

Why the focus on healthcare?

As employment grows in King County, healthcare jobs are projected to increase at a faster rate than employment growth overall. More than 23,000 job openings are projected in King County between 2015 and 2020 in the healthcare field alone. More than half of those openings will be new healthcare jobs created during the 5-year period. Health Careers for All (HCA) is designed to help TANF and other low-income individuals prepare for and fill those job openings.

How have TANF customers benefited from HCA?

Maria had positive work experience in her past, and a tremendous amount of motivation, but a layoff followed by a lengthy time out of work led her to TANF and then homelessness when her TANF benefits ended. With no education beyond high school, Maria's vibrant personality and work ethic had allowed her to secure and maintain employment in sales and administration for many years. When her employer went out of business, she found she didn't have the education and skills she needed to be competitive in the labor market. When Maria heard about Health Careers for All (HCA), she decided to follow her dream of becoming a nurse and enrolled in the NA-C cohort at RTC. She achieved a 4.0 GPA throughout the program and became a mentor to other students in the class. Although her living situation was a struggle, she managed to focus on the positive and successfully completed the program and passed the national nursing assistant credentialing exam. Maria quickly secured full-time employment as a nursing assistant and is already planning the next step in her career. With the support of HCA, Maria began pre-requisite coursework in April 2013 to qualify her for nursing school. While she still has significant challenges ahead of her, she says she is energized from the "life changing" opportunity that has been provided and is determined to continue her education to become a nurse, and hopefully one day, a nursing instructor.

Kim is a single mom of three boys who came to HCA after nearly two years of training and job hunting in medical administration produced no employment. She had been trying to enter the healthcare field since 2008, was nearing the end of her lifetime TANF benefits, and had nearly exhausted her allotted training time through DSHS. Kim had 9 years of steady employment as a journeyman Industrial Maintenance Mechanic but in 2008 was terminated from employment because of excessive time off related to domestic violence issues. Due to the downturn in the economy, she was unable to find alternate employment in her profession. After a period of homelessness, she found transitional housing and subsequently entered subsidized housing. In addition to employment and housing challenges, Kim was busy managing 3 young boys all with behavioral issues and special needs. After some counseling to figure out the best path for her to enter a health career as quickly as possible, and to best utilize skills gained along the way, she enrolled in the HCA Phlebotomy Technician cohort, which she completed with the highest scores in the class. Aside from excellent grades, Kim demonstrated patience, bilingual skills, a wry sense of humor and excellent ability work calmly with diverse patients. Following the phlebotomy training, Kim received job search assistance through WorkFirst and the HCA job developer. In September 2012, she was offered a position at LabCorp at \$14.54 per hour, 25 hours per week to start, and was able to leave TANF. Three months later, Kim called to say that she had received praise for the work she was doing and was offered a fulltime position. Kim is very thankful for the ongoing services received from the HCA program and now wants to start nursing prerequisites so she can eventually become an RN.

Josie had experience working as an NA-C and in home care early in her life and knew that she liked working in the medical field. Though she'd graduated from high school in the Philippines, she had no diploma to prove it. And she also knew, with two young children and a low-paying job, the future held significant struggles for her. She went to WorkSource for help and was referred to the HCA program.

After speaking with an HCA Navigator, Josie learned of a medical assisting (MA) training cohort being developed by HCA in partnership with the Seattle Community Colleges. Josie felt this cohort provided an opportunity to achieve her long-term goal to support her family. But how could she do it? She began the MA cohort in January 2012 and overcame numerous obstacles by sheer determination and with help from many people. Because of her class schedule, she needed evening child care; her neighbor said she'd help. She received assistance from TANF and King County Housing Authority's Section 8 program. HCA provided her with support for transportation, groceries, and rent assistance. Through tears, Josie says she is so thankful to her HCA Navigator: *"He knows how hard it's been and he's been there for me the whole time."* Josie also relied on classmates for support, indicating that she and one fellow student in particular were study partners throughout the program and are now *"friends for life."* In addition to completing the Healthcare Bridge class just prior to the start of the MA program, Josie achieved her long-time goal of a GED, and then successfully completed the four-quarter MA program. Josie immediately began job search and preparation for the national MA certification exam. She did her clinical externship at the Rainier Occupational and Family Medical Center in the International District, a clinic which specializes in "the best of Eastern and Western medicine." This was an experience which Josie enjoyed and at which she learned a great deal. She continued building her work experience while doing job search by taking on a 20-hour per week "Career Path" placement at St. Francis Hospital in Federal Way. In March 2013 she applied for a job with Group Health Cooperative and was hired to work full-time as an MA in the Orthopedic Department at the Central Campus facility earning \$16/hour, allowing her to leave TANF. When she called with the news, Josie's voice was full of excitement, pride, and satisfaction for a major achievement having been accomplished and a new adventure just beginning.

Getahun came to the U.S in the diversity lottery program from Ethiopia in 2011 with his three children and wife. In Ethiopia, Getahun worked as general secretary. Upon his arrival to the U.S., Getahun and his family struggled a lot in adjusting to the new life style and were faced with a great deal of housing issues. They were homeless and living with friends at first, and later moved to a shelter in downtown Seattle and were receiving TANF cash assistance. Getahun was determined to get any skill training to find employment, but was greatly interested in healthcare field. With the career counseling and guidance of an HCA Healthcare Navigator, Getahun chose to enroll in NA-C training to start his career in the healthcare field where he saw many opportunities for employment and career advancement. He successfully completed NA-C training, obtained his state license, and started full time employment as a nursing assistant at a long-term-care facility. His family also secured housing with Wellspring Family Services, and was able to move off of TANF.



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Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County
2003 Western Ave., Ste. 250 • Seattle, WA 98121-2162
206.448.0474 • www.seakingwdc.org

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