



For immediate release  
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**Contact**

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## **Northeast State Nursing degree program achieves full Board approval**

BLOUNTVILLE – Northeast State Community College’s Nursing degree program has achieved full approval from the Tennessee Board of Nursing after review of 2009 program graduates’ scores on National Council Licensure Exam for Registered Nurses (NCLEX-RN) and job placement.

The Tennessee Board of Nursing granted initial approval to the degree program in February 2007. The Board voted to grant full approval to the program on Feb. 18.

“The Board’s decision marks another milestone in the Nursing program,” said Dr. Melessia Webb, dean of Nursing at Northeast State. “Our faculty and students thank the Board of Nursing for recognizing the quality of our program and the value of the degree for students and future nurses.”

Northeast State’s first class of 40 nursing students was chosen in summer of 2007 from more than 80 applicants. Those students began classes in fall 2007 and graduated together in spring 2009, receiving the associate of applied science degree.

The first class of program graduates taking the NCLEX-RN national nursing licensure exam posted an impressive first-time pass rate of 87.1 percent for the first group of program graduates. Students from Tennessee taking the NCLEX-RN exam ranked first in the United States exam pass rates, with Oregon in second place.

Webb said the high pass rate of Northeast State exemplified the value of the associate degree and how the students’ preparation had translated to practical success.

“The students’ success on the exam exemplified everything we hoped to do in the Nursing program,” said Webb. “The 87.1% pass rate for the first graduating class along with TN having the highest pass rate in the United States is something to be proud of - thanks to the great faculty in this nursing program and in this state.”

The division of Nursing is housed at the Regional Center for Health Professions in downtown Kingsport. The program requires completion of 27 credit hours of general education courses and 38 credit hours of nursing-intensive course work.

Other areas highlighted during the approval included student retention from semester one to semester four of May 2009 class of 79 percent. Those graduates had a 100 percent placement rate after graduation in the workforce. The Board of Nursing also reviewed nursing administration qualifications; fiscal support for the program; nursing faculty qualifications; nursing student acceptance, progression; program grading criteria; and the high standards established by the curriculum requirements.

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PRESS RELEASE

**Photo/Nursing 6:** Northeast State nursing students' success in job placement and national licensing exams have solidified the two-year-old program's value in winning full approval from the Tennessee Board of Nursing.