

**Union County Workforce Development Board  
Minutes of the Youth Investment Council  
Union County Administration Building  
Large Conference Room, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
September 15, 2017 at 10:00am**

**Committee Members:**

Stephen Nacco, Co-Chair, Union County College  
Gloria Durham, Genesis Solutions  
James Horne, United Way of Greater Union County  
Juanita Vargas, United Way of Greater Union County  
Pamela Capaci, Prevention Links  
Elizabeth Paskewich, Workforce Development Board  
Antonio Rivera, Director, Workforce Development Board  
Tanya Johnson, Community Access Unlimited  
Josh Bornstein, Union County Ed. Serves Commission  
Phil Kandl, Workforce Development Board

**Minutes**

Co-Chairman Dr. Stephen Nacco welcomed members of the Youth Committee and opened the floor for brief introductions, and requested Mr. James Horne, Executive Director of the United of Greater Union County, which is the lead organization youth provider within Union County.

Mr. James Horne proceeded to present to the Youth Committee a program update with respect to the WIOA Youth Employment Pathway Program (YEPP). The presentation evolved as follows:

**Pre-Existing Circumstances**

Out-of-school youth 16-24 years old, with one or more additional risk factors, obtain an employment and/or education outcome.

In addition to being at an economic disadvantage, many Union County youth experience homelessness, teen pregnancies and parenting, poor academic or education performance, possess limited positive social skills, and poor positive interactions with adults and other authoritative figures.

### **Youth Employment Pathway Program Model**

The Youth Employment Pathway Program Model integrates the best services available among the partners agencies. There are three main strategies which encompasses the holistic approach: Education and Career Pathways, Guidance and Supportive Services, and Work Experience.

Education and Career Pathways includes tutoring, life skills, GED, ESL, basic skills, college, apprenticeships, and occupational training.

Guidance and Supportive Services includes case management, job readiness, life skills, financial literacy, objective assessments, retention services, and post-exit support.

Work Experiences includes labor market assessment, matching skills to education opportunities, internships, subsidized employment, and job retention services.

#### **Priority has been given to:**

- Justice Involved youth
- Pregnant or parenting youth

- Youth with Disabilities
- Current or former foster youth
- Refugee/immigrant youth eligible to participate
- Youth residing in a public housing program
- Homeless/runaway youth
- Youth that have dropped out of school

Utilizing a case management approach, OSY receive a comprehensive set of services that:

- address barriers to success
- result in the development of an individual service strategy and career pathway for each youth
- include subsidized work experience
- provide access to educational services (GED, Occupational Training, ESL, Vocational)
- provide ongoing support in attaining education and/or securing a job for at least one year after exit

The YEPP program services are provided by the Youth Employment Training Consortium (YETC) that is made up of:

- Sub-grantees - Recruitment, enrollment, case management, supportive services, work experience, coordinating educational services and the 14 elements
- Additional Partner Agencies - Access to youth, services aligned with 14 elements, services that address barriers such as child care and housing, and leadership in addressing systemic barriers
- UWGUC - Centralized youth services & job development, point of contact with One-Stop and WIB, technical

assistance and professional development, and monitors for contract compliance

- Union County WIB - Allocating funds, monitors Lead Agency performance, quality of service and cost effectiveness, and reporting on performance to the workforce development board.

#### **Achievements to Date**

- Intensive community engagement strategy to identify youth:
- individual meetings with faith based, police department, libraries, schools, etc. to introduce the program and recruit youth
- flyer distribution via email and at community events
- referral from consortium
- 65 youth enrolled, 65 individual service strategies developed and 65 career pathway plans developed
- All youth have received case management services
- 16 youth completed a work experience; 16 youth are currently engaged in a work experience
- 3 youth have completed security training and are licensed, 2 are currently enrolled in an occupational training, and 2 are in the application process
- 2 youth have passed the GED exam, 3 youth are in process of enrolling at UCC for the GED prep classes, and 1 is scheduled to take the exam
- 13 youth have received tutoring towards meeting basic literacy/math skills and or towards passing the GED
- 29 youth are working (unsubsidized)

- 40 youth have participated in job readiness skills building workshops
- 25 youth have participated in financial literacy skills building workshops
- 36 youth have received supportive services to go to school/work
- Financial assistance for transportation, materials, supplies

### **Challenges**

As projected, about 30% of the participants are not actively engaged in meeting an outcome and .06% have been terminated

- 4 youth are terminated
- 21 youth are experiencing difficulty in committing to program

Low academic standing of the youth enrolled in the program

- 2 youth did not meet proficiency in just literacy
- 28 youth did not meet proficiency in just math
- 28 youth did not meet proficiency in both (Math and Literacy)
- 13 youth need a GED

### **Strategies to Address Challenges & Next Steps**

- Currently assessing the interest and ability for the 21 youth experiencing difficulty in following through with program activities
- Recruiting additional youth to ensure 65 participants are actively engaged

- Launching a *Learn to Work* component that focuses on development of soft skills necessary to sustain a job
- Launching an intensive tutoring program designed to support youth in meeting literacy and math proficiency
- Focused effort in enrolling youth in GED programs
- Focused effort in helping youth be ready to enter an Occupational Training program (proficiency in Math and Literacy, completing applications, meeting all requirements)

Mrs. Gloria Durham asked Mr. Horne what challenges were encountered among the partners within the Youth Employment Partnership Program at the United Way of Greater Union County and as well as with the American Job Center.

Mr. James Horne stated that among the partners the main challenge encountered was communication regarding the documentation required for the effort. Also, it is difficult to swiftly respond to county request for data when working with a large group. With respect to the American Job Center, Mr. Horne stated that tracking youth participant data submitted and approved for services was proving to be a challenge. The opportunity being present is for there to be synchronicity among the consortium members and for the same cohesion to be mirrored in the relationship with the American Job Center.

Co-Chairman Dr. Stephen Nacco thanked the participants of the Youth Committee and adjourned the meeting at 11:15am.