approach:



*1) Recruit:*

- Create greater LPN, AASN, and BSN Program enrollment capacities on our campuses and at our clinical partner sites by expanded and more efficient laboratory and didactic space utilization.
- Enable LPN, AASN, and BSN Program expansion by recruiting more nurse educators in several specialist capacities into new faculty lines (see “Retain” below).
- Cultivate relationships with regional high schools by deploying outreach advisors to direct the preparation of potential pre-nursing students and expand our pool of highly qualified applicants.
- Combine the preparation of potential pre-nursing high school students with targeted marketing and recruitment by outreach advisors, current LPN, AASN, and BSN Program student ambassadors, and summer boot camps experiences on our campuses and at our clinical partner sites.
- Recruit students by providing financial assistance packages (internal and external scholarships, books, online resources, laptops/tablets, medical training supplies, NCLEX and TEAS fees vouchers, etc.).
- Enhance advising capacity for currently enrolled A-State and ASU-Beebe pre-nursing students to facilitate and shorten the time to LPN, AASN, and BSN Program acceptance.
- These recruiting efforts will increase enrollment and graduation of high-quality nurses from A-State and ASU-Beebe, with higher NCLEX Exam success and a quicker transition to clinical practice.

*2) Retain:*

- Enhance student retention and time to graduation by directed preparation of aspiring high school and college pre-nursing students, thus elevating the quality of accepted students (also see “Recruit” above).
- Retain students and faculty alike by equipping newly expanded laboratory facilities with state-of-the art equipment (virtual reality simulation, AI-enabled simulators, high-fidelity simulators, Anatomage tables, etc.) to optimize the educational experience.
- Recruit a certified simulator educator/specialist to develop high-acuity simulation experiences using the above upgrades (also see “Recruit”).
- Recruit a “retention specialist” faculty member specifically designated to mentor at-risk students and facilitate program progression; activities supplemented by current LPN, AASN, and BSN Program student ambassador mentors (also see “Recruit” above).
- Nationally recruit other experienced, high-quality faculty to accommodate expansion and enhance the student experience (more closely connect to students, enhancing retention; also see “Recruit”).
- Retain students and faculty alike by promoting faculty specialization and teaching expertise with funded faculty development workshops.
- Compensate faculty for supplemental resource development for pre-existing coursework to provide alternative learning approaches for students.
- Provide multiple boot camps and advanced clinical skills trainings for existing students at clinical partner sites to optimize experience and exposure to potential employers.

- Retain nursing faculty through salary adjustments and release time for development.
- Like the above recruiting strategies, these retention activities will further increase enrollment and the numbers of high-quality nurse graduates from A-State and ASU-Beebe. Importantly, the combined effects of successful enrollment and retention increases synergistically enhance each other for an even greater production of graduates with higher NCLEX Exam success and a quicker transition to clinical practice.
- These retention and progression efforts will also further enhance enrollment (open up more enrollment spots) due to fewer students needing to repeat courses or even be recycled into a later cohort.

### 3) Reimagine:

- “Reimagine” efforts invest in alternative approaches and changing the status quo of current nursing education and clinical partnerships in Arkansas, thus addressing longer-term solutions that can sustain more and higher-quality nursing student recruitment/enrollment/graduates. These initiatives should translate into more and superior nurses entering the Arkansas workforce well beyond the current funding initiative, thus laying the foundation for future Arkansas nursing education and workforce strategies.
- Our extensive experience shows that the challenging progression of “interested” high school students to successful nursing program enrollment is a significant limiting factor for many reasons. To address this problem, multiple outreach and preparatory efforts in high schools are a novel aspect of the proposed project that will increase interest, remove barriers, and empower students to successfully apply to our LPN, AASN, and BSN Programs.
  - These efforts include high school outreach advisors (see “Recruit”) that direct the preparation and awareness of potential pre-nursing students and expand our pool of highly qualified applicants. This will be accompanied by targeted marketing and recruitment, current LPN, AASN, and BSN Program student ambassadors, and summer boot camp experiences for high school students on our academic and clinical partner campuses.
  - Efforts also include expanded advising capacity (see “Recruit”) for currently enrolled A-State and ASU-Beebe pre-nursing students to facilitate LPN, AASN, and BSN Program acceptance.
- Cutting-edge educational technology (immersive virtual reality simulation experiences, AI-enabled simulators, high-fidelity simulators, Anatomage tables, etc.) will provide our students the best possible education in the world.
- Another novel aspect aimed at student success are semi-annual boot camps for enrolled students at clinical partner sites to review fundamental clinical skills such as phlebotomy, catheterization, central line maintenance, medication administration (IV and oral) wound dressings, etc.
- We include a “Designated Education Unit” (DEU) model pilot project at St. Bernards Healthcare. The DEU is a cutting-edge nurse education model in collaboration with our clinical partner to provide preceptorships, peer teaching, and other collaboration



between educators and clinical providers to optimize student learning and improved clinical experiences.

- We also include preceptorships at Unity Health, ARcare locations, and The Crossing at Riverside.
- One of our clinical partners (St. Bernards Healthcare) will provide TeamSTEPPS leadership training to our senior BSN students. TeamSTEPPS is a novel upskilling offering for BSN students that sets the groundwork for accelerated career advancement.
- Like the nursing profession overall, there is a high turnover of nurse educators at our institutions that jeopardizes the continuity of quality nurse education. The proposed project offers more competitive salaries, specialty training, and upskilling for nurse educators. This is a more sustainable educational model and a step forward in Arkansas nursing education.

### Outcome Goals and Estimated Return on Investment (ROI)

Yearly and final outcome metrics (and ROI) will be assessed by:

- Total number of currently enrolled LPN-seeking and RN-seeking (AASN and BSN) students in A-State and ASU-Beebe programs:
  - Estimated ROI increase in total enrolled LPN-seeking students by Dec. 2026:
    - **15 more students (30% increase from 50 to 65).**
  - Estimated ROI increase in total enrolled RN-seeking (AASN and BSN) students by Dec. 2026:
    - **160 more students (30% increase from 530 to 690).**
  - We predict sustained and even greater enrollment increases well beyond the grant period, as the “Reimagine” efforts to develop, recruit, and retain high-quality students will take time to demonstrate full ROI on multi-year programs.
- Annual number of LPN-eligible and RN-eligible (AASN and BSN) graduates from A-State and ASU-Beebe programs:
  - Estimated ROI increase in annual LPN-eligible graduates by Dec. 2026:
    - **10 more graduates (25% increase from 40 to 50).**
  - Estimated ROI increase in annual RN-eligible (AASN only in 2026) graduates by Dec. 2026:
    - **40 more AASN graduates\* (32% increase from 125 to 165).  
(\*BSNs not included, as there is not time for progression through the full BSN program during the grant period.)**
  - Estimated ROI increase in annual RN-eligible (AASN and BSN) graduates by Dec. 2027:
    - **100 more AASN and BSN graduates\* (44% increase from 225 to 325).  
(\*BSNs included in 2027 to show the first year with a quantifiable ROI metric for their graduation numbers after the grant period.)**
  - We predict sustained and even greater graduation numbers well beyond the grant period due to the combined effects of greater recruitment and retention, as the “Reimagine” efforts to develop, recruit, and retain high-quality students will take time to demonstrate full ROI on multi-year programs.



- Estimated average annual wage increase opportunities based upon Arkansas wage estimates from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (4):
  - LPN graduates after passing the NCLEX LPN Licensure Exam:
    - **\$23,110 annual increase (\$45,990 vs. minimum wage salary of \$22,880).**
  - AASN and BSN graduates after passing the NCLEX RN Licensure Exam:
    - **\$43,650 annual increase (\$66,530 vs. minimum wage salary of \$22,880).**
  - Upskilling of LPN to RN after passing the NCLEX RN Licensure Exam:
    - **\$20,540 annual increase (\$66,530 vs. LPN salary of \$45,990).**
- Increase in number of positions filled by A-State and ASU-Beebe graduates at our 5 healthcare partners (St. Bernards Healthcare, NEA Baptist Health System, Unity Health, ARcare, and The Crossing at Riverside).
- Quality of A-State and ASU-Beebe LPN, AASN, and BSN graduates as assessed by:
  - ATI and HESI Comprehensive NCLEX Predictor Exam Scores.
  - Total number of graduates successfully passing the LPN and RN NCLEX Exams on the first attempt.
  - Percentage of graduates successfully passing the LPN and RN NCLEX Exams on the first attempt.
  - Onboarding time of our graduates as reported by our clinical partner institutions via surveys.
  - Qualitative feedback about our graduates from our clinical partner institutions via surveys.
- Increase in number of nurse educator faculty and staff lines at A-State and ASU-Beebe
  - Estimated ROI increase in nurse educator faculty and staff lines by Fall 2025:
    - **8 more faculty and staff**
- Increase in average nurse educator salaries at A-State and ASU-Beebe.
- Nurse educator effectiveness at A-State and ASU-Beebe (student opinion of instruction surveys for didactic and clinical coursework, program exit surveys, etc.).

**Additional Proposal Details: A-State (Jonesboro)**

Arkansas State University in Jonesboro (A-State) is the flagship campus of the Arkansas State University (ASU) system. In addition to offering degrees from the bachelor to the doctoral level, it also offers a number of associate-level degrees, which is very uncommon for a 4-year university. We consider that a strength of our nursing programs. Housed within the College of Nursing and Health Professions, the A-State School of Nursing is one of very few nursing schools in the U.S. targeting nursing workforce shortages and career progression at almost all academic levels (AASN, BSN, MSN, DNP, and Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist). Moreover, our programs offer almost all potential disciplinary specialty tracks. Importantly, our AASN Program includes robust cohorts both in Jonesboro (A-State campus) and in the underserved West Memphis area (on the ASU Mid-South campus, but controlled and operated exclusively by A-State in Jonesboro). Despite our high-standard gated programs, a February 2024 Census Report from the A-State Office of Institutional Research showed that our combined AASN and BSN Programs have a higher enrollment than any other single A-State undergraduate program.

With the exception of Craighead County itself (in which Jonesboro and A-State are located), the 11 Arkansas Delta counties aligned south from Craighead County to Phillips County include 9 of the 15 lowest-ranked Arkansas counties (of 75 total counties) in health outcomes (3). This includes Crittenden County and West Memphis (ranked 68th). The A-State College of Nursing and Health Professions is confronting this striking regional health disparity with a mission to prepare leaders to meet healthcare demands of the Delta region and beyond. Headquartered in Jonesboro but also serving numerous surrounding counties in the Northeast Arkansas Delta Region, A-State's identified healthcare partners (St. Bernards Healthcare and NEA Baptist Health System) are also highly dedicated to addressing this problem.

It is a large understatement to say that A-State's production of entry-level nursing graduates is vital to the Arkansas Delta Region. Yet, our ability to admit, retain, and graduate students to address regional and State nursing workforce shortages is greatly limited by clinical simulation laboratory capacity and faculty. In fact, we were forced to turn away 120 qualified AASN and BSN applicants last year. Moreover, another 228 of the 673 applicants (34%) were not even qualified for admission into these programs, fostering defeatism in applicants that held longstanding dreams of becoming nurses. Most students migrate to other majors or leave A-State, but better training and advising in high school and early in college may have empowered applicants to be successful. We assert that we can remedy these problems and graduate more high-quality RN-ready nurses into the Arkansas Delta Regional workforce by:

- 1) Growing our capacity to admit more qualified students into our programs by increasing faculty lines and expanding state-of-the-art clinical simulation laboratory space;
- 2) Increasing the number of qualified applicants using outreach advisors for directed preparation of regional high school pre-nursing students and expanded advising capacity for currently enrolled A-State pre-nursing students (see "Recruit");
- 3) Increasing retention, graduation, and NCLEX pass rates due to more highly qualified students, a new retention specialist, curriculum enhancement, more intensive clinical training, and other program enhancements. Along with increased admissions, this will have a multiplicative effect on production of highly qualified graduates (see "Retain");



- 4) Exploring innovative new approaches intended to add sustainability to our initiatives, change the face of nursing education, and put Arkansas at the forefront of nursing education nationwide (see “Reimagine”);
- 5) Expanding clinical education components to enhance student learning outcomes while optimizing direct exposure to our healthcare partners. The two-fold intent is to produce better prepared and clinic-ready graduates while strengthening their relationships with St. Bernards Healthcare and NEA Baptist Health System. We expect to retain more graduates as employees in these institutions as they to serve the healthcare needs of the Arkansas Delta Region.

To minimize redundancy in the above list of objectives, we specifically refer you to the “Recruit, Retain, and Reimagine” (R<sup>3</sup>) section on the Outline / Executive Summary. It provides a more detailed description of our objectives. We also refer you to our A-State (and major healthcare partner in-kind) budgets in Appendices B1 and B2. Our detailed line item budget supports our objectives and provides further clarity of the methods by which we will accomplish our goals.

Our budget contains several state-of-the-art pieces of simulation equipment (AI-enabled simulators, high-fidelity simulators, virtual reality simulation), which we will use to outfit our newly designed simulation facility and other spaces supporting cutting edge nursing education. As noted above, our current simulation laboratory space is very inadequate to accommodate an increased student volume. Furthermore, our two current high-fidelity simulators are approximately a decade or more old, bordering on obsolete. Thus, we already paid for a design project (Appendix A) and will soon commission a renovation project to create this newly expanded renovation space in our facilities. NOTE: We will fund the renovation of the space to create this new simulation laboratory with our current A-State budget. With the current proposal, we are solely asking for new equipment to furnish the new space (not to renovate it).

To support our operating budget and also enhance clinical education outcomes for our students, St. Bernards Healthcare and NEA Baptist Health System have worked with us to create a list of generous yet mission-driven in-kind contributions. These contributions will help fulfill the goals of the proposed project and further strengthen our longstanding relationships with these important healthcare partners. For many years, St. Bernards Healthcare and NEA Baptist Health System have educated our students in their clinical rotations; we share our students equally with both partners, and students have the opportunity to rotate through both systems.

St. Bernards Healthcare and NEA Baptist Health System are investing \$861,471 and \$606,880, respectively, in services in-kind as part of this proposal (letters of commitment are in Appendices E and F). Appendices B1 and B2 detail our proposed budget and their in-kind match contributions.



### **Additional Proposal Details: ASU-Beebe**

Arkansas State University - Beebe (ASU-Beebe) is in central Arkansas (western Arkansas Delta Region) close to multiple healthcare and educational facilities. It serves an area in much need of more nursing professionals of all levels. This “Recruit, Retain, and Reimagine” (R<sup>3</sup>) grant will increase the focus on enhancing nursing education and community partnership, providing more nursing graduates to assist in the nursing shortage. ASU-Beebe, together with Arkansas State University (A-State), will help strengthen and grow the nursing profession in Arkansas. The collaboration will improve resources for students, faculty, and the nursing workforce.

Wages are similar at local workplaces when comparing nurses with similar credentials. In all locations, practical nurses (LPNs) make much less than registered nurses (RNs). Institutions such as ASU-Beebe can use increased funding to train more LPNs into RNs, increasing the wages of nursing healthcare workers in the state of Arkansas. In a similar manner, increasing the number of successful practical nursing graduates through the addition of faculty and resources at ASU-Beebe will grow wage earnings for those nurses that were previously entry level employees such as nursing assistants (CNAs) or patient care technicians (PCT). Starting wages at our local community healthcare partners are as follows:

- Unity Health: RN: \$60k-\$80k, \$28-\$38/hr.; LPN: \$45k-\$55k, \$21-\$27/hr.
- ARcare: RN: \$48k-\$58k, \$23-\$28/hr.; LPN: \$35k-\$42k, \$17-20/hr.

ASU-Beebe proposes the following to help improve the health and wellness of our communities and our state. The ASU-Beebe (and major healthcare partner in-kind) budgets are shown in Appendices C1 and C2. The very descriptive line items in those budgets also help detail the methods by which we will accomplish our goals.

- 1) Funding for nursing education to increase the number of graduates and promote faculty recruitment and retention.
- 2) Career development enhancement and retention within the workforce
- 3) Creation of flexible nursing program schedules to assist in retention
  - a. Offering flexible and frequent start dates for programs
- 4) Enhance nursing programs to incentivize students to enroll in nursing school
  - a. Measures to recruit and retain students
    - i. Assistance for a variety of expenses
      1. Tuition & fees
      2. Books & Online resources
      3. Medical training supplies & Testing Vouchers
    - ii. Provide computer/tablets for each student use
  - b. Apprenticeship program partnerships with healthcare entities
    - i. Online module creation and monitoring for training of healthcare facility mentors and preceptors to assist in apprenticeships
    - ii. Faculty position for clinical apprenticeships management
  - c. Advising and Recruitment specialist
    - i. Provide funding for positions to assist in recruitment at university activities, participation at career fairs.

- ii. Coordinate with high school regional career center (RCC) and counselors to help recruit high school students into nursing programs.
    - iii. Work with potential nursing students to assist with enrollment, documentation for admissions and
  - d. Retention specialist
    - i. Identification of students at risk
    - ii. Referral program
    - iii. Life skills
- 5) Funding more nurse educators and training
  - a. Funding of night class faculty with salary differentials to meet workforce salary standards.
  - b. Hiring of faculty to assist with additional enrollment demands
  - c. Funding faculty expenses
- 6) Funding to offer more competitive wages to help retain nursing faculty
- 7) Improvement of student and faculty work environment
  - a. Reduce stress and burnout
  - b. Work on ways to foster retention and Public Relations to attract more students and faculty
- 8) Providing updated and modern medical supplies and technology
  - a. Nursing simulation center - ASU-Beebe Heber Springs Campus
    - i. 2 Hospital room set-ups
    - ii. 2 high fidelity simulation mannequins
    - iii. Computer system set-up
    - iv. Misc. Nursing Equipment such as IV Pumps, Nursing Carts, and Beds

Again, Appendices C1 and C2 contain the detailed ASU-Beebe (and major healthcare partner in-kind) budgets. ASU-Beebe will receive a 3-year in-kind contribution of \$819,720 from Unity Health. ARcare will commit a 3-year in-kind contribution of \$237,500 and The Crossing at Riverside will commit a 3-year in-kind contribution of \$139,020. Their letters of commitment are found in Appendices G, H, and I, respectively.

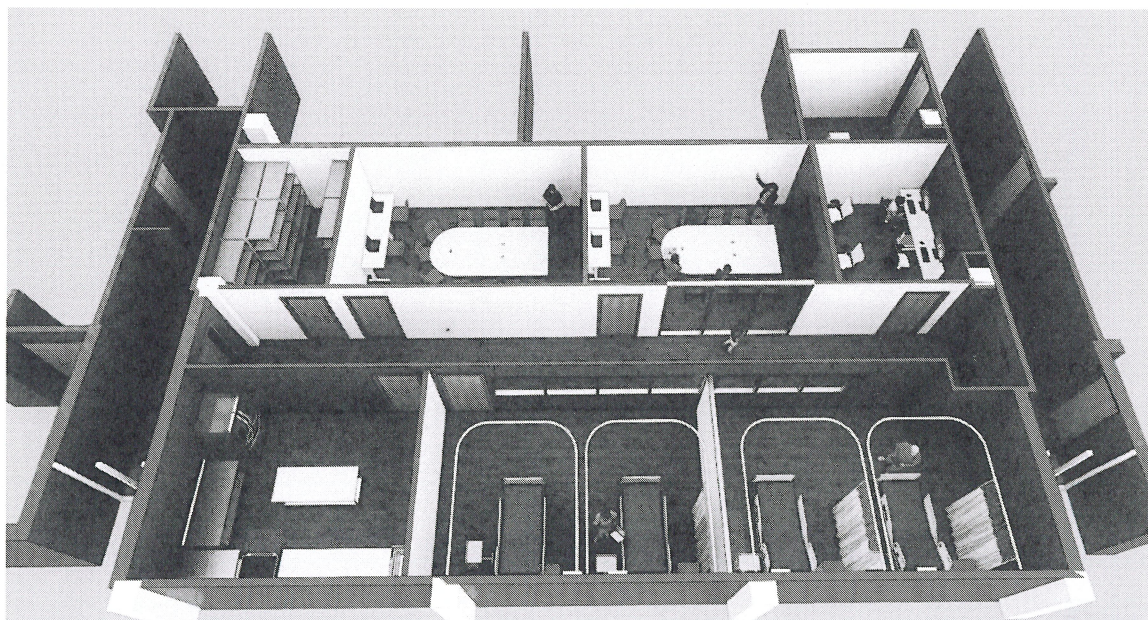
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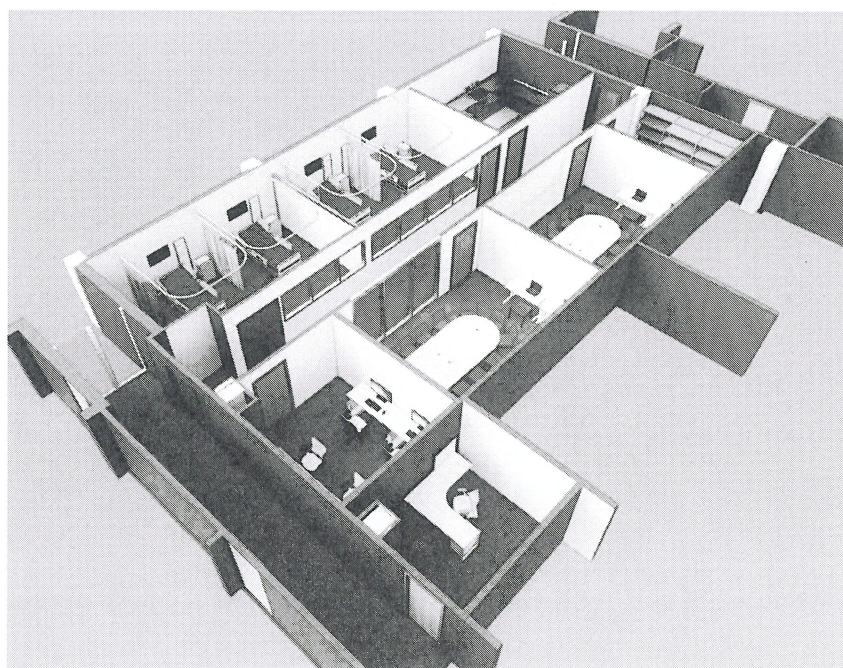
**Appendix A: Design of New A-State Nursing Simulation Laboratory**

***(Renovations to be funded by A-State; Only equipment costs are requested in this proposal)***



NURSING RENOVATION  
2023

AXON VIEW



NURSING RENOVATION  
2023

AXON VIEW





**Appendix B: Detailed A-State (and Healthcare Partner In-Kind) Budgets**

| <b>Appendix B1: A-State (Jonesboro) ALIGN Grant Funding Request</b>  |                     |                   |                   |                     |
|--|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| <u>Item/Usage</u>  | <u>Year 1</u>       | <u>Year 2</u>     | <u>Year 3</u>     | <u>Total</u>        |
| Kathryn Flannigan (BSN Program Chair)<br>(25% Academic Year Buy-Out and 21% Summer Salary plus Fringe)   | \$ 30,620           | \$ 31,538         | \$ 32,485         | \$ 94,643           |
| Sarah Dearing (AASN Program Chair)<br>(25% Academic Year Buy-Out and 21% Summer Salary plus Fringe)  | \$ 28,803           | \$ 29,667         | \$ 30,557         | \$ 89,026           |
| Multiple Faculty TBD (Summer Recruiting Boot Camps; % Effort TBD; plus Fringe)   | \$ 24,569           | \$ 25,306         | \$ 26,066         | \$ 75,941           |
| Multiple Faculty TBD (Supplemental Resource Development; 17 courses/Summer; % Effort TBD; plus Fringe)   | \$ 41,767           | \$ 43,020         | \$ 44,311         | \$ 129,098          |
| 12-mo. Faculty, Certified Simulation Specialist (plus Fringe; estimated 2.5 yrs total grant support)   | \$ 121,500          | \$ 125,145        | \$ 64,450         | \$ 311,095          |
| 12-mo. Faculty, Student Retention Specialist (plus Fringe; estimated 2.5 yrs total grant support)  | \$ 121,500          | \$ 125,145        | \$ 64,450         | \$ 311,095          |
| Staff - High School Student Recruiting/Advising Specialist (plus Fringe; estimated 2.5 yrs total grant support)  | \$ 47,260           | \$ 48,678         | \$ 25,069         | \$ 121,007          |
| Undergraduate Student Mentors/Ambassadors for in-House and Travelling Brand Recruitment and Retention (average 10 hours total/week @ \$11/hr; plus Fringe) | \$ 5,215            | \$ 5,215          | \$ 2,507          | \$ 12,937           |
| High-Acuity (3) and Obsterics (2) Simulators @ \$140,000 each  | \$ 700,000          |                   |                   | \$ 700,000          |
| AI-Adaptive Interactive Simulators (6) with optional simulation add-ons @ \$56,000 each  | \$ 336,000          |                   |                   | \$ 336,000          |
| Virtual Reality Headsets (30) and Software for 500 learners/year for 3 years   | \$ 130,000          |                   |                   | \$ 130,000          |
| General Simulator Lab Equipment/Furniture/Fixtures; AV/IT Equipment; Simuated Medical Carts; Medical Equipment (excluding simulators)                      | \$ 270,000          |                   |                   | \$ 270,000          |
| Two 24-Laptop Cabinet Charging Stations with 48 Dell Laptops   | \$ 72,000           |                   |                   | \$ 72,000           |
| Faculty Recruiting Services and Relocation Expenses  | \$ 13,000           | \$ 13,000         | \$ 13,000         | \$ 39,000           |
| Faculty Specialty Certifications / Upskills  | \$ 10,000           | \$ 10,000         | \$ 10,000         | \$ 30,000           |
| Marketing Materials and Events (videos, promo items, etc.)   | \$ 6,000            | \$ 4,200          | \$ 4,200          | \$ 14,400           |
| Faculty Development Conference Travel: CEUs; Teaching/Clinical Workshops; Upskilling   | \$ 60,000           | \$ 60,000         | \$ 60,000         | \$ 180,000          |
| Regional Tavel (High School Student Recruiting/Advising Specialist; Certified Simulation Specialist; Student Retention Specialist)                         | \$ 8,190            | \$ 8,190          | \$ 4,030          | \$ 20,410           |
|  |                     |                   |                   |                     |
|  | <u>Year 1</u>       | <u>Year 2</u>     | <u>Year 3</u>     | <u>Total</u>        |
| <b>Totals:</b>   | <b>\$ 2,026,424</b> | <b>\$ 529,105</b> | <b>\$ 381,123</b> | <b>\$ 2,936,652</b> |

| <b>Appendix B2: A-State (Jonesboro) Healthcare Partner In-Kind Contributions</b>   |  |               |               |               |              |                            |
|--|--|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|----------------------------|
| <b>Activity</b>  | <b>Cost Breakdown</b>  | <b>Year 1</b> | <b>Year 2</b> | <b>Year 3</b> | <b>Total</b> | <b>Total Commitment</b>    |
| Preceptorships/DEU Model Pilot   | \$35/hr for preceptor; 252 hrs/student in final senior semester; 23-24 students total/year (12 in final year - assumes 2.5 years grant support)  | \$ 202,860    | \$ 211,680    | \$ 105,840    | \$ 520,380   | St. Bernards \$520,380     |
| <b>Semi-Annual Skills Boot Camps (Students split equally between St. Bernards and NEA Baptist) - Review of fundamental clinical skills (phlebotomy, catheterization, central line maintenance, medication administration-IV and oral, wound dressings, etc.)</b>   |  |               |               |               |              |                            |
| St. Bernards Skills Boot Camps   | St. Bernards Cost Equivalent: (11 instructors x \$40/hr x 8 hrs/day = \$3520/day); add \$800 flat rate supplies/materials/1-day course; add \$1950/day for classroom space = \$6270/8-hr course. Based on student volume and throughput of ~120 students/8-hr day, total instruction days = 5 in years 1 and 2 and 4 in Year 3 (shortened year due to 2.5-year funding period) | \$ 31,350     | \$ 31,350     | \$ 25,080     | \$ 87,780    | St. Bernards \$87,780      |
| NEA Baptist Skills Boot Camps  | NEA Baptist Cost Equivalent: \$100/student in supplies and N-95 masks/fittings; \$400/hr (\$3200/day). Based on student volume and throughput of ~120 students/8-hr day, total instruction days = 5 in years 1 and 2 and 4 in Year 3 (shortened year due to 2.5-year funding period)   | \$ 68,500     | \$ 72,000     | \$ 53,300     | \$ 193,800   | NEA Baptist \$193,800      |
| <b>Clinical Classroom Space (Students split equally between St. Bernards and NEA Baptist) - On-site pre- and post-clinical class briefing/debriefing</b>   |  |               |               |               |              |                            |
| St. Bernards Clinical Classroom Space  | \$175/day; BSN Students Require 171 days/year of use and AASN students require 64 days of use in Years 1 and 2 (114 and 36 days respectively in Year 3 due to 2.5-year funding period).  | \$ 41,125     | \$ 41,125     | \$ 26,250     | \$ 108,500   | St. Bernards \$108,500     |
| NEA Baptist Clinical Classroom Space   | \$250/day; BSN Students Require 171 days/year of use and AASN students require 64 days of use in Years 1 and 2 (114 and 36 days respectively in Year 3 due to 2.5-year funding period).  | \$ 58,750     | \$ 58,750     | \$ 37,500     | \$ 155,000   | NEA Baptist \$155,000      |
| <b>Life Support Certification and Re-Certification Courses - BLS, ACLS, PALS (Students split ~1/3 St. Bernards and ~2/3 NEA Baptist due to class sizes)</b>  |  |               |               |               |              |                            |
| St. Bernards BLS, ACLS, PALS   | BLS (cert and re-cert) @ \$75/student; ACLS (cert and re-cert) @ \$200/student; PALS re-cert @ \$200/student; Student numbers and course level vary based upon educational level, frequency of cert and re-cert need, and whether pre-certification is required for program entry (Total students = 300, 320, and 214 in Years 1, 2, and 3, respectively).                     | \$ 35,000     | \$ 37,375     | \$ 24,425     | \$ 96,800    | St. Bernards \$96,800      |
| NEA Baptist BLS, ACLS, PALS  | BLS (cert and re-cert) @ \$80/student; ACLS cert (\$280/student) and re-cert (\$200/student); PALS re-cert @ \$200/student; Student numbers and course level vary based upon educational level, frequency of cert and re-cert need, and whether pre-certification is required for program entry (Total students = 580, 620, and 386 in Years 1, 2, and 3, respectively).       | \$ 84,800     | \$ 90,600     | \$ 55,880     | \$ 231,280   | NEA Baptist \$231,280      |
| <b>A-State Student Orientations at Clinical Partner Sites (Students split equally between St. Bernards and NEA Baptist) - Includes Partner Guest Lectures, Tours, etc. BSN Cohorts = 3 days/semester (Fall/Spring) = 6 days/yr; AASN Cohorts = 2 days/semester (Fall/Spring) and 1 day in summer = 5 days/yr</b> |  |               |               |               |              |                            |
| St. Bernards Orientations  | St. Bernards Cost = \$977/day (Total Days = 11, 11, and 6 in Years 1, 2, and 3, respectively.)   | \$ 10,747     | \$ 10,747     | \$ 5,862      | \$ 27,356    | St. Bernards \$27,356      |
| NEA Baptist Orientations   | NEA Baptist Cost = \$850/day (Total Days = 11, 11, and 6 in Years 1, 2, and 3, respectively.)  | \$ 9,350      | \$ 9,350      | \$ 5,100      | \$ 23,800    | NEA Baptist \$23,800       |
| <b>Other Miscellaneous</b>   |  |               |               |               |              |                            |
| St. Bernards TeamSTEPPS Leadership Training  | 120 Senior BSNs/Semester = 240 students/year; \$5/student = \$1200/yr<br>Need 6 classes/yr to accommodate 40 students/class = 6 classes/yr<br>\$100/instructor x 2 instructors/class x 6 classes/yr = \$1200/yr<br>\$977 classroom space/class x 6 classes/yr = \$5862/yr (2.5-year funding period)  | \$ 8,262      | \$ 8,262      | \$ 4,131      | \$ 20,655    | St. Bernards \$20,655      |
| NEA Baptist EKG Training   | Final semester AASN and BSN Students Only = 8 total courses/year x \$150/course over 2.5-year funding period:  | \$ 1,200      | \$ 1,200      | \$ 600        | \$ 3,000     | NEA Baptist \$3,000        |
|  |  | <b>Year 1</b> | <b>Year 2</b> | <b>Year 3</b> | <b>Total</b> |                            |
|  |  | \$ 551,944    | \$ 572,439    | \$ 343,968    | \$ 1,468,351 |                            |
|  |  |               |               |               |              | <b>3-Year Total</b>        |
|  |  |               |               |               |              | St. Bernards \$ 861,471.00 |
|  |  |               |               |               |              | NEA Baptist \$ 606,880.00  |



**Appendix C: Detailed ASU-Beebe (and Healthcare Partner In-Kind) Budgets**

| <b>Appendix C1: ASU-Beebe ALIGN Sub-Grant Funding Request</b>  |                     |                   |                   |                     |
|--|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| <u>Item/Usage</u>  | <u>Year 1</u>       | <u>Year 2</u>     | <u>Year 3</u>     | <u>Total</u>        |
| Nursing Faculty Salary Adjustments   | \$ 106,000          | \$ 106,000        | \$ 106,000        | \$ 318,000          |
| Advising Specialist (1; Salary plus Fringe)  | \$ 53,200           | \$ 53,200         | \$ 53,200         | \$ 159,600          |
| Nursing/Allied Health Retention and Tutoring Specialist (1; Salary plus Fringe)  | \$ 53,200           | \$ 53,200         | \$ 53,200         | \$ 159,600          |
| Additional Faculty to assist with increase enrollment (3; Salary plus Fringe)  | \$ 211,470          | \$ 211,470        | \$ 211,470        | \$ 634,410          |
| Anatomage Table Bundle (3)   | \$ 338,247          |                   |                   | \$ 338,247          |
| Hospital Beds (10)   | \$ 70,000           |                   |                   | \$ 70,000           |
| IV Pumps (6)   | \$ 48,000           |                   |                   | \$ 48,000           |
| Table top dispensing system (1)  | \$ 5,000            |                   |                   | \$ 5,000            |
| Student tablets (50)   | \$ 50,000           |                   |                   | \$ 50,000           |
| Simulation center - Heber Springs Campus: 2 Hospital room set ups, 2 high fidelity simulation, IV pumps, med carts, computer system set up, etc. | \$ 200,000          |                   |                   | \$ 200,000          |
| Nurse Educator Training (8)  | \$ 16,000           | \$ 16,000         | \$ 16,000         | \$ 48,000           |
| Student Expense Assistance: Tuition, books, Online Resources, Medical training supplies, etc. (50 students)                                      | \$ 250,000          |                   |                   | \$ 250,000          |
| NCLEX Fee vouchers (50)  | \$ 20,000           |                   |                   | \$ 20,000           |
| TEAS Fee vouchers (50)   | \$ 6,000            |                   |                   | \$ 6,000            |
| Digital Ad Recruitment Campaigns (Students/Faculty) (2)  | \$ 3,000            | \$ 3,000          | \$ 3,000          | \$ 9,000            |
| Faculty mileage reimbursements   | \$ 5,000            | \$ 5,000          | \$ 5,000          | \$ 15,000           |
| Instructional Designer Support   | \$ 15,000           | \$ 15,000         | \$ 15,000         | \$ 45,000           |
|  |                     |                   |                   |                     |
|  | <u>Year 1</u>       | <u>Year 2</u>     | <u>Year 3</u>     | <u>Total</u>        |
| <b>Totals:</b>   | <b>\$ 1,450,117</b> | <b>\$ 462,870</b> | <b>\$ 462,870</b> | <b>\$ 2,375,857</b> |

| <b>Appendix C2: ASU-Beebe Healthcare Partner In-Kind Contributions</b> |  |                                       |                   |                   |                   |                     |  |
|--|--|---------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------|--|
| <b>Item/Usage</b>  | <b>Quantity</b>  | <b>Cost Each</b>                      | <b>Year 1</b>     | <b>Year 2</b>     | <b>Year 3</b>     | <b>Total</b>        | <b>Annual Breakdown</b>                                |
| Grow Your Own Scholarships   | 11   | \$ 8,000                              | \$ 88,000         | \$ 88,000         | \$ 88,000         | \$ 264,000          | \$80,000 Unity<br>\$8,000 Crossing                     |
| Pathway Scholarships   | 6  | \$ 8,000                              | \$ 48,000         | \$ 48,000         | \$ 48,000         | \$ 144,000          | \$48,000 Unity   |
| 11 month clinical rotations PN - Nursings supervision of students      | 884 hrs X \$5 (26.5 students)                              | \$ 117,130                            | \$ 117,130        | \$ 117,130        | \$ 117,130        | \$ 351,390          | \$66,300 Unity<br>\$33,150 ARcare<br>\$17,680 Crossing |
| 11 month clinical rotations RN - Nursings supervision of students      | 300 hrs X \$5=\$1500 per student/ program (57 students)    | \$ 85,500                             | \$ 85,500         | \$ 85,500         | \$ 85,500         | \$ 256,500          | \$45,000 Unity<br>\$28,500 ARcare<br>\$12,000 Crossing |
| Preceptorship Rotations-PN nursing 1:1 student supervision             | 102 hrs X \$10 = \$1020 per student/ program (53 students) | \$ 54,060                             | \$ 54,060         | \$ 54,060         | \$ 54,060         | \$ 162,180          | \$30,600 Unity<br>\$15,300 ARcare<br>\$8,160 Crossing  |
| Faculty Education & Collaboration Mtgs                                 | 3 Facility educators at 8 hrs X \$35                       | \$ 840                                | \$ 840            | \$ 840            | \$ 840            | \$ 2,520            | \$840 Unity  |
| Orientation at healthcare facilities by healthcare employee            | 4-8 hr sessions  | \$ 1,750                              | \$ 1,750          | \$ 1,750          | \$ 1,750          | \$ 5,250            | \$1000 Unity<br>\$500 ARcare<br>\$250 Crossing         |
| Carelearning certification review & processing                         | Bi-Annually  | \$ 500                                | \$ 1,000          | \$ 1,000          | \$ 1,000          | \$ 3,000            | \$1000 Unity   |
| ARcare orientation documents review & processing                       | Bi-Annually  | \$ 500-725 (w/ increasing enrollment) | \$ 1,000          | \$ 1,200          | \$ 1,450          | \$ 3,650            | \$1000-\$1450 ARcare                                   |
| Career Fair Participation of healthcare facilities                     | Bi-Annually  | \$ 900 (\$150 per facility per fair)  | \$ 750            | \$ 750            | \$ 750            | \$ 2,250            | \$300 Unity<br>\$300 ARcare<br>\$150 Crossing          |
| Advisory committee participation                                       | Bi-Annually  | \$ 600 (\$100 per facility/ mtg)      | \$ 500            | \$ 500            | \$ 500            | \$ 1,500            | \$200 Unity<br>\$200 ARcare<br>\$100 Crossing          |
|  |  |                                       | <b>Year 1</b>     | <b>Year 2</b>     | <b>Year 3</b>     | <b>Total</b>        |  |
|  |  | <b>Totals:</b>                        | <b>\$ 398,530</b> | <b>\$ 398,730</b> | <b>\$ 398,980</b> | <b>\$ 1,196,240</b> |  |
|  |  |                                       |                   |                   |                   |                     |  |
|  |  |                                       |                   |                   |                   |                     | <b>3 Yr Total</b>                                      |
|  |  |                                       |                   |                   |                   | Unity               | \$ 819,720.00  |
|  |  |                                       |                   |                   |                   | ARcare              | \$ 237,500.00  |
|  |  |                                       |                   |                   |                   | The Crossing        | \$ 139,020.00  |



**Appendix D: ASU-Beebe Partner Commitment Letter**

Office of Academics

February 12, 2024

Dr. Travis Marsico,  
Vice Provost for Research, Innovation and Discovery  
Exec. Director of the Arkansas Biosciences Institute  
P.O. Box 2760  
State University, AR 72467-2760

Dear Dr. Marsico:

I am writing this letter to commit Arkansas State University-Beebe as a subrecipient of the Arkansas Linking Industry to Grow Nursing Program (ALIGN) grant proposal being submitted by Arkansas State University in collaboration with ASU-Beebe and ASU-Newport.

We are committed to the grant project, "Expanding the Arkansas Nursing Workforce: Recruit, Retain, and Reimagine (R<sup>3</sup>). If awarded, ASU-Beebe will use the funding to recruit more nursing faculty and staff; recruit and support nursing students; increase capacity in our Practical Nursing and Registered Nursing programs; create flexible pathways within our nursing programs with a variety of modalities of instruction; purchase modern healthcare educational technology; and incentivize students to enroll and be retained in our nursing programs.

We commit and look forward to collaborating with our ASU System colleagues to complete the objectives of the grant, thereby increasing nursing professionals in our state.

Cordially,



Jason S. Goodner, EdD  
Vice Chancellor for Academics





**Appendix E: St. Bernards Healthcare Partner In-Kind Contribution Commitment Letter**



February 13, 2024

Scott E. Gordon, Ph.D.  
Dean, College of Nursing and Health Professions  
Arkansas State University  
State University, AR 72467

Dear Dr. Gordon,

I am very pleased to support your grant application to the Arkansas Linking Industry to Grow Nurses (ALIGN) Program, funded by the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 through the Arkansas Department of Commerce Office of Skills Development. Your proposal, entitled, "Expanding the Arkansas Nursing Workforce: Recruit, Retain, and Reimagine (R<sup>3</sup>)" comes at a time when the shortage of entry-level nurses is at a critically low level in the Arkansas Delta Region and beyond.

Recruiting and retaining quality individuals into nursing education programs and subsequently into the regional workforce are top priorities. This grant would be an important step in support of those objectives in the State of Arkansas. To that end, St. Bernards Healthcare will support your proposal with an in-kind contribution equaling \$861,471 in programs and services in the areas of preceptorships, student orientation and clinical coursework support, skills boot camps, life support certification courses, and TeamSTEPPS for leadership.

I look forward to working with you on this project if funded.

Sincerely,



Chris Barber  
President & CEO

**Appendix F: NEA Baptist Health System Partner In-Kind Contribution Commitment Letter**



February 13, 2024

Scott E. Gordon, Ph.D.  
Dean, College of Nursing and Health Professions  
Arkansas State University  
State University, AR 72467

Dear Dr. Gordon,

I am enthusiastic in my support of your application to the Arkansas Linking Industry to Grow Nurses (ALIGN) Program, funded by the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 through the Arkansas Department of Commerce's Office of Skills Development. Your proposal is timely as the number of entry-level nurses is dangerously low level across our region creating limited capacity to offer services to patients in one of the nation's poorest and least healthy populations.

To care for these populations, building capacity for existing services and continued development of services in response to our Community Health Needs Assessments is vital. Organizations like ours depend on partnerships with institutions like yours to establish a pipeline that results in successful recruitment, retention, and ongoing career development of health care professionals with a passion and commitment to serve our most vulnerable.

The programs we have discussed in the formation of this grant application are an important step in our mutual goals and those of the State of Arkansas. To that end, as we have discussed, NEA Baptist Health System stands ready to support your proposal with in-kind contributions valued at \$606,880 in programs, facilities, and services focused on student orientation and clinical coursework support, skills boot camps, life support certification courses, and EKG training. These activities will help your students be better prepared for the next phase of their career in healthcare, and allow them to make an impact on those we serve in a more immediate manner. My hope is that with this investment we continue to raise the bar for our patients, our team members, and our partners moving into the future.

I look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sam S. Lynd".

Sam S. Lynd  
Chief Executive Officer  
NEA Baptist Health System

---

NEA BAPTIST HEALTH SYSTEM

4800 EAST JOHNSON AVENUE | JONESBORO, AR 72401 | P 870-936-1000

## Appendix G: Unity Health Partner In-Kind Contribution Commitment Letter

Dr. Jason Goodner  
Vice Chancellor Academics  
Arkansas State University-Beebe  
1000 Iowa Street  
Beebe, AR 72012

02/05/2024

Dear Dr. Goodner,

This letter comes to Arkansas State University-Beebe in support of your Arkansas Linking Industry to Grow Nurses (ALIGN) grant application. This grant will allow growth in ASU-Beebe's Practical Nursing and Registered Nursing programs. Increasing the number of nursing educators and nursing students is a priority for ASU-Beebe, ourselves, and the state of Arkansas.

As a local healthcare provider, the need for Licensed Practical Nurses and Registered Nurses continues to grow. Central Arkansas has a rapidly aging population that is requiring an increase in healthcare related services that depend upon competent nursing staff who can provide services both in clinical and in home settings.

Over the next 3 years, Unity Health anticipates a high level of partnership with ASU-Beebe's nursing program leading to a significant use of our resources. Some examples include providing nursing supervision of students, preceptorship rotations, and use of our facilities for events and meetings. We calculate the value of services we provide to ASU-Beebe to be at least worth \$819,720.00 over a 3-year time frame. Unity Health offers rapid advancement to nurses who obtain degrees at ASU-Beebe. Increase in wages earned and advancement opportunities are closely tied to increases in education level and experience that can be achieved through ASU-Beebe.

ASU-Beebe's dedication to preparing nurses for Central Arkansas is something we at Unity Health find invaluable, and we will continue to support their program through the placement of students in clinical rotations, donation of supplies, services, and equipment, and by hiring ASU-Beebe nursing graduates.

For more information contact us at 501-380-1005, [karen.labonte@unity-health.org](mailto:karen.labonte@unity-health.org)

Sincerely,



Karen Labonte  
Chief Nursing Officer



**Appendix H: ARcare Partner In-Kind Contribution Commitment Letter**

P.O. Box 497, Augusta, AR 72006 • 870.347.2534  
arcare.net

02/02/2024

Dr. Jason Goodner  
Vice Chancellor Academics  
Arkansas State University-Beebe  
1000 Iowa Street  
Beebe, AR 72012

Dear Dr. Goodner:

This letter comes to Arkansas State University-Beebe in support of your Arkansas Linking Industry to Grow Nurses (ALIGN) grant application. This grant will allow growth in ASU-Beebe's Practical Nursing and Registered Nursing programs. Increasing the number of nursing educators and nursing students is a priority for ASU-Beebe, ARcare, and the state of Arkansas.

As a local healthcare provider, the need for Licensed Practical Nurses and Registered Nurses continues to grow. Central Arkansas has a rapidly aging population that is requiring an increase in healthcare related services that depend upon competent nursing staff who can provide services both in clinical and in home settings.

Over the next 3 years, ARcare anticipates a high level of partnership with ASU-Beebe's nursing program leading to a significant use of our resources. Some examples include providing nursing supervision of students, preceptorship rotations, and use of our facilities for events and meetings. We calculate the value of services we provide to ASU-Beebe to be at least worth \$237,500 over a 3-year time frame. ARcare offers rapid advancement to nurses who obtain degrees at ASU-Beebe. Increase in wages earned and advancement opportunities are closely tied to increases in education level and experience that can be achieved through ASU-Beebe.

ASU-Beebe's dedication to preparing nurses for Central Arkansas is something we at ARcare find invaluable, and we will continue to support their program through the placement of students in clinical rotations, donation of supplies, services, and equipment, and by hiring ASU-Beebe nursing graduates.

For more information, please contact us at 870-347-2534.

Sincerely,

Steven Collier, M.D., FACHE  
Chief Executive Officer

Augusta • Bald Knob • Batesville • Bentonville • Brinkley • Cabot • Carlisle • Cherry Valley  
Conway • Cotton Plant • Des Arc • El Dorado • England • Fayetteville • Fort Smith • Hazen  
Heber Springs • Horseshoe Bend • Hot Springs • Jonesboro • Kensett • Lake City • Little Rock • Lonoke  
Mayfield • Magnolia • Mayflower • McCrory • Melbourne • Newport • Parkin • Searcy • Southside • Swifton  
Texarkana • Vilonia • West Memphis • White Hall • Wynne



Accredited by  
The Joint Commission

**Appendix I: The Crossing at Riverside Partner In-Kind Contribution Commitment Letter**



Dr. Jason Goodner  
Vice Chancellor Academics  
Arkansas State University-Beebe  
1000 Iowa Street  
Beebe, AR 72012

02/12/2024

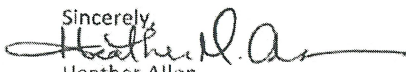
Dear Dr. Goodner,

This letter comes to Arkansas State University-Beebe in support of your Arkansas Linking Industry to Grow Nurses (ALIGN) grant application. This grant will allow growth in ASU-Beebe's Practical Nursing and Registered Nursing programs. Increasing the number of nursing educators and nursing students is a priority for ASU-Beebe, ourselves, and the state of Arkansas

As a local healthcare provider, the need for Licensed Practical Nurses and Registered Nurses continues to grow. Central Arkansas has a rapidly aging population that is requiring an increase in healthcare related services that depend upon competent nursing staff who can provide services both in clinical and in home settings.

Over the next 3 years, The Crossings at Riverside anticipates a high level of partnership with ASU-Beebe's nursing program leading to a significant use of our resources. Some examples include providing nursing supervision of students, preceptorship rotations, and use of our facilities for events and meetings. We calculate the value of services we provide to ASU-Beebe to be at least worth at least \$139,020 over a 3-year time frame. The Crossings at Riverside offers rapid advancement to nurses who obtain degrees at ASU-Beebe. Increase in wages earned and advancement opportunities are closely tied to increases in education level and experience that can be achieved through ASU-Beebe.

ASU-Beebe's dedication to preparing nurses for Central Arkansas is something we at The Crossings at Riverside find invaluable, and we will continue to support their program through the placement of students in clinical rotations, donation of supplies, services and equipment, and by hiring ASU-Beebe nursing graduates.

Sincerely,  
  
Heather Allen  
Assistant Administrator  
The Crossing at Riverside

**AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT OF 2021 PROGRAM APPROPRIATION  
AND PERSONNEL AUTHORIZATION REQUEST  
SECTION 36 OF ACT 152 OF 2024**

**C4**

Agency: Henderson State University Business Area Code: 0100

Program Title: Arkansas Linking Industry to Grow Nurses (ALIGN) ARPA

Granting Organization: Arkansas Office of Skills Development CFDA #: 21.027

Effective Date of Authorization: Beginning: 5/17/2024 Ending: 6/30/2025

Purpose of Grant / Reason for addition or change (include attachments as necessary to provide thorough information):  
Please see attachment.

**American Rescue Plan Act Program Funding**

Func. Area: UNIV Fund Code: New Direct Funding: X

Funds Center: D49 Internal Order/WBS Element: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Continuation: \_\_\_\_\_

|                              | Program Funding Amount |
|------------------------------|------------------------|
| Regular Salaries             | 397,000                |
| Extra Help                   |                        |
| Personal Services Matching   | 105,000                |
| Operating Expenses           | 259,200                |
| Conference & Travel Expenses |                        |
| Professional Fees            |                        |
| Capital Outlay               |                        |
| Data Processing              |                        |
| Grants and Aid (CI: 04)      |                        |
| Other:                       |                        |
| Other:                       |                        |
| Total                        | \$ 761,200             |

Anticipated Duration of Federal Funds: December 31, 2026

|   |             |
|---|-------------|
| <b>DFA IGS State Technology Planning</b>  | <b>Date</b> |
| Items requested for information technology must be in compliance with Technology Plans as submitted to DFA IGS State Technology Planning. |             |

**Positions to be established: (list each position separately)**

| Org Unit | Pers Area | Pers SubArea | Cost Center | Position Number | Cmnt Item | Position Title | Class Code | Grade | Line Item Maximum * |
|----------|-----------|--------------|-------------|-----------------|-----------|----------------|------------|-------|---------------------|
|          |           |              |             |                 |           |                |            |       |                     |
|          |           |              |             |                 |           |                |            |       |                     |
|          |           |              |             |                 |           |                |            |       |                     |
|          |           |              |             |                 |           |                |            |       |                     |
|          |           |              |             |                 |           |                |            |       |                     |
|          |           |              |             |                 |           |                |            |       |                     |
|          |           |              |             |                 |           |                |            |       |                     |
|          |           |              |             |                 |           |                |            |       |                     |
|          |           |              |             |                 |           |                |            |       |                     |

State funds will not be used to replace federal funds when such funds expire, unless appropriated by the General Assembly and authorized by the Governor.

Approved by: *Christopher Adams* 2-17-25 Robert Brech 2/26/25

Cabinet Secretary/Agency Director Date Office of Budget Date Office of Personnel Mgmt Date

MPK 2/17/25





February 13, 2025

Michael Krenn  
Arkansas Department of Finance and Administration  
Little Rock, AR 72201

Mr. Krenn,

This is to provide the attached explanation of ALIGN grant funds and expenses as required in Section 40 of Act 152.

Additionally, a copy of the MOU between Henderson State University and the Office of Skills Development is attached to this document.

If you have any questions, or need additional information, please feel free to contact me at your convenience.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Trey Berry', is written over the printed name and title.

Trey Berry, Ph.D.  
Chancellor  
Henderson State University

### Henderson State ALIGN Grant

1. Upskill lower-level professionals: Transition existing LPN to BSN program to an online delivery modality. The current program has no enrollees. A cohort of 25 LPNs will be recruited to complete the online program in six academic terms with financial and educational support.
2. Increase nurse educator recruitment/retention: Provide financial incentive for nurse educators to continue sharing expertise with aspiring nurse professionals. Retention bonuses are included in the proposed budget.
3. Increase program capacity: Hire faculty for the LPN to BSN online cohort. Hire clinical faculty, simulation lab technician, and peer tutors to expand lab capacity for the traditional BSN program. Identify Pre-Nursing Success Program personnel to provide intensive support in navigating programs and licensure requirements across all programs. Capacity will be expanded from the current size of 64 juniors and seniors to an expanded capacity of 108 students.
4. Expand simulation lab and experiences: Expand simulation center to accommodate more traditional students with space for virtual reality technology. Simulation lab personnel will be used to increase hours of availability.
5. Purchase simulation and skills equipment: Update skills equipment to include new bedside Smart Carts and upgrade use of technology in virtual scenarios for skills development.
6. Impact student recruitment and retention: Implement Pre-Nursing Success Program to provide additional advising and support to students completing admission and licensing requirements.
7. Provide tuition reimbursements: Provide tuition reimbursement opportunities to students in all three undergraduate nursing programs: LPN to BSN, RN to BSN, and traditional BSN.

Dr. Trey Berry

Henderson State University



**AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT OF 2021 PROGRAM APPROPRIATION  
AND PERSONNEL AUTHORIZATION REQUEST  
SECTION 36 OF ACT 152 OF 2024**

**C5**

Agency: NorthWest Arkansas Community College Business Area Code: 0198

Program Title: Arkansas Linking Industry to Grow Nurses (ALIGN) ARPA

Granting Organization: Arkansas Office of Skills Development CFDA #: 21.027

Effective Date of Authorization: Beginning: 5/17/2024 Ending: 06/30/2025

Purpose of Grant / Reason for addition or change (include attachments as necessary to provide thorough information):  
See attached letter for details.

**American Rescue Plan Act Program Funding**

Func. Area: CCOI Fund Code: New Direct Funding: X  
Funds Center: D72 Internal Order/WBS Element: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_  
Continuation: \_\_\_\_\_

|                              | Program Funding Amount |
|------------------------------|------------------------|
| Regular Salaries             | 345,876                |
| Extra Help                   |                        |
| Personal Services Matching   | 96,845                 |
| Operating Expenses           |                        |
| Conference & Travel Expenses |                        |
| Professional Fees            | 444,370                |
| Capital Outlay               | 925,314                |
| Data Processing              |                        |
| Grants and Aid (CI: 04)      | 298,496                |
| Other:                       |                        |
| Other:                       |                        |
| Total                        | \$ 2,110,901           |

Anticipated Duration of Federal Funds: December 31, 2026

|  |  |
|--|--|
|  |  |
|--|--|

**DFA IGS State Technology Planning** **Date**  
Items requested for information technology must be in compliance with Technology Plans as submitted to DFA IGS State Technology Planning.

**Positions to be established: (list each position separately)**

\* unclassified positions only

| Org Unit | Pers Area | Pers SubArea | Cost Center | Position Number | Cmnt Item | Position Title          | Class Code | Grade | Line Item Maximum * |
|----------|-----------|--------------|-------------|-----------------|-----------|-------------------------|------------|-------|---------------------|
|          |           |              |             |                 |           | Program/Project Manager |            |       | 88,574              |
|          |           |              |             |                 |           | Special Instructor      |            |       | 107,909             |
|          |           |              |             |                 |           | Special Instructor      |            |       | 107,909             |

State funds will not be used to replace federal funds when such funds expire, unless appropriated by the General Assembly and authorized by the Governor.

Approved by:  
Catherine Dixon 2/14/25  
Cabinet Secretary/Agency Director Date

Robert Brech 2/26/25  
Office of Budget Date

Office of Personnel Mgmt Date

MPK 2/17/25



## NORTHWEST ARKANSAS COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Northwest Arkansas Community College is committed to meeting the needs of Northwest Arkansas (NWACC) and the growing need for healthcare workers in the region.

The ALIGN grant will help NWACC with the following outlined in the ALIGN Request for Proposals:

1. Salary for Practical Nursing faculty
2. Upskilling lower-level professionals
3. Increasing nurse educator recruitment/retention
4. Equipment purchasing
5. Expansion of labs/Simulation Center

The outcome goals for this grant for NWACC will be to:

- 1 - Use recruiting position to recruit for all the tracks of nursing. This includes CNA, LPN/Paramedic to RN, RN and the new LPN program starting in Spring 2025.
- 2 - Recruit more CNA's into the college level program
- 2 - Upskill CNA's into either the new LPN program or the RN program
- 3 - Upskill LPN's into the RN program
- 4 - With the healthcare providers supplying our adjunct clinical faculty, this frees up time for the current faculty (8 nursing faculty) to attend professional development to ensure that they maintain their nursing licenses.
- 5 - Relieving our current faculty will help the retention of our current faculty.

Outcome Goals of the recruiting position:

- Increase the number of CNA's entering the educational space
- Increase the LPN/Paramedic application pool.
- Increase the number of LPN/Paramedics accepted into the program
- Increase the number of CNA's accepted into the LPN program.

Arkansas and Northwest Arkansas will have a return on investment by the end of 2026 (end of grant) with the following:

- 1 - Return to full capacity of the nursing program cohorts (200 students+ 16 when the LPN program opens)
- 2 - Qualified LPN instructors (BS level faculty)
- 3 - Expansion of the nursing lab on the third floor of the Center for Health Professions
- 4 - Upskilling lower level professionals such as CNA's and LPN's into higher level nursing professions.
- 5 - Fully equipped labs that heighten student learning
- 6 - Better retention of nursing faculty by preventing burnout and providing professional development
- 7 - Relief of student stress of how to pay for textbooks
- 8 - Greater number of nurses graduating and staying in NW Arkansas and Arkansas



Sin

&.cutive Director of Accounting/Controller  
Northwest Arkansas Community College

**Budget for ALIGN Funding**

**Northwest Arkansas Community College**

| <b>PERSONNEL</b>                               | <b>Salary</b>   | <b>Fringe</b> | <b>FTE</b>        | <b>Request</b>    |
|--|-----------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| LPN Instructor - Post Secondary                | 319,845.00      |               | 0.80              | 255,876.00        |
| LPN Instructor - Post Secondary (25% Benefits) |                 | 89,556.60     | 0.80              | 71,645.28         |
| Marketing Recruiter for Nursing CHP            | 112,500.00      |               | 0.80              | 90,000.00         |
| LPN Instructor - Post Secondary (28% Benefits) |                 | 31,500.00     | 0.80              | 25,200.00         |
| <b>Total Personnel</b>                         |                 |               |                   | <b>442,721.28</b> |
|  |                 |               |                   |                   |
| <b>EQUIPMENT/SUPPLIES</b>                      | <b>Quantity</b> | <b>Each</b>   | <b>Total</b>      |                   |
| Hospital Beds                                  | 2               | 3,147.00      | 6,294.00          |                   |
| Suction units                                  | 2               | 1,591.00      | 3,182.00          |                   |
| IV Pole  | 4               | 49.95         | 199.80            |                   |
| CAE Camera Sysytem (Quote)                     | 1               | 45,702.80     | 45,702.80         |                   |
| Luna Mannequin                                 | 1               | 61,518.68     | 61,518.68         |                   |
| ARES Mannequin                                 | 1               | 56,055.57     | 56,055.57         |                   |
| Aria Advanced Mannequin                        | 1               | 102,548.83    | 102,548.83        |                   |
| CAE Learning Space Upgrade                     | 1               | 76,932.42     | 76,932.42         |                   |
| General Supplies                               |                 |               | 54,297.20         |                   |
| <b>Total Equipment/Supplies</b>                |                 |               | <b>406,731.30</b> | <b>406,731.30</b> |
|  |                 |               |                   |                   |
| <b>Award Approved</b>                          |                 |               |                   | <b>849,452.58</b> |
|  |                 |               |                   |                   |
|  |                 |               |                   |                   |
| <b>Total ALIGN Funding</b>                     |                 |               |                   | <b>849,452.58</b> |



**Mercy Northwest Arkansas**

| <b>PERSONNEL</b>  | <b>Salary</b>     |             |                   | <b>Request</b>      |
|---|-------------------|-------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| SIM Lab Managers Midpoint (\$50/hr)                     | 244,370.00        |             |                   |                     |
| Clinical Instructor Midpoint (\$39/hr)                  | 200,000.00        |             |                   |                     |
| <b>Total Personnel</b>                                  | <b>444,370.00</b> |             |                   | <b>444,370.00</b>   |
| <b>EQUIPMENT/SUPPLIES</b>                               | <b>Quantity</b>   | <b>Each</b> | <b>Total</b>      |                     |
| SIM Adult w/Continuous Control Room+ service plan       | 1                 | 69,795.00   | 69,795.00         |                     |
| SIM ICU w/Continuous Control Room+ service plan         | 1                 | 82,490.00   | 82,490.00         |                     |
| SIM Pediatric w/ Continuous Control Room+ svc plan      | 1                 | 86,780.00   | 86,780.00         |                     |
| Computers (Wall Mount) at Bedside                       | 4                 | 2,500.00    | 10,000.00         |                     |
| Patient Beds  | 2                 | 3,000.00    | 6,000.00          |                     |
| Overbed Tables  | 2                 | 267.00      | 534.00            |                     |
| Ventilator  | 1                 | 8,000.00    | 8,000.00          |                     |
| Simulated IV Fluids & Code Medications                  | 1                 | 10,000.00   | 10,000.00         |                     |
| Crash Cart  | 1                 | 2,250.00    | 2,250.00          |                     |
| Cardiac Monitor   | 1                 | 16,400.00   | 16,400.00         |                     |
| Training Headwalls (flow meters/suction)                | 4                 | 3,704.00    | 14,816.00         |                     |
| Medication Dispenser                                    | 1                 | 25,042.00   | 25,042.00         |                     |
| Virtual Reality (VR) Simulation                         | 15                | 6,215.87    | 93,238.00         |                     |
| 1 Year VR Subscription                                  | 2                 | 46,619.00   | 93,238.00         |                     |
| <b>Total Equipment/Supplies</b>                         |                   |             | <b>518,583.00</b> | <b>518,583.00</b>   |
| <b>Award Approved</b>                                   |                   |             |                   | <b>962,953.00</b>   |
| <b>SCHOLARSHIPS</b>                                     |                   |             |                   |                     |
| Summer Extern Program                                   | 98,496.00         |             |                   |                     |
|   | 98,496.00         |             |                   | 98,496.00           |
|   |                   |             |                   |                     |
| <b>Additional Student Scholarship Funding</b>           | <b>Quantity</b>   | <b>Each</b> | <b>Total</b>      |                     |
| Win from Within Tuition Reimbursement \$20k per student | 10                | 20,000.00   | 200,000.00        |                     |
|   |                   |             | 200,000.00        | 200,000.00          |
| <b>Tuition/Scholarships Approved</b>                    |                   |             |                   | <b>298,496.00</b>   |
| <b>Total ALIGN Funding</b>                              |                   |             |                   | <b>1,261,449.00</b> |

NWACC ALIGN 849,452.58

Mercy ALIGN 1,261,449.00

Total ALIGN 2,110,901.58

**AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT OF 2021 PROGRAM APPROPRIATION  
AND PERSONNEL AUTHORIZATION REQUEST  
SECTION 36 OF ACT 152 OF 2024**

**C6**

Agency: NorthWest Arkansas Community College Business Area Code: 0198

Program Title: Arkansas Linking Industry to Grow Nurses (ALIGN) Program

Granting Organization: Office of Skills Development CFDA #: 21.027

Effective Date of Authorization: Beginning: 8/14/2024 Ending: 6/30/25 9/30/2026

Purpose of Grant / Reason for addition or change (include attachments as necessary to provide thorough information):  
To provide funding through the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 for the ALIGN Program at NWACC TC, which will deliver a program of study in Licensed Practical Nursing (LPN). NWACC TC is a multi-district vocational center located on the Bentonville campus. This MOU addresses the budget deficit between vocational center aid, based upon LPN enrollment, allocated to NWACC TC for state fiscal year 2025 and 2026 and the fixed costs of offering the LPN program during that period.

**American Rescue Plan Act Program Funding**

Func. Area: ccol Fund Code: New Direct Funding: X  
Funds Center: D72 Internal Order/WBS Element: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_  
Continuation: \_\_\_\_\_

|                              | Program Funding Amount |
|------------------------------|------------------------|
| Regular Salaries             | 199,365                |
| Extra Help                   |                        |
| Personal Services Matching   |                        |
| Operating Expenses           | 133,360                |
| Conference & Travel Expenses |                        |
| Professional Fees            |                        |
| Capital Outlay               | 323,787                |
| Data Processing              |                        |
| Grants and Aid (CI: 04)      |                        |
| Other:                       |                        |
| Other:                       |                        |
| Total                        | \$ 656,512             |

Anticipated Duration of Federal Funds: 8/14/24-9/30/26

|  |  |
|--|--|
|  |  |
|--|--|

**DFA IGS State Technology Planning** Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Items requested for information technology must be in compliance with Technology Plans as submitted to DFA IGS State Technology Planning.

**Positions to be established: (list each position separately)**

| Org Unit | Pers Area | Pers SubArea | Cost Center | Position Number | Cmnt Item | Position Title | Class Code | Grade | Line Item Maximum * |
|----------|-----------|--------------|-------------|-----------------|-----------|----------------|------------|-------|---------------------|
|          |           |              | 11545       |                 |           | Faculty        |            |       | 107,909             |
|          |           |              | 11545       |                 |           | Faculty        |            |       | 107,909             |

State funds will not be used to replace federal funds when such funds expire, unless appropriated by the General Assembly and authorized by the Governor.

Approved by: *Robert Brech* 2/26/25  
Cabinet Secretary/Agency Director Date Office of Budget Date Office of Personnel Mgmt Date

MPK 2/17/25





# NORTHWEST ARKANSAS COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Department of Finance and Administration  
Little Rock, AR 72203

Subject: Detailed Explanation of the Program Plan and Expenditures for Legislature Review

I am pleased to submit this letter detailing the program plan and associated expenditures for the Licensed Practical Nursing (LPN) Program at NorthWest Arkansas Community College Technical Center (NWACC TC) under the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 for the Arkansas Linking Industry to Grow Nurses (ALIGN) Program. This initiative, in collaboration with the Arkansas Office of Skills Development (OSD), is crucial in addressing the nursing shortage in Arkansas and strengthening the healthcare workforce.

NWACC TC, a multi-district vocational center located on the NWACC Bentonville campus, is committed to preparing skilled nursing professionals to meet the evolving needs of the healthcare sector. The ALIGN Program funding will support the expansion of the LPN program by addressing the financial gap between vocational aid allocation and the fixed costs of operating the program for state fiscal years 2025 and 2026. The funding provided through this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) will be used to enhance program capacity, improve clinical training, and ensure students receive high-quality nursing education.

The funding available under this MOU shall not exceed \$656,512.39 and is allocated as follows:

## 1. Salaries and Benefits

Allocated for instructor salaries and benefits to ensure the delivery of quality education.

- Year 1: \$52,349.19
- Year2:\$147215.98
- **Total: \$199,565.17**
- 

## 2. Student Supplies and Expenses

Includes essential educational materials, testing fees, uniforms, clinical equipment, background checks, and workplace activities for all high school students enrolled in the program.

- Textbooks (eBooks included): \$51,200.00
- Standardized Testing (HESI): \$16,800.00
- Uniforms, shoes, clinical equipment: \$16,000.00
- Background check, drug screening, immunizations, TB skin test, CPR verification, physical exam: \$16,000.00
- Graduation expenses: \$11,200.00
- Student organizations/workplace activities: \$6,400.00
- State Board Testing Fees: \$4,400.00
- Hurst Review: \$5,360.00
- Gas Cards for transportation assistance: \$6,000.00
- **Total: \$133,360.00**



### **3. Classroom Supplies and Equipment**

Includes essential instructional tools, simulation equipment, and medical technology enhancements. This equipment is vital to prepare students for the high-tech environment in health care facilities and will serve to provide the supplemental learning time outside clinic because space in the workplace is limited for a variety of reasons.

- Laptops, carts, software, and printers: \$32,600.00
- Virtual Reality (VR) Headsets for enhanced training: \$92,400.00
- LPN classroom equipment and supplies: \$198,787.22
- **Total: \$323,787.22**

### **4. Total Adjusted Request**

The total request for the program amounts to \$720,397.22; however, the awarded funding under ALIGN covers 91.132% of the total request, amounting to \$656,512.39:

- Year 1: \$363,796.41
- Year 2: \$292,715.98

NWACC TC is committed to ensuring transparency and accountability in program execution. Regular reports will be submitted to OSD, containing:

- Verified enrollment data
- Certifications/credentials earned
- Expenditures
- Concurrent credit hours earned
- Employment outcomes

The ALIGN Program funding for NWACC TC is a strategic investment in the healthcare workforce of Arkansas. By expanding LPN education and providing essential resources, this initiative will produce highly trained nursing professionals, mitigate workforce shortages, and contribute to the overall health and well-being of Arkansas communities.

We appreciate the Legislature's review and support of this vital program. Please do not hesitate to contact me for further information or clarification.

Sincerely,



Executive Director of Accounting/Controller  
NorthWest Arkansas Community College

**AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT OF 2021 PROGRAM APPROPRIATION  
AND PERSONNEL AUTHORIZATION REQUEST  
SECTION 36 OF ACT 152 OF 2024**

**C7**

Agency: University of Arkansas Community College Batesville Business Area Code: 0168  
 Program Title Arkansas Linking Industry to Grow Nurses(ALIGN)  
 Granting Organization: Office of Skills Development CFDA #: 21.027  
 Effective Date of Authorization: Beginning: 8/19/2024 Ending: 6/30/2025

Purpose of Grant / Reason for addition or change (include attachments as necessary to provide thorough information):  
 Arkansas faces a challenge in the healthcare industry due to a nursing shortage. The Office of Skills Development and other institutions have been task with the development of programs to fill this gap. The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 has implemented the Arkansas Linking Industry to Grow Nurses(ALIGN)Program as a way for institutions to fund the programs necessary to upskill employees, expand nursing apprenticeships, increase nursing education retention, assist with tuition, purchase equipment, and expand simulations labs. The grant funding allows for reimbursement of salaries, simulation room equipment, educational medical supplies, and medication administration supplies.

**American Rescue Plan Act Program Funding**

Func. Area: UNIV Fund Code: New Direct Funding: X  
 Funds Center: 062 D62 Internal Order/WBS Element: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Continuation: \_\_\_\_\_

|  | Program Funding Amount |
|--|------------------------|
| Regular Salaries                           | 157,248                |
| Extra Help                                 | 79,800                 |
| Personal Services Matching                 |                        |
| Operating Expenses                         | 10,336                 |
| Conference & Travel Expenses               |                        |
| Professional Fees                          |                        |
| Capital Outlay                             |                        |
| Data Processing                            |                        |
| Grants and Aid (CI: 04)                    |                        |
| Other: Simulated Rooms and Equipment       | 26,317                 |
| Other: Medication Administration Supplies: | 94,913                 |
| Total                                      | \$ 368,614             |

Anticipated Duration of Federal Funds: 9/30/2026

**DFA IGS State Technology Planning** Date \_\_\_\_\_  
 Items requested for information technology must be in compliance with Technology Plans as submitted to DFA IGS State Technology Planning.

**Positions to be established: (list each position separately)**

| Org Unit | Pers Area | Pers SubArea | Cost Center | Position Number | Cmnt Item | Position Title | Class Code | Grade | Line Item Maximum * |
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State funds will not be used to replace federal funds when such funds expire, unless appropriated by the General Assembly and authorized by the Governor.

Approved by: Bruce Hanna 2/13/25 Robert Brech 2/26/25  
 Cabinet Secretary/Agency Director Date Office of Budget Date Office of Personnel Mgmt Date

MPK 2/17/25



UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS COMMUNITY COLLEGE AT BATESVILLE

February 11, 2025

Mr. Jim Hudson, Secretary  
Department of Finance and Administration  
Office of Secretary  
1509 West 7<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 401  
Little Rock, AR 72203-3278

RE: American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, Act 152 of 2024, Section 40-ALIGN Grant

Dear Secretary Hudson:

The University of Arkansas Community College at Batesville (UACCB) appreciates the opportunity to utilize funds from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) of 2021, as authorized in Act 152 of 2024. UACCB hereby submits a supplemental appropriation for these funds to be used in FY2025 and FY2026.

UACCB has access to \$368,014 through the Office of Skill Development (OSD) Arkansas Linking Industry to Grow Nurses (ALIGN) grant program. We propose to allocate these funds as follows:

|                                     |                      |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Regular Salaries:                   | \$157,248.00         |
| Extra Help:                         | 79,800.00            |
| Simulated Rooms and Equipment:      | 26,317.46            |
| Educational Medical Supplies:       | 10,336.30            |
| Medication Administration Supplies: | <u>94,912.50</u>     |
| Total Appropriation Request:        | <u>\$ 368,614.26</u> |

Our goal is to provide a program that will lessen the nursing shortage recognized by the State of Arkansas. OSD has been empowered to design and implement programs that will allow community colleges such as UACCB to house programs like this, and we welcome that opportunity. Personnel costs are budgeted at \$237,048 and equipment and supplies at \$131,566.26. The total program cost is budgeted at \$368,614.26.

Thank you for considering this supplemental appropriation request from UACCB. I am available to discuss any questions or provide further clarification. Please feel free to contact me by phone at (870)612-2001 or via email at [brian.shonk@uaccb.edu](mailto:brian.shonk@uaccb.edu).

i • I Y,,

Brian Shonk, Ed.D.  
Chancellor

P.O. Box 3350 / Batesville, Arkansas 72503-3350 / 870-612-2000 / Fax 870-793-4988  
UACCB is an equal opportunity/affirmative action institution.



**AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT OF 2021 PROGRAM APPROPRIATION  
AND PERSONNEL AUTHORIZATION REQUEST  
SECTION 36 OF ACT 152 OF 2024**

**C8**

Agency: Arkansas State University Mountain Home Business Area Code: 0128  
 Program Title: A.L.I.G.N. Arkansas Linking Industry to Grow Nurses Partnership between ASUMH and Baxter Health  
 Granting Organization: Office of Skills Development CFDA #: 21.0027.21.027  
 Effective Date of Authorization: Beginning: 7/1/2024 Ending: 6/30/2025  
 Purpose of Grant / Reason for addition or change (include attachments as necessary to provide thorough information):

See Letter

**American Rescue Plan Act Program Funding**

Func. Area: UNIV Fund Code: New Direct Funding: X  
 Funds Center: D53 Internal Order/WBS Element: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Continuation: \_\_\_\_\_

|                              | Program Funding Amount |
|------------------------------|------------------------|
| Regular Salaries             | 180,000                |
| Extra Help                   | 5,175                  |
| Personal Services Matching   | 63,000                 |
| Operating Expenses           | 377,000                |
| Conference & Travel Expenses |                        |
| Professional Fees            |                        |
| Capital Outlay               |                        |
| Data Processing              |                        |
| Grants and Aid (CI: 04)      |                        |
| Other:                       |                        |
| Other:                       |                        |
| Total                        | \$ 625,175             |

Anticipated Duration of Federal Funds: 09/30/2026

**DFA IGS State Technology Planning** Date \_\_\_\_\_  
 Items requested for information technology must be in compliance with Technology Plans as submitted to DFA IGS State Technology Planning.

**Positions to be established: (list each position separately)**

| Org Unit | Pers Area | Pers SubArea | Cost Center | Position Number | Cmnt Item | Position Title | Class Code | Grade | Line Item Maximum * |
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State funds will not be used to replace federal funds when such funds expire, unless appropriated by the General Assembly and authorized by the Governor.

Approved by: Robert Brech 2/26/25  
 Cabinet Secretary/Agency Director Date Office of Budget Date Office of Personnel Mgmt Date

MPK 2/14/25

Office of the Chancellor



February 12, 2025

Jim Hudson, Secretary  
Department of Finance and Administration  
Office of the Secretary  
1509 West 7<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 401  
Little Rock AR 72203-3278

Dear Secretary Hudson:

Arkansas State University Mountain Home respectfully requests review of the appropriation from the American Rescue Plan Act 2021 for the ALIGN Program - Arkansas Linking Industry to Grow Nurses, authorized in Section 36 of Act 152 of 2024. Attached you will find a completed request form.

Arkansas State University Mountain Home has been awarded \$625,175 through the Office of Skills Development to address critical workforce shortages and improve labor market participation through targeted skills development and industry-driven care pathways. Arkansas State University Mountain Home serves the profession of nursing by preparing graduates to meet ever-changing client needs for healthcare.

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bentley Wallace".

Dr. Bentley Wallace, Chancellor  
Arkansas State University Mountain Home

**AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT OF 2021 PROGRAM APPROPRIATION  
AND PERSONNEL AUTHORIZATION REQUEST  
SECTION 36 OF ACT 152 OF 2024**

**C9**

Agency: Southern Arkansas University Tech Business Area Code: 0115

Program Title: HIRED Grant Track 2

Granting Organization: Office of Skills Development CFDA #: 21.0027.21.027

Effective Date of Authorization: Beginning: 1/1/2025 Ending: 6/30/2025

Purpose of Grant / Reason for addition or change (include attachments as necessary to provide thorough information):  
See Attached.

**American Rescue Plan Act Program Funding**

Func. Area: UNIV Fund Code: New Direct Funding: X

Funds Center: D51 Internal Order/WBS Element: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Continuation: \_\_\_\_\_

|                              | Program Funding Amount |
|------------------------------|------------------------|
| Regular Salaries             | 258,382                |
| Extra Help                   |                        |
| Personal Services Matching   | 93,018                 |
| Operating Expenses           | 216,135                |
| Conference & Travel Expenses | 20,000                 |
| Professional Fees            | 575,529                |
| Capital Outlay               | 3,336,936              |
| Data Processing              |                        |
| Grants and Aid (CI: 04)      |                        |
| Other: Training Cost Share   | 500,000                |
| Other:                       |                        |
| Total                        | \$ 5,000,000           |

Anticipated Duration of Federal Funds: 06/30/2027

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**DFA IGS State Technology Planning** **Date**  
Items requested for information technology must be in compliance with Technology Plans as submitted to DFA IGS State Technology Planning.

**Positions to be established: (list each position separately)**

| Org Unit | Pers Area | Pers SubArea | Cost Center | Position Number | Cmnt Item | Position Title | Class Code | Grade | Line Item Maximum * |
|----------|-----------|--------------|-------------|-----------------|-----------|----------------|------------|-------|---------------------|
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State funds will not be used to replace federal funds when such funds expire, unless appropriated by the General Assembly and authorized by the Governor.

Approved by: *Robert Brech* 2-20-25  
Cabinet Secretary/Agency Director Date

Robert Brech 2/26/25  
Office of Budget Date

Office of Personnel Mgmt Date





Hugh McDonald  
SECRETARY OF COMMERCE

Stephanie Isaacs  
DIRECTOR,  
OFFICE OF SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**  
**ARKANSAS OFFICE OF SKILLS DEVELOPMENT**  
**AND**  
**SOUTHERN ARKANSAS UNIVERSITY TECH**  
**MOU # HIRED 252617**

**ASSURANCES AND COMPLIANCE:** This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) shall be governed by and construed under the laws of the State of Arkansas. The parties agree to comply with Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Executive Order 11246, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and the related regulations to each. In addition, Southern Arkansas University Tech agrees to adhere to all state and local regulations, as well as the guidelines provided in the *Higher Industry Readiness through Educational Development (HIRED)* Program. Each Party assures that it will not discriminate against any individual on the basis of race, religion, creed, color, sex, age, disability, veteran status, or national origin. Nothing in this MOU may be construed to waive the sovereign or statutory immunities of either Party. Non-compliance may result in the suspension or termination of funding.

**PERIOD COVERED:** This MOU shall take effect on November 14, 2024, and shall continue through December 31, 2026.

**PARTIES:** Parties to this MOU are the Arkansas Office of Skills Development (OSD) and Southern Arkansas University Tech (SAUT). OSD is a state agency authorized to award strategic grants to public and private organizations for the development and implementation of workforce training programs in Arkansas. SAUT is a two-year public college that meets educational, training, and cultural needs of the communities it serves. SAUT serves to support the development and implementation of Advanced Manufacturing: Aerospace and Defense, a project aimed at addressing critical workforce needs in the advance manufacturing sector.

**BACKGROUND:** The Arkansas Workforce Strategy seeks to address critical workforce shortages and improve labor market participation through targeted skills development and industry-driven career pathways. The state's economic growth and competitiveness depends on a well-trained, adaptable workforce prepared to meet the evolving needs of high-demand sectors such as advanced manufacturing, energy infrastructure, information technology, and life sciences. The HIRED Grant Program was created to provide funding for regional, employer-driven initiatives that address skills gaps.

OSD and training providers across the state have been empowered to fund innovative projects that involve collaborative partnerships between employers, educational institutions, and

Arkansas Department of Commerce  
Office of Skills Development  
1 Commerce Way • Little Rock, AR 72202  
[WWW.ARKANSASOSD.COM](http://WWW.ARKANSASOSD.COM)

workforce development organizations to develop and implement training programs. These programs are designed to prepare workers for rapid entry into the workforce, provide upskilling opportunities for incumbent workers, and deliver industry-recognized credentials. Funded by American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, *HIRED Program - Arkansas Workforce Strategy Grants* are focused on funding strategic investments, aligned within the areas of focus, that will increase the state's skilled workforce needs in current and future market strengths.

**PURPOSE OF MOU:** To outline the terms and conditions between OSD and SAUT regarding the administration, implementation, and oversight of funds provided under the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 for the *HIRED Program - Arkansas Workforce Strategy Grants*.

**SCOPE OF WORK:** SAUT agrees to undertake the following activities under the terms of this MOU:

- Develop and implement employer-driven career pathways aligned with the targeted industry sectors identified in the Arkansas Workforce Strategy.
- Collaborate with workforce alliance partners including but not limited to two or more employers, community colleges, universities, and, optionally, K-12 systems.
- Provide training and education that leads to industry-recognized credentials, apprenticeships, or academic credit credentials aligned with the needs of the local labor market.
- Use data-driven methods to demonstrate measurable outcomes including increased employment rates and labor force participation.

**FUNDING:** The approved budget which is incorporated into this MOU shows all eligible expenses for reimbursement by OSD for actual expenses incurred between November 14, 2024, and December 31, 2026. SAUT shall submit monthly reimbursement requests for expenses corresponding to the budget categories. Invoicing for reimbursement should be submitted by the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month for the preceding month's expenses.

Invoices and supporting documents shall be submitted to [osd.hiredgrants@Arkansas.gov](mailto:osd.hiredgrants@Arkansas.gov).

**MONITORING and EVALUATION:** OSD reserves the rights to monitor the project's progress, conduct site visits, and request additional documentation to ensure compliance with HIRED GRANT objectives.

**PROGRAM REPORTING:**

ASU will provide to OSD the following reports:

- Quarterly Reports: Quarterly progress reports outlining key activities, milestones, and expenditures. Reports shall be submitted April 15, 2025, July 15, 2025, October 15, 2025, January 15, 2026, April 15, 2026, July 15, 2026, and October 15, 2026.
- Final Report: A final performance report will be submitted within 45 days of the project's end, providing a summary of outcomes, achievements, and sustaining plan to ensure long-term impact and continued workforce development.

**INFORMATION EXCHANGE AND CONFIDENTIALITY:** The Parties agree to abide by the privacy and nondisclosure provisions of the Family Educational Rights Privacy Act, its associated federal regulations, and Arkansas privacy laws to the extent they apply.

**MODIFICATION:** This MOU may be modified only by written agreement signed by both Parties.

**MOU NOT VALID UNLESS SIGNED BY ALL PARTIES AND ALL INFORMATION FILLED OUT:**

**AUTHORIZED SIGNATURE:**

|   |              |                     |
|---|--------------|---------------------|
| <div>Signed by:<br/><i>Jerry Thomas</i><br/>Dr. Jerry Thomas, Chancellor</div> <div>12/30/2024<br/>Date</div> |              |                     |
| South Arkansas University Tech  | 870-574-4501 | jthomas@asutech.edu |

**STATE STAFF:**

|  |                    |
|--|--------------------|
| Stephanie Isaacs, Director, Office of Skills Development<br>Arkansas Department of Commerce  | Date<br>12/30/2024 |
| <div>DocuSigned by:<br/><i>Stephanie Isaacs</i></div> <div>Cody Waits, Executive Director of Workforce Connections<br/>Arkansas Department of Commerce</div> | Date<br>12/30/2024 |

**FUND ACCOUNT: ARKANSAS WORKFORCE STRATEGY GRANTS**

| MOU Expiration Date | APPROPRIATION CODE | APPROPRIATION FUND | APPROPRIATION | SOURCE OF FUNDS | REVENUE CODE | Office of Skills Dev. Cost Ctr |
|---------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------|-----------------|--------------|--------------------------------|
| 12/31/26            | ***                | XXX***             | 04            | FEDERAL         | N/A          | B000000000                     |

|                   |             |
|-------------------|-------------|
| Total MOU Funding | \$5,000,000 |
|-------------------|-------------|





## Consolidated HIRED Grant Budget

| <u>Category</u>        | <u>Total Project Amount</u> |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Personnel/Stipend      | \$ 351,400.00               |
| Travel                 | \$ 20,000.00                |
| Equipment              | \$ 2,582,236.00             |
| Materials & Supplies   | \$ 216,135.00               |
| Professional Services  | \$ 575,529.00               |
| Construction           | \$ 754,700.00               |
| Area Workforce Trainin | \$ 500,000.00               |
|                        | <hr/>                       |
|                        | \$ 5,000,000.00             |

**AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT OF 2021 PROGRAM APPROPRIATION  
AND PERSONNEL AUTHORIZATION REQUEST  
SECTION 36 OF ACT 152 OF 2024**

**C10**

Agency: University of Arkansas Community College Rich Mountain Business Area Code: 0192  
 Program Title: Arkansas Linking Industry to Grow Nurses (ALIGN) Program  
 Granting Organization: Arkansas Office of Skills Development CFDA #: 21.027  
 Effective Date of Authorization: Beginning: 5/17/2024 Ending: 06/30/2025

Purpose of Grant / Reason for addition or change (include attachments as necessary to provide thorough information):  
 The purpose of this grant is to support the Licensed Practical Nursing (LPN) program at the University of Arkansas Community College Rich Mountain. It will allow the college to further expand the LPN program with purchasing equipment to implement simulation centers as well as hire additional nurse educators.

**American Rescue Plan Act Program Funding**

Func. Area: CCOL Fund Code: NEW Direct Funding: X  
 Funds Center: BX7 Internal Order/WBS Element: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Continuation: \_\_\_\_\_

|                              | Program Funding Amount |
|------------------------------|------------------------|
| Regular Salaries             | 87,750                 |
| Extra Help                   |                        |
| Personal Services Matching   |                        |
| Operating Expenses           |                        |
| Conference & Travel Expenses | 7,500                  |
| Professional Fees            |                        |
| Capital Outlay               | 550,600                |
| Data Processing              |                        |
| Grants and Aid (CI: 04)      |                        |
| Other:                       |                        |
| Other:                       |                        |
| Total                        | \$ 645,850             |

Anticipated Duration of Federal Funds: \_\_\_\_\_

**DFA IGS State Technology Planning** Date  
 Items requested for information technology must be in compliance with Technology Plans as submitted to DFA IGS State Technology Planning.

**Positions to be established: (list each position separately)**

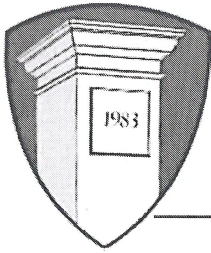
| Org Unit | Pers Area | Pers SubArea | Cost Center | Position Number | Cmnt Item | Position Title | Class Code | Grade | Line Item Maximum * |
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State funds will not be used to replace federal funds when such funds expire, unless appropriated by the General Assembly and authorized by the Governor.

Approved by: [Signature]  
 Cabinet Secretary/Agency Director Date

Robert Brech 2/26/25  
 Office of Budget Date

Office of Personnel Mgmt Date



# University of Arkansas RICH MOUNTAIN

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February 21, 2025

Jim Hudson, Secretary  
Department of Finance and Administration  
Office of the Secretary  
1509 West 7<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 401  
Little Rock, AR 72203-3278

Re: American Rescue Plan Act 152 of 2024

Dear Secretary Hudson,

The University of Arkansas Community College Rich Mountain has been grateful to receive American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 funding through the Office of Skills Development. The *Arkansas Linking Industry to Grow Nurses (ALIGN) Program* award totals \$645,850.00. UA Rich Mountain respectfully submits a supplemental appropriation rest and detail plan for these expenditures.

UA Rich Mountain requests review of appropriation from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 which will provide additional funding in support of the Licensed Practical Nursing (LPN) Program. This will allow the University to expand the LPN program with the purchase of equipment for simulation centers and to hire additional nurse educators.

Please find attached the Memorandum of Understanding that includes budgeted expenditures and the Appropriation quest.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Phillip Wilson, Chancellor  
University of Arkansas Community College Rich Mountain



**AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT OF 2021 PROGRAM APPROPRIATION  
AND PERSONNEL AUTHORIZATION REQUEST  
SECTION 36 OF ACT 152 OF 2024**

**C11**

Agency: University of Central Arkansas Business Area Code: 0165

Program Title: Arkansas Linking Industry to Grow Nurses (ALIGN) ARPA

Granting Organization: Arkansas Office of Skills Development CFDA #: 21.027

Effective Date of Authorization: Beginning: 5/17/2024 Ending: 6/30/2025

Purpose of Grant / Reason for addition or change (include attachments as necessary to provide thorough information):  
Please see attachment.

**American Rescue Plan Act Program Funding**

Func. Area: UNIV Fund Code: new Direct Funding: X  
Funds Center: D60 Internal Order/WBS Element: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_  
Continuation: \_\_\_\_\_

|                              | Program Funding Amount |
|------------------------------|------------------------|
| Regular Salaries             | 132,000                |
| Extra Help                   |                        |
| Personal Services Matching   |                        |
| Operating Expenses           | 210,784                |
| Conference & Travel Expenses | 34,000                 |
| Professional Fees            | 34,000                 |
| Capital Outlay               | 65,316                 |
| Data Processing              |                        |
| Grants and Aid (CI: 04)      |                        |
| Other:                       |                        |
| Other:                       |                        |
| Total                        | \$ 476,100             |

Anticipated Duration of Federal Funds: 12/31/2026

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**DFA IGS State Technology Planning** Date  
Items requested for information technology must be in compliance with Technology Plans as submitted to DFA IGS State Technology Planning.

**Positions to be established: (list each position separately)**

\* unclassified positions only

| Org Unit | Pers Area | Pers SubArea | Cost Center | Position Number | Cmnt Item | Position Title | Class Code | Grade | Line Item Maximum * |
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**State funds will not be used to replace federal funds when such funds expire, unless appropriated by the General Assembly and authorized by the Governor.**

Approved by:  2/24/25  
Cabinet Secretary/Agency Director Date

Robert Brech 2/26/25  
Office of Budget Date

Office of Personnel Mgmt Date



UNIVERSITY OF  
CENTRAL  
ARKANSAS™

## School of Nursing

February 11, 2025

Joint Budget Committee  
Arkansas State Legislature  
1 Capitol Mall, Fifth Floor  
Little Rock, AR 72201

RE: Explanation of Expenses, ALIGN Grant

Dear Committee Members:

I write to provide an explanation of expenses paid for by the ALIGN Grant as required by the America Rescue Plan Act of 2021.

The purpose of our program, Supporting Nursing Student Academic Success, is to increase the number of students who graduate with a BSN degree and achieve employment as registered nurses.

Monies for the following line items will be expended by December 31, 2026, as required by law.

### Personnel: Academic Success Coach

|   |                   |
|---|-------------------|
| Salary = \$50,000 x 2 years                       | \$ 100,000        |
| Fringe benefits 32% x \$50,000 = 16,000 x 2 years | \$ 32,000         |
| <b>Total personnel</b>                            | <b>\$ 132,000</b> |

A nurse educator with a master's of science in nursing will be hired in a 75% part-time, 10-month position as an Academic Success Coach to provide one-on-one mentoring and support for nursing students at risk. Students admitted to the nursing program start in Summer II of their junior year. The Academic Success Coach will be available to students in their first semester.

This salary is reasonable: a full-time nurse educator can expect an annual salary of approximately \$75,000. A 75% part-time position commands livable earnings while offering flexibility in scheduled work hours.

### Equipment

|   |                  |
|---|------------------|
| Laerdal Mama Anne Birthing Simulator (equipment cost, set-up training, maintenance contract, extended warranty) | <b>\$120,000</b> |
|---|------------------|

The Mama Anne is a birthing simulator that allows students to participate in all aspects of a birth, from early labor through delivery. Much more than a typical mannikin, the simulator allows the UCA School of Nursing to replicate high-risk scenarios that can accompany a birth. By adding Mama Anne to the simulation lab, we can ensure that the students are developing skills in birth and labor under a variety of situations. This cost is reasonable: similar models run about the same price.

### Supplies

|  |                  |
|--|------------------|
| Kaplan NCLEX-RN Prep: \$425 X 125 students x 2 years   | \$ 106,250       |
| Typhon Competency Tracking System: \$70/user x 250 users x 2 years = \$35,000 + one-time setup fee of \$150 + \$350 annual fee x 2 years = \$700 = \$850 | \$ 35,850        |
| Skills lab supplies (phlebotomy, injection, anatomy, parenteral medication, foley catheter kits, etc. \$3000/year x 2 years                              | \$ 6,000         |
| <b>Total Supplies</b>  | <b>\$148,100</b> |

Nursing graduates must pass the National Council Licensure Exam for Registered Nurses (NCLEX-RN) in order to be licensed to practice. Kaplan NCLEX-RN prep materials will be integrated into the capstone course curriculum during the final semester in an effort to improve NCLEX-RN pass rates.

The Typhon Competency Tracking System allows faculty and students to monitor progress in clinical experiences and ensure objectives for each course are achieved. Additionally, students can take evaluations and build a portfolio to use when applying for positions after graduation.

Skills lab supplies allow students to practice drawing blood, injecting medications, examining the human body, administering catheters, and developing other necessary skills.

Costs are reasonable. Kaplan provides the premier materials to help students prepare for the NCLEX-RN. Typhon is the top name in healthcare competency tracking. Skills lab supplies are an ongoing need as they cannot be re-used.

#### Other Expenses

|   |                  |
|---|------------------|
| Student Scholarships: \$25,000/year x 2 years     | \$50,000         |
| Professional development: \$25,000/year x 2 years | \$50,000         |
| <b>Total Other Expenses</b>                       | <b>\$100,000</b> |

#### Matching

|   |                  |
|---|------------------|
| Student Scholarships: \$25,000/year x 2 years     | \$50,000         |
| Professional development: \$25,000/year x 2 years | \$50,000         |
| <b>Total Other Expenses</b>                       | <b>\$100,000</b> |

In Arkansas, the shortfall of RNs is expected to reach nearly 5,000 by the year 2035. To address the upcoming gap in care, the University of Central Arkansas School of Nursing (UCA-SON) expanded enrollment in the prelicensure BSN each year between 2019 to 2023 from 75 students per year to 125 students per year. However, additional resources are needed to assure academic success of students who are admitted.

Our partner, CHI St. Vincent's, provides a 1:1 match for scholarships for up to 20 students per year. The scholarships provide financial relief for the students, allowing them to decrease the number of hours they need to work to increase time for study.

Additionally, the partnership provides a 1:1 match of \$50,000 per year for faculty development. Faculty members who can attend conferences and workshops maintain a sense of academic professionalism and increase their knowledge of state-of-the art curricula and teaching/training techniques. Faculty licensures and certifications are also paid out of this fund. These efforts help us retain high quality nursing educators.

#### Totals

|                            |                  |
|----------------------------|------------------|
| Total requested from ALIGN | \$500,100        |
| Total matching             | \$100,000        |
| <b>Total costs</b>         | <b>\$600,100</b> |

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

*Susan Gatto*

Dr. Susan Gatto, Director & Professor



**AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT OF 2021 PROGRAM APPROPRIATION  
AND PERSONNEL AUTHORIZATION REQUEST  
SECTION 36 OF ACT 152 OF 2024**

**C12**

Agency: Arkansas State University-Newport Business Area Code: 0129

Program Title: Manufacturing Technician Pathways & Apprenticeship Expansion

Granting Organization: Office of Skills Development CFDA #: 21.0027.21.027

Effective Date of Authorization: Beginning: 1/1/2025 Ending: 6/30/2025

Purpose of Grant / Reason for addition or change (include attachments as necessary to provide thorough information):  
See Attached Documents.

**American Rescue Plan Act Program Funding**

Func. Area: UNIV Fund Code: New Direct Funding: X  
Funds Center: D54 Internal Order/WBS Element: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_  
Continuation: \_\_\_\_\_

|                                      | Program Funding Amount |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Regular Salaries                     |                        |
| Extra Help                           |                        |
| Personal Services Matching           |                        |
| Operating Expenses                   |                        |
| Conference & Travel Expenses         |                        |
| Professional Fees                    |                        |
| Capital Outlay                       |                        |
| Data Processing                      |                        |
| Grants and Aid (CI: 04)              |                        |
| Other: HIRED Grant Expenses (CI: 46) | 250,000                |
| Other:                               |                        |
| Total                                | \$ 250,000             |

Anticipated Duration of Federal Funds: 12/31/2026

|  |  |
|--|--|
|  |  |
|--|--|

**DFA IGS State Technology Planning** Date  
Items requested for information technology must be in compliance with Technology Plans as submitted to DFA IGS State Technology Planning.

**Positions to be established: (list each position separately)**

| Org Unit | Pers Area | Pers SubArea | Cost Center | Position Number | Cmnt Item | Position Title | Class Code | Grade | Line Item Maximum * |
|----------|-----------|--------------|-------------|-----------------|-----------|----------------|------------|-------|---------------------|
|          |           |              |             |                 |           |                |            |       |                     |
|          |           |              |             |                 |           |                |            |       |                     |
|          |           |              |             |                 |           |                |            |       |                     |
|          |           |              |             |                 |           |                |            |       |                     |
|          |           |              |             |                 |           |                |            |       |                     |
|          |           |              |             |                 |           |                |            |       |                     |
|          |           |              |             |                 |           |                |            |       |                     |
|          |           |              |             |                 |           |                |            |       |                     |
|          |           |              |             |                 |           |                |            |       |                     |
|          |           |              |             |                 |           |                |            |       |                     |

State funds will not be used to replace federal funds when such funds expire, unless appropriated by the General Assembly and authorized by the Governor.

Approved by: [Signature] 2/25/25  
Cabinet Secretary/Agency Director Date

Robert Brech 2/26/25  
Office of Budget Date

Office of Personnel Mgmt Date

## Appendix E. Implementation Grant Cover Sheet

### Implementation Grant Cover Sheet

(Fillable template provided here: <https://adhe.edu/institutions/workforce-grants>.)

- Track 1: Workforce Initiative Grant Program
- Track 2: Arkansas Workforce Strategy Grants

**To:** [Workforce.Grants@adhe.edu](mailto:Workforce.Grants@adhe.edu) (Subject Line: T1 Implementation Grant)

[OSD.HiredGrants@Arkansas.gov](mailto:OSD.HiredGrants@Arkansas.gov) (Subject Line: T2 Implementation Grant)

**Date Implementation Grant Proposal Submitted:** September 23, 2024

**Lead Applicant:** Arkansas State University-Newport

**Lead Applicant Location:** Newport, Arkansas

**Applicant Contact:** Dr. Typhanie Myers

Provost/Vice Chancellor for Academic & Student Affairs

[typhanie\\_myers@asun.edu](mailto:typhanie_myers@asun.edu), (870) 512-7704

**Workforce Alliance Partners:**

Peco Foods

Newport Economic Development Commission/Tech Depot

McPherson Unit

John 3:17

This project is aligned Integrated Partnership Implementation Grant. The supporting employers for this effort include Nice-Pak, Unilever, Post Consumer Brands, Nestle, Frito-Lay & Hytrol. ASUN opted not to duplicate letters of support for Craighead County Employers.

**Title of Project:** Manufacturing Technician Pathways & Apprenticeship Expansion

**Funding Request for Implementation Grant:**      **Year 1:** \$280,000

**Year 2:** \$165,000

**Total:** \$445,000

**Authorized Signature for Institution, Organization, or Business:**

**Name:** Johnny M. Moore

**Title:** Chancellor

**Signature:** Dr. Johnny M.  
Moore

Digitally signed by Dr.  
Johnny M. Moore  
Date: 2024.09.23 13:01:48  
-05'00'

## **Manufacturing Technician Pathways and Apprenticeship Expansion**

### **Section 1: Program Need (25%)**

According to Lightcast 2023 fourth quarter data, over 23,125 residents in the Northeast Arkansas Workforce Development Area (NEAWDB) are employed in manufacturing. Manufacturing represents approximately 18.6% of the total employment, making it the largest industry in the region with an expected increase of 5% over the next five years. The average earnings per manufacturing job is a remarkable at \$82,588.

Most occupations in manufacturing in Arkansas mirror national industry growth rates, however industrial technology related occupations such as Industrial Maintenance, Industrial Control Technicians, and Process Control Technicians are showing much higher growth rates. The national average for an area this size is 523 employees, while there are 1,097 employed in these positions within NEAWDB. The growth rate for these occupations in Arkansas is 10.2% over the next five years compared to a rate of 12.9% in Northeast Arkansas.

Locally and nationally, high schools, community colleges and trade schools are not keeping pace with job openings. In 2023 Northeast Arkansas Community Colleges produced 60 Industrial Technology related credentials as compared to an estimated 128 openings. The gap continues to grow. Currently, 15.9% of the jobs in Jackson County are manufacturing jobs with average annual earnings of \$76,468 with an estimated 10% employment growth in the next 5 years. Many skilled manufacturing jobs in Newport are filled with commuters from neighboring counties.

Advancing the regional and state economies in Arkansas requires a robust talent pipeline in the occupations that fall under the umbrella of industrial technology. However, advances in technology, changes in worker demographics, and a focus on college-going for high school graduates have resulted in a talent gap. As a result, employers struggle to find qualified entry-level technicians as well as to design career paths for current employees.

With the increasing demand for manufacturing talent, Arkansas State University-Newport (ASUN) aims to bridge the skills gap by creating a front-loaded training program that will provide foundational skills to traditional, non-traditional, and marginalized new majority learners. The intent is to fill the talent gap by meeting learners where they are in their journey.

Advancing the regional and state economies in Arkansas requires a robust talent pipeline in the occupations that fall under the umbrella of industrial technology. Untraditional talent will need to be accessed to meet the continued growth of the manufacturing sector.



## Section 2: Program Plan (25%)

This initiative will drive the non-credit training found in the Integrated Partnership Implementation Grant with Arkansas State University and serve as a feeder to ASUN's Industrial Technology programs and apprenticeships. This effort will bring non-credit foundational manufacturing training to Jackson County and surrounding areas.

ASUN is committed to increasing the pathways to both the traditional learner and to our new majority learner, those who are typically seen as non-traditional, unserved or untapped. New majority learners may be justice involved or restricted to a low wage job due to obstacles preventing continued education. ASUN proposes an effort to transition employees from low-wage industries to high-paying manufacturing roles within food and steel production. This program will provide many entry and exit points flexible to needs to those currently working in low wage occupations within industries such as food service.

ASUN's goal is build the following pathways during the grant performance period:

| Pathway or Program               | Development Period (Months) |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Micro Credentials                | 3                           |
| WorkReady Badge (all employment) | 3                           |
| Manufacturing WorkReady Badge    | 3                           |

ASUN's goal is deliver the following credentials during the grant performance period:

| Credential                    | Annual 2023 | Year 1 | Year 2 | Total |
|-------------------------------|-------------|--------|--------|-------|
| Micro Credentials             | 0           | 500    | 500    | 1,000 |
| WorkReady Badge               | 0           | 100    | 150    | 250   |
| Manufacturing WorkReady Badge | 0           | 25     | 50     | 75    |

### Micro-credentials, Badges & Credit Assessment

ASUN will provide training and support to move participants from low-wage jobs to high-paying manufacturing careers. ASUN proposes to participate and leverage the Scaling Learner Opportunity & Economic Growth Across Arkansas initiative to develop micro credentials that will align and feed into targeted food production and related manufacturing programs. The micro-credentials found in Figure 1 are possible examples. Working with industry partners and the Education Design Lab (EDL), ASUN will create non-credit pathways to increase occupational entry and growth points.

As a starting point, ASUN proposes to embed micro-credentials that are built into Work Ready and Manufacturing WorkReady badges. The credentials can be delivered as non-credit workforce training or through traditional credit coursework. These credentials will

stack into all Industrial Technology programs. Upon completion of the non-credit training, learners will only need to complete one or possibly two courses to earn the Manufacturing Technician Certificate of Proficiency. ASUN has made application to participate in the Scaling Learner Opportunity & Economic Growth Across Arkansas Initiative. We anticipate additional micro-credentials will be created through this initiative.

ASUN feels there is need for universal, state-wide non-credit credentials that would address 75% of the **foundational skill** demands of all Arkansas employers. The credential must be credit aligned and the aligned credit programs should have built in flexibility.

ASUN believes the stepped approach to the WorkReady Badge and the follow-on Manufacturing WorkReady Badge is a step in that direction. **This effort will serve as a primer for a Manufacturing Technician apprenticeship program.**

Key elements built into micro credentials include:

- **Soft Skills Development:** One clear take-a-away from recent employer forums is the continued overwhelming need for soft skills development in the workforce. The first component of this will address this need. ASUN proposes to include content from Franklin Covey's LeaderU curriculum into Workplace Essential modules, see Fig. 1. The micro-credentials will align to ASUN's credit course titled Workplace Essentials. Workplace Essentials is a foundational block to all Industrial Technology programs.
- **Technical Skills Training:** Focused on the specific needs of the manufacturing industry, including hands-on training with advanced manufacturing equipment.
- **Talent Recognition:** Built into the foundation of this effort is recognition of talent and aptitude. WorkKeys and WorkKeys Essentials will be provided in the Work Ready badge.



**Figure 1: Non-Credit to Credit crosswalk to Manufacturing Technician Certificate of Proficiency with embedded micro-credentials.**

| Non-credit Course/Micro-credential   | Credit Course Alignment | Seat Hours | Credential        | Stacked Credential   |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| Career Ready                         | Workplace Essentials    | 10         | Work Ready Badge  | Mfg. WorkReady Badge |
| Effective Communicator               | Workplace Essentials    | 8          |                   |                      |
| Highly Effective Team Member         | Workplace Essentials    | 16         |                   |                      |
| WorkKeys NCRC & Essentials           | Workplace Essentials    | 8          |                   |                      |
| Team Building                        | Workplace Essentials    | 4          |                   |                      |
| OSHA 10                              | Trade Skills            | 10         | Mfg. Skills Badge |                      |
| Print Reading                        | Trade Skills            | 4          |                   |                      |
| HACPP & Good Manufacturing Practices | Trade Skills            | 4          |                   |                      |
| Forklift Operation and Safety        | Trade Skills            | 8          |                   |                      |
| Hand & Power Tools                   | Trade Skills            | 4          |                   |                      |
| Precision Measurement                | Trade Skills            | 4          |                   |                      |
| Introduction Lean 101 & 5S           | Trade Skills            | 4          |                   |                      |
| Intro to Advanced Manufacturing      | Trade Skills            | 4          |                   |                      |

**Seat Hours-90**



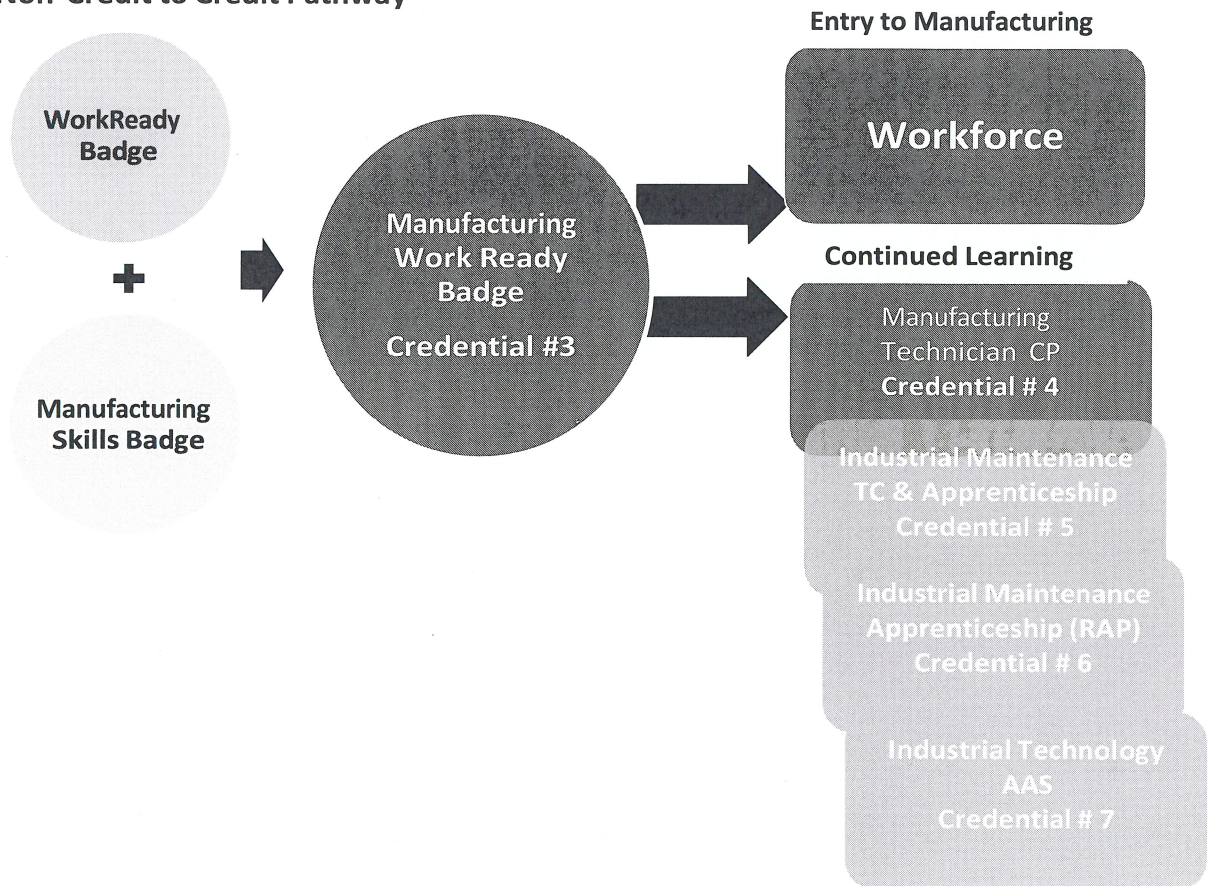
| Credit Courses                 | Credit Hours |
|--------------------------------|--------------|
| Manufacturing Processes        | 3            |
| Industrial Robotics (elective) | 3            |



**Manufacturing Technician Certificate of Proficiency**



### Non-Credit to Credit Pathway



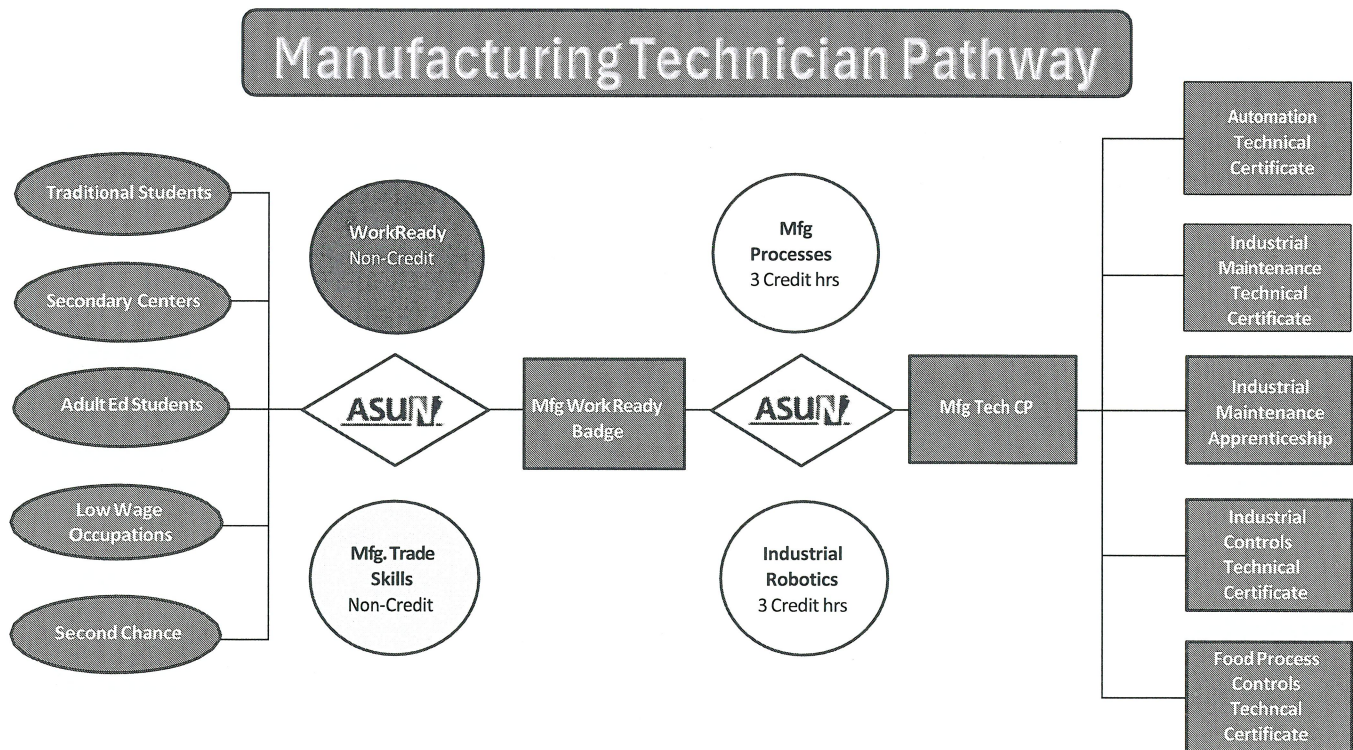
### WorkReady Badge

- Digital Badge that can be issued to the following organizations:
  - High Schools
  - Non-profit organizations
  - Employers
  - Adult Education
  - Community Colleges
- 45 Hours of micro-credentialed instruction.
- 3 credit hours can be awarded for Workplace Essentials, a foundational course in all Industrial Technology programs.
- WorkKeys NCRC Assessment and ACT Essentials.
- Aligned to soft/durable skills found in Future Fit, WAGE Level 1.
- Prior Learning credit can be awarded to NCRC scores and content resulting in 3 to 6 credit hours.

## Manufacturing Skills Badge





- Digital Badge that can be issued to the following organizations:
  - High Schools
  - Non-profit organizations
  - Employers
  - Adult Education
  - Community Colleges
- 45 hours of micro-credential instruction.
- 3 credit hours can be awarded for Trade Skills, a foundational course in in the Industrial Maintenance and Welding programs.
- Aligned to the Manufacturing career cluster found in Wage Level II.

Figure 2: Manufacturing Technician Pathway





**FIGURE 3: Occupational pathways supported through ASUN’s Industrial Technology Expansion.**

|  JOB |  EDUCATION   & TRAINING  |  SKILLS NEEDED                              |  PAY |
|---|---|---|---|
| <b>Manufacturing Technician</b>   | Cutting, Punching, and Press Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders May also set up and maintain equipment.  | These occupations usually require a high school diploma, some work preparation needed.  | <b>\$42,927.00</b>  |
| <b>Food Process Operator</b>  | Set up and operate equipment that mixes or blends ingredients used in the manufacturing of food products. Includes candy makers and cheese makers   | These occupations usually require a high school diploma, some work preparation needed.  | <b>\$43,091.00</b>  |
| <b>Industrial Maintenance Technician</b>  | Repair, install, adjust, or maintain industrial production and processing machinery or refinery and pipeline distribution systems. May also install, dismantle, or move machinery and heavy equipment according to plans. | Most occupations in this zone require training in vocational schools, related on-the-job experience, or an associate's degree | <b>\$61,278.00</b>  |

ASUN is committed to training and matching Northeast Arkansas residents with high-quality jobs, as shown in Fig 4. Through our partnerships with local employers, we will focus on roles that offer:

- **Competitive Wages:** Ensuring participants are placed in jobs that provide a living wage and opportunities for financial stability.
- **Benefits and Job Security:** Prioritizing employers who offer benefits such as health insurance, retirement plans, and job security.
- **Career Advancement Opportunities:** Providing pathways for career growth and development, ensuring long-term success and fulfillment.

### Section 3: Strength of Partnerships (25%)

ASUN has established partnerships with area employers, secondary centers, high schools, prisons, adult education programs and other community partners. ASUN has demonstrated success in working with industry to develop curriculum, internships, registered, and unregistered apprenticeships. This initiative is driven by the employer response and buy-in found in the Integrated Partnership Implementation Grant. The supporting employers for this effort include Unilever, Post Consumer Brands, Frito-Lay, Nestle, Nice-Pak and Hytrol. ASUN opted not to duplicate requests for letters of support for this grant as it serves as an additional feeder program. It should be noted, Granges and



Southwest Steel will be partners on separate Track 1 grant request.

ASUN currently has over 65 credit bearing enrollments within the prison facilities in Newport. ASUN will offer the Manufacturing Technician CP to both the men's and women's facility in Newport. ASUN has completed two pilot WorkReady cohorts. One was held in the McPherson Women's prison unit, the second with John 3:17 a residential treatment facility. We experienced remarkable results in the prison, inmates have described the program as life changing. There are currently over 60 on the waiting list for future non-credit cohorts. We also have future cohorts planned for John 3:17. The piloted cohorts were volunteer unfunded efforts.

The most notable point about both cohorts is the fact that over 70% will be reentering Arkansas County. This effort will allow data collection to identify possible impact on recidivism.

#### **Section 4: Budget Plan (15%)**

ASUN requests \$445,000 in grant funding to support this workforce development initiative, budget allocated as follows:

- **Workforce Training:** \$200,000 in non-credit workforce training funding delivered to targeted populations.
- **Marketing Outreach:** \$20,000, Implement a comprehensive marketing and communication plan to recruit students and inform the community about the program.
- **Equipment:** \$115,000: Purchase (2) FANUC collaborative robots, necessary equipment to develop the Manufacturing Technician program in Newport. Two Newport manufacturers have invested heavily in automation. Southwest Steel Associates has over 19 FANUC robots in operation and Arkansas Steel Associates is currently expanding robot utilizations in their operations.
- **Instructor Salaries:** \$100,000, Allocated based on instructional needs and program demands.
- **Supplies:** \$10,000: Miscellaneous supplies beyond equipment to deliver training.

| Budget Line                    | Year 1    | Year 2    | Total            |
|--------------------------------|-----------|-----------|------------------|
| Participant Tuition non-credit | \$100,000 | \$100,000 | \$200,000        |
| Marketing & Outreach           | \$10,000  | \$10,000  | \$20,000         |
| Equipment                      | \$115,000 | \$0       | \$115,000        |
| Part-time Instructor(s)        | \$50,000  | \$50,000  | \$100,000        |
| Supplies                       | \$5,000   | \$5,000   | \$10,000         |
| <b>Total</b>                   |           |           | <b>\$445,000</b> |

**Section 5: Sustainability (10%)**

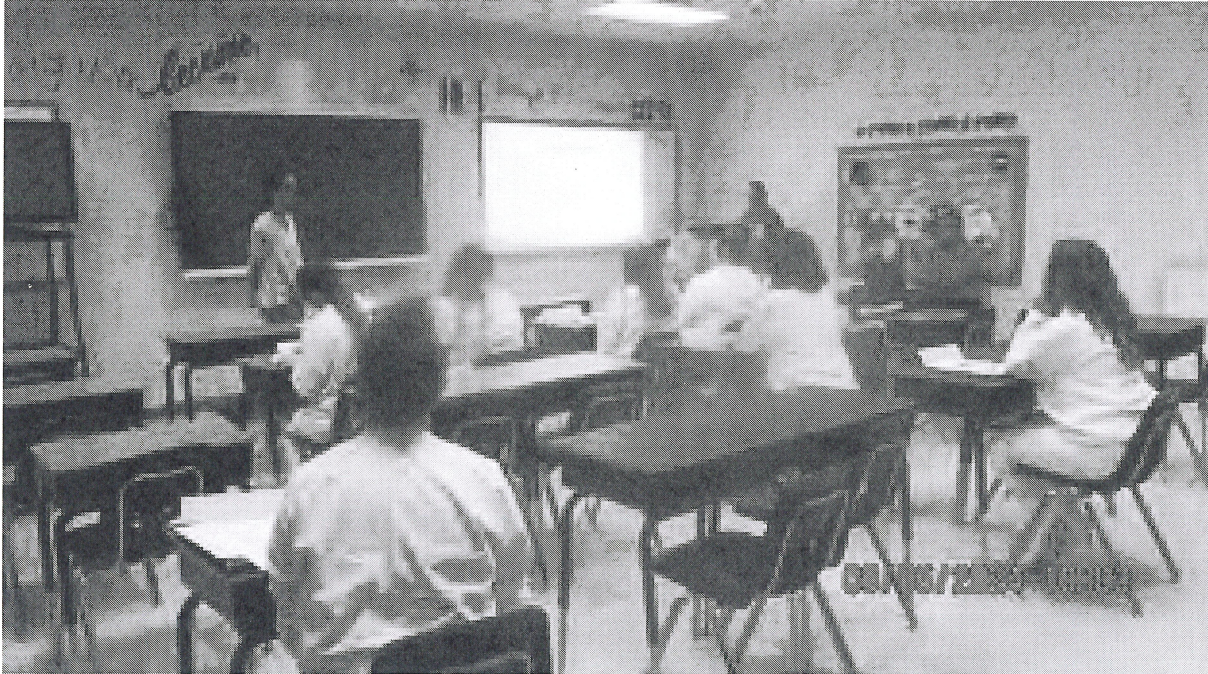
ASUN's Manufacturing Technician Certificate of Proficiency was approved by Arkansas Department of Higher Education in July 2024. ASUN will ensure the Certificate of proficiency are included in the following funding pathways: Arkansas Futures Grant, WIOA, and Arkansas Workforce Challenge.

In the past two years ASUN has launched two registered apprenticeships. ASUN plans to continue to work with employers and intermediaries to launch apprenticeships aligned to the Manufacturing Technician program. Two years of funding to support non-credit training will serve as primer for the Manufacturing Technician Apprenticeship.

**Appendix A**  
**Evidence of Support**



**Pictured Below:** Kerry Newcomb, Regional HR Director, and Kaylee Carr, HR Supervisor, with PECO Foods discusses job preparation and employment opportunities with inmates at McPherson Unit in Newport. Eight out of 10 of these participating inmates will reenter an Arkansas community. Photo taken September 6, 2024.



**Pictured Below:** Inmates at the McPherson Unit in Newport graduating from Transitioning to Employment class. This course will be expanded to Workplace Essentials. Picture taken September 13, 2024.





**Pictured Below:** Transitioning to Employment graduation for John 3:17 participants at Tech in Newport. Nine of the 10 participants will reenter an Arkansas community. Picture taken in Spring 2024.



September 16, 2024

Dear Grant Committee,

I am writing to express my enthusiastic support for the funding of employment preparation training programs for incarcerated individuals within the McPherson and Grimes Prison Units in Newport.

As a passionate advocate for rehabilitation and reintegration, I firmly believe that equipping individuals with essential skills while they are incarcerated is vital to reducing recidivism and fostering successful community re-entry. The transition from incarceration to society presents numerous challenges, and access to quality employment preparation training can significantly ease this process. Arkansas State University Newport (ASUN) and Tech Depot have developed a transitioning to employment program designed specifically for incarcerated individuals, focusing on vocational training, resume building, interview preparation, and essential soft skills.

Research has shown that individuals who engage in educational and vocational training while incarcerated are more likely to find employment and less likely to reoffend. By investing in these programs, you will play a pivotal role in breaking the cycle of incarceration and poverty, ultimately contributing to safer communities and stronger economies.

Peco Foods is willing to support this effort in any way we can, to include participating in educational sessions within the prison, conducting mock interviews, and of course providing potential hiring opportunities. I believe in second chances, and I am proud to say Peco Foods is a wonderful second chance employer.

Moreover, the partnership between ASUN, economic developers, employers, and correctional facilities ensures that the training provided is tailored to meet the needs of both the participants and the local job market. This alignment not only enhances the employability of graduates but also addresses the skills gap faced by employers in our community.

I strongly urge you to consider the transformative impact that funding employment preparation training for incarcerated individuals will have on both participants and society. Your support will empower individuals to reclaim their lives, contribute positively to their communities, and reduce the overall burden on our criminal justice system.

Thank you for considering this important initiative. I am happy to provide any further information or discuss this matter in more detail if needed.

Sincerely,

*Kerry Newcomb*

Kerry Newcomb  
Peco Foods  
Regional HR Director  
870.202.7050



September 16, 2024

Dear Grant Committee,

I am writing to formally express my support for the funding of employment preparation training programs for inmates at the McPherson Unit, provided by Arkansas State University-Newport. As the Warden of this facility, I have witnessed firsthand the profound impact that educational and vocational training can have on our inmates' rehabilitation and successful reintegration into society.

The transition from incarceration to a productive life is fraught with challenges. Many of our inmates face significant barriers that can hinder their ability to secure employment upon release. By providing comprehensive employment preparation training, we can equip them with the essential skills and knowledge necessary to navigate the job market successfully. ASUN has created a program tailored to the unique needs of incarcerated individuals, focusing on vocational skills, resume building, interview preparation, and essential soft skills.

Studies have shown that inmates who participate in educational programs are significantly less likely to reoffend and more likely to find stable employment post-release. By investing in these programs, you will not only contribute to reducing recidivism rates but also foster safer communities and promote economic stability.

Our partnership with ASUN ensures that the training provided is relevant to local job market demands, enhancing the employability of our inmates. This alignment not only prepares them for success but also addresses the workforce needs of our community, creating a win-win situation for all stakeholders involved.

I strongly urge you to consider the transformative impact that funding employment preparation training for inmates at the McPherson unit will have on the lives of these individuals and our community. Your support will empower inmates to reclaim their lives, find meaningful employment, and contribute positively to society upon their release.

Thank you for considering this important initiative. If you require any further information or wish to discuss this matter in more detail, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nurzuhal Faust", written over a printed name.

Nurzuhal Faust

Warden

McPherson Unit

# Newport

## Economic Development Commission

September 16, 2024

Dear Grant Committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for the funding of employment preparation training programs offered by Arkansas State University Newport, Newport Economic Development Commission, and Tech Depot. As a dedicated advocate for workforce development, I understand the positive impact that such programs have on our local community and economy.

This program is the result of a collaboration between Newport Economic Development Commission, Tech Depot, John 3:17, the McPherson Prison Unit, and Peco Foods. This collaboration has demonstrated a commitment to addressing this need through comprehensive employment preparation training. This program not only provides essential vocational training but also fosters essential soft skills, career counseling, and job placement services that empower participants to succeed in their chosen fields.

This training program caters to a diverse population, including unemployed individuals, those seeking to upskill, those who are in rehabilitation, incarcerated and marginalized groups who face barriers to employment. The vast majority of those participating in this program are reentering an Arkansas community. By investing in these programs, you will directly contribute to reducing unemployment rates, promoting economic stability, and enhancing the quality of life for our community members.

Furthermore, expanded collaboration with local businesses ensures that the training provided aligns with current industry demands. This partnership not only enhances the employability of graduates but also supports local employers in finding skilled workers who can contribute effectively to their organizations.

I urge you to consider the profound impact that funding employment preparation training will have on individuals and the community. Your support will enable us to continue this vital work, helping to build a skilled workforce that meets the needs of our evolving economy.

Thank you for considering this important initiative. Please feel free to contact me if you require any further information or wish to discuss this matter in more detail.



Jon Chadwell  
Executive Director

Newport Economic Development Commission  
director@newportaredc.org

201 Hazel Street

Newport, Arkansas 72112

Proue! Past. Bright Future

Phone 870-523-1009  
Fax 870-523-1055  
www.newportaredc.org

**AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT OF 2021 PROGRAM APPROPRIATION  
AND PERSONNEL AUTHORIZATION REQUEST  
SECTION 36 OF ACT 152 OF 2024**

**C13**

Agency: Arkansas State University - Three Rivers Business Area Code: 0685  
 Program Title: Workforce Facility Expansion  
 Granting Organization: Office of Skills Development CFDA #: 21.0027.21.027  
 Effective Date of Authorization: Beginning: 1/1/2025 Ending: 6/30/2025  
 Purpose of Grant / Reason for addition or change (include attachments as necessary to provide thorough information):  
 See Attached Documents.

**American Rescue Plan Act Program Funding**

Func. Area: TCOL Fund Code: New Direct Funding: X  
 Funds Center: D75 Internal Order/WBS Element: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Continuation: \_\_\_\_\_

|                                      | Program Funding Amount |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Regular Salaries                     |                        |
| Extra Help                           |                        |
| Personal Services Matching           |                        |
| Operating Expenses                   |                        |
| Conference & Travel Expenses         |                        |
| Professional Fees                    |                        |
| Capital Outlay                       |                        |
| Data Processing                      |                        |
| Grants and Aid (CI: 04)              |                        |
| Other: Capital Improvements (CI: 05) | 2,819,250              |
| Other:                               |                        |
| Total                                | \$ 2,819,250           |

Anticipated Duration of Federal Funds: 12/31/2026

|   |             |
|---|-------------|
| <b>DFA IGS State Technology Planning</b>  | <b>Date</b> |
| Items requested for information technology must be in compliance with Technology Plans as submitted to DFA IGS State Technology Planning. |             |

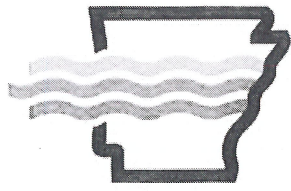
**Positions to be established: (list each position separately)**

| Org Unit | Pers Area | Pers SubArea | Cost Center | Position Number | Comnt Item | Position Title | Class Code | Grade | Line Item Maximum * |
|----------|-----------|--------------|-------------|-----------------|------------|----------------|------------|-------|---------------------|
|          |           |              |             |                 |            |                |            |       |                     |
|          |           |              |             |                 |            |                |            |       |                     |
|          |           |              |             |                 |            |                |            |       |                     |
|          |           |              |             |                 |            |                |            |       |                     |
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|          |           |              |             |                 |            |                |            |       |                     |
|          |           |              |             |                 |            |                |            |       |                     |

State funds will not be used to replace federal funds when such funds expire, unless appropriated by the General Assembly and authorized by the Governor.

Approved by:  2/25/25 Robert Brech 2/26/25  
 Cabinet Secretary/Agency Director Date Office of Budget Date Office of Personnel Mgmt Date





**ARKANSAS STATE  
UNIVERSITY  
THREE RIVERS**

One College Circle  
Malvern, Arkansas 72104  
501.337.5000 or 800.337.0266  
ASUTR.edu

February 25, 2025

Department of Finance and Administration  
Office of the Secretary  
1509 West 7th Street, Suite 401  
Little Rock, AR 72203-3278

RE: American Rescue Plan Act Funding

Dear Secretary:

Arkansas State University Three Rivers respectfully requests review of appropriations from the American Rescue Plan Act to provide reimbursement for costs associated with the renovation and expansion of a campus facility to support workforce training programs. When completed, the facility will be 7,900 sq. ft. and will include offices and five classrooms.

This request is for FY2025. The total funding to be disbursed or reimbursed from the Education Stabilization Fund (American Rescue Plan) for Arkansas State University Three Rivers is \$2,819,250. Please find attached the forms and documentation.

Thank you for your expedited consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Steve Rook, Ed.D.  
Chancellor