



**Department of
Veterans Affairs**

Office of Public Affairs
Media Relations

Washington, DC 20420
(202) 273-6000
www.va.gov

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 31, 2007

VA Announces New Nursing Academy Sites *Four Universities Partner with VA in Nursing Initiative*

WASHINGTON -- To provide compassionate, highly-trained nurses to look after the health care needs of the nation's veterans, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is launching a new initiative that partners the Department's world-class health care system with four of the country's finest nursing schools. VA selected nursing schools in Florida, California, Utah and Connecticut for special partnerships with local VA health care facilities as part of a new VA Nursing Academy.

"The expanded role of VA in the education of nurses will ensure the Department has the nurses needed to continue our world-class health care for veterans," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Jim Nicholson. "Our strengthened partnerships with these four great nursing schools will enhance the faculty and clinical resources needed to educate nurses."

The first four nursing schools selected to take part in the new program are:

- University of Florida in Gainesville;
- San Diego State University;
- University of Utah in Salt Lake City; and
- Fairfield University in Fairfield, Conn.

The four VA-nursing partnerships were selected from among 42 applications. Additional VA-nursing school partnerships will be selected in 2008 and 2009, for a total of 12 partnerships in the five-year pilot program.

The American Association of Colleges of Nursing has reported that more than 42,000 qualified applicants were turned away from nursing schools in 2006 because of insufficient numbers of faculty, clinical sites, classroom space and clinical mentors. VA currently provides clinical education for approximately 100,000 health professional trainees annually, including students from more than 600 schools of nursing.

- More -

Nursing Partnerships 2/2/2/2

The VA Nursing Academy was recently established to address the nationwide shortage of nurses while ensuring that veterans continue to receive world class care and services.

The Academy's "Enhancing Academic Partnerships" pilot program enables competitively selected VA-nursing school partnerships to expand the number of nursing faculty, enhance the professional and scholarly development of nurses, increase student enrollment by about 1,000 students and promote innovations in nursing education.

Further information about the pilot program can be obtained from VA's Office of Academic Affiliations web site at www.va.gov/oa.

#