

ABILITIES COMMITTEE MINUTES  
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2020 AT THE WDB OFFICE

ATTENDANCE – ABILITIES COMMITTEE

MEMBERS		14-May-20	11-Jun-20	9-Jul-20	13-Aug-20	10-Sep-20	8-Oct-20
<b>Maggioncalda, Jim CHAIR</b>	TFG Management Services	X	X	X	X	X	
Abrams, Barbara	Jewish Family & Children Service of Southern NJ						
Cirii, Frank	Local Area Operations Director	X	X	X			X
Deitz, Jeffery	Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services						
Donato, Carl	Wawa	X	X	X		X	X
Forman, Lois	Bancroft	X	X	X	X	X	X
Fugee, Antoinette	Center for Family Services						
Hale, Dawn	The Arc of Camden County	X	X				
Lucas, Angela	JEVS HireAbility	X			X	X	X
Marks, Karen	Jewish Family & Children Service of Southern NJ	X	X		X		X
McClintock, Monica	Adjunct Professor, Rowan University	X	X	X	X	X	X
Mills, Jay	NJ Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired		X				
Smith, Veda	Camden County Independent Living Center						
Taguwa, Denise	LWD-WDB Coord + Support			X			
Veneziani, Jennifer	Program Planning and Development Specialist, DVRS						
Swartz, Jeffrey S.	WDB Executive Director	X	X			X	X
Varallo Kathleen	WDB Administrative Assistant	X	X	X	X	X	X

WELCOME

Jeffrey Swartz, Executive Director, WDB called the meeting to order at 8:46, welcomed attendees to the Zoom meeting and thanked them for attending.

OUTREACH UPDATES

Kathleen Varallo, Administrative Assistant, noted the sample social media posts she sent out with meeting materials. She said these posts can be used for the Abilities Committee’s recognition of October’s “National Disabilities Employment Awareness Month.” It was discussed at the last meeting about creating a social media awareness campaign highlighting efforts in Camden County toward hiring individual with disabilities. She would also like to celebrate the membership of the Abilities Committee and include posts and links about the work of partner agencies including JEVS, the Arc of Camden County, JCFS and others. The Committee discussed and approved the flyers Kathleen sent out.

Kathleen will post a blurb about each organization and how it serves the community such as job placement, job coaching and career development. She will post a link to each organization as well so she asked the committee to send her general information or preferred content for the posts. The Committee discussed the idea and agreed to send information. Jeff said the WDB will want to let the community know the committees are still very active even though they cannot meet in person or host live events during this state of emergency.

Kathleen also did some research and found a webinar hosted by the Job Accommodation Network (JAN) Organization. She asked the committee to take some time to view this presentation about an accommodating

workplace to see if it would be valuable to send to HR managers. She said this may be a great opportunity for the Abilities Committee to create a Zoom event sometime in the fall or winter. The event could open with introductions by the committee and how the WDB can partner with local businesses that may have an interest in starting an inclusive hiring program. The webinar also gives some good tips for employers who may already have one or two persons in their workplace. (See link to JAN presentation for review)

<https://jan.adobeconnect.com/aware/> She also reminded the committee about sending photos of essential workers with disabilities by Friday, October 16<sup>th</sup> and captions will be appreciated. The committee asked if names of persons would be allowed. Kathleen said to follow whatever photo release protocols are in place for posting public information at each organization. Lois Forman, JCFS, said there is usually a photo release form in the client files.

Jeff directed the committee back to discussions at the last meeting which was to plan some sort of virtual meeting to honor Steve Ravitz, Ravitz Family Markets, and recognize Disabilities Employment Awareness Month. He said the WDB will likely recognize Steve Ravitz at the Quarterly meeting scheduled on Wednesday, December 16<sup>th</sup>. Ken Brahl, HR Specialist at Shoprites, and Literacy Chair, will provide information to put together a tribute to him.

Jeff asked Kathleen to give an update about the PTSD event and partnership with the Cooper University Healthcare Team which is postponed until spring 2021. Kathleen reported, based on Carl's suggestion of re-scheduling the event to a date closer to Memorial Day, she was able to secure the Camden County Boathouse on Tuesday, May 25<sup>th</sup>, 2021. Memorial Day is actually the following Tuesday but vacation schedules may conflict with the Tuesday after Memorial Day Weekend so they picked the Tuesday before the holiday. She was able to confirm with the Cooper Team that this date was doable for them as well. She also said the Cooper Team asked for a calendar invite and they will want to organize another planning meeting whenever possible. The Committee discussed the date and approved. Jeff said hopefully the COVID-19 virus will be under control by then and public meetings can resume. There may be some limitations, based on future safety protocols, that may limit the seating capacity of the event but that is to be seen. Monica McClintock, Adjunct Professor, Rowan University, said she might be able to help with an emphasis on promoting the event. She just learned that the Tri-State SHRM, Workforce Committee will be focusing on Veterans and Military Families in the coming program year which runs from September 2020 through September 2021. Every year, they have a different focus and this year will be dedicated to Veterans so they may be able to put some momentum behind the Abilities event in May by promoting it through their group and other associated HR groups. Jeff suggested organizing a joint meeting sometime in the near future as was suggested in the past. Monica said she will look into that possibility especially now that they are meeting virtually. Jeff said the committee can work around their schedule and whatever works for them. It's been a long term goal to meet with their workforce committee.

#### COMMITTEE UPDATES

Angela Lucas, Jevs HireAbility, reported their planning committee decided to host a smaller online JEVS event in partnership with DVRS on October 28<sup>th</sup> from 12noon-1:00pm. She will send a registration link which is free for viewing. The organization nominated and selected five individuals from the various DVRS offices that JEVS supports. She noted there will be a candidate recognized from Wawa. The managers of each jobsite location

will be saying a few words about each nominee as well as their job coach or job support person. They are still working out the logistics for pre-recording and production of the program. The JEVS Director and Commissioner of Labor also agreed to provide opening remarks. The Committee asked Angela to forward the link to the event. She will send it to the WDB so they can forward it to the committee.

Lois Forman, Jewish Family and Children Services (JFCS), reported the job board, discussed at the last meeting, has been launched and is going very well. She has been networking virtually and in-person with local employers. She attended a virtual Rotary Meeting in Mount Laurel to speak about the Job Board. She asked the committee to provide any additional contacts they may have with local rotaries or business organizations. She would like to network with them, spread the word about the Job Board and explain its ease of access. Lois also speaks publically about the services offered by JFCS. JFCS has really expanded programming and COVID support groups that have been organized to address the needs of the community in response to the state of emergency. They continue 50-75 food deliveries per day through volunteers. The programs are expanding and it's really incredible and she is proud to be a part of the organization. She is trying to target the smaller local businesses that face higher costs in posting job positions on national platforms. She encouraged the committee to forward any local contacts such as retail, restaurant and smaller businesses in need of hiring staff. She noted the service is free to local employers.

Monica McClintock, Adjunct Professor, Rowan University, said she did not have a lot to report. She is making connections with her 58 freshman students, many of which have remained on remote study. Tri-State is building a lot of new programming for the new business year. As they meet each month she is taking in the information and sharing it as appropriate. Jeff said he is excited about the possibility of meeting with SHRM on a joint basis. They are a very prominent organization and clearly WDB services should be known to HR managers included in their membership.

Karen Marks, JFCS, reported the organization is getting ready for its annual vocational breakfast hosted virtually on November 20<sup>th</sup>. The Agency recently hosted its annual meeting which recognizes volunteers and staff. A videographer recorded some messages and it was really beautiful. JFCS will be hosting a virtual vocational breakfast in a similar way to JEVS. They will be honoring four individuals, doing pre-recorded videos with the person being honored, their supervisor as well as the employment specialist. She said business is getting busy with referrals. The Agency has been able to place many individuals in employment during the past few months. Job Coaches are attending jobsites and following social distance protocols accordingly. Jeff said there is funding for training as individuals may or may not qualify but he encouraged Karen to refer clients as an opportunity to consider. He encouraged her to contact the DVRS office at the One-Stop. Lois said it might be offered as an additional resource opportunity link on the Job Board. She will also notify counselors and job coaches at JFCS.

Jeff reminded the committee that the One-Stop is now open for virtual and by-appointment services. Some services may be conducted in office for those who do not have access to computers. A good majority of services are available and customer engagement is beginning to flow with ease. He referred to the Camden County website and the WDB website which posts a directory of virtual services. He noted there are funds for

supportive services and training grants for industry valued credential courses and for Learning Link service, such as GED preparation. Follow the link for more information.

Camden County One-Stop Virtual Services Directory

<https://www.camdencounty.com/service/employment/job-training-placement/>

Carl Donato, Talent Acquisition Specialist, Wawa, brought an idea up for discussion. He felt it would be important to build a resource guide for the Abilities Committee team. He thought about creating one or two slides about his profile and his part on the team and each member would do the same so there would be a resource guide to share with the community. As a team, Carl said we communicate the good work we are doing but there is a world around us that may or may not be aware of all that is happening within and out in the community. He said even the HR attendees at WDB events may catch one or two business cards from committee members but it would be good to provide this resource guide of team members and the partner organizations they serve. Kathleen said that leans in to her idea about recognizing the members of the committee as part of October's social media campaign. Carl said the work may not be completed right away but each member could contribute a slide or two and forward it to Kathleen to create this type of member profile guide.

Carl reported that while he will still be a part of Camden County, his regions are switching effective Monday so he will be including Dennis Wexler in correspondence about the Abilities Committee. Dennis will be taking over much of the work in Camden County. Carl is not backing out of the committee or working in the county but Dennis will become an additional resource, representing Wawa and recruiting in the Camden County area. Carl was happy to report that Wawa's Diversity and Inclusion programs will be going to new levels. This will be happening internally versus what the customer may see. With much of the new awareness around diversity and inclusion, the company saw an opportunity to speak more deeply with its associates in all walks of life and give them an open voice of expression with upper management. Wawa has revamped its entire approach to its co-workers and its creating an awesome work environment. He received word yesterday that the program is fully rolled out internally and it will include the population focus of this committee. Carl said Wawa is continuing to hire and he will continue to send messages and job posts as he receives them. There is a new store opening in Burlington County. Wawa is also beginning to open up drive-thru locations as mentioned at the last meeting.

Jeff thanked the committee for their efforts and work in the community. He reminded the committee about the upcoming WDB Quarterly Meeting as discussed earlier on Wednesday December 16<sup>th</sup>

#### NEXT MEETING

The next Abilities Committee meeting is scheduled on Thursday, November 19<sup>th</sup> at 8:30am. This meeting will be conducted via Zoom conferencing. A notice will be sent with the link and dial-in information.

Submitted by

*Kathleen Varallo*

Administrative Assistant