



Workforce Development Board
County of Middlesex

Youth Advisory Committee Meeting
Tuesday, September 25, 2018 9:30am

Present: Meredith Masin Blount, Candice Covington-Thomas, Manuel Colon Jr., Candace Crane, Degra Dolgos, Gabriel Lavigne, Dawn Lystad, Anarai Meza, Jose Montes, Bridget Stilwell Kennedy, Naomi Vliet,

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

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

Naomi Vliet motioned to approve the minutes of the June 26, 2018 YAC meeting as distributed previously by email and Ricky DeJesus 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 Program Year 17**

- As of June 30, 2018 there were 125 new participants and 151 new enrollments in the youth program.
- A copy of the Youth MCOWD monthly Program statistics was handed out.

- HSE graduation was held on July 25, 2018 at Middlesex County College in the West Hall.
- Middlesex County College was awarded the HSE contract for program year 2018 – 2019.
- The youth department has established Work Experience worksites with Perth Amboy Public Works, Perth Amboy Police Department, Hackensack Meridian Health, Kenneth L. Gonzales, Perth Amboy Pediatric Dentistry & Orthodontics, Chamber of Commerce, Farmers Insurance, and Port Jersey Logistics,
- Every six weeks the youth staff attends the Parent of Offender Presentation at Family Court in New Brunswick, NJ.
- The YAC members were asked for recommendations for Industry Tours and any employers that would be willing to offer worksites.
- Affinity Federal Credit Union oversees the Financial Literacy curriculum for the Youth program.
- The GSETA (Garden State Employment and Training Association) conference will be held on October 3 – 4, 2018 in Atlantic City, NJ

- **Industry Tours**
 - Silver Line by Andersen Windows on October 30, 2017.
 - Pepsi Beverage Company in Piscataway on December 7, 2017.
 - Mercer County Community College on August 8, 2018.
 - The next Industry tour will be a visit to the Carpenters Union in Kenilworth.

- The youth staff attended the following recruitments and handed out information about the WIOA Youth Program and services:
 - Family Day at Perth Amboy Waterfront
 - Project Homeless Connect in New Brunswick and Perth Amboy, NJ
 - Old Bridge Job Fair
 - Middlesex County Regional Chamber of Commerce Network Fest
 - MCVTS Piscataway and East Brunswick Career Day
 - Assemblyman Danielsen Annual Job Fair in Somerset, NJ
 - Metuchen High School Career Day
 - Hackensack/JFK Career Day
 - MCVTS Piscataway Career Day
 - Career Fair at Sayreville Public Library
 - Business Summit on Disability Awareness

- Ms. Ciccone reported three success stories of participants in the Youth program:
 - A participant who obtained her HSE in April was placed at a worksite at Middlesex County College as a Teacher Assistant.
 - A participant who completed her Certified Clinical Medical Assistant program in August attained four credentials; Patient Care Technician, Medical Assistant, EKG, and Phlebotomy. She was hired full time at her internship at Women's Health Center Hackensack Meridian Health.
 - A participant who obtained his CDL license in July was hired full time at Cream Of Land Dairy making \$18.00 dollars an hour.

IV. **Guest Speakers**

- **Bridget Stillwell Kennedy, Middlesex County Office of Human Services**
 - Assisted homeless youth between the ages of 16 – 24.
 - Assisted 49 homeless youth between the ages of 18 – 24 in 2017.
 - November is National Homeless Youth Awareness month.
 - Homeless youth should call NJ211 and tell the operator they are homeless and would like case management.
 - Distributed Youth homelessness sheet to assist agencies in capturing/identifying homeless youth within Middlesex County

- **Meredith Mason Blount, Executive Director of NAMI/New Jersey**
 - NAMI (National Alliance on Mental illness) is a statewide non-profit organization
 - Over 500 Affiliates across the country including Hawaii and Alaska.
 - Provides support and programs to individuals and families affected by mental illness.

- 50% of mental illness starts at age 14.
- 1 in 5 people are affected by mental illness.
- Located in 21 counties and 19 affiliates.
- Meet monthly.
- Young adult groups.
- Casual outing.
- Family to Family Program. The program length is for 12 weeks.
- NAMI Basics Program is for parents with children under the age of 18 who have mental illness. The program length is for 6 weeks.
- In Our Own Voice Program; Individuals with mental illness give presentations about their illness and recovery.
- In the process of starting a new program called Ending the Silence.
- Hearts and Minds Program.
- Education Programs: Educating the Educators and Every Mind Matters
- Multicultural Programs: African American Mental Health Outreach (AACT Now), Chinese American Mental Health Outreach Program (CAMHOP), Latino Outreach Program (NAMI NJ en Espanol), South Asian Mental Health Awareness in Jersey (SAMHAJ)
- NAMI Walk was held on Saturday, May 19, 2018.
- NAMI NJ Annual Conference will be held on Saturday, December 1, 2018 at The Imperia in Somerset, NJ. Keynote speaker is Dena Simmons, The Assistant Director of Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence.

VII. Committee Member Announcements/Updates

- Manuel Colon, from Visions and Pathways reported they provides services to abused, neglected and homeless youth between the ages of 13 – 21.
- Visions and Pathways offered a program called Prosperity, which is a Living Skills Education Program for youth between the ages of 14 – 21. The program focuses on life skills such as Job Readiness, Resume Writing, Obtaining Employment, Continuing Education, Housing, and Vocational Training.
- Visions and Pathways offered a program called Brahma House which is a short term group home for youth between the ages of 13 -17 and is located in Somerset County but serves youth throughout various counties in NJ. The program provides food, clothing, counseling, and transportation.
- Visions and Pathways offered a program called Street Smart which is an outreach program for youth between the ages of 13 – 21. The program provides food, shelter, counseling, health care, and help finding jobs and housing. Outreach counselors are available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.
- Middlesex County Family Support Organization will be sponsoring an event called Tea Time Grandparents on October 17, 2018 from 10:00am – 12:00pm at 225 Livingston Ave, New Brunswick, NJ.
- Middlesex County Family Support Organization will be sponsoring an event called Suicide Awareness and Prevention on October 24, 2018 at 6:00pm – 8:00pm at Bayside Family Success Ctr. 500 Dobranski Drive, Perth Amboy, NJ.

- Middlesex County Family Support Organization will be sponsoring an event called Haunted House Halloween on October 31, 2018 from 3:30pm – 5:30pm at 225 Livingston Ave, New Brunswick, NJ
- Puerto Rican Action Board will be sponsoring an event called Juntos Together on October 3, 2018 from 6:00pm – 9:00pm at the State Theatre New Jersey on Livingston Avenue, New Brunswick, NJ.

The next meeting of the Youth Advisory Council is Tuesday December 11, 2018.