

Fall 2008
Volume 23

The Pulse

Nursing Department Newsletter-NYCCT

*From the desk of Kathryn Richardson, MS, RN
Chairperson, Department of Nursing*

Greetings Pulse readers! Welcome to the Fall 2008 issue of our newsletter. The Nursing faculty is in the process of wrapping up another busy semester here at City Tech. We are however, looking ahead to the Spring 2009 semester. The Admissions Review and Advisement Committee will be sifting through 210+ applications for the seats that we will make available in the Spring 2009 semester. The NLN pre-entrance exam scores are in and the committee is awaiting Fall 2008 grades so that GPAs can be calculated and rank ordered. The Nursing faculty is also busy preparing for a visit from the National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission to the AAS program early in the Spring 2009 semester. We are happy to report that the BS in Nursing program received full NLNAC accreditation in Summer 2008. I would like to thank the entire faculty for their successful efforts on that front.

The AAS and the BS programs are both growing. The AAS program is exploring the possibility of expanding the Spring 2009 NUR 1030 cohort by an additional 10 students for a total cohort of 90 students. The BS in Nursing program had 150 students registered for courses in the Spring 2009 semester. We are planning to run BS in Nursing courses in the intersession this winter as well as in the Summer 2009 semester. I would like to take the opportunity to welcome the following new faculty members to our department: Professor Aida Egues, Professor Mary Frances McGibbon, Dr. Elaine Leinung and Professor Celeste Waddy.

In this issue, we have articles highlighting CUNY goals for Nursing education and the way in which City Tech is working toward those goals. We also highlight some of the many activities faculty and students are involved in. Dr. Patricia Cholewka returned from her semester in Lithuania and is currently working on establishing an international partnership with nursing educators in Lithuania. Dr. Theresa Keane is serving as project director on a SAMSHA grant awarded to Brooklyn AIDS Task Force (BATF) that is examining evidence-based treatment approaches to treatment of persons with co-existing substance use disorder and mental illness. Professor Ellen McGuinn continues to serve as project director for the Health Workforce Retraining Initiative. We are also continuing to develop our SimMan scenarios and incorporate them into our curricula.

Congratulations to the sixty-six (66) January 2009 graduates and we are looking forward to seeing the undergraduates next semester. Wishing you all "Happy Holidays!"

Why I Chose New York City College of Technology

By: Thomas Furgiuele, graduating AAS student January 2009

There have been times during my life when atypical circumstances fueled life-changing decisions. Often, these are intricately connected to people we love. One such circumstance occurred during the spring of 2003. My father-in-law had been diagnosed with metastatic colon cancer in late February. When he recovered from surgery to remove the occluding tumor, a palliative approach was recommended. My wife and I had discussed my father-in-law's condition, and we agreed to establish hospice care for him within our home. During the six months that my father-in-law resided with us, my wife took on the responsibilities of managing the house, as well as my father-in-laws' medical appointments and financial responsibilities. My duties entailed tending to my father-in-laws' daily needs, as well as keeping him as active as possible and providing access to as much fulfilling enrichment as he could manage to participate in.

During that atypical period in my life I had learned something new about who I was. As difficult and demanding as this situation was, I discovered that I was happy being the attentive caregiver no matter what was required of me. I found so much comfort in knowing that I was in control and that my father-in-law was getting the best care possible.

After his passing, I began the process of researching new careers, being that my current business as a specialized exercise therapist was undergoing major attritional fluctuations. I was particularly interested in a career that would be in high demand throughout the country, would challenge me intellectually, and would provide me with a sense of fulfillment. My wife had been suggesting that I look into nursing as a career for many years, but was even more insistent now that she had witnessed what transpired between her father and me.

One day, a friend told me about New York City College of Technology, a school that Benjamin Harrison Namm and Governor Dewey had started for veterans returning from World War II, had a very respected and successful nursing department. I promptly phoned Professor Richardson, the Chairperson of the department of Nursing, and set up an appointment to meet her.

The meeting with Professor Richardson not only provided me with the information as to the opportunities and the challenges of a nursing education and career, but conveyed to me the level of her commitment and enthusiasm. I was convinced that this was the absolute best educational environment for my needs. Within 24 hours of that meeting I was enrolled in the prerequisite process, and determined to succeed.

My experience at New York City College of Technology has exceeded my expectations. The college provides students with some of the most challenging and gifted professors I have ever encountered. The student population is probably one of the most diversified of any college in the nation, and allows for cross-cultural collaboration, as well as the potential promise and vision of what the world can become. I admire the fact that the nursing program does not settle for second best in any regard, and the students who are enrolled in this program are expected to meet that requirement on a daily basis. I would have never imagined myself attempting this endeavor twenty years ago, but life circumstances have seemed to dictate it, and I could not imagine myself doing anything more important with my life. There are times in one's life when it is necessary to go a great distance out of one's way in order to be able to return a short distance correctly.

TIPS for students in the RN-BS program

As submitted by students in the Professional Nursing Course

- It is not easy to balance personal and professional life with school. Therefore, at the very beginning the new student needs to set personal and professional goals as well as educational goals.
- Continuous re-evaluation of priorities and goals is necessary.
- Be sure to obtain academic advisement every semester. Advisement will help to shape and monitor educational goals and academic progress.
- On completion of the ADN program it is best to move straight into the BSN program if possible. If it is not possible, try to take just a semester break. It is not very easy to return to school when one gets caught up in the working world.
- Plan from early on how the classes are going to be structured. Do you want to focus on humanities and arts first or do you want to take them along with the nursing classes?
- Don't forget to plan ahead for pre-requisite courses.
- Always bear in mind that no class is more important than any other, because they all complement each other. They are all designed to make a nurse a well rounded professional equipped with knowledge to make a difference.

AMACHI project comes to City Tech

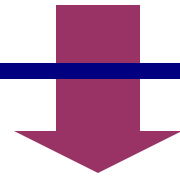
The term AMACHI in the Nigerian language means: **no one knows what has been brought through this child**. We are pleased to announce that the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, through VISTA Americorps, has provided Professor Falk with funding for one year to serve as a VISTA Coordinator for the development of an Amachi Program. The program is a special mentoring program to improve the psychological and functional outcomes of children whose parents are incarcerated. During the 1990s, stricter illegal drug laws affected women who were mothers. Little thought went into what impact this would have on millions of children whose parents were incarcerated. Without intervention, up to 70% of these youths will also be incarcerated. This is one of America's silent populations that is in desperate need of advocacy. You, as future Registered Professional Nurses, have an enormous potential to help break the cycle of incarceration.

The Nursing Department, in conjunction with Student Services and Chaplain, Father Cavalluzzi, is embarking on the establishment of NYCCT Mentoring Program for Children of Promise. This project will serve as a template for nursing schools, which have been an untapped resource of mentors for this population.

Being A Nurse Means Making a Difference

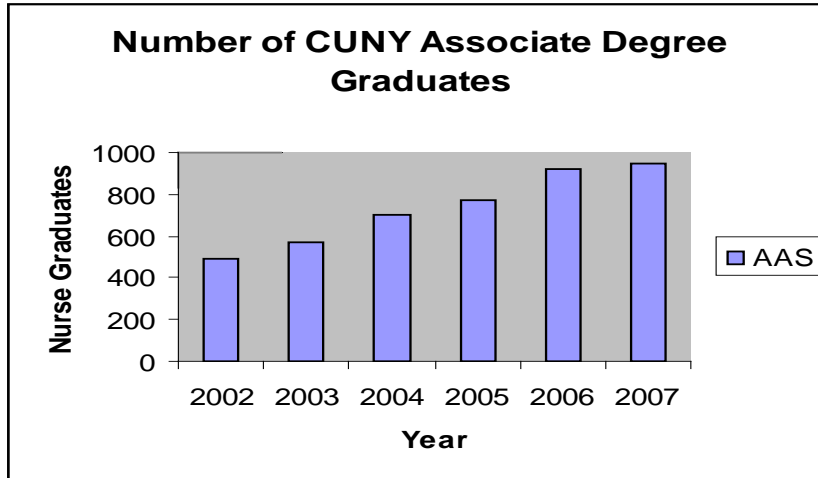
Stay tuned... Judy Stoves, VISTA Coordinator will be hosting an information meeting in January 2009 about becoming a mentor. Stop by the nursing office and fill out a form.

City Tech's Baccalaureate Program

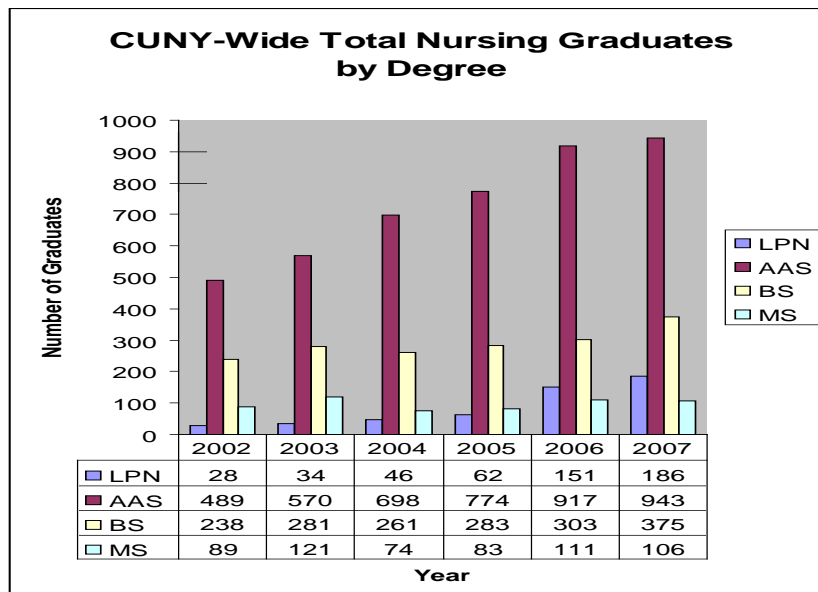


By: Professor Margaret Rafferty and Dr. Carmel Dato

A priority of CUNY has been to increase the number of new nurses that graduate from its nine associate degree and two generic baccalaureate nursing programs so that more new nurses will enter the workforce in New York City. This successful effort has led to the doubling of nursing graduates in the past five years. From 2002 to 2007, the graduations from CUNY associate degree programs increased from 489 to 943.



The vast majority of nurses who graduate from CUNY nursing programs are educated at the associate degree level. The data in the table below shows the BS graduates for both generic and RN-BS programs which accounted for an increasing but still small number of the total graduates within the CUNY system. In the 2007-2008 academic year, less than 20% of the graduates of CUNY graduated from the two colleges within the CUNY system (Hunter and Lehman) that offer the generic baccalaureate degree.



Back in 2001, Professor Richardson and the associate degree faculty envisioned an RN to BS program right here at NYCCT so that graduates could immediately continue their education in a place they called their professional home. They were aware of the increasing number of associate degree graduates in the CUNY system and thought that this required an equal increase in available slots in RN-BS programs. The need for advanced education in nursing in the public sector was very apparent to them and they began working on the development of the BS program in earnest.

Today their dream is a reality. The first graduating class was in January 2008, just two years after the program started. In January 2006 there were 35 students in the program; at this time there are over 150 students with more applicants every day. The program received initial accreditation by the National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission in August 2008 and enrollment is skyrocketing. The third class is due to graduate in January 2009. In 2007, when NYCCT graduated its first graduating class of 15 students, it comprised almost 5% of all the BS graduates within the entire CUNY system.

The number of clinical sites for the three clinical courses is growing each semester. Currently we have students placed in hospitals, clinics, homecare, community care, and other types of agencies. This semester for the first time a new nursing elective course, Nursing Informatics, joins End of Life care as the two nursing electives. Additional nursing electives will be developed.

Last summer two nursing courses were offered, Physical Assessment and Case Management. This summer (2009) they will be offered again along with two or three other courses, dependent upon student interest. For the first time there will be a Winter Session Course offered in January 2009. Students enrolled in Professional Nursing will have the entire course in an intense two and a half week time period.

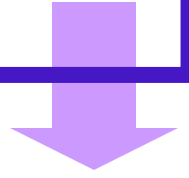
All of the nursing courses in the program are partially or fully online and are all on Wednesdays, including the summer courses. Students like the online format that allows them to take more classes on Wednesdays and have more flexibility in their school work. The faculty is using exciting new pedagogies in the classroom.

Last April several students joined Professors Rafferty and Dato on a trip to the NYSNA Lobby Day in Albany. Students returned enthusiastic about their participation in the important education of elected officials regarding critical issues in nursing and healthcare. Faculty, students and alumni will be attending again this coming spring on Tuesday April 14, 2009.

The challenges of health care in the 21st century demand greater educational preparation for nurses (Aiken, 2003). NYCCT's RN-BS graduates are well positioned by education and experience to become future leaders and managers in an urban-based nursing practice and tomorrow's nursing educators. NYCCT's curriculum is firmly rooted in the Quality and Safety Competency Domains (Cronenwett et al, 2007). NYCCT's BS program prepares the graduates for roles in community health, graduate education and careers in leadership and education. The baccalaureate program increases the pool of Baccalaureate prepared nurses and contributes to the quality of health care by improving the ability of the nursing community to respond with safe evidence-based nursing care to meet the challenges of a healthcare system in medically underserved areas of Brooklyn.

References

Cronenwett, L., Sherwood, G., Barnsteiner J., Disch, J., Johnson, J., Mitchell, P., et al. (2007). Quality and safety education for nurses. *Nursing Outlook*, 55(3) 122-131.

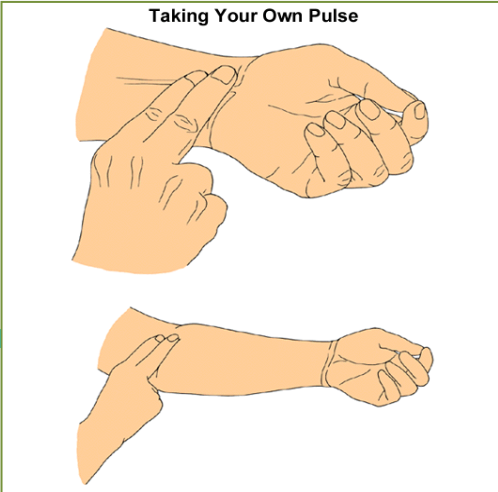


Students enrolled in NUR 2130 - Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing, took a trip to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in Spring 2008 where they studied Bipolar disorder within the context of the life and paintings of Vincent Van Gogh.

The Pulse (Volume 23)

Faculty Editor:
Theresa Keane, Ph.D.

Contributing Students:
-Thomas Furgiuele
- Students in the Professional
Nursing BS course



CONGRATULATIONS to our
graduating AAS students-
Pinning is January 8th at
6PM!!!!



