

How To Integrate Jobs to Careers into organizations without additional grant funding

By Danielle Wolffe

When Ray Gordon, Director of Staff Development at SSTAR presented their Jobs to Careers training model at the Massachusetts Bureau of Substance Abuse's Workforce Development Steering committee meeting November 8, in Shrewsbury Mass, he was thrilled by the level of interest expressed by the audience. The program was directly applicable to one of the key goals of conference attendees, addressing the shortage of certified addictions counselors in the field.

Much of Gordon's presentation was geared towards answering the top question posed by many of the 60 addictions professionals, policy makers, psychologists and administrators in the room. *How do we incorporate a work place based training and educational program like Jobs to Careers into our organization if we have not obtained grant money specifically for this purpose?*

Gordon suggested that organization look towards funding by using the Jobs to Careers model as a platform for grant applications; and/or by using money's already earmarked for their organizations through insurance, cost reimbursement grants, and in training budgets.

He demonstrated how SSTAR was able to use creative means to integrate Jobs to Careers training into their other programming through their recent adaptation of ARISE (Addiction Recovery in Supportive Environment), a family intervention model. SSTAR obtained funding through the Southeastern Massachusetts Health Care Collaborative, an initiative of the Bristol County Workforce Investment Board, for the three-day ARISE interventionist training. Yet, the organization created that training based upon their experiences through the Jobs to Careers program. Additionally much of the workplace-based training, which occurred on-site, as the program became rooted at SSTAR, was modeled after Jobs to Careers.

The administration began, slowly, to petition the State of Massachusetts to fund this project as it developed. The program ran for three years. Each year, SSTAR reported their retention statistics. Finally, SSTAR responded to an RFP for intervention programs, and submitted there ARISE model. They achieved further funding to continue.

ARISE allows family members to independently seek out help for a loved one with an addiction problem, and to become an integral part of that loved ones treatment. Counselors learned how to field calls from loved ones, and to coordinate and facilitate family meetings. This approach drastically changed the culture of the way the organization previously perceived addiction treatment, which was thought of as a private struggle for individuals.

The 24 original staff members who had volunteered to attend the unpaid ARISE interventionist training successfully gained higher credentials, higher pay, and additional professional opportunities. They felt more invested in the program, knowing they had played an integral part in its development.

Perhaps just as importantly, the experience taught SSTAR how to successfully bring Jobs to Careers to the attention of officials who could potentially provide funding in the future.

“The ARISE program was one of those that proved the way we can use Jobs to Careers without additional funding. Though we started with a small grant, we used the program as leverage to advocate

for change at the state level. This experience helped prove what we can do even without a big grant, how we can work with systems to help convince the people who control the purse strings to designate money they do have towards training programs,” Gordon said.