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USF Health College of Nursing is the first in Florida's state university system to offer an RNFA program

Tampa, Fla. (Feb 15, 2022) – The USF Health College of Nursing launched a program, in affiliation with Tampa General Hospital (TGH), to enhance perioperative nurse knowledge. The college is the only Florida state university to offer a program of this kind, thanks to a generous donation through the TGH Foundation. The [Registered Nurse First Assistant \(RNFA\) program](#) will increase the pipeline of RNFAs and ultimately, improve patient safety in the operating room.

RNFAs play a vital role in our hospitals, often working in collaboration with surgeons and nurses in the operating room to achieve optimal patient outcomes. An RNFA is a registered nurse who has received advanced training and credentialing that allows them to perform duties during the preoperative, intraoperative and postoperative care, in addition to care management and developing treatment plans in conjunction with the lead surgeons.

Through this affiliation and program, nurses seeking career advancement are given the opportunity for world-class education from the USF Health College of Nursing and hands-on experience at Tampa General Hospital, a tertiary care hospital that delivers renowned care.

“The future of nursing remains uncertain for us in so many ways, as we are dealing with a critical nursing shortage in the country,” said Usha Menon, dean of the USF Health College of Nursing and senior associate vice president for USF Health. “It’s programs like this that can really lead to impact in those areas of crucial need. We love trailblazing these pathways, we love the idea that we are bringing innovation to the nation.”

The first cohort begins February 14, 2022, and includes four registered nurses from TGH. The tri-phased program will include 11 didactic online education modules, an in-person simulation experience and 120 hours of clinical training at approved clinical sites. The next cohort is set to begin in Fall 2022 and will be open to local and national enrollment. Class sizes are limited to 10 students.

The unique curriculum will provide students with a strong foundation of perioperative and postoperative technical skills. In addition to earning 135 continuing education credits, graduates will be prepared to take the national certification exam to become a Certified Registered Nurse First Assistant.

USF Health

USF Health's mission is to envision and implement the future of health. It is the partnership of the USF Health Morsani College of Medicine, the College of Nursing, the College of Public Health, the Taneja College of Pharmacy, the School of Physical Therapy and Rehabilitation Sciences, the Biomedical Sciences Graduate and Postdoctoral Programs, and USF Health's multispecialty physicians group. The University of South Florida is a high-impact global research university dedicated to student success. Over the past 10 years, no other public university in the country has risen faster in U.S. News and World Report's national university rankings than USF. For more information, visit health.usf.edu

ABOUT TAMPA GENERAL HOSPITAL

Tampa General Hospital, a 1,041-bed non-profit academic medical center, is one of the largest hospitals in America and delivers world-class care as the region's only center for Level I trauma and comprehensive burn care. Tampa General Hospital is the highest-ranked hospital in the market in [U.S. News & World Report's 2021-22 Best Hospitals](#), and one of the top four hospitals in Florida, with five specialties ranking among the best programs in the United States. The academic medical center's commitment to growing and developing its team members is recognized by two prestigious 2021 [Forbes](#) magazine rankings – [America's Best Employers by State](#), third out of 100 Florida companies and first among health care and social organizations and 13th nationally in [America's Best Employers for Women](#). Tampa General is the safety net hospital for the region, caring for everyone regardless of their ability to pay, and in fiscal 2020 provided a net community benefit worth more than \$182.5 million in the form of health care for underinsured patients, community education and financial support to community health organizations in Tampa Bay. It is one of the nation's busiest adult solid organ transplant centers and is the primary teaching hospital for the USF Health Morsani College of Medicine. With five medical helicopters, Tampa General Hospital transports critically injured or ill patients from 23 surrounding counties to receive the advanced care they need. Tampa General houses a nationally accredited comprehensive stroke center, and its 32-bed Neuroscience, Intensive Care Unit is the largest on the West Coast of Florida. It also is home to the Jennifer Leigh Muma 82-bed Level IV neonatal intensive care unit, and a nationally accredited rehabilitation center. Tampa General Hospital's footprint includes 17 Tampa General Medical Group Primary Care offices, TGH Family Care Center Kennedy, TGH Brandon Healthplex, TGH Virtual Health and 19 outpatient Radiology Centers. Tampa Bay residents also receive world-class care from the [TGH Urgent Care powered by Fast Track](#) network of clinics, and they can even receive home visits in select areas through [TGH Urgent Care at Home, powered by Fast Track](#). As one of the largest hospitals in the country, Tampa General Hospital is the first in Florida to partner with GE Healthcare and open a clinical command center that uses artificial intelligence and predictive analytics to improve and better coordinate patient care at a lower cost. For more information, go to www.tgh.org.

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