

**Employer Engagement Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
October 4, 2016**

The Employer Engagement Committee Meeting was called to order at 5:31 p.m. by Co-Chair Cary Robbins.

**MEMBERS PRESENT PERU:** Mary Boogemans, Debbie Clausen, Dr. Jerry Corcoran, Monte Flack

**MEMBERS PRESENT STERLING:** Vicki Carlson, Patty Head, Cary Robbins, Robert White

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Jim Andreoni, Linda Burt, Deana Jones, Kevin Lindeman, Barbara Majeski, Lisa McCarthy, Dave Mennie, Jim Weed

**OTHERS PRESENT PERU:** Pam Furlan, Joel Torbeck

**OTHERS PRESENT STERLING:** Dianna Schuler, Beth Heaton

**Business Meeting**

Approval of Minutes

Dr. Corcoran made the motion to approve the minutes from the last meeting. Vicki Carlson second the motion. Motion carried.

Collaboration Effort of Business and Education

Dianna updated the committee that the next meeting for the Illinois Workforce Opportunity Coalition will be held on Tuesday, October 25<sup>th</sup> at IVCC. The group will be working on developing a website and mission statement to formalize their efforts. Dianna also informed the group that the Workforce Intelligence workgroup has developed a set of survey questions to send to healthcare graduates to assess their satisfaction with their career choice and training. The group has also developed a set of questions that the Business Relations Representatives have been asked to share with the healthcare providers in our 8 county area.

Pam informed the committee that October 27<sup>th</sup> is the date for this year's Manufacturing Day at IVCC. Larry Keist will be the speaker and they expect about 400 students to attend. Pam also informed the committee that Carroll and Jo Daviess Counties will be doing a panel discussion and tours on Thursday, October 20, 2016. Ogle County is partnering with DeKalb County for tours and a workshop at Kishwaukee College.

Matrix of Services

Dianna reported that the matrix of business services is ready. That efforts will be made to put the information into some type of marketing material and will be posted on the NCI Works and

BEST website. An announcement will also be made in the NCI Works newsletter that the information is available online.

### Job Fair Updates

Dianna reported that the Oregon *Just Hire One* event was held on Sept. 22<sup>nd</sup>. This year's event was held at the Oregon Coliseum due to the overwhelming response from businesses. There were 27 employers in attendance and 71 job seekers. Although job seeker attendance was down from the 111 from last year this could be due to a lower unemployment rate in the Oregon/Ogle County area.

Carroll and Jo Daviess Counties will be having their own hiring event on November 1<sup>st</sup> (originally reported as October 26<sup>th</sup> but moved to allow more time for business recruitment and commitment) and will be entirely online. BEST and IDES staff have been working with Chelsea Jones from Illinois workNet to make this event happen. When it does happen it will be the first in the state and is being viewed as a pilot for future virtual job fairs.

BEST, Inc. was also involved in the News Tribune/IVAC Job Fair. BEST provided pre-job fair lunch and learn opportunities and job fair workshops the day of the event. We had been invited by IVAC to provide these services.

### Employer Forums/Workforce Summit Update

Dianna informed the committee that staff is waiting for the virtual job fair to be completed in Carroll and Jo Daviess Counties before scheduling the forum/summit. We will be collecting the survey answers from graduates and healthcare providers in the meantime.

### Youth Career Pathways Grant

Pam informed the group that this project was originally a grant application with the Department of Commerce but no awards were made. It was believed that the project was of such value that we would proceed with the planning of the project without any additional funding. She stated that staff have met with Adult Education at IVCC and SVCC along with the area career centers at L/P High School and in Sterling. The project will be for 18-24 year olds that need a GED/High School Equivalency or interested in the credit recovery programs. These youth need to be WIOA eligible and it is expected that there would be 9 to 10 students at each of the IVCC and SVCC locations.

Pam stated that the project would begin with an orientation to the program and manufacturing. OSHA training would be included in the project. Once a student received their diploma or GED they would then go into a occupational certificate program or Bridge program. Once completed they would then have the opportunity to enter into a 2 year program with an internship where they would attend classes 2 days a week and their internship 3 days a week. The entire project would be a year to 18 months long. The project is just getting started. The project is being called Manufacturing the Future.

### Fee-for-Service Pilot Program

Dianna reported that the Business Relations Unit and Bob White had met in the Sterling office to compile a list of potential fee for services for consideration. She noted that it is only the higher level HR services that we would be able to charge for. Since the list was not included in the mailing Dianna will email it out to the committee before the next meeting. She reviewed the list with the committee and noted that some of the services are already provided by our community college partners for a fee and suggested we would not want to put ourselves in a position of competition with them. She informed the committee that she had contacted 6 other workforce areas, and Joel contacted a couple as well, and none of them currently offer any fee for services to businesses.

Debbie Clausen stated that she'd be more interested in services she can't get on her own. She suggested workshops such as a handbook review workshop. Pam suggested contacting Blanche in LWIA 14 about the workshops her area held and charged a small fee for. Debbie also suggested workshops on ADA and Affordable Care.

### Lack of Skilled Worker Article Discussion

Pam began the discussion by saying that at the NCI Works meeting the conversation went down several paths. Perhaps we need to focus on 1 aspect of what the article is presenting and see what we can do to address it. Pam stated that the Targeted Populations Committee is trying to address some of the background skills issues with the returning citizen segment. Cary added that there seems to be a lot of efforts, as reflected in our own minutes and meeting agendas, taking place and that what he is most interested in is making sure that we (society) are giving opportunities to those that need to develop the skills being sought. Cary went on to state that these types of situation don't change overnight but we do need to work harder at getting the message out and reaching out to the parents. He went on to say that maybe the employers themselves need to reach out to the parents.

Pam inquired as to who needs to be invited to the table for these discussions. Cary replied by stating that he talked with high schools counselors and they struggle as well to get the information to students and parents. He sees the need to get the message out and plant the seed while the students are young. Bob White shared his experience with self-promotion through media on how to get started in manufacturing and get promoted.

Pam proposed the idea of finding a speaker, if one exists, to talk about marketing the image/how to change the image. Patty asked if we could survey our current contacts to see if they would be interested in such a workshop/presentation. Cary suggested including a multi-media platform of some kind as well. Pam suggested that we explore a series of workshop (image, connecting with parents, etc.) and start surveying our current contacts.

### Other Business

None

Public Comments

Dianna introduced Beth Heaton, Business Relations Representative for Bureau, Lee and Whiteside Counties.

Adjournment

With there being no further business motioned to adjourn was made by Debbie Clausen. Motion was seconded by Dr. Corcoran and carried. Meeting adjourned at 6:35 p.m.

Dianna Schuler