

Minutes of MOU Core Partner Meeting of January 17, 2020

Attendance sheet available upon request.

Audio recording available.

Meeting called to order at 10:37 by D. Ramos

Jim Oliveira opened the meeting, noting that this was the 21st meeting of this group and proceeded with introductions and general updates from each member of the meeting.

Agenda item: Career Pathways Working Group report

J. Daniels presented the group the findings of the Career Pathways working in regard to the health care industry.

The group began with looking CNA as a starting point for examining the typical lateral career path moving from CAN to LPN and then RN. The group identified that many of the career center customers were the hardest to serve, and their educational needs did not fit with the traditional health care ladder. The group then started looking at other types of jobs in health care to expand on the pathway. These options included health care jobs in therapeutic services, diagnostic services, health informatics, support services, biotechnology, research, and development and more. The group determined that rather than a lateral pathway there was potential for a career in healthcare with “stackable” licenses and certificates to expand the person’s options and move up the path in a more diagonal manner.

In the process the group found that some MOU Partners are already working on securing slots for CNA training through LifeStream. YouthBuild is working on securing 10 slots; BCC was looking at securing 10 slots and the Career Center 20 slots. They also found that South Coast Health has an in-house CNA training for their employees. There also is an online program “Digital Integration of Lifelong Learning” from CommCorp being developed for CNAs to obtain training as Community Health/Behavioral Case Works.

Next the group wants to look into manufacturing, then marine industry and finally clean energy and wind, in particular offshore.

Following the presentation a brief discussion ensued regarding the needs of the customer, how to better serve them, and a key component of providing hope to them.

Agenda item: Summer and Year-Round Program & the Connecting Activities Program

Donna Ramos introduced the youth programs. Donna noted that youth programs have developed into something that we’ve never seen before. Across the board in all industries employers are struggling to fill positions; it is becoming critical and youth is the future workforce. The state is looking into our youth programs to make them into real jobs using career pathways rather than just make-work programs. Donna felt it was important to bring it up at this meeting ask the group to spread the word about the importance of youth programs.

James Daniels elaborated on the programs and that they provided real training and experience to develop real skills. He noted the program application were going to be available electronically on February 3 with about 400 – 450 applicants expected.

Jim Oliveira noted the state planned dovetailed into the marine industry initiative for youth for the Port New Bedford. Jim stated that the plans were coming together with the city, marine employers, educators, and other stakeholders. He noted VocTech was in the final stages of approval for their marine vocational technical institute which means they could grant an associate's degree where we could get some of the customers started. They are also working developing programs for the manufacturing sector.

Jim Oliveira welcomed Jane Reis who recently joined Job Corps, our MOU partner, and invited Jane to describe some of the career tracks Job Corps offers. Jane noted their newest program was welding and they also offer CNA, certified medical assistant, carpentry and cement masonry. Programs offered are diverse and depend on the availability, the person's interest. They offer LPN programs that are run in Puerto Rico, San Diego and down south. They also have culinary arts program. There is an educational requirement were person has to be at 12th grade level in reading and math and would or they are placed in a program for the area that needs improvement. Candidates relocate to the program, and are place in dormitory style living on a zero tolerance campus. Persons who already have a high school diploma and military veteran are eligible for Job Corps training.

Jim Oliveira then invited Lisa Mello-Frost from YouthBuild to update the group on their programs. Lisa noted their programs run the gamut depending on a person's need. Most people go to work with a small portion going on to secondary education. The main focus is for workforce development in construction and now a CNA program. They are heavily focused on career readiness and offer a 5 week paid internship that flows into permanent placements.

Next James asked Mitch Zahn, from Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission, what has been going on in regard to youth. Mitch noted they offer a robust program for youths age 14 to 22 called Pre Employment Transition Services. It is run by vendors. In the New Bedford area they primarily work with MoLife, Community Connections, and area schools. Schools make referrals directly to the vendor and they do individualized programing based on their interests including counseling on college education. They also offer job placement and development counseling and services.

James asked Nelson Abreu about DTA internship development. Nelson stated so far the requests are only from the career center and the WDB. He has referred these to their coordinator for processing. Nelson noted he had a program they had run with the Taunton career center that was very successful and he would like to try and replicate it in New Bedford.

Other Business:

The transportation working group was not discussed because the working group had not met. Nelson Abreu did look into program from Lyft and Uber offered 3 free rides for job interviews, unfortunately the New Bedford area was not included. James Oliveira noted that they met with the CC operator and found that they could issue an Uber card for point to point service and they are about to pilot the program with one person.

Beth Costa reminded the group about the January 28th Women in the Trades event.

Next meeting:

Friday, March 13, 2020 10:30 – 12:00 MassHire NB Career Center 618 Acushnet Ave NB

Adjourned at 11:42 am