



Supporting the Development and Retention of a World Class Workforce

Jeffrey S. Swartz, Executive Director

Robert Weil, Chair

ABILITIES COMMITTEE MINUTES
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 13TH @9:00, 2017 AT WDB OFFICE

ATTENDANCE – ABILITIES COMMITTEE

MEMBERS		10-Jan	7-Feb	13-Mar	10-Apr	9-May	11-Jul	8-Aug	12-Sep	14-Nov	13-Feb-18
Maggio, Jim CHAIR	TFG/Judge Group	X		Snow n/m	holiday n/m	X	X	X	X	X	X
Abrams, Barbara	Jewish Family & Children Service of Southern NJ		X			X	X	X			X
Cipolla, Joe	Jewish Employment and Vocational Services		X								
Davis, Anthony	Mental Services of Southwestern New Jersey	X	X				X	X			X
Deitz, Jeffery	Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services					X					X
Farber, Dan	Birght Lights USA	X									
Forman, Lois	Bancroft	X				X	X			X	X
Geoffrey, Taylor	NJ DOL DVOP										
Hale, Dawn	The Arc of Camden County									X	
Lombardo, Rick	Target Stores										
Lope, Krista	NJ Division of Vocational and Rehabilitation Services										
Lucas, Angela	Hireability	X	X			X	X	X		X	X
Newman, Jason	NJ DOL DVOP										
Peters, Annie	Sambulance									X	X
Pryor, Regina	LWD Division of Workforce Operations and Business Svcs.		X				X				
Schwengel, Laura	Jewish Family & Children Service of Southern NJ										
Taguwa, Denise	LWD-WDB Coord + Support										X
Tumolillo, Terry	Voice Print										
Waltson, Marcie	VOA										
Waltz, Julie	ARC of Camden County										
Welder, Laura	Jewish Employment and Vocational Services										
Swartz, Jeffrey S.	WDB Executive Director					X	X	X		X	X
Varallo Kathleen	WDB Administrative Assistant	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X
Naroden, Eric	WDB Intern										
Stubblefield, Lelia	WDB Administrative Assistant										
Williams, Leslie	WDB Comptroller										

WELCOME

Jim Maggio, Abilities Chair, Welcomed attendees and asked for roundtable introductions. He said this meeting will be dedicated to setting our 2018 goals and plans. We still face a challenge of getting more Employers or Human Resource Managers to attend our event. We want to look at what we can do better or different this year that would help us with our main focus which is opening up more career opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

Jeffrey S. Swartz, WDB Executive Director, told the committee about an interesting program segment he viewed on CBS Sunday Morning about the benefits of hiring talented individual on the Autism Spectrum. He said SAP, one of the former panelist/speaker Employers at our 2017 event was featured in this report. (See link below for the full story)

<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/the-growing-acceptance-of-autism-in-the-workplace/>

He said the reason he brought it up was that we started these focused events three years ago and we are on the right track to promote this important topic. Our message is gaining momentum and the news media is following this lead with more attention to the assets of putting these highly talented group of individuals to work.

Jeff reported on a meeting he had with Sandy Capell, Philanthropy and Corporate Responsibility Manager at Subaru of America, Inc. on Wednesday, February 7th here at the WDB Office. He spoke to her about the work of the committees. He said she was particularly interested in hearing more about the focus of the Abilities Committee. She said that she might be able attend a meeting or event to find out more about hiring individuals with disabilities at Subaru. She offered the possibility of Subaru staff participation at WDB events. There may be some opportunities to promote our events with their support. Since they are a large employer in the local area, this could carry a bigger draw to our next event. They may also be willing to provide some in-kind or supportive services to our Literacy and Abilities events. Lois Foreman, Bancroft, asked if Subaru would be willing to host our event at their new locations. Jeff said that he did mention that. We'd have to find out what the public capacity will be in the new building. Jim said that Subaru does do a lot of hiring in IT positions. According to his discussions with Sandy, Jeff said most employees, once hired, stay with the company for the life of extent of their career. They will be doing some hiring at their new location but there will not be many new positions to fill.

ABILITIES EVENT 2018

The committee discussed some types of events that might draw more employers such as a Job Fair. Jeff said The Camden County Board of Freeholders sponsors a Spring and Fall Job Fair at the BB&T Center in Camden. It was suggested that the committee attend or take a table at those Job Fairs in order to promote the Abilities Event. It was also suggested that a workshop or resource table could be hosted there for Employers highlighting incentives and information about inclusive hiring programs. The committee agreed to register for a table at the Spring Job Fair on Thursday, April 26th. Kathleen Varallo, WDB Administrative Assistant said she would follow up to find out about the particulars. She said that the County has offered to design and print flyers for the WDB. We can submit information to them for a Save-the-Date and have it ready to distribute at the Job Fair.

The committee discussed dates. All agreed it is fitting for the event to take place during the month of October, which is "Disabilities Awareness Month." It was suggested that the event take place earlier in the month, perhaps on the Tuesday of our regular Abilities Meeting which is the second Tuesday of the month. The committee discussed locations. Anthony Davis suggested taking a look at the TD Bank University. Jeff Dietz said the parking there may be a problem. Jeff said that he will contact Sandy Capell about the possibility of hosting the event at their new corporate location.

The committee discussed hosting a speaker at our next event that would qualify the program for continuing education credits (CCE). This is a requirement for Human Resource Managers. The committee will look into what it takes to apply CCE credits. A course description and

curriculum would have to be submitted to a college that has a continuing education department. Annie Peters, Sambulance, said she sent information to the WDB about this sort of certification. Jeff mentioned bringing back Deb Dagit. Barbra Abrams, JCFS, suggested we look into a more tactical speaker. Someone like Peg Monahan, SAP America, who is running an actual Disabilities Inclusion Program within their company.

Jim asked about what we should be looking to accomplish with the 2018 event. Should it be more about teaching employers how to structure an inclusion program? The committee agreed that the past two events have accomplished the goal of its title, "Dispelling the Myths." Most employers now understand that hiring individuals with disabilities is a best practice. Annie suggested that we should get more into the action plan. Anthony Davis said it should be more educational and that we should find someone who is accredited to teach Human Resource Managers. Jeff suggested contacting the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) which is the world's largest HR professional society. They might be able to offer an accredited speaker. Our target audience is Human Resource Managers. Lois said the speaker should be running an employee program. We could also look at the Universities to see if there is a well known professor teaching in the area of Human Resources that has an expertise in the area of disability inclusion. It was suggested the committee look at Drexel University and its Human Resource Management Department. Barbara said our objective is to show employers how to start successful programs. Most employers know about disability inclusion. It is more of the tactical or technical policies they need to know about such as preparing an accommodations program or how to work with a case manager. Lois and Barbara spoke about a workshop they attended at USBLN. The US Business Leadership Network is a national non-profit that helps business drive performance by leveraging disability inclusion in the workplace, supply chain and marketplace. The workshop subject was about setting a Disability Equality Index. They said they would look at their notes to see about getting the names of possible speaker or panelists. Jim said he attended an event that hosted Mr. Howard B. Stoeckel, Vice Chairman of Wawa, Inc. Mr. Stoeckel served as the Chief Executive Officer of Wawa, Inc. He wrote the book "The Wawa Way" He would be a great draw to the event. He might even draw some CEO or Company Presidents. The American Association of People with Disabilities.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

Angela Lucas, JEVS, reported on the Waffles and Wisdom program they participated in to promote inclusive hiring programs for individuals with disabilities. The event was held on Wednesday, January 10th at the Camden County College, The William G. Rohrer Center, 1889 Rt. 70 East, Cherry Hill, NJ 08003. It was very informal. Jennifer Veneziani, DVRS, led most of the program. We wanted to get input from employers to see what we could do to assist them with hiring. We had 30 companies that attended.

Kathleen Varallo, WDB, reported on the Hire One-Re-entry Event. Jeanne Paige-Soncrant, LWD, Business Service Representative for Camden County, met with Ken Brahl, WDB Literacy Chair WDB about the idea of a Re-Entry event. Ken spear headed the original Hire-One Event. The original Hire-One Program was an outreach to area employers where we asked them to take a chance and hire at least one person that may have been a previous offender, a veteran or disabled person with abilities to high level functions on the job. Our focus was on the employer who has never taken that chance. There were some benefits offered in the way of recognition for participating in the program.

Kathleen said the Business Service Team will be working with Nidia Sinclair, Director, CCOS Career Center, to target a population of ex-offenders. She said that Steve Goodman, Volunteers of America, said that Volunteers of America has an on-the-job training program specifically designed for ex-offenders. They have a grant that will incentivize an Employer to give training to these individuals. These individuals are monitored along the way of the program. Many employers are not aware of the supportive services that may accompany these individuals. Employers also do not know about the Bonding Program. The State will bond an employee before they are hired. It only takes a day or two notice to receive a bond. The bond is an insurance policy that protects an employer from liability due to an act of the employee. The employer is covered for a year or more with this bond. Jeanne has commitments from State Representatives who are willing to explain the bonding program and other benefits to employers. She said that Ken is on board and willing to support the event as a speaker.

There was some discussion at the BSR meeting about gathering a cohort of candidates to coach or mentor through the process of preparing for the event along the lines of a reverse job fair. They are asking the Abilities Committee to support the event by helping to promote. No date has been set yet. Anthony said that he works with Volunteers of America. They have a whole unit devoted to re-entry. He said that Camden County has, according to census data, a population of about nine thousand individuals with re-entry and barriers to employment. Some can work but the competition is fierce. Jeff Dietz, DVRS, said his office will be conducting a meeting with VOA Case Managers to review regulations and procedures.

Annie Peters, Sambulance, announced she will be running a Prevocational Skills Camp at Diggerland USA, for special needs ages 14-21, to give them work experience and skills. The camp sessions will run in July and August for one week from 8:30-4:30pm

Lois Foreman, Bancroft, announced the opening of its new campus in Mount Laurel in January. She announced the Butterfly Ball, Bancroft's big fundraiser on February 24th.

Barbara Abrams, JFCS reported on the Project Search program. The second cohort is underway and will be preparing for a reverse Job Fair in March. There is an information session being held at Jefferson Health on February 15th to fill the third cohort.

Anthony Davis, Mental Health Association, announced that Rowan University is hosting their first transition conference for families of individuals with disabilities. The goal is to connect these individuals with the next level of higher education. He wanted the committee to be mindful that programs, across the State, related to mental health and addiction employment services are losing money. These programs are losing as much as 20% per year. This revenue is very hard to make up. The State has made adjustments to its protocol but for some programs it may be too little too late.

Jeff announced that Alex Levitt, Fine Arts Graduate of Pace University, started today as our WDB receptionist. Today was his first day. We are happy to have a millennial prospective in the office.

Jim thanked the committee for their ideas and continued support. He asked committee members to follow up on their suggestions for the next meeting.

NEXT MEETING

The Abilities Committee will meet on March 13th, at 9am at the WDB office. A notice will be sent to committee member as soon as the date is confirmed.

Submitted by

Kathleen Varallo

Administrative Assistant