

St. Luke's Offers Flexibility and Re-Entry Training for Careers in Nursing

St. Luke's hosting a "Nursing & Allied Health Career Fair" Saturday, December 1st at the Westin Galleria from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

The Woodlands, TX -- Having been out of nursing for over ten years, the thought of re-entering the field was daunting for Mettie Hesse. "For the last decade, I worked with a church's children's program, but I found I missed nursing and wanted to get back in," explained Hesse, "but it was intimidating and I was not confident about where or how to start."

Hesse called a couple of hospitals and found that St. Luke's Episcopal Health System's human resources department believed in her ability to nurse again. "They had the 'Embark' program which encouraged bringing registered nurses back into the workforce and helped them to re-acclimate. Embark provided two months of classroom instruction and hands-on training to relearn skills such as drawing blood and starting IV's, as well as cross-training in several areas. The offer was music to my ears!" she exclaimed.

Hesse said St. Luke's was patient with her and gave her as much time as she needed. "It was scary, but the management and staff were very supportive and encouraging. I found that once I jumped in and started working, it all came back to me."

After her first interview, she was hired as a full-time nurse on the hospital's 23 Terrace VIP unit. Today, she is nursing at St. Luke's Community Medical Center (CMC) - The Woodlands.

Further demonstrating its commitment to flexibility in the workplace, St. Luke's also offers its nurses the opportunity to bid for their shifts through its BidShift program.

"BidShift is an Internet-based program that allows our clinical staff to view and request unfilled shifts on any unit for which they are qualified to work," explained Mona J. Tucker, director of Human Resources at St. Luke's CMC - The Woodlands. "This has been an excellent way for full-time and part-time staff to balance their work/life obligations or perhaps pick up extra shifts. Such incentives help us to attract the best, which is crucial as we are in a mode of growth here with our expansion in The Woodlands."

Debra Sukin, chief executive officer of St. Luke's CMC - The Woodlands and vice president, St. Luke's Episcopal Health System, said, "We strive to meet the needs of our staff by giving multiple options for maximum work flexibility. This new tool will allow our nursing staff the autonomy over their work schedule while the organization fulfills its patient care obligations. This is yet one more example of how we value our employees."

St. Luke's Episcopal Health System will hold its "Annual Holiday Career Fair for Nursing & Allied Health" on Saturday, December 1st from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. at the Westin Galleria's Monarch Room at 5060 West Alabama. Career opportunities will be featured for the areas of registered nurses, pharmacy, radiology, pathology, and respiratory. Positions are available at St. Luke's Episcopal Health System in the Texas Medical Center, St. Luke's Community Medical Center in The Woodlands, and St. Luke's Sugar Land Hospital.

For details or to pre-register, visit St. Luke's Web site or call (800) 231-1000.

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