

**COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA**  
**Office of the Governor**

Timothy M. Kaine  
Governor

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**GOVERNOR Kaine ANNOUNCES 67%  
INCREASE IN COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
NURSING PROGRAM GRADUATES**

*~ Public-Private Partnerships are credited for the increase*

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**RICHMOND**—Governor Timothy M. Kaine today announced a dramatic 67 percent increase in the number of students graduating from nursing programs throughout Virginia's Community Colleges over the last five years. He also applauded the partnership between the Virginia Community College System and the Virginia Hospital & Healthcare Association (VHHA) as a model for meeting critical workforce shortages in career and technical fields.

"Studies have shown that Virginia's growing and aging population will require more than 20,000 nurses by 2020," Governor Kaine

said. "Our Community Colleges and the Hospital and Healthcare Association are working hard, and successfully, to fulfill this need."

In an effort to help fill that critical shortage, the VCCS and the VHHA worked together on a special task force to explore what can be done. The 2005 report of that task force, Virginia's Nursing Crisis: A Call to Action, produced a number of recommendations. The implementation of those findings and the partnership with VHHA are being credited for an increase in both the number of students entering community college nursing programs as well as the number of graduates those programs are producing.

"We are proud of this progress but a lot more has to be done," said Glenn DuBois, chancellor of Virginia's Community Colleges.

"Virginia's nursing shortage is severe and will impact people at the worst possible times and places, like when a child or parent is injured or ill and really needs the attention and care that only a trained nurse can give."

"Hospitals and health systems have committed themselves for the long-term to provide funding, clinical training and support to increase Virginia's nursing workforce," said Laurens Sartoris, president, Virginia Hospital & Healthcare Association. "Nurses are a valued and valuable part of the health care team, and it is vital we continue to educate dedicated and qualified individuals to care for our patients. VCCS is a valued partner in educating nurses and other critically needed caregivers."

In 2002-03, 817 students graduated from nursing programs at Virginia's Community Colleges. Last year, that number has increased to 1,365. National data from the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) show that more than 60% of new RNs are educated in associate degree programs. Further, AACC states that RNs with associate degrees are more likely to remain and work in communities where they are educated.

In addition, the Virginia Department of Health continues its Nurse Educator loan assistance program. This program addresses Virginia's critical shortage of nurse educators by providing 10 students with loan assistance to pursue a post-graduate nursing degree in exchange for teaching at any nursing school in the Commonwealth upon completion. Finally, the Department of Health Professions has begun the implementation of a healthcare workforce data center that will focus on collecting supply and demand data for nurses and physicians.

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