

# InterCom

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## Today's Student Nurse

When Duke Hospital opened in 1931, the schools of medicine and nursing opened simultaneously—fulfilling from the beginning Duke Medical Center's traditional triple role of treatment, teaching and research.

The School of Nursing was organized by its first dean, Miss Bessie Baker, and admitted its first class on January 2, 1931. According to Dr. Wilburt C. Davison in his history of the first twenty years of the Medical Center, "Miss Baker was responsible more than anyone else for the success of the nursing school as well as for the progress of Duke Hospital." Along with other aspects of the Medical Center, the School of Nursing presents a vastly different picture today than it did 30 years ago.

Today's student nurse can look forward to a profession of greatly expanded horizons. It is a profession which still offers the deep personal satisfaction of helping the sick, plus the added security of a guarantee of a job in her chosen specialty for the rest of her working life. Open to her today in addition to general nursing are careers in such new areas as psychiatric nursing, intensive (post-operative) nursing, nursing in research areas (such as our Clinical Research Unit) as well as the personnel-starved field of nursing education.

Ten years ago the university trustees realized that trends in the field of nursing required a student to complete a four year program leading to a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree. So today's student nurse at Duke studies for four academic years and three summers before acquiring her nursing degree.



Capping—this impressive and solemn moment launches our student into her nursing career. At the beginning of the sophomore year, students attend the capping ceremony in the Duke Chapel. Here the Dean of the Chapel presides and each sophomore is capped by her "big sister" advisor. From this time on, the student wears her cap and uniform on the wards. Her nursing training is really beginning now!

The student nurse must meet virtually the same requirements faced by any other freshman at Duke University and faces the same stiff tuition and fees problem encountered by all college coeds. After acceptance her entire freshman year (and parts of her second and third years) are spent taking liberal arts courses in conjunction with other freshmen. She is definitely like every other Duke coed during this first year except that she lives in Hanes House Annex; takes one introductory nursing course and has a student nurse for a "big sister."

While most of the Duke student nurses are from the east coast, less than one quarter are from North Carolina and there are always a sprinkling of girls from the farthest corners of our country in the student body of approximately 300 girls. The School of Nursing at Duke University Medical Center indeed is known as one of the finest in the country.

Duke Feature  
Photos by Sparks