



COVESTRO CENTER FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

RMU.EDU/COVESTRO

READY TO TRANSFORM YOUR ORGANIZATION?

We can help! To get engaged with BoardsWork!, SkillShare, or the Executive Service Corps, visit our website at www.rmu.edu/covestro or contact CCCE program specialist Jennifer Pease at pease@rmu.edu or 412-397-6013.

IMPROVING SAFETY AND EMERGENCY READINESS

Additionally, PULSE wanted to ensure the safety of their fellows. SkillShare paired PULSE with a diverse team of Covestro employees – with expertise in employment law, HSEQ and health. Over 12 weeks, this team improved on the safety manual, created an interactive fellow training program for each house, and recommended changes to the nonprofit contracts to include physical and employee safety.

Chris Hazen, VP of Health, Safety, Environment & Quality (HSEQ) at Covestro, provided his perspective:

I'm new to Pittsburgh, although I have been with Covestro for many years. In the past, I have volunteered with everything from tutoring math, helping a volunteer-based ambulance service to coaching youth sports. With each opportunity, I learn a little more about my community, and truth be told, a little more about myself.



Shortly after arriving in Pittsburgh, I heard about SkillShare and was intrigued by the opportunity to share my professional experiences with a nonprofit. However, with complete candor, it was hard to imagine that any of my experiences in the area of Health, Safety, Environment or Security would be helpful to anyone else. But SkillShare did exactly that! At Covestro, program volunteers are placed on small consulting teams of three to four people. Each team is then matched with a nonprofit. Over a three-month period, each team provides approximately 16 hours of consulting services, applying our competencies and skills to a specific challenge that the nonprofit has identified as a priority. My team was matched with PULSE.

The team traveled to PULSE's office and several residences to evaluate the current safety status, looking for gaps in their current processes and proposed solutions. Separately, an online survey was created and distributed to nonprofit partners to assess their current safety awareness. After gaining some perspective about the current "as-is" situation, the team addressed agreements between PULSE and nonprofit partners, current safety and emergency response procedures within PULSE, and training for PULSE employees and fellows. Beyond the original scope, the team also provided additional assistance with their wellness program, security enhancement, safety training for nonprofit partners, and employee handbook recommendations.

My key takeaways?

- Our increased awareness of PULSE's activities and how they serve the nonprofit space.
- How the team diversity, in background and experience, strengthened and enhanced the project's results.
- How training must be contextual and adapted to the audience.
- That PULSE leadership was fully engaged.
- Making incremental changes over time are the foundation to what we call "continuous improvement" in the manufacturing industry. This process is equally useful in the nonprofit space, where there is also a need to adapt to change, learn from others, and continue to improve.



PULSE's Chris Cooke and Cathy Blanchard were extremely patient and understanding of all our questions and were equally receptive to our suggestions. They are on the front lines of changing our community for the better!

Here's what Executive Director Chris Cooke had to say about BoardsWork! and SkillShare:

Boardswork! increases the capacity of nonprofit organizations to govern with great effectiveness. We've loved the numerous board members we've been matched with through the Boardswork! program. They are bright, engaged, dedicated, and committed to the mission and work of our organization.

Working with the Covestro team on emergency and safety protocol through SkillShare made us aware of many of the challenges PULSE and other nonprofits face as it relates to ensuring safety. The team provided tremendous expertise with highly talented individuals in creating specific solutions to address our concerns in our unique residential and nonprofit partner environment. The work was above and beyond my expectations.