

President's High Growth Job Training Initiative

School at Work

Grant Amounts: \$3,176,000 total: \$1,176,000 (phase 1); \$2,000,000 (phase 2)

Grantee: Catalyst Learning

Leveraged Amount: \$2,715,682, in cash and in-kind support provided by Catalyst Learning, participating hospitals, community colleges, and state and local Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs)

Location of Grant Activities: Participating hospitals in Kentucky, Indiana, Virginia, Maryland, Ohio, Texas, Florida, Connecticut, Georgia, Louisiana, and North Carolina.

Challenge: Low-wage workers in entry-level positions in hospitals often lack access to the educational opportunities and support required to enable them to upgrade their skills and advance to higher-paying, family-supporting positions in the health care field.

Addressing the Challenge: In July 2002, ETA awarded Catalyst Learning a grant to fund the School at Work demonstration in four pilot states. The project tests a distance learning delivery system designed to advance low-wage/low-skill workers in entry-level health care occupations. The SAW model expands access to basic skills training and work-related education for adults in entry-level jobs in the health care field using worksite-based television broadcast and Internet instruction and study in combination with support from adult education experts and hospital coaching staff.

In August 2003, ETA awarded Catalyst Learning a second grant to expand and enhance the SAW project. The new award will increase the scope of the SAW project, bringing it to four new states, 120 employers, and 1,550 employees. Under the new award, Catalyst Learning will increase focus on employees' job advancement, earnings gains, and continuing education, and will demonstrate project sustainability through expanded partnerships with hospital employers and the public workforce system.

Project Outcomes:

- In phase 1, 366 participants were enrolled in training at 28 hospitals. 224 (61%) individuals completed the full program. The majority of completers demonstrated knowledge against the end of the program, and 17% of completers were promoted as result of their work in the program. 38% of completers enrolled in continuing education programs to support their career advancement.
- In phase 2, Catalyst Learning will enhance the scope of the SAW project and will seek to increase job advancement, promotion, and continuing education impacts for participants.

