



SPRING NEWS FLASH

Pennsylvania Women Work

Call for nominations!



We are now accepting nominations for the 2020 Circle of Hope Awards!

This year, we will be celebrating the 20th anniversary of the Circle of Hope Awards. This is our premiere fundraising event where we recognize and honor local women for their dedication to supporting diversity in the workforce, women's empowerment and equitable employment.

If you know an outstanding woman leader or organization, consider nominating them for the follow awards:

- The Honorary Woman of Courage Award pays tribute to women who have overcome incredible odds to achieve success in their lives and careers.
- The Diversity and Inclusion Award seeks nominations for a

Dear friends of PA Women Work:

This is a time of extreme uncertainty for all of us. We are facing immense challenges as individuals, as organizations, and as a community. I feel the weight on a personal level, but also as the leader of a critical workforce agency in our region. The impact that COVID-19 has already had on our economy is astounding. We anticipate that the need for our services will be at historic levels.

As an organization, we are working to navigate the current environment, which has caused us to temporarily close our offices. Our staff is working virtually, limited hours each week, with hopes to resume our normal operations soon.

We are serving the needs of current clients by working with them virtually -- individually, and we are also exploring models of virtual classes. We currently have a pilot virtual class in Westmoreland County and are hopeful that this can be expanded to begin addressing employment needs throughout the state.

Many of you have asked how you can help. We are so appreciative of your continued work as virtual mentors and so grateful for the support you provide to our clients. The need for volunteers will continue to increase and if you are interested in exploring these opportunities, please [click here](#) for more information. In the meantime, you can also help us by supporting our spring fundraising efforts, which you can read about below. Your involvement would go a long way to making this period of time sustainable and allowing us to provide services as needed both now and in the future.

I hope you and your families are staying safe and healthy. I believe that if there is any silver lining to this crisis, it is that our work together as a community will make us stronger than ever before.

Sincerely,
Julie Marx-Lally

company or group within an organization that exemplifies the advancement and inclusion of diverse populations in the workplace.

To learn more about these awards or to place your nomination, [click here](#).

Thought leadership blog



We hope you're all #socialdistancing right now. And yes, we know how boring it is... we're in it with you. To try and help, Abby Swalga, PA Women Work communications manager, pulled together this list of ways you can be productive and healthy during this time.

[Read our list of ways to make your self-quarantine count here!](#)

Thank you UPMC & Duquesne Light!



We'd like to extend a special thank you to UPMC and Duquesne Light. Their generosity will allow us to continue providing

3 Cups of Coffee goes virtual

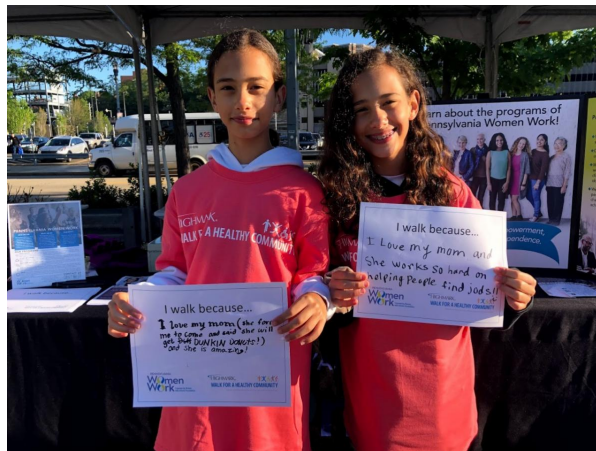


Last year, we piloted a virtual mentoring model for our [3 Cups of Coffee](#) program. The virtual mentoring pairs followed the program's traditional structure, meeting three times to discuss the mentee's goals, resume, application process, career plan and more. The only difference? They brewed their own coffee at home and connected using a video streaming service.

We had no idea just how relevant this would be today. As we are all staying home and social distancing, we are inviting job-seekers to connect with their mentors virtually. Recently, the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette wrote an article about 3 Cups of Coffee, featuring a few of the mentoring pairs who have already met virtually. To learn more and read the article, [click here](#).

If you are either a job-seeker who could use assistance during this time with your employment search, or you are a professional seeking an opportunity to help someone, please consider signing up to be a mentee or mentor. You can get started today by contacting Taneshya Williams at twilliams@pawomenwork.org.

Highmark Walk for a Healthy Community update



For the protection and safety of walkers and volunteers, this year's Highmark Walk for a Healthy Community will now be an **online-only fundraiser and virtual walk**.

workforce development support to residents in the Northview Heights area.

If you or someone you know lives in the Northview Heights area and is interested in learning more, contact us at 412-742-4362.

Invest in our region's economic future

As we move toward recovery during this unprecedented time, you can help local people pick up the pieces and get back to work.

[Make a commitment to our region's future today.](#)

Advocacy support needed for New Choices



As we look toward recovery, job seekers in Pennsylvania will need the critical services provided through New Choices. We need your help to ensure that the New Choices/New Options line item remains in the Governor's budget.

We are asking you to send an email to your local state legislator asking to keep our proven program in the 2020/2021 budget at level funding.

To find your state legislators' email, [click here](#). From there, click on his/her name and look for the email icon. This icon will either show you the Member's email address or it will take you to a contact form.

A virtual walk is a real walk, but it's on your terms! Anytime between May 9 – June 30, you choose how and when you walk (treadmill, park or trail, or around the neighborhood) – it's your choice. You also pick the time of when you start and stop.

Now more than ever, we need your support. Please consider fundraising as part of the PA Women Work team. By supporting PA Women Work, you will directly support an organization solely dedicated to helping individuals get back to work.

Signing up is easy. [Click here](#) to join a team or create your own. You can also make a donation or participate in one of our wrap-around fundraisers. For more information or questions, email eholmes@pawomenwork.org.

#WinItWednesday Raffle moves to May

Due to the current circumstances with COVID-19, we have decided to delay our #WinItWednesday Raffle drawings until the month of May.

Don't miss your chance to take part in the fun! You can win exciting prizes each Wednesday. The grand prize is a \$1,000 gift card to Orr's Jewelers. [Click here](#) to see the full list of prizes and to enter!

Becoming a CNA and getting one step closer to her goal



At five years old, Habibo Sekondo moved with her family from Kenya to the Northview Heights area in Pittsburgh. Even though she was quite young, she recalls the transition being difficult for her family.

"My parents did not speak English and did not understand America's culture," Habibo remembered. "School was very different, and I had to adjust. It took some time for me to learn English. As I got older, there were new obstacles, and I set new goals to achieve as I went."

After graduating high school, Habibo decided to move away from Pittsburgh. She lived in Texas and Kentucky, where she worked difficult jobs in warehouses. After giving birth to a second child, Habibo moved back to the Northview Heights area to be near family and start working on career goals for herself.

Use the information available on [our website](#) to create your email. Be sure to personalize your message based on your involvement with PA Women Work and the New Choices program.

Special thank you!

Thank you to the legislators who have provided letters of support: Senator Wayne Fontana, Senator Jay Costa, Rep. Natalie Mihalek, Rep. Austin Davis, Rep. Bob Brooks, and Rep. Dan Frankel.

If your legislator is on the list, be sure to express your gratitude and appreciation for their support of New Choices/New Options.

For more information, contact Kristin Ioannou at kioannou@pawomenwork.org.

"I knew I could do better for myself. I wanted to become a nurse and help people, but I had to start somewhere. I got a job at Burlington Coat Factory," Habibo explained. "After I'd been there for a while, I was connected with Kristen Tsapis [from Pennsylvania Women Work] and she told me about a CNA training I could do. I knew I had to go for it."

Habibo quit her job at Burlington, and Kristen helped her navigate the application process for a CNA program at Vincentian. Throughout the training, Kristen checked in on Habibo and helped her prepare for her final test, which she passed. Habibo is now a CNA and was hired at Vincentian shortly after completing the program.

"I am making more money now and am one step closer to my goals," Habibo said.

Aside from the assistance Habibo received from Kristen in the Northview Heights, Pennsylvania Women Work also provided Habibo support during the holidays by providing her two small children with gifts, along with offering her assistance with transportation through our bus pass program.

To learn more about the work we are doing in the Northview Heights, contact Susan Showalter-Bucher at sbucher@pawomenwork.org.

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