

Nursing Students Get A \$500 Valley Welcome

By ANTHONY DIXON, STAFF WRITER



PEMBROKE, ON; September 4, 2008 - First year students in the Bachelor of Science in Nursing program at Algonquin College in the Ottawa Valley got a \$500 handshake when they were welcomed to school Tuesday.

Annually, the College hosts an orientation luncheon for the students during which each is presented with a \$500 bursary.

Jamie Bramburger, manager of community and student affairs at the college, explained that the bursary is the result of a community partnership involving local health care providers.

Mr. Bramburger said providing some assistance to first-year students helps attract people to Pembroke to take the Bachelor of Science in Nursing program at Algonquin.

This year, 32 students are registered to begin the four-year program.

"We shoot for 25 so that's a very healthy number," Mr. Bramburger said. "The community partners have been very generous in providing the bursaries up to this point and we hope they continue."

This is the fifth consecutive year that the bursaries have been presented to first-year students.

On hand to present the cheques were representatives of the three main community partners, namely Pierre Noel, president and CEO of the Pembroke Regional Hospital, Shelley Sheedy, administrator of Miramichi Lodge, and Shayne Hoelke, administrator of Bonnechere Manor in Renfrew.

Mr. Hoelke, who attended Algonquin College in the late 1980s, was the guest speaker at the luncheon. He reminded the students of the long-standing tradition of training nurses in Pembroke.





In addition, he asked the students to consider remaining here in the Ottawa Valley when they graduate.

"New graduates are very important to all the community partners in the Valley. Give us some consideration for your careers," he said.

Campus Dean Karen Davies welcomed the new students to the college, telling them the program they were embarking on was "fabulous." She encouraged the students to become involved in activities at the school and to become part of the campus.

"There is a long tradition of nursing education in Pembroke and your class is continuing on with that tradition. The program is fun, it's hard work, but it's interesting and exciting," she said.

First year student Jacqueline Fraser from Beachburg said the bursary will really help her out this year. "I worked all summer to pay for tuition and the bursary will pay for my books which is really good," she said. "I also received the health science award when I graduated (high school) so my first year is paid for without OSAP (Ontario Student Assistance Program)."



Brittany McKenna of Ottawa is also a first-year student. She said she appreciated the bursary, as she needs it along with OSAP to pay for tuition, books and living in Pembroke for four years.

Nadia Mohamed is in her second year of the bachelor of nursing program. "(In my first year) the bursary helped in terms of living expenses, books and paying rent," she said, adding that the extra money meant a little less stress.

