Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey has been the premier nursing program in the state for 50 years with more than 800 students currently at Newark, New Brunswick and Camden. Through exemplary research, scholarship, educational offerings, and internationally and nationally recognized faculty, the College of Nursing at Rutgers is the program to choose for baccalaureate, master’s, and doctoral offerings. Rutgers College of Nursing has defined leadership and excellence in nursing education in New Jersey producing the exceptional Rutgers nurse. This heritage of excellence is at the heart of the College’s degree programs and places Rutgers among the most prestigious nursing programs in the nation. Graduates are recognized as leaders throughout the profession. This strength of leadership and scholarship has been a hallmark of the College’s 50 years. There is a Rutgers nurse in virtually every hospital in New Jersey. Most of our graduates practice in New Jersey, however our College of Nursing graduates reside in every U.S. State & Territory. A brief history of where we have been, what we are currently doing, and where we want to go is emphasized in the following pages.

A Remarkable History

Beginning in 1941, Rutgers offered courses to professional nurses in public health nursing on the Newark and Camden campuses. The following year, the University of Newark offered a one-semester program that included content in biological, physical, and social sciences for student nurses enrolled in diploma schools. The popularity of this program led to the inauguration of a Division of Nursing at the University of Newark in 1943 which offered a one-semester pre-clinical program. The University of Newark was absorbed by Rutgers in 1946, and in 1949, the one-semester pre-clinical program was extended to two semesters.

In 1952, Rutgers altered the name of the division to the Division of Nursing Education and moved it into the Newark College of Arts of Sciences. As a result of lobbying from the New Jersey Board of Nursing, the New Jersey League for Nursing, and the New Jersey State Nurses’ Association, the Division of Nursing Education was granted state civil defense funds to offer the following nursing programs: (a) a 4-year baccalaureate program (the first in the state), (b) a 2-year experimental program (forerunner of the associate degree programs in nursing), (c) an RN to BS program (begun in 1951), and (d) the continuation of the pre-clinical program for student nurses enrolled in diploma schools which closed three years later. Six students were admitted to the 2-year experimental program and ten students were admitted to the 4-year baccalaureate program.

The School of Nursing, established in 1953, became the College of Nursing, the 15th college to be established at Rutgers University. Ella V. Stonsby
was named the first Director of Nursing Education and later became the first Dean in 1956 (see timeline of Deans in Table1). Ms. Stontsby was the author of the 8-year design for a career ladder for nursing education. It was her plan that an individual interested in nursing would start in the 2-year associate degree program, then continue on through a baccalaureate, master’s, and doctoral program; the nursing doctorate (ND). Rutgers established the first three programs in the 1950s, but never established doctoral programs until several decades later. The nursing program was originally housed in an old brewery on Rector Street and in 1955 moved to a brownstone at 18 James Street (one of the Ballantine Mansions). See Figure 1

In 1954, Dr. Hildegard E. Peplau, the world-renowned pioneer in nursing theory and psychiatric nursing, joined the nursing faculty. She was one of a few faculty members. In 1955, she received a federal program grant from the National Institute of Mental Health to prepare clinical nurse specialists in psychiatric nursing. This was the first such program in the country to be established and achieve accreditation. See Figure 2. Students in the late 1950’s are shown in clinical learning in Figure 3.

In 1963, the associate degree, two-year program was discontinued. In 1964, the generic baccalaureate program offering the Bachelor of Science degree was begun and L. Bernice Chapman was named as the second dean. Three years later, in 1967, the College of Nursing moved to 87-91 Halsey Street.

In 1971, the first post-baccalaureate primary health care program for pediatric nurse practitioners was initiated in collaboration with the New Jersey College of Medicine & Dentistry. Graduate programs were started in 1974 in the areas of community health nursing, parent-child nursing, and medical-surgical nursing. The focus was the clinical specialist role, but instruction was also offered in administration and education. In the same year, Dr. Eleanor G. Knudson was appointed as the third dean of the College of Nursing and the College moved to 392 High Street. In 1977, Dr. Beverly H. Bowns, the fourth dean of the College was named. This was the same year that the College of Nursing Educational Opportunity Fund Program (CN-EOF) was started; the only nursing EOF program in the state. Dr. Bobbie Perdue was the first Director. In 1978, the College of Nursing moved to Bradley Hall.

In 1980, the continuing education program was initiated with Dr. Gayle Pearson as Director, now the College of Nursing’s Center for Professional Development. In the same year, an RN to BS program was initiated on the New Brunswick campus. In 1981, Dr. Dorothy DeMaio was named the fifth dean of the College of Nursing and the College of Nursing moved to Ackerson and Conklin Halls on the Newark campus where it remains today. In 1983, the baccalaureate program was expanded to New Brunswick with grants from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and Middlesex General University Hospital. The Bartlett Street building was acquired and several years later, the building at 1 Richardson
was added. A new nursing building is under construction for the College of Nursing in New Brunswick.

The 1990s began with the enrollment of the first class of the PhD program in nursing, the first nursing PhD program in the state, and the extension of the graduate program in Camden in 1990. In 1995, Dr. Hurdis Griffith was named the sixth dean of the College of Nursing. One year later, the RN to BS/MS program was initiated and two primary health care centers were established under a HRSA grant. In 1999, the first online courses were offered.

In 2002, Dr. Felissa R. Lashley was named the seventh dean of the College of Nursing. One year later, the Nursing Center for Bioterrorism and Emerging Infectious Diseases Preparedness was started, the first such center under a College of Nursing. Annual conferences sponsored by the Center, focusing on these issues, have occurred since 2003. In the same year, the post-master’s certificate programs in specialty areas were offered as well as the school nurse certification post-baccalaureate program was approved. In 2004, the BS/MS to PhD program was started. In 2005, groundbreaking occurred for the College of Nursing building in New Brunswick. The first classes are expected to occur in this building in fall 2008. The 14-month accelerated baccalaureate program for second-degree students also started in 2005. Finally, in 2006, the PhD program was converted to an online / blended program and 15 students were admitted; the largest PhD class ever to be admitted to the Rutgers College of Nursing PhD program.

Current Accomplishments

Today, the College of Nursing continues to be at the forefront of nursing education in the state of New Jersey. This fall, the generic baccalaureate program has nearly 600 students with programs in Newark and New Brunswick. The College of Nursing continues its commitment to educating a diverse student body with about 60% minority students. This is representative of the Newark campus which was designated the most culturally diverse campus in the U.S. for the tenth straight year by the U.S. News & World Report. More than 11% of the baccalaureate students are male. An additional 71 students make up the enrollment in the accelerated baccalaureate and RN to BS programs. The total number of graduate students is 142 in the master’s program and 27 in the PhD program.

The mission of Rutgers College of Nursing is to educate students, advance the discipline of nursing through research, provide service that is responsive to the health care needs of the public, and demonstrate local, national, and international leadership for the profession. In the section below, our current accomplishments will be highlighted.
**Academic Programs**

In the fall of 2006, the first online and blended PhD program was introduced at Rutgers College of Nursing to meet the needs of nurses interested in a PhD program who cannot attend a traditional setting because of family and work demands. Fifteen students were enrolled in the first class, making it the largest entering PhD class in the history of the college. Most of the students come from the metropolitan area, however one student is from Indonesia and one is from Nevada.

Recently, the Rutgers Board of Governors approved the College of Nursing’s Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program which will begin its first class in January 2007. This is a relatively new program for nursing and Rutgers College of Nursing is in the vanguard of offering this program. The DNP program differs from the PhD program in that it will focus on the practice of nursing and the application of research, rather than the development and testing of original research. The DNP program will also be in the online and blended format. Each of the doctoral programs requires short residencies.

Students in the master’s program can pursue specialty clinical options in acute care for the adult and aged, advanced practice in pediatric nursing, advanced practice in women’s health, community health nursing, family nurse practitioner, care of the adult and aged nurse practitioner, oncology nursing, and psychiatric/mental health nurse practitioner. A post-master’s certificate program in each of the specialties is also available.

Students wishing to complete the baccalaureate program, can do so as a generic student (traditional 4-year program), 2-year second-degree student, RN to BS/MS student, and as a 14-month, second-degree, accelerated student. A post-baccalaureate option in school nursing is also available. The honors program offers undergraduate nursing students unique opportunities to work closely with faculty on projects relating to research and scholarship. All programs have appropriate state and/or national accreditation.

The College of Nursing continues to partner with New Jersey’s top hospitals, clinics, and community agencies, many of which are magnet designated, for support of its teaching and research missions.

**Scholarship & Research**

Throughout its history Rutgers College of Nursing students have had the benefit of learning from a faculty that is widely respected for their excellence as educators and for their accomplishments as researchers, with more fellows in the prestigious American Academy of Nursing on the faculty than any other College of Nursing in New Jersey. Both undergraduate and graduate students have the opportunity to work closely with Rutgers College of Nursing faculty as research assistants. Faculty research interests include the care and promotion of health in
infants, children, adolescents, aged, and families; HIV; access to health care; chronic illness; and oncology. Faculty members also examine such issues as symptom management, exercise, health disparities, nursing workforce issues, and quality-of-life issues in vulnerable populations. Additional research foci include biopreparedness, emerging infectious diseases, genetics, and high-fidelity patient simulation in nursing education.

Several faculty have received federal funding for their research in the past several years which has greatly increased Rutgers standing in the National Institutes of Health rankings in keeping with Rutgers University standards. So far in 2006 the following had external research/program funding: Dr. Karen D’Alonzo, Dr. Geri Dickson, Dr. Lucille Eller, Dr. Linda Flynn, Dr. Rachel Jones, Dr. Felissa Lashley, Dr. Wendy Nehring, Dr. Gayle Pearson, Dr. Joanne Robinson, Dr. Charlotte Thomas-Hawkins, and Ms. Deborah Walker-McCall. Many faculty author or edit books or book chapters, and over 225 books written by Rutgers College of Nursing faculty and alumni have been identified over the fifty year history. Faculty continue to publish in prestigious nursing and interdisciplinary journals such as Nursing Research, Journal of Cultural Diversity, Biological Research for Nursing, Journal of Pediatric Nursing, Research in Nursing and Health, American Journal of Nursing, Nursing Clinics of North America, and the World Journal of Urology. As a result of such research accomplishments, Rutgers College of Nursing faculty have been recognized with a myriad of regional and national honors and awards in the past several years.

Leadership

Rutgers College of Nursing faculty, students, and alumni have served in many national and state leadership positions over the years. Examples include: Dr. Dorothy DeMaio, past-president of the New Jersey Board of Nursing and past-chair of the Board of Trustees of the United Health Care Systems; Monica Gessner (Student), past-president of the National Student Nurses Association (1988-89); Dr. Lucille A. Joel who was the past-president of American Nurses Association (ANA), past-president of the New Jersey State Nurses Association (NJSNA), past-editor of American Journal of Nursing (AJN), and is now president of the Commission on Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools; Dr. Felissa R. Lashley, past-president of the HIV/AIDS Nursing Certification Board; Dr. Beverly Malone, past-president of ANA, general secretary of the Royal College of Nursing, and incoming chief executive officer of the National League for Nursing (2007); Dr. Gayle Pearson past-president of NJSNA; Dr. Hildegard Peplau, past-president of the ANA, and past chief executive officer of the ANA; Dr. Shirley Smoyak, editor of the Journal of Psychosocial Nursing; Dr. Beverly Whipple, secretary general, World Association for Sexual Health, past-president, Society for the Scientific Study of Sexuality, and past-president, American Association of Sex Educators, Counselors and Therapists; and Dr. Nancy Valentine, past chief nursing officer of the Department of Veterans Affairs.
Special Programs

The College of Nursing continues the tradition of cutting edge innovations in its efforts to improve the health status of the citizens of New Jersey and beyond. The College of Nursing is involved in a number of special projects and programs. Specific programs are detailed below. The College is also involved with community and school projects in both Newark and New Brunswick that involve school-age children and their health care and health status.

The Center for Professional Development. The Center for Professional Development. Led by Assistant Dean Dr. Gayle Pearson, the continuing education branch of the College of Nursing, continues to be nationally recognized for its innovative offerings and annual meetings. This includes the computer and technology conference which will celebrate its 25th year in 2007 and which has become international, the end-of-life conference, and the emerging infectious diseases conference. Individuals interested in the offerings from the Center for Professional Development can view the College of Nursing webpage and select from a variety of in-person, online courses, and certificate programs. The AIDS Education Training Center subcontract for New Jersey is housed in the Center.

The Nursing Center for Bioterrorism and Emerging Infectious Diseases Preparedness. Led by Dr. Felissa R. Lashley as interim Director, was established in 2003. The Nursing Center for Bioterrorism and Emerging Infectious Diseases Preparedness serves as a primary source of education, information and research initiatives for nurses, nurse practitioners, and all allied nursing personnel on practice matters relating to biological, chemical, and nuclear terrorism as well as emerging infectious diseases and has online continuing education modules in these areas. The grant-funded Nursing Center, along with the Center for Professional Development, sponsored the third annual Emerging Infectious Diseases Conference, entitled, "Responding to a Natural Disaster."

New Jersey Collaborating Center for Nursing. Led by Dr. Geri Dickson as Director, the New Jersey Collaborating Center for Nursing was established through state legislation and a partnership between the state of New Jersey and Robert Wood Johnson Foundation in 2002. It is a primary source for data-based evidence to formulate reliable health policy that has a positive impact on nursing care, nursing education, and patient outcomes. The Center further serves as a catalyst for the implementation of innovative practice and education models. Several research studies examining nursing workforce issues are led by Drs. Dickson and Flynn.

Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF). Led by Ms. Deborah Walker-McCall, Rutgers College of Nursing continues to offer the only discipline-specific Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF) program in the state. This program has assisted many qualified students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds in New Jersey to become a professional registered nurse through the
minority nurse leadership institute. An outgrowth of the College of Nursing EOF program was the development of the Minority Nurse Leadership Institute (MNLI) in 1999. The MNLI was established by a team of visionary educators and minority nurse leaders to assist nurses of color to overcome political, social, and cultural barriers that may have impeded their access to leadership positions. Through a series of monthly workshops presented by nationally-recognized nurse leaders and experts from other disciplines, the grant-funded MNLI provides participants the opportunity to gain insight into their strengths and weaknesses, learn how to cope with day-to-day challenges, politics of the workplace, and gain a greater awareness of the issues that affect the delivery of health in minority communities. Currently, funding is provided by Johnson & Johnson.

high-fidelity patient simulation. High-fidelity patient simulation is quickly growing as an important adjunct to clinical education in nursing across the country. Rutgers is one of the leading nursing programs in this area. Currently, high-fidelity patient simulation is being used in four undergraduate nursing courses and one graduate nursing course with plans to increase the student exposure. The College of Nursing owns two adult high-fidelity simulators and will be acquiring the pediatric simulator in 2007. See Figure 4. The College is one of seven nursing programs in the country taking part in developing curriculum models in simulation for use in nursing programs throughout the United States.

the years ahead

The Rutgers College of Nursing will continue its premier status in the state with further national and international initiatives in the years to come. The vision of the Rutgers College of Nursing stipulates that it will maintain its status as a premier institution for nursing education, research, and service. These may be summarized in the following categories:

- Academic excellence: A comprehensive, continuous, cooperative academic program will prepare nurses for leadership in health care practice and in research.
- Research: Collaborative and individual nursing research achievements will be recognized for their contribution to promoting and advancing nursing practice and leadership.
- Service: Integral to this vision is service to health-care consumers throughout the State of New Jersey, particularly the vulnerable and underserved.

Highlights of future plans are detailed below, organized into sections on academic programs, research and scholarship, service, and our new nursing building in New Brunswick.

academic programs
The Rutgers College of Nursing will continue to assess its programs so that excellence and timeliness remain constant elements. In fall 2007, the RN to BSN program will be an online and blended program. The DNP program will begin in January 2007 as an online and blended program. The American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) has predicted that by 2015, all clinical master’s programs will evolve into DNP programs. To that end, the graduate nursing faculty are beginning discussions on what our master’s programs will look like in the near future. Nurses across the state are also asking for a bridge program to be developed between the DNP and PhD programs, and faculty will be examining various possibilities. As delineated earlier, the Rutgers College of Nursing will continue to develop its leadership in using innovative simulation and technology applications in its educational programs, including ways to increase access to Rutgers College of Nursing programs for nurses in all areas of New Jersey. We intend to increase collaborations with other nursing programs in the state. Individuals are welcome to make an appointment to see our exciting technical innovations in nursing education.

Research and Scholarship

Rutgers College of Nursing has nationally and internationally recognized faculty who are not only dedicated clinicians but also researchers making the latest discoveries that are translated into nursing education and practice. We intend to increase our scholarly and research productivity and increase our national rankings in the amount of research funding in the future. Rutgers College of Nursing researchers are known for their work in such areas as HIV/AIDS, genetics, emerging infectious diseases, workforce studies, health disparities, chronic illness, adolescent issues, policy, social and emotional adjustment to illness, and access to care. Our research is translational having direct applications to nursing practice, thus benefiting the citizens of the state of New Jersey through improvement of their health and health care.

Service

Service to our communities include that to the profession, health care and the public. We intend to increase our present endeavors in the Newark, New Brunswick, and surrounding communities in regard to strengthening and increasing partnerships with communities, public schools, health care agencies and professional and lay organizations. These partnerships include, but are not limited to issues regarding the appropriate funding for the nursing programs in the state of New Jersey, adequate compensation for nursing faculty, and, as a result, the ability to educate well-qualified nurses for the state of New Jersey. This includes the education of the Rutgers nurse who will possess the evidence-based knowledge, skills, critical thinking, and clinical reasoning for practice now and in the coming years. Service also includes examining issues in the nursing workplace, and issues of the nursing workforce to ensure the retention of nurses.
and adequate compensation in the years to come. Further, our Center for Professional Development continues to offer cutting edge programming to meet the new continuing education needs of nurses in New Jersey with the advent of mandatory continuing education for relicensure in New Jersey. Future visioning includes the possible development of a World Health Organization collaborating center focusing on nursing workforce.

**The New Brunswick Nursing Building**

The groundbreaking for the new Rutgers College of Nursing building in New Brunswick took place in November 2005 followed by the site dedication in April 2006 where a time capsule was unveiled. See Figure 5. Among the materials placed in the time capsule were the papers written by Rutgers College of Nursing students on what nursing will look like in 2056. The new building will be located on the Rutgers Health Science Center campus, and will be a multistory structure that will replace the two small houses that the College has outgrown on the College Avenue New Brunswick campus. The building is scheduled to open in Fall 2008.

Housed in this new building will be a state-of-the-art nursing practice laboratory, a patient simulation laboratory, faculty offices, research space, clinic rooms, a large smart lecture hall, several smaller classrooms, and a lounge area for students and faculty. Informal learning will be simulated by use of informal learning spaces throughout the wireless building. Clinical faculty and graduate students from the Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy at Rutgers, will have space in the new College of Nursing building, fostering interdisciplinary interactions. See Figure 6. In turn, the College of Nursing will have some remodeled space in the Pharmacy building on the Busch campus in New Brunswick. On our drawing board is renovation of the College of Nursing space in Newark.

**Summary**

With our future plans, as delineated above, and as they evolve in response to changes in society, faculty of Rutgers College of Nursing will continue to exhibit leadership across the state and nation. Based in research, we will continue to inspire our nursing students to provide intelligent, compassionate care resulting in the Rutgers Nurse (see Figure 7).

Dean Felissa R. Lashley, faculty, and staff invite anyone interested in learning more about the academic programs, research, special programs and projects, and other opportunities available at Rutgers College of Nursing to view their webpage at [http://nursing.rutgers.edu](http://nursing.rutgers.edu) and to contact them with individual questions. The Rutgers College of Nursing is proud of its remarkable heritage and looks forward to the future contributions the College of Nursing will make in the lives of the citizens of New Jersey, in particular, and the nation and world in general, in the years to come.
The 50th anniversary of the College of Nursing kicked off in April 2006 with the site dedication in New Brunswick for the new College of Nursing building to be built on that campus (more details below). This was followed on September 28th with the 50 Years of Books by Rutgers Nursing Authors event where books written by faculty and alumni were recognized and displayed for several weeks at John Cotton Dana Library on the Rutgers-Newark campus in Newark. More than 225 books by Rutgers College of Nursing faculty and alumni were listed in the catalog. After the inaugural showing of the books and the reception, a video entitled, A Changing HIV Sexual Risk Behaviors of Young, Urban Women® reflecting the funded research of Dr. Rachel Jones was shown. This work was nominated for a media award from the American Academy of Nursing.

In December, a Holiday Wine Tasting and Private Viewing of Toulouse-Lautrec and the French Imprint was held at the Jane Voorhees Zimmerli Art Museum on the Rutgers-New Brunswick campus.

The next event is a Coach=s Corner Rutgers Women=s Basketball game and lunch on February 3, 2007 at noon, to be held at the RAC on the Rutgers-New Brunswick campus.

Finally, the culmination of our year-long celebration will be the College of Nursing 50th Anniversary Gala and Silent Auction to be held at The Palace in Somerset Park on April 26, 2007. For more information on any of these events, which all are welcome to attend, please contact Andrea West, the Director of Development, at acwest@rutgers.edu.

Table 1. 50 Years of Nursing Leadership

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The Rutgers College of Nursing Deans

Figure 1. The First Rutgers Nursing Building in Newark
Figure 2. (left) Ella V. Stonesby, the first dean of Rutgers College of Nursing showing the first College of Nursing uniform to Dr. Hildegarde Peplau (right), the founder of modern psychiatric nursing.
Figure 3. Rutgers College of Nursing students circa late 1950’s
Figure 4. Rutgers nursing students and their instructor with the human patient simulator ®
Figure 5. Groundbreaking Ceremony for new Rutgers College of Nursing building in New Brunswick, November 2005. (Left to Right) Dr. Steven J. Diner, Rutgers-Newark provost; Dr. David Mechanic, director, Institute of Health, Health Care Policy and Aging Research, Rutgers; James M. Cahill, New Brunswick mayor; Dr. James R. Knickman, vice president for research and evaluation, The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation; Felissa R. Lashley, dean and professor, Rutgers College of Nursing; Dr. Clifton R. Lacy, president and CEO, Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital; Dr. Richard L. McCormick, president, Rutgers University; Joseph F. Vitale, State Senator (D-Woodbridge); and member of the Rutgers Board of Trustees.
Figure 6. Architectural rendering of new Rutgers College of Nursing building in New Brunswick
Figure 7. Members of the Rutgers College of Nursing graduating class of 2006