Whirlpool's "Best Ticket in Town" Program Brings the Classroom to Employees - Company's Partnership with Lake Michigan College Helps Employees More Easily Earn Associate's Degrees

Benton Harbor, Mich. -- Wednesday, April 20, 2005 -- Whirlpool Corporation (NYSE: WHR) today recognized nearly 30 of its employees who are half way toward earning an associate's degree in business from Lake Michigan College (LMC). The employees are all participating in a new program, called the Best Ticket in Town, which Whirlpool developed in partnership with LMC to help more of its Benton Harbor employees earn associate's degrees.

Whirlpool, like many companies, continually competes with other companies to attract and retain the best employees. One of the company's challenges is finding college-educated candidates in the Benton Harbor area for its customer call center. More than half of the employees who work at the company's Benton Harbor call center do not have a four-year degree.

“We know how critical our employees are to the success of our business and how development of our employees benefits the company, the employee and the community,” said Thomas Welke, vice president and general manager, Customer and Appliance Care – NAR, Whirlpool Corp. “Education is a critical component of that development and through the Best Ticket in Town program we wanted to make it as easy as possible for more employees to obtain a college education.”

Since offering the first college credit courses in August 2003, the Best Ticket in Town program has directly addressed barriers many employees in the Benton Harbor area cited as their reasons for not pursuing a degree – cost and inability to schedule classes around their work schedules. With the program, Whirlpool pays for tuition costs up-front and supervisors help by scheduling participating employees' work hours to allow employees to attend classes, most of which are held from 6-9 p.m. Whirlpool executives occasionally serve as guest lecturers to help reinforce the lessons learned in the classroom. For example, David Swift, executive vice present for Whirlpool's North American Region, presented a case study on Whirlpool's marketing strategy during a marketing class last winter.

LMC provides everything the students need to obtain their degrees onsite at Whirlpool facilities, including advising, assessment, registration, text book delivery and, of course, instructors. The Best Ticket in Town program represents the first time LMC has provided a complete degree program at an employer's location.

“We have enjoyed working with Whirlpool Corporation to design a program that meets the needs of their employees while achieving the company's business goals,” said Bob Harrison, dean of Occupational Studies and Community & Business Services for LMC. “We believe that this is an innovative model for other companies and organizations to consider in attracting and retaining high-quality employees.”

Kerrie Campbell-Miller, one of the employees being recognized, is the first Whirlpool employee to obtain an associate's degree through the Best Ticket in Town program. Unlike other Best Ticket in Town participants, Campbell-Miller will earn an Associate in Arts degree with a liberal arts emphasis because she was able to apply 21 credits she had already earned at LMC prior to the start of the Best Ticket in Town program. All other participants will earn an Associate in Business Administration degree.

Campbell-Miller, like many young people, wasn't quite sure what she wanted to do when she finished high school. After strong encouragement from her parents, she started full-time at LMC, but after seeing her report card her parents told her she was on her own. She continued taking classes at LMC while also working part-time at night as janitor at a local power plant. When she took a position with Whirlpool, she found it challenging to continue taking classes because of the day shift she worked. She was one of the first Whirlpool employees to sign up for the Best Ticket in Town program.

“It's a great program for people like me who need to work full-time,” said Campbell-Miller, a product exchange expediter who plans to continue her career at Whirlpool after graduation. “I think Whirlpool is one of the best companies around. I would still want to work here even if Best Ticket in Town didn't exist, but knowing that the company is willing to invest in you makes it even better to work here.”

“It doesn't get any better than this,” agreed Sharon Purnell, a process advisor who is currently pursuing her associate's degree through the program. “Whirlpool pays for classes, books, holds classes onsite and ensures employees have supervisor support. The only thing you have to do is apply yourself.” Purnell, who decided to pursue her associate's degree when her daughter went to college, was part of the committee who developed the criteria for the program.

While Whirlpool offers tuition reimbursement for qualified candidates for college and university studies, prior to the Best Ticket in Town the company was providing tuition assistance for local employees enrolled in nearly 30 different colleges and universities. Through the Best Ticket in Town, the company was able to consolidate the number of colleges and realize cost savings and value by partnering with LMC.

The Best Ticket in Town partnership with LMC has been so successful, Whirlpool is now considering partnering with a four-year university to help employees complete a bachelor's degree in business.

About Lake Michigan College
Lake Michigan College is a two-year community college with four campuses in Benton Harbor, Niles and South Haven, Michigan. It serves over 7,000 students annually and offers a wide range of one- and two-year occupational programs as well as programs designed to transfer to four-year institutions. Further information about LMC can be found at www.lakemichigancollege.edu.

About Whirlpool Corporation
Whirlpool Corporation is the world's leading manufacturer and marketer of major home appliances, with annual sales of over $13 billion, 68,000 employees, and nearly 50 manufacturing and technology research centers around the globe. The company markets *Whirlpool, KitchenAid, Brastemp, Bauknecht, Consul* and other major brand names to consumers in more than 170 countries.

CONTACT:
Whirlpool Corporation
Media:
Jody Lau,
269/923-5918
jody_lau@whirlpool.com