



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Department for the Aging

Julie Christopher, Commissioner

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COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department for the Aging
Julie Christopher., Commissioner

MEMORANDUM

TO: Directors
Area Agencies on Aging

FROM: Bill Peterson

DATE: June 5, 2007

SUBJECT: **Workforce Issue**

One of the issues raised at most of our Community Conversations on Aging was the need for more trained health care professionals to meet the needs of the growing older population. We heard that many nursing schools must turn away potential students because they do not have the faculty capacity. Evidently many nursing faculty are baby boomers and are retiring. The following news release from the Governor's Office describes one of Virginia's attempts to address the decline in nursing faculty who are qualified and willing to teach nursing students.

Attachment

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
Office of the Governor

Timothy M. Kaine
Governor

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 1, 2007

**GOVERNOR KAINE ANNOUNCES SCHOLARSHIPS FOR NURSING
GRADUATE STUDENTS WILLING TO TEACH**

~ New program designed to combat shortages in nursing workforce ~

RICHMOND – Governor Timothy M. Kaine announced today that nursing students in the Commonwealth may be eligible for scholarships of up to \$40,000 through the Commonwealth of Virginia **Nursing Scholarship Program**. Administered by the Virginia Department of Health (VDH), the \$200,000 initiative is designed to increase the number of nursing faculty by providing financial support to master’s and doctoral students.

The new program is modeled after the **Virginia Doctoral Nursing Student Loan Assistance Repayment Program**, which was previously announced, and which provides loans to full-time graduate nursing students who are accepted to, or enrolled in, doctoral nursing programs at George Mason University, Hampton University, the University of Virginia, and Virginia Commonwealth University. This earlier initiative, which is funded with \$750,000, includes a requirement to serve as a teacher at any nursing school in the state that prepares Registered Nurses.

“We value our nurses because they are essential to keeping our communities healthy,” Governor Kaine said. “However, many experienced nurses are expected to retire in the next few years, and the Commonwealth could face a shortage of nearly 16,000 nurses by 2015. We need to work now to recruit and retain skilled teaching staff to train the new nurses we will need.”

The new scholarships are open to full-time or part-time master’s and doctoral nursing students enrolled in a graduate nursing program in Virginia. Priority will be given to master’s degree candidates who will teach in community colleges. Scholarship recipients must complete their degree requirements within two years and teach at a Virginia school of nursing as a condition of accepting the scholarship.

Students chosen for the highly competitive scholarships will receive \$20,000 per year, for up to two years, while completing graduate coursework. Applicants must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- Be a U.S. Citizen;
- Be a full or part-time graduate student in a master's or doctoral level nursing program in Virginia who will complete the degree requirements within two years or less;
- Have submitted a completed application;
- Have submitted all other required materials (transcript, CV, letters of reference);
- Have signed and submitted a written contract agreeing to serve via teaching in a Virginia School of Nursing that prepares students to become registered nurses in the Commonwealth; and
- Priority will be given to master's degree candidates who will teach in community colleges.

Applications will be accepted from June 1 through July 31, 2007. A complete Nursing Scholarship Application and additional program information is available online at <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/healthpolicy/healthcareworkforce/nursing/index.htm>. Interested students can also contact the Office of Health Policy and Planning, Virginia Department of Health, at (804) 864-7435.

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