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Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

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THE FOUNDATION

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## **The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and Hitachi Foundation Receive Council on Foundations 2010 Critical Impact Award**

**DENVER, April 27, 2010** – The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) and The Hitachi Foundation today received the Critical Impact Award during the annual conference of the Council on Foundations. The two foundations collaborated on the launch and support of a national initiative that addresses the needs of low wage health care workers while inspiring innovations in job training, career advancement and health care delivery. The Critical Impact Award honors RWJF and The Hitachi Foundation for making a difference in their grantmaking while providing an example of how philanthropy seeks to enhance the common good.

*Jobs to Careers: Promoting Work-Based Learning for Quality Care* supports 17 partnerships of employers, educational institutions and other community based organizations. The partnerships focus on creating systems to advance and reward the skill and career development of frontline health and health care workers. The \$15.3 million initiative is managed by Boston-based Jobs for the Future and is also supported by the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment & Training Administration.

“The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation has a long history of investing in the people that comprise the health and health care workforce. Skilled frontline workers are an essential element in the equation of quality health care for everyone,” noted Risa Lavizzo-Mourey, M.D., M.B.A., president and CEO.

“Frontline workers compose the majority of all health care workers and have more contact with patients than any other sector of the health care work force. The rewards of career training and opportunity extend far beyond the frontline workers to employers, health care institutions and the clients they serve. Jobs to Careers answers two of the most pivotal demands for our nation’s economic recovery: sustainable employment and health reform,” Lavizzo-Mourey concluded.

“As the heated health care debate dominated the nation, these sites -- representing everything from community clinics to long-term care to acute care hospitals -- were working hard to create solutions,” said Barbara Dyer, president and CEO, The Hitachi Foundation. “Ultimately, quality, affordable care cannot be achieved without skilled workers and effective workplaces. These sites are developing work-based learning approaches applicable to the millions of men and women working on the front lines; providing them not merely jobs, but meaningful careers.”

More than six million people work in frontline occupations. Collectively this segment is growing faster (32.6%) than the growth rate of all health and health care occupations (28.3%), and significantly faster than the growth rate for all occupations (14.8%) in the United States workforce,

according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. One-third of frontline workers are part of a racial minority (18 percent African American, 10 percent Hispanic and 4 percent Asian) and 79 percent of the workforce is female. Their ranks include but are not limited to medical assistants, health educators, laboratory technicians, substance abuse counselors, and home health aides.

Jobs to Careers' grantee projects have produced returns for employers and created career path opportunities for an estimated 726 workers over the past four years.

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***Robert Wood Johnson Foundation** focuses on the pressing health and health care issues facing our country. As the nation's largest philanthropy devoted exclusively to improving the health and health care of all Americans, the Foundation works with a diverse group of organizations and individuals to identify solutions and achieve comprehensive, meaningful and timely change. For more information, visit [www.rwjf.org](http://www.rwjf.org).*

***Jobs for the Future** identifies, develops, and promotes new education and workforce strategies that help communities, states, and the nation compete in a global economy. In nearly 200 communities in 41 states, JFF improves the pathways leading from high school to college to family-sustaining careers. For more information visit <http://www.jff.org> or follow JFF on <http://www.twitter/jfftweets>.*

***The Hitachi Foundation** is an independent nonprofit philanthropic organization established by Hitachi, Ltd. in 1985. The Foundation's mission is to forge an authentic integration of business actions and societal wellbeing in North America. For more information, visit [www.hitachifoundation.org](http://www.hitachifoundation.org).*

***The Council on Foundations** is a national nonprofit association of approximately 2,000 grantmaking foundations and corporations. For more information, visit [www.cof.org](http://www.cof.org).*