

HENRY L. SHATTUCK

PUBLIC SERVICE AWARDS

2018 Henry L. Shattuck Public Service Award Recipient



Alan A. Gentle, Manager, Roxbury Center for Financial Empowerment (RCFE), Mayor's Office of Workforce Development

Alan Gentle, Manager of the Roxbury Center for Financial Empowerment, has transformed a small employment resource center into an effective, full-service financial opportunity center with free financial and employment coaching. Alan's commitment to public service and his ability to empower staff, volunteers, and the people they serve is a major factor in the success of the programs provided at the Roxbury Center for Financial Empowerment.

When Mayor Walsh first took office, he challenged Boston city employees, including Alan, to brainstorm ways to help Boston families improve their economic mobility. Such efforts led to the creation of the Mayor's Office of Financial Empowerment and the transformation of the Roxbury Resource Center into the Roxbury Center for Financial Empowerment, within the Office of Workforce Development, funded by the BPDA. Today, charged with the responsibility of providing economic mobility and workforce development for Boston residents, RCFE serves five to six thousand residents per year.

This transformation required initiative and professionalism. The number of employees at RCFE doubled. Alan and his staff underwent extensive training and certification to become financial coaches while also learning grant management tools and new software. Alan also had to create a public communication program to inform residents about these free opportunities and encourage them to participate. Additionally, Alan had responsibility for managing the move to a new and less visible location.

Despite these challenges, Alan and his staff have met service goals for financial coaching to several hundred residents per year (in English or Spanish), tax preparation for nearly 1,500 households each year, and free counseling for several thousand individuals who come to RCFE workshops on credit building, workforce development, or job assistance. This success has resulted in more funding for their work and helps assure the continuation of these remarkable programs.

Alan, an extraordinary worker who gives of his time and knowledge freely, handles all these challenges with notable calm and generosity. In addition to his regular responsibilities, he volunteers to manage one of the Boston Tax Help Coalition's busiest tax sites at the RCFE for two nights a week and every Saturday from January to April. He supervises several dozen volunteers and staff who provide free tax assistance to Boston residents.

For additional information, please contact Boston Municipal Research Bureau at 617-227-1900