



**Camden County
Workforce Development Board**
Supporting the Development and Retention of a World Class Workforce

Gregg T. DeBaere, Chair
Jeffrey S. Swartz, Executive Director

**ABILITIES & LITERACY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 12, 2016**

ATTENDANCE – ABILITIES COMMITTEE

MEMBERS		Meeting Dates							
		3-Mar	5-Apr	10-May	7-Jun	12-Jul	2-Aug	12-Sep	
Brahl, Ken CHAIR	Ravitz Family Shoprites	X	X	X	X	X		X	
Abrams, Barbara	Jewish Family & Children Service of Southern NJ	X		X	X			X	
Beach, Patti	Camden County One-Stop	X	X					X	
Cleveland, Jennifer	Burlington County Title II Consortium								
Dann, Carol	Camden County College		X	X			X		
Hicks, Rosemari	RHC Consulting								
Kalitan, Marlyn	Kalitan Consulting	X	X	X	X		X		
Knopf, Dick	Marketing Professional Services	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Weir, Barbara	Burlington County WIB								
Young, Jennifer	Verizon		X						
Swartz, Jeffrey S., Exec. Director	WDB	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Stubblefield, Lelia	WDB	X	X	X	X				
Varallo, Kathleen	WDB				X	X	X	X	
Williams, Leslie J	WDB							X	
Regina Pryor	LWD-Div. of Workforce Operations and Business Services					X		X	
Naroden, Eric	WDB Intern	X			X		X	X	

WELCOME

Literacy Chair, Ken Brahl called the meeting to order, welcomed attendees and asked for roundtable introductions. Jeffrey S. Swartz, WDB Executive Director, reviewed some follow-up history of the committee’s efforts leading up to the planning of the upcoming “Dispelling the Myths” event. He spoke of about the Camden County Workforce Development Board’s sponsorship of the Schedule-A event, held each year in December and an employer event that was held May 22, 2015. The guest speaker of that event was Thorkil Sonne, Founder and Board Chairman of the Specialist People Foundation. This nationally recognized speaker and made a presentation promoting the hiring of persons with Autism. That event was so well received by employers and individuals, in attendance that the committee decided to continue and dedicate an annual event to this kind of awareness.

Abilities Chair, Jim Maggio reminded the committee that the purpose of the “Dispelling the Myths” event was to promote the hiring of persons in broader spectrums of disability, not just Autism. Bringing hiring successes to the attention of Camden County’s employers can open up job opportunities for these very talented, dedicated and trainable individuals. Jim reviewed the program draft.

DISPELLING THE MYTHS: GENERAL PROGRAM UPDATE:

Program Draft: “DISPELLING THE MYTHS -THE NEW BUSINESS MODEL”

Location: Jewish Federation Annex Building, 1721 Springdale Road Cherry Hill, NJ 08003.

Date/Time: Friday, October 21, 2016, 8:30am-11:00am

8:30am – 9:00am Registration, Continental Breakfast & Exhibit Area Open.
Soups & Sweets Culinary Training Program

Welcome & Introductions	Jim Maggio
Introduction Guest Speaker	Dick Knopf
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peg Monaghan, SAP 	
Panel Introductions & Discussion	Jim Maggio & Ken Brahl
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Panel Discussion 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Peg Monaghan, SAP</i> 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Dawn Blair, Walgreens</i> 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Jacquelyn Bader, Becker’s School Supplies</i> 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Jocelyn Weyrauch, TD Bank</i> 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Jeff Deitz, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services</i> 	
Questions & Answers	Jim Maggio
Hire One History Presentation	Ken Brahl
Success Story	TBD
Closing Remarks, Sponsor and Exhibit Area Recognition	Jeffrey S. Swartz

Dan Rhotan asked if inviting staff members with autism to attend and be available for interview and questions might enhance the event. Barbara Abrams asked if the Bancroft co-sponsorship was confirmed. Jeff confirmed that he spoke with Bancroft and received the confirmation letter. Jeff reported having submitted an event proposal to TD Bank. He said their decision process includes a review committee and could take six to eight weeks. He included the Schedule-A event and a May 2017 Hire-One event in the application.

Regina Pryor asked if there was a charge for employers to have an exhibit table at the event. The committee agreed that there should be no charge for exhibit or informational tables. The intended audience is Human Recourse Managers and Employers. Jim Maggio suggested that promoting the event to employers is key to the success of the event.

He directed the committee toward discussing ways they are promoting the event to employers. Lois Forman said she is reaching out to business contacts and has assigned Karen Reynolds, a volunteer from Bancroft, to work at the WDB offices and update a Camden County business list with current contact information. Kathleen Varallo, said she is working on a draft press release and will send it to Judi London, Bancroft for final approval then send it out the committee along with the flyer. Jeff said that Judi London and the marketing department at Bancroft will be very helpful in promoting the event.

PANELIST & PROGRAM UPDATE

The committee discussed updates to the general format and layout of the event. Ken Brahl led the discussion about the timing of the event or how much time to allow for introductions, main speaker presentation and the panel discussion. Welcomes 5 minutes, main speaker 20-25 minutes. Panelists will have 5-7 minutes each to present their best hiring practices. Questions and answers should take 20 minutes. The committee agreed that having some prepared questions would encourage others to ask and fill this time period in the program. Ken suggested having index cards available at the event for guests to write their questions for the panel. The Ken said the "Hire-One" presentation should take about 5minutes.

SUCCESS STORY UPDATE

Kathleen reported having spoken the guest speaker Peg Monaghan about bringing a staff person to the event that might speak about his or her training and work placement experience or success. Peg Monaghan will ask the person now in charge of the Autism At Work program at SAP to permit a staff member to accompany her to the event.

Barbara Abrams has booked a person to set up and maintain the audio and visual needs of the event. The committee agreed that hand held or cordless mics should be included.

The committee discussed gift bags or offering attendees a bag for collecting information from each of the employer information tables.

Ken gave new committee members a brief overview about the decision of the Abilities committee' goal to promote the idea that if each employer would consider hiring just one veteran, an individual with a disability or someone previously incarcerated who is qualified and ready to work how it could improve workforce development. He said that hiring a person in these spectrums might present an initial challenge for the employer. Hire-One recognizes employers in the county, who hire these individuals, are part of the solution. Ken will be making a brief presentation at the event about the history and goals of the Hire-One program.

Kathleen sent an email to each of the panelists asking for a brief description of their company or their position to be written into the event program guide, audio visual needs and to offer them the opportunity to reserve an informational/exhibit table.

The committee discussed table and chair needs. Kathleen and Leslie will be visiting the Federation building to confirm the setup of the event. There may be a need to rent some chairs and tables.

The committee discussed registration. All agreed that registration should be preferred, not required. The goal of the event is to get employers to attend. While training providers and students would be welcome, the event is meant to educate human resource managers and employers.

Dick Knopf organized a call from Peg Monaghan to the meeting. Leslie set up the office computer to dial into the internet so that Peg could show her proposed event presentation to the committee. Peg Monaghan has worked at SAP, a worldwide technology company, for the 10 years. This year her primary function is around high schools and colleges to create a pipeline for potential or future employees in the Autism spectrum. She educates these school and colleges on how they can prepare their autistic students for work at SAP. Peg began her presentation with a brief overview her position and the discovery by her company that a large population of Autistic individuals have an interest and unique skill set in the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math. (STEM) SAP started an "Autism At Work" program in 2013 with the goal on training and hiring 650 individuals to their company locations around the world. Currently SAP employs about 100 people. She noted that the cost is 250 billion dollars per year to support people on the Autism spectrum and that SAP has learned that 85% of these people are unemployed. Their abilities are 65% higher, yet most are unemployed or underemployed. SAP operated in the San Francisco Bay area. There are about 50,000 STEM positions that need to be filled. These positions could be filled with high functioning Autistic individuals with an interest in the STEM field. The vision of SAP is to make the world better while they improve people's lives. We know that people who think differently add to our innovative team, the team begins to think differently and in more innovative ways. SAP is tapping into this underutilized source of talent. High recognition, attention to detail and loyalty are just some of the qualities these individuals possess. SAP is seeing a 90% retention rate with these hires. The support circle of employees who serve as mentors or buddies to the autistic employees will say that this interaction has not only made their team better it has also made them more dedicated. Some employees say the Autism at Work program is the reason why they chose to work at SAP and want to know how they can be a part of the program. Peg said that SAP is happy and willing to share their experiences with the hope that they can encourage and educate employers about these brilliant individuals.

The committee discussed questions and the importance of the "Dispelling the Myths" event and were encouraged by hearing a sampling of Peg's presentation. Peg said she will ask her supervisor about bringing a staff member and will promote the event to her contacts as well.

Meeting Adjourned at 10:26am.

NEXT MEETING

The Literacy Committee will meet Tuesday, October 4th 8:30am and the Abilities Committee will meet Tuesday, October 11th at 9:00am.

Submitted by

Kathleen Varallo

Administrative Assistant