

BC3 adds \$45K simulated patient to train tomorrow's nurses today

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Nicole Hartman, left, 21, of Butler, and Bailey Anthony, 21, of Kittanning, first-level students in Butler County Community College's Nursing, R.N., program, are shown with Julia Carney and with BC3's new simulated patient, Simone, on Thursday, Oct. 15, 2020, in a simulation lab within BC3's Shaffer School of Nursing and Allied Health. Carney is BC3's assistant dean of nursing.

(Butler, PA) She complains of pain. Of nausea. She coughs. Regurgitates. Her skin shows evidence of a bedsore. Her heartbeat slows, then races. Her oxygen level takes an unexpected dive.

Simone's stay, as the newest simulated patient within Butler County Community College's Shaffer School of Nursing and Allied Health, will be a long one.

Around the corner and up the carpeted inclined hallway, Simon hasn't left his hospital bed in years. Neither has Simba her crib.

BC3 in August added Simone to its inventory of state-of-the-art medical educational technology to prepare for an increase in enrollment resulting from partnerships with Grove City College and with Concordia Lutheran Ministries.

Grove City College students next fall will begin to receive clinical and technical instruction through BC3's Nursing, R.N., program while pursuing the Mercer County private institution's new bachelor's degree in nursing.

Simon, Simone and Simba will also help to educate BC3 students pursuing the college's new licensed practical nursing program that is expected to debut next fall, said Dr. Patty Annear, dean of BC3's Shaffer School of Nursing and Allied Health. The licensed practical nursing program is being created as a result of the partnership with Concordia Lutheran Ministries, Cabot, and is intended to address a regional shortage of registered nurses and of licensed practical nurses.

Simon, Simone and Simba "offer safe, and realistic practice on all of the core nursing skills," Annear said. "This stems from our basic assessments all the way through critical thinking to advance interventions."

BC3 purchased Simone, related software and training, and preventative maintenance for \$45,535 by using funds from its capital budget, said Jim Hrabosky, BC3's vice president for administration and finance. Simone, like Simon and Simba, are manufactured by Laerdal Medical.

BC3 nursing faculty can program the symptoms exhibited by Simon, Simone and Simba, or can employ scenarios pre-programmed into the simulated patients, said Julia Carney, BC3's assistant dean of nursing.

The simulated patients are "giving our students a leg up in feeling confident in their skills moving forward," Carney said.

Students from Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Indiana, Lawrence and Mercer counties are enrolled this fall in BC3's Nursing, R.N., program held on the college's main campus.

A Laerdal Medical representative trained BC3's nursing faculty on the capabilities of Simone – termed by Laerdal Medical as Nursing Anne Simulator – during BC3's Professional Day on Oct. 6.

Like Simon, Simone has her own private room, within a second simulation lab recently created and whose bedside life-saving simulated equipment mirrors that found in hospitals.

BC3's Nursing, R.N., program is fully approved by the Pennsylvania State Board of Nursing and is accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing, Atlanta.

BC3's Shaffer School of Nursing and Allied Health offers two-year career programs in medical assistant; Nursing, R.N.; physical therapist assistant; technical trades-massage therapy management option; and technical trades-radiologic technology in partnership with Sharon

Regional Health System Inc. Its programs also include certificates in medical assistant, and in medical coding and billing specialist, and a workplace certificate in massage therapy.

Applications open in January for fall 2021 starts in both medical assistant programs, and for physical therapist assistant.