



# NewsSource

**Recruitment & Retention Newsletter**  
**for Engaging Employees and Becoming the Employer of Choice**

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## In This Issue:

- **Success Story #1:** [School at Work: HCA-Affiliated Facilities Benefiting from Entry-Level Staff Education](#)
- **Success Story #2:** [In Denver, the “Best Place to Work” is HealthONE](#)
- [Who to Contact at the Corporate Office](#)

Do you know of a Recruitment & Retention success story at an HCA-affiliated facility? Send your suggestions to [sally.weber@hcahealthcare.com](mailto:sally.weber@hcahealthcare.com).

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## Success Story #1:

### **School at Work: HCA-Affiliated Facilities Benefiting from Entry-Level Staff Education**



Marcos Flores joined JFK Medical Center in Atlantis, Fla., as a valet more than six years ago. Today, he plays a vital role in helping JFK meet its future workforce development objectives by studying to become a registered nurse.

Flores, now a security and transport supervisor, participated in the School at Work program, an eight-month course of study that helps hospital employees enhance their math, reading and computer skills in preparation for entering medical training programs at hospitals, community colleges and technical schools.

School at Work delivers educational content by combining classroom with Internet-based coursework and instruction on DVD. Students take two courses: “Introduction to Healthcare” and “Becoming a Healthcare Professional”. Hospitals provide a coach, typically an education or recruiting professional, to facilitate learning for a group of 10-15 employees. The hospital also pays each student’s \$450 course fee, which includes texts, workbooks and access to online work. There is no cost to employees.



“At a time when qualified staff members are in short supply and hospitals are challenged to hire and retain the best and brightest staff, School at Work can produce huge dividends for the entire organization,” said Lawrence H. Kloess, president and CEO of Centennial Medical Center.

At Centennial, nine student-employees are participating in the program. Three are pursuing RN degrees and two plan to become OR techs. Both positions are high on the hospital’s list of recruiting priorities.

Seven HCA-affiliated facilities have already implemented the School at Work “Building a Career Ladder in Healthcare” program created by Catalyst Learning

Company (CLC).



Typical School at Work students are food service, housekeeping, maintenance, entry-level office/admissions staff or nurse aides with a high school diploma or equivalent who have been out of school for five to 20 years. Many have never had an opportunity to use computers.

More than half of the students are African-American or Hispanic, which makes School at Work a program that can benefit hospitals seeking to increase diversity in the clinical and management positions.

“School at Work unleashes the hidden potential in entry-level workers – an often overlooked source of talent in filling future workforce shortages,” said Lynn

Fischer, Catalyst founder and president.

Flores, who graduated from high school 10 years ago, would not be enrolled in Palm Beach Community College today without the direction and confidence he received from the School at Work Program.

“School at Work gave me the opportunity and the courage to go to college,” he said.

At Reston Hospital Center in Virginia, a former dietary aide is now a medical records technologist enrolled in a local college IT program while continuing to work at the hospital. Another student plans to become a radiology tech.

### **The School at Work Connection to Facility Initiatives:**

According to Gallup methodology, the ability to help associates find the right fit within an organization is a hallmark of a great manager.

“Entry-level associates play an important role in addressing our future workforce challenges,” said Donna Yurdin, HCA’s AVP of Organizational Development. “We believe it is our responsibility to provide education and advancement opportunities that meet the needs of both the individual and hospital. Developing the Career Learning Plan creates an ongoing opportunity for the direct supervisor to talk about the associate’s progress and development.”

Former radiology file room clerk Anna Skae-Caldwell said she now has the confidence to become a radiology tech at Centennial Medical Center. Since completing School at Work, she manages the department’s front desk, interacting with patients, physicians and insurance representatives. According to her supervisor, transitioning Skae-Caldwell from the file room to the vacant front desk had a bottom-line benefit because

there was no need to hire agency personnel or operate short-staffed.

In addition to addressing staffing needs, School at Work is a powerful recruitment and retention tool.

“School at Work is a visionary approach to helping us retain good employees and meet the workforce needs of the future,” said Terry Eggenberger, JFK’s program director for Workforce and Organizational Development. “JFK is easily the employer of choice in the county and School at Work is one of the reasons.”

At Centennial Medical Center (CMC), Kloess said School at Work graduates and their families have told him they appreciate the opportunity to grow in the profession.

“In every case, the graduates referenced CMC as a compassionate employer and stressed their plans to always work for CMC and HCA,” he said.

**You Could Win a  
School at Work Starter Kit!**

Representatives for the School at Work program will attend the HR Conference, set for Jan. 11-13 in New Orleans. Visit the Catalyst Learning table during the vendor fair to enter your facility in a drawing for a free School at Work Starter Kit, valued at \$5,750.

Gina Gerard, human resources specialist at Reston Hospital Center, said “We help ourselves when we give employees the opportunity to move into open positions. And, the student-employees benefit from moving into higher-paying positions and taking the next steps to achieve their eventual goals of careers in healthcare.”

**The Bottom Line:**

A study commissioned by CLC in 2004 analyzed average employee turnover costs for non-nursing clinical, clerical and support positions. Data was collected from 16 hospitals and medical centers in 10 Midwest, Mid-Atlantic and Southern states. The study found turnover

costs ranged from \$4,880 for a non-supervisory food service, housekeeping or maintenance worker to as much as \$13,840 for a clinical employee, such as a licensed practical nurse, surgical technologist and radiographer.

“The cost of the eight-month Career Ladder program for eight employees is less than the cost of one support employee leaving the organization,” Fischer said.

The study concluded that hiring from within the organization reduces hard dollar costs for staffing agency fees, overtime, interviews, recruiting and training. In addition to hard-dollar savings, promoting from within rather than hiring from outside saves money, improves employee morale, recruitment, retention, attendance and performance. It enhances the organization’s reputation as an employer of choice and improves service, patient satisfaction and profitability. For more information on the study, log on to [www.schoolatwork.com](http://www.schoolatwork.com) or contact Lynn Fischer at [lfischer@catalystlearning.com](mailto:lfischer@catalystlearning.com).

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## Success Story #2:

### In Denver, the “Best Place to Work” is HealthONE



HealthONE has invested in state-of-the-art medical equipment, but they think their employees are an even greater asset to its facilities. That philosophy recently earned HCA’s family of affiliated facilities in Denver recognition as the city’s “Best Place to Work”, based on a comprehensive survey developed by the Colorado Human Resources Association

and released by the *Denver Business Journal*.

With 9,200 employees working at seven hospitals and more than 30 outpatient centers across the Denver Metro area, HealthONE is the fourth largest employer in the city and the ninth largest in the state. The company seeks to make a positive impact on Denver families by offering a unique set of benefits to its employees.

“People really value balancing work and family life,” said Roger Smith, HealthONE’s vice president for human resources. “So, to be competitive in the marketplace and attract and retain top-notch nursing professionals, we need to offer equally competitive benefits.”

The survey first asked employees what they considered important in their workplace and then surveyed employers that met those needs. More than 1,400 people, representing more than 100 companies responded that compensation (41%), work environment (34%) and benefits (25%) were the most important in workforce satisfaction.

“We’re incredibly proud of this distinction and especially pleased because the award is based on feedback from employees,” Smith said. “We’ve been working hard over the past several years to make sure our employees feel good about our hospital and know our hospitals appreciate them for all of their hard work. The award tells us we’re moving in the right direction.”

In addition to health and retirement benefits, HealthONE offers several perks. One example is the free concierge service, which has become an employee favorite. The service provides errand-running and personal assistance, such as buying a gift, taking a car in for service, finding a babysitter, making vacation arrangements or buying groceries. During the holidays, some hospitals offer employees free gift-wrapping and discounts for shipping gifts. Throughout the year, HealthONE employees and their families are eligible for discounts to theater, ballet and other family entertainment venues.

To accommodate working parents, HealthONE offers a variety of flexible staffing plans. For example the “track scheduling” option follows the Douglas County school schedule.

Labor and delivery charge nurse, Tiffany Hanson said the company’s flexible scheduling has made a big difference in her ability to create a balance between work and home needs, which includes taking care of her six-month-old son, Cade.

“When I was pregnant and after my son was born, HealthONE let me come in later or leave earlier as I needed,” Hanson said.

In the future, she hopes to take advantage of the discounted childcare center options available through the company. She also appreciates the many educational opportunities available. The educational reimbursement program enabled her to obtain her bachelor’s degree.

Trying to do it all can get stressful. HealthONE meets that need by offering employees a massage therapist to give free 20-minute massages to hospital employees.

“That’s another nice little perk that makes a difference,” said Hanson.

According to Smith, open communication with employees has helped HealthONE identify ways the healthcare system can improve on traditional benefits and help employees balance their work life with their

home life.

These are innovative approaches, but they have to be, Smith said. When half the workforce is nurses, professionals who are in short supply, competition is fierce.

"Options like childcare discounts, subsidized parking, paid maternity and paternity leave and tuition reimbursement not only result in top rankings, but more important, in happier employees," Smith said.

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