



The Virginia Foundation
FOR COMMUNITY COLLEGE EDUCATION

NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release:
July 29, 2008

News Release Highlight:
Two nursing students from Patrick Henry Community College are the first recipients of the Gerald L. Baliles Commonwealth Legacy Scholarship, through the Virginia Foundation for Community College Education.

MEDIA CONTACTS:
Jeffrey Kraus
Assistant Vice Chancellor for
Public Relations
(804) 819-4949
jkraus@vccs.edu

Patrick Henry Community College Nursing Students Earn 2008 Gerald L. Baliles Commonwealth Legacy Scholarships

RICHMOND – **Terry Oakes**, of Collinsville, and **Vicky Thomas**, of Bassett are the inaugural recipients of the Gerald L. Baliles Commonwealth Legacy Scholarships sponsored by the Virginia Foundation for Community College Education.

This statewide scholarship was established in 2007 in honor of former Governor Baliles' dedicated and distinguished career in public service and in tribute to his outstanding leadership as a champion of education in the Commonwealth. Oakes and Thomas will each receive \$2,500 to pursue their educational goals.

Oakes will enroll in Patrick Henry Community College and pursue nursing. A former Emergency Medical Technician, Terry recently lost his job as a driver with American Standard Building Systems. Described as “a very hard worker” who “possesses the integrity our society needs today,” Terry set out to find work to support his family immediately when his company closed. As a father of two sons with health problems, Terry has long held a goal of obtaining his nursing degree but has not had the resources to pursue it.

Thomas will also attend Patrick Henry Community College and pursue nursing. A mother of six children, Vicky would like to better herself with more education and prove to herself and to her family that “being 37 does not hinder you from continuing to learn and grow.” She has

worked since she was sixteen in the medical transcription industry but finds many of these jobs are being outsourced now. Her goal is to attend PHCC full-time and to earn her degree “as quickly as possible.”

Patrick Henry Community College, along with the other 22 Virginia Community Colleges, is aggressively working to help fill Virginia’s nursing shortage. It is estimated that the commonwealth’s growing and aging population will need an additional 22,600 new nurses by the year 2020. Every year, Virginia Community Colleges graduates account for nearly half of the new nurses in Virginia. Since the 2002-2003 academic year, the number of VCCS nursing graduates has increased 52 percent.

###

The Virginia Foundation for Community College Education (VFCCE) helps turn imagination into reality for the thousands of Virginians who dream of going to college. Working hand in hand with Virginia’s 23 community colleges, the VFCCE seeks to guarantee financial assistance to all those who want a college education. For details about the foundation and scholarship information (or scholarship opportunities), visit myfuture.vccs.edu/foundation.