
February 6, 2026

Monroe University and Richmond Community Services Forge Employer-Education Partnership to Expand Employees' Affordable Access to Nursing Education

New Rochelle, NY and Mount Kisco, NY -- [Monroe University](#) and [Richmond Community Services](#) today announced a new workforce development partnership to create an innovative, accelerated pathway for Richmond employees to earn their Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) credentials in just one year.

The program is designed to support Richmond's direct support professionals and other staff members -- many of whom already hold bachelor's degrees -- as they transition into the nursing profession. Through a combination of employer investment, institutional support, and flexible academic delivery, the partnership addresses both workforce needs and long-standing barriers to educational access.

Richmond Community Services President and CEO Paca Lipovac first reached out to Monroe University's Career Services team last summer to explore how the two organizations might collaborate to meet an urgent workforce need at her organization, which serves children and adults with developmental disabilities and their families. Many Richmond employees, while Bachelor's-credentialed internationally, were eager to continue their education to enter the nursing profession. However, as foreign nationals who do not qualify for federal or state tuition assistance programs, they were finding education costs to do so financially out of reach.

Recognizing the importance of investing in its workforce, Richmond committed to subsidizing a significant portion of employees' educational costs -- provided they could identify a higher education partner that offered strong academic quality, comprehensive student support services, and flexible scheduling to accommodate working professionals.

Monroe's "concierge approach" to cohort-based education, which delivers consistent, high-touch advising and advocacy from application through graduation, emerged as a natural fit. This approach is championed by Dr. Militza Gonzalez, Executive Director of Corporate Partners and Advising, who ensures that every student receives personalized guidance and support throughout their educational journey.

Pamela Lieberman, Senior Vice President for Corporate and Community Outreach at Monroe University, led the effort with Ms. Lipovac to develop a clear and supportive pathway forward. Nineteen Richmond employees expressed interest in pursuing their LPNs through Monroe's School of Nursing and subsequently applied. Academic transcripts were individually evaluated, and those requiring prerequisite coursework in Algebra, Biology, or Chemistry were enrolled in Monroe's current Winter semester. Pending successful completion, all 19 students will begin the LPN program together as a cohort in the Spring semester starting in late April.

In addition to Richmond's substantial financial investment, participating students will also receive a generous Monroe tuition reduction grant, further enhancing affordability and reinforcing the University's commitment to access and completion.

"At Richmond, we believe deeply in investing in our people," said Paca Lipovac, President and CEO of Richmond Community Services. "Our staff are the heart of our mission, and creating meaningful opportunities for their professional growth strengthens not only our organization, but the quality of care we provide every day. Monroe University has been an incredible partner throughout this process -- listening to our needs, navigating complex challenges with care, and building a program that truly works for our employees. We are profoundly grateful for their collaboration and shared commitment to workforce development."

Pamela Lieberman emphasized that the partnership reflects Monroe's broader philosophy around employer engagement and talent development.

"At Monroe, we believe the workplace is one of the most powerful classrooms there is," said Ms. Lieberman. "When employers and educators work together intentionally, we can remove barriers, unlock potential, and create pathways that change lives. We are thrilled to welcome the Richmond cohort this April and are honored by the trust Richmond has placed in Monroe to support their employees on this important journey into nursing."

To learn more about Monroe's Corporate Partners program, please contact Ms. Lieberman at plieberman@monroeu.edu.

ABOUT RICHMOND COMMUNITY SERVICES

Richmond Community Services is a non-profit organization based in Mount Kisco, NY, dedicated to supporting children and adults with developmental disabilities and their families by providing individualized services, life-enhancing strategies, education, advocacy, and community integration to help them achieve the highest possible quality of life.

Founded in 1938 and now serving Westchester County with residential care options, day programs, community habilitation, environmental modification services, and respite support, Richmond emphasizes person-centered care, dignity, and independence for individuals with

complex needs. The organization's work is grounded in compassion, expertise, and a commitment to inclusion, supported by trained professionals and a wide range of programs designed to foster skill development, community participation, and meaningful lives. For more information, please visit <https://richmondcommserv.org/>.

ABOUT MONROE UNIVERSITY

Founded in 1933, Monroe University is a recognized leader in urban and international education. The University is proud of its innovative programs to increase college access, affordability, and completion outcomes, especially among first-generation students, and for the national recognition it receives for its strong impact on graduates' social mobility.

Monroe educates more than 9,000 students each year, offering Certificate, Associate, Bachelor's, and Master's degree programs from New York campuses in the Bronx and New Rochelle, as well as in the Caribbean nation of Saint Lucia. Students may also pursue degree programs through Monroe Online. Programs are offered through Schools of Allied Health Professions, Business and Accounting, Criminal and Social Justice, Education, Hospitality Management, Information Technology, and Nursing, as well as through its King Graduate School. Liberal arts and continuing education programs are also available. For more information and admissions criteria, please visit <http://www.monroeu.edu>.