



**Leading with Equity Report
Q2-Q3 2021**

| Committee Agenda Items of Note from Q2 | |
|---|---|
| Legislative Committee | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussed expanding Dislocated Worker program eligibility in order to serve more diverse low-income workers including BIPOC—those who were laid off from industries where jobs may still exist, but who could benefit from training to enter into higher paying fields. • Discussed proposed modernization changes to the WDF and its impact on addressing disparities with flexible eligibility and ample funding to local areas. |
| Business Services/Economic Development Committee | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussed the expansion of Inclusive Workforce Employer (I-WE) programs throughout the state. • Local areas have shared specific projects around equity, including Rural Minnesota CEP diversity job fair, Rural Minnesota CEP workforce program with the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe, Southeast Minnesota (WDI) I-WE program, and Ramsey County’s Inclusive Workplaces Cohort. All WDA’s are facilitating work/partnerships with leading with equity. |
| Policy & Issues Committee | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion on reopening physical locations has included references to the digital divide. In-person services are essential for BIPOC and low-income communities. Local areas need staffing support onsite by DEED. |
| Jobseeker Services Committee | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Created and shared a resource list for Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage, Hispanic and National Disabilities Awareness Months. • Discussed the importance of working with justice-involved populations and the equity issues involved with this group. Committee encouraged ACP group to expand eligibility for Career Pathway training which resulted in more flexible policies in this area. • A committee member shared a related report from the Markle Foundation – Rework America Alliance. • Discussed strategies to ensure that in-person locations are welcoming and inclusive as local areas look toward reopening on August 2nd. Suggestions included posting materials in multiple languages, posting equal opportunity employment posters, checking accessibility software, and reviewing the core values of CareerForce. |
| Operations Committee | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation from Joe Miller, Project Manager – Digital Equity & Strategy at Literacy Minnesota on Literacy Minnesota’s Digital Equity Community Needs Assessment Report. The presentation described the goals and structure of the report as well as some of their recommendations. • Small group discussions on questions related to digital equity. |

Looking back: MAWB hosted its annual conference in August and there were several opportunities for attendees to engage in racial equity and inclusion topics. These included:

- Focus on Racial Equity in Workforce Strategies by the National Skills Coalition
- What Impedes Labor Marketing Recovery After the Pandemic Recession by the Federal Reserve.

Both highlight the critical important to not only engage in workforce strategies that uplift an economic recovery but that we need to be intentional to ensure the recovery is an equitable one.

Looking ahead: A main area of focus for equity these past quarter was an emphasis on digital equity. Some next projects for MAWB include:

- Creating regional templates of tech and digital equity resources, branded with MAWB alignment and coordination.
- Ensure regional plans speak to this digital divide.
- Engage ABE and Libraries in a cooperative leadership conversation to align strategies, advocacy, etc. (tie in GDWB)

In addition, MAWB is plans to continue to focus digital equity as well as on community engagement for the remainder of the year as both topics will be integrated in our strategic planning that will be taking place in late 2021.

Over the past few weeks, MAWB continues to have ongoing conversations with DEED about the various strategies to engage employers in their equity journey. DEED has requested regions to focus on implementing the I-WE program and it is has been implemented, is in the process of, or being considered by various areas. In addition, some areas have introduced other employer programs aimed at promoting more inclusive workplaces.