

Joint Burlington County Workforce Development Board and EAP Joint Meeting

Tuesday, February 21, 2017

- **Call to Order- Tony Mahon**

Tony Mahon Called the Workforce Development Board meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. Today's meeting was held at Rowan College at Burlington County in the Enterprise Center, Room 248, 900 College Circle, Mt. Laurel, NJ 08054. Mr. Mahon thanked everyone for coming.

- **Reading of the Sunshine Law- Alison DeJoseph**

Motion to approve the minutes from the October 2016 meeting Introductions were made around the table.

Business and Industry Leader Updates:

Tom VonKessel stated that there are 1,100 Shoprite Co-ops. They are the third largest user of the turnpike. FedEx, Union Shop, 150 non-union- management, supervisors, loss prevention. They promote from within. Some people that have been promoted have started at \$10 per hour and are now making six figure incomes. Shoprite has management training programs within their system and tuition reimbursement. One issue they face is that they cannot hire enough and the bottom one-third of hires need better retention rates. They are looking at possible certifications and strongly encourage basic soft skills. Tony Mahon asked Tom if they offer an internship program. Tom responded that Human Resources could speak about internships at interviews and orientations. Anna Payanzo Cotton stated that at the Business Round Table there was discussion about how RCBC could work on some of the development and integration of job preparation skills and skillset programs.

Carol Donato stated that there are 730 Wawa stores. The 110th store was just opened in Florida. Wawa has more than 30,000 associates. There is one union for dairy drivers, but everyone else is an associate. Currently they do not have any internships, but are trying to develop an entry-level feeder. Carl spoke about turnover and how with new associates it is known that you are going to leave at some point. He said that finding happiness in the younger age group is a concern, but they do have a great starting pay at \$10 per hour and excellent benefits. He mentioned customer interface and how do you teach that? Carl said they also support persons with limited abilities, veterans and the elderly and that he has been with Wawa for 36 years.

Tom VonKessel stated that they are in competition with Wawa for the entry-level positions because they both offer great starting wages and benefits. Tom stated the concern of a new hire coming into the company at \$15 per hour when you have an employee that has been there for five years and is just now making the same wage.

Tony Mahon mentioned to areas: 1. Figuring out ways to help promote setting up younger people coming in, and 2. Promote the Workforce Development Board vehicle to help businesses get employees.

Carol Donato asked the question of how we get managers away from thinking of the stigma of the unemployed not wanting to work.

Workforce Development Institute Update:

Anna Payanzo Cotton spoke on the Workforce Development Institute's updates. She stated that the establishment of the Workforce Development Board brings Career Services under one umbrella so offerings go to all populations. She reported that Toby Oxholm is leading special projects, assisting President Drayton. One of the projects being analyzing use of the Joint Base and the Willingboro Campus. A recommendation is to use the joint base campus to hold courses beyond general education. John Miller stated that these would not only be offered to active military, but also to military family and spouses.

Donna Vandergrift spoke about meeting the military's needs and that since deployments are seven weeks at a time the process must be streamlined to give them access to computers or anything to meet their needs. Donna also spoke about current needs: degree for Air Force (CCAF), includes 18 general courses + CCAF. There will be a survey going out to the military base.

Anna spoke about the Willingboro Campus being underutilized. Currently it is used for overflow programming. Will be transforming to the Business campus focusing on the Route 130 corridor businesses needs that were discussed in the roundtable discussions.

Leah Arter presented a power point presentation on Education & Training Programs Update. WDI did a gap analysis with Mark Remsa and utilized the sector strategy to develop the structure. WIOA supported everything. Advanced Manufacturing is challenging because there is a bigger gap in funding and training. There are 4 areas of certification- NIMS. NTMA is building an apprenticeship program. Recipient of NSF grant- possible associate degree in Advanced Manufacturing.

Leah Arter also spoke about the Internship Fair. Some challenges are: getting the word out, getting to know employers intern needs and how they engage in internships. Workshops were provided to help students prepare for the fair. Tony Mahon asked if the timing of the Internship Fair should change or should there be additional events? Curtis Myers commented that proactive students benefit from the fair, but can be something else to last minute students. Rick Carpenter suggested looking at high school principals to see what would be the best timeframe. Drexel's internship is part of the students' education. Dan Ruotolo said that he has run a successful internship program for 25 years.

Kelly West state that the strategic plan was submitted and will resend along with the meeting calendar and job fair flyer. For the job fair there will be 100 employers divided by industry sectors. The job fair will be at a new location, The John. F. Kennedy Center, in Willingboro. It is accessible by public transportation.

An open discussion began by talking about the Department of Labor apprenticeships in retail, hospitality, healthcare, and advanced manufacturing. Nick Burdett and John Martinez spoke about the program. They are full-time and on a progressive wage scale. They are tied to industry recognized credentials. At the end, they get a certificate of completion. Work with employers to develop program-

registered apprenticeship, College Consortium – get college credit, customizable to business up to 25%.
Dan Ruotolo asked what the process was to customize more than the 25%.

Kelly West invited anyone to attend the meeting that would continue afterwards.

Tony Mahon suggested increasing meetings, elongating meetings and that there was a nice cross section of attendees.

9:30 The meeting was adjourned.