



DHS News

Newsletter of the Allegheny County
Department of Human Services



June 2020

Amid the pandemic, six DHS staff members successfully complete SFW credentialing program

DHS has participated in Temple University's Strength-Based Family Workers (SFW) credentialing program for many years; however, participants in recent sessions found themselves needing to adjust and adapt during the coronavirus pandemic.

This year's second cohort of the SFW credentialing program started as normal with in-person classroom instruction, one-on-one meetings with coaches, and paper portfolios, but when the shutdown occurred, participants, coaches and instructors had to come up with new ways to continue the program. Very quickly, the group switched to using Zoom for classes, and participants began gathering their portfolio materials on flash drives.

"It was initially really tough for us in the program. The SFW program and curriculum is very interational and experiential. You do a ton of role plays and group activities," said Jason Lucarelli, caseworker II in the Office of Children, Youth and Families (CYF) and one of the six DHS participants in this year's second SFW cohort. "Thankfully, my cohort and our instructors had a really good rapport with each other. We actually had as much fun if not more in the virtual classes, participating in activities and showing each other our dogs on camera."

Despite the challenges they faced, all the SFW participants in group two passed their tests. They will be holding a virtual graduation in October. Moving forward, SFW will be conducted virtually through the 2020-2021 semesters.

Eva Bey, manager of SFW and leadership programs, adds, "It took strength and determination for the students of SFW group two to accept the challenge to accomplish this major task. They did so willingly with excellent support from their instructors and the SFW learning coaches. I am very proud of them. Congratulations, group two, on a job well done."

To learn more about SFW, please contact Eva at Eva.Bey@AlleghenyCounty.US.