

This is the growth and development story of a unique organization and a special group of people who are devoted to making a new idea in collegiate nursing education work.

The organization is called a consortium - that is a special kind of partnership. In this case, the partners are Eastern Washington State College, Fort Wright College, Whitworth College, and Washington State University.

The group of people are the faculty and students of the Intercollegiate Center for Nursing Education.

In February, 1964, the Spokane League for Nursing invited the Inland Empire Nurses' Association to join in a committee effort to consider problems related to continuing education for registered nurses. E.W.S.C., Whitworth, Gonzaga, Holy Names College, W.S.U., Spokane Community College, Spokane County Medical Society and Hospital Administration were also contacted.

It soon became apparent that offering credit courses to R.N.'s was inevitably tied to the establishment of a sound basic baccalaureate nursing program in the Inland Empire. By 1965, this consideration became the major thrust of the Joint Committee.

The State Board of Nursing met with the Committee in March 1965 for an exploratory session convened in the Hotel Davenport.

The nursing consultant of WICHE who was also the president of ANA was requested to meet with the Committee in September, 1965. She advised the formation of a Steering Committee whose initial task would be the formulation of a consultation proposal to WICHE on the issue of an interinstitutional approach to collegiate nursing education.

Funding was a major concern in that no one college or university seemed able to afford such a program.

The proposal was made and the Dean of the School of Nursing at U.C.L.A. arrived for consultation in April, 1966. She recommended a feasibility study and an approach to a local university for the purpose of establishing a continuing education program for nurses.

In May, 1966, the Steering Committee approached W.S.U.'s General Extension Service and a Continuing Education program was a reality by Fall.

Two instructors conducted a very successful program reaching 669 active R.N.'s and 66 inactive nurses from forty-five communities outside Spokane.

After consultation with the Dean of Nursing from the University of Washington in January, 1967, the Steering Committee was dissolved and replaced by a four (4) member Interinstitutional Committee with representation from our present "Consortium" partners. These partners contributed a total of \$5,000 for the feasibility study which lasted four and one half months.