



**Diversity Stride Q&A with Alison Banks Moore
Chief Diversity Officer, EO/AA, Work Life Initiatives at
Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield New Jersey**

Why has Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield of NJ been so committed to the Diversity Stride? How has the organization benefited from involvement?

As part of Horizon's ongoing commitment to Diversity and Inclusion we believe in giving back to the community by supporting the mission of the ACOD. As a result of the monies we've raised for the organization, this further enables ACOD to educate high school and college student leaders, provide the educational programs in the workplace as well as partner with communities' organizations.

How do you engage and motivate so many employees year after year to both take the walk and fundraise?

The planning process starts early on to develop the strategy for walkers as well as identifying the various methods regarding how funds will be raised. To optimize the funds we're able to raise, as donations are received, they are submitted to the Horizon Foundation to be matched. Another example is in our Service Operations Division, co-captains are identified and each co-captain is given a goal to achieve. Weekly reports are communicated giving special recognition to those who either met or exceeded their goals.

How do you implement your Jeans Day? Are there some best practices you can share?

One way we raise money is through Jeans Day events. This is a coordinated effort at all of our locations. It involves mass communications to all employees through email notifications as well as our internal TV Network (BTV). Volunteers are assigned at each location to sell pins, which entitled the employees to wear jeans that day. Normally, we're able to raise \$10K - \$12K when we have a jeans day event.

Do you have other fundraising ideas you can share?

Some other fundraising ideas would center around the holidays or celebrations that would lead up to the walk such as selling plants for Mother's Day, selling Easter baskets and stuffed rabbits for Easter, Teddy Bears and chocolate for Valentine's Day, purchasing snacks and candy from Costco and make a "snack cart" which would be wheeled around an area at around 3:00 p.m. for employees to purchase as a pick me up, bake sales, hot dog day, silent auction, and selling Rita's Italian Ices. Last year, through all these efforts, we were able to raise close to \$30K.

Any other tips you can provide that might be helpful for both large and small organizations that are participating in the walk for the first time or for returning teams that want to improve upon what they have done in the past?

Look at what was successful (and not) in prior years. Look at your audience to determine what do they like, what are they willing to do. What's your budget? If you plan on purchasing items for sale and you have no budget, you may want to start off selling foot prints to create some funding to do other things.