

OFTC to Offer Associate Degree in Nursing Bridge Program

OFTC – Oconee Fall Line Technical College (OFTC) will offer an Associate Degree in Nursing (ADN) Bridge Program beginning Fall 2018, pending Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) approval.

The bridge program offers a smooth transition for licensed practical nurses or paramedics who want to continue their education to become a Registered Nurse (RN).

With the RN shortage in central Georgia at an all-time high, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) projects employment growth for RN's to grow nationally by 16% from 2014 to 2024, which is faster than the average for all occupations. The BLS estimates that RN employment growth will be even higher in Georgia at 20%.

"This bridge program will be a great way for college graduates to advance within their profession," shared Tammy Bayto, Dean of OFTC's Allied Health Programs. "In addition, it will help fill the nursing shortage as well as assist the local economies within OFTC's 11-county service area."

OFTC's ADN Bridge

When Albany State University, formerly known as Darton College, decided to discontinue their ADN Bridge Program which was held on OFTC's Sandersville Campus, OFTC was presented with the opportunity to take-on the program; and since they already had a "pipeline of practical Nursing and Paramedic graduates from current programs, beginning the ADN Program was the logical next step," Bayto said.

While the new ADN Bridge Program is set to begin in August of 2018, pending SACSCOC approval, OFTC will accept students into the college this fall who need the required prerequisite courses. "To compete for the program," Bayto said, "a student is required to take 30 hours of core curriculum, have one year of experience as either a Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) or Paramedic, and have current CPR certification."

Like the bridge program offered by Albany State University, OFTC's Bridge Program will require students to attend class once a week, allowing students the opportunity to work full-time jobs and maintain familial obligations. "This convenience makes the program appealing to not only our service areas but to those within a three to four hour distance from the Sandersville Campus," Bayto said.

After core classes are complete, a student can expect to complete the ADN Bridge Program in one year and be prepared to sit for the NCLEX-RN exam to become licensed Registered Nurses.

Rural Georgia faces multiple issues that negatively impact the health of its residents, Bayto shared, "such as failing infrastructure, poverty, unemployment, limited education and lack of transportation," to name a few. "Having a mechanism for growing our own healthcare

professionals who want to live and work in the area will be a tremendous asset for our community in addressing all of these issues, and more.”

For more info about OFTC’s ADN Bridge Program, visit OFTC.edu or contact our Admissions Office at 478-553-2064.

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