

Quarterly One-Stop Partner Meeting

Minutes

June 18, 2024

1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

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| 1. Welcome / Introductions, Review of the Agenda | <p>Amy Geren (USM Catherine Cutler Institute/CCWI) welcomed everyone and explained that she works for the University of Southern Maine’s Catherine Cutler Institute and serves contractually in the One-Stop Operator role with Coastal Counties Workforce, Inc. As part of her work, she holds these meetings quarterly with the One-Stop partners and meets monthly with some of the front-line managers to keep the work integrated. She invited those in attendance to share a workforce development highlight.</p> <p>Michael Quinney (Outreach and Admissions Manager, Penobscot Job Corps Center) explained that he oversees admissions for the southern half of the state, starting in Waldo County all the way down to Kittery. He said he would be happy to help in any way he can. They’re hiring nearly an entirely new crew, including in Portland to cover Cumberland and York Counties, in Lewiston, and, for the first time ever, someone who’s going to be 100 percent remote, working from Washington. She’ll be working with students who are interested in creating applications and starting the process remotely. She worked for Job Corps during COVID when everything was done virtually. “She brings a lot of experience – we’re excited to see what she can bring,” Michael said. They are also seeking someone for the Augusta area. Michael asked folks to please pass along names of likely candidates.</p> <p>Kate Easter (Workforce Development Director, Loring Job Corps Center) reported that they have a lot of students who are going out right now, getting pretty good jobs, including in places that are not local. They also have a student who just got a job with a construction company in Houlton, a job training match. “That’s lovely for him and for us, and so we’re excited about that!” Kate said.</p> | |

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| | <p>Mahir Hasanov (Career Center Services Manager, Maine DOL-BES,) reported that they, too, are hiring. They are in the process of hiring a new employee focused on clean energy, a Career Center consultant. They’ve been conducting a lot of interviews.</p> <p>Amy noted a related experience that demonstrated the value of networking. When CCWI was accepting support for their application for a NOAA grant for climate-ready workforce jobs, she met with a lot of businesses in these fields. Someone at a seafood business she had reached out to later got in touch about a recent college graduate who wanted to do climate resiliency work. Amy was able to introduce the graduate to five people, and two of them directed her to jobs of interest, and one offered to meet and also invited her to attend a networking event.</p> <p>Robert Ducharme (Assistant Manager, Lewiston, Brunswick, and Wilton Career Centers) noted that he is new in his role and is looking forward to networking with everyone, making new connections (and keeping up with the old).</p> <p>Rene Smith (Career Center Manager, Lewiston, Brunswick, and Wilton Career Centers) reported that it’s exciting to have a new assistant manager – Rob DuCharme! Lots of learning and teaching going on.</p> <p>Libby Stone-Sterling (Director, Bureau of Rehabilitation Services, MDOL) reported on two exciting developments: Samantha Fenderson has become the director of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. June’s grant-application writing efforts include one that focuses on juvenile justice. Libby said that she and Sam have been working on the application, along with the Department of Corrections and lots of community partners. They think it will be a great application for a grant that would be very beneficial to the young people that they work with.</p> <p>Cait Grant (Dean of Economic & Workforce Development, YCCC) reported that they have been wrapping up some trainings, including the MA apprentice group with Maine Health, York Hospital and Nason, and the second cohort of CDL. They trained 32 folks this spring for CDL A (“good jobs!”) in partnership with Northern Maine Community College. They also wrapped up their EMT program (“they all passed, which is incredible!”) and they have just begun a welding program in collaboration with Sanford Tech Center. The program uses the center’s space and instructor over the</p> | |

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| | <p>summer in the evenings, for a non-traditional population, doing the American Welding Society skills building certification.</p> <p>David Watts (Director, Central Lincoln County Adult Education [Hub 7]) reported that Midcoast area adult ed has been busy with multiple CNA cohorts this year. Their third is going to be starting soon. They had 15 in their January cohort and 19 in their May cohort (“that’s expanded, which has been great!”). However, they’re still finding a lack of people willing to be teachers. While they have their funding in place and have been working on a CDL program for two years, they still don’t have an instructor. They also have lost their instructor for the medical assistant program that had been busy. Their culinary on-ramp was all set to go, and then they lost all the students.</p> <p>Susan LeClair (Career Center Manager, Rockland, Augusta, and Northern Kennebec Valley CC) reported that their theme has been networking, continuing their outreach to their partners, trying to support initiatives facing the same sort of challenges that David has been seeing. Traffic has been a little bit light, but they’re trying to be out there, networking and leveraging resource events as best as they can.</p> <p>Samantha Fenderson (Director, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, MDOL) shared that they are at the very beginning of providing summer services for youth participants of the VR program. The first tour, a combination of apprenticeships, pre-apprenticeships, and career pathways, was to occur on Thursday and Friday. Five students were going to visit a couple of employers in Cumberland County, getting hands-on experience with a couple of employers.</p> <p>Kate Points (MJRP Career Navigator, Sanford Community Adult Education) said that the highlights from all their adult education programs have been with their MLL students, in getting workforce training programs up and running, including an Introduction to health care class; it was run virtually, so many people could participate. One hundred percent of the first cohort are enrolled in health care jobs, credentialed as PSS. The second cohort just wrapped up a couple of weeks ago. Kittery Adult Education is also getting a retail class up and running for MLL for students this summer. It is part of the retail career pathways grant program with Retail Maine.</p> <p>Nate Snow (Program Director, LearningWorks, YouthBuild) reported that LearningWorks has moved, as of June 1, into a new space at 190 Riverside Street in</p> | |

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| | <p>Portland, right on the Westbrook line. They're still unpacking while they continue to run programming. About 30 youth are to graduate later this summer. Many have already completed program elements and are working in various fields or doing work experiences or other things. Nate noted YouthBuild's partnership with Revision Energy: The current group of students were over there for a full day last week for pre-apprenticeship training. It paired what the students learn in YouthBuild's construction training program to the work done at Revision to establish a pipeline for opportunity youth into some of Revision's programming, including a registered apprenticeship program to become an electrician.</p> <p>Elisabeth Grout (Regional Administrator, National Farm Workers Jobs Program) reported that they have been focused on getting their NFJP application in ("Thank you so much, everyone who was able to support us on that application!") and have had their best quarter so far regarding enrolling youth participants. They have quite a few who plan to pursue post-secondary education this fall. They do have some openings for Northeast Technical Institute, as well as comprehensive welding spots with the New England School of Metalwork. Elisabeth said that if anyone has clients interested in pursuing those programs who might be NFJP eligible to please let her know.</p> <p>Dawn Croteau (ASPIRE Program Manager, Office for Family Independence) explained that they help people who are in education and training programs, offering financial supports to fix their car, pay their auto insurance or help with childcare, clothing, occupational tools – that's their contribution to the workforce development system. Their contractor has been running some on-ramps for manufacturing, health and human services, and for healthcare – essentially introducing people to the different occupations. Sometimes people will have their minds set on a particular path, Dawn explained, but after they've gone through an on-ramp program and considered some of the similar trainings or occupations, they might change their mind and seek a more lucrative position.</p> <p>Denis Collins (USAH) reported that activity is dropping, fewer calls, less people. So, they can now start working on post-pandemic tasks - they have a lot of SOPs that need to be rewritten and adjusted. He's still seeing a lot of help wanted signs out there.</p> | |

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| <p>2. Approval of March Meeting Minutes</p> | <p>David Watts made the motion to approve the minutes. Nate Snow seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.</p> | |
| <p>3. One-Stop Center & Affiliate Sites</p> | <p>One-Stop Certification Status Update Amy reported that the board has voted to certify the One-Stop Center, completing that process.</p> <p>One-Stop Center Relocation The One-Stop Center will be relocated. The board established a committee to support the relocation process. Amy shared the results of a survey, “OSC Location Priorities,” that she had sent out to gather feedback from the partners. Sixteen people responded. (Please see the PowerPoint file “Colocation Priorities Survey Results” circulated with these minutes to read the results that Amy summarized during the meeting.)</p> <p>Dennis wondered whether anyone requested a different access route for employees than that used by customers. He explained that there is only one regular access route at the Bangor center, and some staff want a different access route. Although he is not in favor of separate entrances, he is getting lots of questions about that. Amy replied that there were questions regarding customers, guests, and staff on the survey.</p> <p>After completing her review of the survey results, Amy asked whether anyone else had questions.</p> <p>Dawn noted that a lot of the state offices aren’t fully occupied because of the hybrid work model. She had heard that the idea of co-locating the DMV at the career center in Lewiston was once considered. She wondered whether the committee was looking at that kind of partnership.</p> <p>Amy replied that, yes, the idea of co-locating was put out there. However, the committee just met earlier on this day, and they have found a site that might be a good opportunity that would not require co-locating.</p> <p>[Elissa Rowe (Director, Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired, Bureau of Rehabilitative Services, MDOL) joined the meeting.]</p> <p>Amy noted that the relocation committee will consider the needs and priorities of the One-Stop Partners in the survey results and the relocation will also need to satisfy</p> | |

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| | <p>WIOA requirements for a One-Stop Center. They will need to make sure the new site meets those criteria, as well as the needs of the One-Stop partners.</p> <p>Affiliate Site Certification Update Amy noted that the affiliate sites all need to be recertified as well, including the career centers in the region and the Goodwill Workforce Solutions affiliate sites. The first review committee will be meeting in a couple of weeks. The Career Center managers are preparing their materials for review.</p> | |
| <p>4. WIOA Reauthorization</p> | <p>Heather Scott (Deputy Director, Coastal Counties Workforce, Inc.) reported that the reauthorization bill, “A Stronger Workforce for America Act,” (HR 6655) recently went through the House of Representatives and moved to the Senate. It has gone to HELP Committee and has stopped there for the time being. It involves some pretty significant changes that would ripple down to not only local workforce boards, but also to the service providers.</p> <p>Heather noted that the reauthorization bill includes a requirement that 50 percent of funds go to training, but does not define training. She pointed out that there are many who access Maine’s workforce development system who don’t want training. If the new mandate is passed, they may not receive the other services they seek, because less money will be available to fund them.</p> <p>A lot of discussion is happening at the local level, Heather said, but there doesn’t seem to be a lot of movement, now, on the bill. It’s hard to say whether it will be passed during a session prior to the election.</p> <p>Amy asked whether anyone had had a chance to look at HR 6655. It does call out Job Corps and makes some changes as to who’s eligible to serve in the role of One-Stop operator, for example.</p> <p>Libby mentioned that their programs are funded by Title IV, which is not being opened up as part of this reauthorization.</p> <p>Heather noted that, given the math on the 50% training mandate that is being considered, fewer people will be served and the ones most affected will be the most vulnerable. Based on what they’re choosing when they come in – if they’re not</p> | |

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| | <p>choosing training – there won't be enough staff to provide the services they want, nor enough support services for the choices that they're making to enter the workforce.</p> <p>Amy added that there already is a lot of training that's offered to job-seekers by the community colleges and other partners – training that the workforce boards leverage but that isn't being taking into account.</p> <p>Link to the bill: https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/house-bill/6655/text</p> | |
| <p>5. Virtual American Job Center</p> | <p>Progress Update</p> <p>Amy noted that the Virtual American Job Center is a grant-funded project, a partnership between the Maine Department of Labor and the three local workforce boards and their service providers. The project is on time and is scheduled to go live in September.</p> <p>Amy sent out a survey to the statewide One-Stop partners (she got contact information from Erin and Galen from the two other workforce boards) to collect information, which was given to the project's consultant, Portland Webworks. An executive steering committee meets weekly, and the stakeholders meet every two weeks with the consultant to review developments to the platform to date.</p> <p>Amy shared her screen, displaying the center homepage. Under the title, "Work Source Maine Virtual CareerCenter," the viewer will see two buttons – "I am a JOB SEEKER" and "I am an EMPLOYER." "Upcoming Events" will be listed below the buttons, and below that viewers will see a button with Maine JobLink and a button to schedule a consultation. The logos of all the partners are displayed at the bottom.</p> <p>Demonstration Reminder: July 11th @ 11:30 a.m.</p> <p>Portland Webworks is to give a demonstration on July 11. Amy explained that there will be more to share about how the platform is working at that demonstration. The platform is going to remove the need to go to different organizations online.</p> <p>[Roger Felix (Loring Job Corps Center) joined the meeting. He thanked Amy for the kind words about Job Corps and added, "We're here if you need any assistance in any way, shape or form."]</p> | <p>Please let Amy know if you need an invitation to next month's demonstration.</p> |

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| 6. Review Next Steps | Please let Amy know if something comes up and you need help making connections. | |
| Adjourn | | |

Next Meeting: September 17, 2024 @ 1:30 PM