



Belmont Abbey
COLLEGE
*That in all things God
may be glorified*

For Immediate Release

Contact: Sarah Bolton

P: 704-461-7016 E: sarahbolton@bac.edu

Belmont Abbey College Receives \$70,000 Grant from CaroMont Health Foundation to Expand AED Access and Nursing Education

Belmont, N.C. (June 2, 2026) – Belmont Abbey College has received a \$73,526 grant from the CaroMont Health Foundation to strengthen community cardiac emergency preparedness, in collaboration with the City of Belmont, and to advance nursing education.

The grant comes in response to a tragic incident in downtown Belmont, where the absence of nearby Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) contributed to the emergency in which Nancy Litwak, a cherished friend of the Belmont community and member of the Belmont Trolley Board, lost her life. Her passing highlighted a critical gap in the community's emergency response resources, inspired changes to the downtown policy, and motivated Belmont Abbey College to pursue this grant to help prevent future tragedies. In the last year, Belmont Abbey's nursing department has already implemented CPR classes and training for community members. To date, more than 70 participants have been trained, equipping residents with the skills to respond during cardiac emergencies.

In collaboration with the City of Belmont, the grant will fund a public AED initiative to enhance the community's cardiac emergency response plan. The project will:

- Install nine AEDs: Six in strategic downtown Belmont locations and three on the campus of Belmont Abbey, ensuring any point in the downtown corridor is within a two-minute walk to an AED, well within the critical four-minute window for defibrillation.
- Train faculty and the community: Four nursing faculty will become certified American Heart Association CPR instructors. Recurring CPR and AED training will be offered to local business employees, organizational staff, and community members.
- Establish sustainable preparedness: The initiative will create a long-term, faculty-led model for ongoing community cardiac emergency preparedness and public education.

"The safety and well-being of our community is always a top priority," said Joe Jordan, Mayor of Belmont. "This collaboration with Belmont Abbey College and the support of the CaroMont Health Foundation will ensure that lifesaving resources, like AEDs and CPR training, are accessible to everyone in our town. Together, we are strengthening Belmont's ability to respond quickly in emergencies and protect our residents."

"Belmont Abbey College and the CaroMont Health Foundation share a commitment to the well-being of this community. It is at the heart of our relationship, and we are proud to support an institution whose programs reflect that caring for the people around us is both a calling and a privilege. It is an honor to help advance the meaningful work they do right here at home," said Mary Grace Bean, Director, CaroMont Health Foundation.

The grant also supports the development of a dedicated Fundamental Skills Lab at Belmont Abbey College. This lab will provide a foundational space for 40 first-semester nursing students to master essential clinical skills while supporting 40-80 upper-level students through the intensive clinical "boot camps" and year-round remediation sessions. Beyond the classroom, the lab strengthens the regional healthcare pipeline through high-impact partnerships, including CNA training collaborations with Gaston College and integrated public AED education.

"This grant from the CaroMont Health Foundation equips both our students and our community to respond effectively in life-saving situations," said Dr. Lee-Ann Kenny, Chair and Program Director of Nursing at Belmont Abbey College. "The combination of new AEDs in the community and enhanced nursing training will have a meaningful impact on public health and healthcare education."

The college is currently finalizing the timeline and securing locations for each AED. A public launch event for the AED initiative is being planned to raise awareness of the new network and recognize the Foundation's support. An announcement will be made when plans are finalized.

About Belmont Abbey College: Founded in 1876, Belmont Abbey College is a private, Catholic baccalaureate and liberal arts institution. Our mission is to educate students in the liberal arts and sciences so that in all things God may be glorified. Guided by the Catholic intellectual tradition and the Benedictine spirit of prayer and learning, we welcome a diverse body of students and provide them with an education that will enable them to lead lives of integrity, to succeed professionally, to become responsible citizens, and to be a blessing to themselves and to others. Our beautiful and historic campus is conveniently located just 10 miles west of Charlotte, N.C., and is currently home to more than 1500 students. For more information, visit <https://belmontabbeycollege.edu/>.