

ABILITIES COMMITTEE MINUTES
THURSDAY, AUGUST 13, 2020, 10:00AM AT THE WDB OFFICE (ZOOM MEETING)

ATTENDANCE – ABILITIES COMMITTEE

MEMBERS		13-Feb-20	12-Mar-20	9-Apr-20	14-May-20	11-Jun-20	9-Jul-20	13-Aug-20
Maggioncalda, Jim CHAIR	TFG Management Services	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Abrams, Barbara	Jewish Family & Children Service of Southern NJ							
Cirii, Frank	Local Area Operations Director		X	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	X
Fugee, Antoinette	Center for Family Services	X						
Hale, Dawn	The Arc of Camden County			X	X	X		
Lucas, Angela	JEVS HireAbility	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	X
Mills, Jay	NJ Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired					X		
Smith, Veda	Camden County Independent Living Center	X		X				
Taguwa, Denise	LWD-WDB Coord + Support			X			X	
Veneziani, Jennifer	Program Planning and Development Specialist, DVRS							
Swartz, Jeffrey S.	WDB Executive Director	X	X	X	X	X		
Varallo Kathleen	WDB Administrative Assistant	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

WELCOME

Jim Maggioncalda, Abilities Chair, welcomed attendees to the Zoom meeting and thanked them for attending. He asked for a roll call of attendees.

Kathleen Varallo, Administrative Assistant, WDB, thanked the committee for their understanding of moving the meeting to a 10:00 start. She said the Operations Committee had to conduct a rather important meeting about the re-opening plan for the One-Stop. The One-Stop is still closed to public access but staff has been back to work since July. All systems are being upgraded to offer virtual services. The challenge now is to get the word out that One-Stop is able to serve customers. The One-Stop is not able to address Unemployment concerns. The state is directing all unemployment claims to the website and call centers. The Abilities Committee discussed concerns about unemployment, Covid response efforts and business closings.

EVENT UPDATES

Event: “Veterans and PTSD-Strategies for Workplace Inclusion”

Proposed date: Tuesday, October 27, 2019 – 8:00am-11:30am

Location: Camden County Boat House, Park Blvd, Pennsauken, NJ

Jim expressed his concerns about continuing to plan an in-person event. He said that it just does not seem possible to make the event happen this year. The State is still closed to indoor gatherings for the most part and no dates have been announced for a full re-opening. The numbers in New Jersey are getting better but he did not think it’s going to be probable to get a lot of people scheduled to come inside for this event given the current circumstances. Jim said he received an email from Carl Donato, Talent Acquisition Specialist, Wawa, and committee

member, expressing concerns about hosting the event and Jim is also in agreement that it would not do the subject matter justice to host it as a virtual event. The content is too important to shrink it down to a one hour program and it would be hard to keep audience attention for a three hour online conference. Jim asked for the input of the committee.

Angela Lucas, JEVS HireAbility, said her organization had an event scheduled in October at Camden County College. She was told the room will not be available because the public access building will not be open by that time. She asked if the Boathouse was allowing indoor events. Kathleen said she confirmed with the staff there that as long as the Governor was allowing indoor dining by October, the event could go on. There may be some social distancing protocols in place to ensure safety. Kathleen said her concerns were based on the fact that the climate of this year's presidential election, only a week away from the event, will be very volatile and may impact a successful event. Monica McClintock, Adjunct Professor, Rowan University, asked if there were any other ramifications to moving the event to another date or other commitments to be considered. Kathleen confirmed that no financial obligations have been made. Lois Forman, asked if there was a chance of hosting a one hour zoom meeting on another topic relevant to Disabilities Awareness month and use it as an opportunity to promote the PTSD event for the spring. She said Cooper University Healthcare is offering us a very robust program. Kathleen asked Angela about the event she mentioned having to plan and how the committee could turn their focus on helping her plan and promote it. Angela said the event in October is actually being organized by the Division of Vocation and Rehabilitation Services (DVRS). It is not her event. She will be responsible for planning a Disabilities Employment Awareness Month Event (DEAM) in June. This type of event recognizes achievements in job coaching, employer and success stories.

Lois suggested keeping the same date and planning a smaller event that would be in keeping with one of the committee's original intentions and that was to honor Steve Ravitz, Ravitz Family Markets, Shoprites. She said he could be honored and other abilities employees of Shoprite could be featured. The event would acknowledge Disabilities Awareness Month on a smaller scale. It may be a smaller target audience but at least the committee would be doing something.

The Committee discussed ideas about hosting a less aggressive one hour event and agreed to postpone the Cooper PTSD event until Spring 2021. Jim also noted that a big part of the event was the face to face networking. Jim agreed that the committee should still plan some type of email or social awareness program to promote persons with disabilities as a great source of talent. He suggested that April would be a good time to reschedule the PTSD event past the winter months. Jim also noted that HR professionals are also being stressed by the current state of emergency.

Jim suggested thoughts about a social media program and posting short segments on LinkedIn, Facebook and email. Lois said it's important to instill hope in the message. There are businesses that are out there hiring and doing well. She felt that even if the online program only drew 25 participants, it could be recorded and then we have acknowledged the awareness month. Jim asked Karen -----JCFS, to comment. She was encouraged that some of her clients are getting hired. There are positions at Shoprite and some clients received jobs. She said there was a new Costco opening in Cherry Hill and one of her clients was hired there. Lois suggested honoring these individuals as essential workers. They've gone from being a marginalized group to becoming essential workers in places like Walmart, Walgreens, Wawa, Hospitals etc. She suggested the committee pay tribute to these individuals working under unusual circumstances and engage the employers that support them to recognize them as well.

Jim asked Kathleen if she received the program agenda from Cooper. Kathleen said she did not receive it yet but also wanted to have the input from this meeting before pressing them. She got a kick back email from Jennifer Moughan, Cooper University Healthcare, that she was on vacation until August 17th. She will follow-up after then try to get the agenda they are planning. She said it will be good to have their plan well in advance of spring. Jim said that the WDB should bring our plan to Tim Galvin and to the Boathouse to get a date in April 2021. Angela said she would check about organizing a joint event. The Committee agreed to continue with the idea of honoring Steve Ravitz and contacting Shoprite about featuring some of their employees. Monica suggested that one of their managers could film a testimonial about an employee and then have the employee say a few words about what it's like to be an essential worker. The Committee discussed many touching stories about individuals who are now in frontline and essential positions. Kathleen said that she will follow up Ken Brahl, Shoprite and Carl Donato, Wawa. She also said she will need to have more guidance about running a better webinar in a Zoom format. She will want some technical advice. Lois said there may be software support through Zoom. She said a video would be nice to share and also a hook toward the Veterans & PTSD event.

Jim thanked the Committee for their input. The Committee also discussed some serious issues surrounding the working conditions and incidents of Covid in the workplace. He said all ideas should be formulated by the next meeting. There is not much time to pull an event together. Jim said the theme will be "Recognizing Essential Workers with Disabilities" and it will tie in with honoring Steve Ravitz.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

Jim asked the committee to give updates about the current statuses of their personal work or organizational developments, events or information.

Lois Forman reported that she is back to work for Jewish Family and Children Services. She is working on a project for them coordinating a virtual job bank. She and her group are in the process of building the platform. JFCS is always working to reach out to the needs of the community and obviously unemployment is a huge concern right now. The Job Bank will not be taking away from the State's platform. The focus is to make it hyper local and touch the communities we most frequently serve in Camden, Burlington and Gloucester Counties. She will be reaching out to local employers to have them post job opportunities on the website. The link will be available on the JFCS website and anyone can access it for potential job leads. She asked the committee to forward any known employer contacts to her. Her job will be to develop these contacts and direct them to post their jobs on the site. The Committee congratulated Lois on her new endeavor.

Karen reported JFCS is still in the process of helping clients get back to work. Some have re-started their jobs in the past month. She said we are helping them get acclimated to new safety protocols. She also said there are a handful of clients whose jobs do not exist anymore and we are looking for new job placements for them.

Monica McClintock, Adjunct Professor, Rowan University, reported Rowan College of Business will not be bringing back any Adjunct Professors this semester. They have since developed a new class for freshman students. It is an introduction to how to be successful in business school. It's a brand new class she has been asked to lead the instruction. All classes at Rowan will be taught online so she is adapting to that new technology format. She is happy to be teaching even with the new challenges. She also announced that TRI-State will be getting together for their annual retreat and planning meeting which of course will be online.

Angela Lucas, JevsHireAbility reported her staff is still working from home and the college is still closed to public access so things are very slow. She will get back to the committee about combining events.

Jim thanked the committee for attending and asked Kathleen to contact the team at Cooper and the Boathouse to schedule a new date in April for the event.

NEXT MEETING

The next Abilities Committee meeting is scheduled on Thursday, September 10, 2020 at 8:30am at the WDB office, 1111 Marlkress Road, Suite 101, Cherry Hill, NJ 08003. This meeting will be conducted as a Zoom meeting. A notice will be sent out with a link and sign on information.

Submitted by

Kathleen Varallo

Administrative Assistant