

**Sisters of Mercy Health System Announces
System-wide Implementation of School at Work®**

Career Development System Helps Lowest-Paid Co-workers Develop Advancement Skills

March 18, 2008— The Sisters of Mercy Health System (Mercy) has expanded use of Catalyst Learning's career development program, School at Work (SAW), to all regions where Mercy sponsors hospital-based healthcare services, encompassing 18 hospitals in four states.

SAW helps Mercy co-workers working in lowest-paid positions by preparing them for better paying positions within healthcare. The program uses coach-based mentoring and teaching, as well as computer training with Internet and DVD technology, and allows co-workers to attend school while at work. Students attend classes at work and complete an individualized career and learning plan, with the help of an advisor. SAW strengthens basic skills, teaches or enhances computer skills and introduces students to medical terminology, anatomy and physiology.

Tony Kinslow, Mercy Vice President of Human Resources, says, "SAW is a leading best practice in the healthcare industry to develop internal talent, and we are proud to offer our co-workers the personal and professional growth opportunities which accompany successful completion of the SAW program."

St. John's Health System in Springfield, Missouri, which includes one of Mercy's largest hospitals, has successfully used SAW for the last two years. The program has resulted in increased diversity, retention and loyalty. SAW also positions St. John's as an employer of choice, says Jim Brookhart, Vice President of Human Resources.

"We believe that not only is SAW consistent with our values of stewardship and justice, but it also makes good business sense in a tight labor market for St. John's to help our co-workers achieve career growth and income growth within the organization," Brookhart states.

Participants in St. John's SAW program frequently use the program for college preparation, subsequently enrolling in a local community college for healthcare certificate and degree programs. One such example is Brenda Compton who worked in housekeeping at St. John's for five years. Recently promoted to nurse assistant and enrolled in a community college nursing program, Brenda's ultimate goal is to become an RN. She says, "SAW literally changed my life. I can learn new things and compete with the younger generation. I have a new outlook on life. I believe that SAW is the reason I got my new position – it made my resume stand out from everyone else's."

Sister Mary Roch Rocklage, RSM, FACHE, chair of Mercy's Sponsor Council, notes, "The Sisters of Mercy are very pleased and grateful that our health ministry is offering SAW. The program is true to the foundation and abiding concerns of the Sisters of Mercy, which include education and meeting the special needs of people who are most at risk and marginalized. SAW is a relevant response to the concerns of the Sisters of Mercy."

Catalyst Learning works with over 350 hospitals in 40 states, including a number of other Catholic healthcare systems and hospitals. Since 2002, School at Work has provided career path solutions to nearly 6,500 students.

Lynn Fischer, President and Founder of Catalyst Learning Company, states, "By using SAW, Mercy is applying the Catholic health tradition of justice in supporting the needs of employees who are often overlooked. We are honored to be a part of the Mercy's effort to increase education and upward mobility for its entry-level co-workers."

About Sisters of Mercy

The Sisters of Mercy Health System is committed to living out a service theme of "making a difference by touching lives." The system operates hospitals, physician practices, outpatient clinics, health plans and related health and human services in a seven-state area including Arkansas, Kansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Oklahoma and Texas. Its members include 18 acute care hospitals providing more than 4,000 licensed beds, two heart hospitals, a managed care subsidiary (Mercy Health Plans), physician practices, outpatient care facilities, home health programs, skilled nursing services and long-term care facilities. Services are provided by approximately 30,000 co-workers and 4,000 physicians who are employed or practice at Mercy facilities. Mercy is the 9th largest Catholic healthcare system in the U.S. based on net patient service revenue and is sponsored by the Sisters of Mercy–St. Louis Regional Community.

About Catalyst Learning Company

Catalyst Learning Company, a workforce development company based in Louisville, Ky., developed and markets School at Work® and Expanding your Career and Healthcare Opportunities™. SAW and ECHO are career development systems for entry and mid-level employees. The programs use a blended learning model, involving small classrooms onsite, Internet and DVD technology, peer discussion and personal coaching. Catalyst Learning's vision is to dramatically increase the number of hard-working adults who are able to achieve the American dream.