



KANSAS BOARD OF REGENTS

1000 SW JACKSON • SUITE 520 • TOPEKA, KS 66612-1368

TELEPHONE – 785-296-3421
FAX – 785-296-0983
www.kansasregents.org

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BOARD OF REGENTS AWARDS \$600,000 IN NURSING GRANTS

17 Public Higher Education Institutions Receive Funding

(TOPEKA) – Today the Kansas Board of Regents awarded \$600,000 in nursing grants to 17 public higher education institutions across the state. Institutions with registered nurse programs were eligible to apply to the Board for these funds which will be used specifically for additional nursing faculty and supplies. The Governor initially recommended and the Legislature ultimately approved this funding during the 2007 legislative session.

“I applaud the Legislature and the Governor for funding the second year of this vital ten-year workforce development initiative,” said Christine Downey-Schmidt, Chair of the Board of Regents. “After just one year, this initiative has already allowed public higher education institutions to admit over 460 additional nursing students – students that would have otherwise been forced to remain on admissions waiting lists. This ten-year program will go a long way towards meeting the future health care needs of Kansans.”

A grant review committee consisting of representatives from the Kansas Association for Homes and Services for the Aging, the Kansas Board of Nursing, the Kansas Health Care Association, the Kansas Hospital Association, the Kansas Organization of Nurse Leaders, and the Kansas State Nurses Association reviewed proposals for this nursing faculty salary and supplies funding and made award recommendations. Upon receiving the review committee’s work and recommendations, today the Board made the following awards:

- **Barton County Community College:** \$38,280 for one additional nursing faculty member.
- **Butler Community College:** \$31,715 for one additional nursing faculty member.
- **Cloud County Community College/North Central Kansas Technical College:** \$39,712 for two additional nursing faculty members.
- **Colby Community College:** \$33,500 for two additional faculty members.
- **Emporia State University:** \$39,172 for one additional nursing faculty member.

- **Fort Hays State University:** \$26,066 for one additional nursing faculty member.
- **Hutchinson Community College:** \$24,590 for one additional nursing faculty member.
- **Johnson County Community College:** \$32,000 for one additional nursing faculty member.
- **Kansas City Kansas Community College:** \$24,958 for one additional nursing faculty member.
- **Labette Community College:** \$30,000 for one additional nursing faculty member.
- **Manhattan Area Technical College:** \$20,102 for one additional nursing faculty member.
- **Neosho County Community College:** \$25,732 for one additional nursing faculty member.
- **Pratt Community College:** \$57,512 for two additional nursing faculty members.
- **Pittsburg State University:** \$7,574 to augment salaries for existing nursing faculty.
- **University of Kansas Medical Center:** \$47,743 for one additional nursing faculty member.
- **Washburn University:** \$49,400 for two additional nursing faculty members.
- **Wichita State University:** \$71,944 for two additional nursing faculty members.

The 2006 Legislature appropriated \$3.4 million to fund the first year of a ten-year nursing initiative to address the critical nursing shortage facing the state of Kansas. The 2007 Legislature appropriated a total of \$2 million in funds, which includes the \$600,000 awarded today, to continue this important ten-year initiative.

As a result of this commitment and investment by the Legislature, public nursing programs in Kansas and their students have already benefited from additional faculty, equipment, and supplies. Since funding began in 2006, over 25 full-time and 23 part-time additional nursing faculty have been hired, 50 nurse educator service scholarships have been awarded, and over 460 additional nursing students have been admitted into nursing programs statewide. In addition, over 30 new patient simulators have been purchased – enhancing both student and professional nurse training, thus preparing these nurses to better meet the future health care needs of Kansans.

Background:

The 2005 Legislature, concerned about the shortage of nurses in Kansas, recommended that the Board report to the Governor and the 2006 Legislature regarding the resources required to increase the capacity of the state's higher education system to educate registered nurses by 25 percent. The Legislature also requested that the report include a timeline for building the infrastructure necessary to accommodate up to 250 more nursing student admissions annually.

Among the causes for the nursing shortage in Kansas is an increased utilization of the health care system by an aging population at the same time many existing nurses will be retiring. Last year, the Kansas Department of Labor predicted that 6,890 new Registered Nurse (RN) positions will be needed by 2010 to meet the workforce demand. An additional 4,460 RN replacement positions will be needed due to retirements, for a total projected need of 11,350.

Implementing nationwide strategies and initiatives within the state, Kansas has been successful in attracting individuals to careers in health care. The pressing issue now does not revolve around filling the pipeline with students interested in nursing careers, but rather expanding postsecondary program capacity for those who want to become trained nurses. Virtually every nursing program has had an extensive waiting list of qualified applicants. Increasing capacity in nursing programs is a complex process that consists of acquiring additional qualified nursing faculty, securing additional clinical instruction sites, and increasing classroom space and equipment.

The nine-member Kansas Board of Regents is the governing board of the state's six universities and a coordinating board for nineteen community colleges, ten technical colleges and schools, and a municipal university.

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*For more information contact
Kip Peterson, Director of Government Relations & Communications, at (785) 296-3421.*

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