

DURHAM TECHNICAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE
1637 Lawson Street, P.O. Box 11307, Durham, N.C. 27703

News Release

August 3, 2006
For immediate use

Contact: Nell Yates, (919) 686-3757, yatesn@durhamtech.edu
Wanda Winslow, (919) 686-3401, winsloww@durhamtech.edu
Fax (919) 686-3663

DTCC Certified Nursing Assistant Program to Hold ‘Pinning’

(DURHAM, N.C.) – Sharhonda Harvey knew she had a nurturing kind of personality. She also knew she wanted a job that made a difference in people’s lives. On Thursday, Aug. 10, Sharhonda will be among the newest graduates of Durham Community College’s Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) certificate program. The ‘pinning’ ceremony takes place at 7 p.m. in the N.C. Mutual Building auditorium, 411 W. Chapel Hill St.

CNA students like Harvey learn basic nursing care for adults and the elderly. They learn how to take accurate vital signs; how to properly transfer patients to and from a bed; and how to feed, bath, and dress patients. On the job, they can give patients therapeutic back rubs, change linens and even assist with meal preparation if needed. CNAs are in high demand at hospitals, nursing homes, and home health care agencies.

Of course colleges can teach skills, but the nurturing must come naturally. “I love taking care of people,” said Harvey, a former state employee now in the midst of her clinical rotations with patients. “You really brighten someone’s life. Just coming in with a pleasant attitude, helping them comb their hair, put on some lipstick and get ready for breakfast can make a big difference to them.”

Harvey says the work is challenging but rewarding. She loves it so much that she plans to continue in the field by enrolling in Durham Tech’s Associate Degree Nursing (ADN) program. In fact, the college now requires students to become Certified Nursing Assistants before joining the ADN.

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Cindy Hardin, director of Durham Tech's CNA program, said the college enrolls approximately 140 students each semester, with 20 students in each section. A new offering at the college is a hybrid class that combines time in the classroom with online instruction. Each spring the program offers an English as Second Language (ESL) section of CAN instruction.

Class make-up in the program is diverse. Some students want to make a career change to become a compassionate caregiver as a CNA. Then again, like Harvey, 40 to 50 percent of the CNA students choose to continue their education in nursing. In addition, some students pursuing physician's assistant degrees at area universities take the class for their required clinical hours.