

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

HEMPSTEADWORKS CAREER CENTER

June 12, 2018

Attendees:

Elizabeth Ajasin, DOOR
Myesha Arvon, DOOR
Danielle Bantileskas, TRI - Westbury
Erica Beckford, Family and Children's Association
Dean Bennett, Nassau County Department of Social Services
Steve Bennett, Humanity 2.0
Chiara Castilla-Brooks, New York State Department of Labor
Ella Craanen, ACCES-VR
Paola Ficarra, New York State Commission for the Blind
Shereen Goodson, EAC Network
Ana-Maria Hurtado, DOOR
Edward Kenny, DOOR
Denise Marcel, Nassau BOCES
Elizabeth Morgan, United Way of Long Island
Yvonne Morrissey, DOOR
Rosa Murciano, New York Community Bank
Erica Rechner, Opportunities Long Island
Nichelle Rivers, Roosevelt School District
Sandy Rubin, DOOR
Barbara Weissberg, ACCES-VR
Lisa Wright, Long Beach Adult Learning Center

I. Welcome, Opening Remarks and Introductions

Ana-Maria Hurtado, WDB Director, opened the meeting at 12:13 P.M. She welcomed and thanked all attendees for coming. At her request, each of the attendees introduced themselves. Ms. Hurtado explained that the Town of Hempstead Department of Occupational Resources (DOOR) is the Grant Subrecipient/Fiscal Agent for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Program in the Town of Hempstead/City of Long Beach Workforce Development Area. The HempsteadWorks

Career Center provides job readiness, skills training and job placement services to individuals in the Town of Hempstead and the City of Long Beach.

DOOR was recently awarded a second round of the Disability Employment Initiative Grant by the New York State Department of Labor. For this round, we were 1 of 3 local areas in the state selected to be a part of the New York State Department of Labor Pathways to Employment Project, which will operate for 3 years serving youth with disabilities. Our Disability Resource Coordinator (DRC), Maria Lombardi, is spearheading the project.

Ms. Hurtado indicated that the main purpose of the Pathways to Employment Workgroup is to help youth with disabilities to find employment through career pathways. The DEI Round 8 grant requires the creation of a workgroup that will contribute to improving the career outcomes of youth participants in the project. Attendees' participation will be valuable to making this project a success.

II. Disability Employment Initiative (DEI) Grant- Round 8

Ms. Lombardi explained the goals of the Pathways to Employment Project:

- Improve education and employment outcomes for youth (ages 14-24) with disabilities by increasing their participation in existing career pathways projects
- Expand the capacity of the New York State Career Center System to serve youth with disabilities using a career-development approach;
- Develop a broader business engagement approach within existing career pathways projects to address business needs and develop a sustainable talent pipeline.

Barbara Weissberg, ACCES-VR, asked what the objectives of the project are. Edward Kenny responded that the grant is about systems change, and we will have to demonstrate how the enhanced services under the grant provide an added benefit to youth participants.

III. DEI Workplan

Elizabeth Ajasin indicated that the DEI Workplan is a tool staff is using to plan, manage the implementation of, report on, and evaluate this project. She distributed a PowerPoint

that summarizes each workplan objective, tasks and timetable, outputs and expected outcomes. Ms. Ajasin described each objective:

- **Institutionalize DEI**

All HempsteadWorks partner organizations, Board, Youth Standing Committee, and this workgroup will be fully aware of and engaged in the DEI project. Ms. Lombardi will present at meetings to inform and update all participating parties, and the formation of this Workgroup, which will offer strategies and support for the success of this project.

- **Build Capacity and Integrate RSPD Grant**

Staff and our contractors will participate in 4 training sessions annually that will build on their capacity to implement this grant. Also, using the tools developed under the Regional Sector Partnership Grant, staff will be trained to help DEI participants develop career portfolios and career plans for career pathways programming and planning.

- **Upgrade and Procure Assistive Technology and Equipment**

This objective involves procuring and upgrading assistive technology at our Career Center so that it all operates at 100% efficiency. Staff will be trained on how to use this equipment, and written training materials will be distributed.

- **Expand Career Pathways Partnerships and Enrich Scope of Services**

Partners will share workforce intelligence, training programs, grants and all other information that will be beneficial to this project. Also, enriching the scope of services will include creating career portfolios and plans while increasing career pathways opportunities in high-demand sectors.

- **Increase Outreach and Referrals**

Youth referrals to the project will increase as a result of distributing project literature, increasing social media presence, on-site visits to referring agencies and working with employers.

- **Develop and Distribute Project Literature**

We will distribute literature to 1,000 individuals to create more awareness of the project.

- **Develop Work Experiences**

Work experience will be developed for participants to increase their understanding of occupations they choose to pursue and acquisition of the necessary skills. This will be achieved by performing outreach to employers.

- **DRC Establishes Partnerships with Training Providers**

Ms. Lombardi and Myesha Arvon, Youth Services Coordinator, will meet with training providers to review the curriculum and arrange for provision of accommodations that may be needed for a participant. Training will be more accessible to these youth, and more will be able to partake in training.

- **Youth Contractors Will Establish Peer Groups**

Peer groups will contribute to youth's motivation and progress through their pathway by learning from the experience of others.

- **Increase Social Media Presence**

Ms. Lombardi will post content on social media monthly to increase access to online information.

- **Track Project Outcomes**

To track outcomes, we will use customer satisfaction surveys, electronic data entry and reporting systems. Doing so will increase project awareness.

- **Develop New Sources of Funding and Sustainability**

We will constantly search and apply for new grant opportunities and develop new contracts annually.

Dr. Nichelle Rivers, Roosevelt School District, asked if participants will be paid for work experiences, and Ms. Ajasin answered that they will. Dr. Rivers also stated that the responsibilities given to youth coordinators at high schools outweigh the amount of money the grant can pay. Mr. Kenny responded that even though the money is not ideal, the goal is to be innovative in our approach to serving these youth. Lisa Wright, Long Beach Adult Learning Center, added that Dr. Rivers can get in touch with Dr. Martin Murphy of the Long Island Regional Adult Education Network (LI-RAEN) because it offers a variety of services that are free.

Denise Marcel, Nassau BOCES, asked if there is a certain amount of grant funds allotted for training youth because many of them lack “soft skills.” Mr. Kenny answered that funding for training is allowable. Ms. Lombardi added that outreach and recruitment of youth is key. Ms. Marcel identified Nassau Community College as a possible area of recruitment because many students take non-matriculated courses. Mr. Kenny said that while we can serve in-school youth under the grant, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires that 75% of our Youth funds be spent in serving Out-of-School Youth.

IV. Regional Sector Partnership Development Grant Project – Final Report

Mr. Kenny explained that in 2016, the Board had received a Regional Sector Partnership Development Grant under a New York State Department of Labor Sector Partnership National Emergency Grant. Under that funding, we contracted with Humanity 2.0 to initiate a plan designed to identify key strategies needed for the development and implementation of a regional industry sector initiative, specifically in healthcare and social assistance. The tools developed under the grant will be applied to the DEI project. He invited Steve Bennett, Humanity 2.0, to give a preview of the project’s final report.

Mr. Bennett identified three key findings:

1. Occupational Priorities: through research, he was able to provide an overview of current and future workforce needs in the Healthcare and Social Assistance sector. He explained that in order to understand the nature of these workforce needs, or the positions employers have difficulty filling, there are some foundational competencies a participant would need to excel.
2. Career Pathways: Mr. Bennett explained that an effective career pathways system requires a career navigation system that includes career coaching; education, training and credentials; and career portfolio development.
3. Implementation and Sustainability: He suggests that the work described in the report will need to be integrated into the existing workforce infrastructure and programs.

V. Next Steps

Mr. Kenny asked Mr. Bennett to recommend next steps given the findings of the final report. Mr. Bennett said that we can delve deeper into grant objectives, deliverables and roles. Ms. Weissberg asked how we can impact youth participants. Mr. Kenny asked if anyone could recommend training that could be helpful for staff. Ms. Weissberg mentioned that Cathy Pantelides would be a great resource. Paola Ficarra, New York State Commission for the Blind, asked how we can get employers involved because many of the youth lack skills to fill their open positions. Elizabeth Morgan, United Way of Long Island, youth will require individualized attention and receive support for their career portfolios.

Mr. Kenny stated that getting youth employed is not the final step; once the youth are employed we will have to track and record their progress with OSOS. WIOA's primary indicators of performance track their measurable skills gain and their employment retention rate. Wright said that Long Beach Adult Learning center has programs where students can earn their high school diplomas, learn to read employment data and learn industry specific skills.

VI. Old Business

No old business was discussed.

VII. New Business

Sandy Rubin, HempsteadWorks, announced a Job Fair scheduled for July 31, 2018 from 10 A.M. to 1 P.M. It will take place at the Levittown Hall at 201 Levittown at Hicksville, NY 11801. The event is sponsored by Councilwoman Erin King Sweeney, Councilman Dennis Dunne, Sr., and the Town of Hempstead Department of Occupational Resources at HempsteadWorks.

VIII. Closing Remarks

Gregory Becker, Commissioner, again thanked all the attendees for coming and that the collaborative approach is important to this grant. We will continue to share information and resources to reach our grant goals and better serve the targeted population. Mr. Becker also thanked Dr. Rivers for Roosevelt school district's involvement with the summer youth program.

IX. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 1:50 P.M.