

## **West Virginia Center for Nursing Announces Scholarship Program**

The Board of Directors of the West Virginia Center for Nursing has established a Scholarship Program. The West Virginia Center for Nursing Scholarship Program is designed to assist nursing students enrolled in West Virginia schools, colleges, and universities with their education related financial needs. The enabling legislation which created the West Virginia Center for Nursing requires the Center to “explore and establish loan repayment and scholarship programs designed to benefit nurses who remain in West Virginia after graduation and work in hospitals and other health care institutions, as well as promoting nursing careers through educational and scholarship programs directed at non-traditional students and other workforce initiatives.”

To meet these goals, the West Virginia Center for Nursing is directed to distribute one-third of its annual budget to scholarship and loan programs. For the academic year 2006 – 2007 the total amount of funds to be distributed will be \$192,000.00.

The West Virginia Center for Nursing Scholarship Program is designed to assist nursing students enrolled in all levels of nursing programs, from LPN through Doctoral programs. Consistent with legislative intent, specific priorities and criteria have been established for students to be eligible for funding. Special emphasis has been placed on underserved and displaced workers, second degree students, those with needs unmet by other financial aid programs, graduate students preparing for faculty positions, and registered nurses preparing for school nurse or public health nurse positions. Students must agree to work in West Virginia after graduation.

Scholarship funds will be distributed to all qualified LPN and RN schools which apply to the West Virginia Center for Nursing. Students will apply directly to their school for funding through this program. Schools will disburse funds to students based on the identified program priorities.

According to Duane F. Napier, Executive Director of the West Virginia Center for Nursing, “this program promises to assist students to be successful in nursing education programs by lifting financial burdens that may not be addressed in other financial aid programs and assists the West Virginia Center for Nursing to address it’s goal of promoting nursing and addressing the shortage in West Virginia.”

The West Virginia Center for Nursing was created by the legislature in March 2004 through the passage of HB 4143. The West Virginia Center for Nursing seeks to enhance and strengthen nursing excellence to optimize the health and healthcare of all West Virginians, through strategic workforce planning, education, research, and nurse practice development. The Center is funded through a 10.00 surcharge paid by all licensed practical nurses and registered nurses at the time of their annual license renewal. For specific information regarding the West Virginia Center for Nursing Scholarship Program and other work of the Center please visit our web site <http://www.wvcenterfornursing.org>, or contact Duane F. Napier, Executive Director, at 304-558-0838.