

# The Bridge

*PCAs: a bridge to community living*

The Newsletter of the Personal Care Attendant Quality Home Care Workforce Council

Volume 10, Spring 2016

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## Profiles of the 2015 Winners of the Paul Kahn Award for PCA Service

The sixth annual Paul Kahn awards for PCA Service were presented on October 7, 2015, at the Grand Staircase in the State House.

Hosts for the event were Senator Patricia Jehlen and Representative Elizabeth Malia. Rep. Malia welcomed a crowd of approximately a hundred PCAs, consumers, family, and friends. Marylou Sudders, Secretary of the Executive Office of Health and Human Services, was the keynote speaker. Secretary Sudders shared with the audience her personal story of working as a PCA shortly after graduating. She

spoke about her firsthand experience with the role that PCA work plays in promoting consumer independence and community-based care. Secretary Sudders closed by saying, "From my heart to your heart, believe me when I say I know the importance of the work you do every day."

The event concluded with Rebecca Gutman, 1199SEIU Vice President, asking PCAs, consumers, and their families to reach out to their legislators with stories about the impact of the PCA program on their lives.

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The 2015 winners of the Paul Kahn Awards for PCA Service. Bottom (l to r): Sabrina Dickieson, Kindalay Cummings-Akers. Top (l to r): Mustapha Zakari, Patricia Holmes, Francis Gardner

*“I was able to use union-sponsored training programs to increase my knowledge of dementia. I love what I do.”*

*...the best part of being a PCA is the appreciation she feels from consumers.*

*“I feel this work has given me purpose... and at the end of each day I feel as if I have accomplished something.”*

### Kindalay Cummings-Akers—Western MA

Kindalay's interest in PCA work began with her daughter, Jovenia, who has cerebral palsy. By providing Jovenia's care, Kindalay saw the importance of independent living and the critical role of caregivers. Kindalay now works for Kevin, an elderly man with advanced heart disease. Kindalay soon learned that Kevin's partner, Ann, has dementia, but was not eligible for PCA services. Kindalay said, “It was not right for me to come into the house and care for him without caring for her.” To make it right, Kindalay provides assistance to Ann without pay.

Kindalay, an active union leader in Springfield, said, “I was able to use union-sponsored training programs to increase my knowledge of dementia. I love what I do.”

### Sabrina Dickieson—Central MA

About four years ago, Sabrina began working in the group home where her sister worked. Sabrina found that she loved caregiving, and began working as a PCA. One of Sabrina's consumers has several severe health issues, including seizure disorder. Sabrina manages the 32 medications he needs. Crises have arisen several times, and Sabrina knew that an injection was needed. She quickly prepared and administered it, then called 911. She helped the EMTs when they arrived by providing them with health and medication information.

Alicia Harmon, a surrogate, says that Sabrina pays great attention to detail. She shows initiative, and is a great team player who can handle stressful situations.

Sabrina trains newly hired PCAs, and ensures that they understand what's needed. For Sabrina, the best part of being a PCA is the appreciation she feels from consumers.

### Francis Gardner—Northeastern MA

Francis says that none of his previous careers has ever given him the satisfaction that he gets from his work as a PCA. He has worked for Linda for 16 years. “I feel this work has given me purpose. I like that I have a talent for helping people, and at the end of each day I feel as if I have accomplished something.”

Linda adds, “In order to keep me healthy and out of the hospital, Francis persuaded my doctors to train him to change my Foley catheter.”

Francis has even trained his sons to do PCA work, so when Francis had to be hospitalized, he ensured continuity of care for Linda. Francis attends PCA rallies and has begun taking CNA classes.

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### Patricia Holmes—Greater Boston

Heather, the consumer Patricia assists, was born with severe developmental disabilities and cannot see, speak, or walk. Her life expectancy was initially set at four years and later revised to 25 years. Heather is over 40 years old. Everyone who knows Heather attributes her happiness and well-being to the care Patricia provides.

Patricia answered an ad 15 years ago and has never stopped assisting all of Heather's ADLs and IADLs. On weekends, Patricia takes Heather to her own home to participate in parties and outings. Lindsey Wilson, Heather's surrogate, said, "Pat sees her work as a commitment to another human being and always treats Heather as a human being."

Patricia says, "This is past the point of a job. You need to put all you have into it. If you can't do that, this work is not for you."

### Mustapha Zakari—Southeastern MA

Mustapha came to the U.S. from Ghana at the age of 27. "In Ghana I learned that all members of the community are part of your family," he explains. That lesson led Mustapha to PCA work. For 20 years he has worked for Nathan, who has cerebral palsy. Because of his attitude and grin, Mustapha is widely known around Nathan's apartment as "Smiley."

Tamami Kataoka, Nathan's surrogate, said that when Nathan was hospitalized for three months, Mustapha visited him almost every day on his own time. Mustapha also brought Nathan's mother for visits, as she could not travel on her own. Mustapha has doctors and nurses address Nathan directly, and interprets Nathan's responses only when necessary.

*"This is past the point of a job. You need to put all you have into it."*

*"In Ghana I learned that all members of the community are part of your family."*



**Join the Council on Facebook!**

**[www.facebook.com/MassPCA](http://www.facebook.com/MassPCA)**

## PCA Skills Training Workshops Available Statewide!

Would additional training help your PCA's ability to do his or her job?

Would you like to encourage your PCA to learn new skills?

***Then check out the Homecare Training Benefit—Skills Workshops for PCAs!***

Workshops are free for working PCAs, and offered in convenient locations statewide.

Topics and content were generated from consumer and PCA surveys and focus groups.

Language interpretation is available.

### Workshops include

- ✓ Adult First Aid/CPR
- ✓ Alzheimer's and Dementia Care
- ✓ Blood-borne Pathogens
- ✓ Body Mechanics
- ✓ Communications and Boundary Setting
- ✓ Medication Safety
- ✓ Nutrition and Diabetes

To register, call 877-409-8283 or e-mail us at [infoMA@1199funds.org](mailto:infoMA@1199funds.org)

## The Council Is Now Accepting Nominations for the 2016 Paul Kahn PCA Service Award

The PCA Quality Home Care Workforce Council, in collaboration with 1199SEIU Health Care Workers East, will present the 7<sup>th</sup> annual Paul Kahn Awards for PCA Service in October 2016.

Nominations may be made by consumers, PCAs, families, and nonprofit and government agency staff.

Five PCAs from different regions of the state will be selected, based upon:

- dedication to their work;
- longevity of PCA service; and
- actions that increase the value and image of PCA work.

If you know of one or more PCAs whose service and dedication to PCA work deserves recognition, you can submit his or her name for consideration. Nominations should be made on the form included in this edition of *The Bridge*.

Please remember to provide us with your contact information and the nominated PCA's telephone number, so the selection committee can contact you and the PCA.

Nominations can be submitted in the following manner.

**MAIL:** PCA Workforce Council  
600 Washington Street, Room 7264  
Boston, MA 02111

**FAX:** 617-210-5452

**E-MAIL:** [pcacouncil@state.ma.us](mailto:pcacouncil@state.ma.us)

***Nominations must be received by June 30, 2016.***





**PAUL KAHN AWARD FOR PCA SERVICE**  
**2016 NOMINATION FORM** *(You must complete the entire form.)*

Name of Person Making the Nomination \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to PCA \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Name of PCA Being Nominated \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Years Working as a PCA \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

1. Tell us how the PCA has shown dedication to a consumer and to PCA work.

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2. Tell us whether and how the PCA has helped, trained, or recruited other PCAs.

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3. What has the PCA done to enhance the value or the image of PCA work? Please include any other information that you believe is relevant.

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***SEND THIS FORM TO:***

**MAIL:** PCA Workforce Council  
600 Washington Street, Room 7264  
Boston, MA 02111

**FAX:** 617-210-5452

**E-MAIL:** [pcacouncil@state.ma.us](mailto:pcacouncil@state.ma.us)

***Submit additional pages if needed.***

## Welcoming the New Chair of the Personal Care Attendant Quality Home Care Workforce Council, Undersecretary Alice Moore

Undersecretary Alice Moore is a dedicated public servant who has spent her career working both inside and outside government to develop and implement important programs and solve complex policy challenges. As Undersecretary, she is responsible for creating, implementing, and managing policy, legislation, and operations for the largest Secretariat in state government.

Undersecretary Moore previously served as Chief of Staff to Senate President Therese Murray, acting as chief policy advisor, strategist, and counsel to the Massachusetts Senate. In these roles, she was deeply involved in the landmark health care reform of 2006 and in subsequent legislative efforts to manage health care cost containment as well as eight state budgets.

Undersecretary Moore has also worked in the Attorney General's Office. She served as the Chief



of the Public Protection Bureau, where she oversaw the AG's affirmative work in civil rights, health care, consumer protection, antitrust, environmental protection, insurance, and utilities.

She also led the Government Bureau, responsible for supervising the AG's defensive caseload, representing state agencies; handling cases involving

challenges to state statutes; and providing legal advice on administrative and constitutional law issues.

While she has also worked in private practice, her heart and her greatest accomplishments have been in the public sector.



# LOOKING to hire a PCA?



## REMEMBER

[www.masspcadirectory.org](http://www.masspcadirectory.org)

Over 7,400 PCAs are listed along with their preferences and qualifications.

# Council and Union Partnership Recognized for ESOL Program

English for New Bostonians (ENB) and its English Works Campaign recently held its "Raising Our Voices: Recognizing ESOL Leadership in Business and the Community" breakfast. The event's purpose was to honor seven businesses and labor/management partnerships that have joined with government and nonprofit agencies to offer their immigrant workers the chance to learn English at work.

The ESOL program conducted by the 1199SEIU Training & Upgrading Fund, in partnership with 1199SEIU Healthcare Workers East and the Personal Care Attendant Quality Home Care Workforce Council, was one of the programs honored.

Speaking at the event, Robert Bower, the MA AFL-CIO's Special Advisor to the President for Workforce Development, said,

"Partnerships like the one we are recognizing today, 1199SEIU Training and Upgrading Fund with 1199SEIU Healthcare Workers East and the Personal Care Attendant Quality Home Care Workforce Council, offer life-changing benefits to members, including ESOL classes, through collective bargaining."



Members of the 1199SEIU Training & Upgrading Fund, 1199SEIU Healthcare Workers East, and the Personal Care Attendant Quality Home Care Workforce Council, posing with their awards.



# Consumer-Taught PCA New-Hire Orientation Curriculum and Materials Now Available Online!

The PCA Workforce Council continues to enhance the delivery of the PCA New-Hire Orientation program. The delivery of the consumer-taught option is now available online for faster access to curriculum materials and resources. Using the Massachusetts Executive Office of Health & Human Services direct-care worker website, [www.madirectcare.com/pca-orientation](http://www.madirectcare.com/pca-orientation), consumers can access the consumer-taught orientation and can view a video that showcases fellow consumers who have oriented their PCA through the group-session format or the consumer-taught option. Spanish translation will

be available soon. The updated curriculum is available on the EOHHS direct-care website.

In addition, the PCA Workforce Council, MassHealth, and the MassAHEC Network, a University of Massachusetts Medical School program, have developed a useful tutorial for consumers who have chosen the consumer-taught option. This preparation module provides information and tips for the consumer (visit [onlinetraining.umassmed.edu/pcaorientprep](http://onlinetraining.umassmed.edu/pcaorientprep)). However, consumers always have the option to change their mind and send their PCA to a group session.

Ongoing evaluation of the program continues for the purpose of identifying new ways to support consumers and PCAs and enhance program delivery. You can forward suggestions and ideas to the PCA Workforce Council at [pcacouncil@state.ma.us](mailto:pcacouncil@state.ma.us).

## *Contribute to* **The Bridge**

*The Bridge* is a newsletter for MassHealth members who use PCA services. We are very interested in your letters, articles, and thoughts about the PCA program and about improving the PCA workforce. Please send your ideas to [pcacouncil@state.ma.us](mailto:pcacouncil@state.ma.us). We can't promise to print everything we receive, but all submissions will receive our serious attention. For consumers without e-mail, please call 617-348-5317 or forward your ideas to the address on the right.

## *How to Contact Us*

### **PCA Council**

600 Washington Street, Room 7264  
Boston, MA 02111

Telephone: 617-348-5317

Website: [www.mass.gov/pca](http://www.mass.gov/pca)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/MassPCA](http://www.facebook.com/MassPCA)

E-mail: [pcacouncil@state.ma.us](mailto:pcacouncil@state.ma.us)

### **Staff**

Elizabeth H. Connell,  
*Interim Director*

Michelle Byrd,  
*Sr. Executive Assistant*

**Please share this publication  
with your PCA.**

