

## **Promising Practice: Employer Coaches Milwaukee Area Workforce Investment Board**

The Milwaukee Area Workforce Investment Board, Inc. (MAWIB) is committed to providing TANF and other low-income incumbent workers in the healthcare industry with the continuous and relevant training, personal and career supports, and motivation and guidance to pursue career opportunities in healthcare. Through its HPOG program, MAWIB partnered with the Milwaukee Area Healthcare Alliance (MAHA) to create the CareerWorks Healthcare Training Institute (HTI), a one-stop training and education center for people seeking work in the healthcare field.

A challenge facing many HPOG participants is that their first, entry-level healthcare jobs may not provide family-sustaining wages. However, these jobs do place them in career pathways leading to better opportunities. It is essential that participants receive continuous coaching to give them information and encouragement and to identify training that will provide the skills and certifications necessary for advancement and higher wages in healthcare careers.

To provide this essential support, MAWIB expanded the HTI's partnerships with key local employers to establish employer coaches. These coaches help qualified and motivated workers succeed and advance on a healthcare career ladder while helping employers build a sustainable talent pipeline to meet their workforce needs.

Employer coaches collaborate with the HTI director and staff to identify needs and provide all appropriate and relevant services for incumbent workers who enroll and become active participants in the HTI programs and services. Employer coaches are often human resources or other healthcare supervisory or management employees. MAWIB compensates the employer for the time coaches spend on HTI activities with participants as specified in formal agreements.

In collaboration with MAWIB and CareerWorks HTI, employer coaches work with, and on the behalf of, incumbent workers who are enrolled participants in CareerWorks HTI. Specific activities of the employer coach include:

- Acquire knowledge of HTI programs and services.
- Conduct individual and group coaching sessions for incumbent worker program participants.
- Coordinate career transition training designed to help participants develop a career advancement strategy.
- Refer and assist participants in the support services application process.
- Communicate with the HTI management team regarding any concerns that may impact a participant's progress toward stated career goals.

The employer is a registered user of the HPOG Performance Reporting System (PRS) and enters HTI participant activities, outputs, and outcomes based on uniform data collection guidelines for monitoring program performance. Employer coaches provide HTI coach staff with updated progress reports and copies of relevant documentation and other forms for participant files

maintained at the CareerWorks HTI. MAWIB provides the employer coach with initial user training, manuals, and guidelines to enter participant data into the required data reporting systems and insures each coach receives ongoing and continuous system support, service, and technical assistance.