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CONTACT: Chris Marschman, Communications Specialist, 608-261-6705

## Secretary Gassman Opens Center for Nursing Excellence

MADISON – Department of Workforce Development (DWD) Secretary Roberta Gassman celebrated the opening of the Center for Nursing Excellence in a ceremony today at their new location at 3001 Beltline Highway, in Madison.

"Wisconsin will soon have more jobs for Registered Nurses than we have people to fill them, and the state is working hard to fill this need by training more nurses," Secretary Gassman said. "We need more than 8,000 nurses every year for ten years to fill new jobs and replace health care workers who quit or retire. This new training and education center is a significant step in the right direction."

The center is a \$1.4 million initiative that provides a hands-on, real-life learning environment, without risk to patients or staff. The CNE can also produce live or delayed broadcast of simulation training and activities for use in the CNE's classrooms or throughout the region through e-learning opportunities.

In addition to private donations, the project was funded through a \$415,753 Healthcare Sector Grant and \$172,516 Innovation Grant from the South Central-Southwest Wisconsin WIRED Initiative. WIRED, Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development was implemented by the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration to support regional workforce and economic development and education. The Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development is responsible for administering the WIRED grant.

The Center for Nursing Excellence is an innovative approach to the:

- **Education and training of our region's future nurses.**  
The lab combines traditional clinical experience with simulation, exposing nursing students to broader, richer patient care experiences than can be assured through hospital clinical rotations alone.
- **Life-long learning environment for established nurses and other health care professionals (Emergency Medical Technicians, Respiratory Therapists, anesthetists)**  
The lab provides an environment that allows them to update their skills, maintain competency in low volume/high risk units or facilitate movement into new specializations.
- **Introduction of health careers to school aged students**  
The lab features the same interactive technologies that infuse their school and leisure activities.

Wisconsin is facing a nursing shortage that is unprecedented. This project uses shared resources to grow student enrollment by increasing clinical training sites and available classroom space. It will also improve nurse satisfaction and retention rates by addressing nurses' interest in life-long learning.