

Presence Health and i.c.stars: How Innovative Talent Solutions Furthered Positive Change



i.c.stars | *



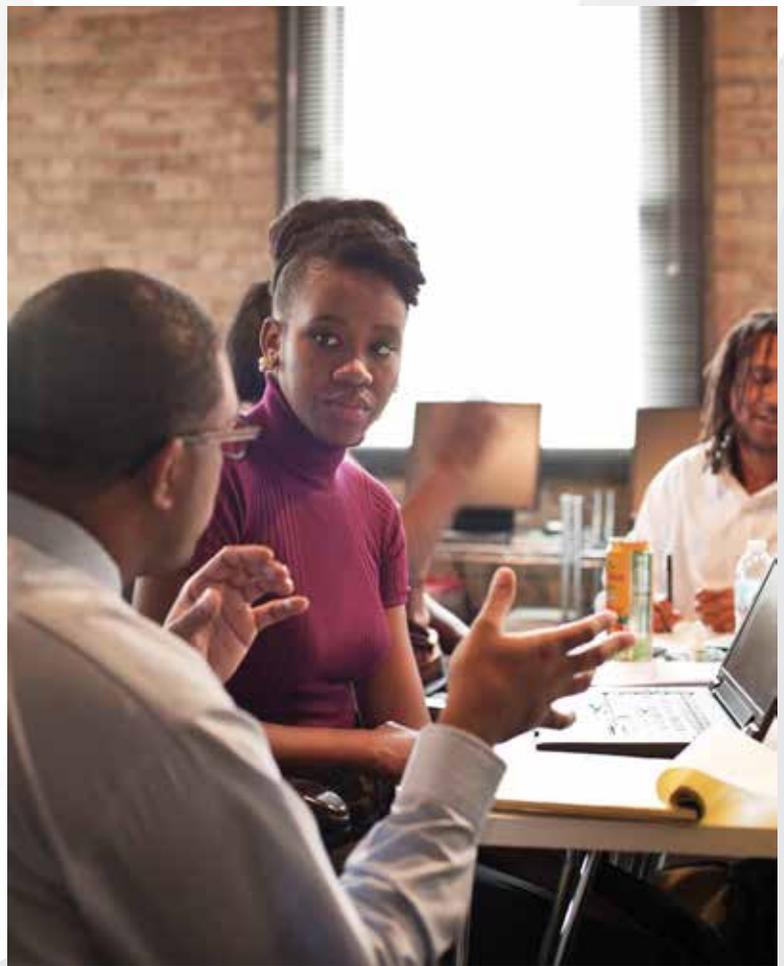
Presence Health provides holistic care in the truest sense. Across their 150 sites of care, including 11 hospitals across Northern Illinois, no matter what position or specialization, Presence Health's associates are committed to the continued health and wellbeing of every patient.

Information systems are no exception. The actions of Presence Health's internal technical team have a cascading impact on thousands. Because of the gravity of their work, members of their team need to be fearless and resourceful, assured that each decision they make is fully informed. Even Presence Health's interns need to be a grade above their peers.

Presence Health was preparing to implement Workfront, a new Project Portfolio tool for their IS department when Dave Lundal, CIO of Presence Health, received a well-timed email about an organization called i.c.stars.

According to sender Rich Linden, i.c.stars Board Member and the CEO of Geneva Technical Services, the organization takes talented young people from underserved communities in Chicago and cultivates their untapped technical potential to enterprise levels. To achieve that end, Linden said i.c.stars needed business partners like Presence Health as part of the equation.

Lundal was intrigued, so the two connected and discussed the virtues of the program, beginning a partnership that would positively impact both Presence Health and i.c.stars going forward.



THE SECRET SAUCE BEHIND i.c.stars

The mission of the Chicago based non-profit organization appealed to Dave and his team: taking solutions-oriented, resilient, and motivated young people, who lack access to traditional education and job opportunities, and train them to be competitive tech professionals. Before any business like Presence Health accepts i.c.stars interns into their organizations, the candidates have gone through a rigorous screening and training process that produces only the best.

Out of 400 to 600 candidates per training cycle, the intense selection process narrows the number down to 20 participants per cycle of interns. i.c.stars runs three training cycles per year, serving 60 people in their intensive, project based learning environment. Through orientation, i.c.stars finds which candidates fit their vision of change-driven, future leaders that will harness the strength of business and technology for social and economic

leadership. Through an extensive, multi-hour assessment, they find which candidates are suited to thrive as problem-solvers and leaders. Once the best of the best are selected, the training process begins.

i.c.stars interns take part in a training program that runs twelve hours a day, 60 to 90 hours a week with zero tolerance for absences and tardiness. Over the course of their sixteen week curriculum, interns work in teams of four to six to solve client business problems, build web and mobile applications, create marketing plans, execute and test marketing plans, and manage projects. At the end of the program, interns boast 1,000 hours of hands-on experience that can translate into the business world.

How does the program stay competitive? Tasha Levy, Training Program Director at i.c.stars says, "We have partner technology companies which coach and mentor our interns for four or five hours a week. They help us make sure that the skills we are teaching are market relevant. Our board members are CIOs in the field and make sure that our curriculum is competitive."

More than philanthropy, businesses involved with i.c.stars have a hand in shaping the workforce to satisfy their expectations and needs.

Number of applicants: 400-600

Number accepted by i.c.stars:

20 participants

Length of program: 16 weeks

Hours of training each week: 60-90

Total hours of training: 1,000

MAKING MATCHES THAT BOTH SIDES LOVE

After a High Tea meeting – an i.c.stars tradition where executives meet, share stories with, and learn from the current batch of i.c.stars interns – the Presence Health team was excited to be a part of this vision. They were eager to take the next step.

So, members of the i.c.stars and Presence Health teams worked out the details in a thorough and calculated way, reviewing how best to employ a few interns. The Workfront project appeared to be a perfect fit: Presence Health would have extra hands on deck to ease their transition and the i.c.stars interns would have an opportunity to learn multiple facets of healthcare PMO. It would be a win-win for both sides. The partnership was officially greenlit, and together i.c.stars and Presence Health set out to find two exceptional Project Manager Interns.

Through the i.c.stars job board, Presence Health posted the two Project Manager Intern job advertisements. Candidates were interviewed over the course of a two day roundtable with Presence Health team members. In the end, Gabriel Sanabria and Alex Fuerte were selected. Their passion, their award-winning i.c.stars projects, and their desire to learn more about the healthcare PMO process proved they were the right fit.

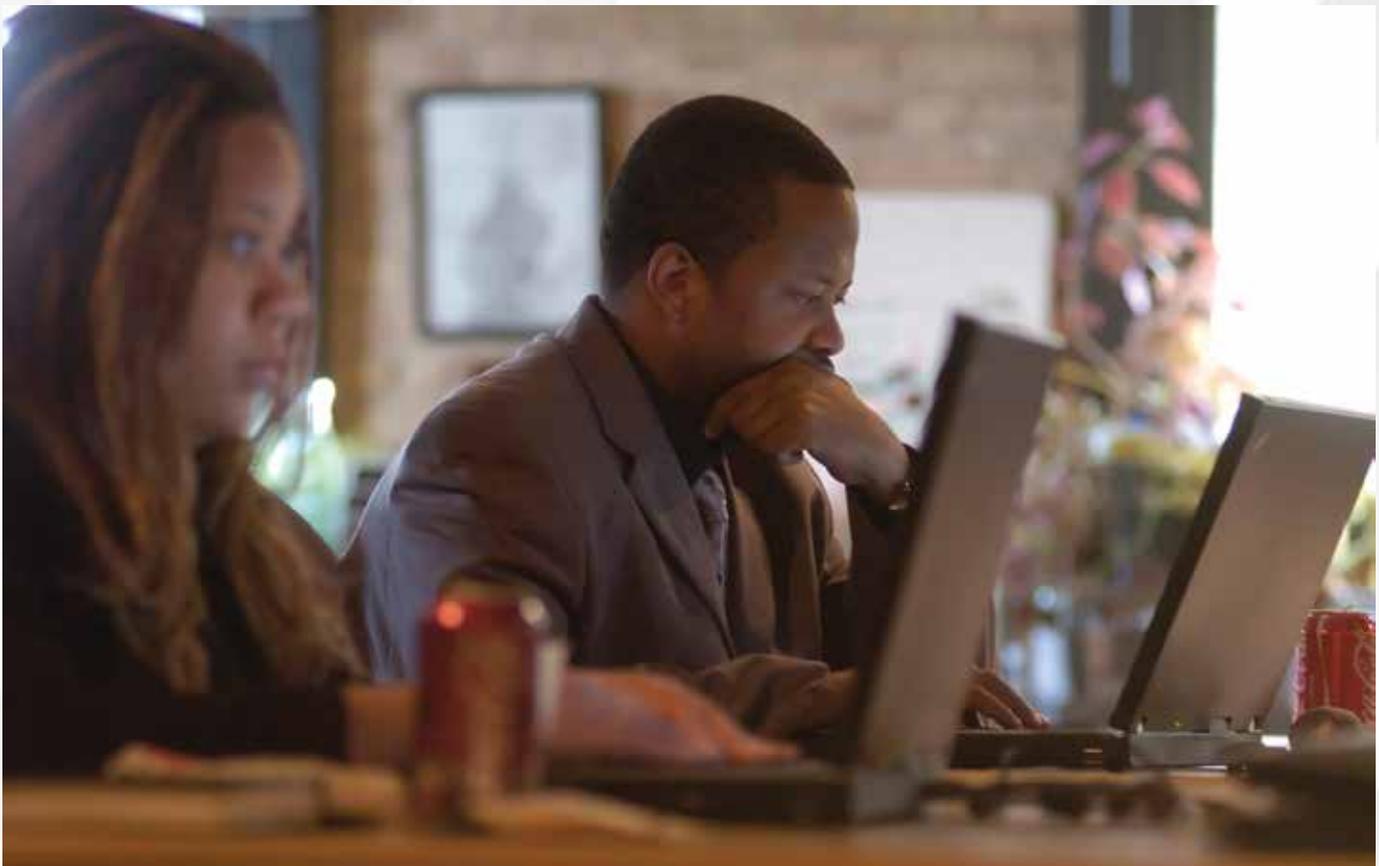
Presence Health could barely contain their excitement. They officially announced that Alex and Gabe would be joining the Presence Health team for the next six months at an event celebrating a winning application the two had designed for an i.c.stars challenge. What an auspicious way to kick off the next half year!



ACCELERATED LEARNING RIGHT FROM THE START

Once Gabe and Alex had accepted the offer, the duo got to work. Alicia Avila, Portfolio Architect , IS-Strategy at Presence Health had this to say, “We wanted a very interactive program where Alex and Gabe felt they were truly a part of the team and, no matter the titles, could ask us anything. And they were blown away.”

From the start, Gabe and Alex were immersed in a whole new world. In healthcare, rolling out new processes and standards requires prudence and calculation. If a change does not work as expected, the outcome can be consequential for patients. So, entrusting Gabe and Alex to assist in the PMO rollout of a work management platform shows how much faith the Presence Health team had in their i.c.stars team members. To achieve a successful launch, Presence Health provided every resource available. The two i.c.stars’ PM interns were guided through a healthcare 101 tutorial and given access to Workfront as a way to bring them up to speed. The two explored solutions, asked questions, and sought out answers to get acclimated as quickly as possible. Then, their work began.



ASSEMBLING PIECES OF THE BIGGER PICTURE

Presence Health was committed to training their PM interns in multiple facets of different projects so they could see the critical pieces of the healthcare IS whole. With that objective in mind, they presented Gabe and Alex with a number of challenges to use their talent and grow their aptitudes, very similar to what they experienced in i.c.stars intensive program.

Decoding SharePoint

As Presence Health was finalizing their ICD-10 coding documentation, they needed Alex and Gabe to help finish out the process. Both Gabe and Alex were crucial while reviewing documentation and making contributions in SharePoint.

When assigned the project, the i.c.stars interns were upfront with Sr. Project Manager Karen Goetz, explaining their limited exposure to SharePoint, but they were willing to study up and provide a solution. Alicia said, "I was so impressed that they were straightforward and said, 'Give us some time and we will come up with some options.' They came back and proposed a solution to Karen. "For two guys who didn't know much about SharePoint, they worked hard, figured it out and got it done."

Sustaining Order in Change Management

The i.c.stars interns led another component of the PMO change control in the form of Presence Health's Change Advisory Board meetings. At first, a member of the Presence Health team was running these weekly meetings and wrangling 10 to 30 different people over the phone. However, the Presence Health team saw this as a learning opportunity for Gabe and Alex, trusting them to lead change discussions prudently and efficiently.

Again, Alicia had great praise for the two. "You can see their confidence build each week. They've been a refreshing spirit to those meetings. People like to work with them because they are so personable and they engage with people in a really neat way. It was fun to see them facilitate when there are a lot of different people and strong personalities. They were very instrumental in driving efficiency." Due to their success, they continued to run change control twice a week and do weekly on-going audits.

A PARTNERSHIP BUILT TO LAST

Gabe and Alex finished up their internship with Presence Health in March 2016, but the story does not end there.

Presence Health has become a strong advocate for i.c.stars. Ron Fovargue, System Director of IS Strategy and Finance at Presence Health, has given presentations on the i.c.stars program to prospective partners, encouraging them to get involved, both because of what they can do for the non-profit and what the non-profit can do for them.

Alicia Avila expresses the same level of satisfaction. She said, "We feel blessed to be involved in the i.c.stars program. This experience has been great for our organization." In the future, Presence Health is very interested in taking on another two interns. And Alicia recommends that other businesses do as well. "When the i.c.stars interns have a partner, someone who they have gone through a cycle with, who is there to help them, I think the candidates grow more and the organization definitely gets more out of it."

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