



 **PROVENA**
Saint Joseph Medical Center
WE ARE BUILDING **EXCELLENCE**

Provena Saint Joseph Medical Center has a medical staff of more than 520 physicians representing over 55 medical specialties and employs over 2,600 professional, technical and support personnel. Provena has had a presence in Will County for the past 126 years. The Medical Center employs close to 850 professional Registered Nurses (RN).

A critical shortage of trained healthcare professionals, generally, and nurses, specifically, exists in our region and throughout the nation. In addition to a highly competitive labor market with a shortage of available RNs, in 2006 Provena Saint Joseph Medical Center established the goal of increasing the proportion of their nurses having a bachelor or masters degree. Recognizing that the majority of their nurses had entered their field with an associate's degree, they looked to the Workforce Investment Board of Will County's Business Grants for Employee Training Program for assistance in launching a program designed to assist their current workforce in acquiring the academic credentials they need to advance and serve as nursing leaders.

The onsite, two-year BSN completion program for AA degree nurses working at Provena was developed in partnership with Lewis University. The program is funded 1/3 with incumbent worker grant funds, 1/3 employee tuition reimbursement through Provena, and 1/3 through the Provena Saint Joseph Medical Center Foundation. Students benefiting from the program make a commitment to stay with Provena for two years following completion.

To date there have been two cohorts representing a total of 34 participants with some of the first cohort graduating in December 2007 – all with honors. This program exemplifies how the Business Grants for Employee Training Program and educational community can assist employers in providing career advancement opportunities to Will County employees. "We could not have initiated the BSN completion program without the assistance of the Workforce Investment Board of Will County. Provena is interested in building an organization for quality care – this program represents a move in that direction. Programs such as this – an investment in our current workers – demonstrates our intent to be an Employer of Choice for Will County residents," stated Beth Garrow, Foundation President, PSJMC and Regional VP, Development.

Provena plans to continue offering the program to nurses and expanding it to other occupations. Physicians have been so pleased with the elevated level of nursing care that they are establishing a scholarship program for nurses.



First graduates of BSN Program – December 2007