

Quinley Miao had been taking ESOL classes off and on for eight years when she began working full-time at Brigham and Women's Hospital in 1997. Prior to working at the hospital, her English courses had been interrupted by the birth of her two children as well as the demands of balancing work and family with her personal and professional goals. "I could not attend classes in the day time," she explains. "I had to take these classes during the night-time or weekend. When I took them at night time it was difficult for me because I have two children. I was a single mother and I was not able to spend time with my children. I was not able to concentrate on homework. I was really tired."

Thankfully, Brigham and Women's and her manager, Lawrence Wyche, believe strongly in investing in professional development. Wyche agreed to support Quinley in her desire to learn English by allowing her to attend an ESOL program at Federated Dorchester Neighborhood Houses with pay during her usual 9:30am – 6pm shift.

This arrangement allows Quinley to have a consistent presence at class (she has perfect attendance), so that she can learn English while building her professional skills. "I've noticed that she's very professional," says Wyche. "Quinley's gone from being clerical to professional...and her English is so much better." Quinley's teacher has also noticed the difference that the employer-supported program has had on her student. Mila

Monteiro, Instructor and Academic Counselor at Federated's Log School ESOL program, says, "The paid class time is less stressful. Quinley has the chance to find a program that suits her well, which gives her the opportunity to flourish. Now she doesn't have to worry about sacrificing work or family to go to class."

As a result of Quinley's improved English and professional skills, she has received two promotions and increased her wages since starting at Brigham And Women's. Quinley's first position at the hospital was Radiology Film Librarian, which involved mostly clerical skills, like filing and reading film. After improving her English and working hard to master her job, she was promoted to Radiology Image Service Representative, which involved more communication with patients and doctors.

"I began working as a librarian in the Radiology Department," explains Quinley. "My English was not so good and I could not talk too much. Then the phone kept ringing so I had to pick up the phone. So I answered the phone and tried and tried and got better and better. Now, any time we have to pick up the phone I speak in English and answer most of the questions on my own."

After years of hard work in the classroom and at her job, Quinley is now the Image Distribution Coordinator for the Radiology Department. While many of Quinley's skills played a role in her promotions, Wyche has noticed the impact ESOL classes have had on her professional skills: "Ten years ago it was harder to understand her. Now she's able to communicate; she coordinates the reading room and uses the telephone." Support from her boss and the hospital is very important to Quinley, as she has always prioritized the needs of her two children—Jasmine, 15, who enjoys art and attends an art academy in Boston and Brandon, 17, who plays piano and will be attending college shortly. The commitment has made it possible for Quinley to develop professionally while maintaining her dedication as a parent.

"The gain for the Radiology Department is getting an employ-

ee who's efficient, proficient, and who can step right in," explains Wyche. Moreover, with an increase in the use of technology in the medical field, advanced skills are necessary for employee job security and consistent performance. Wyche adds: "One of the driving forces for us is to ensure that our employees have the ability to market themselves" in a rapidly changing industry. As a result, the arrangement has worked out well for both the employer and employee. Quinley, who hopes to attend Bunker Hill Community College and study radiography, is eternally grateful for the opportunity her employer has provided, which has opened up doors for her and her family that once were closed.

"If I don't know English, I would just go to work and would not know about the outside community and outside world," she explains. "I'd be with the same small job and I would not be able to learn new things. We live in the U.S. We need a life here. We need to have a good job and good benefits to provide for family, yourself, and the future. English will enable you to do that."