

LA PLATA, Md. (April 5, 2010) – The grand opening of the College of Southern Maryland’s new clinical simulation lab was held Wednesday, March 31. The lab is designed to enhance training for nursing students and professionals in the southern Maryland Region. The lab provides a “real life” experience where students receive both direct instruction and simulated situations to which they respond and receive instructor feedback.

The new lab is part of a collaborative effort by the college and the region’s hospitals and health care facilities to develop strategies to address the current and future nursing workforce shortage.

“Maryland will experience an increased nursing shortage in the coming years if action is not taken to attract and train candidates in the field,” stated Rep. Steny Hoyer, who attended the event. “According to data, 43 percent of Maryland’s nurses plan to retire in the next few years at a time when 33 percent of our population will be older than 50. To accommodate the ‘Baby Boomers,’ Maryland will require 10,000 more nurses to meet those needs.”

Last year, the Maryland Hospital Association launched an initiative to provide \$15.5 million over the next five years to 17 nursing schools — including the College of Southern Maryland — aimed at helping schools enroll more students and hire additional faculty, as well as provide needed medical technology and laboratories. The plan is financed through donations from individuals and participants from the health care field who are concerned that the average age of nurses is rising at the same time that demand for medical care is expected to increase.

“Today, instruction of our nursing students has moved to a new level,” said CSM President Dr. Brad Gottfried. “High-fidelity clinical simulation at the College of Southern Maryland (CSM) is playing a critical role in preparing our students to hit the ground running when they graduate and take jobs in the healthcare industry. It is critically important that we are able to provide this realistic experience in an academic setting.”