



## NEMO WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

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### NEMO Workforce Development Board (WDB) Access Committee Meeting August 16, 2021

#### **Members Present**

Kara Berlin-Bates  
Janice Robinson  
Erin Dennis  
Stephanie Cooper

#### **Guests Present**

Polly Matteson  
Evan Keese  
Scott Evanski  
Lon Little

Mary Kay Merling  
Diana Murillo  
Sherri Henderson  
Hillary (P & P)

#### **Members Absent**

Mandy Rose  
Lisa Randolph  
Wendy Hays  
Lydia McClellan  
Joe Gildehaus  
Shyla Brauch

#### **WDB Staff**

Diane Simbro  
Sharon Hillard  
Wonda Hart

#### **CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

Chairperson Kara Berlin-Bates called the NEMO WDB Access Committee Meeting to order at approximately 10:00 am. The meeting was held at the Hannibal Job Center with a virtual option.

#### **ROLL CALL**

Four Committee Members participated and a quorum was established. Thirteen guests and three WDB staff also participated.

#### **APPROVAL OF AGENDA/MINUTES**

Janice Robinson moved to approve the August 16, 2021 Access Committee Meeting minutes. Erin Dennis seconded the motion and the motion was unanimously approved.

## **REVERSE JOB FAIR**

- **Reports from Committee Chairs & Discussion on Tentative Dates and Venues to Hold the Job Fairs**

Kara Berlin-Bates said she reserved the lobby of the Rolland Fine Arts Center at the Hannibal LaGrange University for Thursday, October 21 from 8:00 am to 2:00 pm for the Reverse Job Fair event. The space reserved includes two classrooms. The University will provide tables to put in the atrium and we can arrange those as needed. Her next task is to develop a flyer for the job seekers and employers. She hopes to complete this by the end of the month. As soon as everyone approves those, she will start circulating them so people can get the event on their calendars. Then she will start reaching out to find donations for water. At the last event, General Mills and Culligan provided donations. She asked anyone with suggestions of anything else we might need to contact her.

Erin Dennis said through her outreach to her staff in Kirksville she had learned that they would not have any candidates ready for the fall job fair. She felt they might have candidates ready by next spring. Diane talked about the low attendance at the recent job fair events and said there was no reason to hold the event if the job seekers were not ready to interview. She said if Erin could get six or so job seekers we may be able to locate more through the justice-involved population, etc. She asked Erin to contact her and Kara when she felt they might have candidates.

Janice Robinson said she felt like they had gotten off to a late start for the job fair planning. NECAC was very busy with their end of year responsibilities and she would not be able to hold a staff meeting to discuss the event until possibly September. At this time, they were just not prepared and she felt it would be better to hold the Reverse Job Fair event for the Moberly and Pike Lincoln areas in the spring as well.

Diane Simbro said there were uncertainties regarding COVID as well and we would have to follow whatever guidelines were in place at the time of the events. We would go forward with the Reverse Job Fair in the Hannibal area and hope to know more in the spring.

## **ROUNTABLE – SHARE WHAT IS GOING ON IN YOUR AGENCY**

Polly Matteson from the Regional Professional Development Center housed at Truman said she works primarily with middle school and high school students and area employers. She has been working a lot on a project called Career Pathways Shaping Missouri's Future. This is going to be a one-hour, monthly virtual session. The first session is going to be in October and will be about careers in agriculture. Professionals in different areas are scheduled to attend. She hopes the event will be engaging and that teachers and faculty will be able share this information with students. Different educational institutions will also be involved. She said Sydenstricker is involved and they will be showcasing their apprenticeship program. State Tech is going to be presenting on their turf management program. Anyone can watch the online event. Polly said she is in Zoom meetings constantly and she is a little worried about what is going to happen with COVID. She wants to get to the schools before they stop letting her in to speak with the counselors, STEM teachers, and deliver several bags of stuff for use in science classes, etc. Polly said if anyone's agency is in MO Buy, she has grant money available. The goal of the funds is to get teachers into businesses to learn more about what they really do so they can prepare their students for the different careers that are available. She would like some of the funding to go to our area.

Erin said they have been having conversations with BASF in Palmyra about their newly registered apprenticeship program. They have reached out to them because they are targeting some of those underserved populations like people with disabilities and women. They want to fill their inclusion quota. The program is for their production operator positions. They have approximately four or five positions they hope to fill. Wages begin at \$22.00 per hour and there are raises built into the program as required. The application does not open until September. If anybody on the call has access to a candidate pool that might be interested in this opportunity, she would be happy to share the information. She said Vocational Rehab would love to fill all of their positions but she did not know if they could.

Scott Evanoski said this has been a tough year for him. His dad passed away in January and as the personal representative for his father's estate, he has missed a lot of work due to these responsibilities. He said it has been hard to stay connected to groups like this. He really appreciates Diane continuing to forward the meeting invitations. Today he was able to get together with the Committee and he wants to continue to do that. He wants to increase the presence of the Kirksville office and their area in what the Committee is doing and extend those projects into the Kirksville area. He said they participated in the three job fairs held in Kirksville, Memphis and Milan and Diane is correct that attendance was very low. However, it was still helpful to get out and meet employers. They are trying to increase their relationship with the local Job Center. They are getting back into the schools and they are increasing their clients. They have had very low numbers of clients interested in employment and hope that will improve.

Janice said NECAC is trying to finish their Strategic Plan that is due to the State. Their staff in the counties are busy with back to school fairs and trying to schedule some poverty simulations. They have lots of utility assistance money and rent money available if anyone knows someone that is having difficulty in these areas. They will soon have a water program. They do not have all the regulations or guidelines yet but it will operate like their energy assistance program. They have been sending letters out to all the water vendors in the area and they are going to start talking more about the guidelines sometime this week. She said staff is out there doing what they do best and if anybody knows of anyone in need, they have funding available. They are also working on their EYE Employment Program. Their SkillUp program is a little slow but is picking up. They lost a couple of county staff and they are trying to fill those positions.

Stephanie Cooper said they have been discussing the impact of working families and access to childcare. As a result, they are piloting an affordable after school program starting next month. This will be in partnership with the Hannibal Public School District. It will be for kindergarten through age five. There is a parent engagement piece to the program. They will be opening up to 25 children, and will be accepting subsidy from parents that qualify on a very affordable sliding fee scale. The program will start around the end of September. It will be from 3:30 to 5:30 Monday through Friday. In June, they announced that Douglas had started a foundation and the first project out of their foundation is a scholarship. They are starting it in the Hannibal Public School District but a couple of other area school districts to discuss the scholarship has approached them. This particular scholarship is for non-traditional career path students who will not be choosing a 4-year career path. They will be awarding scholarships to students with disabilities and students that are going directly into the workforce. Therefore, if they are going into an apprenticeship, a certificate program, or a career tech school they will be eligible. Scholarships may also be provided to students with disabilities that are going into

enrichment type programs or are going to need extra assistance in finding good employment. Scholarships will be provided at mid-year graduation and again in the spring. They will be getting all of that information to the Hannibal Public School District. If you have students that fall into one of these areas, please encourage them to apply. In September, they will also be in the Hannibal Public School District for the semester teaching the Connections to Success curriculum for class credit. They will be working in the Alternative School where they have identified the most need. Connections to Success is a pilot project with the Hannibal Public School District and they are looking to continue the program with the possibility of them being certified as facilitators to teach the soft skills and employment skills training. Stephanie said they have their students selected for the Best Program and they will start that up in September. They were able to place one of their students who participated in the program and graduated High School in a temporary position over the summer until his new job started.

Mary Kay Merling, with the National Farmworkers Jobs Program for MO, said she covers the northern part of the State and she is located in Lexington, MO. She has been busy doing outreach to schools, farms, community colleges and she is beginning to enroll participants into the program.

Diana Murillo, with UMOS, said she is getting ready to do outreach at the end of the month so she will be heading down to Kennett. Dana said it was good to hear what everyone else is doing and to see how they might help out with anything.

Sherri Henderson said she has been busy with events. They had a Montgomery City event where three people attended and all three started working last Monday. They have also had a resource and a hiring event in Troy. They had 3 people at the resource event and 10 at the Hiring event. They are going to step back and evaluate their flyer and marketing efforts. Sherri said 2 of the 10 people that attended the Hiring Event had been promised positions. They are starting a monthly meeting for HR Professionals in Lincoln, Warren and Montgomery Counties and starting to work on a resource and hiring event for next April.

Diane said Hillary with the Children's Division who joined the meeting had to leave before she was able to speak to the group and talk about their services. A copy of the minutes would be sent to her so she could read what everyone else was doing.

Wonda Hart said she went to Bowling Green last Wednesday to distribute information to individuals attending Traffic Court. About 100 people were there and she gave out about 30 Pre-Apprenticeship Program flyers. Several of her cards were taken and she hoped to hear from individuals. She felt Traffic Court was a good opportunity for her to conduct outreach. Diane said Judge Berry is going to continue to do this in Pike County. He wants to make sure that all the people that are coming there are aware of all of the resources in the area. Janice said they had staff there as well.

Diane said she spoke with Carla Potts and NECAC is going to be getting more money than they anticipated for weatherization. Therefore, we are going to be earnestly promoting the Pre-Apprenticeship Program. She also spoke to LanDesign and they are good for right now but their business is really growing in Nashville. If anyone has anybody, he needs someone with CDL license and someone with experience in installing water lines. She said LanDesign has gone to a company out of California and has started hiring immigrants because they cannot find anybody that wants to do that type of work.

Kara said VR serves people who have diagnoses (mental, learning, medical, physical, etc.). If someone does not have a diagnosis and they feel they need assistance, they can connect them to resources to get that. She said it only takes about an hour to see if they can help. They partner with several agencies to braid their services and reach more individuals. Kara said she would love to be part of the resource distribution at Traffic Court if Judge Berry would allow them to participate. Diane said she would send Judge Berry's contact information to anyone who was interested in attending.

Stephanie said they are hosting the Youth Workforce Committee for Economic Development and will be having a meeting tomorrow from 1:00 to 2:00 by Zoom. They are going to be talking about youth workforce activities. If anyone is interested in participating, please contact her.

Sherri requested that someone distribute information regarding the JVS program information at the Traffic Court if she could get a flyer created. Diane said the WDB would be happy to do that for her.

Lon Little said not a lot of job seekers were showing up to the job fairs and hiring events but there has been success with those. Between the hiring event in Montgomery City and the one in Troy, three to four Veterans had been hired and probably five or six had been offered positions. Lon said we need some support in advertising the events. Diane said she continues to speak about the issue of the lack of funding for advertising at every opportunity.

#### **SET NEXT MEETING DATE/TIME**

It was decided that Diane would send out a "Save the Date" email for the next meeting sometime in November.

#### **ADJOURN**

The meeting adjourned at approximately 11:00 am.