

**WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD, INC.
OF
MAHONING AND COLUMBIANA COUNTIES**

Individuals with Disabilities Committee Meeting
April 26, 2023
9:00am
OhioMeansJobs Center Mahoning County

Committee Members Present: Shirley Bowald, Ed Emerick, Brian Eskridge, Dawn Haines for Joe Caruso, Susie Kooser, Melissa Maiorano, Meribeth Noble, and Julie Rupert
Committee Members Absent: Matthew Golladay, Brenda Heidinger, and Marcy Patton
Adjunct Members: Jack Hile, Carol Ramsay-Loomis, and Jennifer Strank
Board Staff: Mary Ann Kochalko and Sharlene Senediak
Guests: Cheryl Cook, Kitty Kromer, and Troy Rhoades

Mr. Eskridge, Committee Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:00am after verification of a quorum.

Approval of January 12, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Motion: To approve the January 12, 2023 meeting minutes as prepared.
Motion made by: Julie Rupert
Seconded by: Melissa Maiorano
Discussion: None
Motion approved.

Pathways to Careers – Improving Post-Secondary Education Options for Students with Developmental Disabilities

Shirley Bowald, from Columbiana County Board of Developmental Disabilities, and Kitty Kromer, from Columbiana County Educational Service Center, presented information about the Pathways to Careers grant award that was recently received. The purpose of the grant is to ensure people with disabilities have more opportunities to enroll in programs for industry-recognized credentials. These programs usually last eight to twelve weeks. The grant project also focuses on developing new apprenticeship programs.

The target population are current high school seniors in any Columbiana County school district, as well as students with disabilities who graduated in the last three years. The populations will also expand to Mahoning and Trumbull County school districts and graduates. The population can have a 504 plan, an IEP, and/or a developmental disability and have demonstrated interests, abilities, or talents in IT, advanced manufacturing, or other technical work.

After participants' interests, abilities, and talents are assessed, team members at the YSU Excellence Training Center will identify specific tasks that are associated with the industry-recognized credentials and apprenticeships. Participants will pursue the appropriate micro-certification/certification training offered at the YSU Excellence Training Center.

Primary focus for CCBDD and CCESC is recruitment of participants into the training programs. Some training is offered remotely. For training that is only offered on-site, a small stipend is available for transportation. The grant funds will be utilized for training; any supportive services will need to be funded through other means.

The Pathways to Careers grant project will result in trained individuals which can help address the workforce needs of employers in the area. OOD is hosting an open house on May 4th at 2:00 for In-Demand Jobs week, and Mark Lamoncha from Humtown Products will be speaking at the event. Humtown Products

partners with OOD and YSU's Excellence Training Center, and employer partnerships are expected to increase given the decline in the workforce, and the need to do more with less.

Grant Updates

Currently, there are 31 individuals being served under the Fresh Start grant. The goal is to serve 84 individuals, and Area 17 is on target to meet the goal. Many participants are being trained in healthcare, social work, truck driving, welding, medical assisting, and real estate. The grant can provide services to individuals who have been impacted by the opioid crisis or individuals who plan to enter a career field that is related to recovery.

Member Updates

OOD – OOD will be expanding many of its programs. A large increase in funding is expected from the State, which can lead to more funding from the federal level. Funding will be used to invest more in credentialing programs, such as YSU's Excellence Training Center, College to Careers, Ohio Transition Support Partnership, and high schools. More staff will be hired to serve an additional 6,000 participants statewide per year.

On April 19th, OOD hosted an in-person hiring event at the Youngstown office. This is the first in-person hiring event since before the pandemic. Giant Eagle, AVI, and Hollywood Gaming participated in the event. 16 interviews were held, and one individual was offered employment on the spot. Efforts will be made to collaborate more with the OMJ centers for future events.

Guest Invite Ideas

Suggestions for guest speakers can be emailed to Brian Eskridge.

Other Business

First Energy – First Energy has ended its Power Systems Institute (PSI) program and is reinstating its apprenticeship program. This change should encourage more people to enter the program by allowing individuals to learn and earn.

Workforce Needs – Given the workforce needs of Intel, discussion was held about encouraging high school students to consider related employment opportunities to meet the supply chain needs of the industry. Locally, efforts are being made to inform students about career pathways, and the available opportunities to fill the talent pipeline.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:25am.