

School at Work sets foundation for bright future

Norton University recently graduated 15 employees from its ninth year of the School at Work program. One of those graduates is Tim Ellis, patient care associate and monitor tech at Norton Suburban Hospital. The School at Work program gave him a foundation of skills for a solid start on his way to becoming a nurse.

“My manager said I would make a good nurse and really encouraged me to attend School at Work,” Ellis said. “I had the intention of going back to school before I joined the program; however School at Work gave me the push I needed.”

School at Work is a six-month-long educational program that helps employees in frontline positions sharpen skills and explore new positions within the organization. Students attend classes two hours a week during work hours on their campus. They also spend two hours a week on homework.

“Students review and refresh skills in mathematics, reading, communications, customer service and patient safety,” said Barry Gary, director, staff development, Norton University. “From there they can follow one of four career tracks: nursing, allied health, clerical or support services.”

The School at Work program makes education more convenient for employees with hectic schedules, like Ellis, who works third shift and is a single father of two girls. The skills he brushed up on are not only opening new doors for his career, they are helping in his home life as well.

“School at Work made it easier for me to help my kids with homework,” Ellis said. “It was an especially good refresher course for math. It’s nice to be able to really help my kids and know what I’m talking about.”

School at Work students also receive health care-specific education while developing a customized career and learning plan. They learn about advancement opportunities at Norton Healthcare, identify personal barriers and how to eliminate them, and have the opportunity to research career steps and financial aid options.

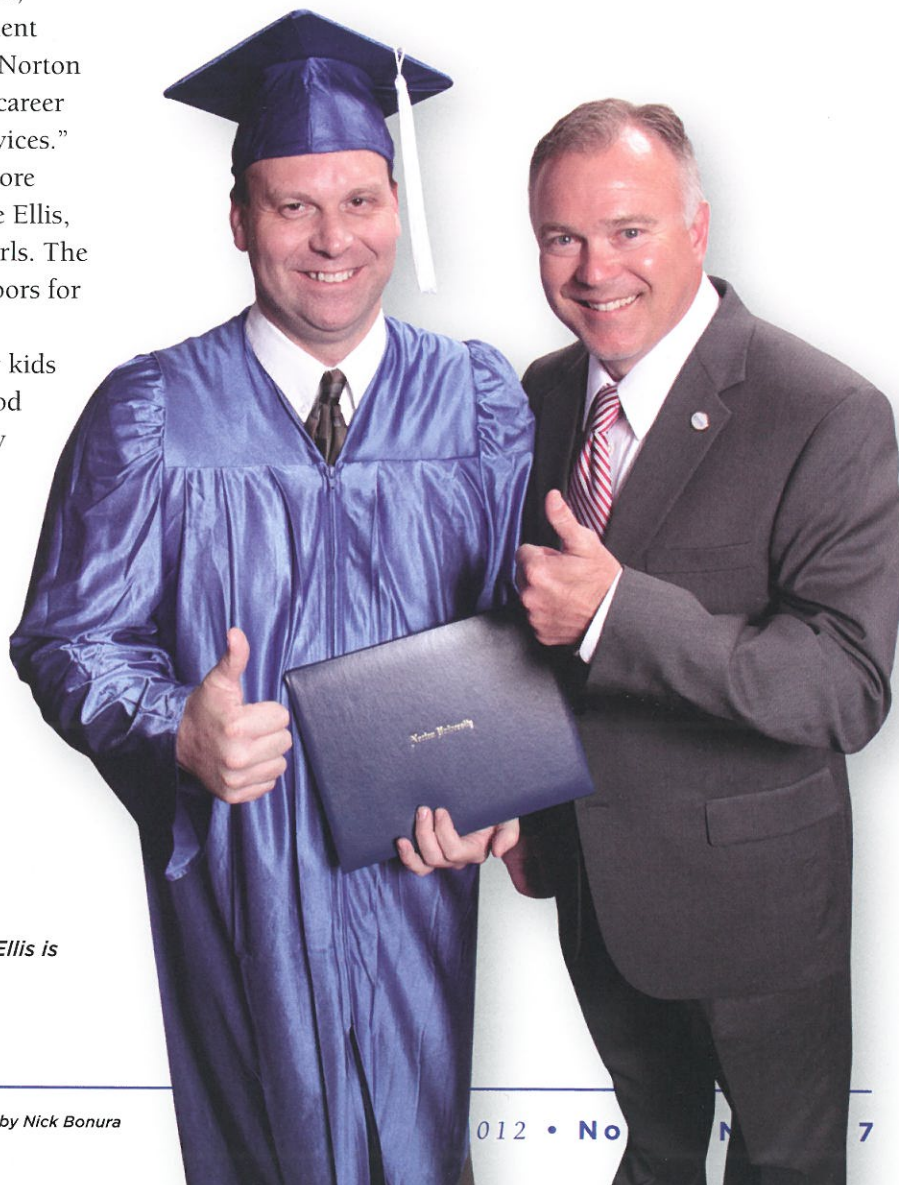
Ellis will begin classes toward a nursing degree in the fall at Jefferson Community and Technical College.

“I’ve taken a big leap of faith with my career,” he said. “It’s kind of scary, but I am so thankful for the support I’ve received. The program has given me an ‘I can’ attitude.”



—Jennifer Reynolds

The next session of School at Work begins Oct. 10. Applications will be accepted beginning in mid-July. Applicants must take a test of basic education before being accepted. For more information about the program, email nortonuniversity@nortonhealthcare.org or call 629-7349.



School at Work graduate Tim Ellis is congratulated by Barry Gary.