



PRESS RELEASE

High-performing Case Workers Receive \$20,000 from Superstar Foundation's Veronica Awards

BALTIMORE, Dec. 6, 2013-- [The Superstar Foundation](#), an organization that seeks to pay great human services professionals great pay for great work, announced today the winners of the 2013 Veronica Awards. These awards are given to direct service professionals who demonstrate outstanding performance in promoting transformational relationships with the participants they serve. Staff members from [Juma Ventures](#), [Roca Inc.](#), [Roca Springfield](#), and [United Teen Equality Center \(UTEC\)](#) have received a total of \$20,000 in Veronica Awards from the Superstar Foundation. The four winners are: Irene Van (Juma Ventures-San Francisco, Calif.), Sulai Rosa (Roca, Inc.-Greater Boston Area, Ma.), Carlos Bravo (Roca Springfield-Springfield, Ma.), and Tom Southerton (United Teen Equality Center-Lowell, Ma.).

Since 2008, the Superstar Foundation has used the Veronica Awards to recognize human services professionals who keep the transformational relationship with participants at the core of their work and who demonstrate the effectiveness of that approach through measured outcomes. Veronica Award recipients receive a check from the Superstar Foundation and have their stories memorialized at Social Solutions' office in Baltimore and in an online hall of fame. The awards themselves are named after the mother of entrepreneur Steve Butz, as his mother was committed to various social causes and laid the foundation of a strong social consciousness in her children.

This year's winners are characterized as having a similar sense of social consciousness, and have been described as client-focused, consistently supporting the individuals they work with to feel empowered, going above and beyond their duties to meet client needs, and being passionate and dedicated to seeing positive change in the lives of those they work with.

Juma Ventures began as a project of Larkin Street Youth Services in 1993 and has evolved into a national nonprofit organization that combines employment, financial capability, and academic support services to create a safe, supportive community where under-resourced youth can achieve their dreams of higher education. The organization's commitment to managing performance has not only enabled them to improve outcomes for youth, but attract the attention of funders and program partners, allowing Juma to expand and deliver their services to more youth. Irene Van is one of Juma's highest-performing frontline staff: she retains 78.6% of clients, 73% of them complete programming ready to begin a 4-year degree program and they save an average of \$821 in an IDA as a result of Irene's efforts.

"Being a named a recipient of a 2013 Veronica Award validates for me that the work I am doing is important and makes a difference in people's lives. Being recognized for the work that you do on a daily basis, and that you do out of passion is really rewarding," Van said.

Roca's mission is to help disengaged and disenfranchised young people move out of violence and poverty. A history of relentless outreach on the streets of Boston's most dangerous urban communities has led Roca to develop and operate an evidence-based Intervention Model for High-Risk Young People ages 17 to 24. Sulai Rosa is the top-performing Youth Worker at Roca Chelsea. While carrying a caseload of 25 participants, she consistently meets 89%+ of contact standards (at least two intentional conversations with each participant each week), and is a leader among staff in both program engagement and workforce readiness metrics.

Roca Springfield is the first replication of Roca, Inc., launched in 2010. Roca Springfield serves young men ages 17-24 who are street, court, or gang involved, disengaged, unable to participate in other programs, and who have dropped out of school. Compared to all Roca Youth Workers, Carlos Bravo scored in the top 5 highest performance levels in engagement of participants in stage-based programming (GED, pre-vocational training, and certification classes, and transitional employment).



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"Both Carlos and Sulai are exemplary for Roca and for youth workers everywhere. Their dedication, commitment and passion for helping this group of young people is beyond compare. Truly they go above and beyond and are extraordinary at what they do. It's great that they are receiving these awards, it will make a huge difference for each of them in their lives personally," said Anisha Chablani-Medley, Chief Knowledge/HR Officer at Roca.

Founded in 1999, the United Teen Equality Center's (UTEC) mission and promise is to ignite and nurture the ambition of the most disconnected young people to trade violence and poverty for social and economic success. UTEC defines proven-risk youth as those youth who have at least one of the following risk factors: out-of-school, gang involved, criminally involved, or parenting. Despite having a case load of 21 youth with a significantly higher percentage of barriers than UTEC's average, Tom Southerton's efforts helped his clients achieve more outcomes than UTEC's average, across all metrics: passing the GED, completing OSHA/ServSafe training, registering to vote, being civically involved and successfully completing the UTEC program.

"It feels surreal to win the 2013 Veronica Award and to be recognized for my work with youth at UTEC," Southerton said. "I owe a lot of this to the young people I work with. I show up to work as a resource, and they do the hard work to meet me halfway and get to the successes we achieve together."

The Superstar Foundation will be accepting applications in fall 2014 for next year's Veronica Awards; information will become available over the coming months at www.superstarfoundation.org.

About Social Solutions

[Social Solutions](#) is the leading provider of performance management software for human services, connecting efforts to outcomes, people to social services, and service providers and communities to funders. The company's Efforts to Outcomes (ETO™) software goes beyond case management, and enables public, private, and nonprofit organizations, such as Harlem Children's Zone®, Catholic Charities, Annie E. Casey Foundation, HUD, and cities such as Boston and Hartford to collaborate, save time, and improve service quality and effectiveness. Thousands of service providers, collaboratives, funders, evaluators, and government organizations use ETO software as they work with over 12 million participants each day

About Superstar Foundation

The Superstar Foundation is an organization committed to recognizing and rewarding great social service professionals for the invaluable work that they do. Dedicated to expanding the use of highly intentional, transformative relationships as the core of human services, the Superstar Foundation has administered the annual Veronica Awards since 2008. The Veronica Awards highlight and reward the efforts of the high-performing direct service professionals who embody this philosophy and have the data to demonstrate their performance.

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