

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** (Issued 08/10/2007)

**Contact:** Denise Rader, Director, Network Marketing/Communications,  
St. Luke's Hospital & Health Network  
610-954-4104, [raderd@slhn.org](mailto:raderd@slhn.org)

**PENNSYLVANIA GOVERNOR EDWARD G. RENDELL THANKS  
ST. LUKE'S SCHOOL OF NURSING GRADUATES FOR  
COMMITMENT TO HEALTH CARE**

BETHLEHEM, PA (8/10/2007) -- Pennsylvania Governor Edward G. Rendell thanked the 64 graduates from the St. Luke's School of Nursing for committing their careers to the care of others and for helping to provide much-needed high quality health care in Pennsylvania in his commencement speech last night.



“There is no higher calling than serving others and the caring and commitment shown by nurses each and every day is critical to the success of our health care system,” Governor Rendell said. “So on behalf of all the

people of Pennsylvania, I thank you and congratulate you on your achievement.

“Nurses are vital to our health care system and are key to expanding access to quality care for all Pennsylvanians. That’s why we’ve worked so hard to expand nursing programs over the past four years and why my ‘Prescription for Pennsylvania’ health care reform plan targeted barriers that have kept advance practice nurses from performing tasks that they are trained and certified to do.”

The Governor talked about his efforts to address nursing shortage issues. He said that data shows that less than half of all qualified applicants are being accepted into nursing programs because of capacity issues, including lack of space, faculty and clinical rotation options.

“We take this problem seriously and have made record investments over the past four years that have yielded seven additional RN nursing education programs in Pennsylvania, bringing the total to 85 programs in 45 counties, and a doubling in

the number of registered nurse graduates,” the Governor said. “The number of students enrolled in RN programs has increased by nearly 100 percent since 1999 with 19,411 students enrolled in 2006.

“And our efforts are starting to pay dividends. During this summer, some 6,640 nurses are expected to graduate, the largest number in recent history. Today, I am pleased to personally recognize more than 60 of those – you, the summer graduating class of St. Luke’s.”

Allentown Mayor Ed Pawlowski also attended the ceremony.

The 135<sup>th</sup> Commencement Exercise was held Thursday, August 9 at the Scottish Rite Cathedral in Allentown. Graduating summa cum laude is Joseph Angelo Mannino of Easton. Allentown resident Jaclyn B. Toth graduated magna cum laude. Cum laude graduates include Donna Marie DeMatos of Center Valley, Audrey M. Frisch of Nazareth, Aranzazu Garcia Moreno of Easton, Mary Anne Keating of Allentown, Mary Kathleen Murphy of Bethlehem, Suzanne Marie Spencer of Kintnersville and Rebekah S. Yount of Belvidere, NJ.

2007 St. Luke’s School of Nursing graduates include the following:

Trevor S. Achenbach.....*Bath*  
Amy J. Acosta.....*Tobyhanna*  
Sarah A. Bash.....*Perkasie*  
Stacy Lynn Breckon.....*Easton*  
Nicole Danielle Brown.....*Bangor*  
Brenna Kate Caponigro.....*Roseto*  
Charity Anne Ciccone.....*Orwigsburg*  
Erin E. Cortes.....*Bethlehem*  
Sandra A. Croughn.....*Whitehall*  
\*Donna Marie DeMatos.....*Center Valley*  
Laura DiNicola.....*Easton*  
Jodi Diane Doyen.....*Bethlehem*  
Luz Anuri Drummond.....*Tobyhanna*  
Jourdan Pierce Eller.....*Bethlehem*  
Adam James Fox.....*Allentown*  
\*Audrey M. Frisch.....*Nazareth*  
\*Aranzazu Garcia Moreno.....*Easton*  
Ann Catherine Gaspar.....*Slatington*  
Monica Enyonam Gbeve.....*Easton*  
Michelle Kathryn Geisinger.....*Albrightsville*  
Vanessa D. Graham.....*Ottsville*  
Emily F. Groller.....*Emmaus*  
Carole A. Hachey.....*Fogelsville*  
Lori Ann Hayes.....*Bethlehem*  
Lillian T. Miller Hendry.....*Stroudsburg*  
Morgan Leigh Hibbler.....*Hellertown*  
Dawn Michele Hoffert.....*Bethlehem*  
Kelsie Elizabeth Hofmann.....*Dublin*

Jamie A. Hunsicker.....*Red Hill*  
 Marcia Regina Hurst.....*Allentown*  
 Gagandeep Kaur.....*Bethlehem*  
 \*Mary Anne Keating.....*Allentown*  
 Christina Marie Lamonica.....*Easton*  
 Savannah Landin.....*Danielsville*  
 Maureen E. Lenahan.....*Allentown*  
 Jennifer L. Lenosky.....*Minersville*  
 Christopher R. Mack.....*Zionsville*  
 Sara N. MacKeverican.....*Orefield*  
 Tracy L. Mann.....*Coopersburg*  
 \*\*\*Joseph Angelo Mannino.....*Easton*  
 Robin Marie Markle.....*Easton*  
 Rhiannon E. McAlary.....*Bangor*  
 Tara L. Meilinger.....*Easton*  
 Dawn Marie Melnick.....*Tamaqua*  
 \*Mary Kathleen Murphy.....*Bethlehem*  
 Tasha Marie Ortiz.....*Allentown*  
 Phung Pham .....*Allentown*  
 Natina Prioleau.....*Delaware Water Gap*  
 Alyssa Emerald Reed.....*Bethlehem*  
 Jamie Lynn Rivera.....*Bangor*  
 Teri Ann Rusnak .....*Hubertus, WI*  
 Therese Serrado.....*Bethlehem*  
 Karrie Ann Shimmel.....*Palmerton*  
 Jennifer E. Sigley.....*Allentown*  
 Amy Lee Skibiell.....*Orwigsburg*  
 Laura Smith.....*Saylorsburg*  
 \*Suzanne Marie Spencer.....*Kintnersville*  
 Debra M. Stranzl.....*Allentown*  
 Natasha Thohan.....*Nazareth*  
 Aleta Pudlo-Tintle.....*Stewartsville*  
 \*\*Jaclyn B. Toth.....*Allentown*  
 Heather L. Wallace.....*Albrightsville*  
 Tara Jean Wolfe.....*Kutztown*  
 \*Rebekah S. Yount.....*Belvidere, NJ*

**ACADEMIC HONORS**

- \* *cum laude* - **3.30 grade point average or above**
- \*\* *magna cum laude* - **3.60 grade point average or above**
- \*\*\* *summa cum laude* - **3.80 grade point average or above**

St. Luke’s School of Nursing is the nation’s oldest hospital-based, diploma school in continuous operation. The school became a reality in 1884 when Dr. William Estes appointed Miss M. J. Merritt from Bellevue Hospital, NY, as principal of the nursing school. Nine students comprised the first class.

Today, St. Luke’s nursing students receive more than 900 hours of clinical training in maternity, care of the child, gerontology, psychiatric and medical/surgical nursing to prepare for success in the field, as well as theoretical

instruction through an intensive two-year period. St. Luke's Hospital & Health Network is the primary site for clinical experience. Through a partnership with Moravian College in Bethlehem, St. Luke's School of Nursing graduates may seamlessly earn a baccalaureate degree in nursing with an additional two years of study.

St. Luke's offers 76 medical specialties and is a major teaching institution that supports centers of excellence in trauma, neuroscience, orthopaedics, open-heart surgery, robotic surgery, high-risk pregnancy, oncology, radiology and vascular disease.

More information may be obtained about St. Luke's School of Nursing at [www.sonstlukes.org](http://www.sonstlukes.org) and St. Luke's Hospital & Health Network at [www.slhnn.org](http://www.slhnn.org).

# # #