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## **FKCC Celebrates National Nurses Week: Recognizes Supporters and Graduates 19 New Nurses**



One-hundred percent of FKCC's fall 2009 graduating class passed the national licensure exam and are now registered nurses.

KEY WEST, FL, April 30, 2010— In celebration of National Nurses Week, Florida Keys Community College will host a presentation and luncheon on Thursday, May 6 at 11:00am in the Library on the college's Key West campus. FKCC faculty, staff, and students, along with the FKCC Foundation, have invited numerous community supporters and donors to thank them for the generosity that enables FKCC to continue to produce quality nurses and healthcare professionals throughout the Keys. National Nurses Week, celebrated annually all over the United States, begins May 6, marked as RN Recognition Day and ends on May 12, the birthday of Florence Nightingale, the founder of nursing as a modern profession.

FKCC Interim Dean of Allied Health and Nursing Debbie Allish will begin the event with a reading that reflects the theme of the festivities: "Our Passion is Our Profession." Guest speaker Lynn Mauck, Chief Nursing Officer of Fishermen's Hospital, will discuss the critical role that nurses play in the future of healthcare and an FKCC nursing student will speak on behalf of the students about the educational experience.

Nursing students will honor numerous supporters of the program with the presentation of a peach rose, the designated academic color of nursing. Over the years, civic organizations and private individuals have donated hundreds of thousands of dollars to the FKCC Foundation to provide nursing scholarships to worthy students and to supplement declining program resources. Representatives from the Lower Keys Women’s Club, the recently-disbanded Lower Keys Medical Center Auxiliary, Hemingway Look-Alike Society, and Key West Women’s Club will all be honored. The FKCC Nursing Advisory Committee, made up of local healthcare professionals, will also be thanked for volunteering their time and expertise to continually enhance the program, as will the many hospitals and healthcare offices that provide clinical facilities to the college.

In its 44-year history, FKCC’s esteemed Nursing and Allied Health Program has trained approximately 1,000 nurses—many who have gone on to save lives and improve the overall health in the Florida Keys. FKCC graduates boast a 92.3% exam pass rate for national licensure—significantly higher than state and national averages. Many of these graduates continue their education, although a large number enter the program already holding graduate and doctoral degrees, but hoping to find a more fulfilling career in nursing. FKCC Nursing alumni also have a long history of serving Monroe County with fundraising, providing care for the homeless, HIV education and prevention efforts, and health screening in the public schools. This year, FKCC, in conjunction with Women Kind, Zonta Club of Key West, and AHEC (Area Health Education Center), established a free healthcare clinic at the Metropolitan Community Church, where many students volunteer.

“Our students are some of the most hardworking that I have ever met; they consistently demonstrate the essential elements of caring, compassion, and collaboration necessary to provide quality care to the clients and their families in our community,” says Debbie Allish, FKCC’s Interim Dean of Allied Health and Nursing. “I am honored to work with such dedicated students and faculty, and incredibly thankful to the many supporting individuals and organizations that enable us to do what we do: educate future nurses.”

On Friday, May 7<sup>th</sup> at 11:00a.m., FKCC will hold a traditional pinning ceremony in Tennessee Williams Theatre for nineteen graduates. The class will be recognized by their instructors with pins inscribed with FKCC’s seal—a rite symbolically welcoming graduates into the nursing profession. Later that evening, the graduates will participate in the larger FKCC commencement ceremony, also in the theater on FKCC’s Key West campus.

For more information about FKCC’s Nursing and Allied Health Programs, visit the website at [www.fkcc.edu](http://www.fkcc.edu).

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