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National Nurses Week May 6-12

The work of America's 2.9 million registered nurses to save lives and to maintain the health of millions of individuals is the focus of this year's National Nurses Week, celebrated annually May 6-12 throughout the United States. This year, the American Nurses Association (ANA) has selected "Nurses: Caring Today for a Healthier Tomorrow" as the theme for 2010.

National Nurses Week begins on May 6, marked as Registered Nurses Recognition Day, and ends on May 12, the birthday of Florence Nightingale, founder of nursing as a modern profession. During this week, nurses at the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center Anita Thigpen Perry School of Nursing will be available to discuss the importance of nurses to the Lubbock community and state as well as the various nursing and continuing nursing education programs offered by the Perry School of Nursing.

Texas and the nation are facing a critical shortage of RNs. According to a recent report by the Texas Center for Nursing Workforce Studies, Texas will not produce sufficient RNs to meet the health care demands of Texans through 2020 without major interventions to increase RN supply.

Between 2005 and 2020, demand for RNs is expected to increase by 86 percent and supply by only 53 percent. West Texas is particularly vulnerable to this shortage of nursing professionals because of its rural demographics.

National Nurses Week is devoted to highlighting the diverse ways in which registered RNs, the largest health care profession, are working to improve health care. From bedside nursing in hospitals and long-term care facilities to the halls of research institutions, state legislatures and Congress, the depth and breadth of the nursing profession is meeting the expanding health care needs of American society. The Perry School of Nursing graduates more than 500 nurses with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing each year.

For more information or to speak to a local nursing expert, contact the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center Office of Communications at (806) 743-2143.

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