

Recruitment Coordinator Up-Date

Wow! I can't believe nearly a year has passed – and what a year it has been for me, to say the least. I feel as though I am getting a handle on the processes and systems, as well as a deeper understanding of some of the unique needs of many rural Oregon communities.

I was fortunate to have attended some very exciting conferences; the benefits were both professional and personal. The Northwest Regional Rural Health Conference in Spokane last March revealed a strong collaborative relationship between our states. Each state generously works toward bringing providers to the Northwest region. At the National Rural Health conference in San Diego last May, Dr. Carl Hammerschlag's motivational talk was very inspiring. He suggested 'if it doesn't feel good – you are not doing it right' and 'try to find a way to come to every day with joy'. I'm finding my responsibilities in this office support that inspiration. Another presenter, Dr. Mary Wakefield got my attention when she discussed the rural medical practice. One of her points was that even if this type of practice is not for you, support of this vulnerable population by collaboration with the practitioners in the field will help preserve us as a nation – caring for our brothers and sisters however we can. With rural leaders such as these, how could one not become passionate about their involvement in the rural health environment?

In August I attended the Association of Staff Physician Recruiter's conference and a National Organization of State Offices of Rural Health mentoring workshop. The first conference provided a broad scoped picture of recruitment and exposed me to the many resources available. The second conference brought the picture into a clear focus as others in my role in the various state offices of rural health shared their experiences and tips for recruiting and retaining practitioners in our rural communities. It was a great experience to be surrounded, in both instances, with positive, energetic, innovative colleagues who were undaunted by the tasks at hand. Additionally, all are willing to share experiences and information.

The truly exciting part of this, however, is being able to work with each of you to actually put some substance to the thoughts and theories and bring the much needed providers into your communities and hearts and then help in keeping them with you.

I am honored to be working with the staff here in the office, as well as each of you receiving this letter. I would like to extend my warmest wishes for a peaceful and heart-warming holiday season to you and all those touched by your life.



Dear "Aunt Jo"

Your recruitment questions answered



Dear Aunt Jo:

Argh!!!!!!!!!! I'm at my wits end. I have interviewed lots of candidates, coordinated a few site visits, offered a couple of contracts, and have been turned down! What is going on?

A Frustrated Employer

Dear FE:

The key to attracting and retaining professionals in rural communities is to define, communicate and manage the candidate's expectations.

Candidate Satisfaction = Candidate's recruitment experience (-) candidate's expectations

The only component of the equation that you can impact is the candidate's expectations.

Have you taken the time to ask yourself "Why didn't we get this candidate?" This self-assessment will help you determine if the rejection was due to something that could be rectified prior to the next recruitment effort. If you don't know why, you haven't been thorough enough in your discussions with the candidate. You need to know before the candidate departs the site visit, what obstacles and/or concerns they have so that you are able to immediately address these. Turn this recruitment failure into a learning process so that you will be able to minimize the impact of barriers or problems. For example, if the candidate's spouse was not 'sold' on the community, make sure you discover the needs of each future candidate's spouse prior to incurring the expense of the site visit to make sure the community is able to fill these needs.

If competitive wages and benefits are proving to be the issue, explore with your financial

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advisor, colleagues in other practices, or your recruitment coordinator, potential options for enhancing the compensation. Some ideas might include, a 4-day workweek, partnership options at a predetermined time or increased salary to cover the cost of health or disability insurance.

Are you clearly representing your practice? Be clear in communicating your provider needs and eliminate all ambiguity. This may require some thoughtful deliberation and written notes to guide discussion during initial conversations. Prepare to discuss topics such as practice philosophy, anticipated call and patient scheduling, practice protocol for handling patient telephone calls, practice and community orientation plans.

Discover what the candidate's expectations are for the site visit and then make the experience even better. Reiterate at the site visit the earlier conversations to make sure both parties have perceived the information in the same manner. The rule of thumb here is to under promise and over deliver. Unexpected benefit or gain yields a higher level of satisfaction.

And, lastly, be sure to provide a written contract to the candidate prior to the anticipated signing. The candidate needs to review the contract, perhaps share with counsel, and be comfortable with all aspects of the practice prior to signing. After going to all the work of recruitment, one would like to be assured of a long, healthy professional relationship with the new provider.

Kind regards,

Aunt Jo

For recruitment and retention assistance, feel free to contact Jo Johnson, Recruitment Services Coordinator, toll-free at 866-674-4376. Please send your questions for Aunt Jo to johnsjo@ohsu.edu or FAX to 503-494-4798.

Holy Rosary Offers Quality Rural Practice

Judy Cordeniz is looking for some very specific people. "Someone who grew up in a rural area; someone with family in the area; someone who loves the outdoors – but definitely someone who has experienced the life style." Judy Cordeniz, MHA, CHE, is the Vice President of Strategic Planning and Business Development at Holy Rosary, a 74-bed, acute care hospital, serving Ontario and the surrounding communities in eastern Oregon and southwestern Idaho. The lifestyle she's talking about is rural.

"We are looking for a female OB/GYN to join an established practice as an independent practitioner, and for an Internist with a sub-specialty in cardiology, pulmonology, or gastroenterology to work for the hospital," said Cordeniz. Holy Rosary has a goal of

serving its community as the primary and general care center by providing diagnostics and follow-up care to cardiology, pulmonology, or gastroenterology surgeries done in Boise. "By hiring an Internist with a sub-specialty, we will be able to provide care close to home. This reduction in travel saves time and money and is better for the patient in the long run," says Cordeniz.

Ontario, Oregon, population 11, 030, is located on the Oregon-Idaho boarder, sixty minutes from Boise, Idaho. Ontario is part of one of the fastest growing regions in the country. Thanks to a robust economy and beautiful scenery, Ontario is an ideal place to begin a career or raise a family.

Ontario also has a growing medical community containing cancer specialty clinics, primary care clinics, a modern nursing home, and dental and pharmaceutical facilities. Ontario is no stranger to 21st century technology either. "We have good internet connectivity in Malheur County," says Cordeniz, "I was able to accomplish my masters degree through an on-line program." Holy Rosary also has a formalized program that has helped mentor J1 visa physicians.

As a part of Catholic Health Initiatives, one of the largest not-for-profit health care systems in the country, Holy Rosary is the largest employer in the area. Considered a progressive health care provider, the medical center customizes its services to meet the needs of patients and the community. Holy Rosary strives to provide the most advanced equipment and sophisticated systems for the treatment of patients.

A recent \$1.7 million upgrade to Holy Rosary's radiology department made imaging systems and equipment equivalent to that of a large urban hospital radiology department. March 2003 saw the completion of a remodeled emergency department, with 16 bays and three trauma beds. Four newly remodeled operating suites, for inpatient and outpatient surgeries, are now equipped with state-of-the-art sterile processing. Additionally there are another two potential operating suites to be added at a later date.

Judy Cordeniz has been with Holy Rosary for seven years. "They invest in their employees," she says. Holy Rosary has a very high retention rate, only 12% turnover, not only among the professional staff but also for administrative and support staff. The medical center offers employees education support, the opportunity to gain experience and professional growth, and the ability to advance within the organization.



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Together with a local community college, Holy Rosary provides nursing scholarships for the college's nursing program. "We have a very positive, strong 'grow your own' attitude because of how rural and isolated we are," said Cordeniz.

The average benefits package includes family insurance for medical, dental, vision and employee only life insurance. Medical malpractice insurance is covered, and if a physician stays with Holy Rosary for five years they are offered tail coverage. Five weeks of vacation, which includes CE time, retirement contribution, professional dues, and licensure are also part of the physician benefit package.

Ontario is considered one of the "gems" of the surrounding Treasure Valley area because of its fascinating history, diverse landscape and friendly people. The Ontario area offers wonderful opportunities for the outdoor adventurer. The surrounding snow-capped mountains provide a place for every winter sport, and the beautiful pine forests are filled with hunting opportunities. The Snake River, local lakes and tributaries are a fisherman's paradise and a playground for boaters, rafters and kayakers. The annual precipitation of 9.68", and the 2,150' elevation level, creates a wonderful high desert climate.

The Four Rivers Cultural Center provides information on the heritage and cultures of the Northern Paiute Indians, Basque shepherders, European cattlemen, and the Mexican and Japanese farmers who settled the land around Ontario. This diverse community enjoys a rich history of art, folklore, and cultural festivals.

To learn more about the openings at Holy Rosary Medical Center in Ontario, Oregon please contact Jo Johnson, Recruitment Services Coordinator, at 503-494-4450, or via email at johnsjo@ohsu.edu. For more information on Ontario, visit the Ontario Chamber of Commerce web site at www.ontariochamber.com. To explore more of Ontario and the surrounding area visit www.el.com/to/ontario/.

Here's A Tip

Recruitment Tip:

If your practice is growing and you anticipate needing additional clinical staff – or, if one or more of your physician's is looking at retirement in the next couple of years – NOW is the time to contact HERO to begin the search for your new practitioner. If you are not sure how to determine your needs, short or long-term, our office Field Services staff can help.

Tips for Opportunity Sites:

- 1) Enhance your opportunity - negotiate a monthly stipend for early commitment (while doctors are completing residency programs).
- 2) Enlist the aid of a local real estate agent, banker, and a school administrator in the community orientation.

Tips for Candidates:

- 1) Check out www.homefair.com/homefair for cost-of-living, climate and demographic comparisons between various chosen locations.
- 2) To start out on the right foot with your new employer, recognize that your attentiveness to obtaining a state license is critical to becoming enrolled with the third party payors, who will ultimately be paying your wages. Failure to accomplish this in a timely manner puts unwarranted (and likely unappreciated) financial stress on your new employer.

For recruitment and retention technical assistance, contact Jo Johnson, Recruitment Services Coordinator, toll-free at 866-674-4376, or johnsjo@ohsu.edu.

Congress Extends "Conrad 30" Program

Congress passed a bill re-authorizing the popular "Conrad 30" program on November 17, 2004. Last year the program placed more than 1,000 doctors in underserved communities across the nation. The Conrad 30 program allows foreign-born physicians who study in the U.S. to remain in the country to practice medicine in federally designated shortage areas.

The Conrad 30 program is extended for two years. The bill also exempts individuals holding Conrad 30 waivers from the annual cap on H-1B visas. A pilot program will be established allowing states placement flexibility with five of the 30 positions available. These five practitioners may be placed in areas designated as underserved by the state, rather than the federal criteria used for the other 25 positions.

To learn how Oregon's Conrad 30 Physician Visa Waiver Program works contact Dia Shuhart, Program Coordinator, 503-373-0364 or by email at dia.shuhart@state.or.us. Visit the Oregon Department of Human Services web site, www.dhs.state.or.us/publichealth/hsp/conrad/index.cfm.

**The HERO Program at the
Oregon Office of Rural Health
would like to hear from you!**

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