

HEALTH CARE

**Jefferson College adds
2 master's programs**

Jefferson College of Health Sciences in Roanoke is expanding its master's degree offerings to include two new specialities: occupational therapy and physician assistant.

Both programs will begin classes this fall and are accepting applications on a rolling admissions basis. Twenty to 25 slots are available in the occupational therapy program and 10 to 15 will be open for the master's in physician assistant studies.

Spokesman Mark Lambert said the college expects the programs to be competitive and to draw hundreds of applications.

The undergraduate physician assistant program, for example, got 463 applications last fall for 40 openings, Lambert said.

Owned by Carilion Clinic, Jefferson College offers 18 degree programs — including three master's — in nursing and other health professions. In 2005, it began offering a Master of Science in nursing and graduated its first class of 17 in May.

The college, which was started as a training ground for nurses in 1914, has strived to boost the school's sense of community in recent years by attracting younger students and expanding its educational options. It now has approximately 1,000 students, including 970 who are full time. 18369