



Agency: MainSpring House
Location: Brockton, MA
Current Associate: Chris Rinehart

Title: Coordinator of Education and Vocational Training

Clientele: 20 homeless males who are in the Work Express Program. The Work Express Program is a transitional program that is a 6 to 12 month commitment and emphasizes sobriety, education, and employment. MainSpring has a variety of contracts with the city of Brockton that enables the individuals to work in the mornings for a small stipend. Some of the jobs include sweeping the streets of Brockton, cleaning out the minor league baseball stadium, and shoveling snow. As a part of the program, the Work Express members are required to save at least 30% of their stipend.

Work Situation: I teach a Life Skills class twice a week for one hour each time. The class has two phases of material. The first phase emphasizes the inner person and the basic skills that people need in order to interact with others such as anger management, stress management, group skills, and communication. The second phase is geared towards job training and focuses on resumes, interviewing skills, and personality tests. In addition to the class, I select the journal topics, read, and respond to the daily journals that the men are required to write as a part of the Work Express Program.

Personal Qualities Needed for the Position: Outgoing personality, confident, organized, flexible, good sense of humor, self-motivated

Skills helpful for this position: fluency in Spanish or Portuguese, legible handwriting (which I personally lack)

Skills needed for this position: public speaking ability, the ability to think quickly on your feet, leadership ability, the ability to manage time well, basic computer knowledge

Placement Atmosphere: The atmosphere here at MainSpring is awesome. The staff here is always open to any questions, comments, or concerns that I have. I am in constant communication with Carlos Agosto, the Work Express director, about any issues that come up regarding the education program along with the other staff members. The staff here goes out of its way to make the associate feel welcome and an integral part of the work that is being done here to help these individuals get their lives back on track. There is a great balance here between hard work and fun, which usually comes in the form of laughter and friendly banter.

Average Daily Schedule: 9-5, M-F

Special Projects/Activities:

In addition to my responsibilities with the education program, I am also a case manager at MainSpring. I have anywhere between 3 and 5 guests at a time and I stay until 7 p.m. one night per week in order to meet with those guests and help to refer them to the services that they need by making phone calls to various agencies and services in the area and taking to the other case managers here

In January, 2006, I will be helping to count homeless individuals on the streets of Brockton as a part of the Homeless Census, which happens twice per year.

Every month, I decorate the bulletin board in our cafeteria with a new theme. Some themes I have used are Hispanic heritage month, baseball history month, and thanksgiving history month.

About once a month, I go out into the streets with the Work Express males and work with them in the morning from 8-12. I have helped to clean out the baseball stadium, swept the streets, and helped to paint the inside of St. Paul's Food Kitchen

Clientele Contact: The contact with the clientele happens all the time. Through my work with the Life Skills Class and the journals, I have been able to personally get to know

each of the Work Express individuals. Taking the time to work with them also helps a lot because it gives them a chance to be with me and gain their trust in me in a less intimidating setting for them.

Personal Satisfaction: This job has a very high level of personal satisfaction. I have had several guests come tell me personally what a positive influence that the Work Express Program and I have had on them. While I have not been able to help everyone, the fact that I have been able to reach at least a few of these individuals makes the work well worth the effort.

Type of Person Best Suited for this Position: A person in this position needs to be confident, flexible, and must have a good sense of humor.