

Maria Cristina C. Valenzuela

Objective

My professional goal is to shape and impact the planning, development, implementation and oversight of policies and programs that strengthen and improve the lives and communities of individuals and families in Hawai'i, with particular emphasis of at-risk and marginalized populations.

Education

Master of Public Administration & Certificate in Nonprofit Management
University of Toledo in Ohio

May 2010

Bachelor of Liberal Arts & Sciences: Sociology, Women & African American Studies
Loyola University of Chicago

January 1996

Experience

Program Specialist V (Legal Services Developer): Executive Office on Aging June 2018 – Present

Serve as the State's Legal Assistance Developer and provide leadership for the development, promotion, and oversight of legal assistance services for older individuals; design legal activities, provide technical advice and assistance, and contract and funding management for programs that protect the rights of vulnerable, older individuals.

- Conceptualize, design, and implement a statewide, legal advocacy system to meet the needs of vulnerable, older individuals
- Monitor and evaluate legal assistance programs and contracts comply with the Older Americans Act, federal and State regulations, and State Bar requirements.
- Identify barriers that older adults and individuals with disabilities face in accessing legal assistance and collaborate with local and state agencies and legal service advocates to ensure and/or expand access to legal assistance and resources
- Provide leadership and guidance in developing legal programs with the Area Agencies on Aging to address the needs of older individuals
- Provide technical assistance and information to Area Agencies on Aging and legal providers on Older Americans Act and federal requirements
- Serve as the agency's Legislative Coordinator to review, analyze, and draft aging and disability related legislation and testimony and provide comprehensive recommendations. Track pertinent federal and State legislation, laws, and regulations and inform key stakeholders.
- Draft and implement the legal assistance and elder rights section of the Hawai'i State Plan on Aging.
- Provide consultation, coordination, and assistance to elder abuse prevention and protection efforts and/or assist older adults in accessing services or entitlements.

Human Services Professional IV: Department of Health

April 2017 – June 2018

Provided support for Branch's neurotrauma activities related to a statewide system of supports in the areas of program planning, development, and evaluation.

- Conducted planning and coordination of a comprehensive system of services to meet the needs of neurotrauma survivors and their families

- Developed and monitored contracts and funding with service providers and assure service plans are appropriate and implemented as prescribed
- Collaborated with public and private agencies in various committees and community events to maintain a needs assessment, to identify gaps in services for individuals with neurotrauma and their families, develop prevention plans and enhance awareness, education, and prevention efforts
- Provided information and resources to individuals, their families, or other service providers by referring to available community services and supports through Neurotrauma Helpline
- Planned and implemented statewide activities, trainings, and special events to increase public awareness about neurotrauma and available resources
- Assisted with grant planning, implementation and monitoring of grant activities related to neurotrauma
- Provided technical support to the Neurotrauma Advisory Board and State Traumatic Brain Injury Advisory Board
- Researched other states' service systems (i.e., Traumatic Brain Injury Waivers, central registries, case management or support coordination, rehabilitation treatment programs, etc.) and kept current on "best practices" in the field of neurotrauma, and on related legislation
- Reviewed and update program website to ensure information on neurotrauma and community resources is current and easy to navigate

Project Developer: Catholic Charities Hawai'i

November 2010-August 2016

Led a federally funded demonstration initiative to develop a new elderly support services program, including a supported employment enterprise

- Coordinated all elements of the development and implementation of the project, including the development of a business and marketing plan; development of policies, procedures, and forms; and oversight to ensure project goals and objectives and budgetary and grant requirements were met in a timely manner.
- Coordinated the implementation of a marketing plan, including but not limited to the recruitment and selection of a marketing consultant and web developer, development of the program's website and all collateral materials and social media and public relations promotions for the program
- Assisted in the planning and development of a supported employment program, Project HOPE
- Coordinated and directed program operations, including but not limited to: conceptualized, designed, and implemented program infrastructure and standards for a client billing and payment system, client and staff scheduling, and operational equipment use and maintenance; produced and maintained client and program forms and recordkeeping systems for proper evaluation, control, and documentation; wrote clear comprehensive reports and documents, including correspondences, grant summary report, program performance reports, and program policies and procedures; and organized, planned, and facilitated monthly team meetings and training initiatives as needed
- Developed job descriptions and performance standards for program staff and recruited, selected, trained, supervised, and evaluated program staff
- Provided educational presentations on aging and caregiving related concerns and on agency's in home and community based senior support services
- Stayed current of laws, rules and regulations impacting older adults by attending trainings and webinars, participating in provider and/or committee meetings, and researching the web
- Served as liaison on the Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias Task Force (June 2011-December 2013), which planned and developed the "Hawai'i 2025: State Plan on Alzheimer's Disease and Related

Dementia”, and on the 2016 ADRD Implementation Committee (March 2016-2017), focused on formalizing the implementation of the Hawai’i State Plan recommendations

Program Specialist: Hawai’i Youth Services Network (HYSN) December 2006-July 2008

Coordinated and directed all aspects of the development, implementation, and financial oversight for a teen dating violence prevention grant project to create educational materials and training workshops targeted for homeless, LGBTQ+ youth and pregnant and parenting teens. Provided administrative and technical support for teen pregnancy and STI prevention project.

Events Coordinator: Native Books/Na Mea Hawai’i August 2003-December 2006

Planned and executed special events and cultural programming to ensure event goals, timelines and budgetary requirements were met.

Parent Line Phone Specialist: Prevention Child Abuse Hawai’i November 2002- June 2003

Provided verbal and written information, guidance and appropriate referrals to parents and caregivers on child development and/or behavioral concerns. Updated statewide community resource database.

House Manager: Marimed Foundation May 1999-April 2002

Planned, developed, implemented, and managed two new shore based residential facilities for adjudicated youth. Recruited, trained, supervised, and evaluated residential youth counselors. Collaborate with clinical therapist and youth counselors to ensure quality of client services and individualized treatment plan.

Other Professional Experience August 1995-September 1998

From August 1995 - September 1998 my prior experience included work as a coordinator for an adolescent pregnant and parenting program and as a counselor and legal advocate for two domestic violence programs. These positions involved coordinating service activities, providing direct services, recruiting, training, and supervising staff, program planning and reporting, and overseeing budgetary and program requirements. Exact employment dates and responsibilities can be provided upon request.

Committees and/or Special Interest Affiliations

- **Maui Elder Justice Team 2019-Present**
Thru monthly meetings local, state, and federal agencies work together to share information, investigate abuse and neglect cases, ensure victim receives services, and collaborate on prevention and awareness efforts.
- **Working Families Coalition 2019-Present**
Diverse group of nonprofit organizations, academia, and community advocates fighting for Hawai’i’s families through policy, advocacy, and education.
- **IVAT: Institute on Violence Abuse and Trauma 2018-Present**
Participate in planning committee for annual Hawai’i summit, specifically in the coordination of the Vulnerable Adult and Elder Abuse track.

References Available Upon Request