

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

About NCIN

NCIN was launched in 2008 to address the national nursing shortage, develop a demographically representative professional nursing workforce, and fuel the pipeline of nurse faculty and leaders.

The program was created by RWJF and AACN to enable schools of nursing to expand student capacity in accelerated baccalaureate and master's programs, and build a more diverse workforce ready to serve the needs of a changing patient population. Schools receiving funding through NCIN provide \$10,000 scholarships directly to students from groups underrepresented in nursing or from disadvantaged backgrounds. These grants amount to an investment of more than \$23 million in nursing development and scholarship.

“Nursing education should serve as a platform for continued lifelong learning and include opportunities for seamless transition to higher degree programs. To respond to the underrepresentation of racial and ethnic minority groups and men in the nursing workforce, the nursing student body must become more diverse.”

— THE FUTURE OF NURSING:
LEADING CHANGE,
ADVANCING HEALTH

2010–2011 Annual Report

To meet the needs of a growing and increasingly diverse patient population, the nursing workforce must increase in number and in diversity. For the past three years, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF), in partnership with the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN), has sought to address the shortage of nurses by preparing diverse, future nurse leaders through the *Robert Wood Johnson Foundation New Careers in Nursing Scholarship Program* (NCIN). NCIN's approach embodies many of the recommendations outlined in the 2010 Institute of Medicine (IOM) report *The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health*, which focuses on transforming the nursing profession to meet the needs of the 21st century American patient, including strengthening nurse education and training; advancing interprofessional collaboration across the health spectrum; and expanding leadership ranks to ensure that nurses have a voice on management teams, in boardrooms and during policy debates.

Through its first three rounds of funding, NCIN has supported 1,906 scholars at 101 schools of nursing across the nation.

About Accelerated Nursing Programs

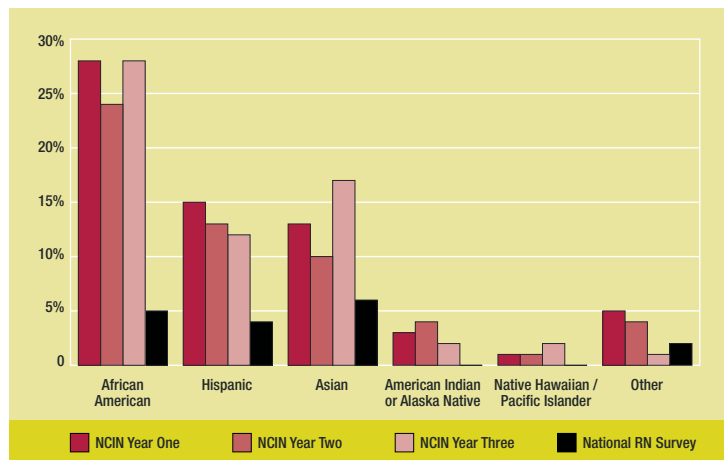
NCIN scholarships were created to enable schools of nursing to expand student capacity in accelerated baccalaureate and master's programs. Accelerated programs provide scholars with the most efficient route to licensure as a registered nurse (R.N.) and create opportunities for adults who have already completed a baccalaureate or graduate degree in a different field to segue into nursing. These programs prepare students to pass the licensure exam required for all R.N.s in as little as 12 to 18 months and provide quicker routes to workforce eligibility than traditional programs.

By bringing more nurses into the profession at the baccalaureate and master's degree levels, the NCIN program also helps to address the nation's nurse faculty shortage. Data from the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) show that nurses entering the profession via baccalaureate programs are four times more likely than other nurses to pursue a graduate degree in nursing, a prerequisite for teaching. NCIN scholars emulate this trend—91 percent of Cohorts 1, 2 and 3 indicated a desire to advance their education to the master's and doctoral levels.

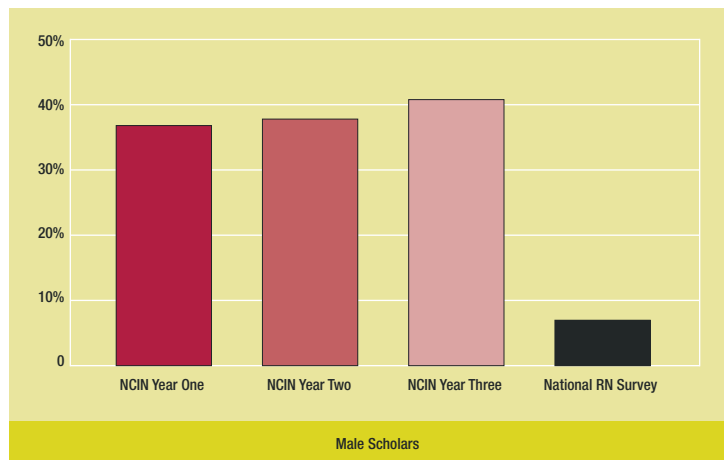
NCIN scholars lead a student panel about their accelerated nursing programs at the 2010 Annual Program Liaisons' Summit.



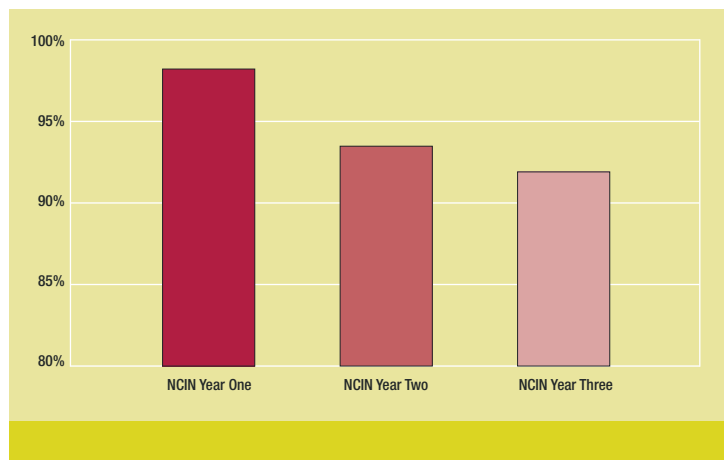
RACE/ETHNICITY IN NURSING



GENDER IN NURSING: MALE SCHOLARS



PERCENTAGE OF NCIN SCHOLARS TAKING OUT LOANS



Changing the Face of Nursing

Compared to the national R.N. population, NCIN scholars are significantly more diverse, representing a wide array of culture, background, heritage and gender. During its third year of funding, NCIN scholarships were distributed to 354 accelerated students at 63 schools of nursing, including 100 (28%) Black/African Americans, 59 (17%) Asian Americans, 42 (12%) Hispanics/Latinos, 8 (2%) American Indians or Alaska Natives, 7 (2%) Native Hawaiians or Pacific Islanders, and 4 (1%) scholars who self-identified as “other.” Respondents were also able to identify themselves as multi-ethnic.

The national nursing profession continues to be predominantly female-oriented. According to the 2008 HRSA survey, approximately seven percent of the 3.1 million employed R.N.s are men. NCIN is working to remedy this gap through the distribution of scholarships to qualified men in accelerated programs. In years one and two combined, 38 percent of NCIN scholarships were awarded to men. In year three, NCIN grantees awarded 131 (41%) scholarships to male students; 41 percent of whom came from diverse backgrounds.

FUELING FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Lack of financial support is a major determinant in students’ ability to pursue nursing education. Since 2008, NCIN has consistently found that scholarship recipients cite NCIN scholarships as their major source of financial support and an important incentive to pursue a nursing degree. Tuition costs for accelerated B.S.N. and M.S.N. degrees vary by school, but can be as high as \$30,000 for one year alone. Students also incur additional expenses like books, technology fees, housing and laboratory costs.

In years one and two combined, 91 percent of NCIN scholars relied on loans to fund their nursing education, and in year three, 88 percent of scholars took out loans for programs. These numbers indicate not only the challenge for students to fund nursing education, but also the importance of NCIN scholarships in allowing them to pursue a degree and minimizing potential debt.

ENCOURAGING ACADEMIC GROWTH

Through three years of funding, a significant number of NCIN scholars have reported an interest in the pursuit of graduate studies. Approximately 93 percent of all scholars (years one through three combined) reported plans to pursue graduate studies in nursing. As NCIN continues to grow and expand, the program is discovering better strategies for fostering scholar interest in higher education and connecting scholars with appropriate advanced pathway programs.



In its third funding year, NCIN found that of the 90 percent of scholars interested in pursuing higher degrees, 48 percent would like to earn a master's degree, 36 percent plan to earn a doctoral degree, and 10 percent plan to earn another advanced degree. Over half (57%) of NCIN scholars in accelerated master's programs reported plans to earn a doctoral degree. This intent is consistent with one of the IOM recommendations that the nation must train more nurses with advanced degrees.

An end-of-program scholar survey found that 71 percent of NCIN scholars from years one and two combined rated their program experience as *above average or excellent*. Scholars' positive program experiences may influence their academic success as 89 percent of NCIN scholars graduated from their programs on time. The attrition rate for NCIN scholars is only five percent, which is ten times lower than the national average of 50 percent for basic R.N. programs.

TRANSITIONING INTO PRACTICE

NCIN scholars are finding employment in higher numbers than their traditional B.S.N. and M.S.N. counterparts. A 2010 survey from National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) found that 24 percent of new nurse graduates had a job offer at the time of graduation. In comparison, nearly 51 percent of NCIN scholars who responded to the round one (2008–2009) program survey have already secured employment as a nurse. Approximately 42 percent of graduate respondents from round two (2009–2010) are currently employed in the field.

Overall, NCIN has supported 806 qualified, diverse nurses into health care workforce positions. These nurses have gone on to serve patients in a variety of settings across a variety of communities.

Technical Assistance

NCIN closely monitors program effectiveness to better understand what resources and activities best prepare nurse scholars for academic and professional success. Over three years of evaluation, NCIN has found that leadership, mentorship, learning comprehension and course preparation are the best determinants of scholar success.

LEADERSHIP

NCIN puts a premium on driving leadership activities at its funded schools of nursing. In 2009, the program developed a *Leadership Toolkit* and released a revised version in 2010. This

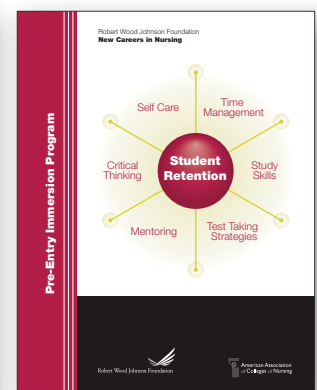
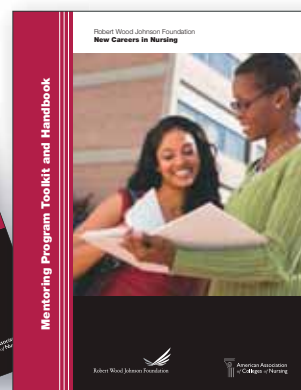
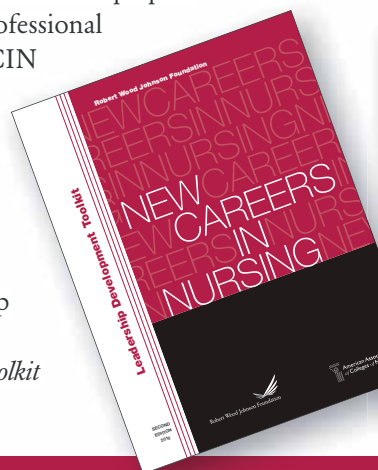
comprehensive planning guide helps grantees to facilitate and promote leadership activities among both faculty and rising scholars.

Salisbury University, a three-time grantee, strategically used the *Leadership Toolkit* to develop a program requiring accelerated nursing students to organize a health fair for local elementary school children. Through this initiative, students demonstrated leadership capacities as they planned all aspects of the community project, from conceptualization to implementation to evaluation. Dr. Lisa Seldomridge, Program Chair and Professor at Salisbury University, used the NCIN Leadership Toolkit to challenge scholars to realize their emerging leadership potential early on. "Engaging our students in real-life, real-time activities like building a health fair from the ground up, tests and develops their leadership skills," said Seldomridge.

MENTORSHIP

To help students navigate a time intensive, demanding academic track, NCIN's schools of nursing integrated mentoring, pairing faculty with scholars and accelerated students, throughout the life of the program. This ongoing structured collaboration provided a significant support system to help nursing students realize their career goals as well as gain a deeper understanding of the health care provider role.

At Rush University in Chicago, NCIN scholars teamed up with volunteers from Chicago's Schweitzer Fellowship, a program of graduate students from health related fields who make a clear commitment to mentoring. Many of the Fellows have previously mentored NCIN students, encouraging inter-professional collaboration. Both mentors and mentees immersed themselves fully in the relationship and were expected to touch base throughout the semester. Mentees were required to complete a quarterly report to reflect on growth and were required to participate in Schweitzer sponsored events and community service activities throughout underserved areas of the city.



NCIN Toolkits



“It is such a great outgrowth of the partnership because these are people who are committed to service and mentoring and are well on their way to professional clinical degrees.”

DR. LISA ROSENBERG, RUSH UNIVERSITY

Noted Dr. Lisa Rosenberg, director for academic advancement at Rush University, who led the effort, “One of the rewards of the mentoring program has been an emerging sense of service.” Three out of the five NCIN graduates from Rush University decided to return and serve as mentors for upcoming cohorts. “It is such a great outgrowth of the partnership because these are people who are committed to service and mentoring and are well on their way to professional clinical degrees.”

PRE-ENTRY IMMERSION

NCIN scholars and accelerated students alike benefit from programs that offer activities and information that convey accelerated degree expectations. To help schools of nursing consider tactical orientation programs, NCIN developed a Pre-Entry Immersion program, titled *PIP*, and created a toolkit to assist with PIP orientation planning and development. Since the creation of PIP in 2010, NCIN grantees have come to consider their PIP programs essential to managing student entry into academic settings and beneficial in preparing students for the rigors of an accelerated track.

Overcome with considerations for their patients’ health, nurses and nursing students often ignore their own well-being, which ultimately impacts their ability to effectively function. At Kent State University (KSU), a unique partnership with the Urban Zen Foundation increased students’ self awareness and sensitivity to balance between personal care and caregiving.

The *Care for the Caregiver* program provided weekly instruction and training in yoga, breath awareness, Reiki, aroma therapy and healthy nutrition. Accelerated students were taught how each technique and skill contributes to a holistic approach to education and self-awareness. “We began to see both physical and cognitive changes in students,” said Tracey Motter, M.S.N., R.N., undergraduate program director for KSU’s College of Nursing. “Their ability to focus and heighten personal awareness greatly impacts their clinical performance.”

Ed Daily, a veteran nurse and Urban Zen Integrative Therapist (UZIT), led the program’s physical activities. Daily became a UZIT after seeing many talented nurses leave the profession

Learning Assessments and Study Strategies Inventory

To aid scholars in successfully completing their accelerated nursing degrees, NCIN provided its third cohort of scholars with LASSI (Learning Assessments and Study Strategies Inventory) assessment. Developed at the University of Texas at Austin, LASSI programs provide students with a diagnosis of their strengths and weaknesses in study skills and offers tangible ways in which they can sharpen those efforts. A full 72 percent of grantee schools who used the assessment found it to be a valuable resource and an important aid to assuring student success. So much so that Simmons College in Boston, Mass. will be offering LASSI not only for its scholars but for all of its traditional nursing students.

due to poor self-care and stress management. “Constant care giving without self-care leads nurses to emotional and physical depletion,” Daily said. “Without a clear focus on self-care, burnout seems inevitable.”

Students who participated in Kent State’s *Care for the Caregiver* curriculum say they now consider self-care a necessity and understand the potential connection with patient care. “Our goal for the self-care initiative is to allow students to develop a personal tool box of healthy modalities to deal with the stresses of becoming a nurse, practicing as a nurse, and providing holistic nursing care,” Daily said.

Funding Impact

NCIN measures grantee outcomes to determine areas where funding has impacted accelerated programs beyond scholarship distribution. Through biannual surveys, NCIN analyzes grantee outcomes to determine best practices for successful student recruitment/retention and program expansion.

PROGRAM AND FACULTY EXPANSION

NCIN scholarships allow accelerated programs to accept and enroll more students, often requiring more faculty. In year three, NCIN grantees reported leveraging RWJF funding to increase faculty—both full-time and part-time—advisors and administrators. Grantees also used scholarship funding to expand program resources, including additional clinical sites, simulation technologies and distance-learning software.



The University of Tennessee Health Sciences Center (UTHSC) College of Nursing leveraged clinical partnerships to add permanent clinical faculty to its Dedicated Educational Units (DEUs) and temporary clinical faculty in specialty areas. Capitalizing on the expertise of clinicians and faculty, DEU creates an optimal learning environment for students while developing nursing staff and enhancing the quality of patient care and outcomes. A fourth DEU will open in 2011, facilitating enrollment of 70 new students into the accelerated M.S.N.-C.N.L. program. UTHSC was also awarded HRSA funding for the school's Master's Entry Clinical Nurse Leader Program, including support of DEU evaluation and expansion.

Before its partnership with NCIN, Azusa Pacific University (APU) School of Nursing was admitting 20 students to the accelerated program. In its first year as an NCIN grantee, APU enrolled 40 students and in this last year of funding, the program admitted 154 students across three campuses. For students admitted into the accelerated program, APU also connects them with clinical rotations in their underserved communities. This expansion has allowed APU to increase faculty staff, including writing tutors, academic tutors and spiritual counselors.

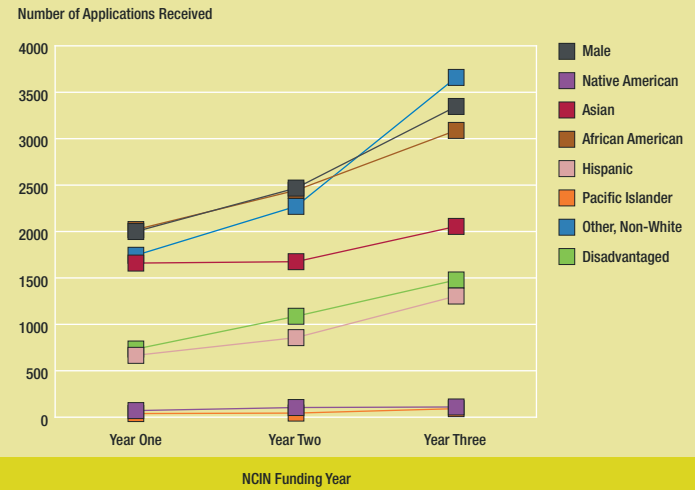
RWJF support also allowed Georgia Health Science University (GHSU), a three-time grantee, to seek additional funding partners, including university hospitals in Augusta. Combined, these partners have contributed more than \$100,000 in matching scholarship money.

INCREASING DIVERSE REPRESENTATION

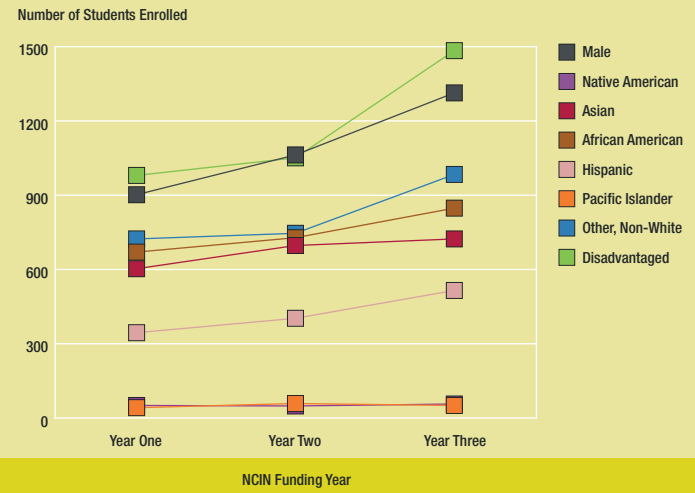
NCIN grantees are required to submit recruitment plans demonstrating their ability to reach students traditionally underrepresented in the field. In year three, NCIN program liaisons reported various recruitment tactics spanning from partnerships with Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), feeder colleges and minority student groups and organizations, to targeted online tactics, social media and campaign advertising. These proactive activities drove more underrepresented candidates to apply for, enroll in, and graduate from accelerated nursing degree programs than in years past. Although NCIN grantees are only able to distribute a limited amount of scholarships, this increase in applications by underrepresented students enabled schools of nursing to diversify their classrooms.

NCIN scholarship awards at the UTHSC helped fuel an overall increase in enrollment of underrepresented students. In 2010, 61 percent of the entire accelerated class was diverse or from disadvantaged backgrounds. In the year ahead, Dr. Patricia Cowan is working to host a series of informational webinars to

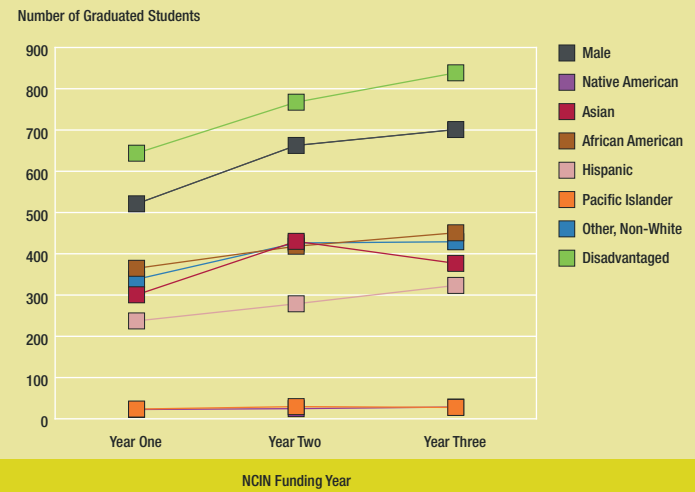
Applications Received for Accelerated Nursing Degree Programs at NCIN Grantees



Enrollment of Underrepresented Accelerated Nursing Degree Students at NCIN Grantees



Underrepresented Accelerated Nursing Degree Graduates from NCIN Funded Schools of Nursing



recruit individuals unable to travel to the Memphis campus. She has also reached out to Hispanic community partners to increase visibility at health fairs, clinics, markets and even restaurants.

At GHSU, recruitment partnerships were formed with historically Black feeder colleges, creating a pipeline of diverse applicants into the accelerated program. In conjunction with these partnerships, intense promotion of the program resulted in increased diverse student enrollment from individuals who would not have otherwise considered the program. GHSU's dean of nursing, Lucy Marion, committed two faculty members to focus on students' leadership and mentorship activities and enhanced partnerships with local HBCUs.

ENCOURAGING ADVANCED DEGREES

As a part of NCIN's funding requirement, grantees must develop programs to support scholars' personal and professional growth during the education process. These unique opportunities have introduced scholars to the various roles nurses can play in government, boards, faculty positions, advocacy organizations and leadership management. NCIN believes that these activities are an important indicator for scholar progression and allow them to explore education past entry-level nursing degrees and into doctoral programs and/or faculty positions.

“Our scholarship committee pays special attention to those interested in pursuing a career in nursing education.”

LORI ESCALLIER, PH.D., R.N., C.P.N.P.

At Stony Brook University, Lori Escallier, Ph.D., R.N., C.P.N.P., nursing project director, is careful to select NCIN scholars interested in pursuing a career as a future nurse educator. “Our scholarship committee pays special attention to those interested in pursuing a career in nursing education,” said Escallier. Many of her students are on their way to pursuing faculty positions—earning the advanced degrees and experience necessary to eventually teach. Stony Brook also leveraged clinical relationships through the nursing school dean, who is the Chief Nursing Operator (CNO) of a local hospital. Several program graduates were offered positions at that local teaching hospital, a process which has helped Escallier forge close relationships with students post graduation.

Scholar Ambition

The Route to Leadership—
Karen Jennings's Path
from M.S.N to Ph.D.

For Karen Jennings, M.S.N. candidate and NCIN scholar at the William F. Connell School of Nursing at Boston College (BC), the decision to continue her nursing education has been an easy one. Jennings is one of many scholars (93%) who indicate a desire to seek advanced degrees. This is her story.



After completing an undergraduate degree in psychology, Jennings became a research assistant at the University of Rochester in New York, and later a mental health specialist at McLean Hospital in Boston. While at McLean, her colleagues and patients opened her eyes to a future in nursing.

“The unit nurses told me that I would make an amazing nurse and urged me to consider a BSN degree,” said Jennings. “When I found the direct entry master’s program at Boston College, everything came together. It was a great opportunity to continue developing my research skills while gaining clinical practice.” In 2009, Jennings was accepted into the program at Boston College and offered a select spot as an NCIN scholar.

Through NCIN, Jennings was introduced to nurse leaders at local and national organizations. In between classes and clinicals, Jennings herself became involved in Boston’s nurse community, contacting local legislators about nurse-led issues.

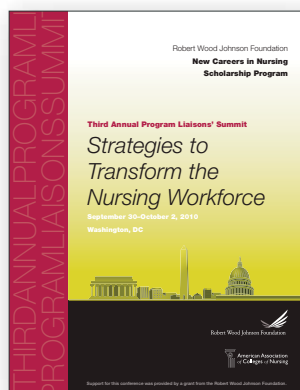
Now, nearing the end of her accelerated master’s program, Jennings has fully discovered her passions for nursing advocacy and applied theories—interests which she plans to develop in the college’s Ph.D. program. “For me, a Ph.D. means the opportunity to have an influence in the nursing practice and in the health field more broadly,” said Jennings. “With an advanced degree, I hope to continue my research and share findings in scientific journals.”

The route toward leadership has been an especially important one for Jennings as an African American and Latina woman. “I’m proud to be a part of a program that supports a diverse set of upcoming health care providers,” she said. “And I’m even prouder that nursing is heading in a direction where it can provide care to all individuals on a holistic basis.”

As her journey takes her further into nursing, there's no telling what the future holds for Jennings. "I have so many interests—teaching, policy, research and working with Boston's disadvantaged population. Because of that, I will always seek opportunities to make me a better nurse. I hope to keep learning—whether it's inside the classroom or in real life settings with patients, peers and professionals."

Convening With a Purpose— The NCIN Program Liaisons' Summit

More than 100 of the country's nursing education leaders attended the 2010 **NCIN Program Liaisons' Summit on Strategies to Transform the Nursing Workforce** in Washington, D.C. This marked the third straight year that NCIN grantees met to discuss challenges and successes unique to the nation's accelerated nursing degree programs. The three-day summit provided an exchange platform for schools of nursing to strategize how to further student achievement.



The summit included presentations from nursing and education experts on diversity, nursing history, adult learning and leadership development. Sue Hassmiller, RWJF Senior Advisor for Nursing, briefed participants on recommendations for the future of nursing, later released in an IOM report. Participants also heard from NCIN peers and colleagues as program liaisons and committee members shared working models for academic recruitment, progress and retention of accelerated degree students. Breakout sessions were dedicated for discussion of best practices in accelerated programs, academic support systems, leadership and mentorship development, metric evaluation and scholarship management.

During a student panel discussion, grantees heard from six NCIN scholars enrolled in accelerated baccalaureate and master's programs. Panelists shared their experiences in the fast-paced programs and emphasized the struggle to successfully manage a work-life balance. Scholars described both classmates and faculty as huge sources of support during times of struggle. Panelists also felt that the diverse experiences offered to them as NCIN scholars were invaluable and improved open-mindedness, bedside manner and comprehension.

Scholars at the University of Tennessee Health Science Center display models for teaching nutrition at a nursing home.



Poster abstracts were displayed throughout the conference to share innovative approaches to preparing accelerated degree nursing students. Seventeen abstracts were presented and exhibited work being done in the areas of cultural competence, mentoring, program design and recruitment/retention.

Nursing Inspiration: What NCIN Scholars Believe about Nursing

"It is the present and future of our economy, our lives and our relationships."

—Samuel Itie
Arkansas State University

"Nursing is an art form and not only a unique profession but also an identity that incorporates the witnessing of miracles, life, death and transformation."

—Jina Hwang
Duke University

"Dedication, determination and passion ultimately lead to a successful and rewarding career in nursing."

—Daniel Lichter
SUNY Stony Brook University

"Personal fulfillment comes from helping others. Nursing as a career is an expression of this belief."

—Shera Thompson
Loyola University of Chicago

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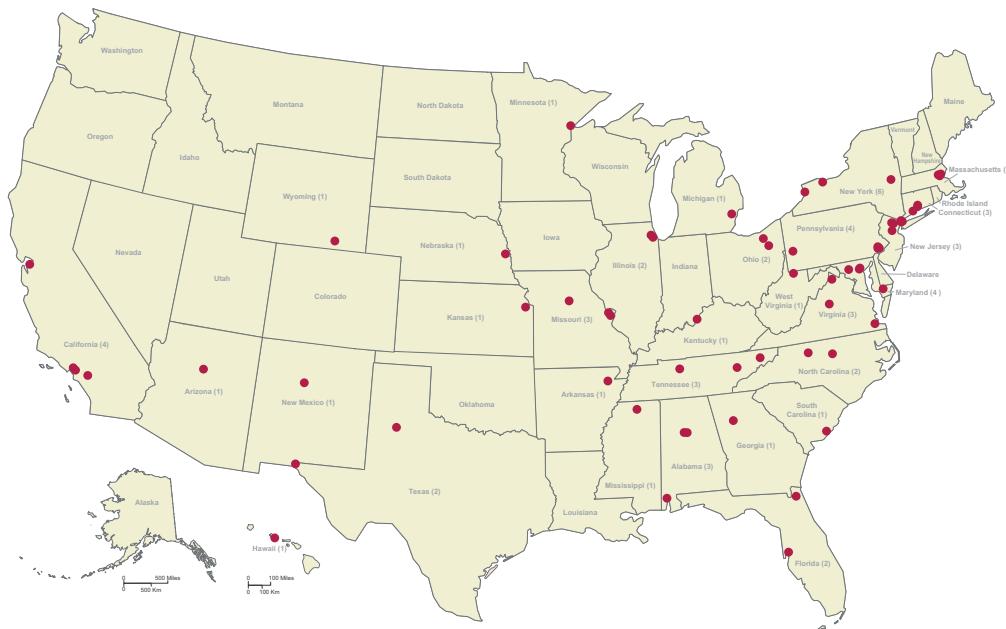
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Geographic Distribution of 2010–2011 NCIN Awarded Grants

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Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

The **American Association of Colleges of Nursing** is the national voice for baccalaureate and graduate programs in nursing. Representing more than 670 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.

