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Continuum's Corporate Diversity Charter

Destination Diversity champions a diverse workforce and fosters an inclusive culture that delivers quality care to a diverse patient population. We support the creation of a multicultural environment that works for everyone and capitalizes on the diversity of all associates.



Special Feature

Continuum Volunteers Support Diversity

Volunteers at Continuum hospitals have always played a pivotal role in patient care. With their varied ages, religions and cultural backgrounds, they also have become part of the organization's diverse tapestry.

"Our volunteers are diverse in the broadest sense—culturally, religiously, ethnically," says **Kathleen Dalton**, Director, Volunteer Services, St. Luke's and Roosevelt Hospitals. "In terms of culture, they are very representative of both the communities we serve and our patient population. Age differential is certainly here as well. We have 15-year-olds to seniors—one woman is turning 90 this year."

At SLR, volunteers receive cultural competency training as part of their orientation, just as new Continuum employees do. They then take an annual refresher class. Ms. Dalton notes that while many of today's SLR volunteers are considering second careers in health care or even currently attending nursing or medical school, all those lending their time to the hospitals benefit from the experience along with the patients to whom they are assigned.

"With volunteering, there comes a lot of realization that our differences don't really matter," remarks Ms. Dalton.

Vivian Conan, 68, is a retired librarian who has volunteered at Roosevelt Hospital since the summer of 2010. Her station at the Patient and Family Information Center suits her perfectly. It allows her to use her research expertise in helping visitors find information on specific medical conditions and, if they need a doctor, help them use Continuum's physician referral line. It also puts her people skills to use, as she has worked in libraries on the Lower



Representative of Beth Israel's diverse volunteer force are, from left, Andrea Taylor, Usha Kaul, Kimberly Guerrero and Erica Varela, here preparing to distribute daffodils to hospitalized patients.

East Side and in Midtown, the South Bronx and Westchester with people of all ages and ethnic backgrounds. Her engagement with diversity doesn't end there: She belongs to the Peace of Heart Choir, which includes members of various races, religions and cultures. The choir sings in different languages and has performed on Roosevelt's psychiatric and orthopaedic units.

"I think my life experience makes it possible for me to understand the problems people are going through. I can connect with them," says Ms. Conan, a West Side resident of Greek-Jewish descent.

Xavier Salce, 17, brings his helping nature to Beth Israel Medical Center, where he has volunteered for two years. The New Design High School student from Brooklyn started on 5 Linsky and then transferred to the pediatric Emergency Room. Every

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Site Diversity Council Profile

Kings Highway Division

Marsha Chyrack, Admitting Manager, and Rosa Raffaele, Patient Care Associate, Pre-Surgical Testing, have shared the chairmanship of the Kings Highway Division Site Diversity Council ever since it was formed several years ago. Together—with guidance from Council Sponsor Rhona Hetsrony, KHD's Vice President, Administration—they have led the Council in coordinating events and implementing initiatives to successfully spread the diversity message throughout the hospital.

To date, there have been quarterly "Lunch and Learns," where KHD staffers talk to co-workers about their respective cultures and their experiences migrating to the United States and entering the health care field. The lunchtime gatherings offer indigenous foods and have featured associates from Russia, China, Haiti, Puerto Rico, Scotland, Ireland and other countries.

"I see more interaction among associates, sharing cultural recipes and foods, teaching one another words in their native languages, etc."

— Marsha Chyrack



The Kings Highway Site Diversity Council sponsored an employee talent show, where fun was had by all. Council members, organizers and participants posed after the curtain fell. Standing from left: Steven O'Brien, Council Co-chair Marsha Chyrack, Gennaidy Tkachman, Jean Michel, Denise Taylor, Mark Roberts, and Yesenia Perez. Seated from left: Valeriya Koybas, Heather Brown-Campbell, and Council Co-chair Rosa Raffaele.

In November 2010, the Council sponsored a talent show, which allowed employees from various hospital units and departments to shine a spotlight on their homelands through song, dance and poetry reading. This spring, the Council will begin assembling a diversity quilt to be hung in KHD's lobby; staff have been asked to donate a square with photos and trinkets that embody the spirit of their cultural backgrounds.

"Diversity awareness has definitely increased at Kings Highway," says Ms. Chyrack, who brings a special sensitivity to her role as co-chair, having parents who immigrated to

America. "I see more interaction among associates, sharing cultural recipes and foods, teaching one another words in their native languages, etc."

Ms. Raffaele agrees: "When we walk around, people ask about the Council and are interested in what we're all about.

"I've been at Kings Highway for 21 years and know many people here," adds Ms. Raffaele, a community leader with experience serving on both Community Board 17

and her block association. "Even though we may not work hands-on with one another, we can still get to know each other and benefit from our similarities as well as our differences."

The Council currently has 10 members and is actively recruiting from all levels and departments at KHD. Any associate interested in joining the Council or offering suggestions or ideas should e-mail Ms. Chyrack at mchyrack@chpnet.org.

Program Report

The Importance of Continuum's Diversity Partnerships

A Message from the Co-chair of Destination Diversity

Pamela Y. Abner, Chief Cultural Diversity Officer and Human Resources Administration

The mainstays of diversity at Continuum are, as always, inclusion and respect for one another and our patients. Having a workforce that is representative of the communities we serve is paramount to supporting these core values and to our being an authentically diverse organization.

We want our workforce to be fully engaged, both professionally and personally. Meeting this objective relies heavily on partnerships with external associations and programs aimed at increasing opportunities in health care for new associates and future leaders, particularly minority individuals. Such relationships are vitally important to Continuum, as they are for any organization focused on growing and developing human resources. They not only provide us with invaluable educational tools, they also introduce us to great, smart, motivated people with whom we might not otherwise connect.

In 2010, we took part in several programs that helped us to identify and nurture potential leaders at Continuum, as well as welcome new talent eager to put into practice what they have learned. These initiatives include:

- Greater New York Hospital Association's (GNYHA) Leadership Development, a 15-month educational program administered in conjunction with Baruch College that promotes racial and ethnic diversity in health care organizations.
- The Healthcare Association of New York State (HANYSA)/Cornell University Academy for Healthcare Leadership Advancement, a six-week certificate program that provides students with new business and leadership strategies, data analysis and health care-focused information.
- GNYHA Minority Summer Internship Program, which offers hands-on learning experiences for minority students completing professional degrees.

From among the interns who spent this past summer at Continuum enhancing their



Pamela Y. Abner

knowledge of hospital management and operations, we hired three, in areas ranging from utilization to information technology. **Shana Dacon**, who interned at Beth Israel-Kings Highway Division, is our new Diversity Manager (*see sidebar*).

We look forward to continuing our partnerships with these organizations to further strengthen the diversity of the Continuum workforce.

Welcome

Meet Continuum's New Diversity Manager



Shana L. Dacon

Continuum welcomes **Shana L. Dacon** as its new Diversity Manager. She will play an integral role in the *Destination Diversity* initiative, overseeing the mentoring program, interfacing with the Site Diversity Councils and much more. Ms. Dacon graduated cum laude with a BS in management, with concentrations in leadership and consulting/marketing, from Binghamton University. She also holds an MPH from the Mailman School of Public Health at Columbia University. Prior to joining Continuum as a full-time associate, she served as a Summer 2010 administrative intern at Beth Israel-Kings Highway Division, where she monitored the improvement of HCAHPS patient satisfaction survey scores, helped develop quality improvement projects to enhance the patient discharge process, and created risk management training documents for hospital staff and future interns.

Special Feature

Music Therapy Links Cultural Diversity to Healing



One of BI's littlest patients is soothed by the soulful strumming of John Mondanaro, MA, LCAT, BT-BC, CCLS, Clinical Director, The Louis & Lucille Armstrong Music Therapy Program at Beth Israel Medical Center.

"Music is an innate human experience that has shaped the world. Our various lullabies, work songs, national anthems and other ballads have become part of a universal language that also has been central to healing, as far back as the age of Socrates," says **John Mondanaro, MA, LCAT, BT-BC, CCLS**, Clinical Director, The Louis & Lucille Armstrong Music Therapy Program at Beth Israel Medical Center. "Through music, we're able to bring diversity sensitivity to the care we provide our patients and transcend social, cultural, religious and language barriers."

"We strive to create a sense of harmony and community for patients," adds **Joanne Loewy, DA, LCAT, MT-BC**, Director of The Louis Armstrong Center for Music & Medicine. "When we share their 'songs of kin' with them—songs from their cultures that have been part of their lives forever—they feel safe and unthreatened and the hospital environment seems less sterile."

Music therapy's role in healing through diversity has never been stronger, both at Continuum Health Partners and in the communities served by the organization. In addition to offering its services in many inpatient and outpatient clinical areas, the Armstrong Program delivers music therapy to schools and community-based entities through its Louis Armstrong Center for Music & Medicine. And as the *Destination Diversity* initiative has grown and evolved over the past few years, so too has the music therapy program, becoming even more invested in integrating diversity into patient care.

Beth Israel's most recent Cultural Competency Fair for house staff is just one example of the program's renewed mission. There, Armstrong staff presented on music therapy and garnered a lot of questions and interest among attendees. The program also has

stepped up efforts to welcome international interns from such countries as China, Spain and Norway, along with established health care professionals from England, Brazil, Australia and other foreign lands. (A long-standing annual Armstrong program, initiated by late Trustee

"We try to pair interns with patients with similar backgrounds, so they can bond through shared music."

— Dr. Joanne Loewy

Richard Netter and entitled "Thanks to Scandinavia", trains scholars from Scandinavia.) Visiting clinicians and interns leave Beth Israel with a solid knowledge about music therapy and often start their own programs once they have returned home.

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Special Feature

Continuum Volunteers Support Diversity

(continued from page 1)



Volunteers at St. Luke's and Roosevelt Hospitals are a diverse group. Front row, from left: Miriam Polsky, Carla Ordinala, Director of Volunteer Services Kathleen Dalton, Vivian Conan, Naomi Goldberg, Volunteer Services Coordinator Heather Brancatelli, and Malcolm Fenty. Back row, from left: Ken Gorsuch, Mamadou Fall, Lisa Laskowich, Allen An, and Judy Gorsuch.

Friday afternoon, he sees that patients and their families have everything they need and drops off and picks up items at the lab and pharmacy. Sometimes he speaks his native Spanish to converse with patients and put them at ease.

"I find the diverse cultures at Beth Israel very interesting," says Mr. Salce, who immigrated with his family to the United States from the Dominican Republic. "My future goal is to be a physician, so I always wanted to volunteer in health care and watch how doctors make people feel better."

"We have many students volunteering here because they're interested in health care," offers **Terry Williams**, Director, Volunteer Services, BI. "Our volunteer team is made up of many people, and currently we are seeing more high school and college students, as well as doctors doing research while they're waiting to hear about their residencies. We're definitely seeing more diverse cultures, ethnicities and generations among our volunteers. And I think they recognize our emphasis on diversity here at Continuum."

BI volunteers undergo core competency training during orientation and review a series of questions on diversity. Every year, they are required to complete a written test to brush up on their diversity knowledge base.

Ms. Williams says that through their cultures and languages, volunteers bring a lot to patients, making them feel comfortable during difficult times. "They're our unsung heroes."

Special Feature

Music Therapy Links Cultural Diversity to Healing *(continued from page 4)*

"We try to pair interns with patients who have similar backgrounds, so they can bond through shared music. Our interns are now creating CDs for patients to take with them after discharge, to promote a kind of continuity of care," notes Dr. Loewy. "We'll also be coordinating personally designed music for patients undergoing radiation therapy."

Music therapy at the Armstrong Program incorporates voice as well as instruments from around the world, and can involve songwriting, improvisation, chanting and just simple sing-alongs to optimize coping and release pain. To illustrate the benefits of music therapy and its intrinsic tie to diversity, Mr. Mondanaro tells the story of a Mandarin-speaking patient with end-stage cancer.

"He chose the sounds and instruments from his culture that he liked and we improvised with them to ease his pain and work the mind-body connection. We also brought in his young children, which led to a comforting family-centered experience.

"Music gives us another level of communication and allows us access to what's happening with a patient at any given moment. When feelings are beyond words, there's always music."



Joanne Loewy, DA, LCAT, MT-BC, Director, The Louis Armstrong Center for Music & Medicine at BI (with guitar), helps sedate a patient prior to surgery in the operating room.

News Brief

Destination Diversity Focus for 2011

This year, Continuum will continue to move forward with its diversity initiative and promote the full participation of leadership and associates. Toward this end, the organization has drawn up a comprehensive agenda that includes the following:

- Supporting individuals targeted for advancement by working with managers to develop action plans
- Embracing a hiring process that recruits more minority individuals for senior positions
- Partnering with GNYHA and other outside organizations to both attract new minority talent and nurture potential leaders already at Continuum
- Enhancing communication channels between the Corporate Diversity Council and the organization at large
- Increasing the number and frequency of diversity training opportunities for associates on all levels
- Offering educational modules on such related subjects as multi-generational diversity, respect in the workplace and cross-cultural differences in health care.

focus for 2011

Glossary of Terms

Common Diversity Terms

- **Affirmative Action:** A legal mandate that attempts to correct the social injustice of denying certain populations opportunities for jobs and promotions.
- **Cultural Competence:** A set of behaviors, attitudes and policies that enable a system or professionals to work effectively in cross-cultural situations.
- **Equal Employment Opportunity:** A legal protection built into the system that protects all employees from discrimination and harassment.
- **Managing Diversity:** The art of balancing the needs, aspirations, contributions and unique qualities of the organization with those of each individual in the organization.
- **Workplace Diversity:** People with different characteristics brought about by life experience, race, age, culture, gender, religion, physical abilities, work experience, sexual orientation or other unique qualities.



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