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## **Tennessee's Nursing Shortage to be Addressed by Statewide Agencies Through Nationwide Program**

*Tennessee expected to have the highest nursing shortage in the Southeast*

**Nashville, Tenn.** – The Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee, along with The Tennessee Center for Nursing and other statewide partners, has recently been selected as one of 11 foundations nationwide to receive funding in the second year of *Partners Investing in Nursing's Future (PIN)*, a national initiative to develop solutions to America's nursing shortage.

The U.S. Government projects a shortfall of 800,000 nurses by the year 2020. Tennessee will be able to meet only half of the demand for RNs by 2020, according to the Health Resources and Services Administration. Because of this crisis, this program aims to increase the number of qualified nurse educators, help retain nurses by creating a positive work environment and give nursing students more educational opportunities in clinical settings.

Led by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the Northwest Health Foundation, the program encourages local foundations to act as catalysts in developing grassroots strategies to establish a stable, adequate nursing workforce. The 11 grants being awarded nationally this year represent the involvement of 27 foundations, and a multitude of other funding sources. These foundations, some for the first time, have forged partnerships in their own communities to apply for this grant, giving increased attention to the nursing shortage in their communities. To help develop solutions and lead efforts within the region, The Community Foundation and its consortium of partners have been awarded a two-year grant of \$250,000. The total budget with matching funds from partners is \$417,536.

"The nursing shortage crisis is an important issue for all of us," said Ellen Lehman, president of The Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee. "We are honored to have convened so many qualified organizations to work together to better the quality of life for all Tennesseans."

*Partners Investing in Nursing's Future* is now in its second year of a five-year, \$10 million initiative, which led to the formation of hundreds of partnerships between nursing organizations and local foundations in its first year.

"The stability and quality of our nation's health care rely heavily on a sufficient supply of appropriately educated and skilled nurses," said Susan B. Hassmiller, R.N., Ph.D., F.A.A.N., senior program officer at the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. "While the nursing shortage is a national issue, community-based interventions are necessary to finding solutions that work in different health care environments."

Across America, patients rely on nurses for personal, quality care delivered in their own communities – which is threatened when there is a nursing shortage. In fact, the nursing

shortage has become so severe in some communities that it is affecting patient care and safety, health care costs and patient outcomes. Experts say the causes of the nursing shortage are complex and range from rapid population growth in several states, to an aging nurse workforce to poor working conditions.

“Because all health care is local, solutions need to be tailored to meet the needs of the individual communities these nurses serve,” said Judith Woodruff, J.D., program director of the Northwest Health Foundation and *Partners Investing in Nursing’s Future*. “Not only do we believe The Community Foundation and its partners will make significant improvements in the state but we believe that the other 20 *PIN* projects can exchange ideas and benefit from their work as well.”

Information about *Partners Investing in Nursing’s Future* is available at [www.PartnersInNursing.org](http://www.PartnersInNursing.org).

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**About The Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee**

The Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee oversees more than 630 charitable funds and manages endowment, unrestricted and memorial funds totaling approximately \$430 million.

**About The Tennessee Center for Nursing**

The Tennessee Center for Nursing, Inc. (TCN), is a statewide nonprofit organization composed of nursing educators, providers, insurers, business representatives, policy makers, consumers, and representatives of professional nursing organizations to guide the ongoing development of an appropriate nursing work force.

**PIN Funding Partners**

Other funding partners helping to make possible the goals of *Partners Investing in Nursing’s Future* are Baptist Healing Trust, The Community Foundation of Greater Memphis, East Tennessee Foundation, HCA, HCA Foundation, Memorial Foundation, Nashville Career Advancement Center, the Tennessee Center for Nursing, Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Tennessee Nurses Foundation, and Vanderbilt University Medical Center.

*The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation focuses on the pressing health and health care issues facing our country. As the nation’s largest philanthropy devoted exclusively to improving the health and health care of all Americans, the Foundation works with a diverse group of organizations and individuals to identify solutions and achieve comprehensive, meaningful and timely change. See [www.rwjf.org](http://www.rwjf.org).*

*Northwest Health Foundation is an independent, charitable foundation committed to advancing, supporting, and promoting the health of all people. As part of our commitment to cultivate a stable, skilled nursing workforce, Northwest Health Foundation invests in collaborative and sustainable solutions to address the nursing shortage, including the development of advocacy and leadership within the nursing community. See [www.nwhf.org](http://www.nwhf.org)*