



National League for Nursing

July 29, 2005

NLN Endorses Nursing Faculty Bills

In separate letters dated July 25, 2005, the NLN endorsed two legislative measures aimed at alleviating the nursing faculty shortage. The first - H.R.3173, the Nurse Faculty Higher Education Act - was introduced by Representative Carolyn McCarthy (D-NY) on June 30, 2005. This bill creates a pilot program to increase the number of graduate educated nurse faculty. H.R.3173 would provide scholarships to nurses who seek advanced degrees in order to become faculty in an accredited nursing program. It also provides grants to hospitals and health facilities to support institutions that permit qualified nurses to earn a salary while they continue their education. Nurses participating in this program would continue to work part-time or flexible schedules to accommodate their schooling. Upon completion of the program, each nurse would be required to teach two years for each year of support received under the program. Funding for the pilot program would come from Title VII of the Higher Education Act. H.R.3173 has been referred to the House

Committee on Education and the Workforce.

The second bill - the Nurse Faculty Education Act of 2005 - would authorize a demonstration project to increase the number of doctorally prepared nurse faculty. This legislation will be introduced shortly by Senator Jeff Bingaman (D-NM). In its endorsement of the measure, NLN's CEO Dr. Ruth Corcoran stated, "Despite the passage of the Nurse Reinvestment Act in 2002, schools of nursing continue to suffer from a growing shortage of faculty, which prevents these institutions from admitting more students. Preliminary results from a report released by the NLN in December 2004 show that an estimated 125,000 applications were turned away from nursing programs at all levels for the academic year 2003-2004. The lack of qualified faculty to teach these students is the primary reason that their applications were not accepted." Funding for this bill would be under Title VIII - Nursing Workforce Development Programs.

Department of Labor Grants Fund Nursing Education Programs

In June, Secretary of Labor Elaine L. Chao announced the awarding of a series of grants totaling more than \$12 million to address opportunities to build a world-class health care and bio-

technology workforce. The 12 grantees were selected from nearly 230 applicants competing for funding under the President's High Growth Job Training Initiative. Five of the grants address the nationwide shortage of nurses with funding specifically designated for nursing education programs, including those intended to broaden (Cont'd page 2)

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## Title VIII – Nursing Workforce Development Programs *Status Quo for FY2006?*

Nursing Workforce Development Programs	FY 2005 Final	FY 2006 Request	House Passed 6/24/05	Senate Committee Report – 7/14/05
<b>Total (Amounts in Thousands)</b>	<b>\$150,674</b>	<b>\$150,000</b>	<b>\$149,991</b>	<b>\$155,661</b>
Advanced Education Nursing	58,176	43,000	57,637	58,160
Comprehensive Geriatric Education	3,450	***8,000	3,426	3,450
Loan Repayment & Scholarships	31,484	31,000	31,369	31,482
Nurse Education, Practice & Retention Grants	36,471	47,000	36,468	40,468
Nursing Faculty Loan Program	4,831	***8,000	4,821	4,831
Nursing Workforce Diversity	16,271	21,000	16,270	17,270

\*\*\*\$8 million total for both programs

Consideration by the full Senate will not occur until September after the August recess.

### Department of Labor Grants Fund Nursing Education Programs (cont'd)

the pool of nurse educators. They are as follows:

- **Indiana** – The Indianapolis Private Industry Council (PIC), Inc. received a grant of \$1 million to join forces with Ivy Tech State College to expand opportunities for radiology technicians, RNs, and respiratory therapists. The PIC will also work to develop an accelerated master of science program for RNs and identify clinical opportunities in the area.
- **New York** – The Orange County Workforce Investment Board (WIB) was awarded a grant of \$1,048,300 to train new nursing instructors and mentors, who will then be available to teach more nurses. The WIB will form a consortium with area health care, education, and training providers to address the nursing faculty shortages that have limited enrollment in local nursing programs – a situation which has led to shortfalls in skilled nurses and health care professionals. As a result of this project, 50 nurses will be trained as instructors; 100 nurses will be trained as mentors; 70 nurses will be trained as adjunct instructors; and 1,000 students will be admitted to health care education and training programs. Key project partners include the Northern Metropolitan Hospital Association, Pace University, and seven WIBs that comprise the Southern/Mid-Hudson Valley.

Representative Nita M. Lowey (D-NY), who helped secure the grant, said the nursing shortage had become a chicken-and-egg problem. "Without enough educators in the field, we can't train nurses," Lowey said at a news conference held at Pace University to announce the grant. "And without more nurses, we can't expect more faculty to rise out of the ranks of nurses." At Pace's Lienhard School of Nursing, which Chao toured, the grant might translate into three full-time faculty members this year and two to three next year.

- **Texas** – The United Regional Health Care System was awarded a grant of \$846,325 to generate a pipeline of new workers for the health care industry through targeted recruiting of veterans, dislocated workers, minorities, and non-traditional workers. In [\(Cont'd page 3\)](#)

## Department of Labor Grants Fund Nursing Education Programs (cont'd)

addition, United Regional will provide entry-level training for new hospital workers and specialty skills training for incumbent workers through the Career Mobility Initiative (CMI), a model that supports health care workers' careers. As a result of this project, 11 nurses and nursing faculty will enroll in advanced nurse educator training.

- **Utah** – The University of Utah was awarded a grant of \$871,707 to increase the number of clinical faculty available to train nurses at the baccalaureate level and help retain clinical nurses and faculty by promoting career advancement through a Clinical Faculty Associate Program. Training additional clinical faculty associates will allow the university to admit more students into its nursing program. The project will develop a customized Teaching Nursing Specialty curriculum. Thirteen clinical faculty will enroll in that program and 32 additional students will enter baccalaureate nursing programs.
- **Wisconsin** – The University of Wisconsin System was awarded a grant of \$1,365,101 to address shortages in Wisconsin's nursing faculty by reducing the training period for nurse educators by 18 to 24 months. The shortages have resulted in more than 3,000 individuals wait-listed to participate in nursing programs. The project will develop a public/private collaboration to recruit and train health professional educators, and use that unique hospital-university-technical college partnership to allow participating nurses to balance clinical and educational roles to increase their annual salaries. The collaboration includes the Wisconsin Technical College System, workforce development boards, the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, and several health care employers. The grant will be combined with \$1,650,939 from the partners, including more than \$881,000 in cash, more than \$461,000 in in-kind contributions, and \$308,000 in federal aid the state receives for workforce investment.

Wisconsin nurses collaborated on the grant proposal, and the innovative project was viewed as one that could be replicated across the country to accelerate nursing education and begin to address the shortage of nurses. Specifically, the project streamlines course work, offers scholarships, and arranges schedules to let working nurses with associate and bachelor degrees outside of nursing to get master's degrees in nursing in two or three years. The project will also develop options between nursing schools and health care employers to let nurses both practice and teach, allowing them to continue earning the higher pay associated with clinical nursing.

## Vermont Combats Nurse Shortage with Faculty Subsidies

**S**tarting this month, Vermont's five nursing schools – the University of Vermont (UVM), Castleton State College, Norwich University, Southern Vermont College, and Vermont Technical College – can offer up to \$10,000 in student loan repayments to new faculty. According to a 2004 study, local nursing schools are not adequately producing the number of nurses needed to care for Vermonters over the next 10 years, and lawmakers are hoping that the loan repayment program will ultimately increase the number of practicing nurses statewide.

As part of the state's new \$1 billion general fund budget, the schools were given \$50,000 to start the loan repayment program (a scaled-back amount from the \$100,000 appropriation lawmakers had originally intended), but additional future funding is likely. The program is meant to be a companion program to the state's widely successful student loan forgiveness program that began in 2002 and has given \$310,000 to 178 students to help them become nurses. (Cont'd page 4)

## Vermont Combats Nurse Shortage with Faculty Subsidies (cont'd)

Noting that nursing programs demand an unusually high 8-to-1 student-to-faculty ratio, UVM officials said that, unless additional faculty are brought on board, local schools will be unable to expand programs and increase the number of students they graduate beyond about 600 annually. "This new program will help significantly in our being able to educate more of Vermont's youth to become nurses," said Mildred Reardon, associate dean at UVM and principal investigator for UVM's Area Health Education Center.

In addition to the current need for more faculty, Vermont's nursing schools are facing a looming retirement crisis – the mean age of the state's 70 faculty members is 53. If younger teachers are not recruited, school programs could soon be devastated by a mass faculty exodus. UVM's Nursing Department chair Gregg Newschwander said, "We will sort of all retire at the same time because many of us are about the same age. So we need to think about building the faculty of the future."

Education officials also pointed out that teaching can be an unattractive career choice for recent graduates because the nationwide

nursing shortage has pushed starting salaries for clinical practice well above those of new professors – as much as \$15,000 annually. At Castleton, nurses need a master's degree to teach; at UVM, they need a doctorate. And, while students can graduate with as much as \$40,000 in nursing school loans, the starting salary for an assistant professor at UVM is \$42,000; at Castleton, the starting salary is \$32,000. The loan repayment program, Reardon said, ". . . will make it more likely that clinical nurses will become faculty because it will decrease the sting in the pay cut."

According to Vermont Senator Susan Bartlett (D-Lamoille), chair of the Senate Appropriation Committee, "It's a pipeline protection. People are more willing to become faculty if they don't have a whole lot of debt." In her comments, Sharon Moffatt, Vermont's deputy health commissioner, said that the state has not yet figured out how it will distribute the money, but chances are good it will allow multi-year payments to the same professor in certain circumstances. Moffatt continued that the state will work closely with each nursing school, and added, "We will use the money as wisely as we can."