Boston Children’s Hospital offers a comprehensive range of pediatric healthcare services for children and young adults. With 404 beds, Boston Children’s provides care for approximately 25,000 inpatient admissions every year, and in 2016 performed more than 26,500 surgeries and 158,700 radiological exams. Boston Children’s has been widely recognized for its overall excellence, and U.S. News & World Report named it the top children’s hospital in the country for 2016-17.

Offering Basic Skills Development for All Workers

In partnership with JVS Boston, a local workforce-development nonprofit, Boston Children’s Hospital offers its support services staff — including environmental services, food service, parking/visitor services, and supply chain work workers— the chance to learn skills that will further their careers. The program is currently focused heavily on promoting English-language and computer skills, and courses currently offered include Professional Communication, Pronunciation, and Computer Basics, as well as English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL). The hospital’s aim in providing these opportunities is to prepare its employees for college and higher-responsibility jobs at Boston Children’s.

Creating an Incumbent Worker Pipeline

Internal surveys showed that Boston Children’s employees wanted more career-advancement opportunities, and with a grant from Boston-based SkillWorks, the hospital established a dedicated career ladder program in 2016. A specially appointed project team identified high-need jobs and then developed a curriculum of essential skills for each position. A dozen employees were chosen for an initial round of training and job shadowing, and early returns are promising: all but one of the employees completed the training, eight met with HR recruiters for informational interviews, and three participants have started new jobs at BCH. The hospital’s goal is to enlist 30 support services employees in the career ladder program.

Exposing High Schools Students to Healthcare Careers

Through its COACH (Community Opportunities Advancement at Children’s Hospital) Program, Boston Children’s recruits local high school students for summer internships. By exposing young people to the idea of a career in healthcare, Boston Children’s Hospital is cultivating a diverse pipeline of engaged future job applicants. Since the program’s inception in 2007, close to 800 students have participated, with the vast majority going on to college and several taking positions with Boston Children’s.

1,394 EMPLOYEES AND STUDENTS HAVE PARTICIPATED IN A DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Career Development Training Program: 30
COACH Program: 678
English, Computer or Citizenship Preparation: 611
APER Float Pool Training: 75
Enhanced Training for Frontline Employees

Designed to increase efficiency in clinic operations, the Essential Skills Training Program/APER Pool Float Program develops critical workplace skills in entry-level and frontline employees. This 36-hour course focuses on communication skills, teamwork, stress management, and navigating difficult situations in the workplace. The program—funded by the Commonwealth Corporation’s Health Care Workforce Transformation Fund—produced impressive results.

Frontline Success Story

Bayush Dinegde, a dedicated and driven Boston Children’s employee from Ethiopia, began taking English-language and computer classes through JVS in October 2013. Thanks to the skills she acquired in those courses, Bayush was able to advance from her position as an environmental services employee to a laboratory assistant. Her new position involves sending information to labs for testing, tracking the data when it comes back — and, crucially, much more use of English. Bayush says that the English courses she took gave her the confidence to pursue this job, and that she isn’t done learning. “I now have the courage to continue my education, and I encourage others not to give up,” she said.

NOTE FROM THE CEO

The success of Boston Children’s Hospital “would not be possible without support for our staff in the form of education and career-development opportunities,” says Boston Children’s CEO Sandi Fenwick. “Opportunities to learn and grow are a necessity as we develop our staff and continue to be an employer of choice. Expanding our Workforce Development supports is a priority for Boston Children’s Hospital, with opportunities to build further career ladders and pipeline programming for our staff in addition to further encouraging post-secondary credentials.”

- Boston Children’s CEO Sandi Fenwick

Number of Employees: 11,291
Number of Frontline Workers: 4,534

The Frontline Healthcare Worker Champion Recognition Program

The CareerSTAT Frontline Healthcare Worker Champion program recognizes healthcare organizations making exemplary investments in the skills and careers of their frontline workers. Organizations are designated as Champions and Emerging Champions. Champions meet all of CareerSTAT’s recognition criteria, including making skill and career development accessible, offering programs at a significant scale, measuring program business impact, and building sustainable programs, while Emerging Champions are in earlier stages of investment and are working with CareerSTAT leaders to strengthen their programs and achieve Champion status. CareerSTAT is an employer-led initiative of the National Fund for Workforce Solutions. Learn more at www.NationalFund.org/CareerSTAT.