



MAWB Business Services/Economic Development Committee Minutes

June 10, 2021

Employer-Related Updates: Items Pertinent to Employers or Employer Services

- Minnesota Chamber of Commerce: Recently released the [Minnesota: 2030 report](#) which captures a statewide private sector perspective of the economy. The report describes that population growth in Minnesota will primarily be people of color, Minnesota does not have enough people for the number of jobs available, and if not for immigration the population would not be growing at all. Need to find ways to attract people to the state. Suggestion to make inclusivity in Minnesota a strength: a state that is especially inclusive and attracts new residents for that reason. The Minnesota Chamber can provide a 30-minute presentation on this report by request.

Summary of Special Presentation

LaRohn Latimer, Leslie Philmon, and Rick Martagon from the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry joined the meeting to give a presentation about Registered Apprenticeship. The presentation provides an overview of Registered Apprenticeship, benefits to employers and jobseekers, pre-apprenticeship/Career Readiness training, and grant opportunities. The presentation also discussed their outreach efforts to BIPOC communities, women, and veterans.

Question and Answer

- Q: What are some of the common barriers for employers with Registered Apprenticeship?
 - A: There is a misconception that working with the government involves a lot of red tape and bureaucracy. Communicating to employers that all they need to get started is a job description usually helps. Also, framing Registered Apprenticeship as an innovative workforce solution helps with the employer perception.
- What options are available for 16–17-year-olds and how should the options be communicated to employers?
 - Career Readiness (a.k.a. Pre-Apprenticeship) is not regulated by DLI, but it's a great way to get hands-on experience before Registered Apprenticeship. Youth Skills Training is not the same but is regulated through DLI. Contact Rich Wessels (rich.wessels@state.mn.us) to learn more. Youth Apprenticeship is also different and regulated by the Minnesota Department of Education. Contact Erin Larsen (mde.cte@state.mn.us) to learn more.

Anyone who has connections to employers that might be interested in Registered Apprenticeship should connect them to the team at DLI for further discussion.

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- M State was unable to attend the meeting but shared a written update. Their initiative [Skill Up Minnesota](#) is currently working with a research firm to inform the development of the website and marketing efforts that will launch this fall. The research questions are:

- Who are the adults in Minnesota wanting to gain skills for employment or career advancement?
 - Which public and community agencies are currently supporting the needs of Minnesota jobseekers and adult career explorers, and how are they doing it?
 - What do unemployed and underemployed workers and career changers want and need from Minnesota State campuses?
 - Does the [Skill Up website](#) meet the needs of users?
- State Agencies
 - Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED)
 - June is Natural Resources month. This is a “lighter touch” than Healthcare and Tech months. Working on blog posts via CareerForceMN.com. Hosting a few Explore Career events during the month. Also developing a roundtable on agriculture and agricultural technology. Workforce Wednesdays are an opportunity for employers hear about best practices on workforce strategies. The team is hiring for a Southeast Workforce Strategy Consultant and hopes to have someone in place soon.
 - Workforce Wednesdays will also include discussion on the I-WE designation. Working on resident recruitment efforts with the Business Development team at DEED.
 - Two Explore Career events in June around natural resources – if you have employer ideas, please send to liz.jennings@state.mn.us. They are looking for employers with open positions who are interested in talking about how they support employees, build career pathways, and demonstrate inclusion strategies. July is Hire a Veteran month, so there will be a 4-week series for employers and a career fair on July 22nd. If you have employer ideas for this event, please send to shannon.sprouse@state.mn.us.
 - There are individuals at DEED who can help employers hire foreign workers as permanent or temporary employees through H-1B, H-2A, and H-2B processes. [Connect with DEED](#) if you would like to learn more.
 - Department of Labor and Industry
 - [Minnesota Dual-Training Pipeline All-Industry Forum](#) on June 15th at 9:00 AM.
 - Recent funding awards were announced. All who applied were funded. 67 companies total and 27 that are brand new to Pipeline.
 - Minnesota Association of Professional County Economic Developers (MAPCED)
 - County economic developers have been working on various grant programs since last year: the CARES Act, then state grants, and now the American Rescue Plan (ARP). Interim final rule for the ARP came out last month and counties are in the early stages of planning how they will allocate funds. Many counties are looking to fund broadband projects. In some respects, there is significant flexibility available to counties when using these funds. Some areas have discussed the potential to impact lasting and generational issues (housing, childcare, broadband, general economic inequality) by creatively implementing ARP-funded projects. Counties will likely be setting their plans for ARP

allocations by this summer, so individuals on the call were encouraged to reach out to county economic developers with their ideas for the funds.

- Local Areas
 - City of Duluth
 - Restaurants in the area are still struggling. A credit union and a bank in the area are looking for tellers and other employees, so they held a 30-minute virtual meeting with CareerForce counselors about career pathway opportunities to help make an impact. Planning to reopen June 21st by appointment only.
 - Central Minnesota (CMJTS)
 - Discussion ensued regarding ongoing issues with Job Service staff being indefinitely reassigned to Good Jobs Now calls and how this has impacted the availability of staff time. Employers have been happy to be involved in hiring events, although still struggling to turn out jobseekers. Event coming up in St. Cloud with 50 employers. Renville County has devoted funds to a childcare project and are looking for a physical building for childcare.
 - Ramsey County
 - In-person job fair at Allianz Field is planned for June 29th from 10 AM – 2 PM. There will be 25 employers. There will also be a giveaway of 10 laptops during the event. Industry-specific job boards to construction and hospitality also provide links to training in those areas.
 - Washington County
 - Bringing cultural competency training to action team meetings.
- The Metropolitan Consortium of Community Developers (MCCD) joined the meeting to provide an overview of their work and to discuss their connection to entrepreneurship. MCCD helps businesses expand by providing new and early-stage businesses with technical assistance, advice, and counseling. MCCD also provides capital to people who face barriers in accessing the commercial banking system and focused on BIPOC communities, women, and low-wealth entrepreneurs.

The July Business Services/Economic Development Committee meeting will be held remotely.

The August Business Services/Economic Development Committee meeting will be held hybrid at AMC.