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May 22, 2009

Contact:
Jeff Wylly
(916) 327-9064

\$60 Million Second Round of Five Year Public-Private Partnership Funding for California Nurse Education Initiative Announced

Sacramento – Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger’s successful public private partnership to increase the number of nursing graduates in California will get a second five-year commitment of funding beginning in the 2009-10 academic year, Acting Labor and Workforce Development Agency Secretary Doug Hoffner announced today.

Grants totaling \$60 million will focus on specialty training at the community colleges and faculty education at the California State Universities and University of California nursing programs, as well as continued baccalaureate and master’s degree programs in nursing. Funding for the partnership will include \$6 million each year for five years from the Governor’s discretionary Workforce Investment Act funds with matching funds provided by partners in health care and education.

“The Governor’s initiative has invested over \$195 million in nursing education over the past four years,” Hoffner said. “This second round of funding will further expand opportunities for nursing students and help narrow the shortfall.”

“We applaud Governor Schwarzenegger’s foresight in continuing to invest in nursing education. Nursing is still a critical shortage and we must remain focused on educating the next generation of highly skilled nurses in California,” said Duane Dauner, CEO of the California Hospital Association.

The Governor’s Nurse Education Initiative has added 23 new nursing programs in the past four years, for a total of 131 nursing education programs serving our students. Additionally, over 9,500 RNs graduated in 2008, reflecting a 54% increase in RN graduates in the past four years. As a comparison, there were 6,158 RN graduates in 2004. Over 23,500 students are currently enrolled in nursing programs, reflecting more than a 68% increase in enrollments in that same four year period

The Governor’s initiative is anchored by a \$90 million, five-year public-private partnership that focuses on expansion of nurse education capacity, faculty development, student support services, including loan forgiveness, and additional funding for nursing schools.

California continues to face 9,900 RNs job openings annually, with the number accumulating to 116,600 by 2020 according to Employment Development Department (EDD) statistics, due to the aging, growing population in need of health care services in California. California’s population is projected to grow from approximately 38.2 million people in 2008 to 43.1 million in 2018.

The California Labor and Workforce Development Agency and the EDD workforce projections include the need to educate over 206,000 additional healthcare professionals by 2014. In March, 2009, EDD reported that the health care workforce sector has the highest job growth rate, with a year-over job increase of 23,400 jobs in California.

For more information on the Governor's Nurse Education Initiative, go to www.labor.ca.gov.