



## **TOP NATIONAL RANKING**

### **FOR MOVING VIRGINIANS FROM PUBLIC ASSISTANCE TO WORK**

On July 2, 2008, Governor Timothy M. Kaine announced that Virginia has been ranked highest in the nation for job entry rates for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) recipients for federal fiscal years 2005 and 2006, by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Additionally, Virginia had the second highest job retention rate for each of those years. This marks the third year in a row that Virginia has ranked so highly.

"Virginia leads the nation in helping people transition away from public assistance and into the workforce because of our innovative programs and the dedication of our staff," Governor Kaine said. "We're training TANF recipients for jobs in fields with growing workforce needs, helping secure job placement and retention, while meeting a crucial need in for the Commonwealth's health care system."

Through a program launched in 2007, TANF recipients are trained to become Certified Nursing Assistants (CNA's), filling the growing need for long-term care and direct-care health professionals. In the last two years, 446 TANF recipients have graduated from CNA programs, and today, nearly 100 TANF participants are currently enrolled in CNA programs.

"Virginia, like the nation as a whole, is faced with a shortage of health care professionals," said Secretary of Health and Human Resources Marilyn Tavenner. "As the population ages, the need for nursing support and personal care services grows, and a well-trained workforce is paramount to providing the long-term care Virginians need now and in the future."

TANF recipients receive job training and education through the Virginia Initiative for Employment Not Welfare (VIEW) program. Virginia's job entry success has been bolstered by a wide range of programs that address barriers to employment. For example, Bridges to Success in Fairfax assists TANF clients who have "hidden" disabilities, such as cognitive impairments.

Local governments have also been active participants in the training programs. For example, in the Montgomery area, Partners for Self-Sufficiency has organized community resources and employers to help clients move into the workforce.

"The dedication of local staff in helping TANF recipients with training and job placements has been critical to Virginia's success," said VDSS Commissioner Anthony Conyers Jr. "People want to be self-sufficient. They just need the skills and the opportunity to become so."

