

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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OISSE CONVENES NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RURAL HEALTH CARE

Omaha, Nebraska (August 31, 2006) --- On September 7-10, 2006, 40 leaders from across the United States involved in rural, interdisciplinary training of health professional students will gather at the *Leadership in Rural Health Interprofessional Education: A Working Conference for Leaders in Rural Health Care* in Denver, Colorado. The conference will focus on challenges and successful strategies in interprofessional education and practice in rural and underserved communities. This conference will take place on the campus of the University of Colorado at Denver and Health Sciences under the leadership of Dr. Gail Jensen, Dean of Creighton University's Graduate School; Dr. Charlotte Royeen, Dean of the Doisy College of Health Sciences at Saint Louis University; and Dr. Robin Harvan, Director of the Colorado Area Health Education Center (AHEC) System, University of Colorado Health Sciences. Drs. Teresa Cochran, Brenda Coppard, Ann Ryan-Haddad, Caroline Goulet, and Joy Voltz from Creighton's School of Pharmacy and Health Professions are core members of the conference planning team.

The conference is being coordinated by the Office of Interprofessional Scholarship, Service and Education (OISSE) within the School of Pharmacy and Health Professions and financially supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Grant #1D36HP03158 *Circles of Learning: Community and Clinic as Interdisciplinary Classroom*, a Quentin N. Burdick Interdisciplinary Training Project. OISSE has a long established history of rural, interdisciplinary training of health professional students and recognized the need to look across such programs to identify and implement best practices.

Conference participants will be presenting and discussing working papers relevant to interprofessional rural health education and practice to share and discuss with others in a variety of workgroups following major themes of interprofessional education and practice in rural and underserved areas. Nationally known speakers, including Hilda Heady, former president of the National Rural Health Association and Director of the West Virginia AHEC System; Dr. Ruth Purtilo, Director of the Ethics Initiative of the Massachusetts General Hospital Institute of Health Professions; Dr. Amy Haddad, Director of the Creighton University Center of Health Policy and Ethics; Dr. Barbara Brandt, Assistant Vice President for Education in the Academic Health Center at the University of Minnesota and Director of the Minnesota AHEC System; and Dr. Kevin Lyons, Associate Dean for Research from Thomas Jefferson University who has a long history with interprofessional student training, will energize the group and engage them in discussion in the importance of rural interprofessional education and practice.

The *Leadership in Rural Health Interprofessional Education: A Working Conference for Leaders in Rural Health Care* hopes to act as forum for leaders in interprofessional education and practice to discuss and plan for the future both impacting the health of rural communities and preparing health care professionals to take on the unique challenges of serving societal needs. For more on the Conference, please visit: <http://oisse.creighton.edu/institute.asp>.