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WMC graduates four from School at Work[®] program

FRANKLIN, TENN. ó The coursework was difficult, but with certificate in hand and big smiles stretched across their faces, none of the 2010 School at Work graduates could say the result wasn't worth the challenge.

Four employees recently graduated from Williamson Medical Center's nine-month School at Work program, which targets adults in entry-level health care jobs who want career advancements but cannot attend school full-time. The program, in partnership with the Catalyst Learning Company and facilitated by WMC's Education Department, is administered on-site with classroom and computer components.

One graduate, Lilia McArthur, aspires to become a registered nurse and says she is proud and relieved to have completed the course.

õI did it; I survived,ö says McArthur, a Fourth Floor nursing assistant. õThe program helped me gain knowledge and helped with English, my second language, and that's important to me.ö

McArthur, along with fellow graduates Svetlana Berak (Health Information Management), Jeannie Delgado (Emergency Department registration), and patient transporter Mary Ann Johnson (Diagnostic Imaging), agreed language barriers and math were the toughest obstacles to overcome. And when the finish line, at times, appeared too far to cross, they rallied together and encouraged one another to keep going.

“We stuck together and helped each other out,” Johnson says.

Delgado describes her graduation with utter disbelief: “I almost can’t believe it,” she says. “There were times I almost gave up, but I’m glad I didn’t.”

WMC’s award-winning School at Work program teaches students key skills, such as medical terminology, anatomy and physiology, math, English, organizational skills, stress management and how to communicate effectively in the workplace.

“My hope for these graduates is that they do not just graduate with a higher sense of knowledge and skills,” says Tim Burton, associate administrator for Operations, “but that they do so with a better sense of communication, accomplishment and initiative to ignite a sustained passion for continuous learning.”

WMC has been participating in the School at Work program since 2004, and more than 60 employees have graduated. Burton says nearly half the graduates have received promotions within the organization, while many more have used this program as a building block to further their educations.

“At Williamson Medical Center, our people strategy has been to grow our own,” Burton says. “Along with accomplishing that goal, this program helps pave a path for a bright future for many of our employees.”

Williamson Medical Center, a 185-bed hospital fully accredited by The Joint Commission, provides comprehensive inpatient and outpatient care including emergency services, with credentialed physicians in 53 specialties and sub-specialties. The community-focused hospital offers a wide range of wellness services, screenings and classes. For more information about Williamson Medical Center, visit www.williamsonmedicalcenter.org.

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