

News Article

Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield Presents Grant

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Patrick Sullivan (from left) discusses the pediatric simulator with Kayla Travis, Addie Fleming and Kelly Damphousse.

JONESBORO – Executives with Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield and the Blue & You Foundation for a Healthier Arkansas visited Arkansas State University Thursday to present a check to the College of Nursing and Health Professions.

Curtis Barnett, president and chief executive officer, Patrick O'Sullivan, executive director, Blue & You Foundation for a Healthier Arkansas, and Todd Holt, regional executive, Northeast Sales and Service Center, met in the Donald W. Reynolds Center for Health Sciences with Dr. Kelly Damphousse, chancellor, Dr. Susan Hanrahan, dean of the College of Nursing and Health Professions, and other A-State representatives.

In announcing the grant, Barnett noted the need continues to grow for improved quality and access to healthcare.

"We recognize we have to have better and more innovative ways to train our healthcare professionals," he said. "We're very pleased to present a check for just over \$89,000 to Arkansas State University from the Blue & You Foundation for a Healthier Arkansas for the pediatric simulator, which will be used in the training of nurses."

Damphousse expressed appreciation and put the significance of the gift into perspective.

"One of our crown jewels at Arkansas State is the College of Nursing and Health Professions," he emphasized as he expressed the university's gratitude for the grant. "We know the challenges our state faces in healthcare and healthcare delivery, so we're grateful for this opportunity to enhance the educational opportunities for our students. Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield has a long history of supporting Arkansas State University."

He also recognized Addie Fleming and Kayla Travis, the assistant professors of nursing who wrote the successful grant application.

"I'm really proud of you and your great work," the chancellor continued. "You represent our faculty so well. Our faculty are dedicated to our students and to students' success."

Brooks Propst, a senior nursing student, also thanked the foundation and emphasized the value of hands-on experience.

"Having this time for simulation gives students the confidence to be able to go into the actual hospital with knowledge and the capability to succeed," he said. "My hope is for this new device is that students like myself will be able to have accurate, precise and increased knowledge regarding the field of pediatrics."

O'Sullivan, who called the training device "baby blue," said it can simulate numerous medical circumstances. He also complimented Fleming and Travis for their success in the grant process that attracted 232 proposals, with only 42 getting funded statewide.

Travis noted the baby can be used to simulate seizures, changes in fontanels, respiratory assessments, medication responses, eye movement and cardiac activity, which are some of the most important characteristics a nurse would need to observe when tending to a nine-month-old child.

"We're proud to be able to help Arkansas State University and the nursing students who will ultimately be able to deliver better care for Arkansans, which is what we're all about," O'Sullivan added.



Those present for the grant presentation included (from left) Susan Hanrahan, Todd Holt, Kelly Damphousse, Patrick O'Sullivan, Brooks Propst, Kayla Travis, Addie Fleming and Curtis Barnett.

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