



Supporting the Development and Retention of a World Class Workforce

Jeffrey S. Swartz, Executive Director

Robert Weil, Chair

LITERACY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, MAY 7, 2019
MEETING AT ORCHARDS FAMILY SUCCESS CENTER, SICKLERVILLE, NJ

ATTENDANCE – LITERACY COMMITTEE

MEMBERS		5-Jun-18	17-Jul-18	7-Aug-18	4-Sep-18	8-Nov-18	4-Dec-18	8-Jan-19	5-Feb-19	5-Mar-19	2-Apr-19	7-May-19
Brahl, Ken CHAIR	Ravitz Family Shoprites	X	X		X	X	X		X	X	X	X
Burnell, Mariya	TD Bank			X								
Crii, Frank	Local Area Operations Director, Camden County					X		X		X		X
Dann, Carol	Hopeworks Camden					X	X	X	X		X	X
Daunoras, Heidi	Pine Hill School District					X	X					X
De, Shyamoli	Camden County Library							X				
Doblick, Duke	Literacy Access Fund		X									
Druce, Jennifer	Camden County Library South County Branch	X	X	X		X						
Hill, Lauren Dr.	Camden County Youth One Stop					X	X	X	X	X	X	
Kalitan, Marlyn Vice Chair	Kalitan Consulting	X	X	X	X	X		X	X		X	X
Kinzy, Joanne	CCC					X	X					
Knopf, Dick	Marketing Professional Services	X	X	X					X		X	X
Levandowski, Andrea	NJ State Library								X			
Lisa, David	Camden County Library System		X	X			X		X			
Lynch, Dawn	NJLWD			X								
Mintz, Jackie	CCC											
Mitchell, Danielle	RobinsNest Inc	X	X						X		X	X
Page-Soncraut, Jeanne	Business Service Rep, LWD											
Rimby, Donna	Clementon Memorial Library											
Strobl, Holly	Council Women, Clementon Borough		X	X		X						
Young, Jennifer	Verizon			X		X	X					
Swartz, Jeffrey S.	WDB, Executive Director			X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Varallo, Kathleen	WDB, Admin Assistant	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Williams, Leslie J	WDB, Comptroller											

WELCOME

Ken Brahl, Literacy Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:45am, welcomed attendees and asked for round table introductions. Ken thanked Danielle Mitchell, Director Orchards Family Success Center, and Cari Burke, Robin’s Nest, for hosting the Literacy Meeting. The Orchard’s Family Success Center is located at 416 Sicklerville Rd., Sicklerville, NJ. Dr. Lauren Hill, called into the meeting.

LEARNING LINK PILOT PROGRAM

Dr. Lauren Hill, Manager, Youth One-Stop, Acting Manager, Learning Link, Camden County One-Stop Career Center, reported on the satellite Learning Link program at the South County Branch, Winslow Township.

This online pilot program is an attempt to extend skills training into other parts of the County. The satellite program allows participants to register with the One-Stop Career Center upon meeting with a Counselor by appointment at the Winslow Township Library. They may be in need of brushing up on math and reading skills. The individual is tested with the Test of Adult Basic Skills (TABE) to establish their reading and math grade level. Once levels are established, the Counselor works with each individual to create a plan that can be implemented using the computers at the library. The Counselor can monitor the progress of the individual

online and plan in-person check points along the way. This service is especially good for an individual preparing to qualify for a training program or GED High Set test.

Dr. Hill reported that there has been no contact or requests for the program coming from that local area. She does not know if better weather will help in that regard. She said there are some drawbacks to using the learning link at a remote location. Customers who would use the program as a required work activity to maintain benefits, must have their hours verified. Remote work stations do not allow counselors to verify the hours or “time on task.” They can monitor progress but the program does not log hours. A separate time sheet would have to be filled out by the customer. The library would have to agree to monitor the hours or handle that paperwork. If a customer registers for the program to simply increase work-readiness or improve skills to qualify for training, they can freely use the program at the Winslow location. The library does subscribe to online services used for the same purpose so it may be a tough sell to regular county library card holders. The Learning Link program is the link to a referral for a paid training grant. That is the biggest advantage to participation that the library can be promoting. The Committee discussed the idea of a video or photo promotional piece for social media and or the county newsletter. Kathleen Varallo, Administrative Assistant, WDB, said that the Youth Committee would also like to create a video. Charles Yancy, March Quarterly WDB Meeting Success Story Award Recipient, will be asked about doing a video interview. He also participated in the Learning Link as part of the flow of services he received that got him a successful career path. The video may be used for a dual purpose to promote youth services as well as the learning link program.

“Meeting with the Mayors,” March 12, 2019 – Next Steps

Ken re-caped that the Literacy Committee invited the Mayors of Clementon, Pine Hill and Lindenwold to participate in a discussion about how the Workforce Development Board has been working to promote literacy services in their local area. A spaghetti dinner was hosted by the committee at the fire hall behind the Library in Clementon Borough on Tuesday, March 12, 2019, 6:30pm. All committee members were invited to attend this meeting. Ken said the meeting was well worth the effort. He thought the discussions were well received and helped to open communication between the mayors for future collaborations in that local area. Ken asked the committee to discuss ways to follow up on that effort. Marlyn Kalitan, Vice Chair, suggested that the committee get in touch with the head librarian at the Lindenwold Public Library. Mayor Roach had said she would be very interested in partnering with the WDB on hosting an event at that library. Kathleen said that the Business Service Team has been planning a Trades Initiative Career Day. The event would include an invitation to parents. The event could be hosted in that local area. Heidi Daunoras, Curriculum Coordinator, Pine Hill School District, said that Pine Hill School’s guidance department, often plans events and would welcome a Career Day being hosted at the school especially on a Saturday morning. She said the school often promotes its literacy services by attending community events. Ken said he would like to dedicate the June Literacy meeting to focusing on targeting the Pine Hill, Clementon, Lindenwold area. There is a good momentum building with local elected officials and we do not want to lose it. Jeff suggested that two events could be planned in the area. A trades Career Day and a Literacy event. Heidi suggested the Literacy Committee could attend a National Night Out Event on Tuesday, August 6th. The community participation is great. There are lots of community and health organizations in attendance exhibiting their services. Dick Knopf, Business Consultants, asked if planning a regional event was possible. Heidi said that the communities usually plan and

draw from residents in their school district areas. She said that Lindenwold is a separate school district. Marlyn said that she took part in a program for young women that included professional women speaking about their careers. Heidi also commented that if the schools could understand more about how to adapt their curriculum to a changing workforce, it would serve the students for effectively. Kathleen reported the Atlantic City Electric is in to process of sponsoring the WDB to a membership to the Center for Energy Workforce Development (CEWD). The CEWD hosts math and work skills curriculum specifically designed for the energy industry. The Committee discussed the National Night Out and agreed it would be a good way to reach a greater number of families with information about Literacy Services. Carol Dann, Adult Basic Skills Coordinator, HopeWorks, said that National Night Out is celebrated in many local communities across the county. Heidi also said that the school hosts a movie night. Ken said that the Committee will be able to focus on one event for this year and build a presence at other events in the coming years.

NJLIBSGROWBIZ COMMITTEE MEETING – RECAP

Ken reported that he and Marlyn Kalitan were invited to attend the New Jersey Grow Libraries Business Committee Meeting hosted at the County Library Voorhees Branch, 203 Laurel Rd, Voorhees Township, NJ 08043 on Monday, April 29. He said they were able to make a presentation about the Literacy Needs Assessment and how the Workforce Development Boards can work with the libraries to cross promote and create a referral system that benefits both organizations. The presentation was very well received. There were head librarians represented from around the state. A few asked how they could go about connecting with the WDB offices in their county.

ROBIN’S NEST INC. & THE FAMILY SUCCESS CENTERS

Ken thanked Danielle for providing breakfast refreshments and hosting the Literacy Committee. He turned the meeting over to her for a presentation about the Orchard’s Family Success Centers and Robin’s Nest Inc.

Danielle Mitchell further explained that the Orchards Family Success Center is a community-based, family-centered neighborhood gathering place located in the heart of Sickerville, NJ. Community residents can visit the center for family support, interactive workshops, activities, and groups. Activities are always free and open to all families in the community. The Orchards Family Success Center is operated by Robins' Nest Inc. The family success center movement started about 11 years ago in New Jersey. There are now 68 Family Success Centers across the State of New Jersey. The idea was to provide a central neighborhood location that would provide support to young and growing families. The centers are open to the public and are not specific or income based. It’s an opportunity for neighbors to come together and connect with one another so that families can achieve success in every area of their lives. The types of programs offered are life skills workshops, cooking classes, movie nights, yoga, budgeting, knitting classes and job-seeking help such as resume writing and assistance with a job search. Ken asked if there was a gap that needed to be filled. Danielle said there many agencies that assist families or individuals once they have a crisis. The Family Success Centers offers a community center environment that serves to help prevent a family getting into a crisis situation. The programs are completely voluntary, there are no eligibility requirements. There are a lot of friendships and resources built here at the center. All events hosted at the center are presented by volunteers or partners in the community.

Each Family Success Center has a parent advisory board that helps direct the center and its programs. Visit <https://orchardsfsc.org/> for more information about the center.

Carol Dann said that she is aware of success centers in Camden County that are operated by the Center for Family Services and Hispanic Family Centers. Danielle said there are four family success centers operating in Camden County. Evolution Family Success Center, Promise Neighborhood Family Success Center, Clementon Family Success Center and Orchards Family Success Center. Dick asked how the Centers measure success. Danielle said that the center often conducts pre and post surveys during events or workshops. Cari Burke said that the centers offer a comfortable environment that is more like a home than an agency. There is a play room, computer room, a quiet room and class or workshop area in every center. Many families come back to tell us when they have achieved a success like buying a home or obtaining a job as result of help provided by the center. Frank asked if case management or counseling services are provided at the centers. Cari said no case management takes place at the Center. More skills development or prevention programs such as parenting skills or budgeting are bundled into more fun workshop like cooking class. Jeff asked how the services of the One-Stop could compliment patrons of the center. Danielle and Cari both said that they often refer individuals to the One-Stop Career Center for employments services and orientations for training grants. It would be helpful to host an information session at the center about training grants or employments services. Frank said that he would like to see technology put into action to help provide more outreach.

ROBIN'S NEST INC.

MISSION

Protecting children, strengthening families, and empowering our communities through innovative, life-enhancing services.

HISTORY

Robins' Nest pioneered the group home movement in New Jersey in 1968. It began when a foster mother came to speak at a meeting of the Junior Women's Club of Woodbury. She talked about how teenagers, subject to abuse and neglect at home, often ran away – only to be locked up along with hardened criminals. She had taken in a few of these teens herself, to help them regain their confidence, continue their education, and go on to lead productive lives.

The young women were so moved by the foster mother's hard work that they vowed to expand her care and compassion to help other troubled teens in the area. The Women's Club members began speaking to various community organizations, asking for their help to purchase a house that would serve their needs. The response was immediate and the group home quickly became a reality. Fifteen years later, Robins' Nest expanded programming to include the first home-based treatment program for children in the state. The success of this program in turn led to the creation and implementation of other programs, thanks to the ongoing generosity of individuals and organizations.

TODAY

Throughout our 51 year history, Robins' Nest has grown from an organization serving children to a community based services powerhouse with over 80 programs and services that impact children, adults, families, veterans, caregivers and the community at large. With its results-focused protocols and driven, experienced staff, Robins' Nest is having a measurable impact on so many people, in so many ways. Visit <https://robinsnestinc.org/> for more information.

The Literacy Committee closed the meeting with a tour of the Orchard's Family Success Center.

NEXT MEETING: The Literacy Committee will meet on Tuesday, June 4, 2019 at 8:30am at the WDB Office, 1111, Markkress Road, Cherry Hill, 08003.

Submitted by

Kathleen Varallo,

Administrative Assistant