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The University of Utah College of Nursing Awarded a \$1 Million John A. Hartford Foundation Geriatric Nursing Center of Excellence

Salt Lake City, Utah, September 21, 2007 –

On Friday, September 21, 2007 the Board of Directors of the John A. Hartford Foundation selected the University of Utah College of Nursing as a Hartford Center for Geriatric Nursing Excellence. Four new Centers of Excellence were added to the five currently funded by the Hartford Foundation. The University of Utah Hartford Center for Geriatric Nursing Excellence is designed to increase the number of faculty qualified to teach geriatric nursing through national and regional strategies. This five-year, \$1 million dollar award will be augmented with significant investment in geriatric education by the University of Utah.

Using cutting-edge distance education technology to reach students throughout the nation, the College of Nursing will offer a PhD program to prepare faculty for major universities. Regionally, the master's and Doctor of Nurse Practitioner programs will educate faculty to prepare registered nurses and nurse practitioners.

Dr. A. Lorris Betz, M.D., Ph.D., Sr. Vice President for Health Science states: "The area of aging is a top priority for the University and our community. This award to the College of Nursing brings a new level of prestige, and encourages interdisciplinary collaboration. The University of Utah Hartford Center for Geriatric Nursing Excellence will prepare nurses for a rapidly changing population, and specifically will prepare nurse faculty to educate new generations of nurses."

The University of Utah Hartford Center for Geriatric Nursing Excellence will become one of 9 Centers in the United States funded by the John A. Hartford Foundation. Along with funding support comes the prestige of being affiliated with this nationally-recognized leader in the advancement of geriatric care and education. Ginette A. Pepper, PhD RN, FAAN will serve as the Center's Executive Director. Patricia Berry, PhD, APRN, BC and Dale Lund, PhD, FGSA will serve as Associate Directors.

The University of Utah College of Nursing has a 30-year commitment to gerontology and geriatric nursing education. The University of Utah Hartford

Center for Geriatric Nursing Excellence will capitalize on the strength of interdisciplinary collaborations in geriatric research, education and practice, a number of funded aging-related studies and access to exclusive regional and national partnerships. In celebrating this accomplishment, Dean Maureen Keefe commented, "This is one of several significant recent awards that places the College of Nursing among the most elite schools in the nation. We continue to develop new and innovative programs and partnerships to respond to the changing needs of the population of Utah and of the region."

The University of Utah Hartford Center for Geriatric Nursing Excellence will have national impact by expanding the number of highly qualified geriatric nursing faculty prepared to teach in nursing programs throughout the country. A specialized program of study will utilize distance PhD education to prepare nurse scientists for teaching careers in research intensive universities. PhD students will attend classes via a sophisticated internet-based videoconferencing system that establishes a virtual classroom. Students can enroll from anywhere in the United States or Canada without re-locating to Utah.

State and regional impact will be attained from universal geriatric preparation of students in graduate programs that prepare advanced practice nurses (nurse practitioners and clinical specialists) and faculty that teach beginning nursing students. Since the largest group of adult patients in hospitals, home care, and clinics are over 65 years of age, all master's and doctor of nursing practice degree students in specialties that care for adults will receive enhanced geriatric training as a part of their coursework. Some of these students will receive more extensive coursework and clinical training in geriatrics, graduating as geriatric experts to provide care to older adults and become faculty for basic and advanced practice nursing programs in community colleges, colleges, and universities. As the majority of these students come from Utah or the Mountain West, it is predicated they will remain in the region.

About the John A. Hartford Foundation: Founded in 1929, the John A. Hartford Foundation is a committed champion of training, research and service system innovations that promote the health and independence of America 's older adults. Through its grantmaking, the Foundation seeks to strengthen the nation's capacity to provide effective, affordable care to this rapidly increasing older population by educating "aging-prepared" health professionals (physicians, nurses, social workers), and developing innovations that improve and better integrate health and supportive services. The Foundation was established by John A. Hartford. Mr. Hartford and his brother, George L. Hartford, both former chief executives of the Great Atlantic & Pacific Tea Company, left the bulk of their estates to the Foundation upon their deaths in the 1950s. Today, the Foundation is America's leading philanthropy with a sustained interest in aging and health. <http://www.jhartfound.org/index.htm>

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