

WPCC program accredited

The Medical Laboratory Technician Program at Western Piedmont Community College has been awarded accreditation by the Committee on Allied Health Education of the American Medical Association.

The program is the second of five MLT programs in the state to attain national accreditation status, according to Dr. Donald McNeill, medical director. The accreditation makes graduates eligible to take the national certification examination given by the American Society of Clinical Pathologists.

The accreditation process, begun in the fall of 1975, involves submitting a self-study for approval by the accrediting agency and being investigated by a survey team of professionals during a two-day on-site visit. The program must meet the requirements of the National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences.

The college's MLT program was begun in 1973 in an effort to expand the one-year certified laboratory assistant program which started in 1968. The MLT program, a two-year course, is designed to train technologists for community hospital clinical laboratories.

The MLT program is directed by Mrs. Rosemarie Palmer, assisted by Mrs. Marcia Pendergraph. Seven teaching hospitals in the area are associated with the program, including Grace Hospital in Morganton, Valdese General Hospital, Cabarrus Memorial Hospital in Concord, Caldwell Memorial Hospital in Lenoir, Catawba Memorial Hospital in Hickory, Cleveland Hospital in Shelby, and Glenn R. Frye Memorial Hospital in Hickory.



Admiring the accreditation certificate are (from left) Dr. Donald McNeill, Mrs. Rosemarie Palmer, and Dr. Gordon C. Blank, WPCC president.

According to Mrs. Palmer, admission to the program is selective and limited to 20 applicants each fall term. The course includes 21 months of both academic courses on campus and clinical practice in one of the seven affiliating hospitals.

The MLT graduate is prepared to work in a medical laboratory perform-

ing analytical tests on blood and body fluids to aid the physician in diagnosing and treating disease. The college's program has been successful, Mrs. Palmer says, in that all graduates have passed the national certification exam and are employed. More than 60 applications for fall admission have been received this year.