Policy-makers, planners, governmental agencies, regulators, and others use National League for Nursing workforce data as they design legislation, approve budgets, and formulate long-range educational goals. The 2018 NLN Biennial Survey of Schools of Nursing was conducted to provide such data.

This report is compiled from data provided by 577 schools of nursing, 55 percent of 1,022 NLN member schools. Forty-four percent of the responding institutions offer baccalaureate or higher degrees in nursing and 56 percent offer associate degree, diploma, and PN/VN programs. Following are highlights of the findings. Details are online at http://www.nln.org/newsroom/nursing-education-statistics.

PERCENTAGE OF UNDERREPRESENTED STUDENTS INCREASING
According to the NLN data, the percentage of underrepresented students enrolled in prelicensure RN programs increased slightly from 27 percent in 2016 to 30.7 percent in 2018. Specifically, African American enrollment increased from 10.8 percent to 11.8 percent; Hispanic enrollment increased from 8.1 to 9.8 percent; Asian enrollment increased from 1.1 to 1.6 percent; and Pacific Islander enrollment increased from 4.4 to 4.5 percent. American Indian enrollment decreased slightly from 0.7 to 0.6 percent.

Enrollment of men in basic RN programs decreased from 14 percent in 2016 to 13 percent in 2018. ADN programs had the highest percentage of men enrolled (15 percent). Enrollment of men in PN/VN programs increased from 9 percent in 2016 to 10 percent in 2018.

Findings from the survey indicate that more younger students are entering doctoral programs. The proportion of doctoral students under age 30 increased from 16 percent in 2016 to 22 percent in 2018. The proportion of doctoral students over age 30 declined from 84 percent to 78 percent in 2018.

PROGRAMS TURNING AWAY QUALIFIED APPLICANTS
The data indicate that significant numbers of applicants for prelicensure programs continue to be turned away. The percentage of PN/VN, ADN, and diploma programs that rejected qualified applicants increased by 5 percent, 3 percent, and 1 percent, respectively in 2018 from 2016. However, BSN and BSRN programs that rejected qualified applicants decreased by 5 percent and 1 percent, respectively, while the percentage of MSN and doctoral programs that rejected qualified applicants decreased by 1 percent and 9 percent, respectively.

The NLN data indicate rejections for PN/VN, ADN and diploma programs increased in 2018, with the most striking increase in PN/VN and ADN programs. PN/VN programs turned away 27 percent of qualified applications in 2018 compared to 22 percent in 2016; ADN programs turned away 38 percent of qualified applications compared to 35 percent in 2016 (Figure 1).
Figure 1:  
Percent of Qualified Applications Turned Away by Program Type, 2016 - 2018

Figure 2:  
Main Obstacles to Expanding Capacity of Prelicensure RN Programs, 2017 - 2018