

The Presbyterian Foundation for Philadelphia and NewCourtland Elder Services Create New \$1 Million Endowed Scholarship to Help Address the Nation's Nursing Shortage



- Kass Endowed Scholarship Awarded to the Gerontology Nurse Practitioner Master's Program at the University of Pennsylvania's School of Nursing -

PHILADELPHIA, March 29 /PRNewswire/ -- According to U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, more than one million new and replacement nurses will be needed by 2012. And across the country, there are approximately 100,000 vacant nursing positions in the long-term care industry. The Presbyterian Foundation for Philadelphia, and its subsidiary, NewCourtland Elder Services, a network of Philadelphia nursing homes, housing and programs for frail elders throughout Philadelphia, have announced the Kass Endowed Scholarship program to address the ever-present nursing shortage in today's long-term care industry. The Foundation recently awarded the \$1 million endowed scholarship to the Gerontology Nurse Practitioner (GNP) master's program at the University of Pennsylvania's School of Nursing, and it will work with the university to oversee the scholarship.

The Kass Scholarship matches the largest gerontological nursing student funding given to the University of Pennsylvania. The scholarship, named for the Foundation's and NewCourtland's current president and CEO, Gail Kass, will provide full tuition on an annual basis to eligible NewCourtland network employees, their children or grandchildren who are accepted to the program. Preference for awarding the scholarship will be given to NewCourtland network employees, their children or grandchildren; but in their absence from the qualified pool, the scholarship will be awarded to a new or current University of Pennsylvania student pursuing a degree in gerontological nursing. Upon completion of the program at the University of Pennsylvania, the Kass Scholarship recipient will fulfill a one-year work commitment in the NewCourtland network.

Established in 1983, the GNP program at the University of Pennsylvania is currently ranked #1 in the nation by U.S. News & World Report. The program's 16-month, full-time curriculum allows students to receive extensive clinical exposure while pursuing their coursework. The GNP program excels at training advanced-practice nurses for careers in aging, and it places 90 percent of its graduates in primary-care settings that include long-term care and home care.

"As the nation faces a nursing shortage, the School of Nursing is grateful for The Presbyterian Foundation's gift and for their investment in the best and brightest students in nursing," said Afaf I. Meleis, the Margaret Bond Simon Dean of Nursing at the University of Pennsylvania. "This wonderful partnership with the Foundation and NewCourtland will support Master's prepared nurses and advance the quality of care for frail elders in nursing homes, some of the most vulnerable patients in the healthcare system."

NewCourtland places an emphasis on continued education, particularly among its employees, and has made strides in addressing the nation's nursing shortage. In 1999, NewCourtland introduced the Ladder of Opportunity, a career and educational advancement program tailored for its network's staff. The program includes extensive and innovative in-house training conducted in classrooms and at the bedside, tuition assistance of up to \$2,000 annually, and a host of scholarship options aimed at financially supporting staff who have shown the initiative to advance their nursing careers.

As the Ladder of Opportunity program continued to grow, the need arose for

a large, centralized educational facility to accommodate its growing staff and programs. In 2004, NewCourtland opened its Education Center, an unprecedented state-of-the-art facility dedicated to the advancement of nursing education and issues related to the field of aging and long-term care.

Now, NewCourtland has been able to take it another step further and expand its educational offerings to include a scholarship program to one of the country's top universities.

"NewCourtland places an emphasis on affording the network staff the opportunity to expand their skills and knowledge throughout their career in the NewCourtland network. This benefits the staff personally and professionally, and also results in better care for the residents," said Kass. "We are so proud to be able to offer this scholarship in gerontological nursing at one of the best schools in the country."

About NewCourtland Elder Services

NewCourtland Elder Services is a subsidiary of The Presbyterian Foundation for Philadelphia, and serves the Philadelphia community by providing long-term care and innovative programs to over 1,600 frail elders, affordable housing resources to Philadelphia's elderly population and educational and growth opportunities to its more than 2,200 nursing home employees. NewCourtland offers a unique approach to the issues of long-term care through its partnership of caring with the staff in its homes. Each day staff in the homes - Care Pavilion, Cheltenham York Road, Cliveden, Germantown Home, Kearsley*, Maplewood Manor and Tucker House - work to improve the quality of care provided to the elders they serve.

*Managed by Courtland Management Services.

SOURCE NewCourtland Elder Services

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