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HealthForce Minnesota Announces Annual Meeting

Rochester, Minn., October 23, 2008 - HealthForce Minnesota will hold its annual meeting on Tuesday, October 28, 2008 to feature successful projects, announce new grant opportunities, review programs of the past year and unveil expanded initiatives for fiscal year 2009.

HealthForce Minnesota is an organization developed to integrate the expertise and resources of education, healthcare providers and community members so that Minnesota can be a global leader in healthcare education, practice, research and innovation. HealthForce Minnesota is one of four "Centers of Excellence" designated by Minnesota State Colleges and Universities.

Some of the key HealthForce Minnesota programs to be discussed at the annual meeting include:

Pediatric Patient Care Simulation

Funded by HealthForce Minnesota nursing students at Rochester Community and Technical College and Winona State University (WSU) –Rochester access a state-of-the-art simulator for training. In simulation, computer-controlled equipment teaches procedures and treatment protocols to students before they have to use them on actual patients. A simulation environment allows students to learn, practice and repeat procedures again and again in order to correct mistakes, fine-tune skills and optimize clinical outcomes. The simulation experience is extremely well received by all levels of students.

Grants

Micro Grants

HealthForce Minnesota will announce a new opportunity through Regional Incentive Grants for communities and organizations to initiate or enhance basic planning, research and data collection of healthcare concerns. Up to four grants of \$12,000 will be awarded each year with no submission deadlines. This fiscal year Regional Incentive Grants will be available through June 1, 2009.

Department of Labor Grant

Medical laboratory technicians and clinical laboratory scientists are in high demand in the state of Minnesota. In 2005, it was projected that 2000 new hires will be needed by 2015 in order to accommodate growth and retirement attrition.



Made possible by the federal Department of Labor's Community-Based Job Training Grants Initiative, St. Paul College will join with MnSCU consortium partners such as HealthForce Minnesota and Healthcare Education – Industry Partnership, Allina Hospital & Clinics, Winona State University, and the University of Minnesota to facilitate career advancement through the restoration of two to four-year program articulation, fast track options, e-learning and laboratory expansion strategies. During the grant period, the goal is to double technician and scientist enrollment and to expand enrollment of students who are currently underrepresented in the healthcare field, such as immigrants, minorities, and dislocated workers.

As a result of this grant, that called for the partnering of healthcare and Minnesota state colleges and universities, St. Paul College will receive leveraged funds from industry partners totaling \$1,188,500, bringing the project total to \$3,187,354.

Scrubs Camp

Successfully launched by HealthForce Minnesota in 2008 and returning in summer 2009, Scrubs Camp is hoping to expand to include STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) activities. Through an innovative partnership, K-12 Health Science Partnership, a program under HealthForce Minnesota, will promote Health career and STEM education and address STEM teacher shortage issues.

Scrubs Camp provides statewide high school students with a week of intensive, hands-on learning and training in healthcare. At the 2008 Scrubs Camp, more than 5 dozen students spent a full week at WSU, staying in the dorms and getting accustomed to college life while learning different aspects of medical careers. Half of the students came from the Twin Cities area and the other half came from southern Minnesota.

The HealthForce annual meeting will be held at University Center Rochester, rooms CF206 and CF208, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

The media are invited to attend an interactive session 10 a.m. – 11 a.m. where they can conduct interviews and learn more about HealthForce programs, grants, K-12 outreach, Scrubs Camp partnerships, diversity initiatives and more.

HealthForce Minnesota is one of four "Centers of Excellence" designated by the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Board of Trustees. Each Center is housed and fiscally managed by a state university who partners with two-year colleges. Winona State University (WSU) acts in this capacity and houses HealthForce Minnesota that operates in Rochester and Minneapolis. The other Centers are Metropolitan State University, information technology; Bemidji State University, manufacturing and applied technology; and Minnesota State University, Mankato, engineering and manufacturing.

Winona State University is a member of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system that is comprised of 32 state universities and community and technical colleges serving the higher education needs of Minnesota. The system serves about 242,000 students per year in credit-based courses and an additional 140,000 students in non-credit courses.

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Also available: PDF HealthForce MN FY08 annual report, 2009 Scrubs Camp brochure, logo

