



Camden County Workforce Development Board

Supporting the Development and Retention of a World Class Workforce

Gregg T. DeBaere, Chair
Jeffrey S. Swartz, Executive Director

ABILITIES & LITERACY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES AUGUST 8TH 2017

ATTENDANCE – LITERACY COMMITTEE

MEMBERS		3-Jan	7-Feb	7-Mar-17	4-Apr-17	9-May-17	6-Jun-17	11-Jul-17	8-Aug-17
Brah, Ken CHAIR	Ravitz Family Shoprites	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Abrams, Barbara	Jewish Family & Children Service of Southern NJ		X			X	X		X
Beach, Patti	Camden County One-Stop	X		X					
Dann, Carol	Camden County College	X	X		X			X	
Kalitan, Marlyn	Kalitan Consulting	X	X	X	X	X			
Knopf, Dick	Marketing Professional Services	X			X	X			X
Young, Jennifer	Verizon		X				X		
Weaver, Thomas	Mayor, Clementon Borough							X	
Goodman, Steve	Volunteers of America, Del Valley	X				X	X	X	X
Welder, Laura	JEVS	X							
Walton, Marcie	VOA-Face Forward								
Powell, Michelle	Camden County College								
Pryor, Regina	DOL-Employment and Training	X	X	X			X		X
Desiderio, Daniela	Housing Authority, City of Camden			X					
Naila Tanczak	DOS La Quinta Inn & Suites					X			
Holly Strobl	Council Women, Clementon Borough							X	X
Swartz, Jeffrey S., Exec. Director	WDB			X		X		X	X
Stubblefield, Lelia	WDB								
Varallo, Kathleen	WDB	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Williams, Leslie J	WDB								
Naroden, Eric	WDB Intern								
Debbie Friedner	Camden County One-Stop Career Counselor		X						
Laurie Maguire	CCRC-Workforce Learning Link					X			

ATTENDANCE – ABILITIES COMMITTEE

MEMBERS		10-Jan	7-Feb	13-Mar	10-Apr	9-May	11-Jul	8-Aug
Maggio, Jim CHAIR	TFG/Judge Group	X		Snow n/m holiday n/m		X	X	X
Abrams, Barbara	Jewish Family & Children Service of Southern NJ		X			X	X	X
Cipolla, Joe	Jewish Employment and Vocational Services		X					
Davis, Anthony	Mental Services of Southwestern New Jersey	X	X				X	X
Deitz, Jeffery	Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services					X		
Farber, Dan	Birght Lights USA	X						
Forman, Lois	Bancroft	X				X	X	
Geoffrey, Taylor	NJ DOL DVOP							
Lombardo, Rick	Target Stores							
Lope, Krista	NJ Division of Vocational and Rehabilitation Services							
Lucas, Angela	Hireability	X	X			X	X	X
Newman, Jason	NJ DOL DVOP							
Pryor, Regina	LWD Division of Workforce Operations and Business Svcs.		X				X	
Schwingel, Laura	Jewish Family & Children Service of Southern NJ							
Tumolillo, Terry	Voice Print							
Walton, Marcie	VOA							
Waltz, Julie	ARC of Camden County							
Welder, Laura	Jewish Employment and Vocational Services							
Swartz, Jeffrey S.	WDB Executive Director					X	X	X
Varallo Kathleen	WDB Administrative Assistant	X	X			X	X	X
Naroden, Eric	WDB Intern							
Stubblefield, Lelia	WDB Administrative Assistant							
Williams, Leslie	WDB Comptroller							

WELCOME

Jeffrey S. Swartz, WDB Executive Director called the meeting to order at 8:35am, welcomed attendees and asked for roundtable introductions.

- LITERACY NEEDS ASSESSMENT UPDATE (LNA)

Jeff contacted Honorable Phyllis Magazzu, Mayor of Berlin Township, to schedule a presentation at the next Mayor's Association meeting. He and Ken Brahl, Literacy Chair, plan to make a presentation at the Mayor's Meeting to introduce the Literacy Needs Assessment and its findings. She was very receptive to the idea and will be scheduling us for their October meeting. They meet on Wednesday evenings.

- LITERACY DAY UPDATE

Jeff complimented everyone on both the Literacy and Abilities Committees for coming together to plan such great events. Both the "Dispelling the Myths and the "Literacy Day" will have a very positive impact on the community. He thanked Mayor Weaver who has been supportive in offering the Clementon Memorial Library as the site to host a pilot program Literacy Day that might be repeated again in Libraries around the County. He said that everyone has been working on the event and will have their own updates. He asked Regina Pryor, to report on her contacts with Pizza Hut and "Bags of Books"

Regina reported on a program called "Bags of Books" that was started by a young lady living in Camden County. Alexa Gabrielle, collects books for children. www.bagsofbooks.org. At events, children are given a bag to fill as they visit the pop-up Kiosk and pick out a book/books to add or build their own home library. There is no cost for the "Bags of Books" to visit an event. Regina said she already has a commitment from "Bags of Book" to participate in the event and she did pick up 13 boxes of books. Alexa, the founder may be there but it will depend on her school and sports schedule. She said that Ken agreed, at the last meeting, to provide the bag for each child.

She has also contacted Pizza Hut about their "Book It" program. Children receive a pass book and once they have read 10 books, they bring the completed pass book to Pizza Hut and will receive a free personal pizza. Regina said she has been having a difficult time getting a commitment from the local Pizza Hut that is close to the library. The manager of that location has been out.

Steve Goodman, Volunteers of America, reported that his organization did a book drive for shelters they have built. The response was so tremendous that they may have an excess amount of books to donate to the Literacy Day, Clementon.

Dick Knopf said he is a member with BookMates and will have many books to donate.

BookMates is a social justice project of the Jewish Community Relations Council and the Catholic-Jewish Commission of Southern New Jersey. Their goal is to promote literacy and help young children become independent readers. BookMates volunteers share the experience of reading one-on-one with children who are beginning readers to promote the joy of reading. Through this one-on-one time, the volunteers learn the individual interests of the children, reading according to their desires. Visit <https://jcrsny.org/bookmates>

The committee discussed options for books that might be left over from the event. All agreed that the Clementon Library would be given the first option to accept the books for sale or use.

Ken Brahl, Ravitz Family Markets joined the meeting and gave his update about food and or snacks for the Literacy Family Day event. He said that Ravitz Family Markets will be in support of the event with the donation of bags for the books and food snack items. The committee discussed snack options and agreed that bottled water, juice boxes, whole fruit and wrapped cookies or breakfast snacks would be appropriate.

Holly Strobl, Clementon Council said that the owner of the local Rita's Water Ice would be happy to get involved in some way. They will be closed by the time the event takes place. They are willing to donate some sort of coupon. Jeff suggested we create some sort of winter reading card that could be filled out for reading a certain number of books. Once the card is filled, it could be turned in, at a spring date to be determined and exchanged for a complimentary water ice.

Ken asked the committee if they would be agreeable to attending the next planning meeting at the Clementon Library. Holly said she would contact the library to get permission to hold the next meeting on September 6th or 13th. Ken said the Abilities Committee should meet at its normal schedule here at the WDB office and the Literacy Committee will hold its next meeting on either of those dates. Holly said the contact person for the Library is Donna Rimvy. Holly also said they will promote the event to the Clementon, Pine Hill and Lindenwold Schools. The library will open the event to the general public however it can only offer memberships to residents of these specific areas.

The committee discussed Literacy Agencies that could be asked to be in attendance at the event. Agencies would include Literacy Volunteers, The Adult Basic Skills Consortium and Learning Link. All agreed there should be a Spanish/English translation for the entire event. Kathleen Varallo, WDB Administrative Assistant said she contacted a young lady, age 16 who is heading toward signing with a major record label. She speaks and sings in Spanish. Kathleen said she will also contact PNC bank about getting a donation of bi-lingual books they produced for their "Growing Up Great" series.

Ken excused members of the Literacy Committee and turned the meeting over to Jim Maggio, Chair of the Abilities Committee.

Jim asked Kathleen the names of the panelists. Jeff suggested that the committee conduct a conference call with the panelists and speaker prior to the event. In this way, we will be able to communicate the goals and expectations and answer any questions the panelists might have regarding timing, audio needs etc. We will also be able to review a set of questions we will be asking the panelists during the event. This will give them time to prepare for the answers. Jim said it was discussed at last year's event follow-up meeting that we should call the speakers to give them more direction. This conference call will be a plus for the success of the event. He suggested that the conference call take place at the next Abilities meeting. Kathleen said she would send a notice to the panelist and speakers.

“DISPELLING THE MYTHS” – *Taking Steps Toward Inclusion in the Workplace*

Location: Jewish Federation Commons Building, 1721 Springdale Road, Cherry Hill, NJ 08003

Date/Time: Friday, October 20, 2017, 8:30am-11:00am

- 8:30am – 9:00am Registration, Continental Breakfast & Exhibit Area
- 9:00-10:30 - Guest Speaker, Panel Discussion, Question/Answer Open Discussion
- 10:30-11:00 – Exhibit Area & Networking
- PANELIST & PROGRAM UPDATE

Deb Dagit is approved and confirmed as the main guest speaker of the “Dispelling the Myths” event, *Deb Dagit is a sought-after consultant and speaker on the topics of Diversity and Inclusion. As Merck’s VP and CDO for almost 12 years, Deb was responsible for global equal opportunity, employee relations, recruiting, staffing diversity and inclusion. Under her leadership, the company was recognized for its exemplary work in diversity. Deb played a role in the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act through her lobbying efforts and testified before the US Senate Health Education Labor and Pensions Committee in 2011 regarding best practices for improving employment opportunities for people with disabilities.*

PANELISTS

Ronda Cavanagh, WAWA

Gwen Ruff, WAWA

Mike McNamee, Wells Fargo

Michele McKeone, M. Ed, Digitability

Debbie Deissroth, SPHR, SHRM-SCP, Kennedy Health, Project Search.

The committee discussed distribution of the flyer invitation and marketing options for the event. Jim suggested that we set up a schedule of mailings to get the flyer out to business contacts at least four times prior to the event. Jeff said he promoted the event at a recent meeting of the South Jersey Workforce Collaborative. This event was held on Thursday, August 3rd at the Rowan Business Development Center at Gloucester, and included Board Members and Committee Chairs from the five southern counties in the state. Kathleen said many attendees seemed very interested and requested a save-the-date. She sent the “Dispelling the Myth” flyer out with the follow up materials for that event. Jeff said that last year he made a stipulation that any staff member or Business Service Rep bring an employer as their price of admission for the event.

Barbara Abrams suggested that Business Service Representatives who are directly working with the Department of Vocational and Rehabilitation Services be contacted and invited to make a brief presentation with general information about how to get a program started in a company. We will be hearing from employers who are running hiring programs but it may leave some employers still questioning how to get started. Steve suggested that this question could be posed to the panel. Dick asked if we followed up after the last event to find out if any employers started a hiring program. Kathleen said thank you notes were emailed but we did not make direct contact with the employers. Keith Davis suggested that contact or resource information for starting an inclusive hiring program could be included in a brochure or in the program guide for the event. Kathleen said she would include a resource page in the program. Jeff said we should make it a point to direct attendees to the page. Keith said that the decision maker in a company who would decide on such a hiring

program may not be present at the event. They may have follow up questions once they receive information brought to the company by an attendee to the event.

Jeff suggested that we could create a public service announcement and also suggested getting the event posted on the pages of county web-site and media outlets. Lois suggested contacting a Darlene Bessi at Bancroft. She is the volunteer service coordinator for Bancroft and is very passionate about the kinds of initiatives that create inclusive hiring practices. The committee agreed they are happy with the program and happy to be ahead of last years' schedule in terms of panelist confirmation and invitation. All are hoping for an definite increase in employer participation. Jim suggested that the state representative be the person to make the presentation about the available resources. He said it's still better to put a face to the name and it adds more value to attending the event.

Jim suggested a schedule of mailings working backwards from the event as follows: Mailing, Oct 12-13, Sept 28-29, Sept 13-14, August 10-11, Aug 31-Sept 1. Jeff suggested we follow the same schedule on the facebook page as far as posting the event. He asked those committee members who engage on Facebook to like and share the event around this same schedule. Ken asked that we send it out on LinkedIn. This site is more geared toward business contacts.

The committee discussed the building layout of the event. Barbara suggested a site visit to review the layout with the Soups and Sweets staff. She said she will contact the church across the street for overflow parking. The current parking capacity is 150. Staff and morning programs take up about 40 spaces.

Jim closed the meeting with the request for all committee members to keep forwarding or reaching out to employer contacts and promoting the event wherever they can.

NEXT MEETING

The Literacy Committee will meet at the Clementon Memorial Library on September 6th or 13th once confirmed with the Library. A notice will be sent to committee member as soon as the date is confirmed. The Abilities Committee meet on September 12th, at 9am at the WDB office.

Submitted by

Kathleen Varallo

Administrative Assistant