

NEWS RELEASE

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EDITOR'S NOTE: For more information about the Heldrich Center, contact Carl Van Horn, 732-932-4100, ext. 6305, or vanhorn@rci.rutgers.edu, or Jeffrey Stoller, 732-932-4100, ext. 6311, or jstoller@rci.rutgers.edu.

ROBERT WOOD JOHNSON FOUNDATION AWARDS A \$3 MILLION GRANT TO THE JOHN J. HELDRICH CENTER FOR WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

New Brunswick, N.J. – The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation has awarded a \$3 million grant to the John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development to honor the lifetime service of John Heldrich, President Richard L. McCormick of Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, announced today. Heldrich, a former Johnson & Johnson executive, was the founding chair of New Jersey's State Employment and Training Commission and led the revitalization of New Brunswick as chair of New Brunswick Tomorrow.

"Rutgers is extremely proud of John Heldrich and the work of the Heldrich Center for Workforce Development," said McCormick. "In its first decade, the center has established itself as a valuable national resource. What better way to cap the Heldrich Center's 10th anniversary than by honoring the center and John with this tremendous vote of confidence from one of America's great foundations."

The Heldrich Center, part of Rutgers' Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy, will use income from the endowment provided by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to conduct independent research on innovative solutions to workforce problems. One of the nation's leading university-based research centers dedicated to strengthening the American workforce, the center was established in 1997 with a generous gift from Heldrich, a 1950 Rutgers graduate from University College-New Brunswick, and his wife, Regina, who graduated from Rutgers' Douglass College in 1942.

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“This outstanding gift from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation will advance the priorities championed by John J. Heldrich throughout his long career as a health industry executive and New Jersey civic leader,” said Carl Van Horn, professor and director of the Heldrich Center. “The foundation’s strategic goal of ‘Building Human Capital’ has never been more crucial to the country’s economic future.”

Heldrich, who chairs the center’s National Advisory Board, remarked, “I am deeply grateful to have the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation as a partner in our efforts to help working people and business succeed in the dynamic global economy.”

Specifically, the RWJ Foundation grant will support the following center initiatives:

- establish business and education partnerships nationwide that match qualified workers to critical jobs in vital U.S. industry sectors, including health care;
- expand the center’s acclaimed national *Work Trends* surveys of American workers and employers; and
- increase the education of policy leaders who will carry on Heldrich’s commitment to community health and prosperity through improved education and workforce development services for all individuals.

Since its inception, the Heldrich Center has engaged in more than 200 major projects funded by corporations, federal and state government agencies, and foundations, and published more than 100 research reports. Its faculty and professional staff have won national recognition for rigorous research and for developing practical solutions to employment and workforce problems. With enhanced endowment support, the center will be able to explore additional education and workforce options for workers with special challenges, including older workers, those with disabilities, low-income earners and immigrants.

“With our commitment to impact public policy through sound research, the Bloustein School is proud of the work performed by the Heldrich Center to improve workforce development,” said Bloustein School Dean James W. Hughes. “Through this generous funding, the Heldrich Center will continue to produce high-quality research and policy that makes a difference in our quality of life.”

The 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 than 35 years, the foundation has brought experience, commitment and a rigorous, balanced approach to the problems that affect the health and health care of those it serves. When it comes to helping Americans lead healthier lives and get the care they need, the foundation expects to make a difference in your lifetime. For more information, visit www.rwjf.org.

The Heldrich Center, celebrating its 10th year, will soon be moving into a new state-of-the-art research and conference center in downtown New Brunswick. The facility features conference space, focus groups rooms and an advanced videoconference center.

For more about the Heldrich Center's research and initiatives, visit www.heldrich.rutgers.edu.

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