

Career Focus on...

Human Services

Introduction

- Have you always thought of yourself as a helper?
- Would you like to influence and empower our most at-risk populations: the elderly, individuals with developmental disabilities, substance abusers, or children and their families with special needs or mental health concerns?
- Would you like to teach people new ways of coping with problems?
- Would you like to improve the well-being and quality of life of those in need?

If you've answered yes to these questions, you might want to consider a career in the Human Services field.

Did You Know... ?

- The Department of Developmental Services provides support to more than 32,000 people in Massachusetts.
- Social and Human Service assistants held 352,000 jobs in the U.S. in 2008.
- Through 2018, employment of Social and Human Service workers is expected to grow by nearly 34 percent, creating about 431,500 new jobs.
- Opportunities are excellent for many jobs in human services. The need is growing for qualified professionals due to the increase in the aging population, and children and adults experiencing a growing number of mental, psychological, educational, and physical problems.
- Board certification (HS-BCP™) for human services practitioners with an associate's degree has recently become available (November 2009).

QCC Alumni Success Story

Jeffrey Clements graduated from Quinsigamond Community College with an Associate's degree in Human Services in 2004. He subsequently earned his Bachelor's and Master's degrees from Assumption College. Jeff worked full time as a Vocational Specialist for the Institute for Community Inclusion, a not for profit agency affiliated with UMass-Boston and Boston Children's Hospital.

Jeff worked closely with Case Managers on their clients' vocational assessments and made recommendations for referrals regarding vocational services. He inquired about the needs of his clients, through an assessment, which reveals barriers to being self sufficient. This may include providing a client with assistance through counseling agencies, food pantries and medical and mental health providers. He assisted clients to succeed in an academic or professional setting. One of his clients decided to return to college, so Jeff assisted with the completion of Admissions and Financial Aid forms. Jeff made recommendations regarding clients' vocational needs to the case workers. Another requirement of the job was to facilitate Job Search and Job Readiness Groups.

QCC gave Jeff the tools necessary to pursue a Career in Human Services. He developed his oral and written communication skills, and became educated on how to navigate through the many social services programs provided through the local community. Jeff likes to relate the acquired skills to a tool box. He says that his tool box was empty when he began his academic career at QCC. Through academic and experiential coursework, he was able to "fill his toolbox", with the necessary elements needed to inspire change and instill hope in other people's lives.

Jeff is currently a full-time faculty member, here, at QCC, teaching human services courses!

Career Options

SOCIAL AND HUMAN SERVICE ASSISTANTS

Median Annual Salary: \$27,940

Recommended Education: Post-High School certificate, Associate's Degree

www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes211093.htm

SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND BEHAVIORAL DISORDER COUNSELORS

Median Annual Salary: \$37,700

Recommended Education: Master's Degree

www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes211011.htm

MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELORS

Median Annual Salary: \$38,010

Recommended Education: Master's Degree

www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes211014.htm

HEALTH EDUCATORS

Median Annual Salary: \$44,340

Recommended Education: Bachelor's Degree, Master's Degree

www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes211091.htm

SOCIAL WORKERS

Median Annual Salary: \$49,420

Recommended Education: Bachelor of Social Work degree, Master of Social Work degree

www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes211029.htm

Worcester Area Employers

- Devereux, Inc.
- You, Inc.
- Community Health Link, Inc.
- Girls, Inc.
- The Seven Hills Foundation
- The Bridge of Central Massachusetts, Inc.

Positions Entered by

QCC Graduates

- Residential Counselor
(for substance abuse treatment program)
- Mental Health Counselor
- Group Home Manager
- Direct Support Worker
- Outreach Worker

Other Professionals in the Field

Josh Gondelman is a head teacher at the Arlington Infant Toddler Center by day, and a comedian on Boston's club scene by night. When Josh earned his bachelor's degree he found he was not interested in many of the careers his male friends were entering. Family and friends encouraged him to become an educator. He already had experience as a preschool and toddler assistant when he decided to go for the job in Arlington. Josh says his two careers fit together nicely: "From my preschool experiences I glean plenty of comedy material. From stories about magic tricks the kids have taught me, to my position as the only male employee on a staff of twenty. And from my standup experience I get practice communicating with a diverse array of people, which comes in handy in the classroom and during meetings with parents." Read more about Josh and other men in the Early Education field at MenTeach: www.menteach.org/mens_stories.

Next Steps

Wondering if the field of Human Services is right for you?

- Take a Career Assessment to match your interests with potential careers: www.qcc.mass.edu/t3/ort/sites.html#careerassess
- Research the web links on this page and more: www.qcc.mass.edu/t3/ort/sites.html#careerinfo
- Conduct an Informational Interview. Speak with a live person employed in this field: www.qcc.mass.edu/t3/ort/sites.html#infointerview
- Attend a Career Planning Session: www.QCC.edu/images/capsession.pdf
- Speak with an Advisor: www2.qcc.mass.edu/advising/adVCalladvCall.asp
- Speak with QCC Faculty who teach Human Services courses.
- Make an appointment with the Human Services Coordinator.

Sources Used

Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, *Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2010-2011 Edition*:

- Counselors, All: www.bls.gov/ocolocos067.htm
- Social and Human Service Assistants: www.bls.gov/ocolocos059.htm
- Social Workers: www.bls.gov/ocolocos060.htm
- Clinical and School Psychologists: www.bls.gov/ocolocos056.htm

Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, *Occupational Employment Statistics, May 2009*:

- Health Educators: www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes211091.htm
- Mental Health Counselors: www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes211014.htm
- Social and Human Service Assistants: www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes211093.htm
- Social Workers: www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes211029.htm
- Substance Abuse and Behavioral Disorder Counselors: www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes211011.htm

Massachusetts Career Information System:

- Social and Human Service Assistants: masscis.intocareers.org/info2.aspx?FileID=Occ&FileNum=100198&TopicNum=0
- Social Workers: masscis.intocareers.org/info2.aspx?FileID=Occ&FileNum=100202&TopicNum=0

Council for Standards in Human Services Education: Human Services Board Certified Practitioner: www.cce-global.org/credentials-offered/hsbcp

Professional Associations

- National Organization for Human Services: www.nationalhumanservices.org/
- New England Organization for Human Services: www.newenglandhumanservices.com
- Council for Standards in Human Services Education: www.cshse.org
- The Center for Credentialing and Education: www.cce-global.org
- Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB): www.aswb.org/index.asp
- Human Service Information Technology Applications (HUSITA): www.husita.org/
- Latino Social Workers Organization: www.lsw.org/index.html
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services: www.dhhs.gov

Looking for employment, co-op, internship, or service learning opportunities?

Contact the Career Placement Office: www.QCC.edu/pages/Career_Placement.html

Possible Transfer Schools

- Assumption College
- Becker College
- Fitchburg State University
- Framingham State University
- Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts
- Nichols College
- Springfield College
- Worcester State University
- UMass Amherst
- UMass Boston

Looking for Specific Transfer Information?

- Start at the QCC Transfer web site: www.qcc.mass.edu/transfer
- Make an appointment online with the Transfer Advisor: www.qcc.mass.edu/transfer/calendar
- Email questions to: transfer@qcc.mass.edu