

Quarterly One-Stop Partner Meeting

Minutes

March 19, 2024

1:30 – 3:00 PM

| Agenda Item | Notes | Next Steps |
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| <p>1. Welcome / Introductions, Review of the Agenda: Please be prepared to share a workforce development highlight!</p> | <p>Amy Geren (Catherine Cutler Institute/CCWI) reported that the One-Stop Center recertification process is nearly final, and the virtual career center is being developed (more to come later in the meeting).</p> <p>Cait Grant (Dean of Economic & Workforce Development, YCCC) said that a celebration had just been held the previous night for dental-assistant students as they wrapped up their program, with friends, families, and prospective employers in attendance. Hiring out of the program has been great. It begins anew next week, and it's overfilled with a waitlist.</p> <p>Libby Stone-Sterling (Director, Bureau of Rehabilitation Services, MDOL) reported that great work is being done using the Pathways to Partnership grant, which is a collaborative effort with the Department of Education and Alpha One, Maine's Center for Independent Living. The aim is to create a seamless system for transition-age youth, and lots of partners are involved.</p> <p>Samantha Fenderson (Acting Director, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, MDOL) reported the division's excitement about an influx of new staff. They are engaged in new-counselor training using a six-week course of nearly full-time training involving many partners, including those at the One-Stop centers. Also, they're moving to more in-person career exploration workshops, rather than the remote workshops that they've been doing since COVID. They're starting to receive requests for in-person workshops, so they're realigning to meet those needs. It should increase foot traffic to the career centers.</p> <p>Elissa Rowe (Director, Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired, Bureau of Rehabilitative Services, MDOL) reported that they are looking at the array of comprehensive, lifelong services they provide, to make sure that everything they're doing is supporting folks so that they can reach their goals. Rowe said they will be looking at employment rates for blind and visually impaired folks nationally and in Maine and trying to grow that and be a model.</p> | |

Dawn Croteau (ASPIRE Program Manager, Office for Family Independence) reported that enrollment in Parents of Scholars has tripled over the last year. Tuition reimbursement has increased, and books, occupational tools, computers, and Internet service are being supplied – they’re doing what they can to make achieving education possible.

Michael Quinney (Outreach and Admissions Manager, Penobscot Jobs Corps Center) reported that they are getting ready to host the Navy for a job fair at the center. Students are expected to come from all over the Northeast (other Job Corps are joining). Eleven companies will be on campus. Also, they will be holding a May 8 open house (please reach out to Michael if you’d like to attend).

Dave Wurm (Goodwill Northern New England) reported that, although, in general, Goodwill’s projects have done well with enrollments reaching their target populations in the last five or six years, reaching youth has been a challenge. But, because of good staffing, staff doing good work, great referrals, and community partners, they’re going to hit a high point for youth enrollment this year, probably reaching full capacity for youth program.

Stephanie Haskins (Director of Adult Education for Gray, New Gloucester [Hub 8]) reported that they have just passed 113 medical assistants certified through their program. The program, which is in various locations, has many partners, including Northern Light Health in the northern part of the state, CMMC, St. Mary’s, Maine Med, Martin’s Point, the New England Cancer Center, and Mercy Hospital. It’s fantastic!

David Watts (Director, Central Lincoln County Adult Education [Hub 7]) reported that they’re ramping up to help the kids who are now trying to finish their high school educations. Also ramping up: A new 80-hour hands-on culinary program that is to begin in May. The first one will be based in Knox County at the Mid-Coast School of Technology (that’s fabulous). Also - Eye on the Mid-Coast is starting, a program to empower youth employment (aka Adulting 101). It targets 16- to 24-year-olds, and will teach them digital and financial literacy, interviewing and resume-building skills, and will provide a stipend for completing deliverables. They just finished an online training for multi-lingual learner volunteers – it’s available for anyone who wants to complete it to be a volunteer tutor for multilingual learners. They have a hybrid CNA program that’s being run out of Damariscotta in partnership with Maine Health, working with mid-coast hospitals.

Teyonda Hall (Director of Resident Services, Portland Housing Authority, HUD) reported that they are planning two half-day mini job fairs, tentatively scheduled for April 9 and April 11 in two different locations, to connect employers who are known to have open positions or who do a lot of work connecting folks to employers. Also, they are using new communication strategies with residents, including publishing job openings in their newsletters for particular sectors in which residents have expressed interest.

Nate Snow (Program Director, LearningWorks, YouthBuild) reported that they just enrolled another cohort of 11 youth, keeping on track to reach fiscal-year goal of 30. They are working with earlier students on placements – certainly a lot of successful outcomes. Also, they have been granted a building permit for new space on Riverside Street in Portland and hope to be moving in within the next six weeks to two months.

Rob Klaiber (Maine Career Centers for Greater Portland and Springvale, MDOL) reported that the hiring events being held at the Greater Portland Career Center and job fairs at the Springvale Adult Ed partnership site have been doing very well. The Portland events are seeing over 150 and up to 220 job seekers. The Springvale-Sanford job fairs, which are happening more frequently on a smaller scale, are helping many job-seekers. (Rob offered to help Teyonda get their events published on the Career Center hiring events page.)
Rob to everyone (chat): We are happy to help any agency who holds job fairs throughout the state.

Allie Novicki (Program Coordinator, Maine Senior Community Service Employment Program) reported that, in collaboration with the national SCSEP program and Associates For Training & Development (A4TD) they have completed the 2024 to 2027 SCSEP plan for the state of Maine. They are now collecting public comments. An online session will be held Thursday, March 21, 9-10:30 a.m. All comments welcome.

Allie to everyone (chat): SCSEP in Maine State Plan Public Comments
<https://events.gcc.teams.microsoft.com/event/2e9a31d6-3d21-4ac1-b699-811918a38de3@413fa8ab-207d-4b62-9bcd-ea1a8f2f864e>

Marshall Archer (FEDCAP Inc. - program provider for ASPIRE) reported that, halfway through the federal fiscal year, they're already at 1,043 placements, as compared to 1,400 for all of 2023; on target to surpass last year's placements, about 50% higher now (2023 was an increase of about 33% over 2022). Also, their team will be growing, nearly tripling in size, so the hope is to get back up to pre-COVID numbers, around 3,000 placements a year.

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| | <p>Amy said that, if anyone needs help connecting with anyone else, to please reach out to her and she can share contact information; email contacts are in the calendar invite as well.</p> | |
| <p>2. Approval of December Meeting Minutes</p> | <p>Amy pointed out that low attendance at the December quarterly meeting was in part due to weather conditions and State of Maine offices were closed. No edits to the minutes were suggested.</p> | |
| <p>3. Virtual American Job Center</p> | <p>Development Process:</p> <p>Amy noted that the Virtual American Job Center is funded by a \$380,000 national dislocated worker grant. It's a partnership between the Maine Department of Labor and three workforce boards and their service providers. The charge is to research, develop and deploy a virtual American job center. Its purpose is to increase One-Stop system access statewide.</p> <p>An RFP was issued for a consultant to develop the platform. One was chosen, Portland Webworks, and they're in the development stage now. They've held focus groups with all three of the workforce boards, and state and other partners. They met with potential users and got some good information about who they're going to be serving with the platform.</p> <p>Amy reported that the team meets regularly - a couple of times a week. One is an executive steering committee meeting, and the other is a review meeting where they review drafts and look at persona research to give the developers an idea of what they need to develop and who they're going to be serving with the platform.</p> <p>The formal name of the platform will be "Worksource Maine Virtual CareerCenter." The URL is going to be myworksourcemaine.gov., which is a complement to a new myworksourcemaine Department of Labor resource, more of a static resource for employment in the state. The same developer is working on that, as well. But though that will create some synergies, the two sites are very different. The Virtual CareerCenter is a lot more interactive.</p> <p>One-Stop Partner Survey:</p> <p>Amy said she sent a survey out the day prior to get feedback from some of the One-Stop partners outside of those immediate partners. (The Maine Department of Labor and the workforce boards and service providers have been at the table all along working on this.)</p> | |

She may reach out to those who have not responded (she conferred with Teyonda, who urged Amy to send her the survey so she could follow up with Brian).

Amy sent an email out before she sent the survey, alerting folks that the survey was coming (the survey could look like spam - it comes from Qualtrics, which the university uses for surveys). She considered sending the survey to all the center directors, but said they have been getting feedback all along from the Maine Department of Labor. The Virtual CareerCenter is meant to serve all of Maine's workforce partners. They want to find out from the partners the sort of programs they offer – in what ways do you serve your clients - and make sure that that information is going to be shared on the site – do you want to have links to your programs, do you want to be featured on a map? – those sorts of things.

The Maine Department of Labor also sent a survey out and has received responses from over 400 employers and about 400 job seekers. So, the developers have gotten a lot of feedback on what they've been developing and will be well informed.

More on development:

The completion date for the new site is September of this year (that's a one-year extension due to a late start on the project when initially awarded).

Amy shared her screen (a file will be sent out with these minutes), displaying a collage of draft designs for the site. A chevron image design mimics the Worksource Maine logo. "Maine Virtual CareerCenter" will be the main title on the homepage. You'll be able to scroll down and look at upcoming events, or click if you're an employer or a job seeker. You'll enter information for yourself which will then connect you with other services.

Amy gave an example: Someone who indicated that they're a 56-year-old veteran living in Cumberland County might be connected to the Maine Department of Labor Veteran Services, and/or the Senior Community Service Employment program as administered by the Department of Health and Human Services, and would be connected to Workforce Solutions as a WIOA service provider.

At the bottom of the homepage, there will be a message telling viewers that, if they're ready to search for jobs, here's the Maine Job Link, or if they would like to schedule an appointment to talk to someone, here's how to set up an appointment.

The site will be translatable into the most common languages.

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| <p>4. One-Stop Center</p> | <p>Certification Status: Amy reported that the One-Stop Center certification was due to be approved by the board last week, but they didn't have a quorum.</p> <p>The One-Stop Center and affiliated sites need to be certified once every three years, according to the WIOA. They're at the very end of that schedule. They had an ADA accessibility review with the ADA coordinator for the state, from the parking lot to bathrooms, etc. They also went through a review process with a certification team made up of the department heads for the Title I, II, III, IV agencies for service providers – that included a compliance checklist and recommendations.</p> <p>There's a lot of review criteria – accessibility, effectiveness (how responsive are they to the business community) and continuous improvement (based on customer feedback). There's a scoring scale of 0 to 74, with 0 to 25 being unsatisfactory. The One-Stop Center at 190 Lancaster Street scored 42 points which is in the satisfactory range. So, the recommendation is to certify the center. The plan is to pull the CCWB together for a separate vote sometime early next month.</p> <p>(David Watts and Amy discussed the infrastructure agreement between the One-Stop Partners. David was concerned about cost estimates. Costs were to be split three ways in differing amounts. Amy offered to send the current agreement to him.)</p> <p>Relocation:</p> <p>Dave Wurm reported that it was very likely that the Goodwill Workforce Solutions location at 190 Lancaster Street in Portland will be moving. They are putting in their notice that they intend to end their lease at the end of September because their parking area is about to be overtaken by new construction and because they no longer need as much space as they have now due to several reasons: fewer people are coming to the office daily; meeting with clients happens off-site; partners have not co-located as they once might have.</p> | <p>Amy: Follow up with David Watts re: IFA billing.</p> |
| <p>5. Review Next Steps</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amy reported that there's a lot going on at CCWI, including the Building Infrastructure jobs grant that came in recently. Other grants have gone out. There are a variety of ways to continue to support workforce – there's a lot of money. She said she continues to be impressed with the work all are doing, connecting with clients and being able to find a funding stream to make things work. She asked that all stay connected and reach out if they need support to pay for things like transportation and personal protective equipment for the job. | |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Michael thanked David for the news about 190 Lancaster Street; Dave said he would forward information.• Amy told Michael she sent the survey to Molly [Penobscot JobCorps].• Amy said she would be presenting at a learning exchange series for the Maine Youth Transition Collaboration, which supports youth transition from foster care and Corrections, this Thursday and again in May. She'll be providing information about the youth programming provided by workforce solutions, as well as EMDC, because she'll be talking about the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act programming available statewide. She promised to mention YouthBuild and JobCorp, making sure that the service providers who support these youth as they move into the workforce are aware of all of those programs. | |
| Adjourn | | |

Next Meeting: June 19, 2024 @ 1:30 PM