



*Investing in Ventura County.
For Good. For Ever.*

Contact:
Ross Goldberg
818/597-8453

**Ventura County Community Foundation Selected in
\$10 Million National Program to Address Nursing Shortage**

*Foundation is one of 10 selected for nationwide program;
Local collaboration between CSUCI and VCCF will develop strategies
for the future of nursing in Ventura County*

(CAMARILLO, CA – September 20, 2006) — The Ventura County Community Foundation has been selected as one of 10 foundations nationwide – and the only one in California – to participate in a new national initiative to develop and test solutions to America’s nursing shortage. The Foundation will partner with California State University, Channel Islands, to develop strategies for the county.

Led by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the Northwest Health Foundation, the Partners Investing in Nursing’s Future (PIN) program encourages local foundations to act as catalysts in developing grassroots strategies, which establish a stable, adequate nursing workforce. Organizations selected for the program are exploring an array of initiatives that meet their community’s specific needs, including recruiting and retaining nursing faculty, developing new roles for nurses in the care setting, and empowering nurses to better assume leadership roles.

“We intend to work with other leaders across the country to identify best practices aimed at increasing the supply and training of nurses,” said VCCF President Hugh Ralston. “By bringing together stakeholders in the medical and academic community, the workforce training community, and the philanthropic and public sector, our goal is to design and develop strategies that cannot only work in Ventura County but become a model for others across the country as well.”

(More)

PIN is a five-year, \$10 million initiative. To help develop solutions and lead efforts within the region, VCCF has been awarded a two-year grant of \$231,000, which will be matched by an additional \$163,000, for a total project budget of \$394,000.

The *Ventura Nursing Legacy Project* will develop a common set of sustainable long-term strategies to address recruitment, health policy and diversity in the nursing profession, with an emphasis on developing strategies for the Ventura County region. Working in partnership with CSUCI, the initiative will focus on:

- Determining priority needs for the region through interaction with nursing leaders and professionals.
- Engaging stakeholders across multiple sectors through symposia and a community summit.
- Developing funding strategies to address the priorities.
- Working with the other PIN partners to create models that link funders to community priorities around nursing issues.

“Nurses are the cornerstone of our healthcare system, and we want nothing more than to provide safe and compassionate care for their patients in supportive and efficient work environments,” said Susan B. Hassmiller, R.N., Ph.D., F.A.A.N., senior program officer at the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. “This unique program brings foundations together to learn from each other and engage others as they address a very serious problem in their communities. This partnership of the philanthropic community provides an opportunity to foster innovations that will help address the nursing crisis beyond just what any one foundation can do.”

America is currently facing a severe nursing shortage that is affecting patient care and safety, healthcare costs, and patient outcomes. Experts say the causes of this shortage are complex and range from rapid population growth in several states to an aging nurse workforce to poor working conditions in some communities.

“As nursing shortages vary across communities, so must the solutions – that’s why a range of programs are being explored so we can find solutions that work close to home,” said Judith Woodruff, J.D., director of strategic initiatives of NWHF and PIN program director. “The Ventura County Community Foundation and its initiative partner California State University, Channel Islands, are well qualified to explore solutions for the people of Ventura County.”

(More)

With the development of a four year nursing program at CSUCI and the extensive efforts already underway at VCCF, both partners have demonstrated commitment to addressing this important priority in the county's healthcare needs. VCCF programs in this area include dedicated scholarships and forgivable loans for nurses, an expansion of technical education scholarship monies, strategies developed by the Civic Alliance on workforce education, and pioneering work on health access and capacity needs by VCCF's Destino Fund.

"Our university recognizes the acute and long-term nursing shortage and its impact on the people of the Ventura and Santa Barbara region," said Richard R. Rush, president of CSU, Channel Islands. "We look forward to developing creative responses with our community partners that are sustainable over time."

For more information about the Ventura County Community Foundation, visit www.vccf.org. Information about Partners Investing in Nursing's Future (PIN) is available at www.PartnersInNursing.org.

#

About the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation focuses on the pressing health and healthcare issues facing our country. As the nation's largest philanthropy devoted exclusively to improving the health and healthcare 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 healthcare 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. See www.rwjf.org.

About the Northwest Health Foundation

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. The Foundation focuses on issues of health and healthcare, seeking concrete solutions to today's health problems while advocating to prevent tomorrow's. As part of NWHF's commitment to cultivate a stable, skilled nursing workforce in the region, the Foundation invests 30 percent of available funds in collaborative and sustainable solutions, including the development of advocacy and leadership within the nursing community. See www.nwhf.org.

(More)

About the Ventura County Community Foundation

Created in 1987, the Ventura County Community Foundation is a family of charitable funds whose combined assets exceed \$90 million and whose grants this year are expected to exceed \$8 million. The Foundation's mission is to promote and enable philanthropy to improve our communities, building long-term capital to benefit Ventura County. For more information, visit www.vccf.org.

Partners Investing in Nursing's Future Projects:

- 1) **Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan Foundation** (Michigan)
 - *Nursing for Life: RN Career Transition Program* will extend the careers of experienced nurses in Michigan, by developing a transition/training program into non-acute care settings, such as long-term care, home care, hospice, and ambulatory care.
- 2) **Colorado Health Foundation** (Colorado)
 - *Building Infrastructure and Leadership for Colorado's Nursing Workforce* will pilot a clinical placement platform for the planning and implementation of a nurse leadership fellowship program.
- 3) **Community Foundation of the Eastern Shore, Inc** (Maryland)
 - *Nursing Careers Support Initiative* will implement a formalized, sustained mentoring program that seeks to address three primary objectives: retention of new nurses, development of a nurse leadership network, and a pipeline for future nurse educators in eastern Maryland.
- 4) **Dreyfus Health Foundation** (New York)
 - *Minority Nurse Mentoring in the Mississippi Delta* will help develop and retain a diverse nursing workforce in the Delta region of Mississippi.
- 5) **Hawaii Medical Services Association Foundation** (Hawaii)
 - *Hawaii Partners in Nursing: Addressing Recruitment and Retention Issues in Long Term Care* will build educational capacity in long-term care facilities in Hawaii through continuing education and training, and attract new nurses into the geriatric specialty area.
- 6) **Irene E. and George A. Davis Foundation** (Massachusetts)
 - *Collaborating To Advance Nursing: Developing Opportunities (CAN DO)* will develop the structural framework for nurses to advance from Licensed Practical Nurse through doctoral level, and raise the bar for cultural proficiency within the nursing profession in western Massachusetts.
- 7) **Mississippi Hospital Association Research and Educational Foundation** (Mississippi)
 - *Mississippi Critical Nursing Faculty Shortage Initiative* will increase and retain nursing faculty that more accurately reflect the ethnicity and gender of the population in Mississippi.
- 8) **Rasmuson Foundation** (Alaska)
 - *Partners Investing in Nursing* will increase the number of native Alaskans trained in nursing, and develop a statewide preceptorship training model to be implemented in all hospitals in the state.
- 9) **St. James Healthcare Foundation** (Montana)
 - *Academy of Advanced Nursing Workforce Solutions* will provide nursing students a career success skills program in order to retain them in the nursing workforce in Southwestern Montana.
- 10) **Ventura County Community Foundation** (California)
 - *Ventura Nursing Legacy Project* will develop a common set of sustainable long term strategies in California to address recruitment, health policy and diversity in the nursing profession.