

TO MEDIA:
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**EXCELA HEALTH, SAINT VINCENT COLLEGE ANNOUNCE
DOCTORAL PROGRAM IN NURSE ANESTHESIA**

LATROBE, PA December 6, 2012 ... Excela Health School of Anesthesia and Saint Vincent College jointly announced the initiation of a new professional graduate education doctoral completion program that will award the Doctor of Nurse Anesthesia Practice (DNAP) beginning in the fall of 2013.

The new program, one of only a handful in the United States to accommodate the needs of working nurse anesthetists, will prepare Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (CRNA) within Excela Health and its affiliates as well as those at other health care facilities nationwide to earn a DNAP and become leaders in this rapidly developing field of medicine.

“Excela Health is pleased and proud to add a new dimension to its graduate educational programs for clinicians,” said Carol J. Fox, M.D., interim chief medical officer at Excela Health. “The DNAP program graduates will provide a complement to our existing family medicine residency graduates as we strive to provide highly trained clinicians who will improve the health and well-being of every life they touch in our community and beyond.”

Saint Vincent College’s traditional commitment to providing a high-quality educational experience is being extended to this new program. “Our goals are to develop motivational leaders who are ready to meet the challenges needed to advance anesthesia practice, to develop CRNAs with superior levels of knowledge in anesthesia theory and practice and to educate CRNAs who are proficient in evidence-based practice and lead the field in establishing new standards of quality and care,” commented Dr. John Smetanka, vice president for academic affairs at Saint Vincent. “We will prepare CRNA leaders of the future with the knowledge and skills to meet the demands of a rapidly changing health care system.”

“As the areas of expertise within our field of practice become more specialized, the need arises to have an advanced level of educational knowledge,” added Dr. Beverly Silvis, director of the Excela Health School of Anesthesia. “We are pleased that Saint Vincent College shares our vision for preparing tomorrow’s health care leaders.”

This program extends the cooperation that Excela Health and Saint Vincent College began in 2005 with the establishment of a joint graduate-level program leading to a master of science in health science degree. Each year several hundred applications are received from around the country for approximately 30 spaces in this program.

“The focus of the program is on leadership management and continuous improvement,” Smetanka added. “We look forward to offering nurse anesthetists the opportunity to become leaders in the field and helping to advance the development of a new standard in health care excellence.”

For additional information, visit www.stvincent.edu/dnap or contact the Office of Graduate and Continuing Education at 724-805-2933 or gradadmission@stvincent.edu

Photo: *Dr. Michael DeBroeck (second from left), assistant director of the Excelsa Health School of Anesthesia, instructs nurse anesthetists, from left, Amber Schaus, William Lewis and Mathew Coddington in the simulation laboratory at Excelsa Latrobe Hospital. The students are enrolled in the master's in health sciences degree program at Saint Vincent College. The new doctoral degree program in nurse anesthesia practice being offered by Saint Vincent in collaboration with Excelsa Health will enable these students to advance beyond clinical practice to the highest level of health care leadership.*

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