



**CareerSTAT**

JOBS FOR THE FUTURE AND THE  
NATIONAL FUND FOR WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS

# HOLY ANGELS RESIDENTIAL FACILITY

SHREVEPORT, LA | 300 EMPLOYEES

Photograph courtesy Holy Angels Residential Facility

## BUILDING LOYALTY AND INSPIRING ACCOMPLISHMENT

Holy Angels is an independent licensed residential training facility serving approximately 184 individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities whose ages range from newborn to older adults. A nursery, dormitories, and group homes located on and near the now 64-acre campus comprise “home” to its residents. In 2012, Holy Angels expanded its mission to adults in the community who are awaiting an opportunity for meaningful work. AngelWorks Day Program provides participants jobs in culinary arts, business services, horticulture, and creative arts.

CEO Laurie Boswell feels strongly that, in order to retain good employees, the organization needs to make bold moves to address employee life skills, general work skills, as well as to offer motivated workers a clear path to upward career mobility and pay. In 2012, Holy Angels joined a collaboration with Southern University, Bossier Parish Community College, and Workforce Innovations for Northwest Louisiana (a partner of the National Fund for Workforce Solutions), to establish Angel University.

Through Angel University, Holy Angels offers its employees optional self-improvement and basic skill classes such as basic computer skills, business etiquette, and conflict resolution.

Angel University participants also have access to career counseling and the opportunity to enroll in postsecondary programs. Certification programs ensure that frontline workers continue to develop new skills and progress on the career ladder with an increase in pay.

In 2013:

- > **22 of 23** frontline workers passed the Certified Medication Administration training course. Of these, all **12** employees eligible for pay increases related to this certification received the pay increase.
- > **81** frontline workers opted to participate in foundational and life skills courses that included Microsoft Word, Excel, and Outlook; business etiquette; and conflict resolution. All participants passed these courses. From October 2012 to October 2013, 5,652 hours of training were conducted for employees.

- > **1** frontline worker completed postsecondary education and is now an RN at Holy Angels.

## RETURN ON INVESTMENT

- > **Decline in Voluntary Separations:** Since the 2012 implementation of Angel University, voluntary separations have declined sharply from a monthly average of **9** to only **2** individuals each month.
- > **36** Holy Angels employees are now certified by the state to administer medications.
- > All **26** eligible frontline workers have received pay increases.
- > **Retention:** Of the **22** frontline workers who obtained certification in medication administration in 2012, **20** are employed one year later.

Angel University enjoys a high level of support from The Community Foundation of North Louisiana. Grant funds have upgraded campus facilities with a computer laboratory and other technology. Holy Angel's commitment to sustaining Angel University—offering paid training and providing pay increases—is part of its long-range planning and budgeting process. Its participation as the healthcare workforce employer in Workforce Innovations for Northwest Louisiana continues to strengthen the foundations of this program and its recruitment and retention efforts.

*“Over the years it has become painfully clear that many of the workers upon whose dedication, compassion, and professionalism we so greatly rely also need assistance maximizing their own human potential. Further, we believe that by helping these workers to learn while they earn, we gain a more loyal long-term workforce that is increasingly able to support improvements to the continuum of care we are known for.” –Laurie Boswell, CEO, Holy Angels Residential Facility*

### FRONTLINE SUCCESS



After nearly two decades of excellent service, direct service worker **Queen Douglas** was surprised when senior leadership encouraged her to join the first group of Angel University students. Learning the fundamentals, Queen soon became comfortable with the Microsoft Office suite. Eager to learn more, she was among the first group of graduates from the Certified Medication Administration program and received an increase in pay. Today, Queen encourages young direct service workers who are nervous about participating in training and hopes that her peers will continue to challenge themselves to improve their careers and to seek happy, healthy, and fulfilled lives.

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