

2019 HPOG Innovation Roundtable Meeting

Sponsored by

OFFICE OF FAMILY ASSISTANCE

An Office of the Administration for Children & Families

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SLATE

St. Louis Agency on Training and Employment

MISSOURI JOB CENTER



Lyda Krewson, Mayor

What were the best stories/quotes that you heard about your program in this interview?

Amy L.

“I feel like I can engage with potential clients in my new role because I *was* a Case Manager for HPOG. I already know their struggles and can present them with targeted messages that speak to that. They can identify with the participants that are featured on our flyers because they look just like them. I hope that it instills a spark of confidence, like, ‘I can do that. That could be me.’ ”

Connie C.

“I try and build relationships as I work with clients through the remediation process. I help them academically, but I also help them to learn to see themselves as successful.”

Kevin S.

“I enjoy empowering clients to do more. We work to eliminate the negative self-talk and keep a high level of positive energy.”

Shaye S.

“I like working with clients based on the circumstances they are currently in. I don’t allow bad attitudes or low self esteem to drag anyone down.”

What do these stories and quotes teach about your HPOG program and its core strengths, capabilities, and opportunities to be even better at what they do?

EMPATHY

A common theme that ran amongst the staff responses was the empathy and compassion they all had towards their clients. The Case Managers derive great satisfaction in developing relationships with their client and building self confidence to the point where the participant knows they will be successful.

Amy Pollard's client, Talisha

Talisha comes from a family of nurses; her aunt is a founding member of the Black Nurse Association of St. Louis, and her mother owns a home health business. As her aunt said 'she has caught the learning bug and is *not* going to stop. It is a blessing to see!' With Amy's encouragement she went on to get her CMT Certification and Insulin Administration Certificate. Talisha discovered, on her own, that Abbott Academy trains their employees through an apprenticeship model for their entry-level EMTs. It was because of her training and employment through HPOG that she was offered this opportunity, and one that she really never considered.

The core strength of this program is that it allows us to successfully complete the mission that this grant set out to do. The career path is attainable and only limited by the participant's momentum and drive.

An HPOG client recently had a daughter which renewed her dream of becoming a nurse. If she's successful, she'll be the first in her family to achieve a post secondary certificate/license and she's determined to break a cycle of relying on food stamp for support. She wants her daughter to see that her mother is successful.

What was the most inspiring vision for the future you heard in this interview?

During the interviews, the Case Managers expressed an idea of allowing ALL TANF recipients to side-step Random Assignment and automatically qualify for Treatment.

It would increase our TANF enrollment numbers, but is that the answer to their current barrier?

The Case Managers also expressed a desire to increase supportive services, or work with the training provider to move the required tests/shots etc., into the price of the class to free up the funds.

It would then allow the clients who seek multiple trainings to develop their career path without the added expenses piling up on to loans.

Through this cohort model, we are beginning to see our employer partners extending a financial commitment to assist with the students' expenses, which could sustain these programs.

One example is St. Luke's Hospital. The Medical Assistant cohort is \$800 more than the grant allows in one program year. The hospital decided they were willing to assist with the difference in the cost.

Of the comments you heard, what did you hear that people want more of, want to keep, change or discontinue?
In other words what did they think was essential and important to continue, what could be improved/strengthened, or things that didn't really resonate?

The number one thing that our Case Managers want is the program to be sustained. It is encouraging to be a part of a government program that really seems to be effective. HPOG is training entry-level healthcare workers, its income eligibility requirements are **generous** compared to other DOL grants and we are seeing a more diverse clientele as a result. Our participants have the highest number of placements than any other program at SLATE because we are selective with our training partners and employers know that they are getting a good candidate as a result.

Case Managers would also like to see an increase in the Supportive Services allowance. The barriers our clients are subjected to are intense, which is not unique to St. Louis.

- Utilities getting cut off
- Partners/family sabotaging client's success
- Lack of transportation/money for gas
- Sudden homelessness/Lack of emergency housing
- Lack of funds for food

What other questions about your HPOG program's strengths and innovative practices does this interview inspire you to want to ask?

Overwhelmingly, will there be an HPOG 3.0?

If there was an HPOG 3.0, would it again be a research grant
or could it be issued in a different format?

Another strength of the grant is allowing income eligibility for working adults not covered under other types of 'safety net' programs.

Could programs like this be extended?

HONORABLE MENTION

**Innovation & Social Media,
SLATE American Job Center**

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The Conversation of Innovation

SLATE has been lucky in the fact that our Social Media and Communications Specialist was a former client of mine. She was laid off from the Yellow Pages, and a TAA recipient where she received training to earn her certification in Social Media Marketing from the University of Missouri, St. Louis (UMSL). Upon completion of this program, Amy accepted the position as a Marketing Specialist inside our Business Services department. She saw that our social media feeds were not being utilized to their full potential and was granted access to them in addition to her current tasks in Business Services.

It was HITE/HPOG's luck that her grant ended and she accepted a position as a Case Manager where she continued her social media responsibilities. After fourteen months, she changed roles to concentrate on social media full time. Her campaigns have helped us reach our goals and directly sustain this program for over 3 years. Through her time as a Case Manager, she developed a kinship with the program that stays with her today. She works hard, but I believe it's this kinship to HPOG that sets her apart and makes my team look good. She should totally be here today, in Denver, looking at mountains and drinking a local craft brew that does not belong to AB.