



July 29, 2003

Contact: Lisa A. Fellers  
Director of Communications  
Office: (817) 531-4498  
Cell: (817) 874-8683  
lfellers@txwes.edu

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Texas Wesleyan University's nurse anesthesia facility  
addresses critical shortage in medical field**

FORT WORTH, July 29 – The new facility for the Texas Wesleyan Graduate Program of Nurse Anesthesia (GPNA), the largest such program in the nation, addresses a critical shortage of Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (CRNAs) throughout the country.

The new \$2.4 million facility will increase student capacity in the highly competitive Wesleyan program to 180, up from about 100 students in the program, which receives more than twice that number of applications each year.

The building houses a patient simulator laboratory, a lecture hall, administrative offices and classrooms. The lecture hall was one of the motivating factors in constructing a new facility and has an interactive videoconferencing system that lets students at nine clinical sites participate in class discussions. At the clinical sites, located in Texas, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, North Dakota and Oregon, Wesleyan graduate nurse anesthesia students receive 16 months of hands-on hospital training after completing their first-year coursework.

-more-

July 29 – GPNA Addresses Critical Shortage, page 2.

John Martin, director of the program, said, “President Hal Jeffcoat and other University administration promised a few years ago to nurture our GPNA program with this new building, and they have been highly committed to keeping that promise.”

Not only is the University’s GPNA program the largest in the nation, it also boasts one of the most impressive pass rates of graduates taking the National Certification Examination to become Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists. Beginning with the first graduating class in 1984, 100 percent of Wesleyan graduates from the nurse anesthesia program through the graduating class of 2001 have passed the exam. (Statistics for the graduating class of 2002 are not available.)

“We are glad to be the largest program in the United States, but we are more proud to be known nationally for the quality of our graduates,” Martin said.

Martin’s admiration for Wesleyan’s CRNA graduates is evident. He tells of David Farmer, a nurse anesthetist who stepped in during the delivery of a baby and saved the mother’s life. The mother, a nurse herself, was so impressed that she soon enrolled at Wesleyan and became a CRNA.

The tuition of student Steve Davis in the GPNA was paid through the Rural Health Initiative, and Davis now gives back to his community by working in two hospitals, one in Childress and the other in Altus, Oklahoma. A married couple who works at separate hospitals has enrolled in the program together, and another female student who holds a doctorate in physiology has come back to school for the Wesleyan nurse anesthesia program.

The new facility is located at the corner of 1000 Wesleyan St. and Avenue B and will be dedicated Aug. 21.

###