Partner Minutes

November 14, 2024

**Attendees:** B. Rice, D. Martinez, L. Kennedy-Taylor, J. Sullivan

Facilitator: JBM

**Review of OSSO Report** – JBM

The full report was shared via email prior to the meeting. Some highlights:

The prior program year, the funds were fully expended so you won’t see the numbers for carry-in for training. They are off to a great start!

For WIOA Youth, the goal is 80 individuals enrolled and to date there are 71. Keep in mind this is the first quarter. 55 carry-in youth that were served in the past and they continue to serve.

For Classroom Training – Students chose 6 training providers and 7 courses. Details are in the report. Overall this year, a lot of them chose opportunities in healthcare, CDL-A, and Automotive Tech.

For On-the -Job Training – Last quarter a lot of people’s OJT ended but at this point there are 15 new ones in just three months. This takes a great deal of outreach and staff time which has proven to be highly effective. Big Kudos to all for such efforts!

Overall, the staff continues to meet or exceed performance!

**General Updates:**

Updates from Bonnie:

* New training program to be offered: Veterinarian Technician or Technologist; Genesee Community College and SUNY Niagara are now offering this opportunity and more to come. [www.worksource1.com](http://www.worksource1.com) highlights classroom training options that you may want to view in more detail.
* Job Fair Oppenheim Park – The last outdoor job fair of the year had 65 businesses and just under 150 job seekers attend.
* New grant opportunities are being pursued and Bonnie will report when they are approved.
* Sumitomo Rubber closing – 1,500 people out of work. WARN notice process not followed so there is some backtracking that DOL, Workforce Dev, and Employment & Training are doing to try to help the affected individuals. Outreach will begin, assisting Erie County, however, there are 330 Niagara County residents who will be impacted. Active engagement is in effect to help connect the affected workers to career services and job opportunities.

**Partner Updates:**

Inclusion Committee Update on ADA and Service Animals: Dennis

The WDB Inclusion Committee hosts free, online Zoom sessions for business questions regarding diversity in the workforce. This month’s presentation was on ADA and Service Animals:

* Service Animals and Emotional Support Animals (ESA) are different. Service animals are protected by ADA and is required if properly eligible for such support in the workplace.
* ESA’s do not have this designation as something that you need to accommodate.
* Employer may ask: Is this animal a service animal for a disability and if yes, what specific task has that animal been trained to do;
* A service animal is a dog specifically.
* Employers can but do not have to accommodate ESA’s by law.
* Overall, many employers may find it helpful to realize that employers can make more decisions. Many are concerned about saying no due to fear of being out of compliance.

Lakisha (NFHA): Doris Jones Job Fair – 32 vendors but low turnout despite publicity. NFHA is offering free Phlebotomy Tech, Pharmacy Tech, and Sterile Tech training through SUNY Niagara. Students must be approved by NFHA; they pay for books and the training itself. Niagara County residents may apply but priority is given to NFHA residents.

Discussion followed regarding low turnout at recent job fair. Lakisha mentioned the possibility of offering an outdoor job fair. One suggestions was to invite food trucks, perhaps this will increase participation.

Jane (OCFS)– Rehab Counselor Kaily is out-stationed at the Niagara Falls Career Center. Another Rehab Counselor was hired as well, location to follow.

Brandon Bless was primarily Rochester, now focused half in Buffalo, half in Rochester.

Looking to new outreach for the commission, vision sensitivity training tweaked for businesses in particular; more hands on with technology in it.

Mobility instructor – every year she is presenting to faculty and students at Niagara University on blindness and vision impairment. There is such a shortage so they are hoping for more students to go into this field. Trying to increase employment engagement to inform them.

**Next meeting: March 6, 2025 at 9:30am via Google Meets.**

**Please note: If you cannot specifically attend, please have someone from your organization attend these sessions. It is a great forum to showcase you**r **happenings, needs and to learn about other things going on that could enhance your assisting your primary clients/customers**. So often we hear communication is lacking so we are unaware of what is going on but this forum closes that gap! Hope to see your organization represented at this meeting.

Have a wonderful Holiday season!