



**The City University of New York
2008 Survey of Nursing Graduates (1997-2007)
Summary Report**

October 2009

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I INTRODUCTION

According to the NYS Center for Health Workforce Studies, in New York City there are 420,000 health care jobs including about 365,000 in the private sector and 55,000 in the public sector, representing 11 percent of all jobs. Hospitals are still the largest employers of NYC health workers accounting for about half of the jobs, but employment in home health care, ambulatory care, and nursing homes has increased significantly. Nationally, and in NYC, many of the fastest growing occupations are projected to be in health care.

Registered Nurses (RNs) are the largest single occupation in the health sector, comprising 15 percent of all jobs in the health care industry. The American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) tracks nursing shortage indicators. It cites U.S. Government projections that more than 587,000 new nursing positions will be created through 2016 (a 24 percent increase), making nursing the nation's top profession in terms of projected job growth.

Quality health care is dependent on the availability of an educated and well-trained workforce, and the City University of New York's responsibility is to prepare a sufficient number of qualified personnel to meet the health care needs of NYC residents. Each year, through its expansive network, CUNY prepares a large pool of qualified nurses who are dedicated to providing quality health care services to all New Yorkers. Thirteen CUNY schools offer nursing programs, from the Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) certificate to the Doctorate in Nursing Science (DNS). Between 2003 and 2008, in response to the nursing shortage, CUNY doubled its total number of yearly nursing graduates while maintaining high pass rates on the licensing examination.

In 2008, the Office of the University Dean for Health and Human Services conducted a survey of CUNY nursing graduates to gather data on student outcomes that would help us strengthen these important professional programs. The survey was designed to examine CUNY graduates' educational experiences, their experiences as new registered nurses (RNs), and their experiences in the labor market. It included students that graduated with an Associate in Applied Science (AAS) in Nursing, a generic Bachelor of Science (BS) in Nursing, or an RN to Bachelor of

Science (BS) in Nursing. The AAS and generic BS degree programs are an important source of entry-level RNs. The RN to BS nursing completion programs provide career ladder opportunities for students who already have an RN license. The following report provides descriptive data from selected survey questions.

II METHODOLOGY

The 2008 Survey of CUNY Nursing Graduates was conducted by the Office of the University Dean for Health and Human Services. Respondents completed interviews between August 2008 and November 2008.

Sample Selection and Response Rate

Our sample was drawn from the 8,595 students who graduated from CUNY nursing degree programs between 1997 and 2007 including: 1) AAS degree programs in nursing offered through nine CUNY schools (Borough of Manhattan Community College, Bronx Community College, Hostos Community College, Kingsborough Community College, LaGuardia Community College, Medgar Evers College, New York City College of Technology, Queensborough Community College, and the College of Staten Island); 2) generic BS degree programs in nursing offered at two CUNY schools (Hunter College and Lehman College); and 3) RN to BS nursing completion programs offered through five CUNY schools (Hunter College, Lehman College, Medgar Evers College, the College of Staten Island, and York College).

A stratified random sample was selected by college, year graduated, degree type, gender, and race. Students receiving a BS degree in nursing and Hispanic students were oversampled to ensure sufficient power for the analysis. A total sample of 4,286 individuals was provided to Cornell University's Survey Research Institute (SRI), which administered the survey. Potential respondents were sent an alert postcard and were subsequently contacted by SRI to set up a time to participate in a 20-minute telephone survey. We offered a \$10 incentive for survey participation. A total of 32 percent of telephone numbers were wrong numbers or no longer in service. Among eligible phone numbers, we achieved a 74 percent contact rate and an overall response rate of 66 percent (calculated using the American Association for Public Opinion Research contact rate 3 and response rate 4 formulae). We obtained 1,852 completed interviews and 44 partially completed interviews. Together, these 1,896 respondents comprise 22 percent of the entire population of nurses who graduated from CUNY's AAS, generic BS, and RN to BS degree programs in nursing during the 10-year period.

Survey Weights

We applied population weights to the sample using data from CUNY's Institutional Research Database (IRDB). Weighting was a two-step process. First, post-stratification weights were assigned according to location in one of 145 strata, representing type of degree, college program, whether the degree was from the last five years or earlier, gender, and for females only, race and ethnicity. In cases of empty strata, we collapsed adjacent cells. Next, we used a raking procedure, also known as sample balancing, to adjust the post-stratification weights to enhance sample representativeness of the original survey population. This procedure helps correct for both intentional oversampling and potential differences in non-response rates across population subgroups, and it also allows for weighting by variables not in our original strata. Categories used in the raking procedure included degree type (AAS and BS), college program, graduation from a generic BS or RN to BS completion program, specific academic year, age category, and ethnicity by gender. The raking procedure was executed using the enhanced IHB Raking Macro in SAS 9.13.

Survey Design

Questions in the survey were designed specifically for CUNY nursing graduates. Existing nurse surveys and an extensive literature on both the nursing and general workforce informed the development process. The survey sample selection and instrument design allow for exploration of differences between AAS and BS nursing graduates, between graduates that had been incumbent workers and other graduates, and between graduates of different races and ethnicities.

We conducted five cognitive interviews with nurses to examine question comprehension and the process through which respondents formulated and chose response categories. SRI then conducted a pilot test with 25 nursing graduates to test the telephone interview protocol, residual problems in question comprehension, and respondents' willingness to complete the interview.

Research Team and Acknowledgements

William Ebenstein, University Dean for Health and Human Services, secured public and private funding to develop and conduct the survey. Dana Weinberg, Assistant Professor of Sociology at Queens College, was recruited as a Faculty Fellow to serve as Principal Investigator for the project. Dr. Weinberg provided leadership in the areas of workforce research, survey design, methodology, and data analysis. Erin Croke, Director of Program Development and Evaluation and Co-Principal Investigator, facilitated survey design and implementation efforts and the report writing process. Travis Dale, Research Associate, provided expertise in survey design, survey methodology, data analysis and report writing. Keville Frederickson, Professor and Director of the Doctorate of Nursing Science Program, CUNY Graduate Center, and Unn Hidle, Assistant Professor of Nursing at LaGuardia Community College, provided expertise in the areas of nursing research and workforce issues in nursing. Debra Entin, former Director of Nursing Initiatives, participated in the survey design process. Charles Torres-Chae, Research Assistant, supported report writing activities.

We would like to thank our external advisory committee members, including: Christine Kovner, Professor of Nursing at New York University; Peter Lazes, Cornell University School of Industrial and Labor Relations; and Barbara Zittel, Executive Secretary, NY State Boards for Nursing and Respiratory Therapy. These individuals provided guidance that improved the quality of the survey. We also appreciate the assistance of Amy Shire, who conducted cognitive interviews as part of the survey development process.

Funding for this project was provided through the Office of the University Dean for Health and Human Services, Reaching Up, Inc. and the Local 1199SEIU/League of Voluntary Hospitals Training Fund.

III DESCRIPTION OF NURSING GRADUATES

A total of 8,595 individuals graduated with an AAS or BS degree (or both) in nursing from CUNY between 1997 and 2007. The 1,896 respondents to the 2008 survey were similar to the overall population of CUNY nursing graduates.

Graduate Demographics

CUNY nursing graduates were predominately women, with significant family responsibilities. Two-thirds came from underrepresented groups and a majority was not born in the United States. The age of CUNY nursing graduates was consistent with national trends.

- Between 1997 and 2007, 88 percent of AAS graduates, 86 percent of generic BS graduates, and 91 percent of RN to BS completion graduates were women.
- Approximately 70 percent of AAS, 67 percent of generic BS, and 67 percent of RN to BS completion graduates were Black, Hispanic or Asian.
- Fifty-eight percent of RN to BS completion, 62 percent of AAS, and 68 percent of generic BS nursing graduates were not born in the US.
- Approximately 33 percent of generic BS, 27 percent of AAS, and 19 percent of RN to BS graduates had children under the age of six living at home.
- More than one-quarter of AAS and RN to BS completion graduates were primary caregivers for one or more dependent adults.
- The average age at the date of graduation of an AAS nursing graduate was 33.4; the average age of a generic BS graduate was 29.2; the average age of an RN to BS graduate was 39.8.

Table 1. Total Population of CUNY Nursing Graduates, 1997-2007

	AAS		Generic BS		RN to BS Completion	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
All Graduates	6089		1166		1624	
Senior/Comprehensive Colleges						
Hunter	-	-	625	53.6%	436	26.8%
Lehman	-	-	541	46.4%	389	24.0%
Medgar Evers	341	5.6%	-	-	235	14.5%
NYCCT	601	9.9%	-	-	-	-
Staten Island	867	14.2%	-	-	343	21.1%
York	-	-	-	-	221	13.6%
Community Colleges						
BMCC	1451	23.8%	-	-	-	-
Bronx	485	8.0%	-	-	-	-
Hostos	162	2.7%	-	-	-	-
Kingsborough	669	11.0%	-	-	-	-
LaGuardia	431	7.1%	-	-	-	-
Queensborough	1082	17.8%	-	-	-	-
Academic Year Graduated						
1997-1998	627	10.3%	164	14.1%	151	9.3%
1998-1999	525	8.6%	101	8.7%	195	12.0%
1999-2000	536	8.8%	84	7.2%	195	12.0%
2000-2001	475	7.8%	78	6.7%	200	12.3%
2001-2002	479	7.9%	90	7.7%	170	10.5%
2002-2003	489	8.0%	85	7.3%	151	9.3%
2003-2004	569	9.3%	98	8.4%	182	11.2%
2004-2005	698	11.5%	126	10.8%	135	8.3%
2005-2006	774	12.7%	165	14.2%	118	7.3%
2006-2007	917	15.1%	175	15.0%	127	7.8%
Gender						
Men	759	12.5%	166	14.2%	145	8.9%
Women	5330	87.5%	1000	85.8%	1479	91.1%
Ethnicity						
American Indian	9	0.1%	1	0.1%	1	0.1%
Asian/Pacific Islander	644	10.6%	227	19.5%	119	7.3%
Black	2915	47.9%	410	35.2%	847	52.2%
Hispanic	676	11.1%	143	12.3%	118	7.3%
White	1845	30.3%	385	33.0%	539	33.2%

Note: Some graduates received both an AAS and an RN to BS completion degree in nursing from CUNY between 1997 and 2007. These individuals are included in both the AAS and RN to BS completion columns.

SOURCE: CUNY Institutional Research Database (IRDB)

Table 2. Respondents to the 2008 Survey of CUNY Nursing Graduates

	AAS		Generic BS		RN to BS Completion	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
All Respondents	1215		251		516	
Senior/Comprehensive Colleges						
Hunter	-	-	139	55.4%	134	26.0%
Lehman	-	-	112	44.6%	112	21.7%
Medgar Evers	65	5.3%	-	-	67	13.0%
NYCCT	110	9.1%	-	-	-	-
Staten Island	189	15.6%	-	-	119	23.1%
York	-	-	-	-	84	16.3%
Community Colleges						
BMCC	289	23.8%	-	-	-	-
Bronx	79	6.5%	-	-	-	-
Hostos	25	2.1%	-	-	-	-
Kingsborough	135	11.1%	-	-	-	-
LaGuardia	91	7.5%	-	-	-	-
Queensborough	232	19.1%	-	-	-	-
Academic Year Graduated						
1997-1998	128	10.5%	35	13.9%	44	8.5%
1998-1999	113	9.3%	19	7.6%	47	9.1%
1999-2000	85	7.0%	16	6.4%	60	11.6%
2000-2001	84	6.9%	14	5.6%	70	13.6%
2001-2002	84	6.9%	19	7.6%	53	10.3%
2002-2003	98	8.1%	8	3.2%	48	9.3%
2003-2004	101	8.3%	23	9.2%	61	11.8%
2004-2005	152	12.5%	26	10.4%	43	8.3%
2005-2006	165	13.6%	39	15.5%	35	6.8%
2006-2007	205	16.9%	52	20.7%	55	10.7%
Gender						
Men	147	12.1%	36	14.3%	47	9.1%
Women	1068	87.9%	215	85.7%	469	90.9%
Ethnicity						
American Indian	0	0.0%	1	0.4%	0	0.0%
Asian/Pacific Islander	122	10.0%	36	14.3%	39	7.6%
Black	556	45.8%	83	33.1%	254	49.2%
Hispanic	146	12.0%	31	12.4%	30	5.8%
White	391	32.2%	100	39.8%	193	37.4%

Note: Some respondents received both an AAS and an RN to BS completion degree in nursing from CUNY between 1997 and 2007. These individuals are included in both the AAS and RN to BS completion columns.

SOURCE: CUNY Institutional Research Database (IRDB)

Table 3. Demographics of CUNY Nursing Graduates

	AAS	Generic BS	RN to BS Completion
Marital status			
Never married or single	32.8%	34.4%	24.5%
Married	55.5%	56.4%	58.8%
In married-like relationship	1.3%	2.7%	1.4%
Widowed	1.1%	0.6%	2.5%
Divorced	7.5%	3.4%	10.2%
Separated	1.8%	2.5%	2.6%
Children living at home	67.0%	55.4%	65.4%
Children under the age of six living at home	27.2%	33.0%	18.8%
Primary caregiver for dependent adult(s)	25.9%	22.2%	28.3%
Born in the United States	38.3%	31.6%	42.3%
Parents' origin			
Both parents born in the United States	20.4%	12.3%	29.6%
One parent born in the United States	4.7%	2.8%	4.9%
Neither parent born in the United States	74.8%	85.0%	65.5%
Highest degree mother received in school¹			
Less than high school diploma	21.6%	21.0%	30.8%
High school diploma or GED	44.8%	37.3%	43.0%
Some college but no degree	5.8%	3.8%	4.3%
Associate degree	9.7%	7.3%	9.5%
Baccalaureate degree	11.4%	24.5%	6.4%
Advanced degree	6.0%	5.2%	4.6%
Highest degree father received in school¹			
Less than high school diploma	19.6%	16.1%	28.8%
High school diploma or GED	41.2%	38.2%	42.7%
Some college but no degree	5.8%	5.7%	4.3%
Associate degree	7.4%	6.8%	6.6%
Baccalaureate degree	16.6%	20.0%	11.7%
Advanced degree	8.1%	11.4%	5.1%
Average Age at Graduation	33.4	29.2	39.8

¹Percentages will not sum to 100 because respondents that answered "other" not included.

SOURCE: 2008 Survey of CUNY Nursing Graduates

IV NURSING EDUCATION

Overall, graduates of CUNY nursing programs thought highly of the preparation they received to become an RN, although they were less favorable about their clinical experiences. Many graduates received additional degrees both before and after earning their CUNY nursing degree. Eighty-five percent were already enrolled or planning to enroll in further education.

Perceptions of CUNY Nurse Education

- Approximately 83 percent of graduates from AAS programs, 74 percent from generic BS programs, and 84 percent from RN to BS completion programs reported that overall, their CUNY education prepared them “well” or “very well” to practice as an RN.
- Sixty-eight percent of AAS graduates, 58 percent of generic BS graduates, and 70 percent of RN to BS completion graduates reported that their clinical experience prepared them “well” or “very well.”
- In general, generic BS graduates had less favorable views about the preparation they received to practice as an RN, compared to other graduates.

Table 4. Perceptions of CUNY Nursing Program

	AAS	Generic BS	<i>RN to BS Completion</i>
Overall, how did your CUNY education prepare you to practice as an RN?			
Well or Very Well	82.5%	73.5%	83.6%
Adequately	15.8%	23.8%	15.9%
Poorly or Very Poorly	1.6%	2.7%	0.4%
How did your CUNY clinical experience prepare you to practice as an RN?			
Well or Very Well	68.4%	57.9%	70.1%
Adequately	24.1%	35.1%	27.5%
Poorly or Very Poorly	7.5%	7.1%	2.4%

SOURCE: 2008 Survey of CUNY Nursing Graduates

Additional Degrees in Fields Other Than Nursing

- Approximately 28 percent of AAS nursing graduates, 24 percent of generic BS nursing graduates, and 12 percent of RN to BS completion nursing graduates received a degree in another field before earning their CUNY nursing degree.
- Six percent of AAS, 5 percent of generic BS, and 10 percent of RN to BS nursing graduates received a degree in another field after earning their CUNY nursing degree.

Additional Degrees in Nursing

Many graduates have gone on to earn a higher credential in nursing after completing their CUNY AAS, generic BS, or RN to BS nursing program. However, since the survey sample consisted of those that earned a nursing degree between 1997 and 2007, many of the more recent graduates have not yet had time to complete subsequent degrees.

- Of those that earned an AAS degree in nursing, 22 percent went on to earn a BS in nursing and 3 percent earned an MS in nursing.
- Eleven percent of generic BS and 22 percent of RN to BS nursing graduates have earned an MS degree in nursing.

Table 5. Overall Educational Attainment

	<i>AAS</i>	<i>Generic BS</i>	<i>RN to BS Completion</i>
Earned degree outside nursing <i>before</i> CUNY degree	27.9%	24.4%	12.0%
Earned degree outside nursing <i>after</i> CUNY degree	5.7%	5.3%	9.6%
Highest degree in nursing			
Associate	75.1%	-	-
Baccalaureate	21.6%	88.0%	77.5%
Master's	3.2%	11.1%	22.3%
Other type of degree	0.1%	0.9%	0.2%

SOURCE: 2008 Survey of CUNY Nursing Graduates

Further Education

- At the time of the survey, 32 percent of AAS graduates, 16 percent of generic BS graduates, and 18 percent of RN to BS completion graduates were enrolled in a further educational program, mostly in nursing. In addition, 56 percent of AAS graduates, 66 percent of generic BS graduates, and 52 percent of RN to BS completion graduates had plans to enroll in further education. Thus, 88 percent of AAS, 82 percent of generic BS, and 70 percent of RN to BS graduates were already enrolled or planning to enroll in further education.
- Of those that were currently enrolled in further education at the time of the survey, 30 percent of AAS graduates, 40 percent of generic BS graduates, and 34 percent of RN to BS graduates were enrolled in a private college in New York State. In addition, of those that planned to enroll in further education less than half planned to attend a CUNY school.
- Eighty-six percent of AAS, 95 percent of generic BS, and 96 percent of RN to BS graduates agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that “It is worth the time and tuition costs to get a Bachelor’s degree in nursing.”

Table 6. Opinions on the Bachelor’s degree

	<i>AAS</i>	<i>Generic BS</i>	<i>RN to BS Completion</i>
It is worth the time and tuition costs to get a Bachelor’s degree in nursing			
Strongly agree	31.9%	54.5%	56.8%
Agree	54.5%	40.2%	39.6%
Disagree	10.7%	4.7%	2.0%
Strongly disagree	3.0%	0.6%	1.7%

SOURCE: 2008 Survey of CUNY Nursing Graduates

Table 7. Further Education

	AAS	Generic BS	RN to BS Completion
Plans for further education			
Currently Enrolled	32.4%	15.9%	17.6%
Plan to enroll in next year	30.2%	27.7%	16.8%
Plan to enroll in the future	26.2%	38.6%	35.2%
No plans for further education	11.3%	17.8%	30.3%
<u>Of those currently enrolled in a program:</u>			
Type of degree program			
Associate	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%
Baccalaureate	71.8%	0.0%	0.9%
Master's	25.5%	96.8%	88.0%
Doctorate	0.5%	3.2%	4.6%
Another type of program	1.6%	0.0%	6.5%
Enrolled in nursing program	96.3%	95.7%	85.0%
Location of program			
CUNY	39.1%	34.4%	35.0%
Another public college in New York State	15.8%	17.0%	12.6%
A private college in New York State	29.9%	40.2%	34.1%
A college outside of New York State	15.3%	8.3%	18.3%
<u>Of those who plan to enroll in a program:</u>			
Type of degree program planning to attend			
Baccalaureate	54.8%	0.0%	0.3%
Master's	39.6%	91.3%	74.1%
Doctorate	3.5%	5.1%	22.9%
Another type of program	2.1%	3.6%	2.7%
Planning to enroll in nursing program	96.3%	93.3%	90.0%
Desired location of program			
CUNY	45.7%	49.2%	42.8%
Another public college in New York State	19.2%	14.1%	12.7%
A private college in New York State	18.9%	19.0%	20.7%
A college outside of New York State	16.2%	17.6%	23.7%

SOURCE: 2008 Survey of CUNY Nursing Graduates

V INCUMBENT WORKERS

A majority of nursing graduates were working adults pursuing career ladder opportunities in the healthcare field while they were enrolled in CUNY.

CUNY Nursing Students as Incumbent Workers

- Approximately 59 percent of RN to BS completion graduates, 55 percent of AAS graduates, and 48 percent of generic BS graduates worked in healthcare at some point before finishing their *initial* RN education program.
- Of those with previous healthcare experience, 82 percent of RN to BS completion, 77 percent of AAS, and 61 percent of generic BS nursing graduates worked in healthcare *while* attending their initial RN education program.

Tuition Assistance from Union or Employer

- Forty-two percent of RN to BS completion, 37 percent of AAS, and 27 percent of generic BS graduates that were incumbent workers during their initial RN education program received tuition assistance from their employer or union.

Union Membership as a CUNY Nursing Student

- Roughly one-half of AAS and RN to BS completion, and one-third of generic BS graduates that worked in healthcare during their initial RN education program were members of a union.
- Approximately 78 percent of AAS and generic BS, and 57 percent of RN to BS graduates that were members of a union in the healthcare job they had while pursuing their initial RN education were members of Local 1199SEIU.

- Thirteen percent of AAS, 10 percent of generic BS, and 17 percent of RN to BS graduates that were members of a union in the healthcare job they had while pursuing their initial RN education were members of DC37 or CSEA, which represent workers employed in the public healthcare sector.

Table 8. Incumbent Workers

	AAS	Generic BS	RN to BS Completion
Did you work in healthcare <i>at any time</i> before you finished your initial RN education program?			
Yes	55.3%	47.8%	59.4%
No	44.7%	52.2%	40.6%
If yes, were you working in healthcare <i>while</i> you attended your initial RN education program?			
Yes	76.9%	61.3%	81.9%
No	23.1%	38.7%	18.1%
For those working in healthcare <i>while</i> enrolled in their initial RN education program, did you receive tuition assistance from your employer or union?			
Yes	37.3%	27.2%	42.0%
No	62.7%	72.8%	58.0%
Were you a member of a union in the healthcare job you had <i>while</i> you pursued your initial RN education?			
Yes	51.0%	34.1%	51.3%
No	49.0%	65.9%	48.7%
If yes, which union?			
1199SEIU	77.5%	77.6%	57.4%
NYSNA	1.7%	3.1%	15.2%
DC37	11.6%	10.4%	12.5%
UFT	0.3%	0.0%	0.8%
CSEA	1.5%	0.0%	4.3%
Other	7.3%	8.9%	9.7%

SOURCE: 2008 Survey of CUNY Nursing Graduates

VI TRANSITION FROM CUNY

Virtually all graduates from CUNY nursing programs took and passed the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX), then went on to work in a position that required the RN license.

NCLEX Results

- Among those that took the NCLEX one or more times, the overall pass rate of CUNY nursing graduates between 1997 and 2007 was 99 percent.
- Less than 2 percent of all CUNY nursing graduates between 1997 and 2007 did not take the NCLEX.

Working as an RN

- Approximately 99 percent of RN to BS completion and 95 percent of AAS and generic BS nursing graduates have worked as an RN.
- A high percentage of CUNY nursing graduates were currently working in a position that required the RN license. Approximately 90 percent of AAS and 92 percent of BS nursing graduates were currently working as nurses.

Table 9. Work Experience as an RN Licensed Nurse

	AAS	Generic BS	RN to BS Completion
Did you ever work as an RN?			
Yes	94.5%	95.0%	98.6%
No	5.5%	5.0%	1.4%
Are you currently working as an RN?			
Yes	89.6%	91.7%	91.8%
No	10.4%	8.3%	8.2%

SOURCE: 2008 Survey of CUNY Nursing Graduates

Table 10. NCLEX Results

	<i>Never took the NCLEX</i>	<i>Passed on the first try</i>	<i>Passed after more than one try</i>	<i>Did not pass</i>
All Graduates	1.8%	82.7%	14.7%	0.8%
Degree				
AAS	1.8%	82.6%	14.8%	0.7%
Generic BS	1.4%	83.7%	13.7%	1.1%
Senior/Comprehensive Colleges				
Hunter	2.0%	88.4%	9.0%	0.6%
Lehman	0.8%	78.1%	19.3%	1.8%
Medgar Evers	0.0%	64.7%	31.3%	4.0%
NYCCT	0.0%	87.8%	12.2%	0.0%
Staten Island	3.1%	84.1%	12.8%	0.0%
Community Colleges				
BMCC	1.9%	81.6%	15.7%	0.8%
Bronx	4.1%	82.4%	12.0%	1.5%
Hostos	0.0%	58.4%	41.6%	0.0%
Kingsborough	2.2%	84.1%	13.7%	0.0%
LaGuardia	1.3%	90.8%	7.9%	0.0%
Queensborough	1.4%	84.9%	12.5%	1.1%
Academic Year				
1997-1998	2.4%	81.9%	15.1%	0.7%
1998-1999	2.6%	72.5%	23.7%	1.2%
1999-2000	2.1%	73.3%	22.4%	2.2%
2000-2001	2.0%	77.9%	19.0%	1.2%
2001-2002	1.2%	81.5%	16.7%	0.6%
2002-2003	0.0%	80.9%	17.3%	1.8%
2003-2004	2.1%	86.1%	11.7%	0.0%
2004-2005	1.0%	87.8%	11.2%	0.0%
2005-2006	1.4%	87.8%	9.9%	0.9%
2006-2007	2.3%	87.3%	9.9%	0.4%

SOURCE: 2008 Survey of CUNY Nursing Graduates

VII CAREER PATHS

The 2008 Survey of CUNY Nursing Graduates demonstrates that most graduates obtain positions in the nursing profession. Survey respondents may have held more than one nursing job at a time, but were asked to report about their main jobs in nursing, that is, the jobs where they spent most of their time. A nursing job was defined as a job that required the RN license. Graduates that were no longer working as a nurse were asked to report about the nursing job they held most recently.

Work Settings

- Eighty-five percent of generic BS, 79 percent of AAS, and 72 percent of RN to BS nursing graduates first worked as an RN in a hospital setting.
- Approximately 17 percent of RN to BS completion, 14 percent of AAS, and 5 percent of generic BS nursing graduates first worked as an RN in a nursing home or extended care facility.
- While 17 percent of RN to BS completion nursing graduates first worked as an RN in a nursing home or extended care facility, just 6 percent reported that their current or most recent nursing job was in a nursing home or extended care facility.
- A greater percentage of graduates reported that their current or most recent nursing job was in a community-based setting such as the Visiting Nurse Service, physician's office, or school compared to their first job as a nurse.
- In 1998, 55 percent of AAS graduates first worked in a hospital and 21 percent first worked in a nursing home or extended care facility; in 2007, 82 percent of AAS graduates first worked in hospitals and just 6 percent first worked in long-term care facilities.

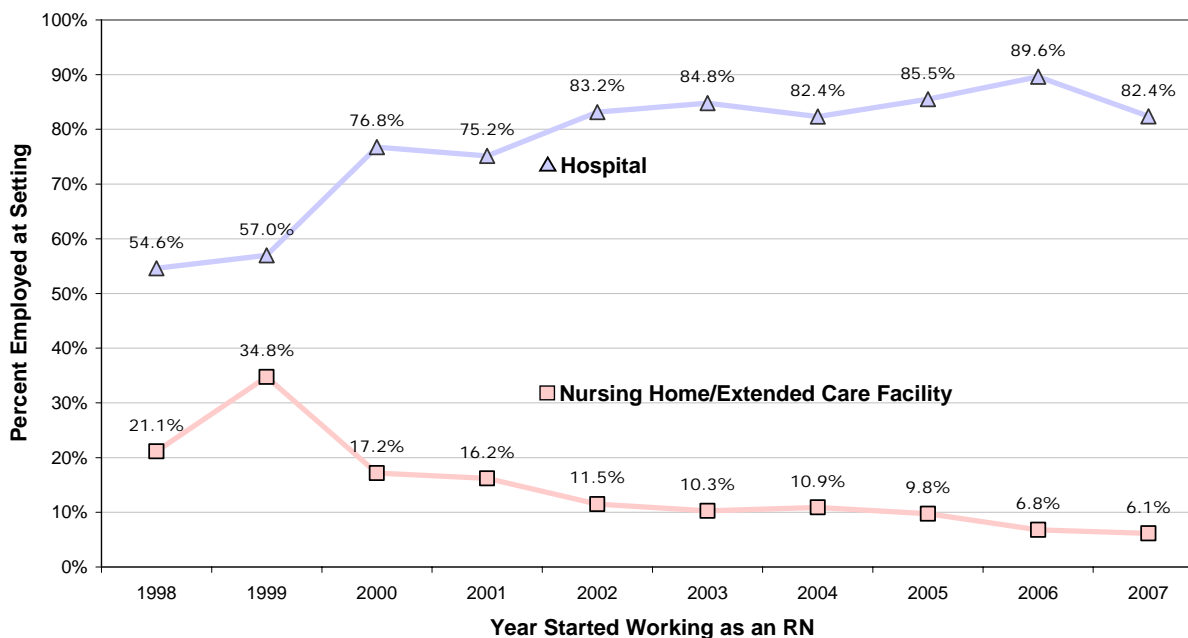
Table 11. First and Current/Most Recent Nursing Job Setting

	AAS	Generic BS	RN to BS Completion
Setting of first nursing job			
Hospital	78.6%	85.3%	72.2%
Nursing Home/Extended Care Facility	13.5%	5.4%	16.7%
Community / Public Health Agency / Visiting Nurse Association	2.8%	5.5%	4.4%
Higher Education	0.3%	0.4%	0.3%
Physicians Office/Ambulatory Care setting	1.9%	1.1%	3.0%
Student Health Service	0.3%	0.3%	0.7%
Something Else	2.7%	2.1%	2.7%
Setting of current/most recent nursing job			
Hospital	79.2%	83.8%	76.0%
Nursing Home or Extended Care Facility	7.5%	4.6%	6.0%
Community / Public Health Agency / Visiting Nurse Association	5.1%	5.5%	8.2%
Higher Education	0.4%	0.4%	1.5%
Physicians Office/Ambulatory Care setting	2.3%	2.7%	2.8%
Student Health Service	1.3%	0.0%	2.5%
Something else	4.1%	3.0%	3.0%

Note: If a respondent only reported one RN job, the setting is counted as both the first and the current/most recent setting.

SOURCE: 2008 Survey of CUNY Nursing Graduates

Figure 1. Setting of First RN Job, AAS Graduates Only, by Year Started Working as an RN



SOURCE: 2008 Survey of CUNY Nursing Graduates

First Nursing Job Tenure

- More than a third of those that graduated from AAS and generic BS nursing programs between 1997 and 2007 were still working in their first nursing jobs.
- Fourteen percent of RN to BS completion graduates were still working in their first jobs. (RN to BS graduates were less likely to still be working in their first nursing job because they started their nursing careers earlier than other survey respondents and earning a BS degree is helpful in getting an upgraded position).
- Approximately 21 percent of AAS, 22 percent of generic BS, and 51 percent of RN to BS graduates worked in their first nursing job for three years or more. (Again, RN to BS graduates started their careers earlier. It is likely that many AAS and generic BS graduates who were still working in their first jobs will continue to work there for a number of years).
- Almost 37 percent of RN to BS graduates stayed in their first nursing job for five years or more.
- The vast majority of those that left their first nursing job continued working as an RN, either with the same employer in a different nursing position, or with another employer.
- Approximately 76 percent of RN to BS completion, 72 percent of AAS, and 62 percent of generic BS nursing graduates that left their first RN job switched employers.
- Of those that left their first nursing job, less than 1 percent reported that they left the nursing profession for good.

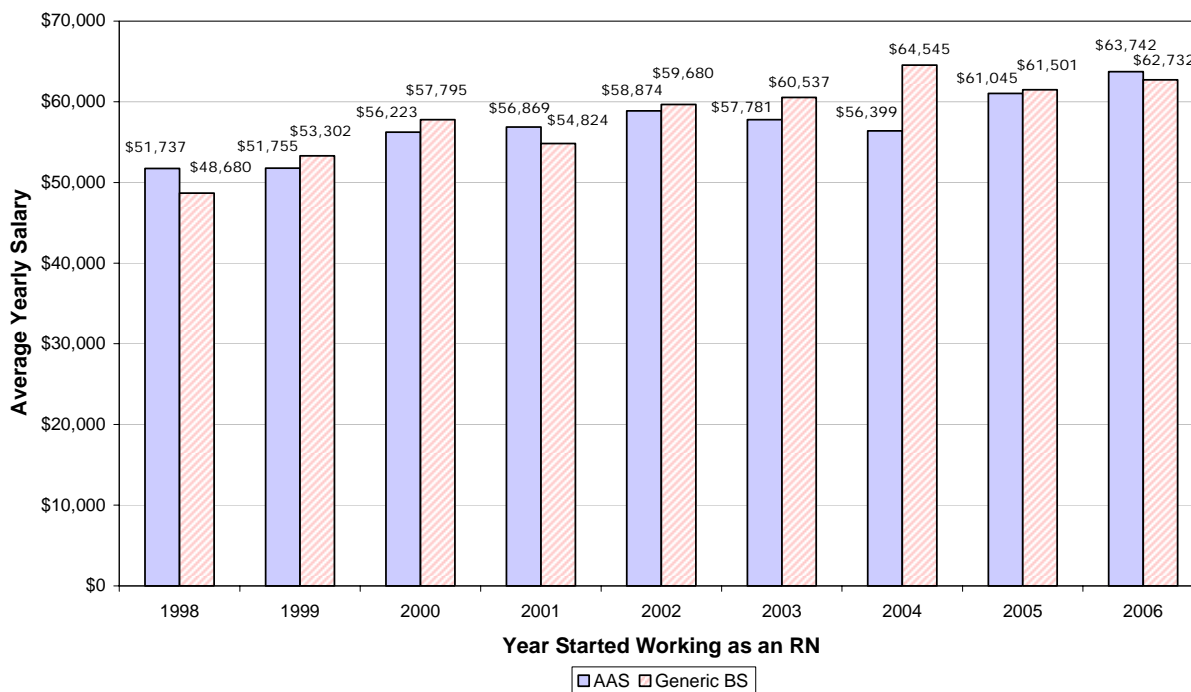
Table 12. First Nursing Job

	AAS	Generic BS	RN to BS Completion
How many years did you stay at your first nursing job?			
Still working in first nursing job	36.6%	39.4%	14.3%
Less than one year	14.8%	12.0%	7.0%
1 to 2 years	27.4%	26.5%	27.6%
3 to 4 years	12.6%	12.6%	14.2%
5 or more years	8.5%	9.4%	36.8%
When you left your first nursing job you...			
Took a nursing position with another employer	72.0%	61.7%	76.3%
Took a nursing position with the same employer	24.1%	33.9%	21.0%
Took time off from working	3.3%	3.5%	2.5%
Left the nursing profession for good	0.6%	0.9%	0.2%

SOURCE: 2008 Survey of CUNY Nursing Graduates

Salaries

- Starting salaries of both AAS and generic BS nursing graduates employed full-time at hospitals have steadily increased over the last decade. In 2006 both groups earned annual starting salaries of over \$62,000 per year.
- At the time of the survey, the average annual income of 1997-2007 nursing graduates working as licensed RNs was \$73,747, and their median income was \$70,000. (This includes total annual salaries from full and part-time nursing jobs, and for graduates that held more than one nursing job.)
- At the time of the survey, the average annual salary from the primary nursing job, for those currently employed full-time only, with ten or less years of experience, was \$68,406 for those with only an AAS degree, \$71,412 for those with a BS degree, and \$89,138 for those with a MS degree.

Figure 2. Average Yearly Salary in First RN Job, Full-Time Hospital Employment Only, by Year Started Working as an RN

SOURCE: 2008 Survey of CUNY Nursing Graduates

Characteristics of Current/Most Recent Nursing Job

Survey respondents were asked to report about their current nursing job or, if not currently working as an RN, their most recent nursing job.

- Eighty-eight percent of AAS and generic BS, and 87 percent of RN to BS completion nursing graduates worked full-time in their current or most recent nursing job.
- Sixty-four percent of AAS, 60 percent of RN to BS completion, and 56 percent of generic BS nursing graduates were union members in their current or most recent nursing job.
- Of those respondents that worked as nurses and were in a union, approximately 69 percent of generic BS, 65 percent of AAS, and 51 percent of RN to BS graduates were members of the New York State Nurses Association (NYSNA). Twenty-one percent of RN to BS graduates, and 17 percent of AAS and generic BS nursing graduates that worked as nurses and were in a union were members of Local 1199SEIU.

Table 13. Current/Most Recent Nursing Job

	AAS	Generic BS	RN to BS Completion
Held more than one nursing job			
Yes	23.4%	18.9%	30.3%
No	76.6%	81.1%	69.7%
Work status			
Full-time	88.1%	88.3%	87.4%
Part-time	8.1%	8.8%	9.3%
Per diem or temporary	3.8%	2.9%	3.3%
Union member			
Yes	64.2%	56.1%	59.7%
No	35.8%	43.9%	40.3%
If yes, which union?			
1199SEIU	16.6%	17.2%	21.4%
NYSNA	65.3%	68.8%	50.9%
DC37	1.3%	2.8%	4.6%
UFT	7.1%	5.6%	7.9%
CSEA	0.9%	0.8%	1.9%
Other	8.8%	4.8%	13.3%

SOURCE: 2008 Survey of CUNY Nursing Graduates

Work Conditions

- Less than half of CUNY nursing graduates reported that there is always or often enough staff to get the work done.
- More than 60 percent of graduates reported that they always or often had autonomy in their current or most recent nursing position.
- Approximately 92 percent of generic BS, 90 percent of AAS, and 83 percent of RN to BS nursing graduates that worked as an RN indicated that their work was stressful at least some of the time.

- Seventy-four percent of AAS, 68 percent of generic BS, and 56 percent of RN to BS completion nursing graduates that worked as an RN reported that they had to do hard physical work sometimes, often, or always.

Job Satisfaction and Benefits

- Eighty-six percent of BS, and 83 percent of AAS nursing graduates indicated they were very or somewhat satisfied with their current or most recent nursing job.
- Over two-thirds of CUNY nursing graduates were somewhat or very satisfied with the amount of pay they received.
- Approximately 95 percent of AAS and generic BS, and 93 percent of RN to BS nursing graduates that worked as an RN were eligible for medical insurance.
- A majority of graduates that worked as a nurse indicated that they had access to active staff development, continuing education programs, or other training opportunities.

Keeping and Changing Jobs and Employers

- Approximately 71 percent of AAS, 77 percent of generic BS, and 47 percent of RN to BS nursing graduates have had just one or two employers. (On average, RN to BS graduates have worked in the nursing profession for a longer period of time and thus were more likely to have had more employers).
- Sometimes when people change jobs, they work for the same employer but they change positions. Seventy percent of generic BS, 65 percent of AAS, and 35 percent of RN to BS completion nursing graduates have held just one or two nursing jobs.

Table 14. Work Conditions in the Current/Most Recent Nursing Job

	AAS	Generic BS	RN to BS Completion
There is enough staff to get the work done			
Always	13.3%	14.2%	18.3%
Often	28.4%	28.6%	27.5%
Sometimes	38.2%	37.8%	37.7%
Rarely	10.8%	9.6%	8.0%
Never	9.2%	9.8%	8.4%
Adequate support services give you the time you need to do your job			
Always	16.6%	16.1%	19.1%
Often	29.1%	31.9%	27.1%
Sometimes	40.4%	38.1%	37.9%
Rarely	10.1%	10.0%	11.1%
Never	3.8%	3.9%	4.8%
You have a lot of say about what happens on your job			
Always	16.7%	12.5%	20.0%
Often	24.9%	28.2%	23.2%
Sometimes	36.4%	42.3%	36.6%
Rarely	15.7%	9.1%	13.4%
Never	6.2%	8.0%	6.8%
You have autonomy			
Always	25.9%	23.7%	32.0%
Often	34.3%	37.2%	34.0%
Sometimes	30.0%	33.2%	25.7%
Rarely	7.0%	4.5%	6.1%
Never	2.7%	1.4%	2.3%
You find your work stressful			
Always	26.2%	25.9%	21.5%
Often	22.6%	27.6%	18.2%
Sometimes	40.7%	38.0%	43.7%
Rarely	7.3%	6.0%	11.4%
Never	3.2%	2.4%	5.1%
You have to do hard physical work			
Always	19.1%	18.4%	13.5%
Often	18.4%	20.1%	11.4%
Sometimes	36.0%	29.7%	30.6%
Rarely	15.9%	18.7%	23.3%
Never	10.6%	13.0%	21.2%

SOURCE: 2008 Survey of CUNY Nursing Graduates

Table 15. Benefits and Rewards at Current/Most Recent Nursing Job

	AAS	Generic BS	RN to BS Completion
Overall satisfaction with current/most recent RN job			
Very satisfied	29.5%	28.8%	30.4%
Somewhat satisfied	53.3%	56.9%	55.1%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	6.5%	4.1%	5.5%
Somewhat dissatisfied	8.4%	8.4%	6.1%
Very dissatisfied	2.3%	1.8%	3.0%
Satisfaction with current/most recent amount of pay			
Very satisfied	11.8%	12.7%	11.4%
Somewhat satisfied	54.3%	58.8%	56.7%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	9.1%	8.6%	6.5%
Somewhat dissatisfied	18.4%	16.6%	18.9%
Very dissatisfied	6.4%	3.2%	6.5%
Eligible for medical insurance	94.5%	94.8%	93.2%
Eligible for other benefits	87.6%	90.0%	88.7%
There is active staff development, continuing education programs, or training opportunities			
Always	26.3%	25.2%	22.5%
Often	30.7%	35.5%	34.1%
Sometimes	28.8%	27.7%	29.1%
Rarely	11.0%	9.1%	11.2%
Never	3.3%	2.5%	3.0%
There is the opportunity to get a better job in the organization			
Always	15.3%	12.4%	12.3%
Often	20.4%	19.7%	17.6%
Sometimes	37.4%	45.5%	35.0%
Rarely	20.5%	17.5%	26.1%
Never	6.5%	4.9%	8.9%

SOURCE: 2008 Survey of CUNY Nursing Graduates

Comparing the Current/Most Recent and First Nursing Job

CUNY nursing graduates were asked to compare their current nursing job with the first job they held as a nurse. Graduates that were no longer working as a nurse were asked to compare the most recent job they held as a nurse, to their first nursing job. Graduates that have held only one nursing job were asked to consider how conditions in that job evolved over time.

- Seventy-three percent of RN to BS completion, 67 percent of generic BS, and 66 percent of AAS nursing graduates reported that overall, their current or most recent nursing job was somewhat or much better compared to when they first began working as a nurse.
- Fifty-nine percent of AAS and generic BS nursing graduates were currently working in a nursing job that required more specialized knowledge or skill compared to when they first began working as a nurse.
- Approximately 50 percent of RN to BS completion nursing graduates were required to obtain additional formal education for their current or most recent nursing position.
- Seventy-seven percent of AAS and generic BS nursing graduates, and 81 percent of RN to BS completion nursing graduates indicated that their current or most recent nursing job provided greater opportunities to expand their knowledge or skills.
- Fifty-nine percent of AAS and generic BS nursing graduates, and 65 percent of RN to BS completion nursing graduates, had better working conditions than when they first began working as a nurse.
- RN to BS completion nursing graduates were especially likely to report an improvement in their working conditions, or enhanced levels of skill or responsibility, since they first began working as an nurse.

Table 16. Current/Most Recent Nursing Job Compared with First Nursing Job

	AAS	Generic BS	RN to BS Completion
Is your current/most recent RN job with the same organization or a different organization than your first RN job?			
Same organization	16.3%	20.0%	13.6%
Different organization	83.7%	80.0%	86.4%
Does your current/most recent RN job require more formal education?	25.2%	29.4%	49.9%
If yes, what type of formal education did you need?			
Baccalaureate degree	58.6%	48.3%	63.7%
Master's degree	7.8%	37.2%	25.4%
Doctoral degree	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%
Something else	33.6%	14.5%	10.4%
Does your current/most recent RN job require more specialized knowledge or skill?	59.4%	58.7%	77.9%
Do you have greater opportunities to expand your knowledge or skills?	77.4%	77.0%	80.8%
Do you have more authority?	69.4%	67.8%	76.2%
Do you have more responsibility for supervising staff?	64.2%	60.9%	69.8%
Do you have better work conditions?	58.5%	59.1%	65.2%
Do you have better benefits?	34.3%	30.2%	45.2%
Do you have a better schedule?	66.8%	61.9%	75.6%
Overall, how does your current/most recent RN job compare to your first RN job?			
Much better	36.8%	29.7%	43.0%
Somewhat better	29.1%	36.9%	29.5%
About the same	27.3%	27.3%	20.1%
Somewhat worse	5.8%	4.2%	5.8%
Much worse	1.0%	1.9%	1.5%

SOURCE: 2008 Survey of CUNY Nursing Graduates

Career Plans and Intent to Stay

- Ninety-one percent of RN to BS completion, 89 percent of AAS, and 88 percent of generic BS nursing graduates were satisfied with their nursing career.
- Seventy-four percent of BS and 72 percent of AAS nursing graduates that were working as a nurse in 2008 indicated they actively seek advancement or promotion in their career.
- Forty-four percent of generic BS, 37 percent of AAS, and 35 percent of RN to BS nursing graduates reported that they will probably look for a new job in the next year.
- Of those working as a nurse in 2008, 96 percent of AAS, 94 percent of generic BS, and 92 percent of RN to BS completion nursing graduates planned to continue working as a nurse over the next three years.

Breaks in Employment

CUNY nursing graduates were asked to consider breaks they have taken from employment since becoming a nurse, not including times when they were on maternity leave or another official leave of absence from a job.

- Since becoming a nurse, 19 percent of RN to BS completion, 17 percent of AAS, and 15 percent of generic BS nursing graduates have taken a break from employment.
- Of those that took a break from employment, 41 percent of generic BS, 36 percent of AAS, and 34 percent of RN to BS graduates left to take care of a child or children.
- Approximately 40 percent of RN to BS, 29 percent of AAS, and 21 percent of generic BS nursing graduates that took a break from employment did so because of an illness or disability.

Table 17. Career Plans and Intent to Stay

	AAS	Generic BS	RN to BS Completion
How satisfied are you with your entire nursing career?			
Very satisfied	39.3%	32.4%	50.4%
Somewhat satisfied	49.6%	55.9%	41.0%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	5.8%	5.5%	4.7%
Somewhat dissatisfied	4.5%	5.2%	3.2%
Very dissatisfied	0.8%	1.1%	0.7%
You actively seek advancement or promotion in your career			
Strongly agree	25.8%	17.6%	29.2%
Agree	46.2%	56.7%	44.5%
Disagree	25.4%	23.9%	23.6%
Strongly disagree	2.6%	1.8%	2.7%
It is likely you could find a nursing job with another employer that is better than the job you have now			
Strongly agree	17.6%	16.6%	18.9%
Agree	47.0%	46.3%	43.8%
Disagree	29.4%	29.4%	30.8%
Strongly disagree	6.0%	7.6%	6.5%
You will probably look for a new job in the next year			
Strongly agree	12.4%	13.5%	13.1%
Agree	24.1%	30.2%	21.4%
Disagree	48.0%	44.8%	48.7%
Strongly disagree	15.5%	11.5%	16.8%
You often think about quitting			
Strongly agree	8.5%	6.3%	8.5%
Agree	19.0%	22.4%	19.0%
Disagree	50.5%	50.5%	48.9%
Strongly disagree	22.1%	20.7%	23.7%
Over the next three years you are planning to...			
Stay in nursing	95.5%	93.7%	92.0%
Leave nursing temporarily	0.8%	1.4%	0.0%
Leave nursing for another career	2.6%	4.0%	2.4%
Retire	0.4%	0.3%	4.8%
Stop working for reasons other than retirement	0.6%	0.5%	0.8%

SOURCE: 2008 Survey of CUNY Nursing Graduates

Table 18. Breaks in Employment Since Becoming an RN

	AAS	Generic BS	RN to BS Completion
Have you taken any extended time off from working since you became an RN?			
Yes	17.0%	14.5%	18.6%
No	83.0%	85.5%	81.4%
If yes, how much time?			
Less than 3 months	44.5%	38.6%	31.2%
More than 3 months, but less than 1 year	32.8%	53.1%	30.8%
1-2 years	15.5%	8.4%	24.1%
3-4 years	3.3%	0.0%	6.8%
5 years or more	3.9%	0.0%	7.1%
You took time off... ¹			
To go back to school	11.6%	10.6%	14.9%
To care for your child or children	35.6%	40.9%	33.6%
To care for an adult family member	13.5%	9.7%	15.4%
Because of an illness or disability	28.8%	20.6%	40.2%
Because the work was too stressful	14.2%	16.2%	6.9%

¹Percentages will not sum to 100 because responses were not mutually exclusive.

SOURCE: 2008 Survey of CUNY Nursing Graduates

VIII CONCLUDING COMMENTS

The 2008 Survey of CUNY Nursing Graduates provides information about the scale, diversity and quality of CUNY nursing programs and their value for the delivery of healthcare services. Each year, CUNY graduates comprise a large percentage of the newly licensed RNs in New York City. Indeed, the health care industry relies on CUNY to provide qualified, culturally diverse personnel in nursing and the other health professions.

Workforce shortages have created an environment that necessitates regional alliances among key stakeholders in the healthcare field. Thus, CUNY has developed a university-labor-employer model of workforce development that includes partnerships with the healthcare industry and its unions. The University has worked to address the nursing shortage by increasing its yearly number of nursing graduates. Its continuum of nursing programs provides career ladder opportunities for incumbent workers employed in frontline positions.

Graduation from a CUNY nursing program provides aspiring students with an opportunity to start a career in a respected and well-paid profession. Most CUNY nursing graduates could not have afforded the much higher tuition charged by local private colleges. Many have worked their way up the career ladder from jobs such as home care worker or nurse assistant. They come from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds, and frequently are residents of the same urban neighborhoods as the patients they now serve. Two-thirds of all nursing graduates between 1997 and 2007 came from underrepresented groups and a majority was born outside the United States.

Overall, graduates of CUNY nursing programs thought highly of the preparation they received to become an RN. Virtually all graduates took and passed the NCLEX, went on to work in a position that required an RN license, and have been retained in the nursing field. Most graduates were satisfied with their nursing careers and intended to continue working as an RN. They were earning decent salaries that also enriched the lives of their children and families.