



MINNESOTA ASSOCIATION
OF WORKFORCE BOARDS

Business Services/Economic Development Meeting

Date: July 9, 2020

Time: 9:30-11:30am

Location: Online meeting

Attendees: Mark Jacobs, Becky Accettura, Leslie Wojtowicz, Emily Johnson, Liz Jennings, Dan Solomon, Marie Larson, Jackie Buck, Morgan Hill, Sonji Davis, Chet Bodin, Elena Foshay, Mary Rothchild, Dan Wenner, Bridgett Backman, Jose Cabrera, Rick Roy, Marci Jasper, Jason Waddell

Internship Guide, Emily Johnson, Inver Hills Community College

- The internship guide was designed for employers interested in hosting interns. It was specifically intended to be flexible and multi-faceted to serve a wide range of career programs.
- There is a section about virtual internships and the changing landscape of career experiences during COVID-19.
- Contact ejohnson@inverhills.edu with questions.

Inclusive Hiring Guide, Marie Larson, City of Minneapolis

- The City's Inclusive Hiring guide was designed to make it easy for each page to be printed or saved separately and sent as a handout to employers.
- The Fair Chance Hiring Guide is a separate document from the Inclusive Hiring Guide.
- There is an updated version of the Inclusive Hiring Guide which will be available on the City's website soon. The current version can be [accessed here](#).

Inclusive Workforce Employer (I-WE) Designation Process – Chet Bodin and Dan Wenner

- The Inclusive Workforce Employer (I-WE) designation process is a project by the Northwest Minnesota Regional Workforce Alliance. Chet Bodin is the project's lead.
- Five pilot organizations have received the I-WE designation. The [main webpage](#) includes these criteria and provides an overview of the program.
- The website's [Employer Toolkit](#) provides resources for employers on inclusive practices.

Q&A

- Q: Have you approached the public sector about this program?
 - A: Yes. Of the first five pilot organizations, three were private and two were public.
- Q: Have you received questions about how you are defining inclusion?
 - A: Yes, those questions have come up in the past. The program administrators are always seeking more input to continually improve their definition of inclusion.
- Q: Is there a year attached with the badge for employers? Will there be any check-ins to ensure that the employer is still fulfilling all four criteria?
 - A: The fourth criteria for the I-WE designation is about sustaining the inclusive and equitable environment. It's an ongoing process for the employers. If they have questions or need help, they can reach back out to the Regional Workforce Alliance, but there is no mandatory review process for employers.

Updates

M State – Registrations are improving for Fall 2020 but the numbers are still about 10% less than last year. A recent announcement from ICE has jeopardized the futures for international students. International students with certain visas have been informed that if they are enrolled a program which has gone all-online for the Fall, they will be required to leave the country. The M State system is hoping to find a solution with blended or hybrid courses, but they are not certain about all the

specifics yet. Mary Rothchild will provide an update next time about her return to managing workforce solutions and non-credit offerings.

MN Chamber – The Minnesota Chamber ran a webinar during the Business Services/Economic Development Committee regular meeting time about impacts of COVID-19 on Minnesota’s economy. You can watch that webinar, as well as others, [on their website](#).

AMC Economic Development, Workforce, and Housing (EDWH) Policy Subcommittee – Jeanna Fortney, MAWB Director and AMC Economic Development, Workforce, and Housing Policy Analyst, shared that the EDWH subcommittee will be having a meeting very soon. They will discuss COVID-19 impacts and housing trends. There was an affordable housing crisis in Minnesota *before* the pandemic hit. Current conditions have exacerbated the problem. The subcommittee will continue into the fall with drafting priorities for the 2021 regular session.

State Agencies: DEED

- *Jackie Buck*: The Small Business Relief Grants from DEED have closed. 29,000 applications were submitted. There will be a randomized selection process overseen by the Minnesota Lottery. The Coursera launch has been very successful. Jackie and team are looking for success stories which can be [submitted online](#). The Department of Education announced the [Reimagine Workforce Preparation grants on 6/23](#). These grants are open to State Workforce Development Boards, but there can only be one application per state. Boards can partner with others on the project.
- *Marci Jasper*: Marci’s team is creating “bite-sized” learning opportunities that are 10-15 minutes long with training for employers about people with disabilities. Marci will be attending an extensive virtual training titled “Windmills” on a similar topic – for more info, [click here](#).
- *Chet Bodin*: Chet and other Workforce Strategy Consultants have been working on the CareerForce [Workforce Optimization Cycle page](#). The bottom of the page has links for employers.
- *Liz Jennings*: Liz is still running a virtual career fair every Monday. They have been very popular with employers. They have also helped publicize the CareerForce brand name.

State Agencies: DoLI – More than \$2.7 million in state grants will fund employment-based dual training for employees as a part of the Minnesota Dual-Training Pipeline. There is an [All-Industry Forum Webinar coming up on July 15th from 9:00 – 10:00 AM](#). The keynote speaker will be Malissa Stanton-Adams of [The Diversity Institute](#). The presentation will discuss how employment-based training can benefit equity and inclusion efforts. DoLI will also be doing “Pipeline 101” webinars later this summer. Licensing exams for construction codes and licensing are restarting. They will be held around the state.

EDAM – EDAM held a successful summer conference virtually. They raised \$3,000 in a silent auction for businesses destroyed by riots. Find information about their upcoming July 21 webinar, titled [“Recover Now and Thrive in the Future,” here](#).

MAPCED – Recent MAPCED meetings have focused on the CARES Act, specifically the Coronavirus Relief Fund. Limited guidance from the U.S. Treasury has raised questions about appropriate uses of the funds. The distribution of funds by the Governor’s Executive Order has removed the requirement to spend 10% of the allocations on business assistance, but many areas are still pursuing projects of that nature.

Local Initiatives –

- **Dakota/Scott:** Two workshops where jobseekers meet with employers. Some CARES Act funds will be used for \$10,000 grants to employers. They are working through the criteria for application. Scott County also has a small business program available.
- **Duluth:** Several large layoffs in the area have prompted the need for dislocated worker outreach.
- **Rural Minnesota CEP:** Will soon be offering incumbent worker training.
- **Minneapolis:** Success stories are coming in from virtual hiring events.
- **Anoka:** The CARES Act has also been discussed regularly in Anoka. They have submitted the statewide application from DEED for a grant related to the opioid crisis. DEED is anticipating an increase in opioid usage due to the pandemic. The grant is more necessary than ever.
- **Central Minnesota JTS:** Working on outdoor youth work experiences. Incumbent worker training is still going. They have also worked on virtual events with employers.

August Meeting Items

- Minnesota Chamber Study Results
- Discussion on the impact seen by the end of the \$600 bonus to Unemployment Insurance (if the bonus ends).

Next meeting: August 13, 2020