

**TOWN OF HEMPSTEAD/CITY OF LONG BEACH WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT  
BOARD PATHWAYS TO EMPLOYMENT WORKGROUP MEETING MINUTES**

**HEMPSTEADWORKS CAREER CENTER**

**September 24, 2019**

Attendees:

Elizabeth Ajasin, DOOR  
Myesha Arvon, DOOR  
Dean Bennett, Department of Social Services  
Margaret Brustman, Nassau BOCES  
Therese Brzezinski, Long Island Center for Independent Living  
Sharon Carty-Johnson, EAC Network  
Larry Forni, ACCES-VR  
Edward Kenny, DOOR  
Joelle Kronberg, Career and Employment Options, Inc.  
Maria Lombardi, DOOR  
Yvonne Morrissey, DOOR  
Rosa Murciano, New Yoro Community Bank  
Erica Rechner, Labor Education and Community Services Agency, Inc.  
Sandy Rubin, DOOR  
Lisa Wright, Long Beach Adult Learning Center

**I. Welcome and Introductions**

Maria Lombardi, Disability Resource Coordinator, opened the meeting at 10:07 A.M. At her request, each of the attendees introduced themselves.

**II. Review of Minutes**

Ms. Lombardi allowed a moment for review of the minutes from the DEI Workgroup meeting dated March 5, 2019. She asked if there were any additions or corrections that needed to be made to the minutes, and none were offered. A motion to approve the minutes was offered by Lisa Wright, seconded by Erica Rechner and approved by the Workgroup.

**III. DEI Activities Update**

Ms. Lombardi explained that the purpose of the Disability Employment Initiative (DEI) Round 8 project, which is at its 2-year mark, is to improve the education and employment options of youth with disabilities by increasing their participation in career pathways programs. Ms. Lombardi referred to her Interim report, which

summarizes all activities performed under the grant since it began in October 2017. She spoke about the following activities:

- Working with businesses and key stakeholders to expand and support accessible and inclusive career pathways for youth.
- Collaborating with Out-of-School Youth contractors, EAC Network, Nassau BOCES, and DEI consultant, Career and Employment Options, Inc. (CEO), to perform outreach and recruit youth.
- Promoting the use of assistive technology to support youth career exploration, support a range of accommodations in the workplace, and receive training on the technology.
- Beginning preparation for a reverse career fair, which gives youth an opportunity to showcase their education, skills and experience to employers. Edward Kenny said that participants will create a professional profile of themselves and asked if any of the attendees know employers that would participate in the fair.

Ms. Lombardi also added that Nassau BOCES has had a job placement rate of 80-85%.

#### **IV. Hempstead Site Visit Report – April 2019**

Ms. Lombardi indicated that on April 18, 2019, the New York State Department of Labor's (NYSDOL) State Lead for the DEI project, Kerry Wiley, conducted a site visit at HempsteadWorks. The purpose of the visit was to discuss project progress, dialog about successes and challenges, and find ways to support and achieve project objectives. A few days after the visit, Ms. Wiley submitted to us a summary report. Yvonne Morrissey gave a summary of the report. These points were discussed:

- Performance measures and objectives are generally being met, and discussed measures included:
  - Number and percentage increase of reportable youth with disabilities under the WIOA Title I Youth program
  - Number and percentage increase of youth with disabilities who enter training under the WIOA Title I Youth program
  - The number and percentage increase of transitioning youth with disabilities who receive work experience opportunities under the Title I Youth program
- At the time of the visit, HempsteadWorks had been in the process of procuring staff training and consultancy. Since then, we have selected Our Ability for staff training and CEO for DEI consulting

- Cumulative statistical outcomes from October 1, 2017 through March 30, 2019:
  - 94 youth with disabilities served
  - 56 youth with disabilities who entered career pathways training
  - 55 youth with disabilities who completed career pathways training
  - 27 youth who entered unsubsidized employment

Ms. Morrissey explained that since the time of the report, the outcomes have been updated to the following:

- 120 youth with disabilities served
- 62 youth with disabilities who entered career pathways training
- 61 youth with disabilities who completed career pathways training
- 34 youth who entered unsubsidized employment

Ms. Morrissey added that HempsteadWorks has been TABE testing youth for Nassau Community College’s URGENT program. Ms. Wright commented that the new TABE test is difficult and frustrating for youth. Sharon Carty-Johnson agreed that the test is difficult, but with her youth, she holds workshops first, so that they feel empowered before taking the exam. Ms. Rechner added that in the Opportunities Long Island program, underserved youth are admitted into pre-apprenticeships in the construction industries where they are introduced to various trades. The youth learn while on the job and gain enough experience to get their foot in the door. Ms. Rechner added that she tests her youth with the old TABE test.

Ms. Wright indicated that a testing alternative is the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems’ (CASAS) National External Diploma Program (NDEP), which helps youth to understand various concepts, such as interpreting charts and graphs. Larry Forni added that at ACCES-VR, youth are given a diagnostic vocational assessment in which youth are placed into a real work setting for 5-15 days to test their skills, aptitude, time management, motivations and multitasking abilities.

**V. DEI – Career and Employment Options, Inc. Presentation**

Ms. Lombardi stated that under DEI, a portion of funding has been allocated for a DEI consultant. Through a competitive process, HempsteadWorks selected CEO, which will provide the services and tasks listed in a meeting handout. She introduced Joelle Kronberg to speak more about CEO’s role as our consultant. Ms. Kronberg explained that she will work with HempsteadWorks, EAC Network and Nassau BOCES to help with specific DEI deliverables:

- Developing and maintaining meaningful relationships with businesses on Long Island

- Enhance HempsteadWorks’ presence on social media
- Include HempsteadWorks in their “round table events,” which are attended by businesses, CEO staff and youth
- Assist with preparation of a reverse career fair

Mr. Kenny added that the DEI grant requires a collaborative environment and effective synergy between organizations.

## **VI. Sustainability Planning Committee Report**

Ms. Lombardi explained that DEI emphasizes the importance of sustainability. The Sustainability Planning Committee is a subgroup of the Pathways to Employment Workgroup, and it met on September 5, 2019 to discuss and modify the draft sustainability plan. Elizabeth Ajasin indicated that under the DEI grant, we want to ensure that best-practices established under the grant are sustained after the period of performance is complete. At the meeting, the Sustainability Planning Committee discussed were several main sections of the plan: the list of priorities to sustain at the end of the grant, the titles of those responsible for implementing each priority, the sustainability process, and the workgroup’s role in this process.

Ms. Ajasin explained that priorities for the plan include continuing to provide career pathways services and training to youth while engaging business and local area stakeholders to help them find employment, and also to increase project awareness and referrals to the project. The sustainability process includes the following:

- Celebrating and publishing participants’ success stories
- Studying outcomes to gain a better understanding of the effects of program operations and recommend adjustments to the Board (we will do so by reviewing the WIOA Primary Indicators of Performance and OSOS Management reports, as well as customer satisfaction surveys)
- Having the workgroup serve as an advisory group to the Board, while the Board monitors the project to evaluate and identify evidence of success
- Staff continuing to foster inclusive career pathways and skills development for youth that will meet regional labor needs and help bridge the skills gap

Ms. Ajasin explained that part of the sustainability plan covers grant development activities, such as leveraging funds we have from other grants and pursuing new grant opportunities as they become available. Mr. Kenny added that the plan includes a logic model, which describes the grant inputs and activities that will lead to positive short-term and long-term outcomes for project participants. Ms. Lombardi asked for a motion to approve the plan, which was offered by Ms. Wright, seconded by Ms. Rechner and approved by the Workgroup.

## **VII. Federal Site Review**

Ms. Lombardi indicated that last month, the DEI team in Albany informed us that of the three local areas currently participating in the DEI project, HempsteadWorks has been selected for a Federal Site review to be conducted by the United States Department of Labor (USDOL). Elizabeth explained that HempsteadWorks was selected as the location for an on-site review because the DEI State Lead, Kerry Wiley, determined that we have made the most progress as far as achieving grant outcomes. The purpose of the review is to:

- Evaluate management and administration of the grant
- Asses the quality of program and services
- Determine if the program is in compliance with the grant agreement and is conducted in a manner that ensures achievement of goals and outcomes

In preparation for the review, we have been working together to compile a list of documents so that they are readily available for the DOL reviewer. Some of the documents requested include our Policy and Procedures Manual, the DEI Round 8 One-Stop Operating System Guide and DEI monthly reports.

## **VIII. Old/New Business**

Three new business items were discussed:

1. Commissioner Mallette thanked Rosa Murciano for New York Community Bank's financial contribution to the Program Year 2019 summer program.
2. Ms. Lombardi announced that HempsteadWorks will be hosting another workshop to be conducted by Elizabeth Justesen, Esq. She provides pro bono workshops to individuals with criminal backgrounds. Her "Breaking Barriers" workshop will be held on October 25, 2019 at 10: A.M. at HempsteadWorks. Ms. Lombardi will distribute the flyer to attendees. Ms. Carty-Johnson said that at the first workshop, her youth participants felt comfortable discussing their RAP sheets with Ms. Justesen.
3. Commissioner Mallette applauded attendees for their dedication to serving the community, despite working under numerous federal, state and local obligations.

## **IX. Adjournment**

After a motion to adjourn the meeting was offered by Ms. Wright and accepted by Commissioner Mallette, Ms. Lombardi adjourned the meeting at 11:16 A.M.