

NURSING PODCAST

FOR CHATTAHOOCHEE TECHNICAL COLLEGE

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Kimberly Roberts: Nursing is all about care. It's about helping people at a time in their lives where they have the most difficult moments in their lives when they realize that they need health care.

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Jacqueline Lopez: You know, they play a vital role in guiding us through this demanding program. And they're very understanding, very compassionate, caring. And, you know, they teach us so much.

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Kimberly Roberts: So there's just so many avenues that you can go as a nurse.

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Narrator: 98 seven Chatt Tech where 98.7% of our students earn a career. On this episode, we'll be discussing one of the top ranked nursing schools in Georgia, located right here at Chattahoochee Tech. Programs of study in nursing at Chattahoochee Tech include the Associate of Science degree in nursing, where students trained to become registered nurses. Programs of study also include Licensed Practical Nursing and Certified Nursing Assistant. We'll hear from the faculty, instructors, current nursing students, grads, and an industry partner from Wellstar. So let's get comfortable and meet our guests.

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Kimberly Roberts: My name is Kimberly Roberts and I am the Program director for the Associate of Nursing program here at the Paulding campus.

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Narrator: How long is the program and who's a good candidate?

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Kimberly Roberts: So the program takes a year and a half to complete pretty much four semesters. People who are interested in helping others when they are sick and ill, those who want to contribute to their community, and helping people when they are at that time in their lives where they have illness. A person who wants to give back, who is a nurturer, are the type of individuals that would be, you know, wonderful candidates to become a nurse.

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Narrator: What is nursing all about?

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Kimberly Roberts: Nursing is all about care. It's about helping people at a time in their lives where they have the most difficult moments in their lives when they realize that they need health care. And so if you are someone who wants to help individuals feel better when they're ill, if you want to contribute in a meaningful way as an incredibly rewarding career that can provide you with that ability to contribute in a meaningful way. If you love the idea of helping individuals maintain their health, teach them about what it means to be healthy, then being a nurse is definitely a wonderful career. I definitely have never had a moment that I have regretted becoming a nurse.

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Narrator: Let's get to know another faculty member.

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Coleeta Davis: I am Colleta Davis. I am the Program Director of the LPN program at Chattahoochee Technical College.

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Narrator: What's an LPN?

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Coleeta Davis: A licensed practical nurse. That's what an LPN is. Some places call a vocational nurse, but they're more focused on the skills and the tasks and things like that. So previously LPNS had a very restrictive licensure. They could not give certain medications. They couldn't give a lot of medications, they couldn't be team leads, they couldn't do a lot. They were just restricted in their practice. Now as things have evolved now they can pass meds. They can't push like some IV cardiac meds in terms of an

emergency. They can't initiate a blood transfusion, but they can go ahead and assess the patients and review and do all those things. But they also have to be well versed in what an RN does, in terms of all the medications, all the things that they do because they if they're taking over care, they still have to know what's going on. So it's just a little bit more restrictive. And they don't have as much of the baseline theory that you would get in a bachelor's degree. But they start straight off with the skills and being very proficient in that.

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Narrator: Can you give us an overview of the LPN program?

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Coleeta Davis: The LPN program at Chattahoochee Tech is 12 months long. There are some that are a little bit longer and some are just a little bit shorter, but most of the time the median is about 12 months. It is a comprehensive program getting nurses ready in terms of the license, practical application to fulfill their licensure. After that 12 months. It ranges from fundamentals all the way up into maternity. So they see all of the rotations as they go through is jam-packed. It is a straight 12 months. There are no summer breaks. So you only get little holidays here and there. But it is a comprehensive, rigorous program here at Tech Tech.

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Narrator: And here's our final faculty member.

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Pauline Berry-Woods: So my name is Pauline Berry-Woods, and I'm the associate dean of nursing for CNA and patient care technician.

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Narrator: What is a CNA and what do they do?

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Pauline Berry-Woods: A CNA is a certified nursing assistant. Pretty much a nursing assistant usually will take care of the activities of daily living. So someone who it could be anyone from infancy all the way up to senior who needs assistance. So someone who maybe needs assistance with maybe feeding or dressing or maybe with motility. If they had a stroke or something like that. So. Or even just need

someone to just sit with a person who maybe have some mental health problems, like from Alzheimer's. And it can't be alone on memory issues, I should say.

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Narrator: What is the training like for the CNA program?

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Pauline Berry-Woods: The training is very intense, it consists of a written portion or a lecture portion and then skills. Most of the time the students usually do not have a problem with the written portion or the lecture side of it. It's usually the skills. You know, someone said, well, I didn't even know that there was a proper way of washing your hands, and there really is a proper way to wash your hands.

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Narrator: I didn't know that. Now let's talk with two recent grads.

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Ciera Walker: My name is Ciera Walker. I am a recent new grad from Chatt Tech. I'm currently working as a licensed Practical nurse, and I'll be soon taking my NCLEX because I just recently graduated from the LPN to RN program at Chatt Tech.

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Narrator: Ciera, can you explain the bridge program?

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Ciera Walker: So the bridge program is just an option to where with us. We were already practical nurses and so that program allowed us to. It's basically accelerated. It allowed us to go from practical nursing to registered nursing. So most traditional students, they will go as previously mentioned, they will go and sign up for their general studies. And then once they meet all of their prerequisites, they can take their classes specific to nursing to earn that degree. Well, in a bridge program, we've already done all of our general studies. We've already done the practical nursing program. And so that literally bridges us from practical nursing to a higher level of nursing.

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Narrator: Is there anything unique about the program?

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Ciera Walker: I guess the only other thing I would mention is that I was actually awarded a scholarship for this program, as well as the Practical Nursing program. So chat Tech is veteran friendly. I'm a I'm a veteran and they offer support services for that. It's just been a very great experience. Overall, we're regarded as the top nursing programs. And so one thing that I would I would like to share is that my journey, it took a long time for me to get to this point, but I feel like I saved the best for last. And not only did I get into this nursing program, but it was one of the best that was worth the wait.

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Narrator: Here's another grad.

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Dametrice Jordan: My name is Dametrice Johnson. I also go by Didi and I just recently graduated from the ASN program here at Chattahoochee Tech. My cohort was an LPN to our end bridge, so we were all LPNS prior to starting the program and we are now registered nurses.

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Narrator: So you started in the LPN program. This is the starting program and you build yourself up.

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Dametrice Jordan: Yes. Um, you don't have to necessarily start off as an LPN, but that is just what I chose to do. So I did start off as an LPN, and then I just bridged right on over to become a registered nurse. Now you do have the option of just going straight through the starting off in the program. However that was not my journey.

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Narrator: What's the difference between the LPN and the ASN programs?

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Dametrice Jordan: Um, I would say the differences is number one, the requirements set by the Georgia Board of Nursing is one of the differences. So there are certain amount of hours that you have to

complete by actively in the classroom, and also a certain amount of hours that you have to complete clinically, which is in the hospital. So there's more hours that we have to train in the hospital for the ASN program, and then there's more hours that we have to complete in the classroom. And then also some of the differences, the degree of work. I would say it's a lot more challenging. And the ASN program, while I would say the LPN program was pretty challenging, I think that a lot of us were kind of surprised and shocked at how much we had to work in the LPN program, but at least at Chattahoochee Tech, which is a good thing, that's definitely not a bad thing, but the ASN program, it's a lot more papers and projects and, um, you're required to think critically is one of the biggest difference with Lpns and RN's. So we spent a lot of time with not just answering questions such as, you know, is this heart failure or is it diabetes? But okay, we know it's diabetes, but what are you going to do about it? What are you going to assess because of it? You know, so it's a lot of critical thinking. I would say.

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Narrator: Let's talk about jobs. What can grads use their degree for?

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Dametrice Jordan: That's the beauty of nursing, though, is that you can go into almost any field. I mean, you can even go straight into like working remotely, doing working for insurance, which is what I did as an LPN, you don't have any direct patient contact, but you're still working in the health field. So. There is something for everyone in nursing.

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Narrator: Let's meet some of the students currently in the LPN program.

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Jacqueline Lopez: Hi, my name is Jacqueline Lopez. I am 32 years old. Stay at home mother of three. Ages are 14, seven and two and I'm currently in the LPN program cohort to graduate December 2023.

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Narrator: What's your story of enrolling in this program?

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Jacqueline Lopez: This journey has actually been about 14 years in the making for me since I was in high school. Like, I knew I wanted to pursue my career in the medical field, but life unfolded and at the age of

18, I welcomed my first child. My nurses were amazingly sweet, compassionate and very caring. So it was during this hospital stay that solidified my desire to pursue my career in the medical field, especially nursing and, you know, women's health. So if I could make someone else feel like I felt at that moment, you know, heard, seen, understood and possibly making a positive, you know, impact during a challenging or difficult time for someone, I believe that that would bring so much meaningful purpose to my life, you know, creating a more compassionate world. So I began by getting my patient care tech diploma, and I started working at an OB GYN office. I loved that patient interaction, and I instantly knew, you know, that that was my calling.

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Narrator: What do you like most about the program?

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Jacqueline Lopez: I like the hands on experience. You know, everything that we're learning in class. At first you're like, I'm so confused. I don't understand what is going on, but it all comes full circle. You know, it's like you put two and two together once you're actually in practice and skills lab in your, you know, hands on experiences in your clinical settings. So I love that part. I love how our professors, you know, they play a vital role in guiding us through this demanding program. And they're very understanding, very compassionate, caring. And, you know, they teach us so much in this 12 month program.

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Narrator: And here's another current student.

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Mia Tanksley: Hi, I'm Maya Townsley. I'm currently in the LPN program, um, started fall 2023 at this program and I've been just trying to get through it. It's been great.

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Narrator: Vo what was your reasoning for enrolling in the LPN program?

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Mia Tanksley: Well, I chose the LPN program specifically because it's timing. I really wanted to get into the nursing field fast and all over the course, and then probably eventually build upon that. Um, so I

thought it was a great stepping stone because I'm currently a CNA, so I'm just really following the blocks right now and specifically Chatt Tech because, um, it is one of the top in Georgia. So I did a lot of research when it came to getting into it. And a current graduate at my job actually just came from there. And had a really great things to say.

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Narrator: Can you talk about your experience in the classroom?

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Mia Tanksley: So it's a really in depth. So we're in class, at least for the first eight weeks. It was five days a week from about 9 to 4. So you really get in depth and you really are interacting with the teachers a lot. You have multiple teachers teaching the multiple subjects, so you get experience from, you know, a wide array of different fields, different knowledge, different skills. And then you do a bunch of skills lab training that is very personal because you're working not only with the teachers, but there's auxiliary instructors that really do help you. Um, you're very close with your cohort because you stay with them throughout the course and with that amount of time. So it's very I like it. It's very personal in that aspect.

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Narrator: Now that you've gotten your two CCS worth from the students and grads, Chatt Tech has a really interesting partnership with Wellstar and Randy McClain. He's the assistant director of professional practice for the center for Nursing Excellence at Wellstar Health System. And Randy, can you tell us what the relation is between Wellstar and Chatt Tech?

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Randy McClain: So we partner with Chattahoochee Tech and our Clinical Workforce Development program, where we train nursing assistants and employ them. So the relationship with Chatt Tech is pretty unique because Chattahoochee Tech already had a nurse aide accelerated program. And then Wellstar looked at, how can we make sure that our workforce is plentiful for folks that are and we can sort of drive those folks into nursing practice? So we provide the clinical experience. The academic components are provided by Chattahoochee Tech, and those are employees of Wellstar Health System.

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Narrator: How can students get in? Involved in the program.

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Randy McClain: The students. The participants in this particular program are vetted by our talent acquisition team. In 1 or 2 ways. This can be, you know, through our own marketing internally of our CNA, what we call our certified nursing assistant and certified medical assistant training programs. We do, uh, internal communication, external communication about the program. And from there we go through the interviewing process. We hire them up front.

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Narrator: Assistant Dean of Nursing Woods. What are the other opportunities for students?

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Pauline Berry-Woods: So generally what happens is it's usually it's not like we have a set employment. What will usually happen is usually there will be people who will say, well, I need a certain CNA or something like that, and then they'll reach out to me and then if I have somebody available, I think would be a good match, I can tell them about it and let them apply for the position. But we have a unique program where we partner with Wellstar that's on the non-credit side, where they pay for their CNAs to come in and train at Chatt Tech, and they will complete the CNA training here. And they have a job through Wellstar, and we're looking to do that more with other facilities.

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Narrator: Instructor Roberts, what can grads do with the associate nursing degree?

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Kimberly Roberts: So once they complete their program, they would graduate with an associate degree in nursing and pass their boards and be a licensed registered nurse. What is lovely about the field of nursing is, is that you can be a part of so many different specialties and you can work in the hospital. You could work in the inpatient environment where you can care for people who are critically ill. You can work in the emergency room and care for people who are entering when they're having an emergency. You can work on the medical surgical floors and caring for people when they're in, you know, the acute phase of their illness. So you could work in interventional radiology and help people with procedures, you know, on the outpatient setting. There is, um, so many rewarding careers, such as working as a home health nurse, where you would go into people's homes and guide them and help them to stay healthy in their homes. You could work in office buildings and be a community health nurse and assisting with providing education and care for individuals when they're at work. So the sky is the limit. And, you know, there's also nursing is now entering into areas that we haven't thought of before, such as working as an informatics nurse, where you are a part of the team that's building the technology and the systems that are used as we care for patients. And also you could work in environments like legislation. So there's just so many avenues that you can go as a nurse. It is a career of lifelong learning. And so the hope is, is that once a person finishes with their Associate of Nursing degree, that they will continue on in their

education and get a bachelor's degree so that you can be someone who can help with making the decisions on the legislative level with how care is impacted and how care is delivered in, you know, our state.

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Narrator: Instructor Davis has the PD of the LPN program. Well, congrats do with this degree.

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Coleeta Davis: Of course they have to be licensed after they finish the program. Then they'll take the NCLEX for practical nurse. Once they have successfully completed their licensure, they can work in all kinds of areas. It has opened the door and probably in the last 5 to 10 years, what a practical nurse can do before you would see practical nurses only in like dialysis, outpatient centers and things like that. But since Covid and the nursing shortage, schools are now opening up their doors for more acute care. So acute care meaning that they can work on the floors in the hospital, along with delegation skills from the RN or whoever is above them in terms of delegation rights. So they have been working in floors. One of my recent grads that will be graduating in December will actually be working in the emergency room, which is something an LPN normally would not be able to do. So we're very excited about that. And then the last couple of cohorts we've hired, what they've been hired into like maternity mother and baby. So any place that a registered nurse most of the time, except like the ICU areas licensed practical nurses can go into, they will have some differences in their roles, but they are able to work in all areas of nursing, which is very exciting.

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Narrator: Assistant Dean of Nursing Woods I want to get your final thoughts on the CNA and the Patient Care Technician program.

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Pauline Berry-Woods: Well, I like to. To students or just anyone, that if you're not doing anything at this point, you know, 16 weeks of your life, one semester, you know you can come and complete this program. It is an accelerated program. It's very intense, but it's doable if you apply yourself. And once you complete the program and take the state exam, which consists of a written exam and a skills exam and pass it, then you will be just like a registered nurse or anyone else who have a professional license. You will be given a certificate number and as long as you work at least eight hours within a two year period, then you will be in good standing and you will be on the Georgia registry. And to me, that's that's a great walk away. And if you decide that you don't want to do anything else, it's a beginning and the end. If you decide that this is what you want to do, or it can lead into other health care programs as well.

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Narrator: Thanks. Dean Woods, Instructor Roberts, what are your final thoughts for the Associate of Nursing program?

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Kimberly Roberts: We really believe in developing our students to have a core of care in the way that they take care of patients. We believe in developing our students to have that support as they're going through the program and helping them to develop into professional nurses. We are not solely focused on just them being able to pass their NCLEX exam, but we are committed to making sure that they are prepared for practice. That's something that we're very proud of, and we have developed some programs, such as our Student Advisement Program, that provides a level of support to the students that is unique for our program. Our students feel safe to learn here, and we see consistently that our graduates come back year after year to participate in the program because they felt the family dynamic that we find this very important in instilling those caring principles. Nursing is caring, and it's important that the nursing program instills that through our own, you know, modeling the way of what this care look like in health care. So I think that that really is a unique dynamic of our program that we are very committed to.

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Narrator: Instructor Davis, let's get your final thoughts on the LPN program.

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Coleeta Davis: I think we're a hit. And Jewel, I think we are great at what we do in terms of preparing the next generation of nursing, whether we're preparing them to go into the hospital and LPN and staying as an LPN, or preparing them for the next level of being an RN and going on and doing other things in nursing. So it is, I think, just letting people know that LPN is not a destination, and that is only one place. You have so many things that you can do with this degree and move forward in education as well as in professional life.

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Narrator: Chatt Tech, the College of Real World Training and how our communities are stronger and better thanks to the thousands of Chatt Tech graduates in our local workforce. For more information about the nursing program at Chattahoochee Tech, visit Chattahoochee Tech .EDU. Thanks for listening to 98 seven Chatt Tech, where 98.7% of our students earn a career.