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News Release

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VA Announces New Nursing Academy Sites ***Five Universities Partner with VA in Nursing Initiative***

WASHINGTON -- To provide compassionate, highly-trained nurses to serve the health care needs of the nation's Veterans, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is establishing new partnerships with five of the country's finest nursing schools. With these new partnerships, the VA Nursing Academy will expand the number of collaborations between the department and nursing schools from 10 to 15.

"The expanded role of the Department of Veterans Affairs in the education of nurses will ensure the department has the nurses needed to continue our world-class health care for Veterans," said Dr. Linda D. Johnson, director of VA Nursing Academy. "The VA Nursing Academy expands the teaching faculty, improves recruitment and retention, and creates new educational and research opportunities."

The VA Nursing Academy is a virtual five-year pilot program with central administration in Washington. It expands learning opportunities for nursing students at VA facilities, funds faculty development of VA staff for additional faculty positions to competitively selected school partners. The five-year, \$59 million program began in 2007.

Five nursing schools will form new partnerships with five VA medical centers and join the VA Nursing Academy this year. They are:

- Western Carolina University, Asheville, N.C.
- University of Alabama, Birmingham, Ala.
- University of Hawaii at Manoa, Honolulu
- Pace University, Manhattan and Brooklyn, N.Y.
- Waynesburg University, Pittsburgh.

VA Nursing Academy 2/2/2

VA Nursing Academy already includes 10 partnerships: the VA medical center in Gainesville, Fla., with the University of Florida; the VA medical center in San Diego with San Diego State University; the VA medical center in Salt Lake City with the University of Utah; the VA medical center in West Haven, Conn., with Fairfield University in Connecticut; the VA medical center in Charleston, S.C., with the Medical University of South Carolina; the Hines, Ill., VA medical center with Loyola University of Chicago; the VA Michigan Consortia (Detroit and Saginaw) with the University of Detroit Mercy and Saginaw Valley State University; the Oklahoma City VA Medical Center with the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences; the VA medical center in Providence, R.I., and Rhode Island College; and the VA medical center in Tampa, Fla., and the University of South Florida.

The American Association of Colleges of Nursing has reported that in 2007 more than 36,000 qualified applicants were turned away from entry-level baccalaureate degree programs in nursing schools because of insufficient numbers of faculty, clinical sites, classroom space and clinical mentors. VA currently provides clinical education for approximately 100,000 health professional trainees annually, including students from more than 600 schools of nursing.

VA Nursing Academy enables competitively selected VA-nursing school partnerships to expand the number of nursing faculty, enhance the professional and scholarly development of nurses, increase student enrollment by about 1,000 students and promote innovations in nursing education.

Further information about the program can be obtained from VA's Office of Academic Affiliations web site at www.va.gov/oaa.

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