

David M. Carlisle, M.D., Ph.D., Director
1600 9th Street, Room 433
Sacramento, California 95814
(916) 654-1606
Fax (916) 653-1448
www.oshpd.ca.gov

NEWS RELEASE

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CONTACT: Angela Smith
(916) 324-6500

OSHPD ANNOUNCES THE AVAILABILITY OF HEALTHCARE SCHOLARSHIP AND LOAN REPAYMENT GRANTS

SACRAMENTO - The Health Professions Education Foundation (HPEF) will award approximately \$800,000 in scholarships and loan repayment grants to healthcare professionals who agree to practice in medically underserved areas of California, Dr. David Carlisle, director of the Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development (OSHPD), announced today.

Scholarships and loan repayments are available to students and recent graduates in nursing, dentistry, dental hygiene, physician assistant and allied health services. Scholarships range from \$2,500 to \$10,000 a year, and loan repayment grants range from \$10,000 to \$20,000 over a two-year period. Application forms and program brochures can be downloaded from HPEF's Website at www.healthprofessions.ca.gov. The application postmark deadline is March 24, 2004.

"The Health Professions and Education Foundation has helped economically disadvantaged and demographically underrepresented students and graduates fulfill their dream of pursuing a career in the health professions and caring for underserved populations," said Dr. Carlisle.

Since 1990, HPEF has awarded more than \$9.3 million in scholarships and loan repayments to approximately 1,550 healthcare professional students and graduates. For further information about the foundation, please contact them directly at (916) 324-6500 or (800) 773-1669.

HPEF receives administrative support from OSHPD and is a nonprofit public benefit corporation. The foundation was established for the purpose of soliciting funds from the private sector and providing scholarships and loan repayment to demographically underrepresented and economically disadvantaged students. The foundation oversees the administration of two funds established by state legislation: the Health Professions Education Fund and the Registered Nurse Education Fund (RNEF).

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger is continuing California's commitment to these programs by including in his proposed 2004-05 budget a total of \$4.1 million for scholarships and loan repayments. The governor's budget includes an additional \$650,000 for the RNEF to increase the scholarship and loan repayment amounts awarded to registered nurses and registered nursing students. In addition, the Administration for the first time is providing support totaling \$206,000 for licensed mental health practitioners through the Mental Health Practitioner Education Fund for loan repayment awards, and \$131,000 for vocational nurses and vocational nursing students through the Vocational Nurse Education fund for scholarships and loan repayments. All awardees from these programs must agree to serve a minimum of one year in a medically underserved area of California.

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