Background
Evidence supports the IOM recommendations, indicating nurses with baccalaureate degrees are linked to lower rates of mortality (Kutney-Lee, Sloane & Aiken, 2012; Aiken, Clarke, Cheung, Sloane & Siber, 2003). In a large national study examining the transition issues for students between associate and baccalaureate nursing programs, respondents indicated barriers to pursuing additional education including costs, family responsibilities and support, lack of employer support and pre-requisites and general education courses as barriers (LaSala and Gorton, 2015).

Methods
- Faculty and advisors from both USC and MTC met to exam and align pre-requisite and general education courses.
- Advisors at both institutions were identified to promote B.S.N. discussion early so that students would take advantage of courses at the technical college
- Administrators from both schools worked with financial aid officers to discuss issues of duel enrollment
- Nursing leadership worked through criteria for students to be considered for duel enrollment

Findings
- We found that if students began to work with a nursing advisor early they could complete many pre-requisite course while waiting for admission to their A.D.N. program.
- We struggled with issues related to sharing of financial aid and duel enrollment
- The inability to fund the B.S.N. portion of the program concurrently with the A.D.N. degree has kept students from moving forward with their B.S.N. course before graduation.

Recommendations
- Continue to work with area technical colleges to develop articulation agreements that allow easy transfer of pre-requisite and general education courses.
- Continue to work with advisors early in the college experience to discuss the importance on maintaining a high GPA to qualify for RN to B.S.N. and graduate work transfer programs.
- Work with clinical partners to assist with funding to allow highly qualified A.D.N. students to enroll in B.S.N. courses in their final semesters

Purpose
This project’s aim was to decrease the barriers of academic advising, resulting in missed pre-requisites and general education coursework which prolongs the academic transition and increases tuition costs. In addition, Students would be able to take some of the RN-B.S.N. course during their A.D.N. program, allowing for accelerated coursework and greater potential for completion of the RN-B.S.N.

Learning Process: What will help others
- Be aware of challenges associated with financing both degrees at the same time. Look for partners to help share student expenses.
- There are differences in grading scales between A.D.N. programs and B.S.N. programs that may make it difficult to determine what your minimum transfer GPA needs to be. An example of this is the cut off for a B grade at MTC is an 80%.
- Students were excited to get started with their B.S.N. but were concerned that they would not be successful in their A.D.N. program if they did both at the same time.
- There is a strong community interest in these students and their success. Building strong partnerships with local technical colleges will provide a steady stream of students interested in moving up.

Conclusions
The RN to B.S.N. program partnership with MTC has been a success in that students are now better utilizing the time prior to admission to their A.D.N. program and are developing a plan for their B.S.N. from the beginning of their education.
Further work needs to be done to allow for financial aid for students in both setting.

References