

CSSI NEWS

for the
Southwestern Economic Development Region

Summer 2007

22 NEW SWEDR NURSING GRADS

Since the Southwestern Economic Development Region (SWEDR) received CSSI grant funding from the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity in April 2005, a total of 32 HEAL Project participants have graduated from the nursing programs at Southwestern Illinois College (SWIC) and Lewis & Clark Community College (LCCC), and fifteen more are expected to graduate in December of this year. To be eligible for the HEAL Project, nursing students have to be employed by one of the healthcare providers in the SWEDR's consortium. Twenty-nine regional employers, representing nine counties and three workforce investment boards (Mid-America, Madison-Bond, and West Central) have participated in the HEAL Project over the last two years. A number of the employers have provided financial assistance and/or flex scheduling to their incumbent workers while in school.

On May 16th the following twelve HEAL participants graduated from LCCC:

Hannah Baecht, Jersey Community Hospital
Nikki Brunaugh, Memorial Hospital, Belleville
Jeannie Bryant, Saint Anthony's Health Center
Sheri Carrington, Alton Memorial Hospital
Tomi Cline, St. Elizabeth's Hospital
Cathy Cooper, Jersey Community Hospital
Jaime Crook, Saint Anthony's Health Center
Aaron Greenwood, Saint Anthony's Health Center
Shannon Paoli, Eden Village Nursing Home
Andrew Pitts, Alton Memorial Hospital
Ron Rutherford, Alton Memorial Hospital
Shannon Vitali, Saint Anthony's Health Center

On May 17th the following ten grant students graduated from SWIC:

Tawni Collins, SIHF Mother & Child Center
Julie Hall, Red Bud Regional Hospital
Mary Jaja, Sparta Community Hospital
Michelle Langenhorst, St. Elizabeth's Hospital
Michele Luster, Memorial Hospital (Belleville)
Jenisha McNealy, Memorial Hospital (Belleville)
Gerry Peters, Memorial Hospital (Belleville)
Amy Sobczak, Willow Creek Nursing Home
Julie Straub, Rosewood Care Center (Swansea)
Tiffany Young, Memorial Hospital (Belleville)

There were ten HEAL nursing graduates in 2006 and all have passed the RN licensing exam.

HEALTH EDUCATION ALLIANCE



CAPACITY INCREASING

Graduating RN classes at both SWIC and LCCC have seen an increase in numbers over the last two years and projections for the future look even brighter.

Southwestern Illinois College had 61 RN graduates in 2006 and 81 in 2007. Lewis and Clark Community College graduated 60 RN students in 2006 and projects that this number will increase to 78 in 2007.

Completion of the Daisy and Roger P. Templin Building on the LCCC Campus this fall will allow further expansion of the college's nursing program. It is projected that LCCC will have 100 RN graduates in 2008 and 120 in 2009. These projections reflect a 60% increase in capacity at LCCC between 2004 and 2008.



Michele Luster was one of three 2007 nursing graduates, out of a class of 81 at Southwestern Illinois College, who received the High Achiever Award at the college's May 15, 2007 Pinning Ceremony. The award is given to students whose academic and clinical performance excel. Michele has been a CSSI grant recipient since June 2005, entering the HEAL Project as a unit secretary and monitoring technician.



A TIP OF THE HAT

Many students and their families have to make sacrifices during nursing school, but few are confronted with the overwhelming obstacles and hardships that **Tawni Collins** experienced. Tawni, a single mother, entered the Critical Skill Shortages Initiative in 2005 as an LPN working for Southern Illinois Healthcare Foundation in Centreville. Although the LPN to RN bridge program is only a year, Tawni had a few general education classes to complete in the 2005-06 school year before being accepted in to the June 2006 bridge class at SWIC.

While in school, Tawni's grandmother, who was her greatest supporter, passed away, Tawni's best friend was severely injured in a car accident, and Tawni faced some serious health issues of her own. If this were not enough, Tawni's car and checkbook were stolen, and following an early winter ice storm, she had to spend four days in her home without electricity. Add to this the demands of a six year old daughter and a full time job and you will agree that staying focused and completing the bridge program had to be more than a little challenging.

With all this behind her now, it's hard to imagine that anything will stop Tawni from achieving her next career goals, which are to pass her RN licensing exam and obtain her Bachelor of Science Degree in Nursing.

PLEASED WITH RESULTS



By the end of June 2007, approximately 100 training sessions will have been provided to area healthcare supervisors and managers as part of the

PY2 BEST (Basic and Effective Supervisory Training) Project. Nine healthcare employers took advantage of the CSSI training opportunity this program year and provided matching funds to support the project. Response to the BEST Project has overall been very positive, and most participating employers plan to sustain some level of similar training in the coming year.

To paraphrase a few hospital HR Directors about the BEST experience:

- ~Training has promoted teamwork, problem solving and empathy for fellow workers resulting in systemic change.
- ~The inter-hospital networking opportunities made possible by the combined regional classes have been very beneficial to new supervisors.
- ~Involuntary employee terminations have increased due to improved supervisory skills. As a result, there has been noted improvement in morale among the hospital's "good performers" and an increase in patient satisfaction.

A total of twelve employers and approximately 750 employees participated in the two-year BEST project. Training both years was facilitated by the Center for Workforce Training at LCCC and the Center for Training Innovations at SWIC.



As we near the end of program year-two of the Critical Skill Shortages Initiative, Workforce Investment Boards #21, #22 and #24 would like to thank everyone who has contributed to the success of this endeavor and particularly to those who have committed to third year sustainability and beyond. The Southwestern Economic Development Region will benefit from this partnership for years to come.

As always, if you have any feedback about the Critical Skill Shortages Initiative that you would like to share, please direct it to Lucy Chappee at: lcchappee@mcetd.org or 101 E. Edwardsville Road, Wood River, IL 62095.

Thanks!