

ABILITIES COMMITTEE MINUTES
THURSDAY, APRIL 9, 2020 AT THE WDB OFFICE

ATTENDANCE – ABILITIES COMMITTEE

MEMBERS		5-May-19	11-Jun-19	9-Jul-19	27-Aug-19	17-Sep-19	8-Oct-19	26-Nov-19	14-Jan-20	13-Feb-20	12-Mar-20	9-Apr-20
Maggioncalda, Jim CHAIR	TFG Management Services	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Abrams, Barbara	Jewish Family & Children Service of Southern NJ			X	X							
Cirii, Frank	Local Area Operations Director	X		X	X		X	X	X		X	X
Deitz, Jeffery	Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services											
Donato, Carl	Wawa	X	X		X	X	X		X	X		X
Forman, Lois	Bancroft	X	X		X			X	X	X	X	X
Fugee, Antoinette	Center for Family Services									X		
Hale, Dawn	The Arc of Camden County		X	X		X			X			X
Lucas, Angela	JEVS HireAbility	X			X	X	X			X		
Marks, Karen	Jewish Family & Children Service of Southern NJ										X	
McClintock, Monica	Adjunct Professor, Rowan College of SJ						X	X		X	X	X
Smith, Veda	Camden County Independent Living Center									X		X
Taguwa, Denise	LWD-WDB Coord + Support					X		X				X
Veneziani, Jennifer	Program Planning and Development Specialist, DVRS											
Swartz, Jeffrey S.	WDB Executive Director	X		X			X	X	X	X	X	X
Varallo Kathleen	WDB Administrative Assistant	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

WELCOME

Jim Maggioncalda, Abilities Chair, welcomed attendees to the conference call and thanked them for attending. He asked for a roll call of attendees and those phoning into the meeting. Attendees shared personal stories of experiences during COVID response efforts. Jim noted the death of Steve Ravitz of Ravitz Family Markets-Shoprites. Jim said he was a great community humanitarian.

ABILITIES COMMITTEE UPDATES

Event: Strategies for Workplace Inclusion-Sub-Title to be determined
Proposed date: Tuesday, October 27, 2019 – 8:00am-11:30am
Location: Camden County Boat House, Park Blvd, Pennsauken, NJ

Kathleen Varallo, Administrative Assistant, WDB, noted she sent the minutes and agenda out to the committee on Friday. She also tried to send them again just before the meeting, but the computers were running very slow. She asked for confirmation that all committee members received the materials. Everyone confirmed receipt of the materials. She said we will start the agenda with the idea that we are still moving forward with the planning of the October event. The Committee agreed that the event is far enough out to consider that date and timing allowable for public events to resume. Jim said the best approach is to go ahead and plan the event accordingly. If public safety measures cause any changes to the plan, the committee can decide to change the format or cancel by August without penalty. Jeffrey Swartz, Executive Director, said the event is scheduled late enough in the fall that hopefully things will be back to normal and we may even see a better turn out for the event.

Kathleen reported she got some positive feedback from Jeanne Page-Soncrant, Business Service Rep., Camden County. Jeanne did contact the head of the Military training department, at Cooper University Healthcare, as a potential speaker for the event. Timothy P. Galvin MSN, RN,

CCRN, Maj, DANG Administrator for Section of Military, Diplomatic, and Field Surgical Affairs, Cooper University Health Care. He is interested in participating in the event. She noted that she spoke at the last meeting about Cooper having the only unit in the country that trains Military personnel how to address PTSD in the field. Jennifer Veneziani, Program Planning and Development Specialist, NJ Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services, said she attended the BSR tour at Cooper and felt he would be an excellent speaker. She said the training program they are conducting at Cooper is unbelievable.

Jim reported he had a conference call set for 11:00am with Matt Verney, Vice Chair, WDB. Matt is very involved with the Greater Philadelphia Veterans Network, Carl Donato, Talent Acquisition Specialist, Wawa, noted that this organization planned an event in Philadelphia addressing the subject of PTSD. Carl sent the committee a video sampling of that event. Jim said Matt was more than willing to help out and work on planning some type of similar program. Jim said there are a couple of program avenues to pursue. He will stay on top of connecting and keep the committee informed. He asked if anyone on the call had any other speaker ideas. Carl said the one of the speakers featured in the video he sent was also very excellent. He was not sure if there would be a cost to hiring him. Carl said this speaker spoke about what he lived and walked through the whole experience of PTSD and how he got to where he is today. The whole program, in Philadelphia, was two hours between the panel and speaker. Carl said there was not a dry eye in the house and it really got to the heart of the subject. It helped the audience to understand what PTSD is, why it exists and dispelled the myths associated with the disorder. It also helped employers to understand why it is a great idea to hire Veterans regardless of the PTSD. Carl said he is planning on contacting him to speak at Wawa. He could also make the request, for the committee, about speaking at the October event. Jim approved of Carl's idea. He said helping HR professionals to understand what the disorder is really about is the first step to teaching them how to interview and work with individuals with different needs and abilities. Jeff suggested Jim ask Matt about the possibility of re-creating the same speaker panel format as it was offered at the Philadelphia event.

Monica McClintock, Adjunct Professor, Rowan University, agreed with Jim that getting to the heart of the matter and making people really understand what is going on and why they should take action and hire our Veterans. Someone that can do that will be highly effective for the group.

Jim took a moment to congratulate Jennifer Veneziani on the great job she did as the guest speaker on the Tri-State SHRM breakfast meeting Thursday, April 2nd that turned from a live event to a webinar. Jennifer thanked Jim and admitted it was a new experience for her to be speaking before an audience she could not see. Jim said she showed great energy and her topic was fantastic. The program was very well done. Monica said she heard so many good things about Jennifer's presentation. Lois Forman, Bancroft, asked if there were many questions asked or that came through the chat box. Jennifer said safety surrounding the workplace for hiring individuals with special abilities seemed to be the biggest concern and that seems to be the norm for all employers she works with. Another question related to how Human Resource (HR) Managers get senior leadership to buy in on hiring. She said everything comes down to a conversation. There is no prescription for this in terms of an A.B.C plan. She tells other Business Representatives; it comes down to their counseling skills and getting right to the concerns of an employer or senior leader and then really working at it from a counseling aspect. Hopefully more

meaningful conversations will continue with HR professionals that attended the Webinar once everyone safely returns to the office. The Committee discussed more details about the format of the Webinar.

Kathleen asked the Committee to try and pin down the actual title of the event so that staff can get it on paper and begin to promote a “save the date” Jeff suggested the committee keep the same “Strategies for Workplace Inclusion” and simply add “Veterans and PTSD” Kathleen said that was the title discussed at the last meeting but it was not finalized. She said the County is willing to weigh in more with flyer design and sponsorship. They are sponsoring the venue and they do like the fact that the event will be focused on Veterans. Jim suggested we turn the title around and title the event “Veterans and PTSD-Strategies for Workplace Inclusion”

Jim said the new normal will be different once the economy opens and some logistics of the event will have to be carefully planned in adherence to new state guidelines for public events. If we have to switch the event to a webinar, the committee should continue to research the logistics of that type of format as well.

Kathleen asked Lois Forman Bancroft, if scheduling a Neuropsychologist from Bancroft was still a possibility for the event and how did she feel about Bancroft’s willingness to continue sponsoring the event. Lois said that all departments at Bancroft are focused on the current COVID response efforts. She said it would be very difficult to ask for any commitments from them at this time. Kathleen said that she will create a sponsorship letter and asked the Committee to think of other businesses that might step up to additionally sponsor the event. She noted the current sponsorship for the event has been \$1500.00 thanks to JEVS and Bancroft. Jeff said this budget is enough to sponsor the expenses and breakfast for 60 participants. The WDB cannot use WIOA funds to sponsor programs or events so we may have to look at soliciting funds from another source. Lois said that while the breakfast is a nice addition to the event, the participants may not feel as comfortable with a catered breakfast under the new normal. Jeff said that the committee should keep the idea of hosting the event as a webinar as a consideration especially if sponsorship funds are not available. It is a discussion the committee will need to have. The Committee can review the budgets from the past events and decide whether a breakfast can be provided. There are other expenses such as printing, speaker expenses and audio visual that are more of a priority in hosting this type of event. Jim said if the committee has any additional ideas about sponsorship or other event details make sure to share it with Kathleen or myself or the entire committee.

OUTREACH OPPORTUNITIES

Kathleen reported that she did send the notice about the Tri-State SHRM webinar and Jennifer’s topic as a way of keeping in touch with last year’s participants. She also sent the information about the Bancroft Lunch and Learn. The WDB has been sharing information with attendees from last year’s event.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

The Committee discussed personal working situations during COVID-19 response efforts. Monica said she began on-line classes with her students. She is finding that many students are just beginning to experience on-line study. She said it’s a good way for them to catch up with modern technology and this possible wave of future classroom design. She also reported that

Tri-State SHRM has rescheduled their conference for the fall and will continue to host monthly meetings online. Jennifer reported that the One-Stops are currently closed to public access. There have been discussions that staff would be filtering back into the offices on a rotating basis. Staff members are telecommunicating vouchers for DVRS services. These are vouchers for uniforms, eyeglasses, or other items a customer might need for starting a new job. Lois reported that she is also learning and teaching some of her Bancroft clients how to become more adept at online tools and communication. The Bancroft lunch and learn and reverse job fair has been postponed for obvious reasons.

NEXT MEETING

The next Abilities Committee meeting is scheduled on Thursday, May 14th, 2020 at 8:30am at the WDB office, 1111 Marlark Road, Suite 101, Cherry Hill, NJ 08003. This meeting will be conducted as a conference call. A notice will be sent out with dial-in information.

Submitted by

Kathleen Varallo

Administrative Assistant