

UNION COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
YOUTHCOMMITTEE
SCOTT KUCHINSKY, CHAIRMAN
MEETING MINUTES: TUESDAY, May 18th, 2021 11:00AM

Scott Kuchinsky - Committee Chair, Plainfield Public Library
Syreeta McClain, UCVTS, Simon Youth Academy
Susana Mateo, Union County College, Youth Corp
Marcela Nunez, Youth Forward
Barbara Johnson, Elizabeth Housing Authority
LaChelle Thompson, Elizabeth Housing Authority
Juanita Vargas, United Way of Greater Union County
Perle Almeida, American Job Center
Thelma Louise Chase, Boxwood
Jensine Wright, Plainfield Action Services

UCWDB Staff

Meredith Barracato
Carolina Marin

Meeting Summary

- I. **Welcome and Introductions:** Chairman Kuchinsky welcomed everyone and addressed the fact it had been a few months since the last meeting due to changes in staff at the Workforce Development Board.

- II. **Review and approval of January 11, 2021 Committee Meeting minutes:**
 - Motion was made by Marcela Nunez approve the January 11, 2021 Committee Meeting Minutes. Motion carried.

- III. **GED Updates:** Chairman Kuchinsky provided an update on the GED services offered at the Plainfield Public Library and the changes that are taking place.

- IV. **Youth Forward Presentation:** Marcela Nunez review a PowerPoint presentation that discussed Youth Forward services and initiatives. Copy of presentation attached to the minutes on file. Ms. Nunez went into details on the various services offered such as;
 1. Job placement & internships
 2. Tutoring and GED services
 3. Career and college counseling
 4. Training and certifications

Marcela Nunez mentioned her team is actively recruiting new clients and is willing to do presentations at partner agencies. She stated she has a close working relationship with the IRC as well as United Way and CAU.

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V. Youth Program Updates:

a. **Simon Youth-** Syreeta McClain mentioned SYA is still providing virtual services but many of her student are on track to graduate this year regardless of the circumstances.

b. **International Rescue Committee – Not present**

VI. Client Services - Issues and Concerns

Chairman Kuchinsky expressed his concerns over the lack of Board of Education representation at the youth meetings. He asked the committee members for their assistance in conducting outreach to their contacts at the Board of Education. Juanita Vargas mentioned she knew a few individuals such as Stacey Greene as well as Crystal Ahrean. Meredith Barracato stated she had been in communication with both the individuals and will be inviting them to the next meeting. In addition to the Board of Education representation Chairman Kuchinsky asked for a connection to be established with guardians to get more feedback from family members.

VII. LITERACY & DISABILITIES - ISSUES AND CONCERNS

- No issues or concerns addressed

VII. Strategic Planning Sub-Strategies Discussion

Youth Activities SS-36 Adopt the WIOA legislation's increased flexibility in eligibility, especially in serving youth considering that 14 diverse populations were recognized and designated under WIOA as face challenges and barriers in obtaining employment and living-wage jobs that lead to self-sufficiency and economic prosperity.

Chairman Kuchinsky mentioned there have been challenges with the eligibility process and the need for flexibility especially during these time where facilities are closed and individuals are unable to get access to certain documents. Chairman Kuchinsky added since the Plainfield Public Library has been assisting the AJC with the documentation review they have a better understanding of the challenges the AJC staff face when trying to certify the clients. Marcela Nunez mentioned they have

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requested assistance from other departments to help with follow up during the certification process but that still has not made a difference in the getting youth certified.

Youth Activities SS-37 Look to co-enrollment to stretch funding while offering expanded diverse educational and occupational services. Susana Mateo mentioned she has been working with Youth Forward team to enroll their clients before they are done with her program to take advantage of the various services Youth Forward has to offer.

Support Services SS-40: Considering the success of the Workforce System in addressing its customers training and employment needs, the System will increase its outreach efforts with state and regional agencies to resolve obstacles faced by its trainees around transportation, housing, and childcare. Marcela Nunez stated they offer their clients supportive services and will continue to offer it to all the partners' as well.

VIII. NEXT MEETING

TBD

IX. COMMITTEE ADJOURMENT