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News Release

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LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO AWARDED SCHOLARSHIPS FOR ACCELERATED NURSING STUDENTS

*Scholarships funded through Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
New Careers in Nursing Program*

MAYWOOD, Ill. -- Loyola University Chicago Marcella Niehoff School of Nursing (MNSON) has been awarded Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) funding through the *RWJF New Careers in Nursing Scholarship Program*. Grants provided through this program will be used for scholarships to maximize diversity and increase the quantity of students enrolled in MNSON's Accelerated Bachelor of Science in Nursing (ABSN) program.

This national initiative was launched by RWJF and the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN). The program aims to help alleviate the nation's nursing shortage by dramatically expanding the pipeline of students in accelerated nursing programs.

"Loyola is honored to receive a grant that is in concert with our Jesuit values of giving back to disadvantaged populations," said Vicki Keough, PhD, RN-Cs, ACNP, CCRN, professor and acting dean, MNSON. "This grant will allow Loyola to attract and educate a diverse group of individuals who might not otherwise have made a change to a career in nursing."

Scholarships in the amount of \$10,000 will be awarded to 15 accelerated nursing students enrolled in the spring 2010 semester. Award preference will be given to students from groups underrepresented in nursing or from disadvantaged backgrounds. Groups underrepresented in nursing include men, African Americans, Hispanics, Asians and students with financial limitations. Grant funding also will be used by schools to help leverage support for new faculty resources and provide mentoring and leadership development to ensure successful program completion by scholarship recipients.

"New Careers in Nursing aims to safeguard the health of the nation by easing the nurse and nurse faculty shortage. Nurses are critical to delivering health care that is effective, patient-centered, timely, efficient and equitable," said RWJF Senior Adviser for Nursing Susan B. Hassmiller, PhD, RN, FAAN. "This important initiative also will advance the Foundation's strategic goal of promoting a health professional workforce that reflects the diversity of the American public."

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 having a college degree disqualifies them from receiving assistance from most federal financial aid programs for entry-level students. The New Careers in Nursing scholarships address this problem and also will alleviate the overall nursing shortage by enabling hundreds of students to launch their nursing careers through accelerated education not otherwise possible without scholarships.

Additionally, the program targets the need to recruit students from groups underrepresented in nursing or disadvantaged backgrounds. According to the National Advisory Council on Nurse Education and Practice, diversifying the nursing profession is essential to meeting the nation's health-care needs and reducing health disparities that exist among many underserved populations. Data from the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration also show that nurses entering the profession at the baccalaureate level are four times more likely than other nurses to pursue a graduate degree in nursing, which is the required credential to teach. Consequently, bringing more nurses into the profession at the baccalaureate and master's degree levels will help to address the nation's nurse faculty shortage.

For more information on applying for scholarships at MNSON, contact Dr. Ann Solari-Twadell at 773-508-2909.

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>.

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Based in the western suburbs of Chicago, Loyola University Health System is a quaternary care system with a 61-acre main medical center campus, the 36-acre Gottlieb Memorial Hospital campus and 25 primary and specialty care facilities in Cook, Will and DuPage counties. The medical center campus is conveniently located in Maywood, 13 miles west of the Chicago Loop and 8 miles east of Oak Brook, Ill. The heart of the medical center campus, Loyola University Hospital, is a 561-licensed-bed facility. It houses a Level 1 Trauma Center, a Burn Center and the Ronald McDonald® Children's Hospital of Loyola University Medical Center. Also on campus are the Cardinal Bernardin Cancer Center, Loyola Outpatient Center, Center for Heart & Vascular Medicine and Loyola Oral Health Center as well as the LUC Stritch School of Medicine, the LUC Marcella Niehoff School of Nursing and the Loyola Center for Fitness. Loyola's Gottlieb Memorial Hospital campus in Melrose Park includes the 264-bed community hospital, the Gottlieb Center for Fitness and the Marjorie G. Weinberg Cancer Care Center.