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**Wheaton Franciscan recognized as one of America's Healthiest Companies**

December 9, 2008 – Milwaukee, WI. The Wellness Council of Wisconsin, local affiliate of the Wellness Councils of America (WELCOA), has presented Wheaton Franciscan Healthcare in Southeast Wisconsin with its coveted Silver Well Workplace Award. This national award recognizes Wheaton Franciscan's commitment to the health and well-being of its employees through quality in-house health and wellness promotion.

"Wheaton Franciscan Healthcare worked hard to successfully meet the rigorous standards set by the Well Workplace process," said Jessica Raddemann, Executive Director of the Wellness Council. "It is our pleasure to recognize them as the newest Wisconsin employer to achieve Well Workplace status."

Well Workplace winners must successfully demonstrate that employee wellness has become part of their organization's overall business strategy by meeting WELCOA's seven critical benchmarks including CEO support, cohesive wellness teams, collecting data to drive health efforts, and carefully evaluating outcomes.

"Wheaton Franciscan Healthcare has worked hard to meet the challenge of becoming one of America's Healthiest Companies," said David Hunnicutt, President of the Wellness Councils of America. "By creating a well-structured health promotion program, Wheaton has created an ideal workplace that truly has changed the lives of its employees for the better."

"Just as we nurture our patients, we want to provide our associates the opportunities and resources to nurture themselves," said John Oliverio, Wheaton Franciscan President and CEO. "In the end, our successes will be visible to those we serve as an outstanding example of how a culture of wellness benefits individuals and communities through improved health and reduced health care costs."

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**Wheaton Franciscan Healthcare** (WFH) is a Catholic, not-for-profit organization with more than 100 health and shelter organizations in Wisconsin, Iowa, Colorado, and Illinois. In Southeast Wisconsin, WFH is co-sponsored by the Wheaton Franciscan and Felician Sisters and has more than 12,000 associates, making it the second largest private employer in the area. Hospitals include All Saints in Racine, St. Joseph and St. Francis in Milwaukee, Elmbrook Memorial in Brookfield, and The Wisconsin Heart Hospital in Wauwatosa. The region also includes Wheaton Franciscan Medical Group with nearly 300 primary care and specialty physicians in more than 60 locations, a network of outpatient centers, four long-term care facilities, Home Health, and Hospice, two Family Medicine Residency programs in collaboration with the Medical College of Wisconsin, retail pharmacies, and a full-service medical and pathology laboratory.

Wheaton Franciscan Healthcare is also affiliated with Affinity Healthcare in the Fox Valley and United Hospital System in Kenosha. Started by the Wheaton Franciscan Sisters more than 125 years ago and formally incorporated in 1983, WFH has corporate services offices in Wheaton, Illinois and Glendale, Wisconsin.