

# Pulse



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## Bethesda's School at Work Program Changes Employee Lives

**Monica Fry** was very satisfied working at her job as a certified nurse assistant at Bethesda Dilworth (Kirkwood/Webster Groves) when she first heard about Bethesda Health Group's involvement in School at Work.

The concept sounded ideal – a few Dilworth employees interested in furthering their healthcare careers could become involved in a federally funded program that let them pursue their coursework during their work shifts.

So she signed up, was selected to participate along with five other Dilworth employees, and began meeting with **Sharon Bateman**, Bethesda's School at Work (SAW) coach, for two hours every week... for eight months... and that doesn't take into account the 2-4 hours of homework every week.

"The School at Work program takes time, dedication and study," said Sharon as she watched the six celebrate at their SAW graduation ceremony. "It was extremely challenging, and they worked very hard. I'm very proud of each of them – they did a great job!"

School at Work is a healthcare-based program through Catalyst Learning and is geared primarily toward providing the skills needed to advance healthcare careers. Bethesda Dilworth is the first skilled nursing community in Missouri to participate in the program.

**Cathy Taylor** was able to use the knowledge she gained from the School at Work class to earn a promotion from laundry staff to housekeeping supervisor, where she has 20-25 direct reports. "I'm so glad I did this," Cathy said. "It builds self-esteem and helps your confidence, and I was able to broaden my communication skills, which certainly helps me in my new job."

**Sharon Bornefeld**, Dilworth nursing administration secretary, said she appreciated getting acclimated to school again. She is continuing her education at Meramec, where she plans to pursue an RN degree. "This is wonderful," Sharon said. "Not a lot of places would be willing to give employees the time to participate in a program like this."

Monica has since become an aide at Bethesda Hospice Care, and she credits the section on interviewing and resumes for helping her get the job. As for her future, she too will be pursuing an RN degree at Meramec – classes start in January.

Twenty-three Bethesda employees will be participating in the next set of SAW classes. For more information on the many continuing education activities Bethesda provides for its staff, please call 314-800-1911.



(L-R) Dilworth staff/students Mimi Muhlvihill, Trina Douglas, Rebecca Herr, Sharon Bornefeld, Cathy Taylor and Monica Fry pose with their School at Work certificates during their graduation celebration.