



# SCHOOL AT WORK GROWING WITHIN CHI

Catholic Health Initiatives (CHI) is renowned for its focus on commitment to enabling all employees to reach their fullest potential by providing meaningful, rewarding work, ensuring a safe, supportive work environment, providing the opportunity to learn and grow, encouraging innovation and achievement, recognizing contributions and celebrating our shared successes and supporting a healthy balance of work and personal lives.

CHI hospitals are seeing the benefits of investing in their entry-level workers with help from the School at Work (SAW) "Building a Career Ladder in Healthcare" program! The following organizations are School at Work users: Tri-Health – Bethesda North, St. Joseph Hospital, Sts. Mary & Elizabeth Hospital (formerly Caritas Medical Center), Our Lady of Peace (formerly Caritas Peace Center), Mercy Medical, and St. Elizabeth's Hospital.

## Perfect Fit: SAW & CHI Mission and Community of Choice Covenant

"School At Work fits very well with the CHI Mission and Community of Choice Covenant. What we are doing with School At Work is taking our star performers and giving them the opportunity to shine where they shine best. We take our good employees...we're helping them to dream. They realize that they have what it takes to follow those dreams" says Jim Hansel, Vice President of Mission and Human Resources and SAW Coach, Mercy Medical Center in Williston, ND. "Our SAW student/employees feel empowered, they are gaining knowledge and they feel set apart. Through SAW we are helping to create a healthier community. We are a strong advocate for creating a more valuable citizen and parent. An RN license means working one job instead of two or three. And where else can you do college prep for 10 people for \$5000?"

As a member of the first SAW class at Mercy Medical (which began in July 2005), employee Jim Goebel benefits from the commitment made by his employer. "SAW has helped me to communicate



*Coach Jim Hansel and 2005 SAW Students at Mercy Medical*

better. I'm really good at math, but I didn't think I was good in grammar. Jim Hansel really encouraged me, noticing things like my improving keyboarding skills. SAW helped me get back to what I knew in high school, getting my intelligence back up. My verbal and written skills have improved. Long term, I'm looking for a hands-on position as a pastoral counselor. I can help people better because I can express myself better."

"For all of our SAW students, to see the extra amount of time they put into homework, to see the gains in the overall morale of the groups...there are no dips" says Hansel. "No one says "I can't do this" anymore. Jim Goebel excels in math, Kristy Snyder helps her co-workers right and left, Diana Lund, a grandmother, is the first one there and the last one still working. Her goals are not just for herself, but also for her kids so they can see that "everything is possible."

***"Through SAW we are helping to create a healthier community...creating a more valuable citizen and parent ...where else can you do college prep for 10 people for \$5000?"***

***Coach Jim Hansel, Mercy Medical***

## Change in Job Performance “Remarkable” for St. Joseph SAW Student

“I would never have gone for continuing education if it had not been for the School At Work experience” says SAW graduate Cleo Warren, St. Joseph Hospital. Warren, who has been a nurse aide for 23 years is currently enrolled at Bluegrass Technical to become a surgical tech. After going through the SAW program, the continuing education is “challenging and fun, I made it through microbiology with a B (Warren currently maintains a 3.0 GPA)”. Warren is “a different person” since the SAW program according to Brenda Harris, SAW Coach and Education Specialist/Technology. Harris comments that when Warren first entered the SAW



*Cleo Warren (front row – 2<sup>nd</sup> from right) and St. Joseph SAW classmates on a field trip to X-Ray prior to graduation*

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***Cleo Warren, St. Joseph Hospital***

program, she had no confidence in her ability to go back to school or pursue her goals. “She was shy, distant, showed no eye contact. I showed her that I cared about her, that I wanted her to succeed.”

According to Harris the feedback from Warren’s manager is that the change in her job performance is “remarkable; she is outgoing, her overall communication with patients has improved, she has really blossomed and she is there to serve”. Warren agrees, noting that she “used to be shy, now I’m more talkative with the patients, not making them feel like I’m too busy to give them a minute and I’m more confident to handle situations myself.”

Harris affirms that St. Joseph’s is “really big on customer satisfaction. There is a difference in associate satisfaction when they are happy with themselves, they are going to be a better employee. Interpersonal skills improve, stress management improves, all around professionalism improves.” As for Warren, Harris believes “the compassion was always there in her, it just needed to be set free.”

## St. Elizabeth’s Hospital – Not Just a Place to Work for SAW Students

“Before the School At Work classes started, St. Elizabeth’s was just a place to work for many, and that was it” says Jan Knudsen, Education Coordinator and SAW coach, Lincoln, NE. Now the SAW student/employees understand that this is a place that offers way more, more than just a paycheck. They feel supported, by their director, their manager, by the facility as a whole.” St. Elizabeth’s Hospital began their first SAW class in June of 2005 and Knudsen says that every week she can see positive changes in each of her seven students. “When our HR recruiter first came to visit our class, our students’ visions had been something like going from dietary to a secretarial position.” As they discussed the wide variety of job opportunities open to them with advanced education after SAW “I could just see the light bulbs going off” comments Knudsen. School At Work has helped St. Elizabeth’s Hospital “grow our own associates in the direction of what they WANT to do versus what they are stuck at.”

One of those “home-grown” associates is SAW student and CNA Lana Yadullayeva. Yadullayeva worked as a physician assistant in the country of Ukraine, but time out of school and the different learning styles of U.S. colleges and universities presented major challenges for her. “You need to refresh your memory, especially in math” says

Yadullayeva. The SAW program and Coach Knudsen have helped her “step a level up and be prepared for nursing school.” Yadullayeva is taking RN pre-requisite course and plans to start classes at UNMC in January.

### **Entry-Level Investment Pays**

**SAW is a “Career Ladder” workforce development program that partners with hospitals to implement pathways for upward mobility within the organization. With today’s average turnover cost for an employee close to \$5000, SAW is helping hospitals save money. For more information on how SAW can help your facility, call Catalyst Learning at 502.584.7337 or visit us on the web at [www.schoolatwork.com](http://www.schoolatwork.com). The CHI corporate representative is Carol Keenan at 859.594.3033.**