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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CVTC, Marian Partner on Dental Hygiene BS Degree ***Plan provides Wisconsin option for dental hygienists***

Eau Claire, WI – Alumni of Chippewa Valley Technical College’s Dental Hygiene program will soon have a path to completing a Bachelor of Science Degree in Dental Hygiene in Wisconsin, thanks to a new agreement with Marian University in Fond du Lac.

Representatives of CVTC and Marian University signed the agreement in a ceremony at CVTC’s Health Education Center in Eau Claire Tuesday, Oct. 8.

“This will open new opportunities for our graduates, who in the past have had to go out of state to earn a bachelor’s degree in dental hygiene,” said Pam Entorf, director of the CVTC program. “Having the higher degree will expand their career possibilities.”

“We are pleased to be able to welcome CVTC alumni and help them continue their education and enter the workforce,” said Russ Mayer, Marian University provost and vice president for academic affairs. “Establishing partnerships like this allows Marian University to help even more students and expand the opportunities of those wanting to become dental hygienists in Wisconsin.”

Under the plan, Marian University will accept all credits from students’ associate’s degrees from CVTC, permitting students to build upon their previously held degree by entering Marian University only needing 50 credits for completion. CVTC alumni will also be eligible for a 10 percent scholarship.

“This is a great fit for both institutions because of our dedication and commitment to student success and helping students advance their education and careers,” said Dr. Julie Furst-Bowe, CVTC vice president of instruction.

Entorf explained that the appeal of a bachelor of science degree for licensed dental hygienists is the possibility of expanded opportunities. She noted that it is a pathway toward working in education, either at a dental hygiene school like CVTC, or for a private company that sells dental equipment and is seeking people to conduct training sessions. Others may work in sales or product development for such companies.

Wisconsin is now considering a bill creating the position of dental therapist between the hygienist and dentist positions. Dental therapists would be licensed to do certain dental work, such as simple extractions or fillings. Minnesota and Michigan are among 12 states with dental therapists. Because

Wisconsin has not yet established a similar program, no standards for dental therapists exist in Wisconsin, but Entorf said it would be at minimum a bachelor's degree level position. The Marian University program could represent a step toward dental therapist if it is approved in Wisconsin, Entorf said.

The agreement between Marian University and CVTC is the first in the state, but university leaders hope to expand it to the other six Wisconsin technical colleges that offer dental hygiene programs.

Marian University was founded in 1936 by the Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes in Fond du Lac, Wis. The institution has one of the lowest student-faculty ratios in the state and strives to live its core values as a community committed to learning, dedicated to service and social justice and joined together by spiritual traditions. Marian offers undergraduate, adult, master's and doctoral degree programs at its main campus, in facilities throughout Wisconsin and online.

With over 155 programs offered both online and on-campus, Chippewa Valley Technical College delivers superior, progressive technical education which improves the lives of students, meets the workforce needs of the region, and strengthens the community. CVTC programs are designed with input of business and industry to prepare graduates for today's jobs, with 95 percent employed within six months of graduation and associate degree graduates earning an average annual salary of \$46,816.

Cutline:

CVTC Vice President of Instruction Dr. Julie Furst-Bowe and Marian University Provost Dr. Russell Mayer sign a memorandum of understanding on Oct. 8 forming the basis for an agreement creating a path for CVTC Dental Hygiene program graduates to complete a Bachelor of Science degree through Marian.

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