Puget Sound Welcome Back Center at Highline Community College Celebrating One Year of Service!
Timeline of Events

September 2008 – Training in San Francisco
Kris Mason, Kao Saechao, and Danielle Hinds traveled to San Francisco for 2 days of official training on the Welcome Back Initiative strategies, procedures and database. Puget Sound Welcome Back Center officially became part of the national Welcome Back Initiative. As soon as we returned, we began processing new participants.

The San Francisco and Seattle Welcome Back teams join forces for our September training.

October 2008 – Grand Opening!
Puget Sound Welcome Back Center (PSWBC) officially opens with ribbon cutting and reception in new location, building 19, suite 103, Highline Community College. Partners, Renton Technical College and Tacoma Community College, were present at the opening.

Highline CC President, Dr. Jack Bermingham, assists with ribbon cutting.

José Ramón Fernández-Peña, Director, Welcome Back Initiative and Carol Gregory, Director, BuRSST for Prosperity at Grand Opening.

Jeff Wagnitz, VP of Academic Affairs and José Ramón finalize the initiative.
Our Staff

Zlatka Velagic, Program Coordinator
Kao Saechao, Educational Case Manager, during a case management session.

Since the grand opening, PSWBC has has been averaging approximately 19 new participants per month.

Kris Mason, Director

November 2008 – Additional BuRSST Funding for Scholarships

In addition to start up funding, in November BuRSST for Prosperity granted additional funding to help individual PSWBC participants with emergencies such as tuition for required courses, licensing fees, translation fees, credential evaluation costs, etc. Since this grant, approximately $6,000.00 has been distributed to various agencies requiring fees for the licensing process. Without this additional grant, we would not have seen the successes and outcomes we have so far.

December 2008 – Seattle Times Article Featuring PSWBC

“Highline Community College gives immigrants an assist with job credentials.”

PSWBC makes the news!
Article featured Puget Sound Welcome Back Center in the Northwest Section of Seattle Times on December 29, 2008.

Written by Seattle Times staff reporter Lornet Turnbull, the article told the story of one of our participants, Ismael Nana, working at the time as a food server at Old Country Buffet in Kent. Ismael worked in a lab in his home country of Burkina Faso, in West Africa, before coming to the United States. He holds master’s degrees in microbiology and biology. Update: We are happy to report that Ismael quit his job at the Old Country Buffet in the Spring
of ’09 and started work as a medical researcher. This article brought more recognition to our work as well as a success story for Ismael.

**January 2009 – Opening of Pronunciation Lab for Healthcare**

The first of PSWBC-sponsored educational interventions is introduced -- Pronunciation Lab for Healthcare Professionals. A free pronunciation lab is available to Welcome Back participants on a drop-in basis so that they may practice their pronunciation with medical terminology. After this intervention, we began other educational interventions such as interviewing, job search and resume writing workshops.

Eulalia Galarza, RN from Mexico, practices her Pronunciation on the software American Speechsounds for Healthcare

**February 2009 – PSWBC Celebrates 100th Participant!**

An average of 19 new participants were added every month in the first 6 months of operation. As a result of outreach to Highline faculty, community organizations, local refugee and immigrant service agencies, DSHS, and other local community colleges such as Tacoma Community College and Renton Technical College, a steady intake of new participants kept us very busy. Participants have come from all over the Seattle area including all of South King County as well as Bellevue, Shoreline, Everett, and Olympia.

**March 2009 – Outcomes Within First 6 Months!**

Examples of outcomes achieved in our first 6 months as a result of Kao Saechao’s successful Welcome Back Center educational case management:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of participants</th>
<th>Action Taken</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>received Pharmacy Assistant licenses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>received the ID # to take USMLE tests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>entered the USMLE licensing process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>applied for RN license</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
April 2009 – PSWBC Met Grant Requirements for Funding in Year Two!

In April of 2009 the Puget Sound Welcome Back Center had satisfied the SBCTC Washington state funding requirements through enrolling a certain number of participants in the program, referral to Highline classes and attendance at educational interventions sponsored by WBC. This meant that funding would be in place for academic year 2009/10!

Also in April, the Health Work Force Institute/ Washington State Hospital Association held a health care forum for the PSWBC and invited all the major hospital administrators to hear about our work and to consider employment pipelines as we prepare participants for re-entry to the health sector. Relationships have been established as a result of this April forum. Hospital administrators were eager to meet and interview our participants and consider them for employment.
May 2009 – New PSWBC TOEFL Study Group is Formed

Harue Kato, RN from Japan, and Olga Gorodilova, RN from Russia, study for the TOEFL test together.

In order to receive a Washington State RN license, our nurses must take the TOEFL test. TOEFL prep classes are very expensive in the Seattle area, so we created our own study group to help prepare our participants.

June 2009 – First Nurses’ NCLEX Workshops and Saturday Support Groups

In June we started our Saturday Support Group for Nurses with an NCLEX workshop. Marie Carpenter, Highline nursing faculty, presented a 3-hour workshop on taking the NCLEX exam.

July 2009 – Announcing Free Class for Fall Quarter:
U.S. Culture and Communication in Health Care

In July we announced that PSWBC will offer a free class to all our participants called U.S. Culture and Communication in Health Care. This class will help with the soft skills needed to communicate successfully in a U.S. Health Care setting. The class will run from 8:20 a.m. – 10:50 a.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Also in July, Hibo Omar (left), RN from Somalia, received authorization to take the NCLEX test. The staff
August 2009 – Workshop with Group Health Cooperative

In August, 16 PSWBC participants were invited to a workshop with Paul Garcia, Senior Recruiting Supervisor with Group Health Cooperative in Seattle. Paul emphasized the soft skills that our participants need for successful job placement.

August 2009 – Tour of Harborview Medical Center for PSWBC Participants

Later that day, the participants were given a tour through Harborview Medical Center. For many, this was the first time they had seen the inside of a major U.S. health care provider.
September 2009  Celebrating One Full Year

with our 200th participant!

As of September 9, Puget Sound Welcome Back Center has served 200 participants! Here are pictures of more highlights from this year. We look forward to doing this important work for another year at Highline.

Eduardo Salazar, RN from Mexico, graduated from the phlebotomy program and started his new job as a phlebotomist at SeaMar.

Eulalia Galarza, RN from Mexico graduated from the phlebotomy program and started her new job at SeaMar.

Dzhamila Dursunova, RN from Russia, Graduated from phlebotomy program And started her new job with Highline Medical Center.
Jagoda Pavlica, RN from Bosnia, and Amadou Toure, MD from Guinea, spoke at a recent Health Care Advisory Council Meeting.

Jorgo Birri, RN from Ethiopia, was able to quit his job at Sea Tac airport cleaning airplane cabins and start a new job as a nurse’s assistant. He is currently preparing to obtain his LPN license.

A sample of the PSWBC outcomes in first year:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of participants</th>
<th>Action</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>received Pharmacy Assistant licenses</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>received the ID # to take USMLE tests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>currently in the USMLE licensing process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>applied for RN license</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>authorization to test for NCLEX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>passed the NCLEX-RN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>applied for LPN license</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>passed and received their CNA licensure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>application for Sonographer’s license</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>applied for Radiologic Technologist license</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>authorization to test received for ARDMS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Passed ARDMS UPI exam</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8 graduated from Phlebotomy program
10 enrolled in Phlebotomy program
21 obtained new work in healthcare
14 received job interviews
1 enrolled in Medical Assistant program

Many others have enrolled in ESL classes to improve their English in all skill areas, including pronunciation, before they begin the licensing process.