

# RN to BSN

A newsletter from  
THE DEPARTMENT OF NURSING

AT SOUTHWEST MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY

## From the desk of:

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## RN to BSN Program Accredited

The SMSU Department of Nursing is pleased to announce that the RN to BSN Program has been fully accredited by the Commission of Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE). Being committed to provide the very best nursing education to our students while serving our communities, accreditation was sought to ensure the quality and integrity of SMSU's RN to BSN Program. This initial CCNE accreditation, which has a five-year term, was awarded following a rigorous process that included a site visit as well as a review of the RN to BSN Program curriculum. The CCNE Board of Commissioners granted accreditation at its meeting at the end of April, determining that the RN to BSN Program met all four accreditation standards with no compliance concerns, the board's highest recommendation.

The SMSU Department of Nursing values the continued success of the RN to BSN Program and is pleased to share the respected notice of accreditation.

*"The baccalaureate program at Southwest Minnesota State University is accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education, One Dupont Circle, NW, Suite 530, Washington DC 20036, 202-887-6791."*



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# First Two RN to BSN Students to Receive Diplomas



What a great feeling it is to walk across the commencement stage, knowing you have a job waiting for you.

That's the situation that Kristin Adams and Hillary Spray find themselves in as the first graduates of the university's RN to BSN program.

Adams is a Winsted, Minnesota native who earned her RN degree from Ridgewater College in Willmar. She saw that the RN to BSN degree was being offered at SMSU a couple of years ago and although "the opportunity came up faster than I thought it would, it has fit perfectly. I didn't know what to expect, so it's been very rewarding. I've learned a lot, and grown in the opportunities presented." She will be a substitute nurse in the Marshall School District next year, as well as work as a sub at Avera-Marshall. Most recently she was employed by Wild Rose Touching Hearts Home Care in Marshall.

"My plan from the beginning was the get my bachelor's degree," she said. "The industry is moving toward a BSN being required. At the hospital I had originally applied, I never got a call back. I sent several applications out. I re-did my resume indicating I was in the RN to BSN program and will be graduating in May, and I got a call the next day. A lot of hospitals want that BSN ratio to be higher."

Kristin and her husband Kyle are expecting their first child – a daughter – on June 4, and the flexibility of the SMSU degree was attractive from the start. "All of us in the program are working and are moms and wives and dads and husbands. We work full time and go to school too. "

There's a broad age range of those in the program now, she said. "I've been an RN for two years, and some have been an RN for 30 years. We learn from each other. We can talk to the older students about some of the newer ways, and they can teach us what they have done for years.

"I think the thing I have noticed about being in the program is that you grow in your mind, and your leadership skills." Spray is a Milan native living in Montevideo. She, too, got her RN degree from Ridgewater. The mother of two – Parker, 5, and Elexis, 2 – she found the flexibility of the degree to be accommodating. "I do my homework after work with my kids on my lap. They are picking on my computer the whole time. My little lady is pretty excited, she said, 'No more homework!'"

Spray will go to work full-time for Countryside Public Health in Montevideo after graduation. She will also continue with Lutheran Haven Nursing Home in Montevideo on a part-time basis. She has her goals set high. "I'd like to go on for my master's degree and become a nurse practitioner," she said.

In the process of getting her RN to BSN degree, "it has opened my eyes to different techniques and different ways of thinking. I think more critically now, am more open to ideas, and have more leadership skills. The BSN gives me more opportunities professionally."

The two agree that rural health care has changed over the years. "Home care and public health are trying to help keep people in their homes longer," said Spray. "There are more resources than people know about. Public health has opened my eyes completely." The two chuckle when they realize they are now the answer to the trivia question: "Name the first two graduates of the RN to BSN program." For them, it is an opportunity to advance professionally and tremendously increases their options as they continue with their respective careers.



## SMSU Department of Nursing

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## Mark Your Calendar!

- Aug 20-23 Gold Rush Days
- Aug 21 Convocation
- Aug 24 Fall Semester begins
- Sept 26 Homecoming
- Oct 15-16 Mustang Days
- Dec 2 Undergraduate Research Conference

## Introduction of New Administrative Support

I would like to take a moment to introduce our new Office Administrative Specialist, Sr, LeeAnn Teig. LeeAnn resides in the Marshall area with her husband and two children. She is a native to Southwest Minnesota.

She has been with SMSU since July 2013 serving as administrative support for the English Department. She looks forward to adding her new role as administrative support to the Nursing Department, in addition to the Honors Program. She is excited to begin her role assisting the students and faculty within the RN to BSN program.

Her contact information is: [LeeAnn.Teig@smsu.edu](mailto:LeeAnn.Teig@smsu.edu), (507) 537-7155.

Welcome, LeeAnn!

## RN to BSN Applications

The SMSU RN to BSN Nursing Program continues to admit nursing students every fall and spring semester. We are still accepting applications for fall 2015 and spring 2016. Information is available at <http://www.smsu.edu/academics/programs/rntobsn/>.