



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

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

LITERACY COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES
AUGUST, 02 2016

ATTENDANCE

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		
Abrams, Barbara	Jewish Family & Children Service of Southern NJ	X		X	X			
Beach, Patti	Camden County One-Stop	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	
Weir, Barbara	Burlington County WIB							
Young, Jennifer	Verizon		X					
Swartz, Jeffrey S., Exec. Director	WDB	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Stubblefield, Lelia	WDB	X	X	X	X			
Varallo, Kathleen	WDB				X	X	X	
Williams, Leslie J	WDB							
Regina Pryor	LWD-Div. of Workforce Operations and Business Services					X		
Naroden, Eric	WDB Intern	X			X		X	

WELCOME

Jeffrey S. Swartz called the meeting to order, welcomed attendees, asked for roundtable introductions and welcomed back Eric Naroden, a Master’s Candidate Intern at Rutgers, Camden who has been assisting the Literacy Committee in drafting a Camden County Literacy Needs Assessment. (LNA).

- **HIRE-ONE AND DISPELLING THE MYTHS: HIRING PERSONS WITH AUTISM EVENT**
Jeff announced a commitment from Bancroft to become a sponsor of the Dispelling the Myths event on October 21, 2016. He also reported on the progress of a sponsorship application submitted to TD Bank. The application was submitted online and includes the following events;

Event Title: “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

The Camden County Workforce Development Board and the One-Stop Career Center actively encourage, support and reinforce the coordination and leveraging of resources through public and private partnerships as a means to maximize employment opportunities and services for individuals with disabilities.

The Camden County Workforce Development Board's Abilities Committee and Literacy Committee is hosting an event for employers, in Camden County and surrounding region, to increase awareness about the benefits of hiring persons with disabilities. The title of the event is "*Dispelling the Myths-The New Business Model*". Our goal is to bring together employers, who are able to provide work sites for persons with disabilities and other partnering agencies who conduct training programs that prepare these individuals to be productive members of the workforce.

Event Title: SCHEDULE A HIRING EVENT

Location: Camden County One-Stop Career Center, 2600 Mt Ephraim Ave. Camden NJ 08104

Date/Time: Wednesday, December 14, 2016, 10:00am-4:00pm

The "Schedule A" event is open to people with disabilities and disabled veterans with a 30 percent or more service-connected disability. Schedule A refers to a hiring authority for federally-funded agencies that allows individuals with disabilities to obtain competitive status in civil service. This targeted hiring event is unique in that registrants are pre-screened and matched with positions based on their skills. Workshops are held in advance to prepare individuals for their interview.

Many of the employers participating in this targeted hiring event are government contractors who are required by law to include individuals with disabilities in their workforces. Approximately 25 employers come to the event ready to fill more than 60 positions such as border patrol agents, banking specialists, and sales manager trainees. The CCWDB and New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS) host the Schedule A event each year in December.

Event Title: HIRE ONE EMPLOYER BREAKFAST

May 2017 Date/Time/Location to Be Determined

The Camden County Workforce Development Board, has established a program for businesses called **HIRE ONE**. The focus of this initiative is to help businesses connect with an often untapped resource in our County.

Each Year, The Camden County Workforce Development Board Abilities and Literacy Committees host an Employer Breakfast to educate area business representatives about the incentives for employers who participate in the HIRE ONE Program. Employers are entitled to special incentives as well as state and federal resources. This pool of candidates includes veterans, individuals with disabilities and those who have been previously incarcerated.

- **LITERACY NEEDS ASSESSMENT UPDATE (LNA)**

Eric presented his latest draft of the LNA to the Committee. Carol Dann, Coordinator of the Adult Basic Ed at Camden County College received a copy of the draft and complimented Eric for his work on the LNA. The committee agreed on the overall layout and information contained in this latest draft. Dick Knopf suggested that an Executive Summary be inserted in the opening pages of the LNA.

Eric said he re-drafted the LNA related Definition of Literacy based on suggestions by the committee at the last meeting as follows;

In order to analyze literacy concerns within Camden County this assessment must define the concept of literacy. It was surprisingly challenging to define the concept in a way that was not too simplistic or complex. Webster's Dictionary defines literacy as *the ability to read and write or knowledge that relates to a specified subject*. Neither of these definitions fully addresses the needs of businesses and how they hire and retain employees. For the purpose of this assessment, literacy will be defined as: The baseline math and reading skill set necessary to perform usual duties for entry-level employment. Usual duties are considered basic tasks that are regularly performed as part of an employee's job description upon being hired.

Eric identified the Camden County communities at risk and the 4 key indicators. The indicators serve as insight into potential risk factors of communities struggling with Literacy, current employment and future employment. The four indicators were; 1. Graduation rates. 2. Percentages of households that speak languages other than English at home. 3. Household poverty rates. 4. Percentages of residents without a high school diploma or GED. He said that while individually these indicators do not offer much information, combined they speak to the literacy needs of the community.

Eric also created an index and each indicator is further separated into sub categories of “concerning” and “very concerning” He added a point system to measure the indicators. This point system would score the indicators to push them into one category or another. The final score in each community, studied in the LNA, would be the combined score of all indicators.

Jeff was impressed by the national average being the benchmark by which each of the local communities could be measured. Eric said he tried to point to a state or national average with each indicator.

The committee discussed some of the languages spoken in households, other than English, referenced in the LNA. They agreed it would be difficult to name any specific languages in the LNA such as Spanish, Asian, Korean, and others. The committee reviewed other elements in the LNA and made recommendations or modifications.

The committee discussed the value of awareness to issues of literacy in each of the Camden County communities studied in the LNA. The data could be presented to elected officials. It would also create additional opportunities for the Camden County One-Stop to help in terms of outreach programs and services they now offer. The information contained in the LNA could help determine where satellite offices could be set up to provide literacy training institutes or facilities. Libraries and Colleges could be included as well.

Carol suggested including WIOA mandates concerning Literacy by adding a “Goals Section” to the LNA. She would like the LNA to focus on the positive points of literacy needs rather than pointing to literacy needs as a problem. Literacy is the foundation of employment. The LNA must communicate

that literacy needs present some barriers to gainful sustainable employment. The committee discussed ways to express literacy needs with a positive tone in the executive summary.

Carol also suggested making more references to other experts in the field of literacy or national studies i.e “According to national (name) literature review.”

Carol suggested that where there are stars indicating literacy training sites, on the maps contained in the LNA, those could be further defined to show which of these sites are funded by WIOA.

The committee also reviewed the general terminology of the LNA and agreed to more changes that would enhance its understandability and comprehension.

Eric agreed to meet with Jeff at the WDB office to define the executive summary and other points in the LNA.

- **OPEN DISCUSSION**

Marlyn Kalitan asked about job postings. She would like to receive e-mails about any job postings from the One-Stop. Jeff said he would forward her information to Trish McGowen patricia.mcgowen@dol.nj.gov who is in charge of posting jobs and recruitments.

NEXT MEETING

The next Literacy Committee meeting is scheduled for Monday, September 12, 2016, 8:30am at the CCWDB office. This will be a joint meeting with the Abilities Committee.

Submitted by,

Kathleen Varallo

Administrative Assistant

Camden County Workforce Development Board