

NORTHWEST HEALTH FOUNDATION

Press Release

REGIONAL FOUNDATIONS COLLABORATE IN NATIONAL EFFORT TO BUILD NURSING WORKFORCE CAPACITY

Contact: Lauren Musiol 202-745-5051
Pattie Yu 202-745-5100
Chris Palmedo, 503-505-5699

19 local foundations join strategic national initiative led by Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and Northwest Health Foundation

Princeton, NJ and Portland, OR – August 18, 2009 – The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) and Northwest Health Foundation (NWHF) today announced 10 new grants to begin the fourth phase of Partners Investing in Nursing's Future, a unique national initiative to help address the long-term shortage of nurses across the country. The program provides support to local and regional philanthropy to act as catalysts in their own communities and develop strategies for creating and sustaining a viable nursing workforce. The 10 grants awarded this year initiate the involvement of 19 local foundations and exemplify diverse partnerships in 12 states.

"Nurses are the cornerstone of health reform and are the nation's most direct link to patient safety and quality of care. We are committed to helping find the most innovative solutions to the nursing shortage so we can protect patients and reduce costs now and over the long term," said Susan B. Hassmiller, R.N., Ph.D., F.A.A.N., senior adviser for nursing at the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. "This unique partnership of the philanthropic community helps identify new approaches to solve the national nursing shortage, builds nursing leaders across the country, and engages philanthropy on the local level."

This marks the fourth year of funding, totaling more than \$10 million of investment by the program in local partnerships. In addition, Partners Investing in Nursing's Future has leveraged more than \$8 million in local and regional funding, ensuring the long term sustainability of the projects. During the program's first three years, 69 foundation partners in 24 states and the island territories of the Western Pacific established more than 300 local partnerships among nursing organizations, funders and workforce development boards to address the nursing and nurse faculty shortages. The new grantees will bring the total number of private philanthropic organizations contributing to the solutions to nearly ninety, and expands the number of states represented to 32.

“Despite the fact that a downturn in the economy has lessened the current shortage of nurses in some settings, our nation faces a growing shortage of experienced nurses in the near future. While the current economic recession may positively impact the nursing shortage in many parts of the country in the short term, this lull also provides an opportunity for philanthropy to develop stronger relationships with nursing leadership at a crucial time,” said Judith Woodruff, J.D., director of nursing and workforce development of NWHF and program director for Partners Investing in Nursing’s Future. “Partnerships between nursing and philanthropic organizations can focus on building commitment to creating innovative and collaborative solutions to the long-term challenge of ensuring a competent and experienced nurse workforce.”

Through Partners Investing in Nursing’s Future, RWJF and NWHF are hoping that local and regional foundations create a domino effect – where innovative ideas are tested locally and shared nationally. Partners represent a diverse group planning a wide range of program initiatives.

Grant recipients named today are:

1) Arkansas Community Foundation (Arkansas)

Planning for Workforce Development in Geriatric and Long-Term Care in Arkansas will improve the educational preparation of registered nurses caring for frail older adults through a unified educational pathway.

2) The Blue Foundation for a Healthy Florida, Inc. (Florida)

Promoting the Use of Simulation Technology in Florida Nurse Education will maximize the use of simulation technology in the preparation of new and current RNs in the state.

3) The Community Foundation of the Great River Bend (Iowa)

Pathways and Perceptions: A Life Span Model for Nursing Work Force Development will strengthen the educational infrastructure and faculty development in the Quad Cities community.

4) The Greater Kanawha Valley Foundation, with Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation (West Virginia)

West Virginia Nursing Leadership Institute: Team Leadership Development Program Comprehensive Gerontologic Education Partnership will foster new nursing leaders in the state in a variety of practice settings.

5) Hinds Community College Development Foundation (Mississippi)

Geriatric Dedicated Education Unit Initiative will develop a clinical education experience model to increase the number of nurses adequately prepared to care for geriatric patients.

6) John T. Vucurevich Foundation, with First Interstate Bank Foundation (South Dakota) Education Service Partners Program: Prepare and Retain will develop programs to ensure that nurses are retained in the nursing workforce throughout their career continuum.

7) The Sangamon County Community Foundation, with Kindred Healthcare Foundation (Illinois) Central Illinois Nursing Initiative will expand nursing education capacity, articulation, and diversity in the region by aligning nursing education opportunities.

8) Tufts Health Plan Foundation, Inc., with Edward J. and Virginia M. Routhier Foundation, (Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island) Creativity and Connections: Building a Regional Nursing Education Framework will develop nursing education throughout the New England that are more aligned with the needs of the diverse communities in the region.

9) Vetter Foundation, Nebraska Health Care Foundation, Iowa West Foundation and University of Nebraska Foundation (Nebraska) Nebraska Geriatric Nursing Quality Improvement will improve the quality of geriatric nursing and leadership in the state.

10) West Central Initiative, Frank W. Veden Charitable Trust, The Initiative Foundation (Minnesota) Building Faculty Capacity in Geriatric Nursing for Central Minnesota will increase the number of competent registered nurses providing nursing care to elderly persons in a variety of settings in the region.

For more information about Partners Investing in Nursing's Future, visit www.partnersinnursing.org.

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The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation focuses on the pressing health and health care issues facing our country. As the nation's largest philanthropy devoted exclusively to improving the health and health care of all Americans, the Foundation works with a diverse group of organizations and individuals to identify solutions and achieve comprehensive, meaningful and timely change. For more than 30 years the Foundation has brought experience, commitment, and a rigorous, balanced approach to the problems that affect the health and health care of those it serves. When it comes to helping Americans lead healthier lives and get the care they need, the Foundation expects to make a difference in your lifetime.

Founded in 1997, the Northwest Health Foundation is an independent, charitable foundation committed to advancing, supporting, and promoting the health of the people of Oregon and southwest Washington. Embracing its role as the community's partner for better health, the Foundation achieves its mission primarily through grantmaking and support for advocacy efforts that influence public policy. See www.nwhf.org.