

# Sen. Belt Helps Secure Funding To Address Rural Nursing Shortage

by Submitted by Sen. Belt's Office  
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**EAST ST. LOUIS** – To address the nursing shortage rural communities are currently facing, State Senator Christopher Belt helped secure \$150,000 in funding for nursing student scholarships at McKendree University.

“In order to end the nursing shortage in smaller communities, we need to hone in on incentives and other investments that shine light on this career path,” said Belt (D-Swansea). “Nurses are essential in our hospitals, and we cannot afford to continue seeing declining numbers of them.”

The Illinois Board of Higher Education awarded a total of \$150,000 through a nursing school grant to McKendree University. The grant was awarded through a competitive application process where institutions submitted enrollment, retention, completion and job placement rates of their students during a multi-year period and how grant funds would be used to enhance their program’s efforts to close equity gaps and improve student success.

Nursing school grants will be used to enhance nursing programs and efforts to close equity gaps in enrollment, course completion, graduation and licensure by underrepresented students. Funds may be used for hiring additional nursing faculty and staff, developing and expanding instructional programs and modalities, expanding academic support services, improving classroom and lab spaces, purchasing equipment and instructional materials and more.

“Investing in our health care workforce not only strengthens our local hospitals and other health care systems, but it also ensures that people have immediate access to quality care,” said Belt. “I’m pleased IBHE provided funds to McKendree’s nursing program so we can continue to grow quality, trained nurses down here in the Metro East.”

To see a full list of nursing school grant awardees across the state, click [here](#).