

Union County Workforce Investment Board
Disabilities Issues Committee
Union County Administration Building, 4th Floor Executive Board Room
9:00am, March 30, 2015

Committee Members Present

Mr. Richard Capac, Leaf Group (Co-Chair)
Fred Mangold, Elizabeth One Stop Career Center
Fredia McKinnie, Community Access Unlimited
Myrna Pinckney, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services
Anita Thomas, Carolyn Dorfman Dance Company
Louis Hoffman, Rutgers, NJTIP
Josh Bornstein, Union County Educational Services Commission
Terry Foppert, Union County Educational Services Commission

Staff

Elizabeth Paskewich, Workforce Investment Board

Meeting Summary

- Mr. Richard Capac called the meeting to order at 9:06am
- Self-introductions followed.
- Richard Capac made a motion to approve the June 17, 2014 meeting minutes as presented. It was seconded by Myrna Pinckney and carried unanimously.
- Elizabeth Paskewich outlined the new WIOA regulations as they pertain to Title IV, hand out was provided. Key points include:
 - Requires the VR program increase efforts to provide outreach to employers
 - Requires that VR programs offer pre-employment transition services
 - Imposes some limitations on the use of subminimum wage employment for individuals with disabilities
 - Places a greater emphasis on the One-Stop Career Centers assisting individuals with disabilities to achieve competitive, integrated employment
- Richard Capac initiated a review of action steps from the previous meeting disabilities committee meeting. This included exploring how to bring together the resources within the county and expanding partnerships. Also discussed was the importance of isolating the resources we have, how to synchronize and bring everyone together.

In October the Workforce Investment Board had a very successful Networking event which was attended by approx. 500 employers. This event brought awareness to the employers on what the WIB does and how we can work together. Events like these start the discussion with these

employers on what initiatives the WIB has and how we can work together to help the community, starting the process of developing new partnerships.

Previous action items also include revisiting the discussion if providing incentives to employers would increase employer participation in working with our county's workforce.

- Discussion followed regarding what values the attending Organizations bring to the Disabilities Committee.
 - Terry Foppert, Superintendent, Union County Educational Services Commission (UCESC) started the discussion by providing an overview of the services provided by the UCESC. Currently they have many partnerships that aid in providing education, transition services, and employment training to students. These partnerships include:
 - Working with NJTIP to bring travel training opportunities to their clients.
 - Partnering with DVRS to create a model for transition to employment, the new model is scheduled to launch in September.
 - Forming relationships with healthcare providers such as Trinitas, to support those with mental health challenges.
 - Running two alternative high school programs that serve approx. 180 students.
 - Working with local school districts such as the Elizabeth Public Schools to enhance transitional services.

These partnerships are crucial in maximizing opportunities for all students throughout the county.

- Josh Bornstein, Union County Education Services Commission elaborated that UCESC is in a unique position as they are able to work with all the school districts so closely. Organized cooperation is essential in keeping up with the demands placed on school districts, providing transitional services that are much needed. Mr. Bornstein also noted the importance of educating employers about the value providing a paid or unpaid internship. Breaking down barriers with employers would provide more opportunities for our students. Putting students into an integrated work environment while they are still in school will help in the transition to be integrated environment as an adult, this will help students understand how to behave and act as well as what the expectations are.
- Myrna Pinckney of DVRS addresses the possible need to include a financial incentive to encourage employers to provide internships. The goal would be to convince employers that the ultimate reward is seeing what great employees these students would make.
- Anita Thomas with the Carolyn Dorfman Dance Company mentioned that the -New Jersey All Stars in Newark have a great program and relationship with sponsors and employers. In her situation Investors Savings Bank sponsored an intern to work with them. Through an "On boarding" process, an individual from the organization came out to her workplace ahead of time to ensure the workplace was ready for the intern. This can be helpful to employers who are a little hesitant as it provides one-on-one guidance.
- The committee discussed the importance of seamless transition from school to work, as well as the need to consider location of possible internships in proximity to the students. The suggestion of starting an Internship Bulletin was introduced. This

resource would provide a list of potential employers and the internships available through their organization. This could entice other employers to provide internship opportunities as well as provides students with a convenient resource.

- Richard Capac discussed reaching out and utilizing the WIB Board to start the initiative to bring on interns as it is important to start the dialogue.
- Louis Hoffman, Program Manager with the Rutgers, New Jersey Travel Independence Program (NJTIP) explained that the goal of NJTIP is to bring education, resources, and travel training for senior citizens and people with disabilities. Mr. Hoffman provides this service in multiple ways, most often going directly to the client, one on one, and provides job access travel training. This service is also provided to groups through a similar manor. NJTIP would visit the group, do a presentation on how to travel independently and then go on a field trip to guide them through it. While NJTIP does not provide direct transportation they provide the resources to education their client on how to their destination efficiently and safely.
- Fredia McKinnie discussed that Community Access Unlimited provides many transitional and employment opportunities for students. Community Access Unlimited provides job coaching, job development, and works directly with employers. They are both a provider and an employer, providing job coaching externally and employment internally. They have long standing relationships with Walmart, Shoprite, and target and have job coaches to assist clients through the training process. Recently, Community Access Unlimited has partnered with Irvington School District which has created additional employment opportunities. Through employer recruitment Community Access Unlimited has recognized the importance of visiting a potential employer's worksite to discover positions that the employer might not have previously considered. Sharing these best practices will provided additional opportunities for students.
- Myrna Pinckney reviewed the history of DVRS the steps DVRS is taking to be closer to One Stops. Working closer with partners will aid in providing more cohesive services.
- The Committee also discussed the need for Soft Skills training in the youth population as well as increasing outreach to employers through employer organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce.
- Richard Capac concluded the meeting with next steps focusing on branding the message the right way to our current partnerships and preparing for the future.
- The committee next meeting date and location, TBA.
- Meeting adjourned at 10:10 A.M.