

## MIDDLESEX COUNTY WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD

### PLANNING COMMITTEE

June 20, 2013

**Present:** Maria Gonzalez, Vin Samuels, Melissa Lewis, Adrienne Keaton, Nina Rios Rivera, Jane Brady

The committee reviewed a chart showing the money expended in the last three program years and to date in this program year and the number of people served in each of those years. The chart also noted the amounts for the coming program year as we have received the NOOs for the three funding streams of WIA. Middlesex received an increase in funds for all three categories so we will be actively discussing how to effectively spend the money to get more people better jobs.

The committee discussed how to encourage people to participate in training to enable them to obtain employment as we are experiencing a decrease in the number of unemployed interested in training. We also discussed the lack of open positions for some of the jobs still listed as in-demand on the state list. Jane noted she has asked for clarification from the state on a number of these occupations but has not received any replies since April, even after repeated emails and to different people. Nina suggested that we ask the WIB to send the request and perhaps they will respond to the WIB exec.

The committee discussed the impact of the reduction in the federal UI payments as of July 1. Many people will not be able to seek training, even with ABT, as the amount they will be receiving will not be sufficient for them to exist without some type of employment.

A question was raised as to the assistance we receive from the Talent Network representatives. Jane noted that we have received no job leads from any of the Talent Network folks, nor information on trends in their specific fields. They have done presentations at our locations, but these presentations are basically just outlining the types of jobs in the sector, not what jobs are actually available. The group also noted that when the state prepares lists of jobs in demand, one job that requires 3-4 skills may be listed 3-4 times as the query that produces the lists searches by skills.

The committee also discussed the lack of employment for workers 55+ and those with significant ESL issues. Staff will research providing full time, concentrated ESL classes for those unemployed people with high education credentials from a foreign country who cannot adequately communicate either verbally or in writing in English.

Unfortunately the state has not funded the ETPU (entrepreneurship training) classes in some time and that is an avenue more and more seniors are exploring since they cannot find other employment. Our Business Development Unit, in cooperation with the SBDC, does offer workshops from time to time on establishing a business and other topics of interest to this segment of the population.

Prepared By: Jane Brady