



Leading with Equity Report Q1 2021

Background: In late 2020 MAWB restarted an Equity Committee. After follow-up discussions, it was determined by MAWB leadership that it was critical to ensure alignment with committees and other MAWB efforts as we move forward. As a result, rather than continuing with a committee model, MAWB leadership agreed to begin a more comprehensive Leading with Equity initiative which would demonstrate and ensure that equity is embedded in all of MAWBS activities and efforts.

Rather than chairing a committee, Ling Becker (Ramsey County) and Tammy Biery (Career Solutions) will head up the Leading with Equity Initiative by ensuring coordination, alignment and sustained impact.

Areas of alignment include, but not exclusive to:

- Committee Agenda items
- Policy initiatives
- Job seeker access and business alignment
- Sharing and showcasing best practices
- Training for MAWB leaders and staff
- Identified equity work plan with committee chairs
- And more.

Ling and Tammy, along with Jeanna Fortney will be meeting quarterly with key DEED leadership to ensure additional alignment between DEED and MAWB. Those included are: Anisa Hajimumin, Lorrie Janatopoulos, Maureen Ramirez, and Ben Baglio. There was interest in collaborating on employer support and resources to bridge more inclusive hiring.

Initiatives Updates

Showcasing Best Practices and Opportunities: Over the course of a couple of months, each Workforce Development Area shared best practices and opportunities. The efforts were as diverse as the populations we serve. Key themes included:

- Equity training efforts and hosting events for decision leadership, board and decision makers
- Targeted recruitment strategies to reach diverse populations
- Leveraging inclusive employer designation strategies
- Opportunities to include wider coalitions of stakeholders recognizing there are challenges to participation including time, resources and trust
- Digital divide more critical than ever
- Importance to integrating other barrier removal efforts within county systems and the community

Committee Agenda Items of Note from Q1	
Legislative Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussed HECAP advocacy through an equity lens. • Discussed increased flexibility in State DW program eligibility to serve more diverse jobseekers
Business Services/Economic Development:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The special presentation on the Twin Cities RISE Fair Chance Hiring Guide was the Leading with Equity conversation for the committee this month. From the minutes: Jacquelyn Carpenter, Vice President of Workforce Development at Twin Cities RISE, discussed their program model and their Fair Chance Hiring Guide. Discussion ensued about best practices for approaching employers on this subject, and the value of opening up conversations and building relationships with employers. Twin Cities RISE does not currently work in greater Minnesota but they are delivering virtual services. They are interested in having conversations about how they can best complement services already being offered in local areas in greater Minnesota. • The committee discussed that diversity and inclusion is a big topic for employers right now. The I-WE designation program is expanding to Central Minnesota. Discussion also ensued about employers struggling to hire for positions in the \$12-18/hour range and how this rate is not necessarily viable for people who are also dealing with compounding issues such as transportation and childcare barriers. Reports of age discrimination and a lack of specialized events/training for older workers was also mentioned.
Policy & Issues:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dislocated Worker Discussion – how to educate DEED and legislators on the high percentage of the BIPOC community participating in the DW program and others offered. • A committee member asked whether the UI phone calls are tracking racial demographic information. • Current Tech Grant- was data indicators used to identify the tech industry for intentional outreach to BIPOC communities? • Local boards are heavily involved in community engagement and have a unique insight into what services and programs people need. • A more difficult part of racial equity is long-term retention of diverse people, but local Boards are only funded to assist with retention for 12 months.
Jobseeker Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The committee plans to discuss the RC3 Career Infographics presentation from last month and connect this to equity across the state. • Committee leadership acknowledged current events at the start of the meeting and provided time for reflection. Also opened up for discussion about the PY19 WIOA Annual Report, asking local areas to consider which communities are currently served and identify where gaps might exist.