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UNLV TO ADDRESS SHORTAGE OF NURSE EDUCATORS THROUGH INNOVATIVE PARTNERSHIP WITH UNR

LAS VEGAS– July 30, 2007– A new partnership program between schools of nursing at UNLV and UNR is focusing on ways to recruit and retain nurse educators, a critical step towards addressing the nursing shortage in Nevada.

Recruitment campaigns in the face of the nursing shortage have sparked a surge in nursing school applications throughout the nation, increasing the demand for Ph.D.-prepared nurse educators.

To address this issue, UNLV School of Nursing Professor Lori Candela was awarded a \$710,000 grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) to develop a program accelerating the progression of nurse educator master's students at UNLV and UNR into the existing Ph.D. program at UNLV, currently the only doctoral nursing program in Nevada. The three-year project calls for exposing existing master's students to doctoral courses, streamlining curriculum, and actively recruiting the current nursing workforce to attract and retain eligible Ph.D. students.

Candela will also develop ways to increase diversity among nurse educators. Minorities make up more than 30 percent of the general population and 20 percent of nursing students, yet only eight percent of the nation's nursing faculty. By developing partnerships with community minority nurse organizations, UNLV will be better able to identify potential applicants, while at the same time increasing cultural competence among nursing faculty and students. The end result will be a Ph.D. curriculum at UNLV that reflects the changing cultural landscape of nursing in Nevada.

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“Increasing the number of Ph.D. prepared nurse educators is critical for our state to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse statewide population and to teach the growing number of nursing school applicants,” said Candela, who is serving as the project director and manager. “The collaboration between UNLV and the Orvis School of Nursing at UNR will not only

increase the number and diversity of nurse educators in Nevada, it will ultimately improve the level of quality healthcare in the state.”

Exposing students to the collective expertise of both universities will increase the level of doctorally prepared nurse educators and improve faculty efficiency through shared online learning environments. Though the project is focused on schools of nursing in Nevada, it will be designed to serve as a model for institutions throughout the nation interested in forming collaborative nursing education programs.

Candela will partner on the project with Sarah Keating, professor of nursing at UNR, who will serve as the site manager in Reno. San Jose State University nursing Professor Kathy Abriam-Yago will serve as the external cultural competence expert. UNLV School of Nursing assistant Professor Karla Dalley will also assist on the project.

The UNLV School of Nursing launched its Ph.D. program in 2004 to meet the growing need for nurse educators and to advance scholarly research in the field. The program is primarily administered online and focuses on developing academic leadership, promoting independent research, service learning, and development of innovative approaches to nursing education.

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UNLV is a doctoral-degree-granting institution of 28,000 students and 3,300 faculty and staff. Founded in 1957, the university offers more than 220 undergraduate, master's and doctoral degree programs. UNLV is located on a 350-acre campus in dynamic Southern Nevada and is classified in the category of Research Universities (high research activity) by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.