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## **Health Professionals Initiative Extended at AASU**

Savannah, GA—August 3, 2004—Armstrong Atlantic State University (AASU) will continue to play a role in the extension of a statewide program to educate more critically needed healthcare professionals.

The University System of Georgia has announced Phase Two of the Georgia Board of Regents' Intellectual Capital Partnership (ICAPP®) Health Professionals Initiative. The \$3.8 million statewide initiative is expected to produce more than 700 nurses and other healthcare specialists over the next two years. AASU is projected to graduate 200 new nurses, 38 imaging professionals, and 28 medical technologists during that timeframe.

During its first year, Phase Two of the initiative will leverage the \$2.05 million state commitment with \$1.75 million in cash and in-kind support from 26 private-employer partners charged with guaranteeing the program graduates jobs. Twelve University System institutions—including Armstrong Atlantic—are participating in Phase Two.

Three hospitals serving the southeast Georgia counties of Bryan, Camden, Chatham, Effingham, Glynn, Liberty, and McIntosh have made both financial and hiring commitments to the program. Memorial Health University Medical Center and St. Joseph's/Candler in Savannah and Southeast Georgia Health System in Brunswick have, collectively, agreed to hire 266 graduates over the next two years.

“We are fortunate to have strong partnerships with these three hospitals to address the healthcare workforce needs of coastal Georgia,” said Barry S. Eckert, Ph.D., dean of the College of Health Professions. “The generous support from the board of regents, in the form of ICAPP®, strengthens those partnerships and increases our ability to improve the delivery of excellent healthcare in the region.”

ICAPP® will fund Phase Two of the Health Professionals Initiative in southeast Georgia in the amount of \$266,489. Regional employers are supporting the initiative with an investment of \$630,000. The projected annual income tax revenue to the state of the Armstrong Atlantic component of the initiative is \$552,960.

### **Office of University Relations**

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**Phase One**

During the first two years of the ICAPP® Health Professionals Initiative, AASU received funding in two areas for the preparation of healthcare professionals. One of the areas was in nursing and the other—partnering with the Medical College of Georgia (MCG)—was for medical technologists. Statewide, 632 licensed healthcare professionals—including 38 nurses and three medical technologists from the AASU College of Health Professions and three medical technologists from the Medical College of Georgia—are being produced through customized University System “fast-track programs”—far exceeding the original goal of 500 new graduates.

Healthcare facilities with hiring commitments to the first phase of the initiative included Archbold Medical Center in Thomasville, Memorial Health University Medical Center, Phoebe Putney Memorial Hospital in Albany, and St. Joseph’s/Candler.

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