

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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VIRGINIA PUBLIC HEALTH NURSES: CARING TODAY FOR A HEALTHIER TOMORROW

National Nurses Week is May 6-12

(RICHMOND, Va.) – Ann Rickard, R.N.,N.P., of Broadway, Virginia has been named Virginia Department of Health’s (VDH) Nurse of the Year as part of the recognition surrounding National Nurses Week May 6 – 12. Ms. Rickard has been a public health nurse for 13 years. A Nurse Practitioner with the Central Shenandoah Health District and a graduate of George Mason University and the University of North Carolina, Ms. Rickard works for her community both on the job for VDH and during her “free” time – volunteering at the local free clinic and serving as a parish nurse. She will serve as an ambassador for VDH in 2010.

“Ann Rickard, as this year’s VDH Public Health Nurse of the Year, is an exemplar of nursing practice and is viewed as highly effective, not only as a clinician but also in advancing public health services and programs,” said Joanne Wakeham, Ph.D., director of public health nursing at VDH.

National Nurses Week is devoted to highlighting the efforts of registered nurses on improving health care at the individual, family, group and community levels. Every day, Virginia’s public health nurses protect the health of more than 7 million Virginians. They have many roles - from staff nurse to educator to nurse practitioner to communicable disease nurse - and serve all of them with passion for the profession and with a strong commitment to patient safety.

Public health nurses are in high demand today with public health nursing providing a fascinating career path of service to the community. “I have seen time and again the positive impact public health nurses can have on our fellow citizens’ quality of life,” said Wakeham. “We need more nurses, both experienced managers and recent graduates, to help ensure the health of future generations.”

For more information about careers in public health nursing, visit www.vdh.virginia.gov/nursing.

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