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\$1.1 MILLION IN SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE FOR CENTRAL VALLEY NURSING STUDENTS

SACRAMENTO—The non-profit Health Professions Education Foundation (HPEF) announced today that it is accepting applications for nursing scholarships from nursing students in Fresno, Kings, Kern, Madera, Merced and Tulare Counties. The deadline to apply is October 9, 2002.

The non-profit foundation will award nearly \$1.1 million in scholarships over a three-year period as part of the Central Valley Nursing Scholarship Program.

Students pursuing Associate Nursing Degree (ADN), Bachelor of Science of Nursing (BSN), or Master of Science of Nursing (MSN) degrees will be awarded scholarships ranging from \$8,000 to \$12,000 per year on a competitive basis.

The Central Valley is targeted because it has one of the lowest rates of registered nurses in the state with 407 nurses per 100,000 population, compared to the state average of 566 per 100,000 population and the national average of 798 per 100,000. The Central Valley Nursing Scholarship Program is designed to ensure that the Central Valley's nursing workforce more closely reflect the diversity of the region's population.

The program is funded by The California Endowment through its three-year \$10 million Central Valley Nursing Work Force Diversity Initiative and is administered by the Health Professions Education Foundation.

The application form and program brochure can be downloaded at the Foundation's Web site at www.healthprofessions.ca.gov. The application postmark deadline is October 9, 2002. Please contact the Foundation's office at (800) 773-1669 or (916) 324-6500 with questions about the program. The next application period begins March 2003.

The Health Professions Education Foundation is a non-profit, public benefit corporation, established to provide scholarships and loan repayment grants to health professional students. The Foundation's mission is to improve access to healthcare in rural and urban underserved areas, where individuals do not receive adequate healthcare due to cultural and/or language barriers, geographic barriers, or economic barriers.

Since 1990, the Foundation has awarded more than \$6.7 million in scholarships and loan repayment grants to approximately 1,400 health professional students.

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