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THE TOMÁS RIVERA POLICY INSTITUTE PRESENTS RECOMMENDATIONS TO ALLEVIATE SHORTAGE OF NURSES, IMPROVE MINORITY HEALTH CARE AT UPCOMING NURSING CONFERENCE

Preventing obstacles that deter Latinos from entering nursing profession can boost health care workers and curtail disparities in treatment

Los Angeles, CA - California is suffering a critical nursing shortage that could be mitigated by more minorities stepping into the field, in turn elevating the standard of care for minority patients, experts say.

A recent study by the Tomás Rivera Policy Institute (TRPI) at the University of Southern California School of Policy, Planning, and Development examined roadblocks to Latinos entering the profession and also explored successful methods used by nursing programs in California to attract and keep Latino students.

On Wednesday, July 18, study author Hayley Buchbinder, MPP, MPH, will present the study's key findings and recommendations on how and why to draw more Latinos into nursing. The presentation will commence at 9:20 a.m. at the 32nd annual National Association of Hispanic Nurses Conference at the Pacific Palms Conference Resort in Industry Hills, Calif.

Analysis and findings of the TRPI study raise compelling points about why Latinos bypass the field of nursing. The project also explores how more minorities working as nurses would improve health care for underserved minority patients.

"Having more Latinos in nursing would address both our state's nursing shortage as well as many of the

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disparities in the health care for our increasingly diverse communities," Ms. Buchbinder said. "The students I interviewed had to overcome incredible challenges in order to become a nurse. By acknowledging and addressing these barriers we can train many more Californians to become dedicated and caring nurses."

Experts in the field, Latino nurses and students all contributed to results that will resonate with anyone concerned about the overall quality of health care in California. The recommendations and future mandates, based on an analysis of successful methods, will prove practical and applicable to health care organizations, educational institutions, and state policymakers.

"Despite innovative and dedicated nursing programs, many barriers remain," TRPI President and CEO Dr. Harry P. Pachon said. "What is important today is that we can increase the number of Latinos in the nursing workforce by understanding those barriers and learning from best practices."

Ms. Buchbinder's presentation at the conference, made possible by a grant from AstraZeneca Pharmaceuticals, is based on a study which was funded by the California Wellness Foundation and released in April 2007. A complete, free PDF of the full report that informed this presentation can be accessed at <http://www.trpi.org/PDFs/nursing.pdf>.

About TRPI

Founded in 1985, the Tomás Rivera Policy Institute (TRPI) advances informed policy on key issues affecting Latino communities through objective and timely research contributing to the betterment of the nation. TRPI is an affiliated research unit of the University of Southern California School of Policy, Planning, and Development and is associated with the Institute for Social and Economic Research and Policy at Columbia University.

Website: <http://www.trpi.org>