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for the student because the program is funded by a state grant.

Dental assisting as a career took a kick in the teeth in recent years with several changes in the market, including the AIDS scare, Frederick said.

But now, "people have been educated that with proper precautions the danger isn't as much as it was first perceived to be," Frederick said.

Many schools of dental assisting have closed in recent years because of expense and dwindling interest, Frederick said.

Add to that the fact that after completing the training many dental assistants go on to other areas of dentistry — they may train to be dental hygienists or even dentists. (Dental hygienists are licensed specialists who clean teeth. Dental assistants assist the dentist during procedures.)

And, because of the pay scale, many assistants move on within a couple years, Frederick said. Dental assistants usually make \$8 or \$9 an hour, compared to \$18-\$20 an hour for hygienists.

The result: Finding qualified dental assistants was like pulling teeth. "Now dentists have had to suffer," Frederick said.

With the help of a state grant, a "virtual school" has been set up. A consortium forms the school: Peak Performers, with offices in Livonia, recruits students; instructors from Dental Training Systems of Michigan use curriculum materials provided by the University of Kentucky School of Dentistry and donated classroom and laboratory space at the OCC Orchard Ridge campus to teach students. Dentist-sponsors help the students gain work experience.

Kristie Greka of Farmington Hills recently completed the program. She found the instruction hard but rewarding. "There was a lot of studying involved — every night," she said.

She had been working as an optician when she saw an ad in the paper for the dental program. After going through a rigorous interview process, Greka entered the program.

Now she's working for Dr. Laurie Toomajanian in Northville. Greka's case is an example of how to change careers in a short time.

"But not everyone is accepted. 'We have to preserve our reputation,'" said Phillip Stark, president and chief executive officer of Peak Performers. That's why potential students must go through a phone interview, submit a writing sample and then come in for a personal interview before being accepted into the program.

"We want our people to know what to do," Stark said. "On-the-job training is expensive. Many programs don't have their students go out into a dental office."

But this program does. Since beginning in January, the program has even brushed up on the number of required training hours, increasing them from 200 to 300 hours, based on dentist's requests.

And, to put more polish on its graduates, Peak Performers requires students to come to school dressed in uniform and to complete training in cardiopulmonary resuscitation.

The extra requirements are to give graduates an edge. "Most dental offices are very meticulous," Stark said.

Frederick and Stark aim to keep dentists smiling and filling the dental gap with trained assistants by applying for renewal of the state grant for another year. Call 477-5777 for information.

Study reviews possible impotence link to prostate disease, treatment

Does prostate disease and its treatment cause impotence? Is there a link? Botsford General Hospital's support group, Help for Impotent Men (HIM), is offering a free educational seminar for men and their partners to help answer questions and address concerns of those affected by the disease.

An estimated 14 million men suffer from impotence. Impotence most often has physical reasons such as medications, diabetes,

chronic illness, heart disease, trauma and surgery. But, there are answers and there is help for those suffering from impotence.

The HIM lecture, "Is there a link between prostate disease and impotence?" will be 7-9 p.m. Tuesday, June 14, at Botsford General Hospital, East Pavilion 2B, 29050 Grand River in Farmington Hills.

"We are pleased to offer this educational program to men and

their partners," said nurse Donna Rice, Health Development Network, community health educator. "Each month, as part of our HIM educational support group, we feature professional speakers and educational materials to address all aspects of sexuality and to provide help and support for those who are concerned about impotence."

For more information on the HIM program and the May lecture, call 477-6100.

CAMPUS PIPELINE

IF YOU HAVE NEWS FROM A COLLEGE, UNIVERSITY OR OTHER CAMPUS OF HIGHER EDUCATION — AND THERE'S A FARMINGTON-AREA CONNECTION — WE'D LIKE TO HEAR FROM YOU. Send items to: Campus Pipeline, 21898 Farmington Road, Farmington 48336.

RECEIVES SCHOLARSHIP
Mary Kutschke of Farmington was awarded the Jewel Ache Memorial Scholarship at the Fort Wayne campus of Taylor University in Fort Wayne, Ind.

NEW GRADUATES
The following Farmington area students graduated from Eastern Michigan University. They are: Joseph William Sturtz, Randall Marc Weiss, Heather Branning Leggett, Jennifer C. Rick and Jennifer Lynn Stumpo.

The following Farmington area students graduated from Eastern Michigan University. They are: Susan Cahill, Patricia Dean, Barbara Runyon, Marilyn Welke, Bridget Deloge, Linda Doyle and Tina Winnick-Szybiaty. Also, Kristin Blake, Darren Buatti, Debra DeMottas, Deborah Ford, Scott Frush, John Kennedy, Tracey Kraus, Chad Mike, Nancy Pennington, Anthony Peruchetti, David Rich, Rebecca Whitaker, Kathryn Wik, Chang-Im Yu, Jody Borock, Paul Cohen, Jodie Fuller, Karen Haberstroch, Jennifer Isenberg, Michelle Miller, Moaghan O'Brien, Michelle Rott, Susan Sundberg, Christine Taubs and Kristine Walker.

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