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Press Contact: Martin Brown
804.874.6706

Univ. of Virginia and Univ. of Richmond join Dr. Louis Sullivan, and University Consortium to Increase Number of Minority Health Care Professionals

Richmond: Dr. Louis Sullivan, former Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and President Emeritus of Morehouse Medical Center announced today that the University of Virginia and University of Richmond are joining the Virginia-Nebraska Alliance; an alliance of colleges and universities specifically created to increase the number of minority health care professionals in Virginia.

The Virginia-Nebraska Alliance is a collaborative academic consortium between Hampton University, J. Sargent Reynolds Community College, Norfolk State University, The University of Nebraska, Virginia Commonwealth University, Virginia State University, Virginia Union University, and St. Paul's College, to identify and cultivate talented minority students and faculty for the pursuit of clinical or investigatory careers in the health and biomedical sciences.

The 2005 cohort of summer fellows included 14 student and faculty from the Virginia Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). Each student or faculty member participated in summer research fellowships at Virginia Commonwealth University Medical Center and the University of Nebraska Medical Center.

The University of Virginia has operated an academic enrichment program for pre-medical students since 1984, and UVA has committed up to 80 slots in 2006 for students coming from Virginia HBCUs to enter this program. The program is designed to give promising pre-medical students the opportunity for additional educational experiences, exposure to clinical and research environments, and to improve their competitiveness in the medical school application process and to enhance their retention in medical school.

The University of Richmond is providing MCAT preparation for 10 HBCU undergraduates (2 from each Virginia HBCU). The program will prepare the students for the MCAT will also providing them with summer stipends, and associated costs.

Along with these new partners, the Alliance expects to triple the number of students and faculty fellowships in 2006.

Organizational Contacts:

Virginia-Nebraska Alliance:	Terone Green	(804) 840.2238
University of Virginia:	Dr. Norm Oliver	(434) 982.1754
University of Richmond:	Dr. Kirk Jonas	(804) 484-1565

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