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Student nurses learning to heal through horses: Caring for diverse populations in the community through an innovative clinical experience

Mashawna Hamilton

Ohio University Southern, USA

Community nursing clinical experiences are an essential component to the education of BSN pre-licensure students. As a cresult of limited space in traditional community settings, it becomes imperative that nursing faculty identify innovative non-traditional learning environments capable of providing quality patient care experiences. Ohio University Southern nursing faculty in conjunction with the Center for Therapeutic Riding Center located at the Ohio Horse Park developed a unique community nursing clinical rotation. This opportunity allowed for multidisciplinary collaboration between nursing and therapeutic riding students. Additionally, nursing students experienced a paradigm shift from caring for individuals in acute care to families and aggregates in a diverse community setting. Initially, nineteen senior BSN students participated in a six week community clinical experience caring for a variety of vulnerable populations participating in the therapeutic riding program. Faculty and students involved responded positively to the experience and it continues to be a highlight of the OUS BSN program.

Biography

Mashawna Hamilton has been educating student nurses at Ohio University Southern (OUS) since 2005. She shares a passion for nursing education and improving the health of the individual, family, and community through community nursing. Throughout her career as a nurse educator, Mrs. Hamilton has been awarded the 2014 Elsevier Leading Stars in Education (ELSIE) Award, recognized by Ohio Magazine for Excellence in Education, received the Ohio University Southern Outstanding Faculty Award for Teaching, and was most recently recognized as an "OHIO Faculty Newsmaker". She has published manuscripts regarding innovative teaching strategies and presented at multiple national, regional, and state nursing conferences.

hamiltom@ohio.edu

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