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Allen College, with a history dating back to 1925, is a specialized, regionally-accredited institution educating nurses and allied health care providers. About 95% of Allen College students are Iowa residents, and most remain in Iowa to work in health care following graduation. The College is authorized to confer two health sciences degrees and bachelor's (BSN), master's (MSN) and doctoral (DNP) degrees in nursing. More than 90% of Allen College's 500 students are studying for a nursing degree. Our nursing programs are designed to prepare students for licensure as registered nurses (RNs) or to advance their careers following licensure. Allen College is the only post-secondary institution in the Cedar Valley region preparing baccalaureate-level and advanced practice nurses. The more than 150 students enrolled in our MSN program are preparing for careers as nurse practitioners, educators, or leaders. Our nurse practitioner graduates play an increasingly critical role in delivering primary health care to Iowa's citizens, especially those in medically underserved areas, because of a decrease in the number of physicians choosing a primary care specialty.

Most (90%) of Allen College's students receive financial assistance in the form of scholarships, grants, and loans. Of students receiving financial assistance, 88% receive at least one type of federal assistance. In addition, the majority of our students work full or part-time in order to pay for the cost of their education. Many also have families to support. But even with this financial assistance and income from employment, the 2009-2010 average debt load of our undergraduate-degree graduates was about \$28,700 because loans (PLUS, Subsidized/Unsubsidized Stafford, Perkins, Alternative) account for the majority (72%) of financial aid.

Currently, RNs comprise the largest group of this nation's health professionals. While the recession has reduced the shortage of RNs in Iowa and elsewhere, Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) analysts project that by 2018 more than 580,000 new jobs for RNs will be created. The BLS predicts that the number of nursing jobs will grow from 2.62 million in 2008 to 3.2 million in 2018, a 22 % increase because of a growing demand for health care for aging Baby Boomers and the influx of new patients into the system as a result of health care reform. Because 458,000 nurses are predicted to retire in the next few years, the total number of available nursing jobs may grow to more than one million. In Iowa, a surge of nurse retirements is likely in the next decade, especially as the U.S. economy recovers, because 45% of Iowa's registered nurses are 49 years of age or older. According to a governor's task force report released in March 2008, Iowa had about 8 % fewer nurses than were needed. This shortfall may increase to 27 % in the next

10 years, or as many as 9,100 unfilled registered nurse positions (about 22% of Iowa's RN current workforce).

To meet the demand for registered nurses, Health Resource and Services Administration (HRSA) officials estimate the U.S. must graduate 90% more nurses from nursing programs. Because more than 60% of our nation's nurse educators are 50 years of age or older, a probable shortage of nursing faculty is likely to result in fewer admissions to nursing programs. The American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) recently reported that more than 50,000 qualified nursing applicants were turned away from baccalaureate and graduate nursing programs in 2009-10 because of a shortage of nursing faculty, clinical sites, classroom space, clinical preceptors, and budget constraints.

Federal support of Allen College has been critical to Allen College's success in increasing the number of well qualified staff nurses, nurse practitioners, nurse educators and nurse leaders for Iowa. In FY2010 Allen College received more than \$440,000 in Title VIII funds to support undergraduate and graduate nursing students and to support improvements in our graduate nursing program. These funds were made available through an advanced nursing education grant, advanced education nursing traineeships, the nurse faculty loan program, and scholarships for disadvantaged students. Our students rely upon this support to help them realize their career goals. The advanced nursing education grant that we received allowed us to hire an instructional designer and additional faculty and staff and to increase our enrollment of students throughout Iowa. In our psychiatric nurse practitioner program, for example, we have doubled our enrollment to 16 students as result of this support. During the 2009-10 academic year, 35 of the 52 graduates from our MSN program received federal nurse traineeship support. Of those 35, at least 25 are working in medically underserved areas and/or serving underserved populations.

The Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development programs, as well as other federal programs that provide financial aid, are critical to support students in completing their degree and making their future debt burden manageable--especially in the current recession. In past nurse shortages, the federal government has provided increases in Title VIII funds which have been effective in increasing the supply of nurses. Today, continued and increased support for the Title VIII program is critically important to schools of nursing and their students if our nation is to avert a shortage of well-prepared registered nurses. Because registered nurses comprise the largest number of healthcare professionals in our nation, an adequate nursing workforce is critical to our nation's future. Given the projected shortages of registered nurses over the next several years, the need invest in the nursing workforce has never been more crucial.

