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Calbright College & SEIU-UHW Partner to Develop Licensed Vocational Nurse Training Program

Sacramento, California – Calbright College and the Service Employees International Union-United Healthcare Workers West (SEIU-UHW) have partnered to develop a training program in California for Licensed Vocational Nurses (LVN). The program will combine Calbright's competency-based statewide education model with SEIU-UHW's healthcare sector leadership to support an additional pipeline for essential healthcare workers amidst a growing need in every region.

"SEIU-UHW is committed to the State of California, frontline healthcare workers, and patients who seek affordable, accessible, and high-quality care," said Dave Regan, President of SEIU-UHW. "Partnering with Calbright to help train the next generation of healthcare providers is an innovative opportunity to support every region of this state, especially in fast-growing and historically underserved areas that require a greater capacity in their healthcare workforce."

The COVID-19 pandemic — paired with an aging workforce — is currently causing high turnover and frequent staffing shortages in hospitals and other patient care settings. These shortages reveal a pressing need for expanded training programs that are designed to future-proof the state's workforce needs. Highlighting this need are data from EMSI, a labor market information database, which showed that in 2021 there were 76,809 job postings in California for Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses. 2020 data from the California Employment Development Department Labor Market Information Database shows there was only a supply of roughly 5,490 qualified professionals to fill those roles. In addition, EMSI data indicates a 42% turnover rate amongst LVNs in California during 2020.

"Calbright College is thrilled to join SEIU-UHW in the development of this LVN training program and to advance and serve California's healthcare workforce," said Calbright President and CEO Ajita Talwalker Menon. "As the state's only fully online community college, our competency-based education model is designed to reach adult learners — especially those in communities underrepresented in higher education — and to create innovative programs that support their goals and the state's changing workforce needs."

Governor Newsom's preliminary budget also spotlights the exigent need for an expanded LVN pipeline, dedicating $270 million in General Fund dollars for a Comprehensive Nursing Initiative.

The Initiative seeks to increase the number of registered nurses, licensed vocational nurses, certified nursing assistants, certified nurse midwives, certified medical assistants, family nurse practitioners, and other professional health positions.

A letter of intent for the 12-month hybrid program was submitted to the California Board for Vocational Nursing and Psychiatric Technicians in early January 2022. Calbright and SEIU-UHW will work toward final program design in the months ahead, which will have a capacity of roughly 100 students once fully launched. Calbright will provide the online competency-based theory coursework, and in-person clinical experience will take place at SEIU-UHW clinical sites across the state.

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Calbright was established by state law late in 2018 as California's first wholly online community college designed to meet the needs of working learners. Its mission is to help millions of low-income and disadvantaged Californians move up the economic ladder by improving their job skills through flexible competency-based education. Learn more at www.calbright.org.

SEIU-United Healthcare Workers West (SEIU-UHW) is a healthcare justice union of more than 100,000 healthcare workers, patients, and healthcare activists united to ensure affordable, accessible, high-quality care for all Californians, provided by valued and respected healthcare workers. Learn more at www.seiu-uhw.org.