

Talking Points

Dr. Andreia Nebel
Clarkson College President/CEO

Thank you for this opportunity. Clarkson College is a hospital affiliated private nonprofit higher education institution solely incorporated with NE Medicine. I am Andreia Nebel, the President and CEO with the honor of serving in a variety of roles at the college for over 22 years. I am also a Physical Therapist and serve as a Higher Learning Commission Peer Reviewer.

Even with the many roles we all have and hats we wear we fundamentally know that education and healthcare are important. I understand the freedoms of all parties involved in this situation and yet my job as President is to protect the best interests of Clarkson College and advocate for and support the thousands of students, learners, alumni, faculty, and staff we serve. That is why you must know this unfortunate situation playing out on social media and the news has caused confusion and unintended consequences for healthcare education and workforce development in Nebraska. Constituents do not understand the difference between Clarkson Regional Health Services and Clarkson College and the public comment that the University might sunset us in 5 years is inaccurate and insensitive to the governance of all institutions. The 13 private non-profit higher education institutions in Nebraska are an important option for students and a critical healthcare workforce pipeline, of which, Clarkson College is the largest hospital affiliated college and 3rd largest provider in distance education. Clarkson College was the first nursing school in the state, founded in 1888, from the hospital started by Bishop Clarkson and his wife Meliora. We have been building relationships ever since with seamless career pathways for all Nebraska's Community Colleges, innovative 3D and simulation services, and employee and family scholarships for founding and community partners. Even without scholarships, the cost of attendance at Clarkson College is less than the cost of attendance at the University.

Clarkson College is also unique in that its average age of enrollment is 26 serving many 2nd career, transfer students, and working families. We enroll and graduate students three times per year, and annually serve approximately 1,200 degree-seeking students, 80% of whom are from Nebraska. We educate more than 6,500 community learners each year through short-term training and continuing education programs, and with a 100 percent job placement rate have Clarkson College alumni living and working in 74 of Nebraska's 93 counties. Unfortunately, the public materials describing the proposed transaction do not provide any clear indication of what happens to the land, buildings, or development assets connected to Clarkson College, which is a potential institutional risk to the perpetuity of the critical services we provide.

The chaos of the last week has been disruptive for the exceptional professionals at Clarkson College who do amazing work every day, as a nationally recognized Great Colleges to Work For institution and the only higher education institution this fall to receive the Governor's Award for Wellness. We will be committed to this work for many more generations; staying focused on our mission, strategic initiatives, and service to our students and community. Not that long ago Creighton University Medical Center eventually became the Atlas Apartments. Let's not repeat history, which leaves even a larger gap in the ability to meet the healthcare needs of our state, at a cost we cannot afford, and a reputation that is not worth ruining.

Thank you for your attention.