FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Program Contact: Elaine Tagliareni
212-812-0333; etagliareni@nln.org

Press Contact: Karen R. Klestzick
212-812-0376; kklestzick@nln.org

NLN Partners with MetLife Foundation to Enhance Geriatric Education for Care of Alzheimer's Patients and Caregivers

Grant Will Facilitate Creation of Specialized Alzheimer's Curricula for NLN Advancing Care Excellence for Seniors (ACES) Program

New York, NY — February 1, 2013 — Between 5.6 and 8 million — nearly one in five — older Americans suffer from at least one illness affecting mental health, according to an alarming report released last year by the Institute of Medicine, *The Mental Health and Substance Use Workforce for Older Adults: In Whose Hands?*. Among these debilitating cognitive/emotional conditions is Alzheimer’s disease, a diagnosis often accompanied by multiple physical impairments and psycho/social co-morbidities that occur during a period of life transition. Today, however, too few health care professionals, nurses included, are adequately equipped to handle the unique challenges of caring for this frail, vulnerable population, one bound to grow as Baby Boomers age.

To address this worrying gap in nursing education and clinical practice by the nursing workforce on the frontline of primary care for seniors, the National League for Nursing will create specialized curricula and resources for the NLN’s nationally recognized signature program in geriatrics education: ACES (Advancing Care Excellence for Seniors). With a $125,000 grant from MetLife Foundation to the NLN Foundation for Nursing Education, funds will be used in 2013 to develop three inter-professional teaching strategies and three unfolding web-based case studies for ACES.

Related simulations, also to be developed as part of the new project, will provide faculty with classroom-ready templates for instruction and guidelines for integrating new knowledge into the core curriculum. In addition, the unfolding case studies and related simulations will highlight complex health care situations experienced by Alzheimer's patients and their families, presenting students with opportunities to think and act in ‘real time,’ using evidence-based nursing assessment and intervention strategies.

“By adding specialized curriculum resources for teaching about care of patients with Alzheimer’s disease and their caregivers, the NLN will be an important resource for faculty to train students in rehabilitation, health
promotion, health care, and social service referral for the specialized care of older adults with cognitive impairments, specifically Alzheimer’s disease,” asserted NLN president Judith A. Halstead, PhD, RN, FAAN, ANEF.

Added NLN CEO Beverly Malone, PhD, RN, FAAN, “MetLife Foundation’s commitment to empower people to lead healthy, productive lives and strengthen communities complements the NLN’s mission of promoting excellence in nursing education to build a strong and diverse workforce to advance the nation’s health.” “We are pleased to support this initiative to develop new resources to enhance care for those with Alzheimer’s,” said Dennis White, president and CEO, MetLife Foundation. “These tools will help health professionals be better prepared to handle the unique challenges of caring for older adults needing specialized care.”

With its long history of grant-funded initiatives, specifically in geriatric nursing education, the NLN is well positioned to have a dynamic, lasting impact on the field.

From 1986 to 1993, NLN was a lead organization for the administration of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation Community College-Nursing Home Partnership, a national project designed to integrate gerontological content into associate degree nursing programs, where the main focus was on care of the elderly in nursing homes.

ACES was conceived in 2009 in what was then the second phase of an ambitious NLN partnership with Community College of Philadelphia to improve the quality of care for older adults and their caregivers through enhanced geriatrics nursing education in both associate and bachelor’s degree pre-licensure programs. The endeavor, initially seeded with a grant from the John A. Hartford Foundation in 2007, was subsequently also backed by Laerdal Medical Corp.; the Hearst Foundations; the Independence Foundation (Philadelphia); and the Independence Blue Cross Foundation of Southeast Pennsylvania. ACES has since expanded to become the go-to website for faculty seeking curriculum-rich case studies, simulations, and implementation-ready teaching strategies. Resources are available free of charge at www.nln.org/ACES.

For more information about the program, contact NLN chief program officer Elaine Tagliareni at 212-812-0333 or etagliareni@nln.org.

Dedicated to excellence in nursing, the National League for Nursing is the premier organization for nurse faculty and leaders in nursing education. The NLN offers faculty development, networking opportunities, testing services, nursing research grants, and public policy initiatives to its 37,000 individual and more than 1,200 institutional members, comprising nursing education programs across the spectrum of higher education and health care organizations.

MetLife Foundation was established in 1976 to continue MetLife’s longstanding tradition of corporate contributions and community involvement. The foundation’s commitment to building a secure future for individuals and communities worldwide is reflected in its dedication to empowering older adults, preparing young people, and building livable communities. Since it was established, MetLife Foundation has provided more than $330 million in grants and $70 million in program-related investments to nonprofit organizations addressing issues that have a positive impact in their communities. For more information, visit www.metlife.org.