Carlow University’s undergraduate and graduate nursing programs are highly respected, offering leadership preparation at the bachelor’s, master’s, and doctoral levels. Housed in the College of Health and Wellness, the University’s health care programs are experiencing steady growth in enrollment, necessitating the critical need to meet both the educational requirements of growing programs, and evolving technology. In the last five years, the College of Health and Wellness has seen 15% growth in program enrollment, with a projected enrollment increase of 3% for the 2018-2019 academic year.

Carlow University’s distinguished health care programs have long been recognized as providing an academic and clinical experience for undergraduate and graduate students. From 2014 to 2016, Carlow’s Bachelor of Science in Nursing graduates have achieved an NCLEX licensure exam pass rate that is the highest in the city of Pittsburgh, the second highest in the region, and well above state and national averages, and the University is proud to proclaim a 100% pass rate of the NCLEX licensure exam in 2017. Pittsburgh is a world-renowned leader in the field of health care, and having Carlow located in the Meds, Eds, and Tech corridor of the city gives students access to the leading health care systems in our region. Ninety-eight percent of graduates from the College of Health and Wellness find gainful employment within six months of graduation.

This growth requires investment in creating dynamic learning spaces with high-fidelity simulation technology to ensure that Carlow’s healthcare graduates meet the rigorous demands of real-life clinical settings. We hope you will consider a gift to support these critical needs and invest in the future of our region’s workforce.

To learn more about this exciting project and how you can be involved, contact Kimberley Hammer, Vice President of University Advancement, at 412.578.6294 or kahammer@carlow.edu.
As the national nursing shortage continues, attracting and educating future nurses is critical to meet the existing and future workforce needs in our local and national healthcare systems. Nursing programs need to look at innovative ways of attracting and educating future nurses, given the constantly evolving complexity of health care. Of critical importance to nursing programs are simulation labs, where high fidelity simulation introduces nursing students into clinical environments before they take on the responsibility of actual patient care. Effective simulation labs need adequate lab space, sophisticated recording equipment, specialty mannequins, and the necessary clinical tools and equipment to create real-life patient care environments. The use of simulation in the undergraduate nursing curriculum is becoming a foundation for many nursing programs, capitalizing on the technological skills of a new generation of students, allowing them to gain valuable experiences in clinical settings without risk to the patient.

Three simulation rooms are linked by Command Central—a command center where a Simulation Specialist and nursing faculty deploy and monitor specialty mannequins simulating real-life patient scenarios. In addition, this center is equipped with sophisticated recording equipment to both capture the entire learning process and for debriefing after instruction.

The Student Space is a comfortable, gathering area for students to wait for simulation instruction or to utilize for group collaboration or studying.

The 2,000 square foot existing nursing simulation lab at Carlow University was inadequate to meet growing enrollment and educational needs in the nursing and respiratory care programs. By expanding the space to 4,000 square feet, educational capacity per year increases, and the use of advanced technology will greatly increase student engagement, promote real-life scenarios and ultimately, better prepare our students for the future labor market.

The Debriefing Room will provide students and nurse educators with a dedicated space to review simulation experiences as a group or in private spaces for one-on-one student and faculty interaction. In this setting, report-free learning environments will take place helping to ensure students’ clinical, assessment, and debriefing skills are learned and reinforced.

Translating learning into practice is critical when educating future nurses and the ability to do that in a realistic simulation lab is paramount. High-fidelity simulation learning environments reduce training variability and increase standardization. Research indicates that simulation labs not only provide high-quality learning experiences for nursing students, but also advance their critical thinking, decision-making and delegation skills.