Nemours Children's Health to Invest $5M in UCF Nursing, Interdisciplinary Research

The investment includes $2.5 million for a real-life pediatric nursing training unit at UCF's Dr. Phillips Nursing Pavilion and $2.5 million for an interdisciplinary research impact fund.

ORLANDO, Fla. (Sept. 24, 2024) – As UCF's first pediatric health-focused Pegasus Partner, Nemours Children's Health is helping to address a pediatric workforce shortage and improve the health of children in Central Florida and beyond.

Nemours Children's Health, one of the nation's largest multistate pediatric health systems, will invest $2.5 million in pediatric nursing education, training, innovation and research at UCF's Dr. Phillips Nursing Pavilion.

"Strengthening and solidifying the pediatric nursing workforce into the future starts with leading-edge education, training and development of emerging clinicians and nurse scientists today," said Matthew Davis, MD, MAPP, enterprise physician-in-chief and chief scientific officer for Nemours Children's Health. "This Pegasus Partnership emphasizes our institutions' shared commitment to education, research and innovation, and also furthers our ability to provide high-quality pediatric care and ultimately meet the needs of the patients and families we serve."

Building upon UCF's global expertise in healthcare simulation education and Nemours Children's clinical excellence, the new Nemours Children's Health Nursery and Pediatric Unit will be a hub of training, research and innovation. It will be designed to resemble a real-life pediatric hospital unit, featuring specialized pediatric equipment, neonatal, pediatric and expectant mother mannequins, as well as augmented reality simulations. Simulation scenarios will give UCF nursing students hands-on, clinical experiences to help them provide high-quality, compassionate care for pediatric patients and their families.

Nursing faculty members will collaborate with colleagues across UCF's healthcare disciplines on research to innovate pediatric education and improve the health of children.

"We are thankful for Nemours Children's continued partnership and support of pediatric nursing excellence at UCF," says UCF College of Nursing Dean Mary Lou Sole. "By leveraging our collective strengths, together we will grow a pediatric nursing workforce of Knight nurses to care for children in our community, innovate pediatric clinical practices and positively impact children's health for generations to come."

The Dr. Phillips Nursing Pavilion is under construction on UCF's Academic Health Sciences Campus in Lake Nona, a hub of healthcare activity and innovation including UCF's College of Medicine and Nemours Children's Hospital, Florida.

The nursery and pediatric unit will be located within the Helene Fuld Health Trust STIM Center on the second floor — a high-tech centerpiece in the new building featuring three times the current simulation space.

Nemours Children's investment also will support the 2,100-square-foot Nemours Children's Health Learning Studio, one of three high-tech classrooms located off the Collaboration Concourse. The studio will feature an innovative active learning design to facilitate collaboration and small-group work.

This investment expands upon Nemours Children's partnership with UCF's College of Nursing. Nemours Children's already participates in UCF's College of Nursing clinicals program, providing clinical rotations for 120 UCF nursing students in 2024 to gain valuable, hands-on training at its Orlando hospital.

Earlier this year, Nemours Children's Health became UCF's first pediatric health-focused Pegasus Partner. Through the partnership, UCF and Nemours Children's will collaborate on opportunities and initiatives that leverage their collective healthcare and academic excellence to advance children's health — including the launch of a $2.5M Nemours Impact Fund, an interdisciplinary research collaboration agreement to advance pediatric healthcare and improve children's health outcomes at individual and population levels.

UCF and Nemours Children's are creating a talent pipeline of skilled, pediatric healthcare providers to address the pediatric workforce shortage. Nemours Children's previously established the UCF College of Medicine — Nemours Children's Health Department of Pediatrics to train the next generation of pediatric physicians.

With its investment at UCF's College of Nursing, Nemours Children's is educating and training future pediatric nurses. According to the Children's Hospital Association, 35% of children's hospitals across the U.S. are facing a shortage of pediatric registered nurses. Around 85% of UCF's 16,000 Knight nurse alumni remain in Florida to live and work, growing the workforce at healthcare facilities including Nemours Children's Hospital, Florida.

After its anticipated opening in Fall 2025, the Dr. Phillips Nursing Pavilion will enable UCF to graduate 50% more newly licensed nurses to address the nursing shortage as well as fuel innovation and research.

About Nemours Children's Health

Nemours Children's Health is one of the nation's largest multistate pediatric health systems, which includes two free-standing children's hospitals and a network of more than 70 primary and specialty care practices. Nemours Children's seeks to

transform the health of children by adopting a holistic health model that utilizes innovative, safe, and high-quality care, while also caring for the health of the whole child beyond medicine. Nemours Children's also powers the world's most-visited website for information on the health of children and teens, Nemours KidsHealth.org.

The Nemours Foundation, established through the legacy and philanthropy of Alfred I. duPont, provides pediatric clinical care, research, education, advocacy, and prevention programs to the children, families and communities it serves. For more information, visit Nemours.org.

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