



# NORTHWEST FLORIDA STATE COLLEGE

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April 27, 2022

Honorable Don Gaetz, Chairman  
Triumph Gulf Coast, Inc.  
Attn: Susan Skelton, Executive Director  
P.O. Box 12007  
Tallahassee, FL 32317

Chairman Gaetz:

Please find enclosed Northwest Florida State College's (NWFSC) application for the Nursing Program Expansion. The project is designed to expand the pool of Registered Nurses available to work in health care facilities in our region. This will help to address the present and predicted shortage of nurses in our state.

The Florida Hospital Association (FHA) recently conducted a survey of its member institutions, finding an alarming Registered Nurse turnover rate of 25 percent, also noting turnover in over a third of its total critical care unit workforce. FHA projects a deficit of 59,100 nurses in Florida by 2035. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, job growth for nurses in Florida is expected to grow by 21 percent, while 40 percent of nurses will approach retirement age in the next decade.

Over the next 10 years, with an initial investment from the Triumph Gulf Coast fund, an additional 546 local residents will earn their Associate in Science in Nursing degrees and pass the NCLEX-RN certification through programming at Northwest Florida State College. This project will also permit an additional 256 Panhandle residents to achieve their Bachelor of Science in Nursing degrees. Together, the two programs will enable 802 individuals to achieve well-paying nursing positions and address the current and projected shortage of trained health care professionals. With the average entry salary for nurses now exceeding \$60,000, this project will provide nearly \$50 million in wages for these local families.

We appreciate the opportunity to submit this application and look forward to providing any additional information you may request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Devin Stephenson".

Dr. Devin Stephenson,  
President, Northwest Florida State College



**NORTHWEST FLORIDA  
STATE COLLEGE**

**Triumph Gulf Coast, Inc. Trust Fund  
Application for Funds  
Submitted May 5, 2022**

**Name of Entity/Organization:** Northwest Florida State College

**Background of Applicant:** Northwest Florida State College (NWFS) is an open-door, open-access institution committed to serving all members of the community and infusing local industry with high-quality employees equipped with high-demand, relevant skills. The College provides students with robust academic services to prepare students for coursework and to guide them toward success. As part of Florida's public system of 28 state and community colleges, Northwest Florida State College offers bachelor's degree programs, associate degrees, and certificates. The College's primary service district includes Okaloosa and Walton counties. The College operates seven campuses and centers. Annual enrollment is 8,054, which includes 7,054 students pursuing college credit and 1,000 students taking non-credit coursework.

**Federal Employer Identification Number:** 59-1214054

**Contact Information**

**Primary Contact Information:** Sam Renfro, Executive Director of Grant Development

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**Website:** nwfsc.edu

**Identify any co-applicants, partners, or other entities or organizations that will have a role in the proposed project or program and such partners' roles.**

NWFS's Nursing Program Expansion reflects longstanding partnerships with healthcare facilities throughout Okaloosa and Walton counties for the Associate of Science in Nursing (ASN) program's clinical placements and participation on the College's Nursing Advisory Board (Appendix A). These partnerships support curricular requirements of the academic program and assist program leadership with continuous improvement efforts to ensure that programs remain relevant and responsive to industry need throughout the region.

**Total amount of funding requested from Triumph Gulf Coast:** \$21,787,560

**Has the applicant in the past requested or applied for funds for all or part of the proposed project/program?**

Yes  No

**If yes, please provide detailed information concerning the prior request for funding, including:**

- The date the request/application for funding was made;
- The source to which the request/application for funding was made,



- **The result of the request/application for funding, and**
- **Projected or realized results and/or outcomes from prior funding.**

Northwest Florida State College has not previously made an application to Triumph Gulf Coast for this project. In March 2022, the Florida Legislature awarded NWFSC \$11,000,000 in PECO funding to renovate the College's Health Sciences facilities, adding to \$2,000,000 previously appropriated. These funds will be used as part of the match for this application.

**Describe the financial status of the applicant and any co-applicants or partners:**

Northwest Florida State College is a financially viable institution with a strong balance sheet and sound operations. The College has \$7,134,829 in reserves and greater than \$60,000,000 in Foundation assets, of which the vast majority are restricted. The College manages an annual operating budget of \$35,000,000. Financial statements are provided in Appendix B.

**Has the applicant or any co-applicants, partners or any associated or affiliated entities or individuals filed for bankruptcy in the last ten years?**

Yes  No

**Eligibility**

Pursuant to Section 288.8017, Triumph Gulf Coast, Inc. the proposed project meets the following statutory purposes:

Grants to support programs that prepare students for future occupations and careers at K-20 institutions that have campuses in the disproportionately affected counties. Eligible programs include those that increase students' technology skills and knowledge; encourage industry certifications; provide rigorous, alternative pathways for students to meet high school graduation requirements; strengthen career-readiness initiatives; fund high-demand programs of emphasis at the bachelor's and master's level designated by the Board of Governors; and, similar to or the same as talent retention programs created by the Chancellor of the State University System and the Commission of Education, encourage students with interest or aptitude for science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and medical disciplines to pursue postsecondary education at a state university or a Florida College System institution within the disproportionately affected counties.

Grants to support programs that provide participants in the disproportionately affected counties with transferable, sustainable workforce skills that are not confined to a single employer.

**2. Provide the title and a detailed description of the proposed project, location, detailed description of and quantitative evidence demonstrating how the proposed project or program will promote economic recovery, diversification, and enhancement of the disproportionately affected counties, timeline for the proposed project, and the disproportionately affected counties that will be impacted.**

NWFSC submits for review the "Nursing Program Expansion" project. To meet industry need and expand the availability of qualified nurses throughout Northwest Florida, NWFSC requires 1) the renovation of the Niceville Campus Health Sciences Building, 2) the integration of instructional enhancements through virtual technology, 3) professional development for faculty, and 4) increased accessibility of pre-nursing coursework to support a pipeline of students (such as dual enrollment).

Funding is sought to expand students' access to nursing and pre-nursing programming in Okaloosa and Walton counties. Due to its central location and existing program infrastructure and support, the Niceville campus has been chosen as the primary site for this project. The primary focus of this project is a complete interior renovation of the Niceville Campus Health Sciences Building with an expansion of the Nursing Simulation Center. However, the impact

of the project will extend throughout both Okaloosa and Walton counties with additional education and employment opportunities provided to individuals located throughout the eight disproportionately affected counties. Specifically, the nursing expansion in Niceville will result in the relocation of the College's Radiography program to the Fort Walton Beach campus for closer proximity, alignment, and collaboration with the Physical Therapist Assistant and Medical Laboratory Technology programs. The consolidation of these programs lays the groundwork for continued, long-term growth in health sciences. Recruitment and course scheduling for general education and elective requirements will extend throughout Walton County, aimed at diversifying enrollment in the College's health sciences programs. Training rising nurses across both counties—and throughout the eight Triumph-region counties—supports the goal of placing highly trained nurses across the Northwest Florida region.

Research suggests a direct corollary between a robust and well-trained healthcare workforce and the path to economic recovery.<sup>1</sup> Nursing, specifically, has been cited as a vital resource “to help accelerate and propel economic revitalization.”<sup>2</sup> Among students graduating from NWFSC's nursing programs, a majority remain in the College's service area upon graduation, and the high job placement rate in the ASN and BSN programs will strengthen staffing and, therefore, quality of healthcare services in communities in the disproportionately affected counties.

The critical nursing shortage necessitates an expedient timeline for this project. This project is contingent upon State of Florida PECO funds appropriated during the 2022 Legislative Session, and these funds are anticipated to be available July 1, 2022. Project activities are proposed to begin immediately upon receipt of these funds.

Project priorities include renovations and equipment purchases to support program capacity increases. The vision for this project is to develop and deploy innovative teaching technologies and strategies to improve learner outcomes while accelerating the learning process. To date, NWFSC's Nursing Program has a long-term record of success in simulation-enhanced instruction that allows the students to strengthen patient care skills in controlled environments, therefore, ensuring that all students are exposed to the right type and frequency of simulated scenarios and allowed to practice acquired skills in a safe environment prior to real-world application. The College is partnering with Vertex Solutions, LLC, to further advance nursing instruction delivery through the use of virtual and augmented reality tools. By increasing the availability of simulation technology and increasing the range of research-backed simulations used during instruction, the program anticipates curriculum innovations that will enhance deep experiential learning and prepare graduates to seamlessly integrate into the role of the professional nurse to a greater degree than ever before. Traditionally, a limit to scaling a health sciences program has been the availability of clinical sites aligned with the program needs; the burden on clinical sites can be addressed by increasing the proportion of simulation activities required to meet clinical requirements. The expanded access to simulation as a supplement to required clinical experiences will support program expansion and increase the number of graduates without overwhelming local facilities with students completing clinical program requirements.

NWFSC and Vertex Solutions, LLC, will accelerate product development timelines by co-locating developers and instructional systems designers with subject matter experts in the nursing program. A detailed list of product development milestones appears in Appendix C.

Course offerings aligned with pre-nursing and healthcare program requirements will be scheduled across Okaloosa and Walton counties in Fall 2022. New hires to support program expansion will begin in Fall 2023. Starting in Spring 2026, the ASN program will graduate an additional 40 net-new nurses each fall and spring semester. Starting in Fall 2027, the BSN program will graduate an additional 20 nurses each fall and spring semester as a direct result of this project.

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<sup>1</sup> Rother, John, and Risa Lavizzo-Mourey. “Addressing the Nursing Workforce: A Critical Element for Health Reform.” *Health Affairs* 28.3 (2009): n.pag.

<sup>2</sup> Adams, Linda Thompson. “Nursing: An Under Tapped Asset for Recovery in Financially Troubling Times.” *J. National Black Nurses Association* 21.2 (Dec. 2010): 34-38.



The College projects increasing the ASN program admissions by 88% (from 96 to 180) by 2025. The College anticipates increasing the program's production of ASN graduates and RN-prepared nurses by 84% over 10 years (from 960 to 1,764). Additionally, the College projects to double the annual BSN capacity (a 100% increase from 100 to 200) by Fall 2027. The project will increase the program's production of BSN graduates by approximately 80% (from 500 to 900 over 10 years).

### **3. Explain how the proposed project or program is considered transformational and how it will affect the disproportionately affected counties in the next 10 years.**

The College's mission is, in part, "to improve lives by providing a high-quality... education that is a catalyst for... economic development throughout the region."<sup>3</sup> Development is contingent upon a region's ability to provide quality healthcare. The nursing shortage crisis in our region threatens this goal, compelling NWFSC to expand its high-quality Associate in Science in Nursing (ASN) degree program to meet the regional demand for nurses. The College expanded health sciences programming with the establishment of the Physical Therapist Assistant and Medical Laboratory Technology programs in 2021 and is highly attuned to the urgent need in the community for additional nurses. The next phase of College growth must target expanded opportunities for nursing students to increase placement in healthcare facilities and mitigate community risks faced with extended nursing shortages.

NWFSC is the ideal recipient of targeted investments in preparing future Florida nurses, as the College has a longstanding reputation for excellence in nursing education. NWFSC's ASN program is nationally accredited through the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN) and boasts NCLEX pass rates that have exceeded state averages by double digits for the past 14 years. The job placement rate for NWFSC's ASN graduates remains greater than 98%, and, frequently, students have positions lined up prior to program completion. Over 60% of the ASN graduates continue their education by enrolling in the NWFSC RN to BSN program, resulting in a stronger nursing workforce that has a deeper understanding of the complex needs of today's healthcare consumer.

The College's ASN program is currently located in Building 420 on the Niceville Campus. This facility is one of the original campus buildings, built more than 50 years ago, and is in dire need of renovation to support the learning needs for contemporary students. The College received state funding for renovation of this building, but the budget allocated to the project is based on construction figures that are several years old. A commitment to the renovation of this facility is necessary to create a space that will cater to the needs of health sciences students and professionals throughout the service district. An expanded high-tech Nursing Simulation Center, designed to maximize students' clinical experiences while not overwhelming local clinical facilities with an increased number of students, will be at the forefront of this new learning space, with skills laboratories, smart classrooms, and faculty offices rounding out the physical facilities. The College will offer continuing education opportunities in this state-of-the-art learning space to the area's clinical professionals, giving them interactive, engaging experiences that will help to maintain current skills and develop new competencies needed to keep pace with the ever-changing advances in healthcare.

Funds granted to support expanded nursing programming will enable NWFSC to implement a rapid response to the urgent nursing staffing needs in the region. Investments and commitments for recurring funds will empower the College to accelerate recovery from recent nursing staffing losses at local facilities and to plan for renewal and deepening of the employee pool for nursing positions in the years ahead as the State continues to respond to crippling and long-lasting effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

This particular project is additionally transformational for nursing education technology, as product development and research will occur as a result of the strategies and tools implemented through this expansion. The partnership between NWFSC and Vertex Solutions, LLC, puts advanced and emerging technologies in the hands of highly trained faculty who can deliver compelling, irresistible learning experiences with immersive simulations that safely maximize students' opportunities to apply skills learned through didactic and theory-based instruction. At present,

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<sup>3</sup> "Mission." *Northwest Florida State College*. <https://www.nwfsc.edu/about/>



there are gaps in the quality of simulation that make it challenging to serve as a fully satisfactory replacement for clinical experiences. A goal of this project is to develop highly immersive, life-like simulations that prompt the willing suspension of disbelief and engage students fully in first-person problem solving as they train to become nurses. While clinical experiences cannot be replaced in full, research has shown that embedding high-fidelity simulations in nursing curriculum reduces students' learning curve and improves their confidence and capability on the job. NWFSC and Vertex Solutions, LLC, in partnership, will observe the overall impact on new technologies to further enhance simulation activities to determine whether the impact is such that curriculum or program design changes may be proposed while achieving or increasing student learning outcomes. Academic leadership remains committed to program adaptation to ensure that the College is producing the world's finest nurses and placing them in jobs throughout Northwest Florida.

#### **4. Describe data or information available to demonstrate the viability of the proposed project or program.**

In August 2021, the Florida Hospital Association stated that "nearly 70% of Florida hospitals are expecting critical staffing shortages."<sup>4</sup> On September 20, 2021, Florida hospital administrators petitioned House committees for emergency support to address the critical nursing shortage resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. In response, Florida is currently exploring all options to mitigate the direct and indirect, short-term and long-term impacts of staffing shortages, including reviving a state-funded center tracking nursing shortages in Florida and strategizing approaches to resolve the crisis. The Legislature originally established the Florida Center for Nursing in 2001. The Center was charged with maintaining a database on nursing supply and demand in the state, including data on nursing education and the number of graduates that were being produced across the state. At the time, the Center "predicted a shortfall of 52,500 nurses by 2020 in Florida."<sup>5</sup> This predicted shortfall coincided with the onset of the pandemic, and critical staff shortages are compounding the pressure on the staff who remain at the facilities. Speaking to the House Health & Human Services Committee, Neil Finkler, Chief Clinical Officer of AdventHealth Orlando, described the critical staffing levels as "one of the great existential threats to our ability to continue to deliver healthcare."<sup>6</sup> This is a threat that state colleges are prepared to mitigate by expanding nursing programs. An investment in nursing education translates to an investment in healthcare infrastructure vital to our state's recovery from the pandemic.

A nursing shortage in Northwest Florida poses a dangerous threat to the community and can be addressed only through comprehensive measures including expansions of nursing education programs to restore local employment pools and to address critical needs for nurses over the next ten years. The Northwest Florida region echoes the cry for nurses heard throughout the state and the nation, with current job postings higher than in comparable areas nationwide and an anticipated 8.5% increase in job openings over the next ten years.<sup>7</sup>

The College recognizes the critical need for dramatic increases in highly qualified nurses and stands ready to expand access through multiple strategies to raise capacity of the existing program, including expanded opportunities to high school and technical college students and other residents throughout the Northwest Florida region.

Northwest Florida State College is proud of its deep roots and sustained support for the healthcare community in the local region and seeks to expand resources and services to proactively recruit and retain nursing students to meet urgent staffing needs in the region. The College's health sciences programs boast a reputation for exceptional

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<sup>4</sup> Associated Press. "Hospitals Face a Shortage of Nurses as COVID Cases Soar." *NPR*. 10 Aug. 2021. <https://www.npr.org/2021/08/10/1026577164/hospitals-face-a-shortage-of-nurses-as-covid-cases-soar>

<sup>5</sup> Kumar, Divya. "USF will house center that tracks nursing shortages in Florida." *Tampa Bay Times*. 1 Sept. 2021. <https://www.tampabay.com/news/education/2021/09/01/usf-will-house-center-that-tracks-nursing-shortages-in-florida/>

<sup>6</sup> Dailey, Ryan. "AdventHealth officials testify to hospital staffing shortage before Florida Legislature." *Orlando Weekly*. 21 Sept. 2021. <https://www.orlandoweekly.com/Blogs/archives/2021/09/21/adventhealth-officials-testify-to-hospital-staffing-shortage-before-florida-legislature>

<sup>7</sup> "Occupational Overview: Registered Nurses." *EMSI, Q2, 2021*. [www.economicmodeling.com](http://www.economicmodeling.com)



instruction and are known for meeting standards of excellence. The area's healthcare employers partner with the College by serving on the programs' advisory councils. Through this work, they help shape curriculum and student experiences to meet their facilities' goals and expectations. They also provide opportunities for clinical experiences and internships, and they confidently hire the programs' graduates and work with these new professionals as they become stable members of the region's healthcare team.

The partnership with Vertex Solutions, LLC, provides program faculty with access to instructional system designers, artists, software developers, and a program manager whose work will inform instructional technology design that aligns with students' needs. The partnership between developers and experienced nursing faculty will result in the creation of cutting-edge instructional technologies intended to be a model for fully immersive simulation experiences in the field of nursing education. Vertex Solutions, LLC, has a strong record of achievements in developing and implementing similar technologies in the field of aviation, delivering tangible results that have reduced pilots' training time (by as much as 30%) before they can fly solo. We anticipate similar results from the implementation of increased use of virtual reality technologies and the realistic simulations that mimic those experienced at clinical sites. The product of this partnership will transform nursing education as we know it, and the rich software development and technology resources available in the Northwest Florida region provide key elements as catalysts for this powerful change.

#### **5. Describe how the impacts of the disproportionately affected counties will be measured long term.**

Lead measures of the project's economic efficacy will include the program completion rates. The primary lag measure will be job placement by county. The program director currently tracks and reports program completion and industry certifications through successful completion of the NCLEX-RN exam, which provides the necessary credential for job placement as a Registered Nurse. The program director also currently tracks post-graduation activities among program graduates to include plans for continuing education and job placement by location.

#### **6. Describe how the proposed project will be sustainable (financially viable and continue to perform the long-term after the funding).**

The College will sustain the program long-term through revenue generated through tuition and fees for courses, as well as CAPE funding for students who complete the NCLEX-RN exam after graduation from the ASN program. Over time, it is anticipated that the investment in educational technologies to support instruction may result in changes to course curriculum or even program length, making instructional resources go farther.

The College anticipates that costs of marketing and recruitment will decline as the project progresses, as the College, through the contributions of Vertex Solutions, LLC, will provide students with a state-of-the-art nursing program that promotes itself through the unparalleled quality and evidenced student outcomes. At present, many hospitals in the area will cover the cost of BSN students' tuition and fees with the promise of continued employment upon graduation. Through this project, the College seeks to be the premier institution for nursing education and training within the region, and the software development aspects of the project promise to extend far beyond this scope into nursing education best practices applicable to K-12 and additional health sciences and CTE fields.

#### **7. Describe how the deliverables for the proposed project will be measured.**

Deliverables for this project will be measured through ASN and BSN degrees earned and industry certifications earned (NCLEX-RN). These data will be tracked on a semester-by-semester basis with graduations occurring in fall and spring terms annually for ASN and BSN. The first deliverables will be seen in May 2026 with net new ASN program completions; the first completers for net new BSN students will graduate in December 2027.

## PRIORITIES

1. Please check the box if the proposed project or programs will meet any of the following priorities

- Generate the maximum estimated economic benefits, based on tolls and models not generally employed by economic input-output analyses, including cost-benefit, return-on-investment, or dynamic scoring techniques to determine how the long-term economic growth potential of the disproportionately affected counties may be enhanced by the investment.
- Increase household income in the disproportionately affected counties above national average household income.
- Leverage or further enhance key regional assets, including educational institutions, research Facilities, and military bases.
- Partner with local governments to provide funds, land, or other assistance to the project.
- Benefit the environment, in addition to the economy.
- Provide outcome measures.
- Partner with K-20 educational institutions or school districts located within the disproportionately affected counties as of January 1, 2017.
- Are recommended by the board of county commissioners of the county in which the project or Program will be located.
- Partner with the convention and visitor bureaus, tourist development councils, or chamber of Commerce located within the disproportionately affected counties.

## 2. Explain how the proposed project meets the priorities identified above.

Investments in healthcare infrastructure, to include expanding nursing-education pipelines, buttress all other infrastructure investments in the region, maximizing the estimated economic benefits of these projects within the disproportionately affected counties. Ongoing nursing shortages actively threaten access to health services and resources, and the supply-demand gap for trained nurses is projected to widen significantly by 2030, as the vast majority of the 660,000 baby-boom nurses currently employed enter retirement, exacerbating current shortages (Buerhaus, et al. 2022).<sup>8</sup> Research well documents the interplay between the nursing industry and economic conditions and shows that the impact of nursing extends beyond healthcare impacts alone: "Poor health affects the ability of people to work, generate income and care for their families . . . economic position impacts health status, and health status impacts economic prosperity . . . Healthcare access impacts almost every human indicator [to include] employability, gender equality, workforce productivity" (Brownie, 2017).<sup>9</sup>

Critical healthcare needs across the disproportionately affected counties will result in maximized estimated economic benefit, as research shows the pandemic's positive impact on nurses' earnings. During the first five quarters of the pandemic, wage increases were 9.5% for licensed practical nurses, 5.7% for nursing assistants, and 2% for registered nurses (Buerhaus, et al. 2022). U.S. median household income was \$67,521 in 2020, a decrease of 2.9 percent from the 2019 median of \$69,560, the first statistically significant decline in median household income since 2011.<sup>10</sup> In 2020, Registered Nurses (RNs) earned a median salary of \$75,330. The highest paid earned \$93,590 that year, and the lowest paid made \$61,630.<sup>11</sup> For a single-income household, a registered nurse will earn 11.5% more than the average household income. For a dual-income household with two registered nurses, the earnings are 223% the average household income.

<sup>8</sup> <https://dailynurse.com/new-study-examines-economic-impact-of-covid-on-the-nursing-work-force/>

<sup>9</sup> Brownie, Sharon M. "The Economic Impact of Nursing." *Journal of Clinical Nursing* 27.21-22 (2022) 3825-26.

<sup>10</sup> Shrider, Emily A., Melissa Kollar, Frances Chen, and Jessica Semega. "Income and Poverty in the United States: 2020." *Census.gov* 14 Sept. 2021. P60-273.

<sup>11</sup> <https://money.usnews.com/careers/best-jobs/registered-nurse/salary>



This project necessarily leverages and further enhances the facilities and programming at Northwest Florida State College, which primarily serves Okaloosa and Walton counties, but which also has a high-quality Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program. The BSN program is delivered fully online to allow nurses to advance their education while employed as RNs and, upon graduation from the baccalaureate program, be eligible for promotion into supervisory roles within hospitals and other healthcare settings.

This project reflects responsible environmental stewardship by repurposing and renovating existing facilities instead of proposing new construction, maintaining the College's existing footprint. **Outcome measures will be enrollment capacity, degree completion rates, CAPE certifications earned, and graduate placement rate.**

This project reflects partnerships with educational institutions and school districts in Okaloosa and Walton counties. Students enrolled throughout the high schools in both districts will have increased access to nursing education, as well as related summer programming opportunities as the College and educational partners increase awareness of healthcare fields and career opportunities through hands-on, immersive experiences delivered by project instructional staff. The College's nursing program is co-located with the Collegiate High School. Enrollment in nursing and related health sciences programs is part of the long-term plan to increase access and opportunity for Early College students. Local hospital and clinical sites are amenable to dual enrollment student participation at these locations so that students may begin working to complete program requirements. The nursing program expansion provides increased enrollment opportunities for dual enrollment and charter school students to complete a portion of their nursing program while still in high school. The Collegiate High School program activities will include recruitment and hands-on, immersive experiences in summer programming, as well as work-based learning experiences as part of the A.S. curriculum and through the senior capstone project through this partnership between the charter institution, the College, and local hospitals and clinical sites.

The College is also exploring ways to partner with the Okaloosa and Walton County School Districts to create streamlined pathways and articulation of credits from local school district and technical colleges' practical nursing programs. The provision of locations suitable for co-teaching and collaborative activities for joint use with educational and hospital partners will provide the resources necessary toward advancing this vision of uniting resources to deliver unified support that covers nursing education at all levels for all students.

### **3. Explain how the proposed project meets the discretionary priorities identified by the board**

Northwest Florida State College's Nursing Expansion Project will be transformational for the future of the Northwest Florida region as it responds acutely and precisely to an ongoing and deepening need for highly trained nurses in local communities. Project funds will enhance students' access to innovating technologies through the establishment of expanded simulation labs proven to increase learning outcomes and increase clinical competency of nursing students.

By leveraging an existing high-quality nursing program and extensive, established industry and community partnerships, the College is positioned to consummate this project quickly and efficiently. The project is a key priority among stakeholders, as the need for nurses in the area cannot currently be supported by the enrollment capacity at local institutions. By delivering a highly innovative, research-backed training model, the College seeks to attract and retain top quality students in the disproportionately affected counties during their education and for their entry into the workforce. The partnerships established between the College and local healthcare facilities have traditionally led to a job placement rate of greater than 95% for graduates who wish to pursue employment. The College anticipates the job placement rate to continue at 95% or higher through the program expansion, as the project design aligns planned program growth with projected demand.

4. In which of the eight disproportionately affected county/counties is the proposed project or program located?

Escambia   Santa Rosa   Okaloosa   Walton   Bay   Gulf   Franklin   Wakulla

5. Was this proposed project or program on a list of proposed projects and programs submitted to Triumph Gulf Coast Inc. by one (or more) of the eight disproportionately affected counties as a project and program located within its county?

Yes    No

If yes, list all counties that apply: Okaloosa

6. Does the Board of County Commissioners for each county listed in response to question 5, above, recommend this project or program to Triumph?

Yes    No

Okaloosa County has established a policy that it will consider providing letters of recommendation once final Triumph Gulf Coast applications have been submitted. The College plans to present the project to the Okaloosa County Board of County Commissioners and anticipates a favorable response.

#### Approvals and Authority

1. If the Applicant is awarded grant funds based on this proposal, what approvals must be obtained before Applicant can execute an agreement with Triumph Gulf Coast, Inc.?

None

2. If approval of a board, commission, council or other group is needed prior to execution of an agreement between the entity and Triumph Gulf Coast:

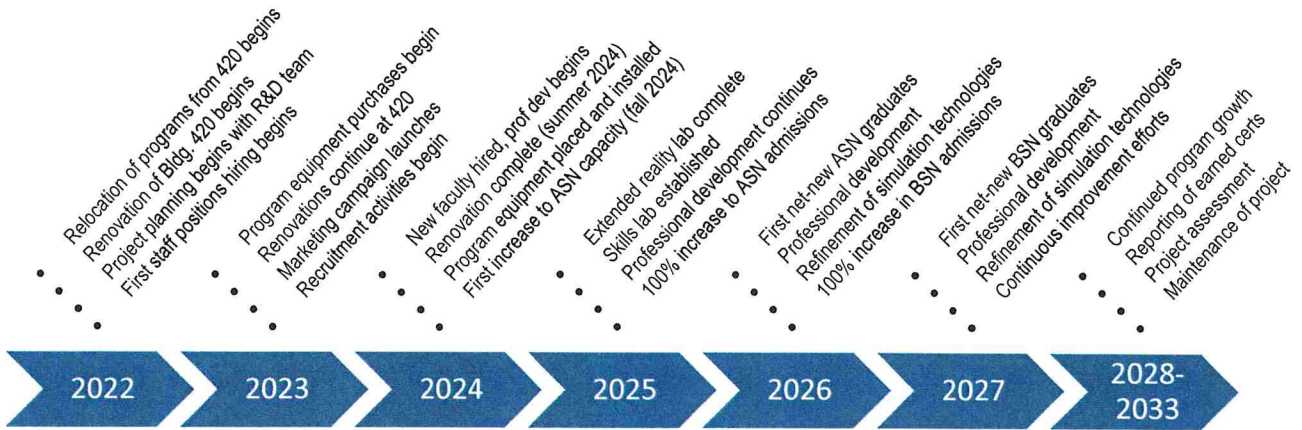
- A. Provide the schedule of upcoming meetings for the group for a period of at least six months.
- B. State whether that group can hold special meetings, and if so, upon how many days' notice.

Not applicable



3. Describe the timeline for the proposed project or program if an award of funding is approved, including milestones that will be achieved following an award through completion of the proposed project or program.

Project activities occur over a 12-year period, starting this year. Specific project milestones may be conducted as follows based on initial planning efforts and proposed targets:



4. Attach evidence that the undersigned has all necessary authority to execute this proposal on behalf of the entity applying for funding. In addition, please attached letters from partners.

Project support from community and educational partners is significant. The Northwest Florida State College Nursing Advisory Council comprises representation from healthcare leaders in the College's service area across Okaloosa and Walton counties. The Advisory Council has written a letter affirming their collective support of this project and echoing the critical nursing shortage that this project strategically addresses. Additionally, letters of support are included from healthcare facilities in Okaloosa and Walton counties that confirm job placements aligned with this program.

The program is also designed to increase and commit access for students from Okaloosa and Walton County School Districts and local technical colleges, as we anticipate an increased proportion of Health Science-track dual enrollment students and LPN graduates to articulate into the ASN and RN-to-BSN programs. The College's partners in education will benefit from increased opportunities for their students to continue their education with program opportunities that further expand their skills, employability, and earning potential.

See Appendix D.

**Contract Authority**

Florida Statutes section 1001.65 defines powers and duties given to Florida College System presidents stating, "The president is the chief executive officer of the Florida College System institution, shall be corporate secretary of the Florida College System institution board of trustees, and is responsible for the operation and administration of the Florida College System institution." As provided in subsection (5), each Florida College System president shall, "Approve, executive, and administer contracts for and on behalf of the Florida College System institution board of trustees for licenses; the acquisition or provision of commodities, goods, equipment, and services; leases of real and

personal property; and planning and construction to be rendered to or by the Florida College System institution, provided such contracts are within law and guidelines of the State Board of Education and in conformance with policies of the Florida College System institution board of trustees, and are for the implementation of approved programs of the Florida College System institution.”

### **Funding and Budget**

**Pursuant to Section 288.8017, awards may not be used to finance 100% of any project or program. An awardee may not receive all of the funds available in any given year.**

- 1. Identify the amount of funding sought from Triumph Gulf Coast, Inc. and the time period over which funding is requested.**

The total funding request from Triumph Gulf Coast is \$21,787,560 over a period of twelve (12) years.

- 2. What percentage of total program or project costs does the requested award from Triumph Gulf Coast, Inc. represent?**

The requested award from Triumph Gulf Coast equals 49.9% of the total program costs.

- 3. Please describe the types and number of jobs expected from the proposed project or program and the expected average wage.**

The expanded program targets growth in Associate of Science in Nursing (ASN) degrees and produces RN-prepared nursing graduates who will work as Registered Nurses (RNs) in healthcare facilities. Among NWFSC's ASN nursing graduates, approximately 85% find employment in nursing in Northwest Florida after graduation. We anticipate that this high rate of job placement immediately upon program completion will continue or will increase based on the State of Florida's staggering projections for the nursing shortage over the coming 10 years. The expected annual salary for new RNs is \$61,630.

Product development activities will result in the creation of six positions with annual salaries ranging from \$70,000 to \$140,000.

- 4. Does the potential award supplement but not supplant existing funding sources? If yes, describe how the potential award supplements existing funding sources.**

Yes       No

The funds requested from Triumph Gulf Coast will supplement, not supplant, public and private sector funding. The College proposes to establish new program activities and instructional technologies that currently do not have a dedicated source of funding. Faculty and non-instructional staff additions are distinct from the positions currently staffed in the nursing program. Facility and faculty development and equipment purchases will be made possible only with support from Triumph.

- 5. Please provide a Project/Program Budget. Include all applicable costs and other funding sources available to support the proposal.**



### A. Project/Program Costs

The College's fiscal year is July 1 to June 30 and project budgets were built based on the College's fiscal year (e.g. FY23 is the period of July 1, 2022, to June 30, 2023). For the purposes of this application, budgets are presented in Calendar Years (CY).

Table 1 NWFSC Project Budget

Expenses	CY22	CY23	CY24	CY25	CY26	CY27	CY28	CY29	CY30	CY31	CY32	CY33	Totals
Personnel (Salary and Fringe)	\$58,119	\$1,093,982	\$1,704,858	\$1,920,347	\$1,309,793	\$1,342,459	\$1,375,454	\$1,405,808	\$1,444,941	\$1,476,613	\$1,504,853	\$1,533,658	\$16,170,885
Marketing & Recruitment	\$0	\$125,000	\$125,000	\$125,000	\$75,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$625,000
Equipment	\$64,000	\$1,521,375	\$1,105,000	\$55,000	\$101,560	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$3,546,935
Furniture	\$0	\$900,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$900,000
Professional Development	\$0	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$330,000
Renovation	\$6,070,000	\$8,000,000	\$8,000,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$22,070,000
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$6,192,119</b>	<b>\$11,670,357</b>	<b>\$10,964,858</b>	<b>\$2,130,347</b>	<b>\$1,516,353</b>	<b>\$1,497,459</b>	<b>\$1,530,454</b>	<b>\$1,560,808</b>	<b>\$1,599,941</b>	<b>\$1,631,613</b>	<b>\$1,659,853</b>	<b>\$1,688,658</b>	<b>\$43,642,820</b>

The Nursing Program Expansion Project requires support for personnel, instructional and operational equipment, resources and professional development funds to equip expanded staffing, and building renovation necessary to increase enrollment capacity.

A majority of renovation costs will be paid with PECO funds anticipated to be available July 1, 2022. The College requests the balance of the project from Triumph Gulf Coast, as the Nursing Program Expansion is contingent upon significant changes to classroom, lab, and academic support spaces for nursing students and faculty.

Personnel costs include instructional, program support, advising, recruitment, and software development personnel. Concurrent with the planned expansion will be advancements in simulation activities to include immersion in virtual reality simulations that deliver cutting-edge educational experiences and increase students' access to simulation activities and resources. Increased adoption of new and emerging simulation technologies provides solutions to limitations on clinical placements, a factor which corresponds with limitations on enrollment capacity.

The program requires resources to support marketing and recruitment to inform incoming students about career opportunities in healthcare. The Nursing Program Expansion Project delivers an aggressive response to the critical nursing shortage. The sharp increase in access to nursing program slots must be paired with an equally sharp influx in marketing and recruitment to target a diverse and academically prepared student population to ensure that the selective admissions process remains competitive.

In sum, this project seeks to increase the number of RN- and BSN-prepared nurses available for employment across the Northwest Florida region. It is equally committed to advancing education and training for nurses through hospital and industry partners to develop a hub of healthcare innovation and strategy. The research and development aspects of the project, effectuated through the College's partnership with Vertex Solutions, LLC, aims to apply highly impactful virtual reality technologies to healthcare simulations to improve student outcomes and reduce the burden on local clinical sites while increasing program capacities to positively influence the healthcare infrastructure throughout the eight disproportionately affected counties.



## B. Other Project Funding Sources

Table 2 NWFSC Project Funding Sources

Revenues	CY22	CY23	CY24	CY25	CY26	CY27	CY28	CY29	CY30	CY31	CY32	CY33	Totals
Triumph	\$3,192,119	\$5,770,357	\$5,877,498	\$1,693,547	\$747,903	\$578,009	\$573,254	\$603,608	\$642,741	\$674,413	\$702,653	\$731,458	\$21,787,560
PECO	\$3,000,000	\$5,000,000	\$5,000,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$13,000,000
Nursing Pipeline Funds	\$0	\$900,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$900,000
Tuition Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$87,360	\$436,800	\$768,450	\$919,450	\$957,200	\$957,200	\$957,200	\$957,200	\$957,200	\$957,200	\$7,955,260
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$6,192,119</b>	<b>\$11,670,357</b>	<b>\$10,877,498</b>	<b>\$1,693,547</b>	<b>\$747,903</b>	<b>\$578,009</b>	<b>\$573,254</b>	<b>\$603,608</b>	<b>\$642,741</b>	<b>\$674,413</b>	<b>\$1,659,653</b>	<b>\$1,688,658</b>	<b>\$43,642,820</b>

The College has identified multiple funding sources to ensure the project's success. Primary sources of funding beyond the Triumph funding request include PECO funds to support the majority of the renovation costs necessary to implement the critical nursing expansion. As additional match, Vertex Solutions, LLC, has committed software architecture as a required foundation for further advancements in virtual reality and simulation technologies. The College aims to partner with Vertex Solutions, LLC, as faculty will work with a research and development team to devise strategies to improve educational experiences in practical applications of nursing. The College's nursing program has a strong, established reputation for deploying high-fidelity simulation experiences, and the faculty have demonstrated a longstanding commitment to innovation and development in new instructional strategies and use of technology. Increased implementation of the technologies that will be developed through this partnership will allow the College to deliver unparalleled, exceptional educational experiences that sharpen recruitment and retention efforts.

Upon approval of this grant application and prior to term sheet, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) will be developed between Northwest Florida State College and Vertex Solutions, LLC, in consultation with Triumph Gulf Coast to address intellectual property associated with this project.

Additional funding sources include funds from the State of Florida dedicated to expanding nursing pipelines and Northwest Florida State College tuition revenues.



**C. Provide a detailed budget narrative, including the timing and steps necessary to obtain the funding and any other pertinent budget-related information.**

*Table 3 Schedule of payments from Triumph Gulf Coast Grant by Calendar Year*

Disbursements	CY22	CY23	CY24	CY25	CY26	CY27	CY28	CY29	CY30	CY31	CY32	CY33	Totals
Triumph	\$3,192,119	\$5,770,357	\$5,877,498	\$1,693,547	\$747,903	\$578,009	\$573,254	\$603,608	\$642,741	\$674,413	\$702,653	\$731,458	\$21,787,560

Funds will be requested from Triumph in accordance with Triumph Gulf Coast's policies and procedures. Budget management will be the responsibility of the Nursing Department in consultation with and supported by the College's Office of Finance and with administrative oversight from the Division of Health Sciences, Public Safety, and Education. Documentation of expenses and match will be provided to Triumph Gulf Coast as appropriate and in accordance with stated grant management expectations.

Applicant understands that the Triumph Gulf Coast, Inc. statute requires that the award contract must include provisions requiring a performance report on the contracted activities, must account for the proper use of funds provided under the contract, and must include provisions for recovery of awards in the event the award was based upon fraudulent information or the awardee is not meeting the performance requirements of the award.

Yes       No

Applicant understands that awardees must regularly report to Triumph Gulf Coast, Inc. the expenditure of funds and the status of the project or program on a schedule determined by Triumph Gulf Coast, Inc.

Yes       No

Applicant acknowledges that Applicant and any co-Applicants will make books and records and other financial data available to Triumph Gulf Coast, Inc. as necessary to measure and confirm performance metrics and deliverables.

Yes       No

Applicant acknowledges that Triumph Gulf Coast, Inc. reserves the right to request additional information from Applicant concerning the proposed project or program.

Yes       No

#### ADDENDUM FOR WORKFORCE TRAINING PROPOSALS

##### 1. Program Requirements

A. Will this proposal support programs that prepare students for future occupations and careers at K-20 institutions that have campuses in the disproportionately affected counties? If yes, please provide details on how the proposed programs will prepare students for future occupations and at which K-20 institutions.

Yes       No

Associate degree prepared Registered Nurses (RNs) are eligible to serve as instructors and clinical preceptors for practical nursing and nursing assistant students in LPN and CNA programs. RNs who earn a BSN degree are also eligible to serve as instructors and clinical preceptors for RN students in ASN programs.

B. Will the proposed program (check all that apply):

- Increase students' technology skills and knowledge
- Encourage industry certifications
- Provide rigorous, alternative pathways for students to meet high school graduation Requirements
- Strengthen career readiness initiatives





Fund high-demand programs of emphasis at the bachelor's and master's level designated by the Board of Governors.



Encourage students with interest or aptitude for science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and medical disciplines to pursue postsecondary education at a state university or a Florida College System institution within the disproportionately affected counties (similar to or the same as talent retention programs created by the Chancellor of the State University System and the Commission on Education)

For each item checked above, describe how the proposed program will achieve these goals.

Table 4

Triumph Goals	Project Alignment
Increase students' technology skills and knowledge	The project expands students' access to high-fidelity simulation lab activities and instructional technology that targets performance on student learning outcomes and clinical competency. Program activities include implementation of fully immersive experiences backed by research conducted by the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN).
Encourage industry certifications	Students who complete the ASN program will earn a CAPE-eligible industry certification: National Licensed Registered Nurse (NCLEX-RN) – NCSBN001.
Provide rigorous, alternative pathways for students to meet high school graduation requirements	The project will include the establishment of an Early College pathway for dual enrollment and charter school students to complete all General Education requirements needed for both the ASN and BSN programs concurrently with high school graduation so that students may complete the ASN and BSN programs within three years following high school graduation. Dual enrollment students earning 46 credits of General Education and nursing prerequisite courses will result in a savings of up to \$5,000 in program costs for each dual enrollment student.
Strengthen career readiness initiatives	Nursing students participate in simulation lab and clinical experiences designed to increase clinical competencies and strengthen self-confidence upon entry into the healthcare industry. The project resources support and enhance students' access to these resources and learning opportunities with project activities targeting nursing career readiness.
Fund high-demand programs of emphasis at the bachelor's and master's level designated by Board of Governors	Project activities include expansion of the Registered Nursing to Bachelor of Science in Nursing (RN-BSN) program (CIP 51.3801), which is a high-demand program that is identified by the Board of Governors as a Program of Strategic Emphasis (PSE).
Encourage students with interests or aptitude for STEM and medical disciplines to pursue postsecondary education at a state university or a Florida College System institution within the disproportionately affected counties (similar to or the same as talent retention programs)	Project activities include recruitment of dual enrollment and traditional students to nursing and related healthcare academic programs at Northwest Florida State College across sites in two disproportionately affected counties, Okaloosa and Walton.

Project activities respond fully to an array of Triumph Goals but specifically and innovatively target (1) increasing

students' technology skills and knowledge, (2) strengthening career readiness, (3) encouraging STEM-inclined students to remain within the disproportionately affected counties.

- (1) The project increases students' access to advanced instructional technologies and increases comfort levels and competency with health science technologies. The College will explore options to enhance program offerings with computer science industry certifications to allow students to strengthen and earn credentials with this in-demand skillset as a supplement to the nursing education received.
- (2) Studies have shown that high-fidelity simulation technology lessens students' time to competency, increases skills-based confidence, and improves patient care outcomes. The technology developed and deployed as a result of this project will put more technology in the hands of nurses-in-training and will empower them to accelerate their learning, skills, and ultimately, time-to-degree by demonstrating mastery of competencies more quickly than peers who participate in traditional nursing programs.
- (3) STEM education is a strong focus of this project, as it merges science with technology, and engineering. The partnership between NWFSC's nursing faculty and students and Vertex Solutions, LLC, will result in irresistible learning experiences designed to engage and excite participants. The College anticipates technology will also deepen partnerships with local hospital facilities through the facility renovation, which will create dedicated skills labs with collaborative spaces suitable for in-services, community engagement, and professional development for members of the healthcare community. Across the College's locations, NWFSC aims to bridge the gap between working healthcare providers and prospective nursing majors. The College has established "Futures Forward" summer programs to engage students in 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade early and increase awareness of nursing education and careers in healthcare with cutting-edge education available locally and jobs available immediately upon graduation. The College is in the process of growing partnerships with local school districts and healthcare facilities to entice and attract students to these high-wage, high-demand career opportunities while offering affordable, accessible, top-quality education.

**C. Will this proposal provide participants in the disproportionately affected counties with transferable, sustainable workforce skills but not confined to a single employer? If yes, please provide details.**

Yes       No

All of the training programs identified in this proposal address industry needs. None of the programs are designed based on a single employer. All identified programs are focused on developing workforce readiness competencies in addition to the professional skills identified in the State of Florida's curriculum frameworks.

**D. Identify the disproportionately affected counties where the proposed programs will operate or provide participants with workforce skills.**

The proposed program will operate from the Niceville campus in Okaloosa County; however, program activities will occur throughout Okaloosa and Walton counties, as recruitment, dual enrollment coursework, general education coursework, and pre-nursing summer programming will occur at seven sites across the College's two-county service area. Students from all of the eight disproportionately affected counties will be eligible to apply for admission to the selective admission program.

In the current academic year, 96% of students enrolled in the Associate of Science in Nursing program reside in one of the eight disproportionately affected counties. Currently, 86% of students enrolled in the Bachelor of Science in Nursing program reside in one of the eight disproportionately affected counties.



Table 4 NWFSC Nursing Students (AY 22) by County of Residence

	ASN #	ASN %	BSN #	BSN %
Okaloosa	105	66%	57	63%
Walton	29	18%	10	11%
Other	25	16%	24	26%
<b>Total</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>100%</b>

	# ASN students	% ASN students	# BSN students	% BSN students
Triumph	152	96%	78	86%
Non-Triumph	7	4%	13	14%
<b>Total</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>100%</b>

**E. Provide a detailed description of, and quantitative evidence demonstrating how the proposed project will promote:**

- **Economic recovery,**
- **Economic Diversification,**
- **Enhancement of the disproportionately affected counties,**
- **Enhancement of a Targeted Industry.**

The disproportionately affected counties are currently facing a critical nursing shortage expected to worsen over the next ten years as a majority of the 660,000 baby-boomer nurses across the nation are projected to retire. Research suggests a positive relationship between sound healthcare infrastructure and a path toward economic recovery.<sup>12</sup>

Expanded and enhanced nursing education opportunities in Okaloosa and Walton counties will result in a stronger, larger population of highly trained nurses available for employment at local hospitals and other healthcare facilities. Technological enhancements and an increase of high-fidelity simulation experiences will deliver students with exceptional, irresistible learning environments that produce nurses who are capable, competent, and confident on their first day on the job, improving patient outcomes and supporting nurse retention long-term.

By the end of the grant, the College projects to produce 640 RN-prepared ASN graduates ready for placement in registered nursing jobs. Additionally, the College projects to graduate 260 bachelor's prepared nurses who will be eligible for career advancement in their field.

**2. Additional Information**

**A. Is this an expansion of an existing training program? If yes, describe how the proposed program will enhance or improve the existing program and how the proposed program will supplement but not supplant existing funding sources.**

Yes       No

<sup>12</sup> Adams, Linda Thompson. "Nursing: An Under Tapped Asset for Recovery in Financially Troubling Times." *J. National Black Nurses Association* 21.2 (Dec. 2010): 34-38.

Equipping a facility to support a significant program expansion over the next 12 years is the primary request. It is important to note that the training delivered through the provision of funds for this expansion will not support instruction as usual. With support delivered through this grant, the College seeks to advance nursing program activities with immersive virtual reality (VR) simulations that prompt the suspension of disbelief and create such vivid realism during simulation that deep learning occurs before students begin to interact with live patients at any given level of the program. This learning builds confidence and competence.

Specifically, this project undertakes the development of transformational training described as follows:

- **Remote collaboration:** Allows doctors and other specialists to log in remotely to support training exercise. This provides student nurses the opportunity to communicate within a professional environment. The doctors and specialists log into an exercise from their office to support a 30-minute scenario instead of driving to a simulation center, which will increase their willingness to participate.
- **Simulated Scenarios:** Vertex can also create more advanced scenarios of procedures that practicing nurses may not often encounter. NWFSC can create online collaborative learning simulations that allow practicing nurses to log in from their homes at scheduled times to participate in a VR simulation. The LMS can be used to assign credit or certifications.
- **STEM Education for K-12 Students**
  - 3D models and learning scenarios can be repackaged for use in STEM education to introduce middle school and high school students to nursing.
  - VR provides a level of immersion that can provide a moment of inspiration that will cause a student to begin exploring a career field. This nursing program could be combined with other VR learning content to create a comprehensive STEM program to motivate tomorrow's workforce.

**B. Indicate how the training will be delivered (e.g. classroom-based, computer based, other). If in-person, identify the location(s) (e.g. city, campus, etc.) where the training will be available. If computer-based, identify the targeted location(s) (e.g., city, county) where the training will be available).**

The ASN curriculum is delivered in face-to-face instructional settings, including classrooms, skills laboratories, and clinical facilities where students care for real patients under the supervision of program faculty and/or RN preceptors. The classroom and laboratory instruction will take place on the Niceville campus of NWFSC, but the clinical experiences occur in healthcare facilities throughout Okaloosa and Walton counties, including HCA Florida Fort Walton-Destin Hospital, HCA Florida Twin Cities Hospital, North Okaloosa Medical Center, Ascension Sacred Heart Emerald Coast, Florida Department of Health-Walton County, and many others.

Nursing program faculty use a wide range of instructional tools and strategies in all phases of the program. The College-adopted online learning management system (LMS) and lecture-capturing software supplement in-class instruction by allowing faculty to “flip” the classroom. Students read and review content posted in the LMS prior to coming to class, where faculty provide interactive, engaging activities designed to apply the knowledge acquired, thus deepening the understanding and relevance of the coursework. The fluidity of moving from content-rich lectures to concept-focused activities helps students discover contextual meaning and build increasingly complex thinking required by the profession. These activities include collaborative groups working through case studies, escape room scenarios, and simulated patient scenarios using high-tech mannequins that respond to nursing interventions. These simulators are the backbone of the Nursing Simulation Center, where students spend hours caring for a variety of simulated patients in a safe environment where they can make mistakes without the risk of hurting real patients. The immediate



feedback received after making an error, along with the follow-up instruction and practice, results in deep learning for students that persists throughout their careers. The time spent in the Simulation Center is so focused and rich in experience that each hour spent in the Center is equal to two hours of clinical time in live healthcare facilities. There is no "down time" for students when patients are sleeping or while they are waiting for their instructor to finish with another student before giving medications or providing other treatments. Instructors, who are primarily responsible to ensure patient safety in the clinical settings at all times, must prevent students from making errors in that setting. While "near misses" provide good teaching moments, they are not the powerful learning experiences that often occur during simulation.

The RN to BSN program is 100% online and accessible to students who live and work in Florida, across the nation, and throughout the world. A majority of the NWFSC RN to BSN students graduated from the NWFSC ASN program. The online design of the program benefits the students because greater than 95% of them are working RNs who fit coursework around long, challenging hours on jobs that provide nursing care 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Unique to this program will be a partnership with Vertex Solutions, LLC, to include product development aligned with nursing instruction best practices that are highly responsive to student needs and learning objectives.

Vertex Solutions has been in the enterprise learning development business for over 20 years. They have experience working with institutions, instructors, and subject matter experts to define performance competencies, the metrics and measures that define mastery of the competencies, and the learning interventions that will produce nursing graduates who demonstrate mastery.

Vertex Solutions will work with NWFSC nursing professors and staff to develop highly interactive courseware and simulations that best complement the college curriculum and develop the desired competencies that will accelerate learning, increase retention, and advance NWFSC nursing students to the highest levels of healthcare proficiency. The learning interventions will deliver not only clinical skills, but also focus on effective communication in high stress environments, patient empathy, teamwork and collaboration, and other competencies necessary to effectively perform under the most fast-paced medical emergency conditions.

Vertex Solutions will use a continuum of learning approach to developing effective nursing content. Valuable knowledge transfer can be obtained from simple investigation of an animated 3D model of a heart that shows cutaway views, x-ray views of circulation and ventricle function, catheter views, blood flow, cycle of function, faults that require diagnoses and so on. This same 3D heart model art asset can be used in an emergency room simulation with an underlying physiological simulation and medical equipment simulations that require a team of nurses working with doctors to correctly diagnose and treat a patient. Similarly, 3D art assets for VR and simulation can be reused in desktop and tablet delivered courseware to increase the level of interactivity of eLearning modules and improve sustainability of the entire learning enterprise. As updated medical standards, new procedures and other considerations impact course content, updates to the VR 3D models and simulation can flow down to changes in the courseware, reducing time and cost of updating the curriculum.

The research and development Vertex is currently doing in virtual reality (VR) and mixed reality (MR) for the Air Force and Navy will be leveraged into the NWFSC nursing program to increase the fidelity along the continuum of learning. Vertex defines fidelity of learning as that which most closely replicates the job performance environment producing the most direct knowledge transfer to job tasks. VR models and underlying simulation will be used to develop detailed immersive learning methodologies that are based on familiarization, exploration, patient communication, and basic procedures. VR will allow students to interact with virtual objects with limited haptic feedback. Through its over eight years of research into VR and MR

technologies, Vertex has developed methods to incorporate sensors with the VR hardware that allows users to interact with virtual 3D objects either bare handed or, even more precisely, using a special glove. This allows students to interact with medical equipment and perform medical procedures with only what they see in the VR head mounted display (HMD) using no physical objects.

MR will be used for higher fidelity training that requires students to use touch as part of the assessment or procedure. MR incorporates physical objects that are overlayed with VR art assets in the HMD to improve realism and immersion. An example of an MR application could be overlaying an animated VR patient on a manikin torso. The student nurse will be able to interact tactilely with the torso for the haptic queues, while observing facial expressions, skin tone, and asking questions of the patient in VR. This MR mixture of physical devices combined with VR visuals increases student immersion and creates a very powerful training simulation approach at a much lower cost than representing everything physically. It also allows physical devices to be used in a far larger set of applications and provides a much richer data set to support student performance analytics.

#### Architecture: Data Collection, LMS interface, Student Performance Assessment

Vertex solutions will integrate all NWFSC learning applications developed for the nursing program under this effort into its training system digital backbone. Vertex has been working since June of 2020 on an open architecture learning framework that supports implementation of learning products with a variety of backend services, including Learning Management Systems, automated student performance analysis tools, scenario development and other instructor tools. The architecture uses well-defined and standardized Application Programming Interfaces (APIs) to integrate learning content developed in-house or commercially available to be integrated with the backend services.

The user-facing portion of the architecture provides an intuitive graphical student login portal that interfaces with the LMS, supporting a single student sign on that launches the learning content and records student performance data. From any location, students will be able to log into the LMS through the portal to launch learning content including simulations. When entering a simulation exercise, the architecture will automatically collect granular simulation data for each student in the nursing simulation and store the data contextually using Experience API (xAPI) protocols into a Learning Record Store (LRS). An additional API then converts the LRS data into a format that can be stored in the LMS and correlated with all other student records. Remote students can also use the same LMS login approach allowing their remote simulation collaboration to be scored and credited in the LMS.

Remote instructor tools developed as part of the architecture allow instructors to monitor students and to enter the VR environment as an avatar to provide just-in-time feedback, correction, and coaching. This same capability enables instructors, volunteer doctors, and other outside role-players to monitor and participate in simulations from their offices, allowing them to carve out only a few minutes of their schedules, greatly increasing those able to participate in a significant contribution to nursing education.



**C. Identify the number of anticipated enrolled students and completers.**

Programs will matriculate students multiple times per year, depending on local need.

*Table 5 Number of Anticipated Admissions in ASN Program by Calendar Year*

ASN Enrollment	CY24	CY25	CY26	CY27	CY28	CY29	CY30	CY31	CY32	CY33	Total
Anticipated Admissions without Expansion	96	96	96	96	96	96	96	96	96	96	960
Anticipated Net New Admissions with Expansion	48	84	84	84	84	84	84	84	84	84	804
<b>Anticipated Total Admissions with Expansion</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>1,764</b>
Anticipated Net New Admissions from Triumph Counties (ASN)	46	80	80	80	80	80	80	80	80	80	766

*Table 6 Number of Anticipated Admissions in BSN Program and Total Net New ASN and BSN Admissions by Calendar Year*

BSN Enrollment	CY24	CY25	CY26	CY27	CY28	CY29	CY30	CY31	CY32	CY33	Total
Anticipated Admissions without Expansion	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	500
Anticipated Net New Admissions with Expansion	0	0	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	400
Anticipated Total Admissions with Expansion	50	50	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	900
<b>Total Anticipated Net New Admissions – ASN and BSN</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>1,204</b>

*Table 7 Number of Anticipated Net New Industry Recognized Certifications by Year (ASN Completers)*

	CY24	CY25	CY26	CY27	CY28	CY29	CY30	CY31	CY32	CY33	Total
Net New NCLEX-RN	0	0	80	80	80	80	80	80	80	80	640

*Table 8 Number of Anticipated Net New BSN Completers and Total Number of Net New ASN and BSN Completers by Year*

	CY24	CY25	CY26	CY27	CY28	CY29	CY30	CY31	CY32	CY33	Total
Anticipated Net New BSN Completers	0	0	0	20	40	40	40	40	40	40	260



At present, NWFSC's ASN and BSN programs predominantly serve students residing in the eight disproportionately affected counties (see Table 4 for specific breakdown by county of residence). The nursing expansion will result in net new openings in the nursing program, and students residing in the eight disproportionately affected counties will be given priority admission for these seats.

**D. Indicate the length of program (e.g. quarters, semesters, weeks, months, etc.) including anticipated beginning and ending dates.**

The program will occur over a 12-year period with project activities beginning July 1, 2022, with the relocation of health sciences programs and renovation of Bldg. 420 to allow for increased capacity for nursing students and the development and implementation of new technologies targeting enhanced educational experiences and improved learning outcomes. The program activities are expected to end December 31, 2033, with the program continuing and sustained through the College beyond the life of the grant.

**E. Describe the plan to support the sustainability of the proposed program.**

The College supports academic program operations through a variety of funding sources to include tuition, course fees to offset materials costs, recurring endowment funds allocated to health sciences program enhancements, and state appropriations. The NCLEX-RN exam that leads to licensure and an industry certification is eligible for CAPE funding; therefore, completions will be reported and funds applied to continued enhancements and support for program needs. Program requirements for the ASN and BSN degrees include general education courses, which offset the cost of technical core and elective courses that operate a higher cost than lecture courses. Ultimately, the College's mission prioritizes investments in academic programs that directly respond to industry and regional needs. Long-term demand is anticipated for continued support for healthcare education leading toward employment in the field of nursing. The College is fully committed to continuing support for these vital programs that strengthen the healthcare infrastructure for the whole of our communities and region.

**F. Identify any certifications, degrees, etc. that will result from the completion of the program.**

Students will earn an Associate of Science in Nursing (ASN), Registered Nurse licensure upon successful completion of the NCLEX-RN exam, and/or the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN). The College is exploring opportunities to work with local school districts to possibly incentivize high school students' participation in practical nursing programs that include Patient Care Technician and Electrocardiograph Technician certifications by creating seamless articulation pathways for continued education in the field of nursing through dedicated seats in the selective admissions programs and priority admission points for partnering secondary programs. Continued technology enhancements made possible through this program additionally provide opportunity for embedded and supplemental industry certifications in technology fields that enhance students' preparedness to work in virtual patient care. The College will explore program tracks and summer programming that strengthen students' technology skills and lead toward industry certifications with a technology focus that complements virtual patient care skills.

**G. Does this project have a local match amount? If yes, please describe the entity providing the match and the amount.**

The College is providing a majority of the renovation costs with \$13,000,000 of PECO funds. The College requests the balance of these renovation costs from Triumph Gulf Coast to complete renovations necessary for the expansion of the nursing program at the Niceville Campus location. The College also received \$790,000 from the State of Florida for nursing program excellence, which will be used as match for this project. The College will also contribute a match of \$110,000 toward furniture in support of the project.

Vertex Solutions, LLC, is partnering with NWFSC to develop and deliver advanced technologies for nursing education. To this project, Vertex Solutions is contributing an R&D investment reported to the IRS for development of the learning system architecture since June of 2020 valued at \$2,590,557, which is excluded from the budget.

Total match for this project is \$21,855,260.

Yes       No



H. Provide any additional information or attachments to be considered for this proposal.

Additional information provided upon request.

I, the undersigned, do hereby certify that I have express authority to sign this proposal on my behalf or on behalf of the above-described entity, organization, or government entity:

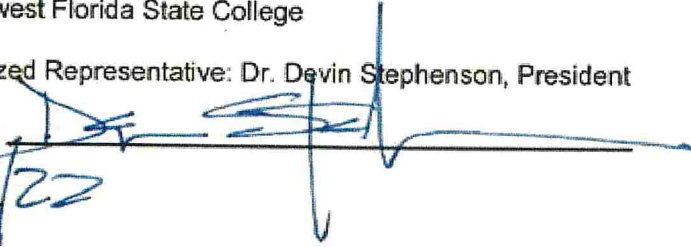
Name of Applicant: Northwest Florida State College

Name and Title of Authorized Representative: Dr. Devin Stephenson, President

Representative Signature:

Signature Date:

5/3/22



## SUPPLEMENTAL REQUEST TO TRIUMPH GULF COAST, INC. GRANT

Following is a request for an addendum to NWFSC’s Nursing Program application to provide scholarships for nursing students who enroll in the program during the term of the program.

### APPLICANT INFORMATION

**Name of Individual/Entity/Organization:** Northwest Florida State College

**Addendum Title:** Scholarship Support for Nursing Students

**Amount of Triumph Funds Requested for Scholarships:** \$7,381,440

**Total Amount of Triumph Funds Requested:** \$37,124,260

**Total Estimated Project Cost with Supplemental Request:** \$51,024,260

### The Request

Many students require additional financial support to pay tuition and fees associated with academic program costs. Only 24 percent of all NWFSC students qualify for Federal Pell Grants despite a much larger average qualifying as having financial need. ASN students face a larger financial hurdle, as most are unable to work while earning their credentials due to course load and clinicals. Without existing financial support, a substantial gap in funding is projected, which would force many individuals to seek student loans or forgo their nursing education. In order to help students avoid the perils of student loan debt and eliminate financial barriers, NWFSC is requesting scholarship support for NWFSC nursing students. The scholarship support will be structured as “last dollar” scholarship funds for tuition, fees, and instructional materials not otherwise covered by federal, state, or intuitional aid.

Following are projected ASN scholarship needs based on tuition and fees:

### *Net-New ASN Scholarship Needs*

ASN	CY2024	CY2025	CY2026	CY2027	CY2028	CY2029	CY2030	CY2031	CY2032	CY2033	Total
Tuition Costs by Year	\$87,360	\$436,800	\$655,200	\$655,200	\$655,200	\$655,200	\$655,200	\$655,200	\$655,200	\$655,200	\$5,765,760
Fee Costs by Year	\$24,480	\$122,400	\$183,600	\$183,600	\$183,600	\$183,600	\$183,600	\$183,600	\$183,600	\$183,600	\$1,615,680
<b>Total Scholarships for Net-New ASN Students</b>	<b>\$111,840</b>	<b>\$559,200</b>	<b>\$838,800</b>	<b>\$838,800</b>	<b>\$838,800</b>	<b>\$838,800</b>	<b>\$838,800</b>	<b>\$838,800</b>	<b>\$838,800</b>	<b>\$838,800</b>	<b>\$7,381,440</b>

***Total Projected Student Scholarship Needs (Net-New): \$7,381,440***



**Project Budget**

Expenses	CY22	CY23	CY24	CY25	CY26	CY27	CY28	CY29	CY30	CY31	CY32	CY33	Totals
Personnel (Salary and Fringe)	\$ 58,119	\$1,093,982	\$1,704,858	\$1,920,347	\$1,309,793	\$1,342,459	\$1,375,454	\$1,405,808	\$1,444,941	\$1,476,613	\$1,504,853	\$1,533,658	\$16,170,885
Marketing & Recruitment	\$ -	\$ 125,000	\$125,000	\$125,000	\$ 75,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 625,000
Equipment	\$ 64,000	\$1,521,375	\$1,105,000	\$ 55,000	\$101,560	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$ 100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$3,546,935
Furniture	\$ -	\$ 900,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 900,000
Professional Development	\$ -	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 330,000
Renovation	\$6,070,000	\$8,000,000	\$8,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$22,070,000
ASN Scholarships	\$ -	\$ -	\$111,840	\$559,200	\$838,800	\$838,800	\$838,800	\$838,800	\$838,800	\$ 838,800	\$838,800	\$838,800	\$7,381,440
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$6,192,119</b>	<b>\$11,670,357</b>	<b>\$11,076,698</b>	<b>\$2,689,547</b>	<b>\$2,355,153</b>	<b>\$2,336,259</b>	<b>\$2,369,254</b>	<b>\$2,399,608</b>	<b>\$2,438,741</b>	<b>\$2,470,413</b>	<b>\$2,498,653</b>	<b>\$2,527,458</b>	<b>\$51,024,260</b>
<b>Revenues</b>	<b>CY22</b>	<b>CY23</b>	<b>CY24</b>	<b>CY25</b>	<b>CY26</b>	<b>CY27</b>	<b>CY28</b>	<b>CY29</b>	<b>CY30</b>	<b>CY31</b>	<b>CY32</b>	<b>CY33</b>	<b>Totals</b>
Triumph	\$3,192,119	\$5,770,357	\$6,076,698	\$2,689,547	\$2,355,153	\$2,336,259	\$2,369,254	\$2,399,608	\$2,438,741	\$2,470,413	\$2,498,653	\$2,527,458	\$37,124,260
PECO	\$3,000,000	\$5,000,000	\$5,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$13,000,000
NWFSC Furniture Investment	\$ -	\$ 900,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 900,000
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$6,192,119</b>	<b>\$11,670,357</b>	<b>\$11,076,698</b>	<b>\$2,689,547</b>	<b>\$2,355,153</b>	<b>\$2,336,259</b>	<b>\$2,369,254</b>	<b>\$2,399,608</b>	<b>\$2,438,741</b>	<b>\$2,470,413</b>	<b>\$2,498,653</b>	<b>\$2,527,458</b>	<b>\$51,024,260</b>

### **Conclusion**

Creating a partnership with Triumph Gulf Coast to provide both ASN and BSN student scholarships for qualifying participants will enable students to pursue careers in nursing without the extra burden of having to worry about funding their education and taking on student loan debt. This will ensure that students who are most economically disadvantaged will be afforded an equal opportunity to earn an above-average family sustainable wage upon completion of the program.



## Appendix A

Clinical Sites currently used by the Nursing programs (ASN and BSN)

96th Medical Group	Eglin AFB, FL
Advanced Behavioral Health Analysis (ABHA)	Fort Walton Beach, FL
Arc of the Emerald Coast	Fort Walton Beach, FL
Ascension Sacred Heart - Emerald Coast	Miramar Beach, FL
Brookdale Senior Living	Fort Walton Beach, FL
CALM (Crisis Assistance for Littles and Moms)	Niceville, FL
Catholic Charities of NWFL	Fort Walton Beach, FL
Covenant Hospice	Fort Walton Beach, FL
Crestview Area Shelter for Homeless	Crestview, FL
Crossroads Medical Center	Valparaiso, FL
Emerald Coast Autism Center	Niceville, FL
Emerald Coast Hospice	Miramar Beach, FL
Florida Department of Health - Okaloosa County	Fort Walton Beach, FL
Florida Department of Health - Walton County	DeFuniak Spring, FL
Grace Rides	DeFuniak Spring, FL
HCA Florida Fort Walton Beach-Destin	Fort Walton Beach, FL
HCA Florida Twin Cities	Niceville, FL
Healing Hoof Steps	Crestview, FL
Healing Paws for Warriors	Fort Walton Beach, FL
Healing Paws for Warriors	Navarre, FL
Homelessness and Housing Alliance	Fort Walton Beach, FL
Homelessness and Housing Alliance	DeFuniak Spring, FL
Homelessness and Housing Alliance	Mary Esther, FL
Hope Medical Clinic	Destin, FL
Horse Healing INC.	Milton, FL
Mary Lou O'Connor Child Development and Education Center	Niceville, FL
North Okaloosa Medical Center	Crestview, FL
Opportunity Place, Inc	Fort Walton Beach, FL
Pregnancy Support Center	DeFuniak Spring, FL
The Manor at Bluewater Bay	Niceville, FL

Appendix B  
Financial Statements



# BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

## NORTHWEST FLORIDA STATE COLLEGE A Component Unit of the State of Florida Statement of Net Position

June 30, 2021

	College	Component Unit
<b>ASSETS</b>		
Current Assets:		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 4,286,750	\$ 304,350
Restricted Cash and Cash Equivalents	2,145,026	-
Restricted Investments	-	24,319,447
Accounts Receivable, Net	2,144,655	-
Due from Other Governmental Agencies	3,771,220	-
Restricted Pledge Receivable	-	211,862
Due from Component Unit	17,656	-
Inventories	20,301	-
Prepaid Expenses	285,407	28,585
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>12,671,015</b>	<b>24,864,244</b>
Noncurrent Assets:		
Restricted Cash and Cash Equivalents	1,903,933	-
Restricted Investments	-	36,888,726
Pledge Receivable	-	246,036
Depreciable Capital Assets, Net	127,642,863	3,208,634
Nondepreciable Capital Assets	6,430,277	254,001
<b>Total Noncurrent Assets</b>	<b>135,977,073</b>	<b>40,597,397</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>148,648,088</b>	<b>65,461,641</b>
<b>DEFERRED OUTFLOWS OF RESOURCES</b>		
Other Postemployment Benefits	105,167	-
Pensions	6,120,203	-
<b>TOTAL DEFERRED OUTFLOWS OF RESOURCES</b>	<b>6,225,370</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
Current Liabilities:		
Accounts Payable	66,019	3,474
Salary and Payroll Taxes Payable	541,588	-
Due to College	-	17,656
Unearned Revenue	31,998	-
Deposits Held for Others	184,211	-
Long-Term Liabilities - Current Portion:		
Bonds Payable	21,000	-
Note Payable	1,244,470	-
Installment Purchase Payable	30,000	-
Capital Leases Payable	37,952	-
Special Termination Benefits Payable	131,678	-
Compensated Absences Payable	62,203	-
Other Postemployment Benefits Payable	10,598	-
Net Pension Liability	54,424	-
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>2,416,141</b>	<b>21,130</b>

	<u>College</u>	<u>Component Unit</u>
<b>LIABILITIES (Continued)</b>		
Noncurrent Liabilities:		
Bonds Payable	69,000	-
Note Payable	19,406,450	-
Installment Purchase Payable	123,427	-
Capital Leases Payable	4,141,745	-
Special Termination Benefits Payable	41,998	-
Compensated Absences Payable	3,047,957	-
Other Postemployment Benefits Payable	524,108	-
Net Pension Liability	18,700,460	-
<b>Total Noncurrent Liabilities</b>	<u>46,055,145</u>	<u>-</u>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<u>48,471,286</u>	<u>21,130</u>
<b>DEFERRED INFLOWS OF RESOURCES</b>		
Other Postemployment Benefits	19,588	-
Pensions	1,207,564	-
<b>TOTAL DEFERRED INFLOWS OF RESOURCES</b>	<u>1,227,152</u>	<u>-</u>
<b>NET POSITION</b>		
Net Investment in Capital Assets	108,999,096	3,462,635
Restricted:		
Nonexpendable:		
Endowment	-	37,721,413
Expendable:		
Grants and Loans	5,215,377	-
Scholarships	65,450	-
Capital Projects	3,303,024	-
Debt Service	16,403	-
Other	-	25,097,688
Unrestricted	<u>(12,424,330)</u>	<u>(841,225)</u>
<b>TOTAL NET POSITION</b>	<u>\$ 105,175,020</u>	<u>\$ 65,440,511</u>

The accompanying notes to financial statements are an integral part of this statement.



## Appendix C – Vertex Solutions, LLC Virtual Reality and Mixed Reality Timelines

Milestones and Schedule:

Curriculum Analysis.

- Initial results in first 3 months and ongoing over next 30 months as new content is developed and implemented
- Media Analysis:
  - Identify the training interventions that will be used to address the learning objectives. This will include a search of existing commercial-off-the-shelf physiological art assets and training aids that can be immediately implanted into the curriculum to jump start the immersive elements of the training program.
  - This will be an ongoing task as new training needs and refinements are discovered to better serve the nursing students
- Training Content Hardware Analysis
  - Identify the computer hardware, HMDs, physical mannequins, and other hardware required to deliver the content.
- Analysis Report
  - This report will be updated regularly as new training approaches are identified. The report will describe the learning objectives addressed, the metrics and measurement approach that will assess successful accomplishment of the objectives, and the learning methodology used to deliver the learning.

Design Document – This is a living document that is updated for each new proposed set of learning interventions and content development activities.

- Detailed design and description of each training intervention and content development activity that will be developed under the program: Storyboards, software and hardware designs
- Training methodology used
- Student contact time
- Opportunity to impact learners beyond NWFSC student population
- Development level of effort and budget for each learning intervention.
- Identify opportunities for Transformational Nursing Training

Learning Intervention Development

- Art asset development
- Simulation software development

From development to implementation, the process to build and launch new technologies to support nursing instructional experiences will be approximately 18 months, which aligns with necessary facility renovations.

Appendix D  
Letters of Support





May 2, 2022

Dr. Devin Stephenson  
President, Northwest Florida State College  
100 College Blvd  
Niceville, FL 32578

Dear Dr. Stephenson:

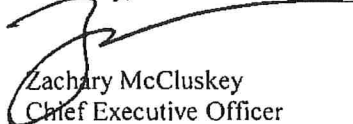
As the Chief Executive Officer of HCA Florida Fort Walton-Destin Hospital, I am writing in strong support of Northwest Florida State College's application to the Triumph Gulf Coast, Inc. Trust Fund for funding to expand the Associate and Bachelor's in Nursing degree programs. The College is pursuing funding for this project to respond to the critical nursing shortage in our communities.

Project priorities include equipment purchases and facility renovations to support program capacity increases. The vision for this project is to develop and deploy innovative teaching technologies and strategies to improve learner outcomes while accelerating the learning process. To date, NWFSC's Associate in Science in Nursing (ASN) Program has a long-term record of success in simulation-enhanced instruction that allows the students to strengthen patient care skills in controlled environments. All students are exposed to the right type and frequency of simulated scenarios and are allowed to practice acquired skills in a safe environment prior to real-world application. By increasing the availability of simulation technology and increasing the range of research-backed simulations used during instruction, the program anticipates potential curriculum innovations that will enhance deep experiential learning and prepare graduates to seamlessly integrate into the role of the professional nurse in our facility to a greater degree than ever before. The expanded access to simulations as supplements to required clinical experiences will support program expansion and increase the number of graduates without overwhelming our facility with students completing clinical program requirements. Over 75% of the College's ASN graduates continue their education by enrolling in the NWFSC RN to BSN program. Therefore, as the capacity of the ASN program expands, the BSN program will also grow and provide us with experienced nurses who have a deeper understanding of the complex needs of today's healthcare consumer.

As the largest healthcare employer in our area, HCA Florida Fort Walton-Destin Hospital will directly benefit from the increased outputs of well-trained and qualified nurses resulting from the implementation of this critical project. Accordingly, new nurses trained at NWFSC can help fill jobs openings currently available at HCA Florida Fort Walton-Destin Hospital.

Once again, we at HCA Florida Fort Walton-Destin Hospital stand in strong support of the College's application to the Triumph Gulf Coast, Inc. Trust Fund. We appreciate your consideration of their proposal and this letter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Zachary McCluskey".

Zachary McCluskey  
Chief Executive Officer



# Ascension Sacred Heart

April 15, 2022

Dr. Devin Stephenson, President  
Northwest Florida State College  
100 College Blvd.  
Niceville, FL 32578

Dear President Stephenson:

As the Vice President of Nursing of Ascension Sacred Heart Emerald Coast, I am writing in strong support of Northwest Florida State College's application to Triumph Gulf Coast for funding to expand the Associate and Bachelor's in Nursing degree programs. The College is pursuing funding for this project to respond to the critical nursing shortage in our communities.

Project priorities include equipment purchases and facility renovations to support program capacity increases. The vision for this project is to develop and deploy innovative teaching technologies and strategies to improve learner outcomes while accelerating the learning process. To date, NWFSC's Associate in Science in Nursing (ASN) Program has a long-term record of success in simulation-enhanced instruction that allows the students to strengthen patient care skills in controlled environments. All students are exposed to the right type and frequency of simulated scenarios and are allowed to practice acquired skills in a safe environment prior to real-world application. By increasing the availability of simulation technology and increasing the range of research-backed simulations used during instruction, the program anticipates potential curriculum innovations that will enhance deep experiential learning and prepare graduates to seamlessly integrate into the role of the professional nurse in our facility to a greater degree than ever before. The expanded access to simulations as supplements to required clinical experiences will support program expansion and increase the number of graduates without overwhelming our facility with students completing clinical program requirements. Over 75% of the College's ASN graduates continue their education by enrolling in the NWFSC RN to BSN program. Therefore, as the capacity of the ASN program expands, the BSN program will also grow and provide us

Ascension Sacred Heart  
615 N Bonita Ave  
Panama City, FL 32401



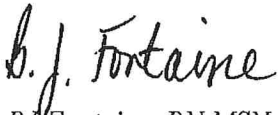
with experienced nurses who have a deeper understanding of the complex needs of today's healthcare consumer.

Ascension Sacred Heart Emerald Coast (ASHEC) is an 86 bed community hospital that serves the Walton-Okaloosa region. We offer acute inpatient, ICU, Cardiac Intervention, Labor & Delivery and Level II NICU services to our area. We employ around 900 associates with ~300 nurses and nursing support being a part of that group. ASHEC is currently a CMS 4-star hospital. Leapfrog A and PRC Top Performer Awards for patient experience. We have had a long standing relationship with NWFSC that fosters the clinical experience for nursing and other clinical students in our facility.

Ascension Sacred Heart Emerald Coast will directly benefit from the increased outputs of well-trained and qualified nurses resulting from the implementation of this critical project. Accordingly, new nurses trained at NWFSC can help fill jobs openings currently available at Ascension Sacred Heart Emerald Coast.

Once again, we at Ascension Sacred Heart Emerald Coast stand in strong support of the College's application to Triumph Gulf Coast. We appreciate your consideration of their proposal and this letter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "B.J. Fontaine".

*BJ Fontaine, RN MSN, IHI IA*  
VP of Nursing

□ NORTH OKALOOSA  
□□ MEDICAL CENTER  
□□□

April 19, 2022

Dr. Devin Stephenson  
President, Northwest Florida State College  
100 College Blvd  
Niceville, FL 32578

Dear Dr. Stephenson:

As the Chief Nursing Officer of North Okaloosa Medical Center, I am writing in strong support of Northwest Florida State College's application to the Triumph Gulf Coast, Inc. Trust Fund for funding to expand the Associate and Bachelor's in Nursing degree programs. The College is pursuing funding for this project to respond to the critical nursing shortage in our communities.

Project priorities include equipment purchases and facility renovations to support program capacity increases. The vision for this project is to develop and deploy innovative teaching technologies and strategies to improve learner outcomes while accelerating the learning process. To date, NWFSC's Associate in Science in Nursing (ASN) Program has a long-term record of success in simulation-enhanced instruction that allows the students to strengthen patient care skills in controlled environments. All students are exposed to the right type and frequency of simulated scenarios and are allowed to practice acquired skills in a safe environment prior to real-world application. By increasing the availability of simulation technology and increasing the range of research-backed simulations used during instruction, the program anticipates potential curriculum innovations that will enhance deep experiential learning and prepare graduates to seamlessly integrate into the role of the professional nurse in our facility to a greater degree than ever before. The expanded access to simulations as supplements to required clinical experiences will support program expansion and increase the number of graduates without overwhelming our facility with students completing clinical program requirements. Over 75% of the College's ASN graduates continue their education by enrolling in the NWFSC RN to BSN program. Therefore, as the capacity of the ASN program expands, the BSN program will also grow and provide us with experienced nurses who have a deeper understanding of the complex needs of today's healthcare consumer.

North Okaloosa Medical Center is a 110 bed facility, and has been dedicated to providing safe, patient-centered health and wellness services, along with community outreach and education for over 40 years. Our focus is on ensuring optimal patient care through the use of advanced technology, innovative medical and surgical treatments, staff knowledge and experience. Our team is committed to meeting healthcare needs through a diverse range of medical specialties, with notable specialty units including a robust surgical services line, women's health program including Birthing Center, Cardiac Cath Lab and Electrophysiology Lab. As a Chest Pain Center

151 Redstone Avenue, S.E.  
Crestview, Florida 32539-5352  
Telephone: 850/689-8100  
FAX: 850/689-8484



□ NORTH OKALOOSA  
□□  
□□□ MEDICAL CENTER

and Joint Commission-accredited facility, we work hard every day to be a place of healing, caring and connection for patients and families in the community we call home.

North Okaloosa Medical Center will directly benefit from the increased outputs of well-trained and qualified nurses resulting from the implementation of this critical project. Accordingly, new nurses trained at NWFSC can help fill jobs openings currently available at North Okaloosa Medical Center.

Once again, we at North Okaloosa Medical Center stand in strong support of the College's application to the Triumph Gulf Coast, Inc. Trust Fund. We appreciate your consideration of their proposal and this letter.

Sincerely,



LeAnn Holcombe  
MSN, RN, Chief Nursing Officer



April 19, 2022

Dr. Devin Stephenson  
President, Northwest Florida State College  
100 College Blvd  
Niceville, FL 32578

Dear Dr. Stephenson:

We write to you as the Chief Executive Officer and Chief Nursing Officer at HCA Florida Twin Cities Hospital in strong support of Northwest Florida State College's application to the Triumph Gulf Coast, Inc. Trust Fund for funding to expand the Associate and Bachelor's in Nursing degree programs. The College is pursuing funding for this project to respond to the critical nursing shortage in our communities.

Project priorities include equipment purchases and facility renovations to support program capacity increases. The vision for this project is to develop and deploy innovative teaching technologies and strategies to improve learner outcomes while accelerating the learning process. To date, NWFSC's Associate in Science in Nursing (ASN) Program has a long-term record of success in simulation-enhanced instruction that allows the students to strengthen patient care skills in controlled environments. All students are exposed to the right type and frequency of simulated scenarios and are allowed to practice acquired skills in a safe environment prior to real-world application. By increasing the availability of simulation technology and increasing the range of research-backed simulations used during instruction, the program anticipates potential curriculum innovations that will enhance deep experiential learning and prepare graduates to seamlessly integrate into the role of the professional nurse in our facility to a greater degree than ever before. The expanded access to simulations as supplements to required clinical experiences will support program expansion and increase the number of graduates without overwhelming our facility with students completing clinical program requirements. Over 75% of the College's ASN graduates continue their education by enrolling in the NWFSC RN to BSN program. Therefore, as the capacity of the ASN program expands, the BSN program will also grow and provide us with experienced nurses who have a deeper understanding of the complex needs of today's healthcare consumer.

Our hospital has a rich history in Okaloosa County, providing care to our community for more than 40 years. The growth and development of healthcare services over these past four decades have played an integral role in shaping our community. The support of academic institutions like Northwest Florida State College help fulfill our mission of providing care to our neighbors and visitors alike.

HCA Florida Twin Cities Hospital will directly benefit from the increased outputs of well-trained and qualified nurses resulting from the implementation of this critical project. Accordingly, new nurses trained at NWFSC can help fill jobs openings currently available at HCA Florida Twin Cities Hospital.

Once again, we at HCA Florida Twin Cities Hospital stand in strong support of the College's application to the Triumph Gulf Coast, Inc. Trust Fund. We appreciate your consideration of their proposal and this letter.

Sincerely,



Todd Jackson, FACHE  
Chief Executive Officer



Sonna Harding, MSN, RN  
Chief Nursing Officer





## Okaloosa Technical College

Jon Williams, Director  
Phone: (850) 833-3500  
Fax: (850) 833-3466

April 26, 2022

Dr. Devin Stephenson  
President, Northwest Florida State College  
100 College Blvd  
Niceville, FL 32578

Dear Dr. Stephenson:

As the Director of Okaloosa Technical College, I am writing in strong support of Northwest Florida State College's application to the Triumph Gulf Coast, Inc. Trust Fund for funding to expand the Associate and Bachelor's in Nursing degree programs. The College is pursuing funding for this project to respond to the critical nursing shortage in our communities.

Project priorities include equipment purchases and facility renovations to support program capacity increases. The vision for this project is to develop and deploy innovative teaching technologies and strategies to improve learner outcomes while accelerating the learning process. To date, NWFSC's Associate in Science in Nursing (ASN) Program has a long-term record of success in simulation-enhanced instruction that allows the students to strengthen patient care skills in controlled environments. All students are exposed to the right type and frequency of simulated scenarios and are allowed to practice acquired skills in a safe environment prior to real-world application. By increasing the availability of simulation technology and increasing the range of research-backed simulations used during instruction, the program anticipates potential curriculum innovations that will enhance deep experiential learning and prepare graduates to seamlessly integrate into the role of the professional nurse in our facility to a greater degree than ever before. The expanded access to simulations as supplements to required clinical experiences will support program expansion and increase the number of graduates without overwhelming our facility with students completing clinical program requirements. Over 75% of the College's ASN graduates continue their education by enrolling in the NWFSC RN to BSN program. Therefore, as the capacity of the ASN program expands, the BSN program will also grow and provide us with experienced nurses who have a deeper understanding of the complex needs of today's healthcare consumer.

Okaloosa Technical College will directly benefit from the increased opportunities for nursing education resulting from the implementation of this critical project. Through this project, Okaloosa Technical College's LPN graduates will have greater access to continuing their education through the College's ASN program.

Once again, we at Okaloosa Technical College stand in strong support of the College's application to the Triumph Gulf Coast, Inc. Trust Fund. We appreciate your consideration of their proposal and this letter.

Sincerely,

Jon Williams  
Director  
Okaloosa Technical College



# NORTHWEST FLORIDA STATE COLLEGE

100 College Boulevard, E. • Niceville, FL 32578-1347 • (850) 678-5111 • [www.nwfsc.edu](http://www.nwfsc.edu)

April 12, 2022

Dr. Devin Stephenson, President  
Northwest Florida State College  
100 College Blvd.  
Niceville, FL 32578

Dear President Stephenson:

We, as members of the Northwest Florida State College (NWFSC) Nursing Advisory Council, are presenting this letter to support the College's application to the Triumph Gulf Coast, Inc. Trust Fund for funding to expand the Associate and Bachelor's in Nursing degree programs. As nurse leaders in our communities, we lend expertise to the College by sharing nursing workforce trends and influencing curriculum changes to ensure that the program is preparing students to meet employer needs upon graduation. The College is pursuing funding for this project to respond to the critical nursing shortage, the effects of which we are experiencing in our places of employment.

Project priorities include renovations and equipment purchases to support program capacity increases. The vision for this project is to develop and deploy innovative teaching technologies and strategies to improve learner outcomes while accelerating the learning process. To date, NWFSC's Associate in Science in Nursing (ASN) Program has a long-term record of success in simulation-enhanced instruction that allows the students to strengthen patient care skills in controlled environments. By increasing the availability of simulation technology and increasing the range of research-backed simulations used during instruction, the program anticipates potential curriculum innovations that will enhance deep experiential learning and prepare graduates to seamlessly integrate into the role of the professional nurse to a greater degree than ever before. The expanded access to simulation as a supplement to required clinical experiences will support program expansion and increase the number of graduates without overwhelming the area's healthcare facilities with students completing clinical program requirements. Over 75% of the ASN graduates continue their education by enrolling in the NWFSC RN to BSN program. Therefore, as the capacity of the ASN program expands, the BSN program will also grow. The BSN graduates, many of whom are already employed in the region's healthcare facilities, offer a deeper understanding of the complex needs of today's healthcare consumer and are able to expand their influence in providing excellent nursing care.

In addition to the increased number of well-trained and job-ready nurse graduates that will be available to fill the current vacancies at each of our facilities, we look forward to partnering with the College to provide continuing education for our nurses. The renovated learning spaces and enhanced learning technology that will be available as a result of this critical project will provide an opportunity for us to use the latest teaching and evaluation tools and strategies to affirm skill competencies and to introduce new skills in response to our ever-changing industry.





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Once again, the NWFSC Nursing Advisory Council membership stands in strong support of the College's application to the Triumph Gulf Coast, Inc. Trust Fund. We appreciate your consideration of this proposal and this letter.

*Note: The following Nursing Advisory Council members provided written permission to include their names on this letter.*

Paige Arnup, MS, Executive Director, West Florida AHEC

Naomi Brown, BS, CTTS, West Florida AHEC

Barbara J Fontaine, RN, MSN, IHI IA, VP of Nursing, Ascension Sacred Heart Emerald Coast

Sonna Harding, MSN, RN, Chief Nursing Officer, HCA Florida Twin Cities Hospital

Teresa Halverson, Director of Business Development & Community Relations, The Manor at Blue Water Bay

Teresa Haughton, RN, Ascension Sacred Heart Emerald Coast

LeAnn Holcombe, MSN, RN, Chief Nursing Officer, North Okaloosa Medical Center

Tina Snodgrass, MSN, RN, Director IDT ICU/PCU/Medsurg/Respiratory Therapy, Ascension Sacred Heart Emerald Coast

Caroline Stewart, MBA, MSN, RN, Chief Nursing Officer, HCA Florida Fort Walton-Destin Hospital