



Workforce Development Board
County of Middlesex

Youth Advisory Committee Meeting
Tuesday, February 7, 2016 9:00am

Present: Lisa Alexander, Heather Allen, David Blevins, Ingrid Coutinho, Candace Crane, Gabriel Lavigne, , Ushindi Lewis, Dawn Lystad, Evelyn Rosa, Naomi Vliet

Staff: Sandra Ciccone, Rick DeJesus, Janice Alexander, Nicole Montero, Shamara Gatling-Davila

I. Welcome and Introductions of Committee Members

Gabriel Lavigne, Chairperson for the Youth Advisory Committee, began the meeting with the introduction of all present members and guests.

II. Approval of Minutes: November 1, 2016 Meeting

Candace Crane motioned to approve the minutes of the November 1, 2016 YAC meeting as distributed previously by email and Naomi Vliet seconded. The vote was called and the motion passed to approve the minutes as written.

III. Update of MCOWD Entry Level Internship Training & Employment (E.L.I.T.E)

➤ **Statistics for the current Program Year**

Ms. Ciccone reported that from June 30, 2016 to present, the youth program has served 98 participants. The goal for 2016 - 2017 program year is to serve 165 participants. A copy of the Youth MCCOWD Program was handed out.

➤ **Dropout Statistics**

Ms. Ciccone reported from June 30, 2016 to present that we were notified by the school districts of 85 students who had dropped out of school. Naomi Vliet, from Middlesex County Office of Education, reported that she will email the Youth Advisory Committee the accurate number of students who dropped out of school in Middlesex County.

➤ **Industry Tours**

Two industry tours have been completed for program year 2016 -2017. The first Industry Tour was on November 15, 2016 at Rutgers University and the second Industry Tour was on November 29, 2016 at the Carpenters Union in Kenilworth. Both tours were very successful. The third industry tour will be with Sunny Delight. Evelyn Rosa, from MCC – New Brunswick Center recommended the youth department visit Tropical Cheese in Perth Amboy and NJ Commission for the Blind.

IV. Committee updates

Mr. Lavigne asked the YAC members if they had any suggestions on how the committee is going to move forward and for recommendation on issues, policies, and topics the committee would like to discuss at the Youth Advisory Committee meetings.

David Blevins, from New Brunswick Youth Service System, inquired if the Youth Department served undocumented youth. Ms. Ciccone reported that we cannot. The Youth Department is federally funded, and any youth participant would have to: be a permanent resident or have a green card or DACA to be eligible for the youth program.

Ms. Ciccone asked the YAC members if they had any recommendation on where the youth department could referral undocumented youth. Mr. DeJesus suggested PRAB.

Ms. Ciccone asked YAC members if they had any recommendations on homeless shelters in Middlesex County. Mr. Blevins recommend Henry Guest House located on Livingston Avenue in New Brunswick, NJ. In Perth Amboy the homeless could contact Kenny Ortiz, at the Recreation Department, or the Salvation Army and the YMCA. Mr. Blevins suggested United Way of Central Jersey would be the best resource for a list of homeless shelters. Candace Crane, from United Way of Central Jersey will email the list to Youth Advisory Council.

Lisa Alexander, from Ace The Resume reported that Middlesex County College will have a job fair on March 1, 2017.

The Youth staff attended a job fair in Woodbridge, NJ and handed out information about the Youth Program and services.

Ms. Ciccone, Diane Seavers, the Deputy Director, and Susan Rauscher, the Deputy Manager of Operation will be attending the Prisoner Reentry Services Seminar on February 8, 2017.

The Youth staff will be attending a job fair at Middlesex County Vocational and Technical School in Piscataway, NJ at the end of the month to speak to seniors and their parents about the Youth Program and services offered.

Ingrid Coutinho, from Edison Job Corps reported that Job Corps will have a job fair on March 9, 2017.

Ms. Ciccone reported five success stories of participants in the Work Experience program:

- One Orthodontic participant finished her 3 months' Work Experience worksite and was hired at the end; she is now enrolled in an ITA.
- Another participant, who is placed on a worksite as a mechanic helper contract, was extended due to the employer wanting to hire him.
- The third participant who finished her ITA as a Legal Secretary is placed at a worksite.
- A participant who completed the Microsoft Office Specialist program was hired at Louis Vuitton (LVMH Global) as a Customer Service Representative making \$17.01 an hour.
- A fifth participant who completed the Microsoft Certified System Administrator program, was hired at HMS International as a Tier 1 Help Desk Associate making \$20.00 an hour.

Ms. Ciccone asked the Youth Advisory Committee if the youth program should continue to give the participants who in enrolled in an ITA both a \$20.00 dollar stipend a day and a bus pass. The question was put to a vote, and the proposal was approved unanimously to continue to give the participants both. A copy of Policy Resolution MCWDB-2017-01 (Youth Incentive Policy) was handed out.

Ms. Rosa, from MCC, New Brunswick Center, asked Ms. Ciccone if the Youth Department offered the participants Financial Literacy Training. We offer Financial Literacy to all the youth who enter into the youth program. The youth program have two vendors who come to speak to participants: Santander Bank and Affinity Federal Credit Union. Ms. Rosa recommended that the youth program use Junior Achievement; a nonprofit organization located in Edison, NJ, which has many different types of programs for the youth.

Ms. Ciccone, Ms. Seavers, and Shamara Gatling-Davila, the WDB Policy Analyst, are in the process of working on the RFP for program year 2016 – 2017 which has to be submitted to the board by July 1, 2017.

Ms. Ciccone reported the Youth Program is planning a graduation for August which will be held at Middlesex County College.

Mr. DeJesus asked the Youth Advisory Committee if they knew of any programs for young, teenage mothers.

V. Committee Brainstorming

➤ **Business Partnerships**

Ms. Ciccone asked the YAC members if they had any recommendations for any employers that the youth department could use as a worksite.

➤ **Programs**

There are 28 participants in the ITA program, 61 participants attending the HSE program, and 8 participants on a worksite

➤ **Retail Industry/Labor Department Rules**

Mr. Lavigne asked the Youth Advisory Committee if they knew what the labor law was for hiring teenagers to work in the mall.

VI. Youth Recruitment

➤ **EBPL (East Brunswick Public Library)**

Ms. Ciccone and Ms. Seavers attended the Career Connections ribbon cutting ceremony, held at the East Brunswick Public Library in January, 2017.

➤ **Additional Recruitment Ideas**

Ms. Ciccone asked the YAC members if they had any recommendation on future youth recruitment.

Ms. Rosa, from Middlesex County College New Brunswick Center recommended that the Youth Programs materials be made available in Spanish.

VII. Other/Future Business

Mr. Lavigne reported that the Middlesex County Regional Chamber of Commerce will be having an Emerging Leaders' Summit at The Heldrich Hotel on February 9, 2017.

Gabriel A. Lavigne adjourned the meeting.

The next meeting of the Youth Advisory Council is Tuesday, May 2, 2017