

# Robert Wood Johnson Foundation **New Careers in Nursing**

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) joined with the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) in 2008 to create the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

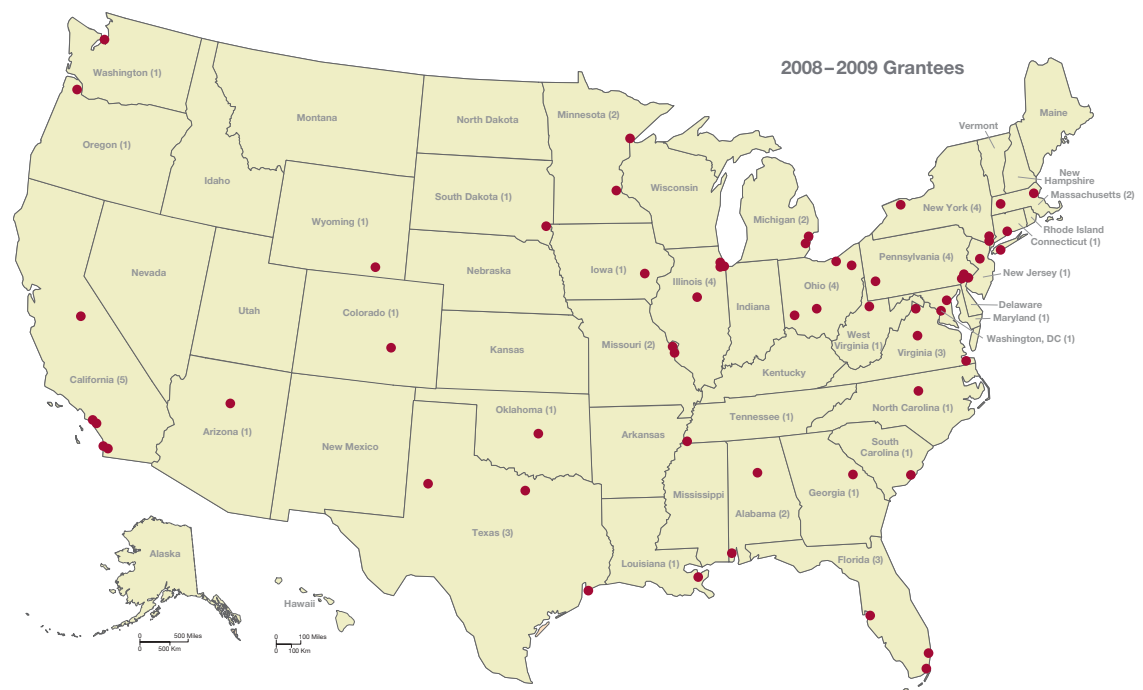
## **New Careers in Nursing**

(NCIN) scholarship program to help alleviate the nursing shortage and increase diversity in the nursing workforce. Through annual grants to schools of nursing, the NCIN program provides \$10,000 scholarships to college graduates with degrees in other fields who wish to transition into nursing through an accelerated baccalaureate or master's nursing program.

Nursing's academic leaders have long recognized the strong connection between a culturally diverse nursing workforce and the ability to provide quality patient care. According to the National Advisory Council on Nurse Education and Practice, diversifying the nursing profession is essential to meeting the health care needs of the nation and reducing health disparities that exist among many underserved populations. AACN is working with RWJF to help remedy these critical issues.

## **Year One Results**

**D**uring the 2008–2009 funding cycle, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation **New Careers in Nursing** program proudly supported 58 accelerated nursing programs, and 706 individual students. By the end of its second year, a total of \$14.06 million in scholarship funding will be distributed to 1,406 entry-level nursing students and a total of 84 schools of nursing will have participated in the program. All scholarships have been awarded to students representing one or more of three selection criteria: 412 (60 percent) diverse ethnic backgrounds; 256 (36 percent) males; 144 (20 percent) disadvantaged background. With 95 percent of scholars indicating they plan to pursue graduate studies at the completion of their program, NCIN is clearly making an impact on the nursing student population by bringing more underrepresented groups into the profession.



California State University, Fresno



## Demographic Breakdowns

A recent NCIN survey of the 2008–2009 scholarship recipients provided information on the scholars' race, gender, age and educational funding sources. Of the 58 NCIN funded schools of nursing, every program reported an increase of ten to 20 percent in the diversity of its student population.

Data from The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' 2004 National Sample Survey of Registered Nurses (NSSRN) offer points of comparison and demonstrate the lack of diversity among registered nurses and the urgent need for a health care workforce that reflects the country's population. All national data in the following charts are taken from the NSSRN.

### RACIAL/ETHNIC BACKGROUND

A survey of year one NCIN scholarship recipients found that 412 (60 percent) students reported diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds: African American 197 (28.3 percent), Hispanic 103 (14.8 percent), Asian 88 (12.6 percent), American Indian or Alaska Native 18 (2.6 percent), Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander 6 (0.9 percent), and 32 (4.6 percent) as "other." Of the 319 (45.8 percent) students who selected Caucasian, 178 (69.8 percent) were male students. Respondents were allowed to select more than one ethnic group.

### GENDER

Compared to the national nursing population, which is 5.8 percent male, men account for a much larger portion of scholarship recipients in the NCIN program. Of the 706 NCIN survey participants, 701 disclosed gender. Among them, 256 (36.5 percent) were male and 445 (63.5 percent) were female.

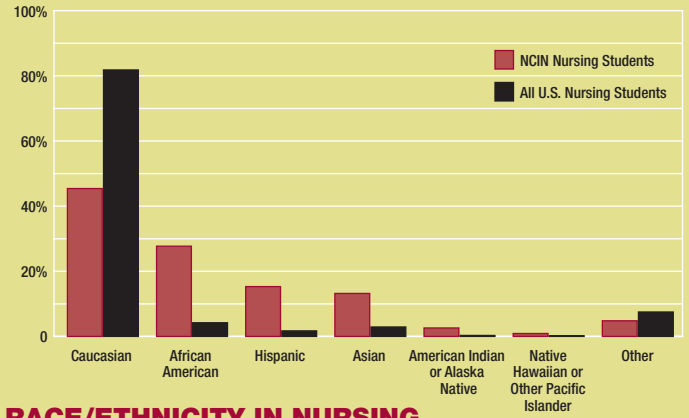
### SOURCE OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR EDUCATION

Survey data show that the NCIN program is succeeding in removing financial barriers to nursing careers, as first-year scholarship recipients cited the NCIN scholarship as a major funding source for their education. Students indicated that a career transition would not be possible without NCIN funding.

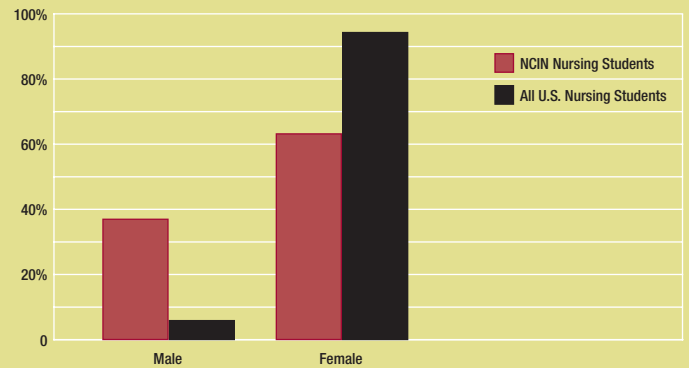
Among the 693 responses to the NCIN entry participant survey, 635 (91.6 percent) relied on loans to fund education, 240 (34.6 percent) used savings, 151 (21.8 percent) leveraged family support, 48 (6.9 percent) received tuition support through a hospital or health care agency, and 170 (24.5 percent) used other sources. In the national survey, nurses relied on family support more than twice as often as NCIN scholars.

### FUTURE AMBITIONS

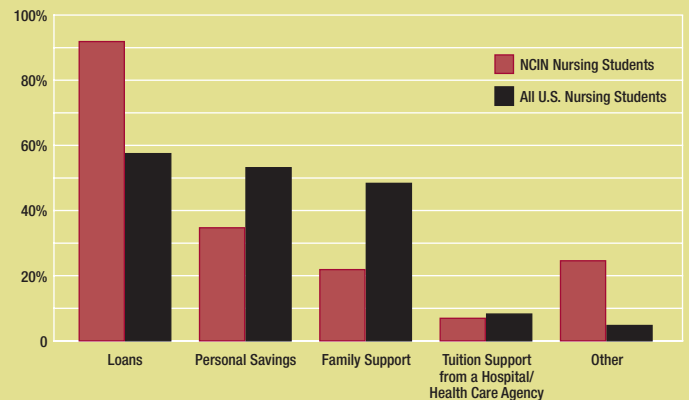
When asked about future plans in the nursing field, 95 percent of all scholars indicated that they plan to pursue graduate studies once they have completed their entry-level program. This finding is consistent with evidence that graduates of baccalaureate nursing programs are four times more likely to pursue graduate level education, a necessary component to meet the goal of expanding the potential pool of a demographically representative nurse faculty.



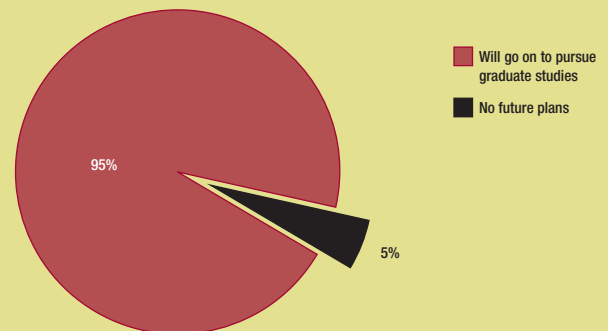
**RACE/ETHNICITY IN NURSING**



**GENDER IN NURSING**



**SOURCE OF EDUCATIONAL FUNDING**



**NCIN SCHOLAR AMBITIONS**



## Program Spotlights

**N**CIN acknowledges the continued dedication and support of every funded program. The unique curricula and incentives allow both NCIN staff and nursing program administrators to observe successful recruitment, strategic development and implementation of work plans. With the progress of each program and each scholar, value has been injected into the nursing community overall and into the quality of future patient care. Following are just a few of the many stories that our grantees have shared.

### **RWJF SUPPORTS CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FULLERTON'S NURSING LEADERS OF TOMORROW, TODAY**

California State University, Fullerton's (CSUF) Department of Nursing received a \$200,000 grant from NCIN and established its program "Supporting Tomorrow's Nursing Leaders." The cost of educating nurses is considerably greater than the cost of educating other, non-nursing students due to heavy lab/clinical requirements and small class size. The gap between the actual cost to educate nurses and the amount that the campus receives in state support and fee revenue is \$5,540 per student, per year. According to Mary Wickman, director of CSUF's pre-licensure RN program, "To expand capacity, the university must raise external, supplemental funds to pay for expenses not covered by core state funding."

### **UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING'S BRAND GETS A BOOST**

For University of Wyoming, coordinator of Bachelors Reach for Accelerated Nursing Degree (BRAND), the five \$10,000 scholarships were significant. The announcement that the Fay Whitney School of Nursing was awarded this first wave of scholarships

from NCIN through a grant from the RWJF sent a ripple effect across the state. The School of Nursing's phone began ringing with congratulations from legislators, trustees, representatives of the university, and the health care acute facilities feeling the impact of a strained health care workforce. The intimacy of the BRAND program allows faculty to provide one-on-one course-work counseling, mentoring and moral support.

### **MEDICAL UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA NURSES CHANGE LIVES**

Programs supported through NCIN continue to prepare the next generation of nurse leaders for a diverse and transitive health-care setting. For Instance, the Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC) is dedicated to providing holistic education that affords scholars opportunities to work collaboratively with other organizations in various settings. Through these campus and community engagements, NCIN scholars have been able to develop leadership and interprofessional work skills that are too often left unaddressed in health profession education. Accelerated nursing students at MUSC have also cultivated cultural competency by attending health-related national conferences, community workshops, campus organizations and international missions. In 2008, MUSC NCIN scholars individually attended the Global Health Conference, Hispanic Health Initiative, MUSC Student Government Association, Presidential Scholars, and medical mission trips to Uganda and Peru. It is the mission of MUSC to graduate nursing students who will excel not only within a focused field of health but also across professional settings. As mirrored throughout the South Carolina nursing program, "MUSC nurses change lives."

*Continues on next page.*

University of Wyoming



University of Wyoming, Hana Kim





Shenandoah University

### **SHENANDOAH UNIVERSITY PREPARES FOR GROWING ENROLLMENT**

Since its inception in 1962, the Division of Nursing at Shenandoah University (SU) has encouraged personal and professional growth as students are able to apply their studies to the communities around them. With the program's acceptance into NCIN, SU obtained ten scholarships in its first round of funding and recently received an additional 15 scholarships to accommodate a growing spring cohort. The NCIN program benefits students who apply early for their degree and encourages applicants to stay with the process despite cost concern. The ten students at Shenandoah who received scholarships in the first round of funding call themselves the "RWJF Scholars."

### **Looking to the Future**

**R**WJF approved a \$299,827 award to Educational Testing Service of Princeton, N.J., for the purpose of evaluating the RWJF NCIN program. The grant period will run from July 15, 2009 to January 15, 2012.

In collaboration with the AACN, the evaluation will produce information on the enrollment changes that occurred at institutions and the experiences of participants in the NCIN program. The evaluation project will present data and information to AACN that can be used to improve the program and inform nursing schools on best practices.

The **Robert Wood Johnson Foundation** focuses on the pressing health and health care issues facing our country. As the nation's largest philanthropy devoted exclusively to improving the health and health care of all Americans, we work with a diverse group of organizations and individuals to identify solutions and achieve comprehensive, meaningful and timely change. For more than 35 years we've brought experience, commitment and a rigorous, balanced approach to the problems that affect the health and health care of those we serve. When it comes to helping Americans lead healthier lives and get the care they need, we expect to make a difference in your lifetime. For more information, visit [www.rwjf.org](http://www.rwjf.org)



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The **American Association of Colleges of Nursing** is the national voice for baccalaureate and graduate programs in nursing. Representing more than 640 member schools of nursing at public and private institutions nationwide, AACN's educational, research, governmental advocacy, data collection, publications, and other programs work to establish quality standards for bachelor's and graduate degree nursing education, assist deans and directors to implement those standards, influence the nursing profession to improve health care, and promote public support of baccalaureate and graduate nursing education, research, and practice. For more information, visit [www.aacn.nche.edu](http://www.aacn.nche.edu).



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