

ABILITIES COMMITTEE MINUTES
TUESDAY, MARCH 20, 2019 AT WDB OFFICE

ATTENDANCE – ABILITIES COMMITTEE

MEMBERS		10-Apr-18	8-May-18	12-Jun-18	10-Jul-18	4-Aug-18	13-Sep-18	13-Nov-18	11-Dec-18	26-Feb-19	20-Mar-19
Maggio, Jim CHAIR	TFG/Judge Group	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Abrams, Barbara	Jewish Family & Children Service of Southern NJ	X	X		X						
Cirii, Frank	Camden County One Stop							X		X	X
Connor, Andrea	Mental Health Association, Executive Director										
Cooper-Williams, Dina	Express Scripts		X				X			X	
Deitz, Jeffery	Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services										
Donato, Carl	Wawa		X					X	X	X	
Forman, Lois	Bancroft	X	X	X	X	X			X		X
Hale, Dawn	The Arc of Camden County	X	X								X
Lucas, Angela	Hireability		X			X		X		X	X
Taguwa, Denise	LWD-WDB Coord + Support	X	X	X	X	X		X	X		
Veneziani, Jennifer	DVRS					X					
Levitt, Alex	WDB Administrative Assistant	X	X			X					
Swartz, Jeffrey S.	WDB Executive Director		X	X	X	X				X	X
Varallo Kathleen	WDB Administrative Assistant	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Williams, Leslie	WDB Comptroller										

WELCOME

Jim Maggio, Chair, welcomed attendees. He asked for roundtable introductions and asked they announce themselves to dial-in committee members. Angela Lucas, JEVS, HireAbility, and Lois Foreman, Bancroft, called in to the meeting.

EVENT FOLLOW-UP

Program Title: Strategies for Workplace Inclusion *A Workshop for Human Resource Managers*

Date: Tuesday, October 22th 8am registration, program 8:30am-12:00noon

Location: Camden County Boathouse, 7050 North Park Drive, Pennsauken, NJ 08109

Jim reported that he has been attending meetings hosted by the NJ Tri State-Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM). He is continuing to promote collaboration between the WDB and SHRM's Diversity and Inclusion Committee and the Workforce Readiness Committee, chair by Dina Cooper-Williams, Express Scripts. He said Dina is helping in that area as well. Kathleen Varallo, Administrative Assistant, WDB suggested inviting each of the Chairs of those SHRM committees to the Abilities Meeting. Jim said he plans to do that as soon as he get permission to do so.

Kathleen reported that the County has approved our application to utilize the Boathouse on Tuesday, October 22, 2019 for the workshop event. She also got approval to extend the usage of the venue until 1pm on that day. It was discussed at the last meeting that the event would be a more interactive experience with more break-out sessions and an expanded exhibit area that might include picture boards of successful inclusion program operation in some local businesses.

2019 Event Workshop Topics

Jim said he is going to contact Lou Lessig, based on the suggestion that the event include some updates with regard to laws effecting inclusive hiring practices.

Louis R. Lessig is a partner with the firm of Brown & Connery, LLP. His practice concentrates in labor and employment counseling, litigation, negotiations and training. He was a former president of Tri-State HR.

Mr. Lessig represents clients in all types of employment matters, including but not limited to claims of discrimination, harassment, hostile work environment, wage and hour irregularities and retaliation in state and federal courts as well as before administrative agencies including the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, National Labor Relations Board, U.S. Department of Labor, American Arbitration Association, New Jersey Division on Civil Rights, New Jersey Office of Administrative Law, Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission, and Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations.

Jeffrey S. Swartz, Executive Director, WDB further re-caped prior discussions about changing this year's event format to a more interactive type workshop about inclusion hiring practices. Last year's event included presentations that were more like keynote talks. This year's event will include more practical policy application in the workplace. Kathleen said that planning discussion include four main focus areas as follows;

- Updates to laws regarding ADA compliance, inclusive hiring practices and some discussion on the use of medical marijuana in the workplace
- Accommodation's plans and the best way to use them hiring intake
- The benefits of working with Job Coaches and how they can help make a smooth transition into building an inclusive hiring program.
- Unconscious Bias, recognizing what they are and how they can affect the workplace environment

Frank Cirii, Local Area Operations Director, CCOSC, said there is a state vote about the use of medical marijuana coming in the very near future. If the legislation is approved, employers around the state will be looking for guidance.

The committee discussed the general room requirements at the venue to accommodate the break-out sessions. All agreed that once the program content was confirmed that those kinds of logistics could be worked out. The Boathouse location should easily accommodate the needs of the event. Jeff said he envisions a welcoming presentation that would include a general description of how the day would progress. He suggested a keynote speaker would set the tone for the program and then Jim would follow thanking the event sponsors and instructions for the break-out sessions. Jim said that in other workshops he has attended, the topics and guidelines of the day were clearly explained. He said that Lou Lessig would be able to weave discussions about the use of medical marijuana into his presentation as needed. It does not have to be the focus of his whole discussion.

Angela and Lois suggested the committee contact Jennifer Sosdorf, State Coordinator of Supportive Employment, Division of Vocational and Rehabilitation Services. She would be the right person to speak to the target audience about the benefits of working with a Job Coach.

Lois suggested the committee contact Kristin Russell, Advancing Opportunities. Lois said she attended a workshop conducted by her about utilizing technology to ease the transition to an inclusive workplace environment utilizing such tools as Alexa.

Kristin D. Russell is a dynamic speaker with over 20 years of experience in leading and catalyzing large global operations, services, and information technology (IT) organizations. She currently is the President of Global Services at Arrow Electronics, a Fortune 113 company, where she and her team help enable customers' growth through a simple, sustainable, and scalable technology lifecycle experience.

Jeff said that Dina Cooper Williams, Express Scripts mentioned that she attended a workshop on the subject of unconscious bias. She was going to identify a speaker that could talk more about this topic.

Unconscious bias (or implicit bias) is often defined as prejudice or unsupported judgments in favor of or against one thing, person, or group as compared to another, in a way that is usually considered unfair. Many researchers suggest that unconscious bias occurs automatically as the brain makes quick judgments based on past experiences and background. As a result of unconscious biases, certain people benefit and other people are penalized. In contrast, deliberate prejudices are defined as conscious bias (or explicit bias). Although we all have biases, many unconscious biases tend to be exhibited toward minority groups based on factors such as class, gender, race, ethnicity, religious beliefs, age, able-bodiedness, and other such traits.

Kathleen presented information about The Job Accommodation Network (JAN). She contacted them to speak about how human resource professionals can take advantage of their free services. They are fully sponsored and would be willing to present at the event. They would only ask for travel expenses. They are going to submit a proposal so the committee can make a decision whether there are enough sponsorship funds to cover the travel expenses.

The Job Accommodation Network (JAN) The Job Accommodation Network (JAN) is the leading source of free, expert, and confidential guidance on workplace accommodations and disability employment issues. Working toward practical solutions that benefit both employer and employee, JAN helps people with disabilities enhance their employability, and shows employers how to capitalize on the value and talent that people with disabilities add to the workplace. <https://askjan.org/Frequently-Asked-Questions.cfm>

Lois said that they have an amazing website with more resources for professionals than anyone can wrap their head around. Dawn Hale, Arc of Camden County, suggested that if the proposal cost is prohibitive, they may be able to provide resource information for the exhibit area where supportive services will be featured. Jeff said the goal is to have attendees walk away from the event with strategies they can apply in the workplace. Technology assistance seems to better fit the goal. Attendees can explore the website on their own. Kathleen getting the commitments of the speaker/facilitators is the first challenge. Fine-tuning the topics can easily be discussed with

these professionals once they are committed and we receive their program descriptions. She also said that she wrote the proposal for last year's event and Jim submitted it to SHRM for re-certification credit hours. Receiving the program descriptions helped to organize the topics and promote the event as well. Kathleen said that Margaret Gilbride from the Boggs Center (2018 speaker) gave her guidance about the content of the proposal and it further shaped the event.

Jim suggested that the committee plan to contact potential facilitators or speakers and finalize the topics for the 2019 event before the next meeting. Once the facilitators or speakers have been established, promoting of the event with a "save-the-date" can begin.

NEXT MEETING

The Abilities Committee is scheduled to meet on Tuesday, April 9, 2019 at 9:00am at the WDB office, 1111 Marlarkess Road, Suite 101, Cherry Hill, NJ 08003.

Submitted by

Kathleen Varallo

Administrative Assistant