

Jeffrey S. Swartz, Executive Director

Robert Weil, Chair

ABILITIES COMMITTEE MINUTES

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 2019 AT THE WDB OFFICE

ATTENDANCE – ABILITIES COMMITTEE

MEMBERS		11-Dec-18	26-Feb-19	20-Mar-19	23-Apr-19	5-May-19	11-Jun-19	9-Jul-19	27-Aug-19	17-Sep-19	8-Oct-19	26-Nov-19
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	Camden County One Stop		X	X		X		X	X		X	X
Cooper-Williams, Dina	Express Scripts		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
Hale, Dawn	The Arc of Camden County			X			X	X		X		
Lucas, Angela	Hireability		X	X		X			X	X	X	
McIntock, Monica	Independent										X	X
Taguwa, Denise	LWD-WDB Coord + Support	X								X		X
Veneziani, Jennifer	DVRS											
Swartz, Jeffrey S.	WDB Executive Director		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. He asked that the committee recap the workshop event and offer their suggestions and opinions about what they thought went well and what they thought could have been done better.

EVENT:

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

**Date:** Tuesday, October 22<sup>th</sup> 8am registration, program 8:30am-12:00noon

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

EVENT RECAP

Jim thanked the committee for their ideas, input and teamwork in helping to plan of the event. He felt it was very successful.

Kathleen Varallo, Administrative Assistant, WDB, reported that 51 Employers or Human Resource Managers attended the event. The total count attending the event, including speakers, vendors and the committee was 70. She said that an email confirmation request was sent twice to all registrants that registered on the Eventbrite site. A count of 80 people registered. She also said it is hard to gage how many could have registered knowing that a certain amount of people would drop off since it was a free event. The registration was cut off at 80 due to sponsor budget limitations. The budget did not allow for more than 70 People to attend. She thanked Frank Cirii, Local Area Operations Director, for allowing Scott Stetser, Computer Technical Manager, One-Stop, to attend and manage the PA system and computer visual needs for the event. She said that was a huge savings to the budget. She also thank Cathy Quattrone, Camden County Technical Schools, for volunteering the easels and delivery by Cathy’s husband. Alex Levitt, Administrative Assistant, made the connection with Cathy Quattrone. Kathleen said it was a very good effort on his part and saved the event even more cost.

The Committee discussed the concerns about not having control on the Eventbrite site to better manage the registration. Being that it was a free event, it is hard to count on everyone showing up that registers. The Committee discussed ideas about charging a nominal fee that might ensure more confirmed participation. Frank suggested that the workshop was well worth an admission price of \$25.00. Jeffrey Swartz, Executive Director, WDB, said that people probably would pay to attend because they could charge the ticket back to the employer as a company expense and because it is a continuing education event. He said the WDB is not interested in making a profit on the event. It is better to cover expenses and confirm a solid attendance by participants. He noted appreciation to Bancroft and JEVS HireAbility for their continued sponsorship of the event. He suggested the committee consider charging a \$25.00 fee for attendance to next year's event. He also noted appreciation to the Camden County Board of Freeholders for sponsoring the Boathouse location. Expenses included paper, linens, the breakfast and other speaker materials. He asked the committee to comment on whether they would pay \$25.00 to attend an event like this Abilities event, knowing that the event earned continuing education credits. The Committee agreed that breakfast was not the draw, it's the content and the credits that make it worth charging a \$25.00 fee. Lois Foreman, Bancroft asked how many credits are earned by the workshop. Kathleen said three credits and earned. Jim said that all SHRM events have an attendance fee for the dinner. Monica McClintock said she thought on the day of the workshop that an entrance fee could have been charged. Jim said that all events usually have a 10% no show rate. Denise Taguwa, DOL, said she volunteered at the registration table on the day of the event and there were a few walk-ins. Jeff said again that the idea is to simply cover expenses and it was fortunate that the speakers did not charge as in some past years. There have been some accommodation and travel costs in the past that were generously covered by the sponsorship. Lois said that the committee feels so indebted to attendees and struggles to maintain a robust list of contacts. She asked that the WDB follow up with attendees and she asked for the list of attendees to be shared with the committee. Kathleen said all attendees did receive a thank you email with presentation attachments. Lois questioned whether the event would lose attendance by charging. She felt the event was great and heard a lot of great feedback about the speakers. Hopefully the committee is developing a good reputation for the great information we are disseminating. Kathleen suggested pitching the event to the regional WDB Directors, show them what the committee is doing and the content of the workshop. There is money in each of the county's budget set aside for regional events. The Committee discussed past experiences with holding regional events. All agreed that location might deter attendance by the targeted population of the local area. Jim said the overall logistics to the event worked out great. Parking did not seem to be a problem either.

Jim asked the committee to comment more about the content, speakers and the format of the workshop. Frank felt the strength of the event was the speakers and it would be hard to top this year's program. All agreed the speakers were bright, full of great information and engaging. All agreed that the Alma Scott presentation about Unconscious Bias could have been one complete topic for a full event and the limited time frame made it feel a bit rushed. Frank felt the legal workshop should continue to be presented every year specifically because legal issues are always evolving and new information is valued by professionals in Human Resource Management. Physical access is changing and website accessibility for individuals with disabilities will keep evolving as well. Lois felt the information was a welcomed addition to the workshop. She suggested that future events include only three workshops. She felt that four topics pushed participant's attention span a little too much. Monica felt the speakers were a good draw and

being her first event she did not have any past comparisons. She said in comparison to hearing a lot of speakers over the years, they were all very good. She also said her only negative about the event was the noise level of the vendors in the back of the room during the workshops. Jim said the room is built in a way that carries voices even at a quiet level of conversation. He agreed that the exhibit area was distracting to the event. The Committee discussed suggestions raised and how to improve the event by limiting the workshops to three and closing the exhibit area during the workshops. There could also be a longer break and networking opportunity with less speakers. All agreed that the networking was appreciated and everyone seemed happy to meet other participants and say hello to fellow colleagues. Jeff cautioned that a longer break might cause some to leave the event after the break. The Committee agreed that anytime an event break is planned the risk is there that some person might leave early. Monica felt it would be a good idea to get feedback from the vendors. Lois said that there are not that many vendors and most of those attending tables were already known to attendees. There may have been two that might have benefited by more interaction with attendees. She said it might make more sense to find another room for the exhibit area. Kathleen suggested providing a vendor package with instructions about how the exhibit area would be conducted in advance of the event. We could also add a table of seating for the vendors away from the area. Frank said that participants could receive a gift bag with sponsor and vendor information and that could eliminate the need for an exhibit area. The Committee discussed timing of the breaks and more about the logistics of including an exhibit area. All agreed that Carl Donato, Wawa, did a great job of moderating the event and keeping things moving along. His take-aways or points learned about each topic helped to inspire participants to think about and appreciate the topics that were presented. The Committee also agreed that the interaction during the break and networking was an asset to the event. Jeff said the speakers were great and very engaging. Kathleen presented the committee with a photo collage of the event. The Committee commented favorably about the photos.

Jim thanked the Committee again for their input and suggested that everyone think about and research new topics for the coming year's event. He said it is not too early to begin planning and selecting engaging topics. Jim also suggested that some focus be placed on addressing Veteran concerns. There will always be a great need to work with individuals with disabilities but we can do more to address specific statistical data regarding specialized topics of concern such as post-traumatic stress disorders faced by not only veterans but others who have faced some type of trauma. Lois said that she is seeing more of the aging population so addressing topics regarding senior employment might be very important. She has a number of clients that have a disability and are aging and are also looking for employment. She also attended a similar type of event in Burlington County that included several success stories as well as an employer success story. They also included a sort of swag bag of materials from their committee. It was a good event but she felt that this committee's event was more impactful in terms of being educational.

Jim asked the committee to comment about how to best use the list of contacts collected have as a result of the event. He said we are building our participant list. He asked how to best use this list and show help or value for being a part of the efforts of the committee. It might be a newsletter or some type of continuing communication to keep them close so to speak. Lois suggested sending out a survey. It's hard to say how many people will respond because we know what surveys are like. She wondered if there was a way to ask participants if there was some topics they might be interested in hearing about or if they themselves would be interested in being a speaker. Jim suggested reaching out with a newsletter or some bit of useful information

either every other month or once per quarter. Jeff said he would like to invite one or two of those human resource professionals to serve on the Abilities committee. Lois said that could be a question included on the survey. Monica said she would help to put some questions together for a survey. It should follow up fairly quickly after the event. The Committee discussed ideas for a survey, workshop topics and or a newsletter and agreed that when the CEU credit hours certification letter comes in, it would be a good time to send it to participants with the survey. Jim also said he would contact the speakers to personally thank them and ask for their input about the event and what they might improve.

Jim thanked everyone again for their input and summarized the next steps of the committee. He said the participants of the event are now our customers so we will want to stay in touch with them by way of a regular email or newsletter. The Committee will work on a survey, research topics and set goals at the next meeting. He suggested that, due to the holidays, meetings will resume in January. He wished everyone a healthy happy holiday.

#### NEXT MEETING

The Abilities Committee is scheduled to meet on Tuesday, January 14, 2020 at 8:30am at the WDB office, 1111 Marlkrass Road, Suite 101, Cherry Hill, NJ 08003.

Submitted by

*Kathleen Varallo*

Administrative Assistant