

# Barnabas Uplift Helps Iowans Begin Careers in Caring

The Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) Training Program of Barnabas Uplift capped off a successful year of growth in rural areas, with seven classes graduating in the last two months alone. According to Pastor Vince Ramos, Barnabas Uplift state coordinator, the program's expansion into rural Iowa communities has reached people who may not have otherwise had the means to pursue a health care career.

"By working with the community colleges, we're able to reach a very specific group of folks that the colleges alone may not have reached before," Ramos says.



Graduates of Barnabas Uplift's second CNA Training Course offered at Postville were honored Dec. 17 at St. Paul Lutheran, Postville.



Zion Lutheran, Oelwein, hosted a ceremony Dec. 15 for graduates of Barnabas Uplift's CNA Training Course in Oelwein.

As part of its Help4Health initiative, Barnabas Uplift works with area community colleges to offer the 75-hour instruction and clinical course to prepare students for the CNA certification exam and a career as nursing assistants in nursing homes. The training takes place at sites in several rural Iowa communities and is offered free for qualified individuals whose income is at or below the poverty line, or up to 200 percent above the poverty line.

Four Barnabas Uplift coaches oversee the training sites and work with social service agencies, churches, schools and other local organizations to recruit potential students who are eligible and interested in the training. The coaches serve as mentors for the students, helping them with enrollment and supporting them through training and job placement.

"These students have a lot of significant barriers that traditional, on-campus students might not have," says Ramos. "Our coaches help connect them with resources that can overcome some of those barriers, such as needing transportation."

Barnabas Uplift is an interfaith social ministry network that encourages individuals, families and communities in Iowa to move beyond poverty. A federal funded grant enabled the Help4Health CNA training program to reach more rural communities, including Oelwein, Postville, Roland and Iowa Falls. Continued contributions and referrals for students will help Barnabas Uplift continue to help lift rural Iowans out of poverty.



A Jan. 19 graduation ceremony at Trinity Lutheran, Waterloo, honored these five students for completing the Barnabas Uplift 75-hour CNA Training Course.



## To learn more about how to support Barnabas Uplift, contact:

Pastor Vince Ramos, state coordinator  
Office: 319-233-5561  
Cell: 319-296-6400  
Email: [barnabasupliftiowa@gmail.com](mailto:barnabasupliftiowa@gmail.com)  
Website: <http://sites.google.com/site/encoragingiowans/>