

Southeastern Wisconsin Initiatives to Attract, Recruit and Retain Workforce

Aurora Health Care

Aurora St. Luke's Medical Center: Building Tomorrow's Workforce Today: Attracting Students to Health Careers

Abraham Pacheco is an example of Aurora Health Care workers who benefit from programs that enable entry-level employees to advance to a position that offers greater responsibility and greater income.

Pacheco's first steady job after high school was earning \$9.20 an hour in the kitchen at Aurora St. Luke's Medical Center in Milwaukee, but he had his eye on a better job: surgical technologist. Surgical techs help prepare operating rooms and assist during surgery. The job paid almost two to three times more than Pacheco was earning.

But to get the job, Pacheco needed formal training. When operations used just a clamp, retractor and a scalpel, surgical techs could quickly learn all they needed on the job. Now that they must work with complicated surgical machines costing \$1 million or more, they need formal training.

Pacheco learned Aurora was training entry-level employees to become surgical technologists and, with federal assistance, paying them \$10 an hour to attend the nine-month program. He joined the program, graduated and began work in an operating room at Aurora St. Luke's.

Aurora Memorial Hospital of Burlington: Building tomorrow's workforce today -- Burlington High School Anatomy Class

Finding ways to recruit young people into the health care profession is crucial in providing future health care services. This trend led to the development of an anatomy and physiology class at Burlington High School featuring physicians and other health care professionals from Aurora Memorial Hospital of Burlington and Aurora Burlington Clinic. They go to classes and share knowledge and experience about specific topics the students are studying. They also share their personal stories of how they became interested in health care professions, what educational paths they took, and highlight what opportunities exist in the field today. The students are provided with job descriptions and salary structures to help gain a better understanding of their field of interest.

Additional hands-on experience is gained through activities such as coming to the hospital lab where students perform their own urinalysis, perform individual respiratory testing, and observing actual surgeries in the hospital's operating rooms. The goal is to develop a pool of health care professionals who, based on their life experience and education, would be interested in working in rural settings. Since its inception in 2002, nearly 400 students have gone through the program.

Aurora Lakeland Medical Center recognizes nurses: Registered nurses-Retention and Recruitment

To help recognize and celebrate those who embody the spirit of nursing, Aurora Lakeland Medical Center in Elkhorn, Wis., presents an annual nurse excellence award. The award recognizes a registered nurse or licensed practical nurse that serves as an exemplary model of what the true meaning of nursing is. The individual portrays a commitment to excellence in service to those in his/her care that is delivered in a spirit of love and compassion to serve, and a willingness to go above and beyond the call of duty.

Nomination criteria include any registered nurse, either in the hospital or clinic setting that demonstrates leadership, competency, ethical integrity, and patient advocacy skills. Candidates must also be active in professional associations or organizations and go above and beyond by participating in community service and taking the time to do extras. Nurses receive nominations from their nursing peers, physicians, health care workers, patients, family members, and others.

Aurora Lakeland Medical Center established the program in 2001 as a way of retaining, recruiting and recognizing nursing professionals.

Aurora Medical Center in Kenosha offers youth options program for students

Aurora Medical Center partners with Kenosha area high schools on a program that allows students to experience and learn about nursing and other health-related careers. After the student receives certification as an advanced certified nursing assistant, we provide a real life glimpse into the health care setting. The students serve as an extra pair of hands on the floor and work closely with our registered nurses. Their duties including taking patients' vital signs, helping with meals, and assisting ambulatory patients move around the room or facility. Those with advanced training are able to perform simple dressing changes. This hands-on experience allows the student the opportunity to determine if the health care field is for them and provides perspective on other aspects of health care such as physical therapy.

The students go through the same orientation as the regular advanced certified nursing assistants, and complete the competencies expected of regular employees. Following their stint, most of the students stay in our float pool after they graduate from high school and often come back during college breaks to earn extra money. The program, known as Health Youth Options for Students has been in place for several years.

Aurora Health Care's Wilkinson Clinic/Waukesha South H.S.- Waukesha Academy of Health Professions

Aurora Health Care and other health providers, businesses, parents and educators helped establish a charter school in Waukesha South High School for students interested in medical professions. The Waukesha Academy of Health Professions began with 49 students in 2004 and now has 113 students in its fourth year.

"Waukesha South is extremely proud to be the home of such a progressive charter school. Educators from afar have visited us to see if they might be able to replicate the program at their schools," said Mark Hansen, executive director of curriculum and instruction for the Waukesha School District. Hansen was principal of South when the program began.

"Aurora Health Care and its Wilkinson Clinic not only provided equipment, they were instrumental in shaping the curriculum. They gave students the opportunity to shadow health professionals to not only see how health care works but also to get a better sense of which area they'd like to pursue," Hansen said.

"Aurora and other partners in the school are helping us to expose more students to health careers at earlier ages and giving them some of the skills they need to land jobs in their chosen career."

Aurora Medical Center in Oshkosh prepares for the future -- The Aging Workforce- Retention Strategies-Recruitment Efforts

The current vacancy rate for RNs at Aurora Medical Center in Oshkosh is low, but in the next three or four years, it is expected that many of the current health care workforce will begin to cut back hours and semi-retire.

As part of the Fox Valley Health Care Alliance, Aurora Health Care will work to help find better ways to encourage these employees to continue working, at least part-time.

This is critical to avoid losing the extraordinary expertise seasoned employees provides. One example is in nursing. Such nurses are not only wonderful caregivers but great mentors.

One of the alliance's strategies in 2008 is to increase the number of mentors and preceptors, especially in nursing. Tenured nurses will play a crucial role in helping to train the next generation of nurses as students graduate nursing school.

In the Fox Valley, Aurora has close relationships with local nursing schools. In addition, Aurora Medical Center in Oshkosh sponsors an "explorers post" and "job shadowing" programs that allows high school students to see firsthand various health care careers. As a result of showing students the opportunities open to them early in a student's life, the chances of their becoming interested in a health care profession are even greater.

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Froedtert Hospital: Wisdom at Work: Retaining Experienced Nurses

Froedtert Hospital is currently teaming up with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) to participate in testing new ways to keep experienced nurses in our nation's hospitals. Froedtert is one of 13 organizations across the country (and the only in Wisconsin) selected by RWJF to participate in its new program, Wisdom at Work: Retaining Experienced Nurses. The program provides an evidence base for what works to help hospitals hold on to qualified nurses.

The specific evidence gathered focuses on motivational factors in retaining experienced nurses transitioning from the ICU to the hospital's new Virtual Intensive Care Unit (VICU). The VICU is a service that uses remote monitoring technology to make a critical-care specialist available during nights and weekends when physicians may not be on-site. Nurses specializing in critical care help the on-site nurses monitor patients, identifying problems before they develop. "The average age of a nurse nationally is 47 years old," said Bob Herdrich, MS, RN, director of special projects in nursing for Froedtert Hospital and project director for the grant. "The VICU provides an environment where critical care nurses can still utilize their essential skills in a less physically taxing environment."

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Columbia St. Mary's: Nurses Can Now Schedule Shifts Online

In Spring 2007, Columbia St. Mary's Hospital began using an Internet-based scheduling system that allows nurses to submit requests from their own personal computers for extra shifts. Like most hospitals, CSM uses agency nurses to fill shift vacancies. However, agency nurses are more expensive than using currently employed nurses on open shifts.

Bidshift works by posting all open shifts two weeks in advance for a four-week time period. Nurses who are interested in additional hours or those who work for the CSM internal pool, who have already committed to a full work week can go online and indicate their preference for working additional shifts at that point. Then, each unit or department director will make a staffing decision based on the number of CSM nurses who are interested in working those extra shifts.

Prior to the implementation of Bidshift, each department or unit director would have to call nurses at home to fill the openings. Thus far, Bidshift has reduced the need for agency use and the increased cost associated with temporary nurses and provides CSM with a real selling point to nurses looking for new jobs.

Columbia St. Mary's: Nurse Recruiting Project

The Human Resources department at Columbia St. Mary's partnered with the Division of Nursing in a successful December nurse recruitment project. The strategy consisted of mass interviewing, both during the week and on weekends, to meet the needs of both candidates and our customers in nursing. This program resulted in 31 student nurses hired into technician/intern roles, 41 new graduate nurses and 14 experienced nurses hired, all within a two month period. This program targeted both the organization's desire to hire new nurses as well build a pipeline for the 2008 calendar year for the nursing division.

Additionally, the program included support from our Employee Education and Organizational Development team. Each of these hires were included within our organization's nursing orientation. This

week-long training was held twice in January, prior to the employee's unit-based training. Additional resources were dedicated to create a meaningful and smooth training period.

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SynergyHealth St. Joseph's Hospital: Training Tomorrow's Caregivers

Laura Wiedenhofer, 31, was among the first class of six graduates from a collaborative nursing program between the University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee and the University of Wisconsin Washington County.

Laura spent her third year at UWM and did all of her clinicals in Washington County. During her fourth year, she completed her advanced clinical work at SynergyHealth St. Joseph's Hospital, working closely with nursing preceptors and nursing leadership. In January 2006 she was offered a permanent position at the hospital, prior to her May graduation with a bachelor's of science in nursing. She now works second shift on the medical/surgical floor.

Laura is one of approximately 160 students who were provided valuable clinical and non-clinical experience at St. Joseph's Hospital during fiscal 2007.

"Clinicals are experiences offered to University students in which 'book learning' meets real life. The students, who have completed much of their classroom work, work with experienced professionals who help them practice skills through guided and monitored activities," said Sharon Serwe, manager of education at St. Joseph's Hospital. "This practical experience is essential for students, who learn in a supported environment and because the professional is overseeing the skills, the patients receive excellent care."

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Children's Hospital of Wisconsin: Teens get HIP to Health Careers

As science and technology help people live longer lives, more health care professionals will be needed. Health In Practice (HIP) Careers Camp, a weeklong summer camp offered by Children's Health Education Center, helps students in grades 7-12 discover the possibilities of a rewarding career in health care. Fun learning experiences include: site visits to Children's Hospital of Wisconsin, local universities and other Milwaukee health care organizations; speakers representing a variety of health care careers, from dermatology to sports medicine to administration and human resources; self-inventory of skills, team-building activities and mock interviews offering hands-on learning; goal-setting and learning how to make school and other extracurricular activities work to achieve those career goals.

HIP Careers in Nursing

Because of the popularity of HIP Careers Summer Camp – and with a grant from the Faye McBeath Foundation – a 45-minute outreach program called HIP Careers: Nursing was created. HIP Careers: Nursing integrates a health educator, video interviews with Children's Hospital nurses and hands-on activities to inform seventh to ninth graders about a variety of nursing opportunities. To date the program has completed six successful pilots.

"The opportunities in nursing are great," said Colleen Schultz, education manager at Children's Health Education Center. "With the variety of educational paths students can explore, we need to make sure students not only know about them, but get excited about them at an early age."

For more information visit BlueKids.org.

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Wheaton Franciscan Healthcare - Elmbrook Memorial: Medical Explorers Program

Medical Explorers is a joint venture between Wheaton Franciscan Healthcare - Elmbrook Memorial and the Exploring *Learning for Life Division* of the Potawatomi Area Council Boy Scouts of America in Waukesha County. The goal is to attract as many promising young people as possible to medical professions as well as give them an idea of what jobs are available as they move toward college.

Students sometimes think they would never be interested in a certain field until they find out more about it. During the school year, high school students are invited to hear doctors and nurses speak about their profession. Students have the opportunity to ask candid questions about the health care professional's specific interest and concerns providing them information to make educated and experienced decisions about a career in health. Students are offered behind-the-scenes looks at hospital departments, hands-on experience with equipment and tools of the trade, shadowing opportunities and a chance to learn about the many jobs available in health care.

Finding out what really goes on behind closed doors can help students discover that they would love working in health care, or just as important, it is not the path for them.

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Community Memorial Hospital of Menomonee Falls: Healthcare Career Academy

In response to a growing need for qualified health care providers, Community Memorial Hospital of Menomonee Falls (CMH) and the School District of Menomonee Falls partnered to develop the Healthcare Career Academy (HCA).

Students from Menomonee Falls High School complete applications to the HCA. High school faculty review the applications. Formal interviews are conducted by a panel of three persons from school district staff and three health/organization development professionals from CMH. Ten students were selected for the inaugural program.

The HCA experience spanned five weeks during June-July 2007. The students attended two days of orientation to the hospital and health careers. Over five weeks pairs of students rotated to nursing units, pharmacy, laboratory, physical medicine, and medical imaging. Each rotation focused on a health topic which demonstrated the interdisciplinary nature of health care careers. Students completed weekly personal journals, prepared weekly presentations for their peers about their experiences, and gave weekly feedback. On their final day, school district staff, teachers, parents, hospital faculty, and hospital leaders attended a final poster presentation by the students followed by a 'graduation' and luncheon.

Success of this venture demonstrates CMH's mission, strong commitment to the community, and enhanced partnership with the School District of Menomonee Falls.

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Wheaton Franciscan Healthcare: Administrative Fellow Program

Wheaton Franciscan Healthcare's Administrative Fellow Program is designed to recruit, develop and retain people of color as management associates to better mirror the communities we serve. Individuals who earned a Master's Degree in Health Administration or Business Administration within the past two years and are in an early career stage are eligible to participate in this program. They receive training, mentoring, the opportunity to manage projects, and exposure to all components of our health system. In the last four years, five people have participated, four of which have been placed into entry level management positions. Our next class which begins in July 2008 will include up to three people.

This initiative is part of our commitment to cultural competence so that our leaders will better reflect the patients we serve and our associates will experience an inclusive work environment.

Wheaton Franciscan Healthcare: Academic Opportunities

Our tuition reimbursement policy offers support for eligible Wheaton Franciscan Healthcare associates pursuing further education at accredited technical schools, colleges, and universities. Through partnerships with these schools, we also offer growth opportunities such as our ADN to BSN, RN to MSN, and clinical faculty fast track programs for nurses. The ADN to BSN program allows nurses to conveniently pursue a degree at one of our sites along with other co-workers.

Wheaton Franciscan Healthcare: Wellness Incentive Program

Wheaton Franciscan Healthcare's Wellness Incentive (WIN) Program is designed to motivate associates to practice healthy lifestyle behaviors. WIN participants commit to behaviors like healthy eating, exercise, and wearing a seat belt. Results are assessed at year's end and associates receive cash awards based on points earned. Last year, 3,397 associates participated, shedding a total of 7,417 pounds, dropping cholesterol by 12,469 mg/dL, and earning a total of \$426,880 for completing the program.

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