



Madison County helps woman go from public assistance to professional in medical field

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WOOD RIVER — A single mother working part-time and receiving public assistance has found a full-time career in the medical field thanks to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

Philicia Holman visited Madison County Employment and Training more than a year ago seeking tuition assistance to help her finish her schooling for respiratory care at Southwestern Illinois College. Holman, who was working part-time as a waitress and receiving public assistance for herself and her two children, received funding through WIOA.

An older than average age college student, Holman found it difficult to care for her two small children and attend clinical hours outside of her normal commuting area.

The WIOA funding assisted Holman with her tuition. Holman graduated in May and started worked as a PRN, or pro re nata, as a respiratory care tech at St. Luke's Hospital in St. Louis.

While working part-time in the position Holman found a full-time position at another hospital where she started earning higher wages.

Holman said wasn't able to take advantage of some of the resources available to others because she was a single mother. She said she could not attend the extra classes that were out of the area. Students often took the extra classes to prep for boards

Holman said she wouldn't change anything about her journey.

“I’m just really glad that I stuck it out,” she said. “I want to be able to provide for my children, and myself. I’m glad that now I’ll be able to do so.”