



Jewish Vocational Services Boston Diligence Trip Report Boston, MA October 6, 2022

Program Visited

- Jewish Vocational Services Boston (JVS Boston)

Focusing Philanthropy Staff

- Teresa Burton

Staff

- Kelly Tessitore, Vice President of Advancement
- Elizabeth Hogan, Director of Healthcare Skills Training Program
- Shelly Hedstrom, Instructor
- Rita Vogel & Craig Miller, Volunteers

Executive Summary

In 2021, Focusing Philanthropy launched its first campaign with JVS Boston after several months of due diligence. This site visit is the second Teresa Burton has made in Boston to meet with staff and observe a class.

Background

JVS Boston was founded in 1938 to assist immigrants entering the U.S. workforce. As the largest provider of adult education in the greater Boston area, JVS serves more than 16,000 individuals annually, runs over 35 programs targeting 8 job sectors with trainings ranging from 4 weeks to 15 months, including English as a Second language components. In Boston, where the healthcare industry employs 20% of all workers and immigrants are 29% of the population, the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in even higher demand for qualified jobs applicants. Currently, JVS students participate in hybrid on-line and in-person classes to gain skills in English, computers, math, job readiness, career planning, technical skills, and professional communication as well as other supportive services.

Boston Healthcare job market statistics:

- Massachusetts has a 25% shortage in healthcare workers

- Mass Brigham is the largest JVS employer, has been a partner since 1990 for new and incumbent workforce training
- Pharmacy technicians earn \$17 to \$19/hr at CVS locations and \$20-\$21/hour at area hospitals
- JVS pivoted to engage with local immigrants who were stuck at the bottom of the Boston wage ladder. During the recent Trump administration's reduction in refugee admissions to the US, JVS immigrant students saw 50% wage gains
- JVS Boston is currently launching a Substance Abuse Counseling Training Course in response to market demand and will be able to match people with lived experience and/or criminal records to open positions in career track jobs with potential for advancement

Building Tour

The first half of the visit was a building tour of 122 Arlington Street, located near public transportation in Bay Village, not far from the JVS Boston headquarters in downtown Boston. The historic building was the home of the Boston Center for Adult Education which recently closed and merged assets with JVS. After significant renovations, JVS will open the Healthcare & Biotechnology Career Institute at Arlington in partnership with Quincy Community College in 2024. The Institute will be a state-of-the-art healthcare training and job placement center with 6 classrooms, meeting rooms, a small library, computer room, and 5 labs: biotechnology, sterile processing, phlebotomy, a simulated hospital room and bathroom, and a mock pharmacy. Expanded program offerings, correlating with Boston employer demand, will include: launching a Substance Addiction career pathway, doubling enrollment in the Biomanufacturing pathway, and significantly increasing enrollment in all other healthcare pathways.

Programs Funded by FP

The 2022 campaign with Focusing Philanthropy is supporting the following four course offerings:

- Certified Nursing Assistant (Caring for our Elders):
Each 14-week training prepares participants to work as skilled caregivers to frail elders in the community. The training includes: 1) 10 weeks of JVS training (35 hours per week) in Vocational English language, medical terminology, computer training, professional development, and techniques for working with frail elders; 2) A three-week CNA Certification course with the Academy for Healthcare Training, with 105 hours of classroom instruction; 3) A one-week clinical practicum at a long-term care facility providing hands-on care to elders; 4) One-on-one job search support with each program graduate to secure training-related positions in the healthcare field while they study to pass the CNA exam; 5) After passing the CNA exam and receiving a certificate, graduates receive additional job search support to obtain a career pathway nursing job; and 6) Ongoing post-placement support and career counseling for a year. The average wage for placements in 2022 is \$22.61/hour.
- Patient Care Technician (PCT):
The 8-week course is a critical upskilling program for CNA's, NAs and HHAs working in acute care facilities. The training program provides students with skills through patient simulations and learning how to operate industry equipment. Students will graduate from the program with a Home



Health Aide and Acute Care Nursing Assistant Certificate and will be prepared to enter a degree-seeking program at any accredited nursing college. Students also have the option to participate in an additional 7-week track in Phlebotomy and EKG and will be eligible for the national Patient Care Technician exam. Overall, more than 70% of direct patient care is provided by nursing assistants in acute care settings, and qualified candidates continue to be in high demand by healthcare employers in the region. No data on wage rates.

- **Certified Pharmacy Technician:**

Each 12-week training cycle includes: 1) JVS classroom instruction (24 hours per week) on medications and anatomy, pharmacy law, hospital basics, pharmacy math, customer service, professional development, and inventory; 2) An industry externship (9.5 hours per week) with a major retail or hospital pharmacy in Greater Boston, giving students industry-specific skills and hands-on experience; 3) One-on-one job search support, working with each program graduate to secure a high-demand, career pathway job after attaining a national Pharmacy Technician certificate; and 4) Ongoing post-placement support and career counseling for a year. The average wage for placements in 2022 is \$20/hour.



Simulated CVS Pharmacy

- **Certified Sterile Processing Technician (SPT):**

The comprehensive 12-week course trains students to clean, sterilize, reassemble, package, store, label, and deliver surgical instruments to the necessary hospital departments. In addition to preparation for the examination, 400-hour externship, and certification process, the training places an emphasis on decision-making and prioritizing daily goals. The average wage for placements in 2022 is \$20/hour.

Classroom Observation

During the second part of my visit, TB observed day two of a Certified Nursing Assistant Class (CNA) class with 10 students, 4 participating remotely. The day's lesson was Speaking and Listening. The CNA course is 14 weeks which includes several weeks clinical work at Quincy Community College. Afterwards, students take the certification exam and apply for jobs. Typically, the best students are hired by hospitals and the rest go into home health. The use of technology in the classroom was smooth and efficient considering that 4 students were actively participating via one screen, the instructor was teaching using a SmartScreen and the students were using Chrome books. Students were all managing the use of multiple technologies remarkably well considering that they were all using new chrome books in addition to two classroom software programs that were also new to them.

To assess students' writing skills, the Instructor, Shelly Hedstrom, asked them to write a one-page personal statement and was giving directions about the structure of the essay. Three classroom volunteers were there to help and were circulating among the students to answering questions. All of the students were people of color, 2 were men. One student was a former nurse from Brazil who is pursuing the CNA credential as a first step towards being a nurse in the US.

TB was not able to speak with the instructor but did spend some time with one of the volunteers. Rita Vogel, is a former JVS board member and a retired human resources executive who has volunteered with JVS for several years. She reported how much she enjoys being in the classroom to help with English skills, writing cover letters, resumes, and practicing interview skills. She noted that the students, all English language learners, were doing a great job given they were only in the second day of class. As an extra service, if students need more help, she and other volunteers also offer free individual tutoring after-hours. As she was explaining the day's lesson, she highlighted that understanding and following instructions as well as improving communication skills are the critical skills students need to succeed. As the students' communication skills get better, coursework will include working in teams and presenting their projects to the rest of the class using slides. Requirements for admission to the class include: a work visa, intermediate English language abilities, 3 months of prior work experience in any field in any country, and a clean background check and drug screening.

Staffing & Fundraising

New CEO, David Fleischman, started in July. Staff reports his transition has been smooth and there have been no board or staff defections. JVS recently added a new VP of Human Resources, Keila Barrios, and staff is pleased with her contributions.

JVS Boston just completed an \$18 million fundraising campaign. They plan to be in "stewardship mode" for the next couple of years. Staffing additions are planned and will include expanding the development team to add a major gifts officer and a mid-level gifts officer. The current strategic plan ends in December, and they will start a new planning process in 2023.

Challenges – CNA State Certification Exams

In the Pharmacy Tech class, hybrid learning has led to slightly lower exam pass rates. Instructors believe students retain less information in online classes and are in the process of reevaluating the curriculum. In the CNA class, problems with the availability of state testing have led to several problems that JVS is working to address. For example, due to a change in the exam vendor and a subsequent backlog, many students have not tested even though they are already working in hospitals using a state waiver. When the waiver was set to expire, JVS lobbied legislators to extend the deadline because the exams have been unavailable through no fault of the workers. In addition, current announcements of exams are sent to students with only a day or two notice. For students who had been waiting several months, the timing did not provide JVS a chance to prepare them as a group and pass rates were low as a result. To help with this problem, JVS is recording an exam review course that students can use to study for exams on short notice.

Notes for Next Visit

- Progress of healthcare trainings and job placements
- Revisions to growth plans and enrollment
- Pass rates of CNA exams
- Progress of Arlington renovations and estimated opening

Certificate Program	Wages*	Vacancies over past 6 months in Greater Boston	
Certified Nursing Assistant/ Patient Care Technician	\$38,000	7,000	Expansion
Pharmacy Technician	\$40,000	1,091	Expansion
Biomanufacturing	\$44,000	1,000	Expansion
Central Sterile Processing	\$42,000	240	Pilot FY22
Medical Office Assistant	\$33,200	2,000	New location
Phlebotomy	\$39,700	500	New location
Substance Addiction	\$34-40,000**	128	Pilot FY23**

*Average wages are \$18,000 per year for those working at enrollment.

**Projected; new program with no data yet.

Sept. 2022 JVS Boston Job Market Stats

