



Molina Healthcare of Washington Receives Recognition as a Winner of Governor's WorkFirst Business Appreciation Award; Award Luncheon Scheduled for May 18

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BOTHELL, Wash.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--May 11, 2004--To recognize its efforts in helping individuals advance off welfare and out of poverty to become self-sufficient, Molina Healthcare of Washington (NYSE:MOH) has been honored with a Governor's WorkFirst Business Appreciation Award. Each year, Gov. Gary Locke honors companies who demonstrate exemplary support for WorkFirst, Washington's welfare-to-work program. The award luncheon is scheduled for Tuesday, May 18, 2004, from 11:30 am to 2 p.m. at South Seattle Community College located at 6000 16th Avenue SW in Seattle.

The Washington State Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development's WorkFirst division has helped thousands of individuals advance off welfare and out of poverty while providing employers with a skilled workforce.

"We are honored to receive the Governor's 2004 WorkFirst Award," said Ann Koontz, CEO of Molina Healthcare of Washington. "We proudly share the program's vision providing Washington welfare recipients with employment skills and education necessary to rise above impoverished circumstances. Even more gratifying for us is that our first employee who participated in the WorkFirst program is still with us."

Since 2002, Molina has hired WorkFirst workers in several departments on a permanent basis, currently employing 17 people from training programs in the North Seattle area.

The program's success parallels the reduction of Washington's unemployment rate for March (preliminary seasonally adjusted), which fell one-tenth of one percentage point to 6.1 percent from a revised 6.2 percent in February (April figures will be released on May 18, the same day as the WorkFirst luncheon).

"Getting this job was the chance of a lifetime; I got my foot in the door at Molina and WorkFirst did that for me," said Lisa Austin, former WorkFirst graduate and current Molina employee who was recently promoted as a trainer. Austin's family was deeply affected when an aerospace company laid off her husband. "At WorkFirst, we received comprehensive medical office training, training for self-sufficiency and job placement services," added Austin, a resident of Lynnwood.

Molina officials cite the thorough nature of the WorkFirst program that provides individuals with specific skill sets before their first day on the job.

"The WorkFirst program offers the initial steps of training for us. Its thorough educational component folds directly into our systems and philosophies," said Lisa Zerda, Member Services Manager at Molina Healthcare of Washington. "We are excited to be associated with such a meaningful program."

Stanwood resident Alicia Blair is a mother of five and like Lisa Austin, also completed the 14-week Medical Office Training offered by WorkFirst. A former recipient of Medicaid, Blair says that her personal experience along with her WorkFirst instruction has helped her work with members and providers in resolving issues as a member services representative for Molina.

"I think having been on Medicaid, I can better relate to members in helping them in particular situations. I could have never been in this situation if it wasn't for WorkFirst," said Blair.

Molina Healthcare of Washington, Inc. is one of Washington's fastest growing Medicaid health plans and part of Molina Healthcare, Inc. Molina of Washington serves more than 200,000 members in more than 30 Washington counties including King, Pierce, Walla Walla and Spokane and relies on community physicians, local rural health clinics and hospitals for its provider network throughout Washington.

For more information on Molina Healthcare of Washington, please log onto www.molinahealthcare.com/washington.

Molina Healthcare, Inc. (NYSE:MOH), a publicly-held company, is among the most experienced managed healthcare companies serving low income patients who have traditionally faced barriers to accessing quality healthcare -- including individuals covered by Medicaid and other state administered health programs for children. Molina Healthcare operates health plans in Washington, Michigan, California and Utah. The company's corporate headquarters are in Long Beach, California.

More information on Molina Healthcare can be obtained at www.molinahealthcare.com.

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