

## Nurses Needed

By Dr. Al Roberts

Florence Nightingale, the British nurse who founded the modern nursing profession, was born on May 12, 1820. While tending to the needs of wounded soldiers during the Crimean War, she earned a reputation as a merciful and devoted caregiver. After the war, Nightingale returned to England and established a training school for nurses. It opened in 1860.

In 1965, the International Council of Nurses designated Nightingale's birthday as International Nurses Day. The observance commemorates the contributions nurses make to society. In the United States, the week culminating with her birthday (May 6 through May 12) is recognized by the American Nursing Association as National Nurses Week, and the Wednesday of that week is designated as National Student Nurses Day.

Southside Virginia Community College joins in honoring the hard-working women and men who devote their professional lives to caring for the sick and tending to the injured. Few others have such a lasting impact on the health and wellbeing of people in their communities.

Although many nurses say the rewarding feeling of serving others is one of their profession's biggest benefits, credentialed nurses can also earn competitive wages in a career with a recession-proof track record, flexible scheduling opportunities, and a variety of fields from which to choose. Yet, despite these workplace advantages, there is a critical shortage of nurses across the nation—even here in Southside Virginia. Hospitals, doctors' offices, clinics, and other healthcare providers often struggle to find qualified people to fill vacant positions.

Education programs available from SVCC prepare students to embark on careers in nursing and related health fields. The College's state-of-the-art Nursing Simulation Labs provide hands-on learning experiences in a safe, realistic environment. Students also participate in clinical practice at health care agencies located throughout our service region. Local medical facilities are eager to hire College graduates, providing students immediate work opportunities close to home.

SVCC offers instruction that leads to licensure as a Registered Nurse or Licensed Practical Nurse, and the College's Associate in Applied Science Degree in Nursing (ADN) program is accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN). Additionally, in conjunction with Old Dominion University's Distance Learning program, the nursing education path can be extended at SVCC campuses in Alberta and Keysville to include BS or MS degrees. Furthermore, the College's Office of Workforce and Continuing Education prepares students for certification as a Nurse Aide (CNA), Medication Aide, Massage Therapist, or Phlebotomist.

Florence Nightingale said, "I never lose an opportunity of urging a practical beginning, however small, for it is wonderful how often in such matters the mustard-seed germinates and roots itself." If you would like to begin a rewarding career in the health professions, call 888-220-SVCC (7822) for more information.

Dr. Al Roberts is president of Southside Virginia Community College, an institution of higher learning that provides a wide variety of education opportunities to a diverse student population within a service area that spans ten counties and the city of Emporia. He can be reached via email at [al.roberts@southside.edu](mailto:al.roberts@southside.edu).