



**Workforce Development Board**  
County of Middlesex

**Reentry Employment Committee**  
**June 26, 2018 – 9:30 AM**

Present:	William Lim, Yvette Molina, and Kathy Shaw (via phone)
Guest & Staff:	Vivek Bhatnagar, and Tasha Hogan; Shamara Gatling-Davila, Kevin Kurdziel, and Diane Seavers

**1) Welcome/Introductions**

**Kevin Kurdziel**

- a) Kevin Kurdziel greeted those in attendance and asked everyone to introduce themselves.

**2) Sollers College**

**Vivek Bhatnagar**

- a) The school takes pride in “finding jobs of the future.” Right now there is a huge demand for workers, but a short worker supply. Hence, the reason for focusing on future jobs.
- b) An employer can contact the college needing a certain number of employees. Once the details of that position are determined, the college will create/develop a curriculum to teach that number of people how to do that particular job.
- c) Three month internships are also available if the employers require it.
- d) A recent cohort was the Big Data Engineering course. It was comprised of 15 people and those that successfully complete the internship are considered for projects afterwards.
- e) Income Sharing Agreement. Once a student graduates and becomes employed, a percentage of their income is used to repay tuition. The options are 20% of the income for 2 years or 17.5% for 3 years. Associate Degree and Bachelor Degree options are available as well in addition to preparing students for employment. Justin Roslonek is Keynote Speaker specializing in his story about reentry, post incarceration. His YouTube video is available for the public to view.

**3) Identification of Reentry Priorities for WDB Strategic Plan**

**Kevin Kurdziel**

- a) Think of about three key area to focus on for the reentry portion of the strategic plan
- b) Marketing what the One-Stop does to the population. People released from the correctional facilities do not know the One-Stop exist. Create comprehensive system with reentry partners to link services. More comprehensive work needs to take place behind the wall and a discharge plan should be created prior to release.
- c) Ultimate goal would be to have a One-Stop inside the correctional facility. Having a representative located within the correctional facility a day or so each month is a start. Funding does not allow that type of service right now, but that is a goal.
- d) NJ Reentry Corp has met with the warden and is unsure if their agency can have a representative behind the wall on a more frequent basis.
- e) An updated list of employers that not only ban the box, but are also known for hiring ex-offenders is useful. Establish relationships with companies so no matter who the HR Manager, the policy of hiring ex-offenders will continue. A company to spearhead the advertisement of this option is needed. Gerda is perfect for it.

- f) In addition, it would be wise to know what the demand occupation is for ex-offenders. Are they being hired for general entry level positions or are there certain sectors more likely to hire ex-offenders?
- g) Some of those incarcerated do not have a valid ID, their social security card or driver's license. This creates a problem in general, but especially for employment. If proper identification is acquired while the person is still incarcerated, he/she can apply for work immediately. The requirements for obtaining a birth certificate through NJ Reentry Corp have changed, and it now takes more time to acquire.

**4) Hindering items for Reentry Population**

**Committee Members**

- a) Child Support payments. A lot of people do not know their child support payments can be suspended while incarcerated. Suspending the child support payments will prevent parents from falling behind even more on their payments.
- b) When people owe probation fines and do not pay them, they can be taken back to court. A system of referrals could help this population. If there is an option for the NJ Reentry Corp and One-Stop Career Centers to work together as a resource, training that leads to employment can help with the fines.
- c) While incarcerated some people earn various types of certificates or complete various courses. If there was a way to transfer the education they received while incarcerated to true college credits, national certified credentials, etc. it will at least allow them to build their resume.
- d) Support group and services are needed for homelessness, substance abuse, and ways to boost self-esteem for those that are broken mentally. The Middlesex County Service Locator can be used for various resources.
- e) Build a case Study to advertise the type of success companies have had with hiring ex-offenders.

**5) Old/New Business**

**Kevin Kurdziel**

- a) Tasha Hogan will be the Chair of this Reentry Committee.
- b) The committee will have a name change to Reentry Advisory Group. The name change sounds more professional and business like.
- c) A representative can come in and do a presentation on Federal Bonding at a future meeting.
- d) A meeting with the warden to work out the process of discharge can help this committee serve the population better.

**6) Meeting Adjourned**

**The next meeting of the Reentry Employment Committee will be Tuesday,  
September 18, 2018, at 9:30am.**

**Conference Room G**