

Reprinted from:

THE PROVIDER

Vol. 29 - No. 2

The Newspaper of the Providers' Council

February 2008

Providers' Council certificate programs groom future leaders

Last July, Stan Connors, the chief executive officer of Bay Cove Human Services in Boston, addressed 18 mid-career, human service professionals graduating from the joint Suffolk University and Providers' Council Certificate in Human Service Management. His comments that evening echoed a growing concern in the human service sector. "When human

service agency executives talk about the future," said Connors, "we ask ourselves where we are going to find the next generation of leaders for the industry that we have built. The answer to that question can be found in this room tonight."

One of the Suffolk graduates was Kelli Hyland, a residential supervisor at Bridgewell, Inc. in Lynnfield and one of the sector's capable young managers. And in the western part of the state, Candace Ouillette Gaumond, program director in the Residential Supports Division of The Association For Community Living, is emerging as a leader in the human service field. A month earlier, she was among the 14 mid-career professionals graduating from the Certificate in Human Service Management Program run jointly by the Providers' Council with Clark University in Worcester.

Both of these middle managers chose human services as a career for similar reasons — to help people with developmental disabilities reach their potential and

become contributing and equal members of society. Hyland's first encounter with human services came during high school when she worked part-time as a direct service professional at North Suffolk Mental Health. During her five years as an undergraduate and post-graduate student at Suffolk University, she worked for the University's Police Department and explored a career in criminal justice. But while

studying for dual master's degrees in Mental Health Counseling and Criminal Justice, Hyland felt a tug to return to human services where she knew she could make a difference in people's lives. She joined Bridgewell in 2001 as a site director in the Mental Retardation Division. Two years later, she was promoted to Residential Supervisor, overseeing six residential site directors and 38 individuals.

Ouillette Gaumond has divided her professional life between working in human services and serving on the staffs of two Massachusetts legislators. She entered the human services sector as a direct care professional with The Ledges in Hopedale in 1993 and worked on and off in human services and at the State House until 2004 when she rejoined The Association as a program director. During those 11 years, she also earned an associate's of arts degree at MassBay Community College, attended Regis College and received a bachelor's of arts degree with honors from the Our Lady of Elms College. Ouillette Gaumond currently oversees

four, 24-hour supported residences and a supported living program that serves 18 people with developmental disabilities.

Through the Certificate in Human Service Management programs with Suffolk and Clark universities, the Providers' Council is offering committed middle managers, like Hyland and Ouillette Gaumond, the opportunity to explore various facets of agency management from human resource and finance administrative necessities to contracts, grant writing, legal and ethical requirements in order to prepare them for future leadership positions.

While Hyland felt she was a strong leader before enrolling in the program, she discovered that there is always so much more to learn — especially about yourself. "Since graduating from the certificate program," she continued, "I definitely see a change in myself and the way I approach my job. I feel that I am more 'professional' in general and that I am more ready and capable of moving into a senior management position."

Hyland, who also serves as the agency's Special Olympics coordinator, further noted that the certificate program reinforced the importance of having "well-rounded" people working in the sector. "I truly did not realize how complex the human services field was and how well-rounded in a multitude of areas I needed to be," stated Hyland. "The

certificate program covered areas that I knew something about, but I absolutely came out of the program knowing a lot about! And I not only learned from the professors and the curriculum but also from a great cross-section of my classmates."

Ouillette Gaumond thought the Certificate Program was "stellar" and that it not only "deepened my commitment" to the human service field but also reinforced her managerial skills. "The program definitely strengthened my leadership skills, particularly in areas where I felt I was weak, and it gave me a good foundation to advance in the field," said Ouillette Gaumond.

"It offers an agency the ability to provide valuable, effective, professional development to its emerging leaders as well as a long-term commitment of employment from the employee who participates in the program. I was so impressed with it that this year I am sending one of the people I supervise through it. It also jump started my coursework toward a master's degree in public administration with a focus on human service management at Clark University."

Both of these women are participating in the The Providers' Council Emerging Leaders Roundtable, a networking initiative for middle managers seeking advancement in the human service field.



Kelli Hyland



Candace Ouillette Gaumond