

SWIC
Youth Council
March 1, 2012
Ivy Tech Indianapolis
Fall Creek Center: Laiken and Johnson Community Rooms
Indianapolis, IN
8:30 a.m. – 9: 45 a.m.

Present: Bill Stanczykiewicz, Dr. Susan Lockwood, and Robert Hayes

Also Present: Leslie Crist, Sue Honcharuk, Elizabeth Darby, Brittany Dougherty, and Lauren Kaminski of DWD Strategic Initiatives; Robyn Minton, Region 1; Edmond O'Neal, Region 3; Deb Waymire, Region 4; Brianna Morse, Region 5; Karen Bailey and Barbara Street, Region 6; Linda Morley, Region 7; Michele Bowman, Region 9; John Corcoran, Region 8; Tony Waterson, Region 10; Bill Miller, EmployIndy; Cheryl Musgrave and Lydia Davidson, JWIB

Absent: Thomas Brink, David Entzian, Lloyd Garrison, Alishea Hawkins, Patrick Jamison, Cathy Metcalf, Terry Rodino, Sherry Seiwert, Wayne Seybold

Mr. Bill Stanczykiewicz welcomed council members and members of the public. He requested a motion to approve the December meeting minutes. However, because there were not enough members of the council present to establish a voting quorum, the minutes will be approved at the next SWIC Youth Council meeting. Additionally, all individuals present introduced themselves and stated what region or organization they represented.

The meeting began with a discussion on general thoughts of holding a Youth Council chairperson summit in the fall for all nine regional youth councils. The purpose of the summit is to provide regional youth council's the opportunity to collaborate on various initiatives, address challenges, share best practice information, and address any additional information the youth councils see beneficial.

In light of the discussion on holding a summit for regional youth councils, Mr. Stanczykiewicz asked regions to share their thoughts and feedback on the benefit of having regional youth councils. Cheryl Musgrave stated that the Joint Workforce Investment Board (JWIB) youth council is a talented group of members who are working hard to connect council members and the community to become more aware of youth programs, services, and initiatives WorkOne centers provide. She stated the youth council members are frequently requesting more information in order to strategically incorporate new plans with pre-existing plans the respective organization's already has in place in working with youth in the community.

Additionally, Barbara Street stated that Region 6's youth council is very active, however, one challenge they have encountered is many resources are localized which creates service barriers when trying to bridge out into rural areas and reach various youth populations. Many regions acknowledged similar challenges and discussed the issue of the availability of resources throughout the region. Dr. Lockwood stated it could be very beneficial that some resources are localized and not regionalized in order to efficiently serve the local population which may be in need of the immediate resource compared to an entire region.

A discussion ensued on additional challenges regions are facing in regards to regional youth councils. Deb Waymire from Region 4 reported that a major challenge they face is getting youth council members representing youth and parents of youth to attend meetings. It is important for those members to attend because they provide unique insight into serving and working with youth as well as valuable ideas from various perspectives. Edmond O'Neal from Region 3 stated that one of their biggest issues for their youth council is the various levels of knowledge regarding the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and tailoring discussions and objectives so all youth council members can understand services and youth programs

provided through WIA. Additionally, Mr. O'Neal stated that it is difficult to connect the community at times because the size of Region 3 and working with large urban and rural areas, which has proven hard to make resources available to everyone.

Other challenges were discussed by various regional members relating to the new establishment of the youth councils and educating its members and members of the community on the WorkOne system and aspects of workforce development. Furthermore, educating regional youth councils on common measures and performance-related topics proves to be a difficult task because there is not enough time to fully understand the data and all the back stories relating to data-entry. It is also difficult because there are numerous databases in which information is extracted.

Mr. Stanczykiewicz stated that the challenges mentioned could be addressed at the summit. Another aspect of the youth council that could be addressed at the summit is basic training on WIA and the challenge of youth following through with enrollment and participation in services.

Dr. Lockwood inquired about the importance of regional youth councils and examining the objectives as well as raising public awareness of initiatives, objectives, and the purpose the youth council poses to the community. One regional member stated the great part of having a regional youth council is connecting the community and region to engage members and bring diverse partners together. Mr. Bill Miller from EmployIndy stated it's great to talk about the importance of youth councils and their purpose because the impact they have on the youth they serve is very rewarding and significant. Mr. Miller cited examples of two students who won national awards and changed their life around because of the services provided to them through WIA. He also provided an example of a program to obtain a GED and in just 5 weeks of GED preparation, over 80% of the students increased 2 grade levels, 18% increased 4 grade levels, and one gentleman increased 8 grade levels in math. So, in serving youth and young adults, it's imperative to remember the importance of the work you are doing, why you are there, and the lives you are affecting.

Moreover, Ms. Robyn Minton presented on regional youth strategies applied in Region 1. When the Region 1 youth council first started working together, they initially discussed strategic initiatives and objectives to focus on throughout the year. Upon the initial meeting, they created a one pager relating to the purpose, focus, and objectives of the youth council. Over the last several meetings, an additional page was created that focused on youth elements of WIA, membership, and duties of council members. Currently, there are two objectives the youth council is working on: 1) summer jobs initiatives and 2) work readiness skills. For work readiness skills, the youth council created a survey asking employers to identify skills needed by employees. From those responses, a list of the top ten skills was compiled. A poster was also created highlighting those key skills and a letter was composed to send out to local employers, churches, and non-profits along with the poster. Currently, the youth council is working on various presentations on the poster to different community groups. Mr. Stanczykiewicz stated that he loved the idea of the posters because each of the ten work readiness skills highlighted are skills youth can control.

Additionally, Ms. Minton stated principals from area high schools have taken the work skills poster to a new level and focused on a specific skill for a duration of three weeks. Within those three weeks, teachers are encouraged to tailor activities and lessons to educate the students on the key work readiness skill and pick a winner at the end of the three weeks who has effectively displayed knowledge, understanding, and mastery of the specific skill. She states that in having the principals highly involved in this initiative, it has helped promote awareness. One outcome area the youth council is currently working on to enhance this objective is to also educate parents on these skills.

Mr. Tony Waterson presented on Region 10's strategic overview. He spoke of the challenge of being a new council and educating council members as well as community members on WorkOne and workforce development services, programs, and activities. However, one positive Mr. Waterson cited was, by having a regional youth council; it provides a great opportunity to cultivate relationships with various community

partners. Additionally, Region 10's philosophy of their youth council has three areas specifically focused on youth. These areas are 1) they are part of the community at large; 2) emerging/future workforce; and 3) development of youth assets. For each area, focus is emphasized on both internal and external activities. Furthermore, a specific focus is placed on out-of-school youth, as they are one of the hardest populations to reach.

Mr. Waterson also spoke of the hardships of dealing with disconnected youth that are hard to contact and typically do not follow through. One way Region 10 has combated the issue is by implementing a filtering process during enrollment to better assess the youth's goals and serve youth that are most in need. There is a four step enrollment process for youth that consists of an initial interview, TABE testing, another interview and attainment of appropriate documentation. He feels that this process has helped serve youth who need it the most and is also an effective strategy to gauge the youth's commitment level.

Another strategy Region 10's youth council focuses on is valuable work experience for youth. The objective of the work experience is to tailor it to specific career goals of the youth. For example, a youth was interested in becoming a veterinarian. Youth staff worked hard in order for her to obtain valuable work experience for 12 weeks in a local veterinarian office as a veterinarian technician. Because of her work experience, she is now enrolled in post-secondary education studying to be a veterinarian technician and on track to obtain her degree. Region 10 has also found it effective to find the youth first, and then acquire appropriate work experiences related to their career goals.

Mr. Waterson reported that another great outreach strategy Region 10 implements is a quarterly luncheon hosting different target audiences. The idea of the luncheon is to bring the target audience to the local WorkOne Center and educate them on various activities, initiatives, and the overall concept and process of youth programs in the WorkOne system. He feels this has worked really well to raise awareness of their services as well as engage various members of the community.

As the meeting continued, Ms. Leslie Crist presented data on the recent youth performance report. Leslie stated the Department of Labor approved for the Performance Improvement Plan and agreed with all mentioned initiatives. In the plan, four key areas were identified overarching challenges in meeting performance requirements. These four areas were: 1) data entry 2) reporting 3) connection with WIA youth and JAG, and 4) direct service provision. Furthermore, four additional aspects were identified to enable regions to better meet performance measures. These areas are: 1) Technical Assistance Guides (TAG); 2) development of WIA youth monitoring protocols; 3) connection with Adult Education; and 4) Providing performance training for JAG specialists and youth workers.

In discussing the recent performance report, questions were raised about the variations in data. Many regional members agreed that cumulative and simple reports would enable better understanding of data. Requests for standardized reports and how data is being extracted from DOL were discussed. Other questions that came about were the relevancy of the reports, accurate data reflection and reporting, and knowledge of data extraction from various data bases. Furthermore, questions, comments, concerns, and any other information regarding this topic are encouraged to be sent to Leslie.

Furthermore, Ms. Crist stated that Mr. Robert Hayes from Job Corps has agreed to attend the upcoming regional youth coordinator meeting to speak about meeting performance matrices and other strategies related to performance measures.

Mr. Stanczykiewicz encouraged member to present at the fall summit about successes in reaching the performance measures. Dr. Lockwood stated that one program the Department of Correction implements is similar to some JAG programs so she would be interested in speaking on their behalf at the summit. Another aspect she is interested in discussing at the summit is ways to connect youth from out-of-school JAG, Job Corp, and Department of Correction programs.

Ms. Elizabeth Darby gave an update on the regional and state JAG Career Development Conference (CDC). The total number of individuals allowed to attend the state CDC has not yet been determined, so an update will be sent out at a later date regarding more specific information. Ivy Tech has been wonderful to work with so far, so Elizabeth is excited for this opportunity. Additionally, please let her know if there are participants that may have trouble attending because of work and/or school. The appropriate employers and schools will be contacted to ensure students have the opportunity to participate. Mr. Stanczykiewicz stated that he is confident this event will be spectacular and thanked Elizabeth for her continued hard work planning the CDC.

Ms. Brittany Dougherty provided an update on Young Hoosier Conservation Corps (YHCC). YHCC will be implemented again this year with approximately the same number of positions available for hire as last year. Both Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) are partners again this year, too. Also, YHCC will continue to focus on females and minorities in construction-related fields as well as obtainment of Commercial Drivers Licenses through INDOT and full-time employment beyond YHCC. She asks that each region please keep a running list of potential youth for hire. Brittany will send out more information regarding YHCC as soon as it becomes available.

The 2012 Summer Jobs+ campaign information is included in the meeting packets. Please review and talk with local youth councils regarding the campaign and ways to encourage participation by local employers.

In closing, Mr. Stanczykiewicz thanked youth council members and regional members for coming to the meeting and wished everyone safe travels. There is no confirmed date for the next meeting, so please stay tuned for more information. The meeting adjourned at 9:50 am.