The School of Nursing has received funding for the fourth year in a row from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's (RWJF) New Careers in Nursing (NCIN) Scholarship Program to support the enrollment of students who are traditionally underrepresented in the field of nursing.

The NCIN Scholarship Program was launched in 2008 by the RWJF and the American Association of Colleges of Nursing to address the national nursing shortage, develop a diverse professional nursing workforce reflective of the U.S. population, and fuel the pipeline of nurse faculty and leaders. This year the school received $150,000 to fund $10,000 scholarships for 15 students enrolled in the school’s Accelerated Program for Non-Nurses (APNN). Since 2008, the NCIN has supported 53 APNN scholars. The school is one of only 19 nursing schools in the country to receive this level of funding for all four years.

The APNN builds upon students’ existing degrees in other fields by providing generalist nursing studies that qualify students for nursing licensing exams. It offers an efficient route to licensure as a registered nurse for adults who have already completed an undergraduate degree in another field. The program began in May 2002 with 22 students and today enrolls more than 168 students. To accommodate this interest, the school expanded in 2011 to include three cohort admission cycles. While the number of applicants to the APNN has increased dramatically over the years, students who already hold degrees in other fields are often disqualified from receiving federal financial aid for entry-level programs. The RWJF NCIN initiative not only addresses this issue but also specifically supports the enrollment of students from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds.

“The men and women entering this program from across the country bring rich life experiences and valuable cultural perspectives to our profession,” says Kathy Rideout, interim dean and associate dean for academic affairs at the School of Nursing. “This award makes it possible for our most deserving students to attend and for our school to play a role in preparing a diverse national nursing workforce for the future.”

Rideout notes that NCIN funding has been used by the school to help leverage new faculty resources and ensure successful program completion by scholarship recipients. This year’s grant also will strengthen the tailored mentoring program that was initiated for awardees, enrich students’ leadership opportunities, and expand the program’s academic services.

“We have taken the leadership content developed as a result of previous years’ awards and incorporated it into our current program so that all of our students benefit from the support of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation,” Rideout says.

Scholarship details, application procedures, and deadlines are available on the School of Nursing website: www.son.rochester.edu. Prospective students may call (585) 275-2375 for more information.