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DWD UW Health, SSM and UnityPoint Health/Meriter to Sign New, Hybrid Medical Assistant Registered Apprenticeship Contract

Unique Partnership to Address Madison Area's Employment Needs

MADISON – The Department of Workforce Development (DWD) – Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards (BAS), the Workforce Development Board of South Central Wisconsin, UW Health, SSM Health and UnityPoint Health/Meriter, held an Apprenticeship Standards Signing to launch a new Medical Assistant Apprenticeship on Monday.

"The State of Wisconsin continues to advance innovative talent development strategies to equip workers with the skills needed for jobs in our growing healthcare economy," DWD Secretary Ray Allen said. "Thanks to our partnership with UW Health, SSM Health and UnityPoint Health/Meriter, we will celebrate the launch of a new, hybrid Registered Apprenticeship training model to help them further develop their workforce and fill the ongoing need for highly skilled Medical Assistants."

DWD provides dozens of apprenticeship opportunities in the construction, industrial, service and utility trades and in 2018 alone has expanded opportunities into IT, farming and finance.

"UW Health is pleased to lead industry efforts and partner with the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development to create the first Medical Assistant Registered Apprenticeship Program in the state of Wisconsin," said Bridgett Willey, Director of Allied Health Education and Career Pathways at UW Health. "We believe that our efforts in creating this sustainable and innovative approach to addressing the shortage of Medical Assistants will not only provide a solution to a critical workforce need, but also support our diverse and committed UW Health, UnityPoint Health/Meriter and SSM Health employees with professional growth opportunities and, most importantly, continue to ensure access to essential healthcare services for the patients that we serve."

DWD's Registered Apprenticeship program, which was created in 1911 and has served as a national model for generations, annually provides value-added training for as many as 11,000 apprentices and 2,500 employers across the state in over 200 occupations.

"Creating registered apprenticeships for Medical Assistant training is instrumental in enabling health care organizations to create talent pipelines for their incumbent workers," Pat Schramm, Executive Director of the South-Central Wisconsin Workforce Development Board. "We are pleased to be working with Dane County's three largest healthcare providers and DWD to address current and future Medical Assistant employment needs."

Medical Assistant is the first healthcare occupation developed through the Wisconsin Apprenticeship Growth and Enhancement Strategies (WAGE\$) grant, a \$5 million American Apprenticeship Initiative grant awarded to DWD by the US Department of Labor. The purpose of the WAGE\$ grant is to expand apprenticeship opportunities into three new areas- Healthcare, IT, and Advanced Manufacturing.

For more information about Wisconsin Registered Apprenticeship, visit wisconsinapprenticeship.org.