

20 graduate from St. Antoine Residence's CNA program

NORTH SMITHFIELD — Twenty students recently graduated from Saint Antoine Residence's Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) Training and Career Laddering class known as TEAMhealth2 (Train, Employ, Advance, and Mentor).

"This is one of the largest classes we have graduated," said Tammy Summiel, TEAMhealth's program director.

The program has been operating for five years, funded primarily through two, three year grants from the United Way of Rhode Island's Community Impact and Skill-Up programs.

"The students will obtain their state licenses as CNAs and all have been placed in employment," Summiel added.

The program works with an array of funding, employer, and program partners. Other funding partners have

included or now include The Rhode Island Foundation, Levy Foundation, Northern Rhode Island Area Health Education Center (nriAHEC), Blanche Walsh Trust, Ocean State Charities Trust, and the Departments of Labor and Training and Human Services.

Over the last five years, more than 280 people have graduated with 100 percent job placement. An additional 98 individuals are now on or have completed the career laddering portion of the program to become CNA Level II, Certified Medication Technicians (CMT), Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN), Registered Nurse (RN).

Keia Horton was one of TEAMhealth's recent graduates. She says the TEAMhealth program has literally changed her life.

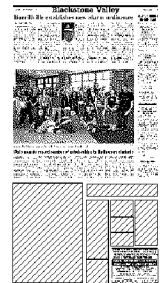
"After high school, I joined the Navy and served during the Iraqi Freedom

War," she said. "Upon returning home, I became a single mom with two young children and no job. For 18 months, I lived in two different homeless shelters just to survive and keep my children safe. Then, I was accepted into the Veterans' Housing Program and moved into my very first apartment."

A spiritual person, Keia punctuates her story by saying, "if you have a desire in your heart to do something, and if God sees fit, He will bless you with whatever that desire is."

And, so it was with Keia as she stood before her graduating class, recently. She had found out about Saint Antoine's TEAMhealth program and with the supports available to her through the program, had successfully graduated top of her class.

She says that her ultimate goal is to become a registered nurse.





Submitted photo
Keia Horton, shown here with her daughters, Satara, 5, and Ja'Naye, 2, graduated top of her class from Saint Antoine Residence's Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) Training and Career Laddering class.