

Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) Milwaukee Enrollment Services (MiES)

Organization Profile

Milwaukee Enrollment Services (MiES) manages all aspects of income maintenance programs within Milwaukee County. MiES maintains a policy of “no wrong door,” meaning that anyone may call the MiES Call Center or walk into any of its locations and receive assistance. Milwaukee County residents can get help with FoodShare Medicaid, BadgerCare Plus, Caretaker Supplements, Family Planning Only Services and Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy. The organization values the needs of the people it serves and takes pride in its collaborations with partners and responsible management of public resources.



Michael Poma

Michael is the associate director of the Milwaukee Enrollment Services for DHS and has been with the state of Wisconsin for six years.

Training Need

Integral to the success of its mission, MiES is tasked with providing a high level of customer service to those it serves in determining eligibility for entitlement programs. Michael Poma, the associate director, noticed that his frontline workforce was comprised of many technical experts experienced at the operational and technical aspects of the job. However, they were lacking the knowledge and hands-on skills needed to lead transformation through increased ownership and improved processes, resulting in enhanced customer interactions and overall service.

Training Solution

Michael Poma spearheaded the development of the Pathways to Leadership Program in collaboration with the UWM School of Continuing Education. The goal of the program was to provide professional development for emerging leaders within the organization. This hands-on training would provide opportunities for growth and development of nonmanagerial employees to become leaders among their peers.

UWM customized a program that delivered on these goals, resulting in at least 60% of Pathways to Leadership graduates being successfully promoted into supervisory positions. They remain engaged in the program by representing the organization on committees, working on special projects and mentoring co-workers. The Pathways to Leadership Program was awarded the 2017 Diversity Award by the state of Wisconsin for its strong commitment to the recruitment, retention and promotion of a diverse workplace.

Participant Testimonial

“The instructor stressed the idea that a leader is not just about doing the work (achievement) – it’s about your influence. These courses helped me move from technical expertise to strategic leader. A great takeaway: ‘Building relationships gives you credibility, and credibility gives you visibility. Credibility allows you to influence, and influence allows you to impact.’”

– Pathways to Leadership graduate

Contact Us

For more information on bringing customized training solutions to your group, please contact John Siegert at siegertj@uwm.edu or 414-227-3243.

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