



OCATO Spotlight

Meet IC Anita Maldonado: Part of the Community Action Family



Anita Maldonado has been in Community Action since 2000 and has served as an Internal Consultant (IC) for the Ohio Community Action Training Organization (OCATO) since 2003.

She began her career in Community Action with the Akron-Summit Community Action Agency as the founding director of their YouthBuild program. One year later, she moved up to the director of outreach and community development. Another year later she became the director of program planning and development, a position she held for five years. After leaving the Akron agency, she was recruited by Robert Chilton, executive director of IMPACT Community Action in Columbus to serve as their chief operating officer, a position she still holds today.

Anita has an extensive educational background as well. She has an associate's degree in legal assisting technology, a bachelor's in political science, a master's in public administration and a Ph.D. in higher education administration. When Anita learned about the IC program, she was very interested. "I knew I wanted to be a part of that community," she said. She asked her boss in Akron at the time about signing up and he approved it and recommended her to become an IC.

As an IC, Anita provides training in strategic planning, board training and ROMA training, as well as several other courses. She's also helped with curriculum development. One of her niche roles is compiling conference evaluations because she has a strong background in statistics.

Anita said what she likes best about serving as an IC is the camaraderie between colleagues and peers. "I like to talk through best practices and bounce ideas off each other," Anita explained. "It's a way of being creative, to help the network as a whole. We're like a family. We've been through a lot together, births, weddings, divorces."

She finds the IC program to be very valuable to the Community Action network. "Quality training and technical assistance is critical in the non-profit environment today and serves as a core component to the success of the network," she stated. "People come in and out of agencies and rules are constantly changing. The IC program offers quality training programs and capacity building opportunities for free with qualified trainers that will strengthen the network as a whole. In this competitive environment, Community Action has to strive to be 'world class' in the way that we operate or we will be left behind. That's why it's so pertinent."