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Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center School of Nursing
Receives Scholarship Funds to Expand Nursing Pipeline

The Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center (TTUHSC) School of Nursing has received $100,000 from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) through the RWJF New Careers in Nursing Scholarship Program. This national initiative, launched by RWJF and the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN), aims to help alleviate the nation’s nursing shortage and increase the diversity of nursing professionals. Through grants to schools of nursing, the program will provide scholarships to college graduates without nursing degrees who have been admitted into accelerated baccalaureate nursing programs and master’s nursing programs.

The $100,000 grant will provide 10 scholarships in the amount of $10,000 each for School of Nursing Second Degree Program students beginning September 2010. In 2008, the school was awarded $150,000 for these scholarships and in 2009, the school was awarded $300,000 for these scholarships.

Award preference is given to students from groups underrepresented in nursing or from disadvantaged backgrounds. Grant funding will also be used by the School of Nursing to help leverage new faculty resources and provide mentoring and leadership development to ensure successful program completion by scholarship recipients.

“This grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation will enable our excellent nursing education programs to continue to flourish,” said TTUHSC Interim President Elmo Cavin. “We are proud to be a part of the foundation’s commitment to improving the nation’s health care.”

The RWJF New Careers in Nursing Scholarship Program supports accelerated programs, which offer the most efficient route to licensure as a registered nurse for adults who have already completed a baccalaureate or graduate degree in a discipline other than nursing. Although enrollment in these programs has steadily increased over the past few years, many potential students are unable to enroll since already having a college degree disqualifies them for receiving most federal financial aid programs for entry-level students.
“Our school is thrilled to receive this grant for the third year in a row. The scholarships will enable our Second Degree BSN students to focus on their education without the worries of large student loans,” said Interim School of Nursing Dean Chandice Covington, Ph.D., R.N., Florence Thelma Hall Endowed Chair for Nursing Excellence in Women’s Health.

The School of Nursing offers a second degree web-based accelerated baccalaureate nursing degree program for students with a previous college degree. This twelve-month program has preceptor and nurse educator oversight in the student's own community in Lubbock, Austin, Marble Falls, Abilene, Permian Basin or El Paso.

School of Nursing second degree students from disadvantaged populations including first generation college students and individuals from low socio-economic status are eligible to apply for one of these scholarships. For more information about how to apply, contact Tonia Borrego, senior administrative assistant, at (806) 317-4650 or e-mail tonia.borrego@ttuhsc.edu.

AACN serves as the National Program Office for this RWJF initiative and oversees the grant application submission and review processes. For more information about this program, see http://www.newcareersinnursing.org.