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UNLV MAKES HISTORY BY AWARDING NEVADA'S FIRST PH.D. DEGREES IN NURSING

*UNLV School of Nursing Generates the State's First Ph.D. Nurses, a
Critical Step in Combating an Emerging Shortage of Nurse Educators*

LAS VEGAS – May 19, 2008 – When Lara Carver and Anne Diaz walked across the Thomas & Mack Center stage during UNLV's Spring Commencement activities on May 17, they earned more than their degrees – they made Nevada history as the state's first nursing Ph.D. graduates.

With nursing school applications surging nationally, qualified students are being relegated to waiting lists or turned away due to a shortage of Ph.D. prepared nurse educators. UNLV's School of Nursing, which launched Nevada's first Ph.D. program in 2004, is addressing this emerging issue by advocating for and preparing highly trained nurse researchers and educators. The program, administered almost entirely online, is one of few nationally with an increased emphasis on nursing education.

“Nevada's tremendous growth has sparked a great need for Ph.D. prepared nursing faculty and leaders in our community,” said Carolyn Yucha, dean of the UNLV School of Nursing. “Our first two graduates are already making a very real impact on the health of Southern Nevadans, and, with the online nature of the program, both working nurses and nurse scholars are now able to contribute to nursing education and leadership that will improve the level of quality healthcare in the state.”

(more)

Carver, a former nurse for the Clark County School District, currently serves as nursing director for the newly formed Henderson, Nev. branch of National University. Under her leadership, the university recently gained new program approval from the Nevada State Board of Nursing and will admit its first nursing undergraduates this summer. Carver's dissertation explored generational differences in nursing faculty, particularly their impact on the current nursing faculty shortage.

Diaz is a long-time Clark County School District nurse whose academic research examines leadership training and emotional intelligence among school nurses. With national student-to-nurse ratios nearing 1,000-to-1, Diaz plans to continue working in the school district and hopes to provide innovative classroom and clinical instruction to advance nursing education in Southern Nevada.

The Ph.D. in Nursing at UNLV currently enrolls 26 students and is focused on developing academic leadership, promoting independent research, service learning, and creating innovative approaches to nursing education.

For more information on the UNLV School of Nursing, please visit <http://nursing.unlv.edu>.

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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.