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**AGENDA**  
**PLANNING, RESEARCH and PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE**

Wednesday, September 20, 2023  
12:00 p.m.

Claiborne Building, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor  
Louisiana Purchase Room 1-100  
1201 North Third Street  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

- I. Call to Order
- II. Roll Call
- III. Consent Agenda
  - A. R.S. 17:1808 (Academic Licensure)
    1. Renewal Applications
      - a. South University
- IV. Report on Act 109 of the 2021 Regular Legislative Session - Health Care Employment Reinvestment Opportunity (H.E.R.O.) Fund
- V. Other Business
- VI. Adjournment

Committee Members: Judy A. Williams-Brown, Chair, Wilbert D. Pryor, Vice Chair, Christian C. Creed, Stephanie A. Finley, Terrie P. Sterling, Felix R. Weill, Samuel T. Gil, Student Member  
Staff: Susannah Craig, Deputy Commissioner for Strategic Planning and Student Success

**AGENDA ITEM III.A.1.a**  
**South University**  
**Savannah, Georgia**

**BACKGROUND**

South University (SU) is a private institution with its main campus located in Savannah, Georgia. This university is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges.

**ACADEMIC PROGRAM**

SU offers academic programs in various areas of study such as health services, business, legal and criminal justice studies, IT, public administration, psychology, and human resources. There are 38 academic programs offered to students, including doctorate, master's, bachelor's, and associate degree programs as well as post-graduate certificates. The university currently has 123 students in its Louisiana Unduplicated Headcount Enrollment.

<b>Degree Level</b>	<b>Louisiana Unduplicated Headcount Enrollment</b>
Doctorate	1
Master's	9
Bachelor's	75
Associate	38
Certificate	0
Other	0
Total	123

**FACULTY**

South University (SU) has 38 full-time and 531 part-time faculty members with either a master's or doctorate degree.

**FACILITIES**

SU offers online instruction to Louisiana residents.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

**Given the programs' scope and the credentials of its faculty, the institution's campus, program accreditation, and the general oversight by the home campus, Senior Staff recommends approval of the application for license *renewal* from South University (SU).**

## **Agenda Item IV.**

### **Act 109 of the 2021 Regular Session: Healthcare Employment Reinvestment Opportunity (H.E.R.O.) Fund**

#### **Background Information**

The Louisiana Health Works Commission, created by the legislature, serves as a collaborative working group charged with coordinating resources relative to healthcare workforce development within various state departments and key organizations. The Commission is comprised of postsecondary systems, legislative representation, and medical organizations. The Board of Regents provides the necessary staff to support the legislative charge and work of the Commission.

The Commission is required, pursuant to Act 109 of the 2021 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature, to provide an update to the Board of Regents regarding the Health Care Employment Reinvestment Opportunity (H.E.R.O.) Fund (Attachment B), a special fund designed to assist in meeting current and growing employment demands for nursing and allied health professionals.

#### **H.E.R.O. Fund Overview**

In Fiscal Year 2024, the Commission has the authority to spend up to \$5 million from the H.E.R.O. Fund. Of this total, nearly \$4 million will be utilized to create the Regional Healthcare Innovation Partnership program. This program is designed to enable higher education institutions to partner with healthcare providers and/or regional not-for-profits, in order to establish innovative regional healthcare partnerships that will increase the number of healthcare graduates in each identified labor market. In November 2022, a request for applications was released to higher education institutions, and nine programs were selected to participate in this pilot initiative. Attachment A provides a summary of each selected application.

At the Commission's August 29, 2023 meeting, the Commission discussed future priority areas in which to utilize the remaining 2024 balance of the H.E.R.O. Fund, as well as future priority areas that will contribute to increasing the supply of healthcare workers in Louisiana. The priority areas discussed included:

- Increase the capacity of healthcare-related programs;
- Improve student success in high-demand healthcare-related programs; and
- Improve throughput rates (graduation and licensure exam success) of students in high-demand healthcare-related programs.

The Commission will continue to discuss and solidify future funding priorities, acknowledging significant progress must be made to meet the state's healthcare workforce needs and ensure all priority areas will contribute to decreasing the shortage of nurses and other front-line healthcare staff throughout Louisiana.

#### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

**This item is for information only; no action is required.**



# HEALTHCARE WORKFORCE FUNDING INITIATIVES

## Regional Healthcare Innovation Partnership Program

To meet healthcare workforce regional needs, a request for applications was distributed to higher education institutions in November 2022. This RFA sought entities to establish regional healthcare innovation partnerships throughout Louisiana to increase the number of healthcare graduates in multiple regions. The application required academic programs to partner with one or more healthcare providers and/or regional not-for-profits to leverage public and private funds for the purpose of increasing the workforce pipeline to fulfill the healthcare workforce needs of the targeted region. As a result of this request, nine institutions were granted funding to initiate this program. This program will utilize \$3.9M of the Healthcare Employment Reinvestment Opportunity (H.E.R.O.) Fund.

### Fletcher Technical Community College

Regional Partner(s)	Summary of Program
<p><b>Terrebonne General Health System, Cardiovascular Institute of the South, Terrebonne Parish Recreation District #7, Terrebonne Parish School District, Ochsner Health System</b></p>	<p>Feedback from the workforce indicates that the healthcare industry in South Louisiana is in need of medical assistants and cardiovascular sonographers, given the current shortage of professionals in these positions. In addition, the US Census Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts a 16% increase in the number of medical assistants and a 10% increase in the number of cardiovascular sonographers needed by 2031. Fletcher will provide a needed workforce pipeline in the region, meeting both the current need and future anticipated demand by providing students with the knowledge and skills to obtain a position in a hospital, physician's office or clinic as a medical assistant or cardiovascular sonographer. To accomplish this, Fletcher will increase the number of students enrolling in the existing Medical Assistant program and initiate the Cardiovascular Sonography program. This new program will be offered in a hybrid fashion, both online and in-person at various locations in the region. The Terrebonne Parish School District and Terrebonne Parish Recreation District #7 have agreed to provide access to their facilities to set up a classroom and lab environment for the Medical Assistant students. Terrebonne General and Ochsner Health System will provide the needed clinical rotations for students, while the Cardiovascular Institute of the South will provide some use of their facility for the Cardiovascular sonography students, thus strengthening the workforce pipeline to meet the needs of the community.</p>

### Louisiana Tech University

Regional Partner(s)	Summary of Program
<p><b>Northeast Louisiana Healthcare Alliance</b></p>	<p>Louisiana Tech University will create a program to support the preparation of Associate of Science in Nursing (ASN) majors as they enter their first year of study. This program, Freshman Advanced Summer Term (FAST), will provide 24 incoming freshman nursing students with a jump-start into the nursing curriculum and the support of a cohort group that will remain in place throughout their time in the nursing program. The NursesFAST program will serve as an intensive approach to the foundational science courses required prior to beginning the clinical nursing program at Louisiana Tech. Nursing students will develop strong study skills that are necessary for successful completion of their curriculum, along with completing two required and challenging courses and developing supportive relationships with their peers, upperclassmen, University faculty and staff and nursing mentors from the community through the Northeast Louisiana Healthcare Alliance.</p>

## Franciscan Missionaries of Our Lady University

Regional Partner(s)	Summary of Program
Franciscan Missionaries of Our Lady Health System, HOPE Ministries	Franciscan Missionaries of Our Lady University (Fran U) will create a multi-faceted program to expand the nursing workforce of the Greater Baton Rouge region. This program will provide a range of student support services that previously were not available. In particular, Fran U will create the Wolves on the RISE (Resources Increasing Self-Empowerment) program, specifically marketed to Black, Indigenous and other people of color within the community, as data support the need to increase diversity in the nursing workforce. This program will provide several academic student support services including intrusive advising, staff nurse mentoring, and career/life coaching provided by HOPE Ministries. The Franciscan Missionaries of Our Lady Health System (FMOLHS) will identify registered nurses from diverse backgrounds to mentor the accelerated nursing students.

## Elaine P. Nunez Community College

Regional Partner(s)	Summary of Program
Louisiana Children's Medical Center, New Orleans East Hospital	To increase the number of Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs) in its region, Elaine P. Nunez Community College will work with a partner hospital system to identify staff currently employed in non-nursing positions who are interested in a career pathway progression that results in an LPN. Participating students in this program will be compensated and allowed time to attend classes and or tutoring as needed. This program will provide scholarships and additional non-traditional student supports to participants in order to break down socio-economic barriers to student success, ensuring each participant is in the pipeline to support this workforce demand.

## Southern University and A&M College

Regional Partner(s)	Summary of Program
Ochsner Health, Southern University System Foundation	To meet regional needs for registered nurses and healthcare-related fields, Southern University and A&M College will deploy a three-pronged approach to increasing the registered nurse pipeline in the community. First, Southern University and A&M College will enhance specific student remediation and retention practices by implementing a peer tutoring program and providing support for students who do not meet the necessary exam rate in classes. Second, the institution will create a workforce pipeline, implementing a Career Day and a summer internship. In support of this effort, Ochsner will allow usage of their Clinical Simulation and Patient Safety Center as well as the Ochsner staff and alumni to mentor students on interviewing, networking and job seeking. The third component will strengthen the pipeline among local elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools through a summer enrichment program for students across the community.

## LSU Health Shreveport

Regional Partner(s)	Summary of Program
Ochsner Lafayette General	In the Lafayette region, there is a substantial need for health diagnosing and treating practitioners, who are primarily physical therapists. In addition, there is presently no physical therapy program in this labor market or in immediately surrounding areas. To meet this need LSU Health Shreveport, working in partnership with Ochsner Lafayette General, will create a Doctorate of Physical Therapy program in Lafayette.

## Louisiana State University at Alexandria

Regional Partner(s)	Summary of Program
<p><b>Rapides Regional Medical Center, CHRISTUS St. Frances Cabrini Hospital, Avoyelles Hospital, CHRISTUS Central Louisiana Surgical Hospital</b></p>	<p>Survey feedback has shown significant interest within the CENLA region for a program leading to registered nurse (RN) licensure for Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs) and Paramedics. To meet not only the interest of these individuals, but also regional workforce needs, which include a crucial demand for RNs, LSUA will work with regional hospitals to create a pipeline for LPNs as well as Paramedics to receive the ASN. Several partnering healthcare providers will support the addition of clinical students by assigning adjunct faculty to conduct clinical experiences without the penalty of using their personal time off or weekends. In addition to providing tuition waivers for participating institutions, LSUA will create the new position of professional advisor, assigned specifically to this program, to ensure students are supported and successful.</p>

## Northwestern State University

Regional Partner(s)	Summary of Program
<p><b>Natchitoches Regional Medical Center</b></p>	<p>To increase the number of Registered Nurses (RNs) in northwest Louisiana, Northwestern State University will support Licensed Practical Nurses (LPN) employed by a local hospital who are interested in and willing to become RNs. Northwestern will establish an LPN to RN program with the local hospital and will increase the number of RNs graduating to support the needs of the region. The healthcare provider will allow flexible scheduling around classes and clinical time to accommodate program participants.</p>

## University of Louisiana at Lafayette

Regional Partner(s)	Summary of Program
<p><b>Ochsner Lafayette General and Oceans Healthcare</b></p>	<p>To address unmet and projected additional workforce needs for licensed mental health professionals, UL Lafayette LHC Group · Myers School of Nursing will create a 20-credit-hour online Post-Master's Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Certificate Program. The Bureau of Health Workforce, Health Resources and Services Administration classifies Louisiana as a Mental Health Workforce Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA), with 26.15% of need for mental health professionals met in the state as compared to 27.66% for the nation. A total of 166 additional practitioners are needed to remove the HPSA in mental health designation for Louisiana. Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioners (PMHNP) are uniquely qualified to close provider gaps caused by a shortage of psychiatrists. PMHNPs offer advantages of increased access to high-quality, evidence based, cost-efficient clinical care. Ochsner Lafayette General and Oceans Healthcare will provide in-kind services in the form of preceptors for students enrolled in the program.</p>

SENATE BILL NO. 229

BY SENATORS HENSGENS, ABRAHAM, ALLAIN, BARROW, BERNARD, BOUDREAUX, CATHEY, CLOUD, FOIL, HENRY, JACKSON, JOHNS, LUNEAU, MILLIGAN, FRED MILLS, ROBERT MILLS, PEACOCK, PRICE, REESE, SMITH, TALBOT, TARVER, WHITE AND WOMACK AND REPRESENTATIVES BACALA, GARY CARTER, EDMONDS, HORTON, MARCELLE, MCFARLAND, PIERRE, RISER, ROMERO, TURNER, VILLIO AND WHEAT

Prefiled pursuant to Article III, Section 2(A)(4)(b)(i) of the Constitution of Louisiana.

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AN ACT

To enact Chapter 20-I of Title 17 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, to be comprised of R.S. 17:3050.11, relative to the Health Care Employment Reinvestment Opportunity (H.E.R.O.) Fund; to provide for the creation of the fund as a special fund in the state treasury; to provide for the transfer, dedication, use, and investment of monies in the fund; and to provide for related matters.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

Section 1. Chapter 20-I of Title 17 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, consisting of R.S. 17:3050.11, is hereby enacted to read as follows:

**CHAPTER 20-I. HEALTH CARE EMPLOYMENT REINVESTMENT**

**OPPORTUNITY**

**§3050.11. Health Care Employment Reinvestment Opportunity (H.E.R.O.)**

**Fund**

**A. There is hereby established in the state treasury a special fund, to be known as the Health Care Employment Reinvestment Opportunity (H.E.R.O.) Fund, hereinafter referred to as the "fund". The fund shall consist of monies received by legislative appropriation and from grants and donations. Deposits into the fund shall comply with the provisions of Article VII, Section 9(B) of the Constitution of Louisiana relative to the Bond Security and Redemption Fund.**

1           **B. Monies in the fund shall be invested by the state treasurer in the same**  
2           **manner as monies in the state general fund, and interest earned on the**  
3           **investment of monies in the fund shall be credited to the fund. All unexpended**  
4           **and unencumbered monies in the fund at the end of the fiscal year shall remain**  
5           **in the fund.**

6           **C.(1) Subject to legislative appropriation and the approval of the Board**  
7           **of Regents, the Louisiana Health Works Commission is hereby authorized and**  
8           **directed to determine how monies in the fund are allocated and expended**  
9           **through a multi-year plan, solely and exclusively for the following purposes and**  
10          **in the following priorities:**

11           **(a) Meet the current and growing employment demands for nursing and**  
12           **allied health professionals by increasing the capacity of nursing and allied**  
13           **health training programs through supporting initiatives such as increasing**  
14           **faculty positions and clinical preceptors in nursing and allied health schools.**

15           **(b) Support the nursing and allied health professions by providing**  
16           **incentives that financially support student financial stipends and tuition**  
17           **forgiveness contingent upon employment in Louisiana health care facilities or**  
18           **nursing or allied health schools.**

19           **(c) Provide incentives for nursing and allied health care professionals to**  
20           **practice in Louisiana with an emphasis on medically underserved areas of the**  
21           **state.**

22           **(2) Monies in the fund shall not be used for construction, maintenance,**  
23           **repair, or improvement of structures.**

24           **D. On or before October first of each year, the Louisiana Health Works**  
25           **Commission shall submit a plan of fund allocation to the Board of Regents.**

26           **E. The Board of Regents shall submit a comprehensive annual report to**  
27           **the Senate Committee on Finance, the House Committee on Appropriations, the**  
28           **Senate Committee on Health and Welfare, and the House Committee on Health**  
29           **and Welfare no later than sixty days after the end of the state fiscal year in**  
30           **which the monies were appropriated.**



1                    **F. The provisions of this Section shall terminate on July 1, 2026, or when**  
2                    **all of the monies in the fund have been expended, whichever occurs first. Any**  
3                    **monies remaining in the fund on July 1, 2026, shall be transferred by the State**  
4                    **Treasurer to the state general fund.**

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

\_\_\_\_\_  
SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

\_\_\_\_\_  
GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF LOUISIANA

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_