

**Cathy at Will County
Healthcare Careers—Skilled Workers, Strong Earnings**

Single mother Cathy Kaczmarek was laid off from her job in banking. She knew, as she was exhausting her unemployment benefits, that she needed to find a way to make a career change so she could support herself and her child. Cathy had been out of school for more than 30 years but was familiar with caregiving and encouraged to pursue a career in healthcare. When Cathy found out about the HPOG program, she was thrilled and certain that those supporting her participation in the program were angels, as she had no other way to finance her education. A good student, Cathy applied herself to her academics and created a new network of friends that supported each other as they pursued their education. Cathy completed the Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) course and passed her State certification exam a month later. She was hired by a local assisted living facility as a CNA. Stellar reviews from her employer reinforce and affirm Cathy's efforts and the value of the HPOG grant in providing Cathy with this opportunity.