

# Lee cuts ribbon on expanded nursing complex

**Funded through bond approved in 2013, expansion project completed on time & on budget**

BAYTOWN, TX — Students in the Lee College Nursing Program now have a renovated and revamped facility on campus to train and prepare for rewarding careers on the front lines of patient-centered health care — complete with new spaces to learn and practice critical professional skills, and connect with classmates and instructors.

Lee College administrators, students and faculty came together Tuesday, Oct. 24, with members of the Board of Regents and local health care community to cut the ribbon on the McNulty-Haddick Nursing Complex Expansion, which was funded through a \$40 million bond overwhelmingly approved by voters in 2013. The project was completed on time and came in just under its original \$6 million budget.

“We know how important nurses are; they’re essential to health care. Nurses are where the rubber meets the road,” said Pete Alfaro, chairman of the Board of Regents, in thanking citizens for supporting the bond referendum that made the expansion possible. “Property taxes, student tuition and fees and state funding do not cover everything. We are grateful for what the community did for us. We want to give every student and faculty member at Lee College the very best.”

At the expanded McNulty-Haddick Complex, there is a new lecture hall that seats 105 students; additional classrooms that can also be used for lab spaces and give faculty and students a variety of ways to interact and enhance instruction; and a new lounge, computer area and outside patio for students to connect with each other and review materials in close proximity to their classrooms and labs.

The Clinical Lab and Simulation Center inside the complex – a replicated hospital setting where students practice their professional skills with high-fidelity mannequins that sweat, bleed and even give birth – has been expanded to add an area dedicated specifically to pediatric care. Through a donation to the Lee College Foundation and grant funding from the state’s Nursing Innovation Grant Program, the Clinical Lab and Simulation Center have also received new mannequins, supplies and equipment that will allow faculty to teach clinical application in each nursing course throughout the program curriculum.

“This project focused on fulfilling the needs of nursing students, faculty and staff,” said Dr. Tracy Allen, director of the Nursing Program. A Lee College alumna herself with more than 20 years of experience in the field, she praised the previous nursing directors — many of whom attended the ribbon-cutting ceremony — who taught her how to be a professional and set the solid foundation upon which the program continues to build today.

“We share that same commitment to student success and to the nursing profession,” Allen said. “Lee College nursing graduates are some of the best nurses I know.”

With a strong reputation for its challenging and relevant curriculum that prepares students for the realities of modern health care, the Lee College Nursing Program emphasizes practical experience. From their first semester, students are required to spend time in both traditional classes and the laboratory and hands-on clinical

environment. They are also encouraged to become lifelong learners and continue their education beyond the associate degree.

Since the expansion of the nursing complex was completed, students have particularly enjoyed using the lounge area to hold study groups and unwind together from the rigors of their coursework.

“We want to express our gratitude. Your financial resources have been to good use,” said Danyel Browder, a Level 3 student and president of the Lee College Nursing Students Association, at the ribbon-cutting ceremony. “This new addition has made us really proud to say we are nursing students at Lee College.”