

New Jersey State Employment & Training Commission
Disability Issues Committee Meeting
The Leadership Council for DiscoverAbility NJ

Meeting Minutes

October 6, 2011

10:30- 12:30

Welcome/Opening Discussion

The meeting opened with a welcome at 10:40 a.m. by Jody Levinson. Introductions were done and the minutes from the August 2, 2011 meeting were approved by all.

Paula Barber- DiscoverAbility NJ

Ms. Barber gave updates on activities funded by DiscoverAbilityNJ:

- TransCen will hold two Webinars in November; one will discuss their technical report.
- An event on Social Enterprises is being planned by Elaine Katz and Ronnie Kauder.
- The Alliance for Full Participation conference will be on October 28, 2011 at the Heldrich Center in New Brunswick and there are only a few registrations still available.
- Leadership classes have begun. We will try to recruit new Disability Issues Committee members from that group.
- NJ BLN is still working with the Chamber on their Diversity Supplier Program.
- Disability At Work is updating their FaceBook page as they now have over 5,000 friends.

Direct Support Professionals- Colleen McLaughlin & Shellyann Dacres, The Boggs Center

A Direct Service Professional (DSP) is anyone who provides personal services to people with disabilities. In 2004, The Boggs Center developed a Workforce Coalition and now has the College of Direct Support for training.

There is a real need for competency-based training. The emphasis is to change the career ladder as historically, the career ladder moved people out of the job. This training gives recognition, internal ladder of salary increases, and opportunities for mentorships.

The College of Direct Support is all online, developed by the University of Minnesota. It includes national best practices and is focused on true competency, not just knowledge. Students can receive a state certification as well as a national credential. In New Jersey, a kick-off event was held one year ago following a three year pilot program that operated from 2007 to 2010. The roll-out was regional from November of 2010 through July 2011 but is now going statewide.

There is a workforce crisis in the need for DSPs, especially as all the baby-boomers age. By 2018, we will need 4,000,000 workers, which is 1 million more than we have now. Entry level wage is low (\$9.00 an hour and often part-time with no benefits) and that acts as a deterrent for job seekers. To fill the shortage, it will become necessary to recruit outside the normal

demographics of women ages 25-54. In New Jersey, the cost of turnover is high: \$9,500 versus \$5,400 nationally, so an emphasis will also be placed on sustaining the employment of DSPs.

Courses are heavily based in developmental disabilities but they will be developing other courses for employment supports for clients of Vocational Rehabilitation, veterans, mental health, and the elderly.

Nationally, there is an issue in that there is no single CIP code or occupational code for DSPs. Places of employment have various job titles: home health aides, nursing aides, orderliness, personal care aides, home care aide or rehabilitation aide.

Also to help reduce turnover, it is important for job seekers to know the true job duties they may have. A realistic job preview DVD has been created for agencies to show potential employees. A snippet can be seen at www.directsupportprofessional.org.

Next steps:

- Continue working with agencies
- Working with pre-employment such as vocational technical schools, WIB's, One Stop Career Centers and community colleges.
- Visit high school transition fairs for graduates to interest them in the field.

The Committee gave Ms. McLaughlin feedback on her presentation and marketing materials. As they develop materials, it was suggested that the State Employment and Training Commission will be able to distribute them to WIB's and One Stop Career Centers. It was also suggested that they should speak at the One Stop Operators/Employment Services Manager meeting to explain the career and the need. Individual agencies should also be encouraged to work with Department of Labor and Workforce Development and One Stop Career Centers.

Anthony Camuso- National Organization on Disability (NOD)

On September 30, 2011, NOD got a \$550,000 grant for two years (with a possible three year extension) to increase employment opportunities for youth with disabilities, especially within minority owned businesses. The grant is through ODEP. This is second year they gave these grants (four agencies were awarded grants each year). The main focus will be in Newark and New York City. Many State partners will be involved including the Chamber, DVRS, SETC and Heldrich Center (who will do the evaluation). The first year of the grant will be for planning, with the second year for implementation.

Mr. Camuso also reported that on November 4, 2011 at Heldrich Center, DiscoverAbility is holding an event with NOD in four industry sectors with secondary education representatives on panels from 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at no cost. Everyone was encouraged to attend.

Dana Egreczky- New Jersey State Chamber of Commerce

Last week, The Disability At Work (DAW) Consumer Advisory Campaign announced a program to reward businesses for their support of people with disabilities. Nominations of deserving businesses can be made from people in the field by registering at www.DisabilitiesAtWork.org. Once endorsed, companies will receive the Disabilities At Work logo for use on websites and press releases. Endorsed companies will also have the opportunity to purchase window decals, point-of-sale magnets, and a plaque for use at their facilities. Ms. Egreczky also noted that there is currently federal legislation pending that will mandate people with disabilities as a category similar to minority and women owned businesses.

The Chamber's program, *Learn/Do/Earn*, is working well with the students in the DEI grant. Two sites have been done and two more are scheduled for November. Of the group of students, 70% were youth with disabilities. The events were so successful at these locations that the Chamber is now getting some new corporate sponsors.

Bob Haugh- Department of Education

Mr. Haugh reported that for this school year, there are eight *Dare to Dream* conferences scheduled. He stated that he would like to include the *Learn/Do/Earn* program in the sessions.

Announcements

It was noted that October 19, 2011 is National Disability Mentoring Day.

Judy Formalarie made some announcements:

- Four students with disabilities have begun their internships from Rutgers University at the Department of Human Services.
- Posters for National Disability Employment Awareness Month were distributed to all. They can be downloaded from www.dol.gov/odep.
- Each Thursday in October from 2 to 2:30, the Employer Assistance and Resource Network (EARN) will host Webinars on a variety of topics. Information was distributed.
- A handout on the Disability Issues Committee that was used during a workshop at the GSETA conference was given to all. As a result of that workshop, the Committee got two new members.
- An announcement regarding a new rule that strengthens protections for Americans with disabilities at rail stations was distributed.
- Today a Disability Pride parade was held in Trenton; Brian Burns and Alice Hunnicutt from DVRS were participants. Ms. Hunnicutt was also a speaker at the event.

La Shauna Jackson, who is a college intern working at the SETC for the fall semester, explained her background and offered her services to Disability Issues Committee. She asked everyone to think up ideas and let her know how her services could be best utilized.

The meeting concluded at 12:30 with a reminder of our next meeting will be on December 6th at the Arc of Middlesex in the Training Room.

Attendees:

Paula Barber	Elaine Katz
Anthony Camuso	Ellen Kurtz
Shellyann Dacres	Jody Levinson
Dana Egreczky	Cynthia Mapp
Anthony Ferrera (conf. call)	Colleen McLaughlin
Judy Formalarie	Nils Richardson
Bob Haugh	Clara Rivera-Pacheco
La Shauna Jackson	
Roni Kantor	