

I Am Workforce Solutions Service Award Nomination

Submitted by FAPO

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I nominate Doreen Lau for a "I AM Workforce Solutions Service Award." Doreen has served as Data Analyst for Workforce Solutions Financial Aid Payment Office for the past seven years, and continues to impress everyone who has had a chance to work with her or benefited from her work.

Doreen is already hard at work early in the morning, churning out reports for Workforce Solutions and general public. Doing these reports or doing them all day isn't what impresses us; that's her job. What impresses us is how she touches others in a unique and significant way with the level of sophistication of her work, the multitude and types of reports, and her understanding of the customer needs.

For child care local match partners, Doreen understands it is of utmost importance that their matched funds are making a difference in the community, enabling families to secure childcare service while they work. FAPO was always ready to provide an expenditure report to show them the status. However, due to system limitations in TWIST, we were unable to produce this report since we started in TWIST. Being an expert in her field as Data Analyst and an observant staff who understood match partners' perspectives, Doreen suggested a solution to overcome this dilemma using her TWIST data knowledge, and finally came up with a customized expenditure report that satisfies the contributors' needs. This helps them understand the difference their dollars are making in the community, and makes it easier to continue to raise funding from them to support child care in the region.

FAPO makes projections of weekly cash needs to pay over 2,000 childcare vendors every month. Projections are affected by many variables, including number of children in care, number of days in a month, average daily rate of pay, fund type, and so on. Previously, FAPO management had to gather and combine multiple data sheets to make projections and complete a cash draw report. It was always submitted timely but was an extremely time-consuming process. Doreen first took the time to understand these variables for projections. Then she found a way to gather all necessary data from various sources into one place and customized the projection worksheet, so that the management was able to spend time on actual analysis of the information rather than on the collection of data.

Doreen is a believer in efficiency. When she receives report requests of a similar nature from more than one requestor and rather frequently, Doreen gets busy automating as many of these reports as possible, so that she can spend more time looking for other areas that can be improved with her skills. She has even developed dynamic reports for other people to be able to run and pull updated data anytime they want, again providing them the information they need while saving her time and enabling her to serve other customers. As you can imagine, at times she receives more requests than she can handle. She is able to still help them by saying "not right now; but if you give me a bit more time, I'll figure out how to get what you want". Doreen has demonstrated her ability to prioritize tasks, and to say no in a tactful way so that the requestors will get what they originally asked for, or something even better than expected, because she examines all requests in a true sense.

When asked what we can do to help her reach her goals, she responds: "I'm very happy with where I am and what I'm doing here. I just want to give back for all the good it does for so many people in so many communities."

Doreen is definitely a tremendous asset; losing her would be a terrible set back. Doreen IS Workforce Solutions!