Strengthening rural health care

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Natalie Ramirez could go pretty much anywhere when she graduates in May. With nurses in high demand across the state and country, she won't have any trouble finding a job after completing her bachelor's degree.

Many young professionals would view this as an opportunity to move to a big city, but not Ramirez. She plans to start her career in rural Nebraska, where she received her education and training.

A native of Bridgeport – a community of about 1,500 in the western Nebraska Panhandle – Ramirez attended the University of Nebraska at Kearney through the Kearney Health Opportunities Program (KHOP), a partnership between UNK and the University of Nebraska Medical Center.
Natalie Ramirez started her undergraduate education at UNK before transitioning to the UNMC College of Nursing on the Kearney campus. She plans to work in rural Nebraska after graduating in May.
Opened in fall 2015, the Health Science Education Complex allowed UNMC to expand its nursing programs in Kearney and bring new options to the UNK campus. The building quickly filled to capacity, with more than 300 students currently pursuing degrees in over a dozen professional programs.