

Bristow and Manar join University of Illinois at Chicago and Lewis and Clark Community College in announcing new opportunities for nursing students

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SPRINGFIELD – State Rep. Monica Bristow, D-Godfrey, and state Sen. Andy Manar, D-Bunker Hill, have been working with the University of Illinois at Chicago and Lewis

and Clark Community College to provide nursing students in the Metro East and Central Illinois with more opportunities to receive their Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degrees. Through their efforts, nursing students will be able to work towards their degrees from the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) College of Nursing while attending classes at Lewis and Clark Community College.

“Building a more vibrant Metro East economy means providing options for our young people to pursue an affordable, world-class education here in our community,” said Bristow. “This collaborative effort by UIC and Lewis and Clark Community College will bring more good-paying nursing jobs to our community, help more of our students achieve their academic goals here at home, and deliver more effective, compassionate care for all. I’m grateful that these institutions have come together to both provide our young people with more career opportunities and also create a partnership that will benefit our entire region.”

Bristow and Manar are committed to developing different approaches that make good-paying jobs more accessible to residents in the Metro East and Central Illinois. Timothy Killeen, President of the University of Illinois, and Dale Chapman, President of Lewis and Clark Community College, worked with Bristow and Manar to develop the agreement that will include partnerships in the area of nursing degrees, collaboration and funding of the National Great Rivers Research and Education Center, innovation partnerships through the L&C St. Louis Confluence Fab Lab and University of Illinois Tech Hub, and through work being done at the Mannie Jackson Center for the Humanities.

“We appreciate the leadership of our local elected leaders, Senator Manar and Representative Bristow, and the vision of President Killeen for helping us reach this historic partnership,” said Chapman. “The program development between the University of Illinois and Lewis and Clark will continue the growth and expansion of students’ learning and research.”

Lewis and Clark has a long history of graduating successful associate degree nurses who are well prepared for clinical practice and ready to continue their education. UIC has offered RN-BSN completion education for over 35 years. With a US News & World Report ranking the institution as one of the top 10 nationally, it is uniquely positioned to join with Lewis and Clark to expand BSN education in the region. A partnership between these two reputable programs builds on the strengths of each allowing for real innovation while maintaining efficiency in program delivery for Metro East RNs seeking BSNs.

“I want to commend the leadership of these two institutions of higher education for coming together to create a groundbreaking new program that solves a pressing problem

in my Senate district,” said Manar. “Because of their willingness to work together and think outside of the box, prospective students will have access to affordable bachelor’s degrees; rural hospitals and clinics will have access to an expanded pool of nursing applicants to address growing workforce needs, and working families will take on less debt and earn better wages. I am beyond thrilled about this partnership, and I look forward to being there when the first BSN class graduates from Lewis and Clark and UIC through this program.”

Utilizing novel approaches, UIC College of Nursing’s RN-BSN program will enable Lewis and Clark associate degree nursing (ADN) students to begin taking classes toward their BSN degree while students at Lewis and Clark with UIC BSN degree after ADN graduation. This partnership creates options for a convenient and affordable pathway to a BSN degree for students in the Metro East region. Nursing leadership from both institutions will work together over the coming weeks to develop effective strategies to efficiently further access to RN-BSN education for nurses in the region.

“The University of Illinois System is gratified to be able to collaborate in important work with our counterparts at Lewis and Clark and community colleges across the state,” said Killeen.