

Wildhaber Honored as Outstanding ECC Alumna



Amy Wildhaber of Beaufort was named recipient of the East Central College Outstanding Alumni Award for 2014. The award is presented annually to honor an ECC graduate who has used his or her education and been of service to the community. Cookie Hays, ECC's vice president of student development, made the presentation at college commencement ceremonies held Saturday, May 17, at the campus in Union.

Recognizing the importance of building upon her experience as an LPN, Wildhaber came to ECC in 2002 as an adult student intent on earning her degree and becoming a registered nurse. Wildhaber has always worked as a nurse in this area. She began her career as a LPN working on the medical-surgical-pediatric unit at St. John's Mercy Hospital-Washington. She then went to work as a school nurse with the Union R-XI School District.

In 2001 she took a position at Missouri Baptist Hospital in Sullivan where she worked as a staff nurse on the telemetry-medical unit. At that point she decided to attend ECC's Associate Degree Nursing program. ECC nursing instructor Nancy Mitchell noted that Wildhaber was a wonderful student who excelled in the classroom and the clinical setting. "She was a constant source of support for her fellow classmates as well as being a role model," Mitchell said. After graduating with her ADN, Wildhaber remained with Missouri Baptist Hospital in Sullivan as the service excellence coordinator. She is currently the nurse manager of the hospital's emergency department.

Wildhaber and her husband Troy lost their 17 year old son Zac in a vehicle accident in February of 2012. They chose to donate Zac's organs. To help them cope with their tragic loss, the Wildhaber family established Zac's Challenge, an initiative to educate people about the organ and tissue donor registry. Through their selfless act of kindness and ongoing work, many people are living today due to Zac's organ donation and the donations still to come from people who have accepted the challenge to become donors.

The family spends many volunteer hours making presentations to schools, churches and civic groups. Zac's Challenge was also honored with a \$500 "Making a Difference" award from KSDK-TV in St. Louis. Missouri Baptist Hospital in Sullivan has also been an outstanding supporter of the project.

Wildhaber is a 1990 graduate of Union High School. She is a member of St. Joseph Church at Neier where she serves on the parish council. She and her husband live near Beaufort with their children, Megan and Rob.