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[www.nurseschangelives.com](http://www.nurseschangelives.com)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **NURSESCHANGELIVES.COM AIMS TO STOP STATE'S NURSING SHORTAGE**

RICHMOND, VA (NOVEMBER 7, 2002)—Today a coalition of statewide funders from private and public health care systems and organizations announced the launch of the Virginia Partnership for Nursing's campaign, "Nurses Change Lives." The Web site [www.nurseschangelives.com](http://www.nurseschangelives.com) and all collateral materials including posters with comic book characters depicting nurses and their healing powers are designed to engage and encourage K-12 students to pursue and discover nursing as a career adventure. Students interested in discovering nursing as a career may also call a toll free number 866-VPN CHAT for more information and to order posters.

Nurses Change Lives is VPN's response to the Virginia Study of Nursing and the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration's estimate of the shortage which puts Virginia's nursing workforce at 15% below demand by 2005. A public health crisis could be created with Virginia at 39th in the nation for nurse to patient populations.

The Nurses Change Lives' campaign seeks to inspire all K-12 students to consider a career in nursing. The campaign is a result of support provided by individual hospitals, health systems and nursing and health care organizations from across Virginia.

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Four different posters targeting specific age groups have been created for distribution to elementary, middle school and high school students across the state to encourage interest in nursing as a career choice. "We ask all nursing administrators, hospitals, health systems and nursing organizations to post the materials in high-traffic areas such as patient waiting rooms, hallways, cafeteria and doctor's offices, so that students can become aware they can change lives too," said Dr. JoAnne Henry, co-director of VPN.

In addition, a network of nurses will be developed to provide education about nursing opportunities. Nurses will recruit young people and share the value the profession offers as a career path. "This recruitment campaign is critical to ensure appropriate nursing resources to care for the people of the Commonwealth," said Shirley Tate Gibson, co-director of VPN.

All elements of the nurse recruitment campaign were created by the Richmond branch of Bernard Hodes Group, a recruitment communications and staffing solutions company. After conducting many hours of pro bono research the message strategy and visuals used throughout the "Nurses Change Lives" campaign were created to reach out to kids age 5 and up. The focus groups asked boys and girls ranging from the kindergarten through high school in public schools, churches, YMCAs, bilingual soccer and baseball leagues about their perceptions of nurses and their work.

#### **About the Virginia Partnership for Nursing (VPN)**

Established in 1998, The Virginia Partnership for Nursing is a statewide nursing workforce initiative and part of the Colleagues in Caring Initiative funded through the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. VPN was created in response to the federal and state estimates of a nursing shortage, which may eventually lead to a shortage in the workforce at 36% below demand by 2020. VPN's mission is to build commitment and capacity to transform health care by creating a nursing workforce responsive to consumer health care needs.

#### **About Bernard Hodes Group Inc.**

As a fully integrated recruitment communications and staffing solutions provider, Bernard Hodes Group (<http://www.hodes.com>) offers solutions to clients in the human resources industry. These solutions include advertising, e-recruiting technologies such as Hodes iQ ([www.hodesiQ.com](http://www.hodesiQ.com)), consulting, media planning and employer branding, assessments and metrics, research, resume sourcing, Web development, outsourcing and more. The company is headquartered in New York City, with over 70 offices and affiliates around the globe. Bernard Hodes Group is a subsidiary of the Ominicom Group (NYSE: OMC), one of the world's largest communication groups.

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