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WPCC medical assisting students achieve 100 percent pass rate

Special to The News Herald

MORGANTON — Western Piedmont Community College's 2011 Medical Assisting program graduates achieved a 100 percent passing rate on the national examination for the Certified Medical Assistant (CMA-AAMA) credential, according to Ann Giles, the program coordinator.

The CMA examination, administered by the American Association of Medical Assistants (AAMA) in conjunction with the National Board of Medical Examiners, tests administrative, clinical and general medical knowledge required of a medical assistant needed to perform in a licensed health care practitioner's office. Western Piedmont's medical assisting students graduated in May and sat for the computerized examination in testing centers around the area between May and November.

The class of Spring 2011 had 100 percent participation in the certification process with a 100 percent passing rate. Graduates achieving the CMA credential are Lexie Beane and Lauren Biddix of Lenoir; Emily McIntosh of Nebo; Sheri Rodriguez of Marion; Sue Lail of Valdese; Kathy Lester of Hickory; and Whitney Conway, Laura Edwards, Daphne Ervin, Tonia Price, Leigh Thompson, Michelle Walker, Kandy Wheeling, Marqueta Whisenant, Crystal Yelton and Gia Xiong, all of Morganton.

Medical Assistants are the only allied health personnel trained to perform administrative, clinical and laboratory procedures in the physician's office setting. Only individuals who have graduated from accredited Medical Assisting programs are eligible to sit for the examination to earn the Certified

Medical Assistant credential. After earning the CMA (AAMA), individuals must recertify, through continuing education or retesting, every five years to retain the credential. Locally, the Burke County Chapter of AAMA meets at 6 p.m. on the second Tuesday of each month in the Lake James Room at Blue Ridge Healthcare. These speaker meetings are approved for continuing education units and are open to all medical assistants.

Hundreds of students have graduated from WPCC's Medical Assisting program since its inception in 1968. Many of these graduates continue to work in physicians' offices in Burke, McDowell, Caldwell and Catawba counties. In addition to Giles, current instructors in the MA Program are Rachel Bradshaw, CMA (AAMA), Beverly Berry, MT (ASCP) and Terry Houston, EMT.