

**Aims Community College  
Bachelor of Science in Nursing  
March 24, 2023**

**TOPIC: Bachelor of Science in Nursing**

**PRESENTED BY: Aims Community College (Aims)**

**RELATIONSHIP TO AIMS STRATEGIC PLAN:**

- Empowers students to succeed by fostering equitable access opportunities via the identification of and removing barriers to relevant and affordable programs and services.
- Enriches NoCo economic development by evaluating and prioritizing all current educational and service offerings to more effectively meet workforce needs and developing new and relevant programs and services for the growing NoCo populations.

**EXPLANATION:**

Colorado Revised Statute §23-1-133 states the Colorado Commission on Higher Education shall consider various criteria in determining whether to approve a bachelor of science degree program for Aims Community College. “In determining whether to approve a bachelor of science degree in nursing program as a completion degree to students who have or are pursuing an associate degree in nursing for Aims community college pursuant to section 23-71-102 (1)(b)(II)(B), the commission shall consider the following criteria:

- I. Whether Aims community college provides data demonstrating workforce and student demand for the degree program;
- II. The regional and professional accreditation requirements for the degree program, if applicable, and whether the college can satisfy those requirements, as appropriate, at both the institutional and program levels;
- III. Whether Aims community college can demonstrate that providing the degree program within its service area is cost-effective for the student and Aims community college;
- IV. Whether Aims community college can demonstrate that the degree program is sufficiently distinguishable from:
  - A. An existing degree program at a state four-year institution of higher education that is provided to a student who resides in Aims community college's geographic service area, as defined by the commission pursuant to section 23-1-109 (2), without the student having to change his or her residence; or
  - B. A degree program that has been successfully offered previously in conjunction with a state four-year institution of higher education, which

degree program will be reinstated sooner than the degree program could be offered by the community college.

This proposal seeks Board approval for a Bachelor of Science in Nursing for Aims Community College. The legislative criteria for approval of a BSN degree are set forth below, with a summary of the supporting data demonstrating that the criteria have been met. Additional information is provided in the appendices. Aims Community College CEO/President approved the development of the BSN degree in April, 2022 with the Aims Board of Trustees giving approval on August 10, 2022 in a unanimous vote.

## **OVERVIEW:**

Aims Community College and Aims' Allied Health and Wellness (AHW) Division are pleased to develop and offer a Bachelor of Science in Nursing. This degree represents expanded opportunities for the diverse communities Aims serves while opening pathways for continued student success. It also represents Aims' second offering of a Baccalaureate degree at affordable tuition rates.

Aims' AHW division is dedicated to Career and Technical Education, continuing education and offering students a gateway to various avenues of healthcare practice. In addition to nursing certificates and degrees, Aims AHW offers programs in radiological technology, surgical technology and sterile processing, phlebotomy, medical assisting and allied health professionals. Aims AHW also offers a career academy program, Medical Preparation, to high school students allowing them to concurrently gain high school and college credits and obtain five Aims certifications including their CNA and provides opportunities to transition into various academic programs.

The addition of a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree to Aims' educational portfolio provides access and accessibility for current students as well as nurses already working in the field. Aims' is currently the only institution in the Northern Colorado region with a licensed practical nurses (LPN) to Registered Nurse (RN) program. Aims will be able to build upon this program to create one of a limited number of state pathways that allow LPNs to further their education from a certificate to a baccalaureate degree. It also addresses a demonstrated need in a critically under-staffed healthcare industry (See Appendix A), enabling associate-prepared nursing graduates greater income opportunities and upward mobility.

Aims' BSN program will be 120 credit hours. Approximately 90 credits of the program can be transferred into Aims or have been accrued by the student as part of their Aim's Associate of Applied Science in nursing degree. The 30.5 credits of the Aims' BSN completion program will be delivered online with clinical experiences in the student's local area to provide the necessary accessibility for nurses who work rotating shift schedules. By design, this offering focuses on upper-level coursework to fulfill the requirements of a Bachelor's degree for those who enroll in the Aims' Associate of

Applied Science in Nursing program or transfer in with an Associate of Applied Science Degree in Nursing from a regionally accredited institution. With classes on Trends in Nursing Practice, Gerontology Nursing, Behavioral Health, Evidence-based Practice, Community Health Nursing, and many more, content will be taught by Master's and doctorally-prepared faculty who are experts in the content area and their field.

### **1. Data demonstrate workforce and student demand for the degree program.**

Aims Community College current students and alumni, as well as members on Aims' Nursing Program Advisory Committee (comprised of a collection of local industry partners such as Chief Nursing Officers, Long Term Care Administrators, Directors of Nursing and Nurse Educators), have voiced a need for a BSN program at Aims for several years. Although there is current access to BSN programs in Northern Colorado, the reality is that such programs are cost-prohibitive for many students and prevents them from being truly accessible. For many graduates, they would also like to return to the comfort of the local community college to attain their BSN, rather than transferring to a four-year institution and needing to learn a new learning management system and understand new academic resources and environments. This interest was further supported by local employers from acute care facilities, hospice and long-term care, all of which are endlessly searching for new nursing applicants. This support is represented by letters of support (See Appendix B) by Directors of Nursing Health Care Administrators, current students, and recent alumni. Within these letters, there are comments regarding the positive reputation of Aims Community College in the nursing community and the ability of our graduates to enter nursing practice ready to provide safe, competent care to patients. The letters also discuss the considerable nursing shortage currently faced by Northern Colorado and the need to continue to produce new nursing graduates and provide them upward academic movement throughout their careers.

Aims conducted a feasibility study to determine employment needs in Colorado, the Northern Colorado region, and local county of Weld to measure the viability of offering the BSN. The data collected from the independent agency Lightcast shows that the projected need for registered nurses from 2019-2029 will increase 17.6% regionally. Employment projections for nurses have been greatly impacted by the pandemic, and are currently evolving, but it is estimated that the current gap of 6,000 nurses in the state could rise to 10,000 by 2026. Currently in the state of Colorado there are over 80,000 job postings for nurses and only one out of every five positions were filled during the January 2021 to February 2022 time frame. This is a symptom of not enough nurses in the workforce with an increasing demand. One thing consistently communicated from local healthcare partners is "We need more nurses in practice". The median annual salary for nurses in Colorado is \$77,299. The BSN is the industry standard for entry into

acute care and mobility within the nursing field. However, due to the critical nature of the current healthcare industry many of the healthcare agencies in the Northern Colorado area are willing to hire nurses with an entry level Associate Degree, but require nurses to sign a contract stating they will complete their BSN within three years of hire to maintain employment.

**2. The regional and professional accreditation requirements for the degree program, if applicable, have been met.**

**Regional accreditation.** This program will require approval by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). Aims Community College has drafted and will submit the HLC *BSN Degree Request for Degree Approval and Substantive Change Application* upon receiving all appropriate State approvals of the program. This process will likely take three to six months and will require a panel review and site visit by HLC. Aims was approved by HLC for a Bachelor of Allied Science in Public Safety Degree in December for 2022.

**Specialty accreditation.** Upon HLC approval, the nursing program will submit a substantive change form to the Colorado State Board of Nursing. The nursing programs of Aims currently hold specialty accreditation by the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN). Upon State Board of Nursing approval, the nursing department will submit to ACEN the Candidacy Eligibility Application Form which takes approximately 1-2 weeks for review. If considered eligible, the subsequent step is to submit a Candidacy Presentation to ACEN which requires an approximate six-week time frame for review.

**3. Providing the degree program within the Community College System is cost-effective for the students and the Community College System.**

As Aims Community College is a local district college, and therefore there will not be costs incurred by the Community College System. Aims Community College, and the nursing department, which will host the BSN offering, has sufficient resources, equipment, personnel and facilities to support the launch and growth of the program. Any additional cost associated with the BSN costs are fully supported by Aims' administration as well as the Aims' Board of Trustees.

As the BSN program curriculum will be offered in an online format, it will provide convenient access and flexibility for the working nurse. Another critical element for students looking to attain their BSN at Aims Community College is the cost-effective nature of the program. In-district students pay less per credit at Aims compared to local community colleges in Northern Colorado and will realize a cost savings of 150-250% compared to choosing another option for the BSN degree with the local four-year institution or other proprietary programs (See Cost Comparison below).

Program Administration Needs: The program administration will be provided by the existing Director, supported by a program coordinator for administrative tasks. This activity will be overseen by the Academic Dean of the Allied Health & Wellness Division, and the Chief Academic Officer.

Faculty and Instructor Needs: Instruction will be provided by Master’s-credentialed, as well as doctoral-prepared CTE-approved faculty, with an estimated enrollment of 10-15 students in the first year of program delivery with incremental increases in subsequent years. One additional full-time faculty member will be required in year three after program launch to provide adequate faculty for the current nursing program and the addition of the BSN.

Operating Needs: Facility requirements are minimal, as this BSN degree program offerings will be fully online with clinical offerings for two of the program courses. Office space to support the aforementioned one FTE faculty and one FTE program coordinator are available. These roles are already established by current employees and will provide support for the program launch and continued growth. Similarly, institutional support requirements are minimal, based on online format and initial enrollment estimates. In addition, impact to and requirements of other support services, to include advising, financial aid, registration and admissions, etc., will be minimal as a percentage of overall college enrollment requirements, but services will be readily available and accessible for students. This fully online degree program will require a robust IT support mechanism to address the needs of working students and the college is prepared to provide the needed support for student success through the support of our library, learning environments team, student learning commons and institutional IT support staff. Aims currently has a robust infrastructure supporting all of these areas for online students.

Costs: Pre-program costs for curriculum development and marketing will be \$29,507. After three years in operation, annual costs for full- and part-time faculty and full-time staff (with benefits) will be \$246,399.

## COST ANALYSIS

	Pre-Program	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
<b>1. Expenses per year</b>						
<b>A. One-time</b>						
<i>New/Renovated Space (yes or no)</i>	<i>No</i>					
<i>Equipment</i>	<i>None</i>					
<i>IT Equipment/Software</i>	<i>None</i>					
<i>Marketing</i>	<i>12,000</i>	<i>12,000</i>	<i>6,000</i>			

<i>Other/Curriculum Dev</i>	17,507	17,507				
<b>Total one-time</b>	<b>\$ 29,507</b>	<b>\$ 29,507</b>	<b>\$ 6,000</b>	<b>\$ 0</b>	<b>\$ 0</b>	<b>\$ 0</b>
<b>B. Recurring</b>						
<b>Salaries and benefits (populated from table below)</b>						
<i>Faculty</i>	0	10,746	11,068	67,164	69,179	71,254
<i>Staff</i>	0	92,700	95,480	98,344	101,294	104,332
<i>Benefits</i>	0	48,929	50,396	80,891	83,318	85,817
<b>Total salaries and benefits</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$152,375</b>	<b>\$156,944</b>	<b>\$246,399</b>	<b>\$253,791</b>	<b>\$261,403</b>
<i>Equipment</i>						
<i>Marketing</i>	0	0	0			
<i>Curriculum Dev</i>	0	0	0			
<b>Total recurring</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$152,375</b>	<b>\$156,944</b>	<b>\$246,399</b>	<b>\$253,791</b>	<b>\$261,403</b>
<b>Total expenses (A+B)</b>	<b>\$29,507</b>	<b>\$181,882</b>	<b>\$162,944</b>	<b>\$246,399</b>	<b>\$253,791</b>	<b>\$261,403</b>
<b>Salaries and Benefits Worksheet</b>	<i>Estimate 3% increase in salaries each year</i>					
	Pre-Program	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
<b>Instructional Salaries</b>						
<i>Full-Time Faculty - est. \$60,000 per year</i>				60,000	61,800	63,654
<i>Part-Time Faculty - \$1,194 per credit hour</i>		10,746	11,068	7,164	7,379	7,600
<i>Assistant Instructor - \$27 per hour</i>						
<b>Administrative and Staff Salaries</b>						
<i>Program Coordinator - est. \$45,000 per year</i>		46,350	47,740	49,172	50,647	52,166
<i>Lab Coordinator - est. \$45,000 per year</i>		46,350	47,740	49,172	50,647	52,166
<i>Staff Associate - est. \$38,000</i>						

Benefits						
Full-time benefits - 50%	0	46,350	47,740	79,172	81,547	83,993
Part-time benefits - 24%	0	2579.04	2656.32	1719.36	1770.96	1824
<b>Total salaries and benefits</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$ 152,375</b>	<b>\$156,944</b>	<b>\$246,399</b>	<b>\$253,791</b>	<b>\$261,403</b>

### **Aims Community College BSN Program – Cost Comparison**

In the Northern Colorado region, students have access to BSN completion programs through both University of Phoenix and the University of Northern Colorado. When comparing costs between these institutions, Aims Community College represents a clear advantage for students, with the lowest tuition rates of any higher education institution across the state. Affordable tuition rates will make it possible for a greater number of underserved, underrepresented, or lower socioeconomic students to obtain their BSN degree, that might not or would not be able to otherwise. The clear cost advantage to Aims' BSN is shown below:

	<u><b>Aims CC</b></u>	<u><b>University of Phoenix</b></u>	<u><b>UNC</b></u>
<b>Tuition</b> (per credit hour)	\$214.00	\$350.00	\$513.00
<b>Tuition</b> (for 30 credits)	\$6,420.00	\$10,500.00	\$15,390.00

(Tuition costs calculated at in-state/out-of-district rates for online offerings. Aims in-district tuition rate per credit hour is \$123.00)

In general, the costs shown above demonstrate the cost of the program for a student that has already attained their AAS-Nursing degree. If a student chose to complete the entire 120 credits of the BSN at Aims, the approximate cost would be \$14,742 compared to \$42,760 at the University of Phoenix and \$33,805 at the University of Northern Colorado.

- 4. The degree program is sufficiently distinguishable from:**
  - a. an existing degree program at a state four-year institution of higher education that is provided to a student who resides in the community college's geographic service area, as defined by the Commission pursuant to Section 23-1-109 (2), without the student having to change his or her residence, or**
  - b. a degree program that has been successfully offered previously in conjunction with a state four-year institution of higher education, which degree program will be reinstated sooner than the degree program could be offered by the community college.**

Data from the program's feasibility study (feasibility study report available upon request) indicate that, although there are currently two institutions of higher education in Northern Colorado that offer the BSN (Front Range Community College and the University of Northern Colorado), the need for additional access still exists. Currently, if students in the Associate's Degree in Nursing (ADN) program at Aims choose to dually enroll in a BSN program at FRCC or UNC, they are not eligible for financial aid for the BSN program based on the federal guidelines that does not allow aid to students while enrolled at two schools simultaneously. Adding the BSN program at Aims would allow students to pursue their ADN and be dually enrolled in the BSN all at Aims and take advantage of using federal financial aid to assist them with both their degree choices. In addition, this degree pathway allows for students to explore various career opportunities (LPN and RN) while working toward their BSN. Increasing the access of students to the BSN at Aims also may attract students that otherwise would have chosen to forego this undergraduate degree because the dual enrollment program at an alternative institution like UNC or FRCC necessitates an additional application process as well as learning an unfamiliar learning management system and ancillary university services.

With Aims offering the only LPN to RN program in Northern Colorado, perhaps the most noteworthy aspect of Aims' BSN offering would be that Aims' would provide the opportunity for licensed practical nurses (LPNs) upward mobility into the BSN degree. The addition of the BSN program would create a unique opportunity that other schools do not provide at this time. Nurses currently working as LPNs in practice, would have a pathway to return to the academic environment and complete their RN degree as well as their BSN.

The other unique elements of Aims' proposed BSN is the chosen foci of the program. Due to the current national focus on mental health services and the growing mental health needs of our population, behavioral health will be integrated into all courses of the BSN; highlighting the need for caregivers to focus on the health of themselves as an essential foundation to effectively caring for others. Core courses were chosen specifically based on the evolving needs of our society. The specific behavioral health course will not only focus on the mental health of patients that nurses care for, but on the self-care and development of resilience by nurses in practice; a critical need in the nursing population at this time. This behavioral health focus for our nurses has the potential to prevent burnout for currently practicing nurses as well as increasing the retention of individuals returning to school for their BSN. An additional focus not present in other programs in the region is gerontology. Gerontology nursing will focus on the aging population in our country and the chronic illnesses experienced with aging as well as the opportunities for preventative health care that allow aging individuals quality of life as they reach the later stages of life. The population in the United States age 65 and older increased from 39.6 million in 2009 to 54.1 million in 2019 (a 36% increase) and is projected to reach 94.7 million in 2060. In Weld County, the growing trend is similar, with 47,962 residents currently over the age of 65, and that number is expected to reach over 80,000 in the next 20 years. With the massive shift in our population



demographics, having a solid understanding of the unique needs of this part of the population is essential to provide adequate care and ensure optimal health outcomes.

- 5. The degree program could not be provided through a statewide transfer agreement pursuant to Section 23-1-108 (7) with an accredited state four-year institution in the community college's geographic service area or with an accredited state four-year institution of higher education that has a statewide service area, as defined by the Commission pursuant to Section 23-1-109 (2), that will deliver an existing Bachelor of Applied Science program in the community college's service area sooner than the degree program could be offered by the community college.**

Aims Community College currently has a dual enrollment option through the University of Northern Colorado. Although the students have access to BSN coursework with the University of Northern Colorado, the financial accessibility for many community college students is limited. For students participating in dual enrollment with four-year institutions, the cost of the BSN program must solely be out of pocket as students are not eligible for federal financial aid at the dual institution and tuition costs are considerably more expensive than the option proposed at Aims (See Cost Comparison in section 3). The aforementioned partnership and dual enrollment option will be maintained for students that can afford and wish to attend the four-year institution.

- 6. The proposed program addresses the needs of the community.**

Of the various letters of support outlining the local community need for such a program offering, the focus of such letters emphasizes that the addition of the BSN to the current nursing programs offered by Aims fulfills our mission, "to provide knowledge and skills to advance quality of life, economic vitality, and overall success of diverse communities". According to the Colorado Center of Nursing Excellence, as Colorado faces a dramatic nursing shortage (needing over 3,000 nurses annually), there is a need to ensure that bedside nurses are prepared for the rigor of practice and have opportunities within their local area to continue to practice while returning to academia for advanced degrees. The ability of Aims to provide such a program in a cost-effective manner will enhance the opportunity for all students, including those that have been historically underserved due to their socioeconomic status or lack of access, to complete their BSN while maintaining full-time employment and without incurring out of pocket expenses associated with their academic endeavors.

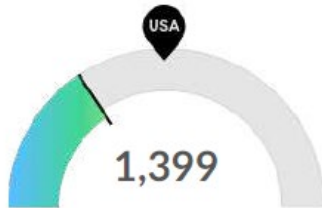
In addition to the calls to offer a BSN by the Aims Nursing Advisory Committee, current students, alumni, and nurses already working in industry have made it clear that a cost-effective BSN offered by Aims is a desired option for individuals in this region. Staying true to the mission of Aims Community College, this program provides students with not only access, but financial accessibility to a

BSN program and contributes to the local healthcare pipeline that is in critical need of additional BSN prepared Nurses in practice.

Finally, employment and advancement opportunities, as well as job growth and better-than-national average salary rates for nurses that have bachelor degree preparation are also a clear indication that Aims' BSN will fill a need in the higher education market of Northern Colorado.

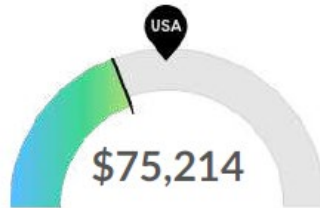
## Appendix A – Registered Nurses in Weld County Occupation Overview

### Aggressive Job Posting Demand Over a Thin Supply of Regional Jobs



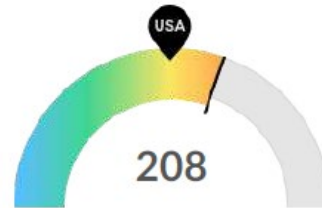
Jobs (2021)

Weld County, CO is not a hotspot for this kind of job. The national average for an area this size is 2,580\* employees, while there are 1,399 here.



Compensation

Earnings are low in Weld County, CO. The national median salary for Registered Nurses is \$77,397, compared to \$75,214 here.



Job Posting Demand

Job posting activity is high in Weld County, CO. The national average for an area this size is 154\* job postings/mo, while there are 208 here.

\*National average values are derived by taking the national value for Registered Nurses and scaling it down to account for the difference in overall workforce size between the nation and Weld County, CO. In other words, the values represent the national average adjusted for region size.

### Job Posting Activity



4,996 Unique Job Postings

The number of unique postings for this job from Jan 2021 to Dec 2022.



440 Employers Competing

All employers in the region who posted for this job from Jan 2021 to Dec 2022.



24 Day Median Duration

Posting duration is 5 days shorter than what's typical in the region.

## Appendix B – Letters of Support



**North Colorado Medical Center**

Administration  
1801 16<sup>th</sup> Street  
Greeley, Colorado 80631  
970.810-4121  
bannerhealth.com

March 17, 2023

To Whom It May Concern:

The intention of my letter is to provide support for Aims Community College in their endeavor to add a BSN program to their curriculum. As you are aware, the nursing workforce is struggling locally and nationwide. We need to continue to provide every avenue for those seeking to become nurses to do so. Programs like Aims Community College make this possible as their program creates great nurses at a significantly lower cost.

Thank you for your consideration of this recommendation for Aims Community College.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Julia Gentry".

Julia Gentry, MBA, MSN, RN, NEA-BC  
Chief Nursing Officer, Senior Director  
Banner Health – Northern Colorado  
[Julia.gentry@bannerhealth.com](mailto:Julia.gentry@bannerhealth.com)  
970.714.0405

Colorado Department of Higher Education

To Whom It May Concern:

I am sending this letter of support for Aims Community College's request for approval to offer a BSN program. While I recognize that there are other BSN programs available in Northern Colorado, Aims Community College can provide this program at approximately 150% lower cost to students which creates accessibility to students that could not otherwise afford a BSN program. This program would support DEI efforts to help drive students of color and underrepresented persons into nursing.

According to ESQJobs, there are over 6000 open registered nurses with bachelor degree positions in Colorado. The nursing workforce shortage is dire. Any additional educational opportunities that Aims can provide to bring more nurses into the workforce, I wholeheartedly support. As the acuity level in healthcare increases, the need for more educated nurses arises. This program would support and address this need.

I would be happy to answer any questions you may have. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Carol L Salter, MHA  
Nursing Shortage Program Manager  
Larimer County Economic and Workforce  
Development 200 West Oak Street  
Fort Collins, CO  
80521 Phone:  
970-498-6632  
saltercl@co.larimer.co.us



March 6, 2023

To Whomever It May Concern;

It is my pleasure to write this letter of support for Aims Community College to be approved for a Bachelor of Science (BSN) Nursing program in northern Colorado.

Pathways is a long-time, community-based provider of hospice and palliative care in northern Colorado for more than 45 years.

During that time, we have worked closely with Aims Community College as an education partner to raise the quality of the healthcare workforce in the area. They have been a tremendous help.

While there are other BSN programs available in northern Colorado, we can see a distinct value in Aims Community College also providing this type of program by adding to the diversity and accessibility of programs in the area as well as providing a more affordable option.

On behalf of Pathways, we are in full support of Aims Community College adding a BSN program to their educational offerings.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Sincerely;

Evan Hyatt Interim  
President

305 Carpenter Road | Fort Collins, CO 80525 | Phone: (970) 663-3500 | FAX: (970) 663-1180 | [www.pathways-care.org](http://www.pathways-care.org)

4075 W. 11<sup>th</sup> Street | Greeley, CO 80634 | Phone: (970) 356-4090 | FAX: (720) 773-8733

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**Faye Hummel, RN, PhD**  
**Professor Emeritus, University of Northern**  
**Colorado Fellow, American Academy of Nursing**

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March 9, 2023

RE: Letter of Support for RN-BSN Completion Program:  
Aims Community College, Greeley, Colorado

To Whom It May Concern:

The nursing shortage crisis directly impacts on the quality and safety of patient care within our healthcare settings. Despite a worsening shortage, every year thousands of qualified applicants to BSN programs are denied admission. To address healthcare staffing needs, coupled with an increasing shortage of BSN prepared nurses, in 2018, Colorado passed legislation to increase access for RNs to complete their BSN program at community colleges. As such, I fully support the RN-BSN completion program at Aims Community College. My support is based on my 36 years in nursing education as professor and director at the University of Northern Colorado (UNC) and as a current Hospital Board Trustee representing four Front Range hospitals in Colorado.

Aims Community College is an outstanding education institution for nursing education that is highly respected and regarded within the professional nursing education and practice environments. With absolute certainty, I believe a RN-BSN completion program at Aims Community College Nursing Program will provide outstanding BSN nursing education to meet the demands of an increasingly complex healthcare system. Dr.

Katrina Einhellig, Nursing Program Director, is an exemplary nurse educator and leader who demonstrates a clear focus and vision for nursing education. At UNC, Dr. Einhellig enabled nurses to achieve higher education levels and increased opportunities for continuous academic progression. She designed and deployed strategies focused on supporting students throughout their education journey, engendering a sense of belonging, engagement and empowerment in student experiences. Dr. Einhellig has a clear understanding of and expertise in ADN and BSN programs. As Dual Enrollment Director at UNC, she partnered with leaders in Front Range and rural community colleges, creating a shared space to evaluate and design plans to build on curricula, strengths and learning outcomes of each degree.

Baccalaureate nursing programs in Colorado turn away many qualified applicants every year. I experienced this trend throughout my tenure at UNC. For example, for every qualified applicant admitted, there was at least one, if not two, qualified applicants who were denied admission. In response, in 2014, we initiated a Dual Enrollment program with Aims Community College as well as Front Range and rural Associate Degree programs in which students could complete their BSN at UNC. While the program was quite successful, students faced numerous barriers. The opportunity to complete the BSN at Aims Community College would eliminate these challenges.

275 South Third Avenue, Brighton, Colorado 80601  
303-638-0601 [fayehummel1@gmail.com](mailto:fayehummel1@gmail.com)

Implementation of BSN completion program at Aims Community College would provide:

### **Enhanced Utilization of Existing Education Resources:**

- Promotes student **retention**: provides seamless progression for students from AA to BSN program in education setting familiar and known to students.
- Assures **accessibility** to BSN completion: Availability of clinical placements does not restrict admissions. Limited course work requiring additional clinical practicum hours, BSN curriculum builds on first 2 years of AA to enhance breadth and depth of professional nursing practice.
- Enhances **prudent use** of existing education resources without duplication of four-year BSN programs in Colorado.
- Consistent Academic and wholistic **student advising**: one institution/policies, one advisor, logical communication.

### **Financial Benefits:**

- **Cost effective**: lower tuition at Aims Community College with fewer course/program fees throughout BSN completion.
- Consistent access to **financial aid** throughout AA and BSN.
- Decreased student debt due to RN **compensation** during BSN completion: ADN allows BSN students to work as nurse to self-support during BSN completion program.
- **Tuition support** from health care settings while completing BSN.

### **Healthcare System Benefits:**

- BSN preparation is essential for safe, quality patient care in an increasingly complex health care environment.
- Every dimension of our healthcare system relies on the education preparation of nurses.
- High quality BSN education and professional practice are inextricably linked.

Existing education pathways are not adequate to meet current and evolving workforce demands. A BSN completion program at Aims Community College would increase capacity and access to BSN education through utilization of existing infrastructure.

Without reservation, I fully support a BSN completion program at Aims Community College; they are prepared and ready to offer a high-quality BSN completion program to align with ever changing professional nursing practice.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Faye Hummel', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Faye Hummel, RN, PhD, ANEF





## ALUMNI CONNECTION

To Whom It May Concern,

I attended the Aims Community College Nursing program from 2019-2021. I enjoyed my experience greatly. I fondly remember getting ready to sign up for classes and telling my family I would finish with my RN and BSN at all cost. When starting my program at Aims, I also applied for the UNC BSN dual enrollment program. My first semester came along, and I took one BSN class through UNC. I was taking and paying for a full load semester through the Aims program, and this is where I was able to utilize any financial aid I received, but it was very limited because that was my second degree. I also enrolled in one BSN course at UNC. You can only imagine my surprise when I found how time consuming the nursing program was. With that being the case and adding on the BSN course it limited my ability to work and have a traditional income. The tuition for the single UNC BSN course was between \$3000-\$3500 and that had to come completely out of pocket because it is not eligible for financial aid. I eventually was able to pay it off but due to the financial barrier that posed I was only able to do that one class for one semester and didn't continue and complete the BSN program.

If I had the opportunity to complete my BSN program through Aims I know I would have completed. I would have had the opportunity to use financial aid on the BSN portion, and even if I had to pay out of pocket, the tuition at Aims would have allowed for me to manage the financial impact of the program. I would have had continuity in services and supports throughout my time in both programs, and I would have had the ease and infrastructure for a more seamless success path through the RN and BSN process. I am in huge support of Aims having a BSN program. Many of my classmates experience the same barriers to dual enrollment BSN obtainment as I did, and I know if future students have this opportunity it would greatly benefit them and their preparation to enter the Nursing industry, along with increase the amount of BSN prepared nurses entering the field.

Cheria Cauley, RN



## Student Nursing Association

To whom it may concern,

I would like to extend my support for the Bachelor Degree Program through Aims Community College. This is a great opportunity for students as it gives the accessibility and financial affordability to achieve a higher education. The Aims education opportunity would allow students access to a BSN program without the stress of debt accrued through another institution.

Thank you,

Brittany Eade  
President - Student Nursing Association  
[beade@aims.edu](mailto:beade@aims.edu)