

Utah County Employee of the Month, September 2015

Ben Cannon - Data Manager

aDDAPT

Hipster. Data Monkey. Iron Chef. West Virginia Sin Eater. Mice fear him.

These descriptions do not adequately explain the incredible value added to our department by the hiring of Ben Cannon in the position of Data Manager. Ben has only been with the Dept. of Drug and Alcohol Prevention and Treatment since the fall of 2014 - initially as a time limited employee, but full time since April 2015. We usually don't consider anyone for employee recognition until they've been here a full year and the honeymoon is over. However, Ben truly deserves this award.

His major - and many will say sole - responsibility during his time with us, *so far*, has been the implementation of the department's new electronic health record, Credible. Credible implementation involved 4 phases and nearly 300 distinct tasks to be accomplished. A reasonable but optimistic time frame to complete a new installation of Credible is 6 months. We started implementation on January 2nd, and our target go-live date was July 1. We made it! The majority of the credit for this success goes to Ben. He was able to step in as a new staff manager, quickly gain the trust and respect of the line staff, manage the implementation team meetings and forms development meetings, as well as being the primary point of contact with the Credible implementation team staff. In the meantime, he had to work closely with the data staff at the State Division of substance abuse and mental health to make certain our required data submissions were accurate, and with both Wasatch Mental Health and Weber Human Services for concurrent operation of our existing electronic health record (Junction). At this point your eyes are rolling to the back of your head because of the technical tedium of what Ben has been responsible to do and accomplished so far. Let me put it another way....

These are (euphemistically) the stages of a planning and implementation project:

1. Unbridled enthusiasm
2. Cautious optimism
3. Stark realization of the truth
4. Disillusionment and despair
5. Search for the Guilty
6. Punishment of the Innocent
7. Abandonment of current project and pursuit of new fruitless activity

Ben has navigated us through the rocky shoals of step 3 with very little step 4 impacts. At this point he is suffering some step 5 and 6 (serving the role of the West Virginia Sin Eater), but we are confident we will never get to step 7 because of his leadership, knowledge and skills.

The important thing to understand about our nomination of Ben is that there is a consensus on our management team that there is NO WAY POSSIBLE that we could have managed to achieve the success we've had with Credible implementation without having a Data Manager -and Ben Cannon, in specific. His personality, knowledge, ability to work effectively with a variety of different people both inside and outside our agency make him incredibly valuable to us. If he got hit by a bus tomorrow, I think our entire administrative office would quit!

Nominated by Richard Nance and Robert Johnson

Photo courtesy of Mike Stansfield - Fairways Magazine