

Boston Housing Authority's Jobs Plus Program – Charlestown Works

The strongest element of Boston's Jobs Plus Program is our highly successful adult education program known as BHA Charlestown Adult Education (BHA CAEP). The Program began offering adult education services in 1985 in response to a need for remedial literacy services, English as a Second Language classes, and high school equivalency classes to address the large number of students dropping out of high school. In the past few years, the Program has increased capacity in the well-established ESOL and HiSET programs, which consisted of 5 classes and 75 students to 8 classes and 130 students. These 8 classes consist of 3 levels of ESOL (beginner, intermediate, and advanced), as well as ESOL Literacy, Family Literacy with child care, Pre-HiSET preparation for students whose GLE is 4-8, HiSET preparation for students whose GLE is 9-12, and Fast Track HiSET preparation, which is a 9-week, fast paced HiSet preparation class for those who score in the advanced category on the TABE 9/10 placement test. We also have an Educational/Career Advisor, who guides our students into their next steps by counseling and preparing them to make well thought-out decisions about their futures. Boston College 4Boston Program provides our program with 15 tutors, who are scheduled throughout the week to work with our students one-on-one, in small groups, or in the classroom as an aide. We recently added a child care component to our program through Smart from the Start, for those who have non-school aged children and need child care to attend classes. In the last 5 years, BHA CAEP has built strong connections with the Charlestown community and program staff attend monthly community building meetings with agencies that provide services that help our students take next steps beyond HiSET attainment. Our collaborations have made it possible for students to further their education, obtain certifications in various trades, and successfully obtain employment. These connections have also enhanced awareness of resources available to Boston residents. Some of our key partners include the Boston Private Industry Council (Boston's Workforce Investment Board), the Mayor's Office of Workforce Development, the Charlestown Tenant Task Force, Bunker Hill Community College, Year Up, Massachusetts General Hospital, Charlestown Substance Abuse Coalition, Smart from the Start (School Readiness Program), and a number of local employers.

Our Jobs Plus program has the unique advantage of being located in the same building as the BHA CAEP. The BHA CAEP, which works with BHA Charlestown residents on HiSET Preparation (former GED preparation), ESOL, Literacy, College Preparation, and Career and College advising, will be the stepping stone for the career development supported by our Jobs Plus program. The convenience and benefits of being co-located are invaluable. Jobs Plus recruitment efforts will be minimized due to the large number of residents/students with whom BHA CAEP is working and who will participate in the Jobs Plus program. As part of the curriculum in BHA CAEP, all students in the program will fall into one of three Jobs Plus advising tracks and students will develop career readiness skills at their appropriate levels as part of their next steps. The combined efforts of BHA Charlestown Adult Education and Jobs Plus career development and placement center will ensure that all BHA Charlestown residents who participate, will be well-rounded and well-prepared in career readiness and academic proficiency.

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