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THE PROVIDER

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Don't miss the Virtual Caring Force Rally May 14 Workers rally in support of fair pay, loan repayment

Every spring, hundreds of members of The Caring Force typically fill the Great Hall in the State House and advocate for fair funding for human service programs, adequate salaries for direct care workers and a student loan repayment program for the human services sector.

When the COVID-19 pandemic made it clear TCF could not hold an in-person rally in 2020, the Council quickly shifted instead to a "Reverse Rally," where elected officials and legislators from across the state and nationwide were asked to use their social media to thank community-based human services workers.

They delivered with enthusiasm, posting dozens of heartfelt messages and videos and more than 70,000 post views on social media.

This year, The Caring Force is excited to host an hourlong virtual rally on Friday, May 14 at 10 a.m. The rally

will take place remotely over Zoom and include speakers from our workforce and presentations from legislators.

Workers from Roxbury Youthworks, Bristol Elder Services and Advocates



Participants in TCF's 2019 Rally gathered in the State House's Great Hall. This year, the rally will be virtual.

are scheduled to address attendees. Two of TCF's legislative champions, Sen. Eric Lesser and Rep. Tram Nguyen, will be presented with Caring Bear Awards.

"We can't wait to come together virtually and thank the essential human services workers of Massachusetts for their incredible commitment to the people they serve. The time has come for legislative change to help the workers who care for others, and we are excited to support that," said Lydia Todd, executive director of NFI Massachusetts and chair of TCF.

The rally will focus on the Council's Pro-Workforce Legislative Agenda and spreading awareness on how vitally important the human service sector is across the Commonwealth.

An act establishing a loan repayment program for direct care human service workers, filed by Sen. Eric Lesser and Rep. Jeffrey Roy would create an education loan repayment program for human service workers.

An act relative to fair pay for compa-
RALLY, see page 7

House passes \$47.7b budget

The House Ways & Means Committee unanimously passed a \$47.716 billion budget, including a \$79 million Chapter 257 Rate Reserve and other investments in human services programs, including housing assistance, substance use and mental health treatment.

In three days of active debate over more than 1,000 proposed amendments late last month, lawmakers added tens of millions in spending to their original proposed budget for programs designed to speed the state's COVID-19 recovery.

The House initial budget plan had called for a \$1.19 billion spending increase over the current year's budget, a 2.6 percent increase. This is nearly \$1.8 billion, or 3.9 percent more, than Gov. Charlie Baker recommended in his FY '22 budget proposal in January.

The House supported Gov. Baker's request for a \$79 million Chapter 257 Rate Reserve (1599-6903) that will go

BUDGET, see page 7

Viewpoint: We must combat anti-Asian racism and hate

By Danielle Kim

As I was winding down for the evening on March 16, a friend texted me and said "I am so sorry about the Atlanta shooting." I immediately checked social media, and felt the wind knocked out of my chest as I scrolled through countless posts detailing the horrific, racialized murder of eight people — six of whom were Asian women. I was overcome by uncontrollable grief and rage, magnified by the recent surge of targeted anti-Asian attacks and the nation's long history of violence and racism perpetrated against Asian Americans.

It also felt immensely personal. I immediately thought of my parents who have owned a small business for 35 years and have certainly experienced racial slurs from belligerent customers — though they don't want to burden or worry me with these stories. And similarly, I've shielded them from the hundreds of painful, racialized and sexualized comments that I've experienced in my life. This communal silence has felt unbearably heavy during this past month, and I refuse to be

silent any longer.

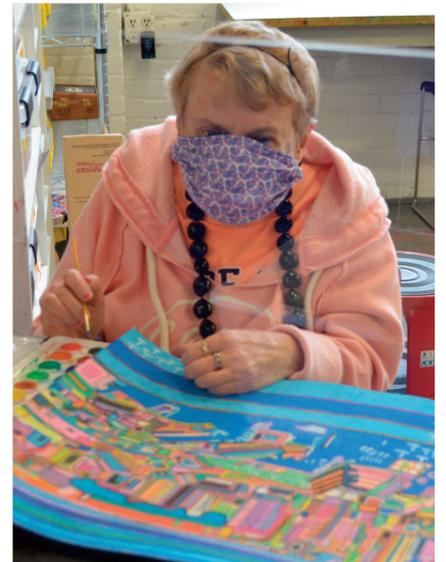
I was five years old when I became acutely aware of my Asian American identity. I was sitting by a bookshelf in a brightly lit kindergarten classroom, and three boys came up to me, pulled their eyes sideways and asked why my eyes were so slanty. I curled up into a tight ball. I remember wanting to disappear.

Silence can feel like insulation. It's also a survival mechanism — a well-worn shield, hoisted with the hopes of assimilation to protect ourselves and our loved ones from harm. But this silence is also a reason why anti-Asian violence went largely ignored in mainstream reporting, until the Atlanta massacre finally propelled this issue into our nation's consciousness. It's the reason why Asian American history is absent from our textbooks, and the reason why so many people are woefully unaware of the brutal violence, exploitation, and perpetual othering that has defined the Asian American experience for over 150 years.

Alongside this public reckoning,

KIM, see page 5

Vinfen to host A Virtual Taste of Gateway gala on May 20



Vinfen's Gateway Arts, an acclaimed studio for adults with disabilities, will present A Virtual Taste of Gateway sale and gala on May 20 at 7 p.m. More information and tickets are available at gatewayarts.org/taste. Left: the signature artwork for A Virtual Taste of Gateway by Carmella Salvucci. Untitled (Downtown Crossing, Boston). Acrylic on canvas. 24" x 18". 2021. Right: Artist Carmella Salvucci, a Gateway participant since 1973, at work in the Main Studio at Gateway Arts in Brookline.



Massachusetts Council of
Human Services Providers, Inc.
100 Crossing Blvd, Suite 100
Framingham, MA 01702

Advocates, HMEA announce affiliation

Two human services organizations — Framingham-based **Advocates, Inc.** and Franklin-based **HMEA** — announced that they will enter into an affiliation beginning July 1, 2021.

Both organizations provide services for individuals with autism, intellectual and developmental disabilities and the deaf. They also offer outpatient counseling, psychiatric health services and community justice and jail diversion programs.

The agencies, which together serve more than 35,000 children, adults and families in Massachusetts and Rhode Island and employ more than 2,200 workers, have previously collaborated on projects in the areas of IT, trauma care and COVID-19-related needs.

"Our industry is changing in ways that require organizations like ours to affiliate in order to continue to be successful and to grow and innovate to meet the needs of those we serve," said Diane Gould, president and CEO of Advocates.

"Both organizations have talented staff who care about the people they serve and are passionate about the work they do," Jule Noack, HMEA president and CEO said. "We see lots of potential to learn from each other and create new opportunities for employees across both organizations."

JRI named to Boston Globe's Top Places to Work list based on diversity and inclusion

Needham-based **Justice Resource Institute** was one of ten companies named to The Boston Globe's Top Places to Work 2020 based on diversity and inclusion. The group was culled from the newspaper's larger Top Places to Work 2020 survey.

The named companies actively recruit not just Black and Latinx prospects, but LGBTQ candidates and

people with disabilities, as well as those with Native American and Middle Eastern heritage, the Globe noted. Many track representation among new hires, promotions, and people who quit, and evaluate leaders based on these metrics. Some hire outside companies to conduct pay-equity audits and require extensive diversity training for everyone associated with the company.

"We have to have staff that are not just informed but are living and breathing diversity, equity, and inclusion," JRI Vice President Dani Silcox, told the Globe. "Because that's how they're going to be able to provide the best service for the very diverse clients that we serve."

Open Sky Community Services appoints new director of outpatient services

Open Sky Community Services announced the appointment of Eric Roldan, LICSW as the Director of Outpatient Services. Roldan, who is bilingual in English and Spanish, brings experience in both community mental health and substance abuse settings to his new role. He will be responsible for oversight of The Bridge Counseling Center.



Eric Roldan

Roldan began his career in human services over a decade ago and holds a master's degree in social work from Springfield College. Most recently, Roldan served as a clinical program director for Spectrum Health Systems.

Greater Lowell Community Foundation makes \$550K in grants to 31 nonprofits

The Greater Lowell Community Foundation announced it granted \$550,142 to 31 nonprofits providing relief to area residents who have been ad-

Lifeworks to expand services for adults with autism throughout Greater Boston



Lifeworks is expanding its community-based autism services to include adult autism support in 40 communities in eastern Massachusetts, in addition to its existing youth and family autism services in Newton and parts of Norfolk county. "It's a privilege to expand our autism support services in the DDS Metro Boston Region," said Daniel Sullivan, vice president of quality and community services at Lifeworks. "We look forward to providing our comprehensive supports and services as we establish new community connections and partnerships." Photo: Paul Ridikas receives assistance with an application from Christine Baker, Associate Director of Lifeworks' Adult Autism Support Center.

versely affected by the coronavirus pandemic. Among the grantees were Council members **Community Teamwork**, **International Institute of New England**, **NFI Massachusetts** and **Wayside Youth & Family Support Network**.

People's United grants \$151K to 34 Massachusetts agencies

People's United Community Foundation recently granted \$151,000 to 34 Massachusetts nonprofits to support critical community programs, including food aid, small business assistance, youth education and mentoring programs, as well as homelessness pre-

vention, supportive housing and employment services.

The Care Center, Massachusetts Down Syndrome Congress and **Rachel's Table**, a program of **Jewish Federation of Western MA**, were among those receiving grants.

Welcome new Council members!

The Providers' Council would like to extend a warm welcome to our new members: **Dr. Franklin Perkins School-RFK Children's Action Corps** of Lancaster, **Family and Community Resources Inc.** of Brockton and **Your Part Time Controller/YPTC**.



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Providers eAcademy shows off new look, new credentialing content for members

The Providers' Council is excited to announce that Providers' eAcademy has a new look! As part of the Council's ongoing project to update The Human Services Credentialing Program, the Providers' eAcademy logo was updated to match the design of the upcoming revised Credentialing Program modules.

All participating eAcademy agencies with the Premier Package have access to the SkillSoft course library through Relias, which includes 300+ skills-based courses on communication, management and leadership, personal development and safety. Some of these courses include:

- Effective Team Communication
- Navigating the Workplace with Emotional Intelligence
- Using Communication Strategies to Bridge Cultural Divides
- Being an Effective Manager When Times Are Tough
- Ensuring Onboarding Success
- Bridging the Diversity Gap
- Understanding Unconscious Bias

Interested in learning why Providers' eAcademy could meet your learning management needs and help improve your performance metrics? Contact Zoena Howland at zhowland@providers.org or 508.599.2242.

PROVIDER PROFILES

HILDEBRAND FAMILY SELF-HELP CENTER

614 MASSACHUSETTS AVE. • CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139 • 617.491.5752 • WWW.HILD-SELFHHELP.ORG

About the Agency

Every family has a home. This is **Hildebrand Family Self-Help Center's** (Hildebrand's) vision, and that clear, yet complex, goal has motivated the organization for 33 years since its founding in 1988.

Hildebrand helps families stabilize, take care of their children, find new homes, and move on with their lives.

Since 1988, Hildebrand has been at the forefront of the movement to end family homelessness. Hildebrand is the legacy of the social action ministry of St. Paul AME Church in Cambridge; in 1986, Reverend Leroy Attles' discovery of a homeless woman sitting on the steps of the church sparked its outreach and shelter, and the founding of Hildebrand as an independent 501(c)(3) two years later.

The organization is named for Reverend Richard Allen Hildebrand, the regional bishop who authorized the rehabilitation of the former parsonage for use as its first shelter in 1988. Over the years, Hildebrand has continued to expand the permanent housing and emergency shelter apartments to meet the needs of the growing number of families experiencing homelessness in Massachusetts.

Hildebrand is a force for change, committed to raising awareness of the true face of homelessness in our communities, since most of the individuals in Hildebrand's shelters are children, and to disrupting the cycle of homelessness for families.

Hildebrand helps every family find a home



Hildebrand assists families seeking permanent homes throughout metro Boston. Families participate in congregate and scattered-site living with 24/7 staff supports.

The journey to a new home begins with shelter, programs and resources to heal and stabilize, followed by the move into a permanent home with another two years of Hildebrand's stabilization support.

This is the pathway that families experiencing homelessness and Hildebrand staff travel together. Hildebrand partners with families experiencing homelessness and goes beyond providing housing to build strong relationships with each family member. Hildebrand serves the area's most marginalized families — racial/ethnic minorities, immigrants, those who are in poverty, and those who have less education than the average Bostonian. Of the families currently in shelter with Hildebrand, 82 percent are Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC). The majority are children. Hildebrand recognizes that the causes of poverty and homelessness are complex so the organization works with each family member to identify barriers holding them back from self-sufficiency. Hildebrand meets each family where they are, to help them get where they want to go — and the journey begins with each family having a safe, accessible place to live.

The organization currently operates 135 units of emergency shelter consisting of five congregate living programs in

Boston and Cambridge that shelter 53 families and 82 scattered-site units throughout the Metro Boston area. These programs are staffed with 24/7 on-site staff.

While in shelter with Hildebrand, each family member receives support and resources to help them heal, stabilize and get ready to find permanent homes. Priority areas for stabilization include credit, debt, CORI or legal issues, health or mental health challenges, employment, education, parenting, language barriers, immigration issues and overall individual and family well-being.

Hildebrand has also developed a broad range of community partnerships to expand services to families and increase their economic mobility. This individualized case management model begins with establishing personal goals and then, using a trauma-informed, strength-based approach, families build skills that lead to increasing self-sufficiency and permanent housing.

When the families have reached their goal of finding a new permanent home, they continue to be supported by Hildebrand's Stabilization Services team for another two year. Hildebrand also owns 11 units of affordable permanent housing in Boston and Cambridge, with plans to acquire additional properties.

Executive Leadership

Shiela Y. Moore has been the CEO of Hildebrand since 2013.

Prior to Hildebrand, she led two of Boston's flagship organizations, both in the forefront of domestic violence and homeless youth services.



Moore's passion is to reposition nonprofits by building collaborations and innovative programs that address the unmet needs of the underserved. As a former executive director of Casa Myrna, she is credited for the creation of SafeLink, the statewide domestic violence hotline.

Shiela Y. Moore

Moore has written commentary pieces for *The Boston Globe* and is noted as one of Boston's most influential leaders in Bill Brett's highly acclaimed book, *Boston All One Family*.

She has received several awards for her leadership and in 2014, Moore was appointed to the Board of Directors of the Central Square Business Association and has served on other Boards, including Jane Doe Inc., Mt. Washington/East Boston Bank, Boston Cares, and Planned Parenthood of Eastern MA.

She was a member of the Governor's Commission Against Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence and is currently a member of The Boston Club. Ms. Moore received her master's degree from Xavier University and bachelor's degree from Oberlin College.

SALUTING THE CARING FORCE

Ascentria's Forsberg staff are 'a beacon of light' for clients

How does a small staff of nine help guide over 80 individuals with developmental disabilities through a year of the pandemic? They do so through dedication, patience, bravery and ingenuity.

Ascentria Care Alliance's Forsberg Independent Living Program is a unique model that enables and empowers people with developmental disabilities to live independently in the Worcester community.

This program assists participants with their finances, helps them improve their skills for the activities of daily living and encourages self-reliance. Case workers visit program participants, monitor their progress and serve as a constant resource and support in all life situations.

"One of the most important ways our staff make a difference is promoting our clients' engagement with their community. In a blink of an eye once the pandemic hit, they had to tell their clients the opposite - stay home. Their isolation is very real," said Kristin Foley, program manager.

With closings of day programs, loss of jobs and limited family visits, our staff became many clients sole point of social interaction and emotional support.

Staff had to face their own fears about contracting the virus so that they could help their clients navigate a new way of living their lives during this crisis.

Foley observed: "It weighs heavily on our staff that, due to social distancing requirements, they cannot spend as much quality time with clients which is so important for building and maintaining trusting, close relationships. They look forward to the time when they can get back to serving the person as a whole."

"It is inspiring to witness our case workers' ability to bring a calming influence to clients dealing with instant change to their daily routine when they are accustomed to change in small increments. They are a welcome constant in their clients' lives which have been disrupted by the pandemic,"



Menes Boddie (right) and his Ascentria case-worker, Teta Monroe, are all smiles under their masks.

shared Stephanie McCarthy, Ascentria vice president.

"My caseworker, Teta, is assisting me to find new housing during this time. She continues to help throughout the pandemic no matter how hard it be-

comes. She is relentless, I'm happy to have Ascentria on my side" says Menes Boddie.

We celebrate all staff at the Forsberg program for being a beacon of light for our clients every day, but especially during these challenging times.

Human services workers are essential workers!

Nominate one of your staff members, or even an entire team of staffers, to be featured in the Saluting The Caring Force section in an upcoming issue of *The Provider*!

Email Erica Noonan at erica@providers.org for more details

EDITORIAL



Michael Weekes
President / Publisher

Mayday! Mayday! Mayday!

As we enter the month of May, many would think of warmer weather and longer days, but it also brings a sense of concern and anguish as human services sector managers are exclaiming a *Mayday!* call.

This internationally recognized signal of distress is based on their increasing anxiety and concern about their workforce challenges. Many are in a near crisis, as they're challenged to retain and recruit an adequate workforce to support their missions.

I've heard from more than a few that their ability to do so is increasingly compromised and now, in the COVID era, it is much more difficult and beyond even our previously documented dire predictions.

The Providers' Council commissioned a report authored by the University of Massachusetts Donahue Institute and UMass Dartmouth titled *Who Will Care? The Workforce Crisis in Human Services in 2017*. This seminal report provided empirical data underscoring the experiences of many providers in the human services sector.

Among its findings were difficulties providers had supporting their missions to effectively serve the Commonwealth's most vulnerable residents. Salary disparities between their staffers and workers holding similar positions in other sectors were strikingly large.

The median wage earner in human services received \$27,000, while workers in all other industries received \$40,500 — this gap has not closed significantly. Further, this report made distressing predictions that, based on the Commonwealth's needs, the human services sector would need to fill nearly 24,000 to 25,000 new jobs by the end of 2024. And while these are predictors of a looming workforce crisis, no one expected that three years later we would have a generational pandemic that now has claimed over 557,000 lives in America, contributing to making a bad situation even worse for this human services industry.

I often hear from Council members that the workforce situation has gone from bad to worse. Their voices are often filled with anguish, sometimes a sense of hopelessness. There's even occasional anger.

Their collective mission requires them to provide essential services to people with a disability, those who are hungry, people in crisis, and/or those lacking a home or other necessity. Without adequate staffing from a stable well-trained workforce, our workers cannot meet their full potential in supporting others to do the same.

Our state's most vulnerable residents have faced — and will continue to face — the brunt of this pandemic, out of no fault of their own. They will endure disrupted services, waiting lists and service denials. Some will argue that is the sign of the times and

many industries have workforce issues after all, there are Help Wanted signs everywhere.

But there is a difference between our sector and others. We can't curtail our hours and turn 24/7 residential homes for children in need into part-time facilities. Nor will we close our homeless shelters and send children and adults into the streets. We provide essential services on behalf of government and society. It's government that must heed our *Mayday!* call.

We have to demand that our policies match our values and our rhetoric for economic and social justice.

Currently, the Biden Administration has provided additional support to Massachusetts through its American Rescue Plan. The human services sector, which has nearly 185,000 jobs and serves hundreds of thousands of residents in need, should be at the front of the line receiving support.

We are confident that our state values the mission-driven services of this sector and its essential staff. It is time for them to step up with solutions like these:

Pay supplement: Undoubtedly, our state would have experienced far more casualties in the pandemic if our human service sector mistook the lack of funding support as a lack of respect and decided to call it quits.

Women and men throughout the state sacrificed their own health, and that of their loved ones, by showing up and serving those in need. Even when it may have been more profitable to collect unemployment and enhanced benefits, they recognized the essential nature of their jobs.

I propose that government provide these heroes with a \$5,000 retention supplement and extend it with additional support throughout the next 18 months. This money would be a much-needed retention and/or recruitment supplement and financial bridge until government corrects its rate-setting system to support adequate and fair wages for these essential staff members.

Loan repayment: Like other industries in the helping professions, we want to recruit and retain the best and brightest to care for those in need. They're often well educated, with advanced degrees, and provide quality clinical, medical and/or human services.

Our goal is to help them repay their education as a means of retention and professional development. The average loan debt for Massachusetts residents is \$31,821, a huge burden, and a deterrent from workers embracing careers in human services.

There are other solutions we can propose. However we get there, let us make sure the state heeds our *Mayday! Mayday! Mayday!* call and can help our helpers fulfill their mandated missions.



**Want additional copies of *The Provider*?
Interested in writing a letter to the editor?
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Viewpoints from across the State?**

**Let Erica know: 508.599.2245
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Talk with children about racism

By Dr. Catherine Vuky

A few months ago, two elderly Asian people were attacked at a North Quincy subway station. Similar stories can be found in cities from New York City to Los Angeles. Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, Asians worldwide have been faced with increasing violence and acts of hate, they have been made the subjects of slurs and jokes, and they have been faced with verbal harassment, shunning, spitting, physical assaults, and workplace discrimination. This includes a steep rise in racial discrimination, harassment, and physical assaults against Asian American youth.

Asian-Americans in communities across the country are dealing with anxiety, fear and anger brought on by the attacks. Children experience these events, some personally and directly, and others through news, social media, at school, or through other platforms. Parents play a key role in supporting children who might face or witness these attacks.

Providers might ask how to approach conversations with patients, or even whether they should, and how to foster dialogue within families about Asian hate. It is important to speak with children about race and racism, and to encourage parents to speak with their children, not only once, but to have ongoing conversations. It is also important to encourage parents to look at their children's inquiries about race and discrimination, whatever the inquiry may be, as an opportunity.

The following story is an example of such an instance: A young girl asked her therapist, "What is a Karen?" The term was something she'd encountered on a gaming platform. She had posed this same question to her mother but was dismissed. Her mother felt she was too young and said that she could learn more about the term when she was older. Unfortunately, not answering the question can have larger, unintended consequences.

Children are exposed to all kinds of terminology related to race and ethnicity and, if dismissed, a child may be less

likely to ask about other terms and names they might hear. One of the primary functions of teaching children about race and identity is to help them recognize societal discrimination. Adolescents who receive fewer messages about race and ethnicity from parents are most at risk for psychological distress.

Data shows that Asian parents might be least likely among all non-white racial or ethnic groups to report conversations about discrimination or inequality. While some of the hesitancy to talk about racism within Asian families is attributable to cultural norms, it can also be attributed to "othering," which is the tendency to view or treat people as different from oneself or from other groups, that exists within our society.

Even in this climate of greater focus on racial justice and equity, conversations about racism and discrimination often exclude Asians, or downplay the impact, thanks to the model minority myth which suggests that Asians do not face the same hardships as "other" minority groups. It is common for people to dismiss racism or hate because of such perceptions. Othering can lead to a whole host of issues, including assumptions about how an event, or comment, or action impacts an individual or community. Conversely, openly talking about racism with Asian-American youth may lead to favorable outcomes, including higher self-esteem, increased engagement in school, and stronger family dynamics.

It is important for providers to ask questions and bring up conversations about race. Ask how families are feeling, hold space for conversation, and encourage parents to do the same. Dialogue about race or racism can be difficult, both for parents and providers. However, silence is a mistake. Having open, honest conversations is a critical first step.

Dr. Catherine Vuky is director of the Asian Mental Health Concentration and an assistant professor of Clinical Psychology at William James College.

Engaging the vaccine hesitant

By Michael Curry

Recently, on the Massachusetts League of Community Health Centers' communications platform, a community health worker on Cape Cod posted the following message:

I wanted to share what I consider a very successful conversation I had with a hesitant patient that makes me feel better in those times. This woman responded to our text outreach for a vaccination clinic asking if she could get some counseling on the vaccine ... We spoke at length about safety and development but in the end she stopped me saying, "I feel like your job is just to make me say yes." I felt awful at first, I explained to her that my job is never to make her feel pressured or guilty but only to give her the information we have available to help her make the best decision for herself and her body. She confessed to me that she believes all the science, she knows she should get it, but she is just afraid since she has had bad experiences in the past with vaccines... We spoke for a while and in the end, I told her we would remove her from the call list... I assured her again that we support her decision, and that if or when she is ever ready, we are here with no judgment. We thanked each other, and she even gave me props for making her comfortable... This, for me, was the most successful conversation I had to date with a patient.

You're probably scratching your head: Why, in a race to get shots in the arms of as many people as possible, does the Massachusetts League of Community Health Centers consider this to be one of our success stories?

The reason goes back to our origins and the populations we serve. Community health centers were born out of the civil rights movement.

Our reach into the state's most vulnerable residents is deep. One in every seven Massachusetts residents receives care at a health center and one of every two Bostonians.

Our patients come from urban, Black neighborhoods; Puerto Rican, Dominican, and Central and South American backgrounds; rural whites; farmworkers; the LGBTQ community; people experiencing homelessness; and first-generation families from around the world.

They often live in small, multi-generational homes; work in essential jobs; and use public transportation. They are the same communities that were-and, unfortunately, in some cases, continue to be-devastated by the pandemic. They are also among the most vaccine-hesitant.

Our patients' more cautious attitudes were confirmed by a recent poll that oversampled Black and Latinx communities. The first key finding was that a majority of Massachusetts residents planned to get the COVID-19 vaccine, but wanted to wait until others had gone first.

The second was that across all groups, doctors are the most trusted source of information about the vaccines. But there was a drop of 10 percent between whites and communities of color when it came to getting vaccinated right away.

That difference can be explained by the legacy of racism, concerns about immigration status, linguistic

and cultural isolation, and logistical barriers to access.

To bridge it, we knew we would need to reach out to our community health workers, dig into vaccine hesitancy studies, and seek input from our partners in the work we do to serve vulnerable populations. We would also have to allay our patients' fear and mistrust by showing them we believed in their good judgment, acknowledging their desire to make good decisions, and respecting their autonomy. This approach aligns with our members' philosophy of patient-centered care.

The League's Let's Get There COVID-19 Vaccine Community Engagement Campaign began in January 2021 with the development of materials to support people in having respectful conversations about the COVID-19 vaccine-and letting patients make up their own minds. There are several types of materials:

1. Tips for Talks. This is a simple guide for having open-ended, non-judgmental conversations. They are written at a basic reading level and are available in 10 languages at: www.massleague.org/Programs/COVIDVAX.

2. Common Questions and Concerns. Our common questions and concerns aren't like any others out there! They have been customized exactly for each population in Massachusetts, both in terms of what questions are included and in the order they are presented. The customizations were created by listening to the opinions of health center staff, community groups, and a community health worker advisory group. They have also been carefully written to make them easy for health center patients to understand and use. They are available on our website.

3. Provider Videos. We asked Black and Latinx health center providers to talk about their experiences of the pandemic, the COVID-19 vaccine, and why they think people should get the shot.

And we asked them to leave their lab coats at home, talking to us as if they were old friends. We are running them on local television around the state. The videos are available on the League website and YouTube.

4. After the Pandemic Artists Videos. The final component of the campaign, scheduled for late spring and early summer, is a set of very short videos featuring artists from each community talking about the campaign and showing artwork they did to illustrate the theme *After the Pandemic*.

These are intended to celebrate each community and motivate additional individuals to get the vaccine.

We are at an inflection point in the campaign. Many of our patients have been relatively eager to get vaccinated. With the opening up of eligibility to anyone over 16, we expected that we would encounter more resistance, which seems to be the case. We are now looking to identify pockets of people who are skeptical or still on the fence.

If you have some of these individuals in your patient populations or have ideas about who they might be, we welcome your collaboration.

Michael Curry is the president & CEO of the Massachusetts League of Community Health Centers.

Kim: Ending anti-Asian racism

Continued from Page 1

we have an opportunity to act - to condemn violence against Asian communities and to demand that things will be different. Here are some concrete actions that you can take, as an individual, employee, and a community member, to help advance an anti-racist Commonwealth.

Fight for language justice. Conduct an audit of your internal and external communications with an eye towards language access, and increase your organization's budget for translational services. Providing live translators at meetings and distributing materials in multiple languages should be the norm - not the exception.

Fund community-led strategies that address systemic disparities. Racial violence doesn't occur in a vacuum. It is deeply connected to policies and practices that were designed intentionally to marginalize people of color and immigrant communities. Invest deeply in strategies that uplift communities of color and address systemic inequities across education, jobs, health care and housing.

Expand access to multilingual, culturally affirming mental health services. Ensure that survivors of all background and language abilities receive the services they need to recover and heal. Hire, retain, and generously compensate caseworkers and mental health professionals that represent the racial, cultural, linguistic, and eco-

nomics diversity of the communities that you serve.

Promote Black, Indigenous, Latinx, and Asian leaders. Despite decades of progress, people of color - including Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders - remain underrepresented in leadership roles. This is true across executive suites, board rooms, and government offices. Work to identify and cultivate Asian, Black, Indigenous, and Latinx leaders at all levels of your organization, particularly positions of power.

Equip your coworkers and neighbors with the tools to speak up. Asian Americans alone cannot shoulder the burden of denouncing Asian hate and violence. Set a clear expectation in your workplace that all employees, especially managers, are expected to speak up and denounce racist comments or microaggressions when they occur. Participate in a free bystander intervention training, and learn how to respond to and intervene in cases of harassment.

Please join me in publicly and unequivocally condemning violence and xenophobia against Asian communities. While the headlines may move on, our responsibility to actively, deliberately, and continually denounce anti-Asian racism remains. We deserve better. We are stronger together.

Danielle Kim is a commissioner on the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Asian American Commission.

Council welcomes two new board members, including new chair

The Providers' Council welcomed two new board members and a new board chair at its online 46th Annual Membership & Business Meeting on April 7.

"2020 was an incredibly unusual year," said Michael Weekes, Council CEO and president, in his welcoming statement. "COVID-19 shook not only our nation and the world, but our human service community as well. We also faced a second pandemic: The scourge of racism in 2020."

Cheryl Fasano of Mental Health Association and Shaheer Mustafa of HopeWell are the latest additions to the board.

Outgoing board members thanked for their longtime service were John Larivee of Community Resources for Justice, Joan Kagan of Square One and Michael Moloney of HMEA. Nancy Munson of Bristol Elder Services, Inc. was elected Board chair, replacing Bay Cove Human Services' Bill Sprague after he completed his two-year term.

Other officers elected at the meeting included Sandra McCroom, chair elect; Michael Vance, vice chair; Diane Gould, treasurer; Susan Stubbs, assistant treasurer; Mia Alvarado, clerk; Christopher White, assistant clerk; Bill Sprague, immediate past chair; and Gerry Wright, chair emeritus.

The board meeting was followed by a special panel discussion: Untapped Talent: Supporting Career Development Needs of the BIPOC and Foreign-Born Workforce focusing on efforts and strategies to support foreign-born and BIPOC staff's career development in the community human service industry.

The panel featured Emmanuel Owusu, Executive Director, African Bridge Network; Jule Gomes Noack, President and CEO, HMEA; Peter

Obour-Mensah, Manager, Bay Cove Housing Support Program; Evans Chiyombwe, Senior Program Director, Victory Human Services; and Hillary Bradburn, Education Manager, International Institute of New England. The panel was moderated by Pam Sampson, Chief Program Officer, Venture Community Services.

Developing BIPOC and the foreign-born workforce is a pressing need for the human services community, as approximately one in six Massachusetts residents are immigrants and nearly 20 percent of the human services workforce is foreign born. Workers often face a pernicious stigma for being Black and/or brown and being foreign born, members of the panel said.

"How do we make a difference so that we become a place where we can recruit new people, and BIPOC people can be leaders?" asked Sampson.

Owasu said some common barriers are a lack of clear pathways for career advancement in the workplace, lack of representative leadership and role models, and lack of trust.

Some of the most persistent issues that plague workers are not terribly complicated, he said, like the need for extra time to make a journey home to see family due to long transit times, particularly in Africa.

Many traditional organizational vacation policies do not accommodate this, and foreign-born workers feel forced to choose between family and job.

"We need to determine what obstacles hinder our people from progressing, and find more ways to support them," he said.

The Providers' Council also noted it would use the net proceeds from the event to create a scholarship and provide further educational opportunities to a foreign-born worker in the sector.



Nancy Munson



Cheryl Fasano



Shaheer Mustafa



Want top candidates? The Jobs with Heart website has tallied nearly 250,000 job exposures and 35,000 job views so far in 2021!

More than 10,000 jobs have been posted to the site since it launched, including **nearly 1,000 new jobs posted in the last four months.**

So what are you waiting for?

Posting jobs at Jobs with Heart is **free** for Council members!

The site features easy-to-use tools and is customizable for your organization.

Check it out at jobs.providers.org.

Any questions? Contact bill@providers.org.

A VIEW FROM THE HILL

A commentary from a legislator on human services



Hate crimes bill a necessary start to holding attackers accountable

By Rep. Tram Nguyen

Long before shots were fired in three Atlanta salons; before an AAPI woman was knocked down on a New York City sidewalk on her way to church; even before Asian Americans were spat on because of a xenophobic association with a "China virus," Asian American and Pacific Islanders have experienced anti-Asian racism here in America.

Most of us have been ridiculed or harassed for the shape of our eyes, our small stature or a perceived accent. Many of us, myself included, have been told to "go back to your country, you don't belong here." We know what it is like to be treated as the "other," the perpetual foreigner.

All of this was exacerbated with the news of the COVID-19 virus in 2020. We've seen a horrifying uptick in anti-Asian hate crimes and incidents from individuals emboldened by the racist and ignorant rhetoric that started with the former president but also used by so many others who have been scapegoating the Asian community.

The wave of anti-Asian violence spread as quickly as the virus: Chinese people attacked on public transportation. A Vietnamese elderly man kicked to the ground. Korean people punched in the face. A Filipina woman's hip broken. Hate crimes against Asian Americans increased 150 percent nationally in 2020, even as hate crimes against other ethnic groups slightly decreased.

America has a long and troubling history of racism against AAPI people, from the Chinese Exclusion Act which prohibited all immigration of Chinese laborers, to the brutal treatment of Chinese workers as they built this country's railroads, to the horrible injustice of Japanese internment camps during World War II, to the murder of Vincent Chin where the white perpetrators targeted him based on his race and walked free with a fine and probation.

The slow boil of anti-Asian hatred in the U.S. has been consistently ignored or outrightly dismissed. People of Asian descent in this country have lived in the shadows: invisible, overlooked, stereotyped; relegated as foreigners, sex objects, and now as diseases. Only when a gunman killed eight people, including six Asian women, did the country finally take notice: Asian people are being targeted. Injured. Murdered. And we have to stop it.

It was the rise in anti-Asian violence that inspired me to partner with Attorney General Maura Healey and State Senator Adam Hinds to introduce H1819, An Act to reform the hate crime statutes. But it was also the other events of 2020, and the years preceding: witnessing bias-motivated attacks against people of color, people

of different gender identities, immigrants, and other vulnerable people.

Hate crimes not only injure the victim; they terrorize their entire community. My father, who enjoys exercising outdoors, is now fearful to leave his home after seeing the rise in attacks against Asian elders throughout the country, and this fear is palpable throughout the AAPI community.

Our hate crimes bill is a start at holding perpetrators accountable. Currently, Massachusetts has two statutes: Section 37, addressing civil rights, and Section 39, addressing hate crimes.

Because they partially overlap and are vague about the animus, or motivation, of a crime, these laws are rarely enforced. Our bill combines the two statutes into one, provides clear

definitions, clarifies prohibited conduct, and assigns penalties based on the severity of the crime. It addresses the reality of "mixed-motivations," when a perpetrator may have multiple reasons for attacking a victim - and one of those reasons is based on the victim's membership in a protected class.

Our bill also broadens the protected classes to include gender and immigration status, to make sure that our laws meet the moment when we're seeing increases in xenophobia and gender-based crimes. We are continuing to work on this legislation, to ensure that restorative justice is an option in sentencing - we support allowing a judge to sentence a repentant offender to anti-bias education, community service, or other diversion programs.

We also want to ensure that AAPI community groups are provided with the resources they need to support victims. We need to do what we can to help victims feel safe to report these crimes. Additionally, we need to collect data on hate crimes and incidents so that can have a clearer understanding of the extent of anti-Asian violence and discrimination. And, perhaps most important, we must eliminate racial, ethnic or gender stereotypes in our children's K-12 education by making sure that public school curricula are racially and culturally inclusive.

In the wake of these terrible shootings in Atlanta, we all need to unite against violence and hate. I would ask this caring community to continue to support your AAPI neighbors, to amplify their voices, and to call out racism when you see it. I would ask that we all educate ourselves, listen to the community's needs and fears and come together to #StopAAPIHate. This senseless violence has no place in our community or in our country; stopping it begins with us.

State Representative Tram Nguyen represents the 18th Essex district.

The opinions expressed in A View from the Hill and Viewpoints from Across the State are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views or opinions of the Providers' Council or its members.

RALLY: TCF will hold all-virtual pro-workforce event May 14

Continued from Page 1

able work, filed by Sen. Cindy Friedman and Rep. Kay Khan would seek to eliminate the pay disparity that exists between the salaries of human services workers employed by community-based human service providers and state employees holding similar job titles who perform similar work no later than July 1, 2027.

TCF sent more than 1,200 messages to legislators earlier this year,

and dozens of legislative co-sponsors have signed on each bill — including more than 60 on the House loan repayment legislation.

TCF has also organized a "Thank You Essential Workers" yard sign and billboard campaign, along with televised PSAs from Gov.

Charlie Baker and EOHHS Secretary

Marylou Sudders, that has reached tens of thousands of Massachusetts residents.

Since the Council launched TCF in 2011, more than 28,000 members have joined the grassroots human services advocacy movement, which has over the past decade been

successful in securing more funding

for essential human services and modest salaries increases for direct care staff.

All Council members are invited to send attendees to the rally.

Please let the Caring Force Project Manager Ravi Simon know how many attendees you plan to bring by emailing him at ravi@providers.org.

Attendees can also register for the rally using the RSVP form at www.TheCaringForce.org.



BUDGET: House passes \$47.7b FY '22 budget; \$79m Chap. 257 reserve

Continued from Page 1

toward new human services funding that will be needed in FY '22.

The budget also noted that funds would be expended for Competitive Integrated Employment Services, the state's only welfare-to-work program, in the DTA's Employment Services Programs line item (4401-1000). While the initial budget did not have a funding floor for CIES, the Providers' Council worked with Rep. Dan Hunt to file an amendment ensuring DTA would "expend not less than the amount expended in fiscal year 2021" for CIES and the Young Parents Program. The amendment was added to the budget as part of Consolidated Amendment "A".

The House budget proposal also boosted spending for school finance reform and established a \$40 million fund to help school districts struggling after the COVID-19 pandemic.

The budget, however, did not include an expected \$4.5 billion in federal aid coming to the state in June, which legislators will handle with a separate spending bill, according to

House Speaker Ronald Mariano.

House Ways and Means Chairman Aaron Michlewitz noted the budget builds on the FY '21 plan which prioritized housing and homelessness prevention, especially for families.

"As we move into the FY22 budget, we plan to continue to prioritize these needs and build on previous investments to support individuals, families, and youth. In tandem with an anticipated \$800 million in Federal rental assistance funds, this budget will create hundreds of new vouchers that will be utilized to keep at risk families in their homes," Michlewitz told the State House News Service.

"As we cautiously recover from this pandemic and look toward the future, we must continue to build back a new normal which is more resilient and equitable for everyone," Michlewitz said after the budget was finalized.

While a final budget with all amendments and funding levels was not available at press time, an initial review of the spending plan showed the following allocations to line items of interest, including:

EBC: HWM funds 3000-7050, *Family & Community Engagement*, at \$11.54m, matching the projected spending levels for FY '21. The Gov. proposed funding it at \$14.04m, and the House proposal represents a 17.82 percent decrease from his proposal.

MCB: HWM funds 4110-3010, *Vocational Rehabilitation for the Blind*, at \$2.83m, matching the amount Gov. Baker proposed in his budget. This is less than the \$3.13m projected spending level for FY '21, representing a 9.45 percent decrease.

DTA: HWM funds 4401-1000, *Employment Services Program*, at \$15.5m, a 10.3 percent boost from Gov. Baker's proposal, but a 6.7 percent drop from FY '21 projected spending levels.

DPH: HWM funds 4512-0200, *Bureau of Substance Addiction Services*, at \$160.1m, nearly 4.7 percent under FY '21 projected spending levels, but 12 percent more than the Governor's proposal of \$142.8m.

DCF: HWM funds 4800-0040, *Family Support and Stabilization*, at \$70.1m, a \$3m increase — or 4.5 percent - above FY '21 projected spending

and the Governor's FY '22 proposal.

DMH: HWM funds 5046-0000, *Adult Mental Health and Support Services*, at \$505.9m, \$4.5 million more than FY '21 projected spending and \$1m more than Gov. Baker's proposal.

DDS: HWM funds 5911-2000, *Transportation Services*, at \$27.1m., 34.8 percent higher than Gov. Baker's budget proposal, which sought \$20.1m in funding. Gov. Baker had proposed moving funding from this line item to 5920-5000, which HWM funded at \$79.9m, as did Gov. Baker.

To see the Council's preliminary HWM budget analysis, which compares a selection of HWM line items to their FY '22 projected spending levels and a comparison to the Governor's FY '22 H1 recommendation, visit www.providers.org

If you believe your program or services will be positively or negatively affected by this budget proposal, please contact Bill Yelenak at bill@providers.org so we can learn more about your line item and track it throughout the budget debate.



USI Insurance Services has been the Providers' Council Exclusive Endorsed Insurance Services Broker for over 40 Years

USI Insurance Services considers each client relationship as an ongoing partnership. We offer suggestions and more importantly, solutions on how to do things better or more efficiently through our network of resources - our people. We in turn, pass our expertise to you by providing exclusive offerings in dental, life, disability and vision insurance programs. Other offerings include commercial coverages, workers' compensation and voluntary personal auto & home insurance. USI's Human & Social Services Practice is committed in providing quality insurance services to our valued "partners" - the Providers' Council members.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS • SPRING 2021

What: **Members-Only Northern Massachusetts University Roundtable**
When: Wednesday, May 5
Time: 10 a.m.
Where: via Zoom
Panelists: Brian MacKenna-Rice, Coordinator for Human Services, Northern Essex Community College
Dale McLennan, Dean, Internship and Career Center, Endicott College
Melisa Alves, Director, Career Services & Advising Center, Fitchburg State University
Samantha Medina, Director of Employer Engagement, Merrimack College
Cost: Free

What: **Members-Only Webinar: How to Hire a Consultant**
When: Thursday, May 6
Time: 10 a.m.
Where: via Zoom
Trainer: Kristen McCormack, Boston University Questrom School of Business
Cost: \$20 members; \$30 non-members

What: **Members-Only Webinar: Partnerships, Mergers, and Acquisitions – The New Vocabulary for Social Service Agencies**
When: Wednesday, May 12
Time: 10 a.m.
Where: via Zoom
Trainer: Alison Glastein Gray, President, Pear Associates
Cost: Free

What: **The 2021 Annual Caring Force Rally**
When: Friday, May 14
Time: 10 a.m.
Where: via Zoom
Speakers: Workforce members, legislators
Cost: Free

What: **Building a Motivated Team Spring 2021**
When: Monday, May 17
Time: 9 a.m.
Where: via Zoom
Trainer : Virginia Maglio, Optimum Development
Cost: \$70 members/\$130 non-members

Note: This program has been approved for 3 Social Work Continuing Education hours for relicensure, in accordance with 258 CMR. NASW-MA Chapter CE Approving Program, Authorization Number D81244. This program is also valid for 3 PDCs for the SHRM-CP® or SHRM-SCP®.

*Pre-registration for these events required unless otherwise noted.
Visit www.provider.org/events to learn more and register.*

Questions? Contact Eliza Adams at 508.598.9700 or eadams@providers.org



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