

Committed Employer Partners Invest in CHWs

Issue 2, October 2007

The employer partners of the CHW Initiative have been working hard to market the coaching services to their community health worker employees. Employing over 280 CHWs, these 10 organizations have signed memorandums of agreements agreeing to provide release time for career coaching participants and recognition of the achievement of CHEC's Advanced COEC certificate. Partnering with the CHW Initiative signifies an employer's strategic investment in their workforce and their commitment to developing the skills of their employees. Employers expect to see improvements in the quality of service CHWs provide and their job satisfaction as a result of this investment.



East Boston Neighborhood Health Center's Dedicated Staff

"I'm a CHW" by Angelita Prout-Paniagua

My name is Angelita. I am working as a maternal-child outreach specialist as well as practicing birth coach with the Network Health Forward program.

Once I had to counsel a Haitian woman who had endured many hardships to get to this country. She endured overcrowding in her apartment, a low paying job and her husband toiling in poverty back in her home country. She had had a couple of miscarriages, and was devastated. Then, she received even worse news: uterine fibroids would prevent her from ever having a child. In distress, she turned to me for help. I was able to get a referral to uterine specialists, housing and immigration information so that both she and her husband could be in the United States legally. Now, three years later, she and her husband are going to be the proud parents of a healthy baby.

Note from an Employer Partner

"I talked to one of our CHWs today, I can't thank you enough for the wonderful work you are doing with her. She was telling me that you have been encouraging her to look at many opportunities. She is really excited about her future and I really think you have a huge part in that and I can't thank you enough, you are doing great work! -Tegan at BHA"

Highlight on Services: One-on-One Coaching for CHWs

Dedicated to helping CHWs reach their advancement goals, Keyse Angelo and Herman Perez provide the one-on-one career coaching services. After an initial assessment, CHWs develop a Career Plan in conjunction with their coach that articulates the advancement-related activities they are interested in pursuing. Together the CHW and coach create a projected timeline and brainstorm potential barriers that may hinder the achievement of these goals.

The coach offers assistance with referrals, applications, financial aid, follow-up and encouragement. Having a coach can help a CHW access opportunities they weren't aware of or didn't have the resources to pursue before. But as Herman often says, "I teach the CHWs how to ride the bike, but they are the ones doing all the hard work to pedal."

A recent guideline change has expanded the eligibility for enrollment. CHWs can enroll if they meet the following requirements: 1) are currently working or recently worked as a CHW 2) live or work in Boston and 3) are interested in remaining in the CHW field. Formerly CHWs had to be employed with an employer partner, but that requirement has been eliminated in order to serve more CHWs.



Free Button Given to All CHWs Enrolled in Coaching Services

Visit us on the web at www.chwinitiative.org

For questions, comments or to remove yourself from this mailing list, please email chwinfo@bostonabcd.org or call 617-348-6590. The CHW Initiative is a program of Action for Boston Community Development through the generous support of SkillWorks.