

PROMISING PRACTICES



Integrating CARF with Baldrige leads to performance excellence

Nearly a decade ago, [United Cerebral Palsy Land of Lincoln](#) (UCPLL) recognized that it was essential to shift its management philosophy from nonprofit strategies to business strategies if it were to sustain organizational growth.

Reflecting on this philosophical shift, UCPLL Chief Operating Officer Kathy Leuelling said, "Management by what you know rather than what you think is a big cultural change for many nonprofit organizations. Yet, in today's economy, competition among nonprofits has intensified as a result of less money to go around and more people in need of services. To thrive in this environment, we recognized we needed to apply proven business principles."

UCPLL, whose programs have been [CARF](#) accredited since 1995, sought a complementary framework aligned with the CARF standards to help guide the organization's business practices. After investigating several tools, the organization selected the Baldrige Performance Excellence Program because the Baldrige criteria provide a model that:

- Establishes systematic processes to accomplish the work of the organization.
- Collects pertinent information and data about the effectiveness of these processes.
- Uses the information gathered to drive positive changes.

All of these criteria were compatible with and carried out the intent of the CARF standards.

UCPLL now uses community focus groups and employee teams to apply Baldrige criteria in tandem with the CARF standards. The groups and teams complete self-assessments, develop and

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Plan to attend the CARF 2012 ECS International Conference

Leaders in the rehabilitation field from across the United States and Canada will address "Building the future in uncertain times" at the CARF 2012 Employment and Community Services International Conference, February 27-28, 2012, in Tucson, Arizona. For information or to register, visit: www.carf.org/international_conferences

About the ECS Promising Practices newsletter series

An organization receiving exemplary recognition in its CARF survey report stands out because of its professional and strategic response to a service or business need. CARF presents these ECS Promising Practices articles to encourage dialogue among service providers and to offer examples of creative solutions for improving service

implement process improvement plans, collect data, and analyze results.

Recently implemented process improvements at UCPLL include:

- A strategic framework that focuses on social impact with objectives, goals, and action plans based on challenges, advantages, and changing customer requirements.
- Employee Passports with individual goals linked to departmental and organizational strategic objectives. Passports are carried by staff members while at work as a reminder of UCPLL's mission, vision, and values.
- Lean Principles to map work processes, determine customer value, eliminate waste, and capture workforce knowledge.
- An extensive data collection system for outcomes as well as in-process measures that are tracked monthly on departmental and organizational scorecards. Regular review of these data enables directors to address underperformance in real time.

The investment in these efforts has paid off for UCPLL with big dividends:

- Individuals achieving their personal outcomes increased from 75 percent in 2007 to 92 percent in 2011.
- Non-state revenue increased from 11 percent in 2005 to 24 percent in 2011.
- Customers rating UCPLL as their provider of choice increased from 76 percent to 95 percent.
- Employee turnover decreased by 43 percent since 2007.

In recognition of UCPLL's performance improvement, the Lincoln Foundation for Performance Excellence (the Baldrige program in Illinois) recognized UCPLL with the Bronze Award for Commitment to Excellence in both 2008 and 2010.

The most recent CARF survey report said UCPLL's participation in the Baldrige Performance Excellence Program demonstrates "the organization's exemplary commitment to performance measurement and management and connecting the work done by staff each day to the mission and vision of the organization."

The United Cerebral Palsy Land of Lincoln's website is at www.ucpll.org. For more information about the organization's experience applying Baldrige criteria with the CARF standards, write Kathy Leuelling, COO, kleuelling@hotmail.com.

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www.carf.org/ecspromisingpractices

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Services, and Employment Services.