

Workforce Development Board

Abilities Committee Minutes

Wednesday, June 14, 2023

Attendance: via ZOOM

Attendees:

Jennifer Veneziani – Div. Voc. Rehab Services	Katie Donnelon – Dept Human
Lindsey Aquino – Div. Voc. Rehab Services	Services/Commission for the Blind & Visually
Joe Zesski – Resources for Independent Living	Impaired
Pat Gerke – Rowan College at Burlington Co.	Lauren Goldner -Occupational Training Ctr.
Donna Vasquez – RCBC	Mariya Burnell – TD Bank
Kinder Kaur – America Works	Kelly West – WDB
	Barbara Weir – WDB

Call to Order: 9:34AM – Jennifer Veneziani, Chair

Jennifer kicked off the meeting with introductions - meet and greet style

I. Discussion Goals/Objectives of the Committee

Jennifer announced the Abilities Committee is a restructuring of the previous Disabilities Committee that is much needed in the County. Under the guidance of the Workforce Development Board, we will deal specifically with issues that are surrounding individuals with disabilities, whether its access to services, resources, or connection to employment and other opportunities.

Committee members will partner to share information, expertise, and assist with operational or other issues related to the provision of services to individuals with disabilities.

Committee members will ensure that all services, including those at the comprehensive American Job Center (One-Stop Career Center), and external training sites, are accessible to persons with disabilities and that outreach efforts effectively reach this population.

II. Events

- **Resource Fair**

DVRS has a Pre-Employment Transition Services Coordinator, Mauresha Spencer, who assists with resources for customers. The committee will host a Resource Fair, much like the Youth Job Fair, to provide the community with valuable and necessary resources they may not be aware they have access to; whether it be supportive employment, community college information, social services, mental health, etc.

- **NDEAM 2023: Advancing Access and Equity**
The former Committee spearheaded this event and will continue to do so. Usually held in October. We need to select a date, select recipients both employer and individual, and gather volunteers for the day of the event.
- **Professional Development**
The goal for Professional Development is to bring awareness to other agencies of what DVRS has to offer. The Committee will support the development of appropriate training for staff.

III. Around the Room

- Project SEARCH is a dedicated program focused on providing education and training to young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. TD Bank is the host site for DVRS and their partnership with the Lenape Regional School District. Tomorrow, June 15th Project SEARCH will hold their graduation celebration where 6 students will graduate from the program.
- RCBC has a newly formed Adult Center for Transition (ACT) for high school graduates between 21-24 with Developmental Disabilities. RCBC's ACT program is a post-secondary program that aids and identifies career pathways and employment resources. The Adult Center for Transition (ACT) program students will receive education and employment preparedness, self-advocacy training, and have access to community resources. ACT students will concentrate on the enhancement of financial literacy, work-place readiness, personal growth and development, computer literacy and activities of daily living. Utilizing person-centered planning, career interest inventories, resume writing and interview skills, job shadowing along with supported employment, students will be better able to define their career goals. A cohort of 15 per semester is classroom based with a sense of first year college experience. Students will also learn how to read a syllabus and manage their college experience.
- America Works is looking for job coaches for the customers they are currently working with. Jennifer will connect with Kinder to discuss how to assist.

Meeting Adjourned: 10:04 AM

Next Meeting: September 13, 2023, via Zoom