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Fearless Leadership - Allison Young Achieves Results Through Transformation

Place Allison Young under the category of “wave maker.” Throughout her career, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana’s Senior Vice President of Benefits Administration has been the catalyst for major organizational transformations that would intimidate all but the most confident. With cool resolve, she has accepted one daunting project after another, each involving multiple millions of dollars and taking years to accomplish. Along the way, she has created entire teams of self-assured risk-takers who would plan and implement continuous improvement processes.

the risk of converting their own processes to work on the same platform. She also engaged frontline staff to participate in planning and implementation.

Four vice presidents and nine directors now report directly to Young. The 750-employee processing group (nearly half of all Blue Cross staff) is responsible for claims, the Federal Employees Health Benefit Program, BlueCard® Inter-Plan Claims, customer service, membership and billing, coordination of benefits, and adjustments and recovery.

“This project has positioned Blue Cross

well to adapt to changes being brought about by the new healthcare reform act,” says Young. “The new regulations support what Blue Cross has been doing for 75 years. Our members will find their experience with us is even more personalized for their needs, easier to understand and heavily focused on wellness and prevention.”



Allison Young’s resume outlines a history of taking risks and leading change. Prior to coming to Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana, she spent two decades overseeing IT operations for 30 enterprises served by Cendant Corporation, including the nation’s largest and best-known companies in the areas of mortgage/finance, hospitality, fleet management, travel and health care. Previously, she consulted with PricewaterhouseCoopers, and she implemented one of the nation’s first fully integrated electronic health record systems while at Graduate Health System.

Young participates on a national level through her work with the American Heart Association/Go Red for Women’s Circle of Red, the board of directors of Southern University Foundation and Young Leaders Academy, and the advisory board of Women Business Leaders.

What’s next? Young continues to take risks. Recently she moved out of her comfort zone yet again to represent the company in a Dancing for Big Buddy charity event, where she was voted Online Favorite.



Young’s current transformation project has been eight years in progress. Blue Cross, Louisiana’s oldest and largest domestic health insurer, hired her in 2003 to improve the way it serves its 1.4 million members. Working with a 30-year-old legacy system, the company needed to migrate its entire book of business to a new core platform to include an updated claims system. Based on her outstanding reputation for business transformation and decades of experience in IT supporting back-office functions for large enterprises, Young was selected to lead the \$75 M project.

Blue Cross’ mission and vision are focused on the health needs of Louisianians. Young adopted a number of strategies to translate that mission and vision into measurable, attainable goals. She initiated a Six Sigma project to identify and remove the causes of errors. She gathered a team of people who were willing to take



All photos by Jason Cohen.



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