

news release

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Winter Haven Hospital Foundation establishes endowed chair in nursing at Polk State College

WINTER HAVEN, FL – (September 28, 2010) – The Winter Haven Hospital Foundation has made a substantial donation to Polk State College to create an endowed chair in nursing at Polk State College. The hospital foundation’s contribution – combined with a state match – will underwrite a new teaching position at Polk State and augment the college’s recently announced decision to add a bachelor’s degree in nursing program.

Polk State will conduct a national search to find a candidate to fill the new position, said **Annette Hutcherson**, the college’s director of nursing. The new instructor will either have a doctoral degree in nursing or will be in the process of completing their PhD, Hutcherson said. Polk State College graduates about 150 nursing students a year.

Eric Adamson, chairman of the Winter Haven Hospital Foundation Board of Trustees, said the decision to fund an endowed chair reflects the hospital’s long-standing commitment to nursing and to inspiring individuals to take up the profession.

“For many years, we have funded scholarships for both hospital employees and for nursing students at Polk State College because we felt it was our responsibility to make sure that we have enough talented and skilled individuals to care for the patients that our hospital serves,” Adamson said. “Stepping up our commitment and establishing an endowed chair means that we are going to be able to grow opportunities in the health care profession, both for our community and for individuals seeking to advance their careers.”

Eileen Holden, Ed.D., president of Polk State College, said: “We are extremely grateful for Winter Haven Hospital’s staunch and ongoing support. Clearly, the hospital and its philanthropic supporters share our vision that this community must do its part to educate and prepare both future nurses and future leaders.”

Lance Anastasio, president and CEO of Winter Haven Hospital, said an endowed chair in nursing at Polk State College “will prove to be a valuable recruiting tool for

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attracting all types of healthcare professionals to our organization and this area.”

“Generally, talented people want to go where they feel they are valued, where they see a level of commitment and where they see opportunity for advancement,” Anastasio said. “Thanks to our foundation, we can easily demonstrate the level of support that we have. This will be perceived as significant not just to talented nurses, but to our medical staff and many other professionals as well.”

Joel Thomas, Vice President, Development Marketing and Public Relations for Winter Haven Hospital, said the Foundation encourages visionary philanthropic leaders who seek to invest in initiatives to fund educational opportunities for health care professionals.

“One thing we’ve learned over the past decade in awarding hundreds of thousands of dollars in aid to individuals and institutions is that there is no shortage of interest among students in pursuing careers in health care. The only limitation is the availability of access to the type of funds the Foundation provides,” Thomas said. “Clearly, it benefits everyone in our community if we can create more opportunity through philanthropic endeavors such as this.”

About the Winter Haven Hospital Foundation

The Winter Haven Hospital Foundation, Inc. is a not-for-profit charitable institution governed by a board of volunteer trustees who serve without pay. The Foundation cultivates philanthropic support to provide patients with state-of-the-art medical care, cutting-edge technology and equipment, top quality education, and the best and brightest personnel. The funds benefit the patients of Winter Haven Hospital, the Regency Center for Women & Infants, and many other health services of our growing community.

About Winter Haven Hospital

Established in 1926, Winter Haven Hospital serves as the major medical center for east Polk and Highlands counties and the U.S. Highway 27 / Ridge Corridor. The 527-bed hospital is a locally owned and operated not-for-profit organization. The hospital is fully accredited by the Joint Commission on accreditation for Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) and has more than 300 board-certified physicians on its medical staff representing every major specialty. Affiliated with the University of Florida College of Medicine/Shands Healthcare, Winter Haven Hospital also is the home of **Bostick Heart Center**, the **Cassidy Cancer Center**, the **Regency Center for Women and Infants**, a nationally accredited **Stroke Center** and the nationally accredited **Joy-Fuller Rehab Center**. In January, the hospital was recognized by the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) with the prestigious designation of Magnet status, recognition granted to only 5 percent of the nation’s hospitals. With more than 2,500 employees, Winter Haven Hospital is east Polk County’s largest private employer and has been recognized for three consecutive years by Polk Works Workforce 2020 as one of the county’s best places to work. For more information, please visit our Web site at www.winterhavenhospital.org.

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