

IDL ASSISTS IN NURSING STUDENTS' LEARNING



Cynthia Johnson, Allied Health Project Specialist at Garden City Community College (GCCC), reports that the Kan-ed network is used to broadcast and receive health-related interactive distance learning (IDL) programs through partnerships around Kansas and in surrounding states.

One partnership, now in its third year, that developed through Kan-ed is with Seward County Community College's Respiratory Therapy Program. Courses are sent to both GCCC and Dodge City Community College. Johnson said, "We started the partnership so students that were not close to Liberal could do this program through the Polycom and not have to travel." Students are able to receive their daily lectures over video. Six of the 18 first year students in the program use the distance learning tools made available at GCCC.



More plans for utilizing the Kan-ed network's distance learning capabilities are underway at GCCC. Johnson noted that GCCC would like to "partner with some of the hospitals in the communities where the students are coming from...so that the students could come in to their facility and use the Polycom" to receive course content from GCCC's nursing program.

GCCC's Emergency Medical Services (EMS) program also has been forming partnerships both within and outside the state through Kan-ed's distance learning capabilities. Johnson noted that the program's instructors "love doing this," and that Kan-ed provides tools to form far-flung partnerships. Johnson also highlighted the benefits of these capabilities for students, saying, "By the nature of that field, a lot of the students that are going into the paramedic program are already working for an EMS service somewhere as an EMT...where you work four days on, four days off or something like that. It's really hard for them to enroll in a traditional format class where they have to be on campus." Distance learning enables instructors and students to work around these kinds of practical realities, and enables the EMS program to "accommodate more students ... that are working full-time out in the field."

Johnson stated, "I do like using the Polycom. I think it is a beneficial technology tool to have." She also said of the students for whom this opportunity has been made available, "They like using it. I think if it did go away...it would be missed. It would be a hardship."