

Partners Meeting

September 11, 2020

Attendance:

AJC Partners Meeting September 11th 2020

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| Simon Youth Academy | Jasmin Lee |
| Union County College | Lisa Hiscano |
| Union County College | Isaias Rivera |
| Department of Labor Employment Services | Juanito Chiluisa |
| Department of Labor Employment Services | David Moskowitz |
| Department of Labor | Raji Ramachandra |
| American Job Center | Perle Almeida |
| American Job Center | Meredith Barracato |
| American Job Center | Elton Armady |
| Youth Forward | Jackie Santiago |
| Youth Forward | Marcela Nunez |
| Workforce Advantage | Julio Sabater |
| Workforce Advantage | Yunia Labaut |
| Easter Seals | Merenda Scott |
| Plainfield Library | Scott Kuchinsky |
| Urban League Reconnections | Cathy Waters |
| Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS) | Ed Faver |
| International Rescue Committee | Fiorella Rodriguez |
| America's Small Business Development Center | Herb Cesar |
| Youth Corp | Akiva Simmons |

-Dave Moskowitz, Deputy Director of One Stop, begins meeting by describing all virtual programs being provided to clients at Both the Elizabeth and Plainfield One Stop. Phone number is (908) 965-3957 and email for the Elizabeth One-stop is elizabeth_1stop@dol.nj.gov.

-Jaqueline Santiago and Marcela Nunez speak about the Youth Forward Program and Virtual Workshops. Virtual Workshops include College Tours, Financial Literacy, and In-Demand Jobs. RFP Committee is process of identifying providers. Office hours are Monday-Friday, 8:30am-4:30pm. Anyone interested in program can email Katerin Farias at katerin.farias@ucnj.org or call at 908-558-2520.

-Raji adds that Workforce GPS, from USDOL, has added resources and guidance on work experience concerning the pandemic, that should be read and any questions should be addressed with Raji.

-Jasmin Lee of the Simon Youth Academy explains that the Academy is in Phase I of the states reopening plan, operating on a hybrid schedule, with students operating in learning co-horst consisting of alternating days with all students attending virtual on Fridays. Students are on a modified schedule and receive a grab-n-go lunch. Phase II will begin interviewing and CASAS testing. Director Armady explains how Simon Youth

operates out of the Jersey Gardens Mall. Ms. Lee explains that in person is more conducive to learning for the students participating.

-Youth Core was represented by Dr. Lisa Hiscano and Akiva Simmons. Ms. Simmons presented an update on the Youth Core program, another alternative high school program, based out of Union County College. Basic Skills Training is offered to students, in order to pass state testing, in order to obtain a high school diploma. All instruction is being delivered virtually, with students coming in on an as need basis, especially for CASAS testing, pre-enrollment testing, and post testing for every 100 hours of instruction to chart the students growth within the program. Life Skills instruction are offered on subjects such as Nutrition, Job Exploration, Financial Literacy and other topics that overlap with Youth Forward Program, because of an overlap do to the pandemic. Community Service is included in the program, where census calling happened remotely, as well as a Public Service Announcement Project.

-Union County College was represented by Dr. Lisa Hiscano and Isais Rivera. Dr Hiscano explained that the College is working on an 85% virtual with 15% of the classes in person, being focused on testing.

-Herb Caesar, senior representative for America Small Business Development Center. , spoke about entrepreneur and the grant given by Bank of America for financial support of the program. The SBDC works with the 1-Stop to encourage participants to pursue entrepreneurship in obtaining their employment goals.

-The Plainfield Public Library spoke about re-opening for GED testing through GED.com. The building has been limited do to pandemic restrictions. Capacity has been met after a time of low participation. Working with 1-Stop on intake. IC3 Certifications have been obtained by virtual testing. Director Armady addressed the virtual and technological gap that is being addressed by the library. As pf meeting date, the city has not allowed it to be fully opened. As soon as the library is approved to open, the library will inform this group.

-Easter Seals helps assists seniors to obtain employment as a main gold because of age discrimination. Help the 55+ community learn new skills or upgrade existing skills to obtain employment. Easter Seals provides gas and bus cards and help with clothing and assist in anything which will help the customer become employable. Ms. Scott asked anyone associated with the meeting for referrals for employment. There is a large pool of clients with varying education. The majority of participants are from Elizabeth, and 16 participants have been placed since the beginning of the pandemic. Any and every industry is covered by the Easter Seals program. Ms. Scott asked if any other vendor would provide training space for participants while the Easter Seals office is closed.

-Reconnections was represented by Cathy Waters of Urban League. The program reconnects individuals who have recently been incarcerated with wrap around services. Education is stressed as a critical need for employment and can obtain employment through trades for worthwhile employment. A larger room is being obtained so services for clients can be met. It is found that these services are critical or the younger population.

-IRC was represented by Feorela Morales. Refugees from around the world. The WIOA grant provides funding for the training of clients. The office has been closed and Clients are only allowed in by appointment to sign papers and contract agreements.

-US Department of Labor was represented by Raji. Raji informed the meeting participants the USDOL Reports pertaining to their sector of employment will be available shortly. She advised the counselors that there needed to be better case notes before the USDOL could send their clients to training.

-Julio Sabater spoke for Workforce Advantage. Mr. Sabater explained his clients face challenges because of digital and language barriers. All Workforce Advantage participants have an entry platform before entering ESL classes. The virtual classes will continue for his clients because of the success for clients and demographics. Over 100 ESLs have been completed since July. Testing is being done remotely, and it is found that testing is best completed on a tablet or computer, because the phone does not allow for participants to easily complete the tasks. ICIII has four groups of 60 students. CLA has been put on hold because hands on testing must be done for the completion of testing. Title II funding in association with Union County College is where most of the funding for the programs come from. A renovation of the site has taken place, making the classrooms larger for the participants.

Mr. Armady concluded the meeting with thanks and set the schedules for the next meetings, which are November 13 and December 11 at 10:00 am. Intake and interviews are all being done virtually, and will continue to be done virtually for the time being.