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MIDDLE TENNESSEE SCHOOL OF ANESTHESIA RECEIVES MAXIMUM 10-YEAR RE-ACCREDITATION

(MADISON, TN) – The Middle Tennessee School of Anesthesia (MTSA) has been awarded a full 10-year continued re-accreditation by the Council on Accreditation of Nurse Anesthesia Educational Programs (COA), announced MTSA President L. Phil Hunt, RN, EdD.

“This maximum full accreditation is a reflection of the quality of the anesthesia program at MTSA, including the efforts of administration, faculty and staff,” said MTSA Vice President/Dean Ikey DeVasher, CRNA, PhD, APN. “It is also a reflection of the students MTSA enrolls, who have high academic achievements and strong clinical backgrounds in critical care areas of nursing.”

MTSA offers a 28-month program for registered nurses that wish to earn the degree of Master of Science with a focus in Nurse Anesthesia, and complete the academic and clinical requirements to become eligible to take the National Certification Examination to become Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists. MTSA also provides a mechanism whereby current Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists can complete the master’s degree requirements. Graduates will be able to teach anesthesia related subjects, should they desire, and assist in the preparation of the next generation of anesthesia providers.

“COA is pleased to inform MTSA that continued accreditation has been granted,” said COA Executive Director Frank Gerbasi, CRNA, PhD. He continued saying, “This decision recognizes the program for providing a graduate level curriculum leading to the award of a Master of Science degree.”

Hunt said, “In harmony with a broad overall mission of reflecting Christ in its educational program, and in keeping with its Seventh-day Adventist heritage, the Middle Tennessee School of Anesthesia conducts its academic classes with an exposure to Christian, Seventh-day Adventist beliefs. By this educational effort, it is the mission of the Middle Tennessee School of Anesthesia to contribute to meeting the community needs for anesthesia providers in Nashville, Middle Tennessee, the Central South, and Nationally.”

The American Association of Nurse Anesthetists (AANA) initiated the accreditation program for nurse anesthesia in 1952. The accreditation function was transferred to the Council on Accreditation of Nurse Anesthesia Educational Programs/Schools in 1975 in response to a major revision of the U.S. Office of Education criteria. Since 1975, the COA has existed as a fiscally autonomous multidisciplinary body under the corporate structure of the AANA. This multidisciplinary structure gives recognition to the various publics that represent the community of interest within which the nurse anesthesia profession resides. The 12 members of the Council are representative of the following groups: nurse anesthesia educators and practitioners, nurse anesthesia students, health care administrators, university representatives, and the public. All are voting members except the student member.

COA's scope of accreditation is for institutions and programs of nurse anesthesia at the post master's certificate, master's or doctoral degree levels in the United States, its territories and protectorates. Both the United States Department of Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation recognize the COA as an accrediting agency for nurse anesthesia.

The Council on Accreditation is responsible for establishing the standards and policies for nurse anesthesia educational programs subject to consideration by its communities of interest. The standards address administrative policies and procedures, institutional support, curriculum and instruction, faculty, evaluation, and ethics. The first set of standards was adopted in 1952 and has been under review and subject to periodic major and minor revisions since that time. Compliance with the standards forms the basis for accreditation decisions made by the Council.

The accreditation process for an established program is based on self-evaluation by the program and a site visit by a team of two or three reviewers. The process is repeated at intervals of up to ten years and may be supplemented by progress reports. A summary report of the review and the program's response to the report are presented to the COA for an accreditation decision.

Accreditation provides quality assurances concerning educational preparation through continuous self-study and review. The ultimate goal of accreditation is to improve the quality of nurse anesthesia education and provide competent practitioners to health care consumers and employers. Graduation from an approved program is one prerequisite of eligibility for national certification and a consideration used by governmental funding and licensing agencies, employers and potential students.

MTSA is located in Madison, Tennessee and was founded in 1950. It is one of the largest schools of nurse anesthesia in the United States. For more information, call (888) 353-MTSA or visit the school's website: www.mtsa.edu.