Flagship program under way

Delaney names nursing program as first of several nationally recognized flagships

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It was hard enough for Dean Pamela Chally of the College of Health to keep the secret. Luckily, she only had to wait a few days before the announcement was made publicly.

"I think I said, 'GO NURSING!'" Chally said about her reaction to the news that the nursing program would be selected as the first flagship program at the University of North Florida.

"I knew fairly early on that nursing was leading the pack, but still didn't know until shortly before it was announced that nursing was definitely going to be the flagship," Chally said.

UNF President John Delaney made the announcement July 5 in front of a classroom full of nursing students as well as a non-traditional crowd of faculty and administrators. The nursing program is the first of several flagship programs that will be chosen over the course of the next year.

The nursing program will receive several benefits, including a slightly larger budget, in which the program will expand to receive national recognition.

"This process has been in the works for some period of time," Delaney said. In his announcement, Delaney said Chally should be excited about the selection of the nursing program.

"I don't know how well she kept the secret because I told her a few weeks ago that it looked like this would be the program which we were going to select and her first words were, 'Can I tell the faculty?'" he said.
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The National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission visited the nursing program months before the flagship announcement and Delaney said commission members were overwhelmed with what they saw. Along with the flagship recognition, the unit has an advanced development as well as an increase in scholarships among the nursing faculty and a 50 percent increase in the number of students accepted to school. The timing of the flagship announcement and the legislative requests should help the nursing program, but Chally and Li said they are more than confident the program will thrive and that the college will benefit from its prosperity. The nursing program includes relationships with all of the community organizations that hire nurses, and those are the same organizations where all of our students have opportunities for internships," Chally said. "I just see it as a filter down, where it will help our entire college to grow in excellence and recognition."