

Annual Report 2026

Career by Senior Year

BalladHealth™ Academy

"By combining classroom learning with hands-on experience, these specialized healthcare high schools will prepare students for careers with opportunities for growth and advancement."

Michael R. Bloomberg, founder of Bloomberg Philanthropies and Bloomberg LP and 108th mayor of New York City

A message from the Chairman and CEO

When I look at the future of healthcare, I see both tremendous challenges and extraordinary possibilities. Across the country, workforce shortages continue to grow, particularly in rural communities. Meeting this need will require more than traditional approaches. It will require a bold vision, strong partnerships and a willingness to invest in the next generation.

That vision became Ballad Health Academy. By creating earlier, more accessible pathways into healthcare, the Academy identifies students with an aptitude and passion for the sciences, provides them with meaningful opportunities to explore healthcare careers, and creates pathways that enable them to serve the communities they call home. We believe that by investing in local students, we can help them build rewarding, well-paying careers while addressing one of the most pressing challenges facing healthcare today: the workforce shortage.

The response has exceeded expectations.

We set an initial goal of enrolling 100 students in the first year. Instead, 243 students enrolled, and we now project 517 students will participate during the program's first two years.

This work aligns directly with one of Ballad Health's North Star Goals: to become a national model for improving rural health. We believe Ballad Health Academy is already demonstrating what that model can look like. By bringing together healthcare, education and community partners around a shared purpose, we are creating sustainable solutions that strengthen both our workforce and the health of our region.

We are grateful to Bloomberg Philanthropies for investing in this innovative approach, and we thank the educators, clinicians and community leaders who have helped bring this vision to life. Most importantly, we celebrate the students who are preparing to make a difference in the lives of their neighbors, friends and families.

This is only the beginning.

Sincerely,

Alan Levine
Chairman and CEO
Ballad Health



Alan Levine
Chairman and CEO
Ballad Health



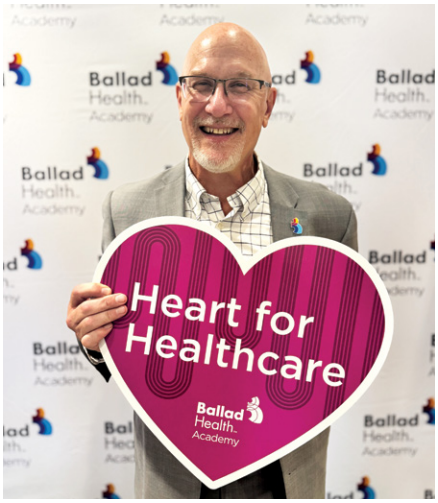




Director's message

"Career by Senior Year"

Welcome to the Ballad Health Academy Class of 2030



Jeff Moorhouse, Ed.D.

Following the success of our first year, we are thrilled to welcome the second cohort of Ballad Health Academy students. This program represents a new approach to workforce development — giving high school students a fast track to a high-impact healthcare career while redefining how early talent pipelines can be built in rural communities. This approach offers a replicable model for engaging students earlier, reducing barriers and aligning education directly with workforce demand.

What learners can expect from our program

- College credits, zero debt: Through our partnership with the Tennessee College of Applied Technology (TCAT), students earn real college transcripts while still in high school. Thanks to Tennessee dual enrollment funding, tuition is fully covered, so students start their career ahead of the game, debt-free.
- The best of both worlds: Students don't have to sacrifice their senior year for their future. Most of the coursework happens right on their home campus, so they can still lead clubs, play for their team and stay connected with friends.
- Pro mentorship: They don't navigate the program alone. They have a Pathway Advisor for weekly check-ins and Nurse Mentors in the hospital to give hands-on, real-world experience that students can't get in a classroom.

Building the future

We are honored to welcome our newest cohort to Ballad Health Academy and to continue investing in our students today so they can lead and serve our healthcare community tomorrow. We look forward to supporting our students in their journey toward a meaningful career.

Jeff Moorhouse, Ed.D.
Corporate Director of Secondary Education Programs





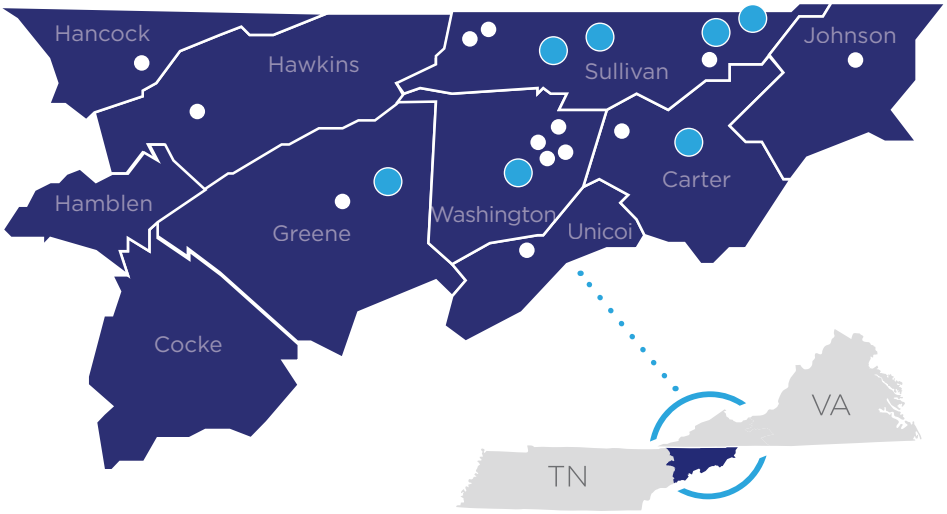


Ballad Health Academy overview

312 students enrolled

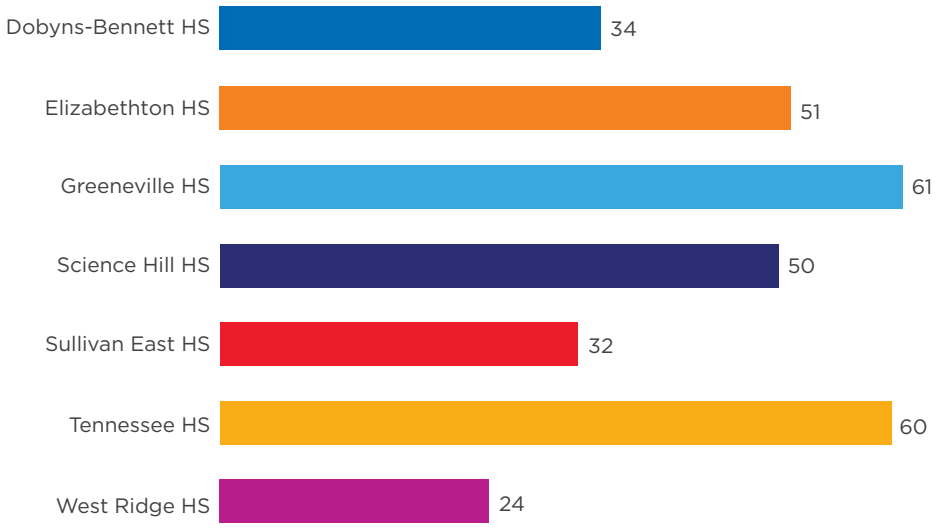
7 high schools

6 school districts

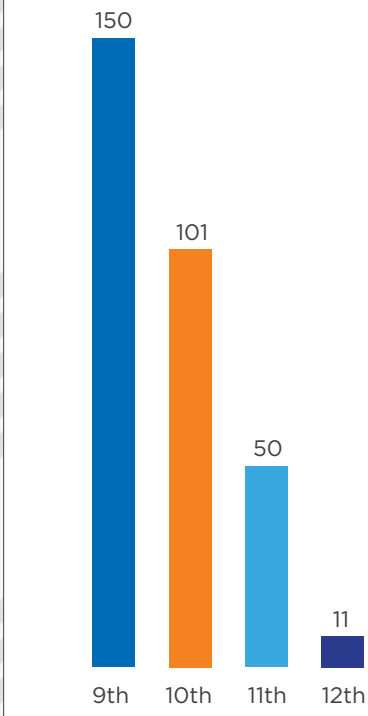


- **Bristol**
  Tennessee High School
- **Elizabethton**
  Elizabethton High School
- **Greeneville**
  Greeneville High School
- **Johnson City**
  Science Hill High School
- **Kingsport**
  Dobyns-Bennett High School
- **Sullivan County**
  Sullivan East High School
  West Ridge High School

Enrollment by school for 2025-26 SY



Enrollment by grade level for 2025-26 SY



Program highlights

- **Comprehensive curriculum**
  The curriculum includes anatomy and physiology, nursing fundamentals, patient care, pharmacology and more – ensuring a well-rounded, industry-aligned education.
- **Hands-on experience**
  Clinical rotations at Ballad Health facilities provide invaluable real-world learning and skill development.
- **Qualified instructors**
  Experienced, passionate nursing educators will offer personalized mentorship and instruction.
- **Modern facilities**
  Labs and simulation centers replicate real clinical environments for safe, skill-refining practice.
- **Employment opportunities**
  Graduates of the program are guaranteed job interviews with Ballad Health.







"Tennessee is continuing to lead the nation as one of the best places to do business and raise a family, and I thank the local school systems, Ballad Health, our community colleges and TCATs for partnering to create something that will serve the entire region."

Tennessee Gov. Bill Lee







Our model

Ballad Health Academy is built on a model intentionally designed for scalability—one that can be adapted by other rural health systems seeking to build sustainable talent pipelines.

The program offers a student-centered, market-driven pathway that provides, at no cost, the training and credentials students need to start a healthcare career with family-sustaining wages. By incorporating in-person, virtual and in-hospital education and using a school-within-a-school approach, Ballad Health Academy allows students to receive advanced career training while maintaining a well-rounded high school experience.



Partnerships

Ballad Health Academy was intentionally designed as more than a program — it is a dynamic, mutually beneficial ecosystem that connects students, school systems, healthcare providers and postsecondary institutions in a shared mission: building a sustainable, skilled healthcare workforce. This level of cross-sector alignment is uncommon in healthcare.

Partners include:

- Bloomberg Philanthropies
- Local school districts
  - Bristol City
  - Elizabethton City
  - Greeneville City
  - Johnson City
  - Kingsport City
  - Sullivan County
- Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology
  - TCAT Elizabethton
  - TCAT Morristown



Support

Ballad Health Academy Pathway Advisors, along with school counselors, work with students throughout high school to schedule and sequence courses and navigate dual enrollment, so students have support to explore and navigate their paths and handle logistical tasks needed to advance their success.

The Academy also matches each student with a nurse mentor to help advise and guide them as they enter the clinical portion of the curriculum.

Having completed its first operational year, the program will add at least two students from each participating high school to serve as student ambassadors who will receive specialized leadership training and provide peer-to-peer mentorship for future students.



Connect

By providing the classroom education, hands-on training and support mechanisms needed to successfully navigate this healthcare career pathway, Ballad Health Academy connects students directly to high-demand healthcare careers through an approach that innovates on traditional career education.

Graduates of the program are guaranteed job interviews with Ballad Health once they've graduated from high school.

New to Ballad Health Academy

Family Events

Ballad Health Academy hosted students and their families at Northeast State Community College and East Tennessee State University's College of Nursing for career exploration events. The open houses allowed parents and students to explore postsecondary healthcare education through question-and-answer sessions, talks with current nursing students and campus visits.



Photo courtesy of Logan Mink, ETSU

Project-based Learning Labs

In partnership with Science Hill High School, Ballad Health Academy developed and piloted topical labs in biology courses, impacting both Ballad Health Academy students and the general student population.

Online Class Adjustments

With support from the Niswonger Foundation, specially designed online courses are now available to Ballad Health Academy students. Covering subjects including economics, U.S. government, personal finance, lifetime wellness and computer science, the online format allows students to meet graduation requirements while staying fully engaged in other high school opportunities such as band, JROTC and Advanced Placement courses.

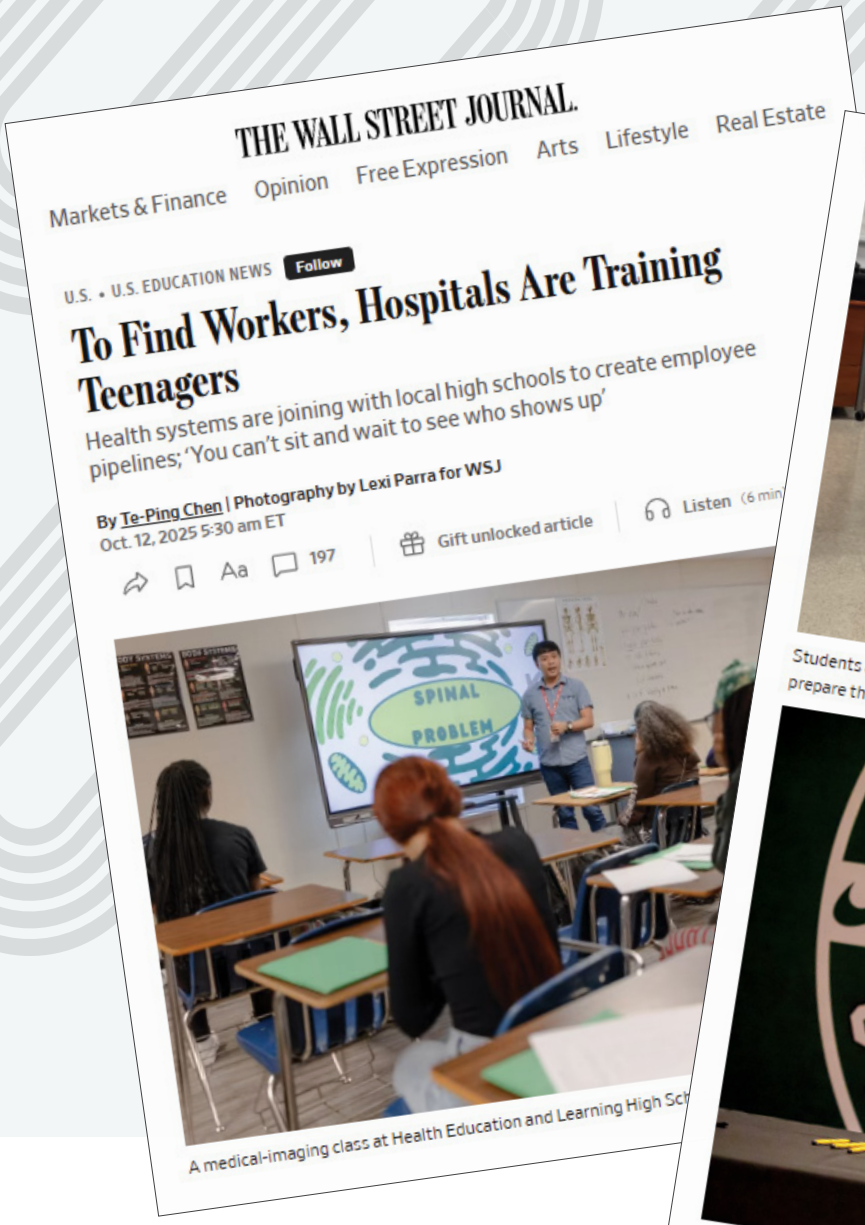
Mobile Simulation Labs

Launched in August 2025, the Ballad Health Academy simulation lab allows the program to bring advanced lab capabilities to schools across the Appalachian Highlands, improving access to hands-on training. The custom-designed bus is equipped with two exam tables, blood pressure cuffs and interactive monitors to simulate real clinical experiences for up to 15 students at a time. During the 2025-26 school year, the lab saw more than 5,000 student visitors from both participating high schools and middle schools, generating interest in healthcare among younger students.



The mobile simulation lab allows Ballad Health Academy to bring advanced training directly to students





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To Find Workers, Hospitals Are Training Teenagers

Health systems are joining with local high schools to create employee pipelines; 'You can't sit and wait to see who shows up'

By Te-Ping Chen | Photography by Lexi Parra for WSJ
Oct. 12, 2025 5:30 am ET

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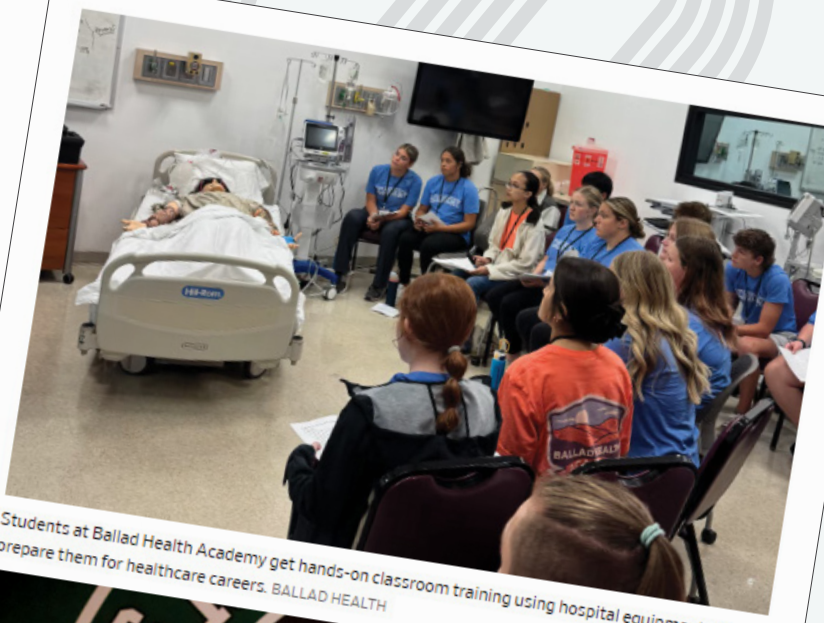
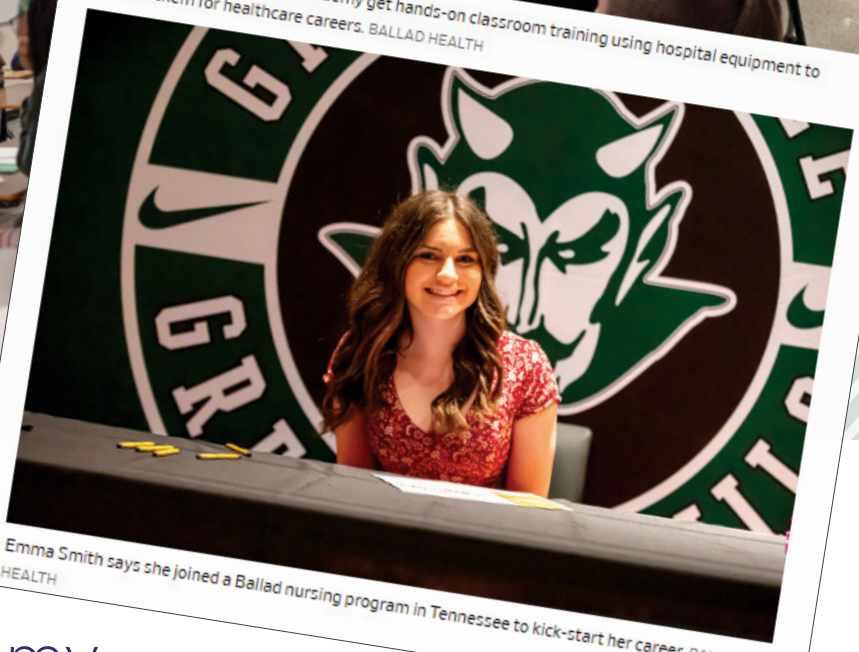
A medical-imaging class at Health Education and Learning High Sch



Students at Ballad Health Academy get hands-on classroom training using hospital equipment to prepare them for healthcare careers. BALLAD HEALTH



Emma Smith says she joined a Ballad nursing program in Tennessee to kick-start her career. BALLAD HEALTH

Ballad Health Academy in the spotlight

The Wall Street Journal featured Ballad Health Academy in an Oct. 12, 2025 article, highlighting the accelerated career pathway the program gives to students.

"For Emma Smith, 15 years old, enrolling in the Ballad nursing program was a no-brainer. 'I get a kick-start on my career," said Smith, a sophomore at Greeneville High School in eastern Tennessee.'

"Smith now spends hours every week in a classroom with mannequins and hospital beds, in addition to taking classes including Spanish and AP English. She plans to use her credentials from Ballad to start healthcare work while she also pursues a college degree to become a labor and delivery nurse."






TENNESSEE VIKINGS
BSH SPORTS
BalladHealth
Academy




SULLIVAN EAST
PATRIOTS




SCIENCE HILL
HILLTOPPERS
BalladHealth
Academy



Signing day

Ballad Health celebrated its newest Ballad Health Academy class during signing day ceremonies across participating high schools.



The milestone events honored the students' commitment to a transformational educational journey toward a healthcare career.

Signing celebrations, similar to a collegiate athlete signing day, were held between April 30 and May 8, 2026.

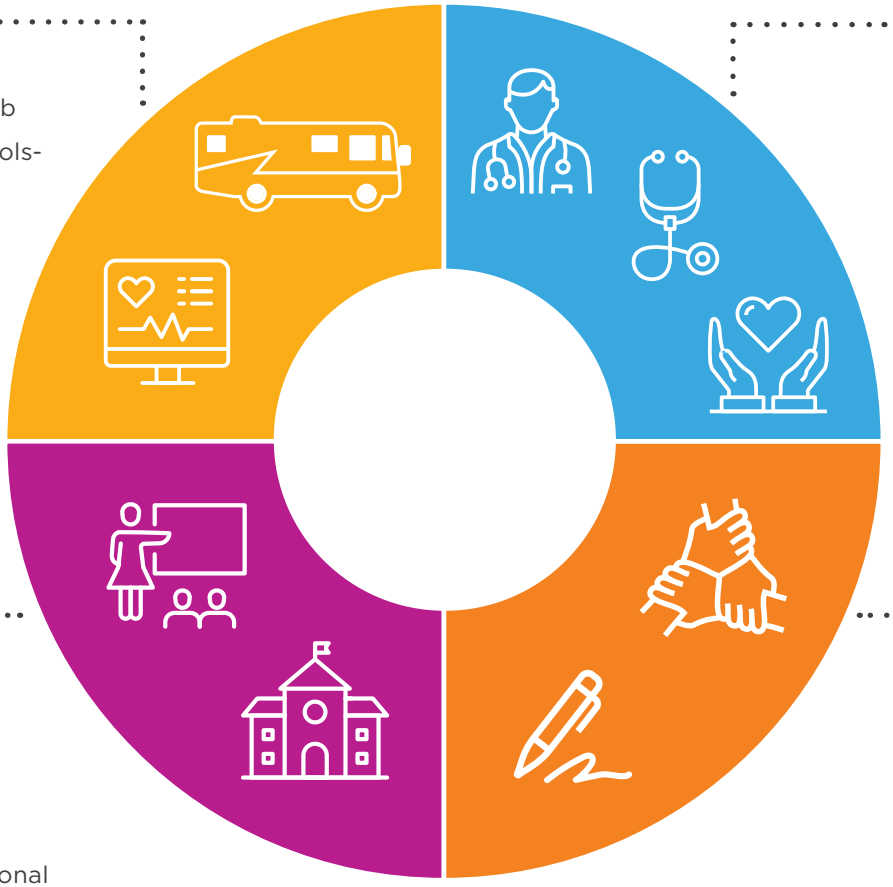
- Elizabethton High School
- Tennessee High School
- Greeneville High School
- Sullivan East High School
- Science Hill High School
- West Ridge High School
- Dobyns-Bennett High School

Equipment

- Mobile simulation lab
- Equipment for schools-based labs

Student support

- Stethoscopes, scrubs and other supplies
- Six pathway advisors
- Career exploration software
- Two pathway RNs



Training & curricular development

- Leadership professional development series
- Training seminar for student assessment software
- Project-Based Learning Workshop and modules

Programs & events

- Summer camps
- Saturday skills camps
- Regional nursing career exploration events
- Signing Day events at partner schools
- Online courses

"Our region has the capability to contribute to solving this problem, and Ballad Health Academy will become a national model for how local communities can help fill these important workforce needs."

- Alan Levine, Chairman and CEO, Ballad Health

Thank you

Ballad Health Academy would not be possible without the ongoing support of school district partners, post-secondary education partners and community partners. These organizations' commitment to providing students in our region with first-rate education and career opportunities has been integral to the creation and ongoing success of the Academy. **Thank you for being part of this story.**

We are grateful for long-term care clinical training opportunities provided to Ballad Health Academy students by the following facilities:

- The Waters of Bristol
- The Waters of Johnson City
- Durham-Hensley Health and Rehabilitation
- Ivy Hall Nursing Home

A note from Dr. Matthew Loos

Chief Academic Officer

January will mark three years since we announced the launch of Ballad Health Academy!



Matthew Loos, MD, FACS, MBA

In some ways, it's hard to believe it has only been three years; in others, it feels like it has been much longer.

We are thrilled to see our first cohort of ninth grade students move into the full year of curriculum in their journey toward a career in healthcare. And, we're excited to start welcoming our next class. We believe the challenges we've faced and lessons we have learned from the past year will further the sustainability of the Academy and advance our mission, made possible by the support of Bloomberg Philanthropies.

We are deeply appreciative of the schools that raised their hands and took the leap of faith by joining the Academy sight unseen. The Academy is already proving transformative for our region. Thank you to the parents and students that share the vision of a career by senior year and the opportunities that the Academy offers. Here's to another great year!

Matthew Loos, MD, FACS, MBA
Chief Academic Officer
Ballad Health








NURSING CAREER
YOUR JOURNEY.
Your impact.


BalladHealth
Academy
ELIZABETHTON
CYCLONES



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