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# News



**National League  
for Nursing**

For Immediate Release

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## **NLN 2002 – 2003 Survey of RN Nursing Programs indicates positive upward trends in the nursing workforce supply**

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**December 13, 2003... New York, NY.** The National League for Nursing today released a preliminary report that shows a surge in the number of graduations, admissions and enrollments in RN nursing programs for the academic year 2002-2003. The National League for Nursing is the only nursing organization that collects and analyzes data from all types of nursing education programs.

In announcing the preliminary survey findings, NLN CEO, Dr. Ruth D. Corcoran, said that, “We are heartened by these early results and hopeful that these trends continue. Graduations appear to have increased 6% over the prior year, and if all graduates pass their licensure exams, approximately 75,000 new RN nurses will be able to join the workforce. However, this increase is a drop in the bucket compared to the need.”

Shortages of nurses and nurse educators remain critical. The Joint Commission on Accreditation of Health Care Organizations reports that over 126,000 nursing positions are unfilled in hospitals. Further, nurse shortages are even more acute in long-term care organizations and home-health care agencies.

### **The Survey**

NLN’s preliminary projections are based on data analyzed to date, approximately 30%, from the 3,017 nursing programs in the United States and its Territories. These preliminary survey results compare the 2002–2003 growth rates to those of the prior year in the numbers of admissions, enrollments and graduations in Associate Degree, Diploma and Baccalaureate programs.

Admissions and graduations for all three types of programs increased by about 6%. Enrollments for all three programs increased 15%, with enrollments in Associate Degree and Diploma programs increasing 5% while those for Baccalaureate programs increased a dramatic 21%.

Based on the above increases, NLN projects an immediate nursing workforce supply (graduations) and a potential nursing workforce pipeline (admissions and enrollments) as follows:

## **IMMEDIATE WORKFORCE SUPPLY:**

**73,000** GRADUATES from all pre-licensure RN nursing education programs – Associate Degree, Diploma, and Baccalaureate -- in the 2002-2003 academic year:

Diploma programs which were rapidly and steadily declining seem to be reversing this trend and are now back to 1998/99 levels. Both Associate Degree and Baccalaureate programs, which were also declining, are back up to levels of over a decade ago.

## **POTENTIAL WORKFORCE PIPELINE:**

**88,000** Fall ADMISSIONS to all pre-licensure RN nursing programs.

**240,500 students** ENROLLED in all pre-licensure RN nursing programs during the 2002 – 2003 academic year:

The final report, with complete data tables, detailed analysis and implications will be published this spring.

*The **National League for Nursing** is the only national organization that represents the nursing workforce at all levels of education and practice. For 110 years, NLN has been dedicated to preparing nurses to meet the needs of a changing health care environment. NLN provides opportunities for the professional development of nursing faculty to advance quality nursing education. In addition to competency tests and measurements, and other educational products, NLN serves as a repository of databases, information, and benchmarking related to nursing education. For more information about the NLN, visit their website at [www.nln.org](http://www.nln.org).*

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