



# YOUTH COUNCIL

## MINUTES

Wednesday, March 13, 2013  
Merrimack Valley Workforce Investment Board  
439 South Union Street  
Lawrence, MA 01843

### Youth Council MEMBERS PRESENT:

Howard Allen, Steve Noroian, Linda Piergeorge, Michael Strem, Cal Williams, Ellen Weinhold, April Lyskowsky

### MVWIB Youth Council MEMBERS ABSENT:

Marina Acosta, Janet Allison, Irene Chalek, Tom Connors, Ed Fitzgerald, Barbara Richards, Donna Rivera, Megan Shea, Ed Warnshuis, Brad Howell, Heidi Riccio, Beverly DeSalvo

### MVWIB STAFF PRESENT:

Cristy Gomez, Mary Kivell

### OTHERS:

Lisa Berube, Lisa Coy, Denise Perrault

#### **I. Call to Order**

A quorum being present, Cal Williams called the meeting to order at 11:45 a.m.

#### **II. Approval of February 20, 2013 Minutes**

Cal then called for a motion to approve the minutes of the February 20, 2013 meeting.

**Motion by Howard Allen seconded by Steve Noroian to approve the minutes of the February 20, 2013 Youth Council meeting as submitted. Motion passed.**

#### **III. "Amp It Up" Program Poster Contest- Results**

Cristy said that many Youth Council members voted at last month's meeting for the AMP It Up Program posters. After calculating all the ballots Methuen High School student, Nicholas D'Avolio was the 1<sup>st</sup> place winner; GLTS student Cassandra Rocheleau was 2<sup>nd</sup> place winner; and GLTS student Annie Machado was third place winner. The prize for 1<sup>st</sup> place is \$250; 2<sup>nd</sup> place \$150, and 3<sup>rd</sup> place \$100. Cristy said that we need to plan the presentations and acknowledge their fine work. Cristy explained that AMP It Up is new initiative to raise awareness of opportunities in advanced manufacturing in

our region. The Kick-Off was Monday and we were awarded a \$10,000 grant (part of a \$100,000 grant distributed across the state). We will be working in conjunction with our Connecting Activities program to expand initiatives such as career days. The Posters will be used in the campaign and belong to the WIB. We received a total of 21 posters and the top 3 will be used to promote the program in flyers and on our website.

#### **IV. YouthWorks Train the Trainer Workshop Series**

Cristy said that we have designed different workshops as a result of our online program assessment and are getting ready for summer. There will be three training sessions which are open to Youth Council members and WIA Youth partners as well. The training sessions for our region will be held in Boston with Part 1: Developing Positive Self-identities on Friday, March 22<sup>nd</sup> from 11-3; Part 2: Job Search Skills on Tuesday, April 9<sup>th</sup> from 11-3; Part 3: Career Exploration on Friday, April 26<sup>th</sup> from 11-3. Cristy said that if anyone wants to attend to let her know. She also said that the information is available on the Commonwealth Corporation website.

#### **V. Youth Program Updates**

Cristy then gave the Youth Program Updates starting with the Bridging the Opportunity Gap Program (BOG). Cristy said that enrollment is 17 with 13 total employers: 7 non-profit; 5 private, and 1 public. She reported that 8 of the BOG youth attended the Customer Service Certificate training at LARE Training on 2/19/13 and 2/20/13. Of the 8 that attended, 7 passed the exam and received their certificates. The 1 youth that did not pass is going to be allowed to repeat his training after 30 days and he is sure he will pass it next time. The youth continue to work and several have had to switch worksites. Staff continues to reach out to employers. The program is doing extremely well and Cristy said that we will be requesting extra funding to allow youth to continue working until July 30, 2013.

Cristy continued with Connecting Activities stating that staff continue to reach out to students at Lawrence and Haverhill High Schools and Lawrence High Learning Center to provide students with Career Planning, Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling; Employment/Internship, Financial Literacy, Future Career Success Plan/Transition Plan, Job Coaching, Job Readiness Skills Training, MCAS Remediation, Individual Planning Goals, Work-Based Learning Plan and individual work readiness/job search assistance. Job Shadow Day is scheduled for Tuesday, March 26<sup>th</sup> and our target is 60 students.

A total of 77 students from local schools will be participating in the Construction Career Day scheduled for May 2<sup>nd</sup> at the Massachusetts Construction Career Day at the New England Laborers Training Center in Hopkinton.

The next steps for the Amp It Up are a press release and Career Exploration Workshops to inform parents and students about advanced manufacturing careers. Cristy said she would keep the Youth Council posted on the progress of Amp It Up.

Denise Perrault asked if we considered connecting with GLTS and Cristy said that we go to all the schools as needed and target those most in need of remediation.

The plan is to open the Youth Department Resource Room full time on Monday, April 1, 2013. Currently there is a volunteer tutor on Tuesday working with youth on math and reading remediation.

The YouthWorks application has been released early on 3/1/13 and we anticipate the same funding which will allow us to place 276 youth. Applications are due April 5<sup>th</sup> and pending funding youth will be required to complete 10 hours of workshops. Cal Williams asked about workshops and Cristy said they will focus on Job Readiness Skills, Safety on the Job, Career Exploration, Positive Self-Identities and Financial Literacy. Cal also said that having guest employers address the youth often has more of an impact. April Lyskowsky asked the dates of the program and Cristy said from the first week in July through the second week in August.

Cristy also said that Commonwealth Corporation has released their final report from last year and included a favorable story on one of our youth. She reported that we met all of our goals for last year.

Cristy said that under WIA the In-School Haverhill High School SNAP program has an enrollment of 23 out of the target goal of 25. Students continue to meet with their mentors and attend internship classes and are being placed in internship sites. Last quarter 7 students received incentives and 2 earned a 100% attendance incentive from the Principal. Students continue working on college applications.

## **VI. Partner's Information**

Cal then called on Youth Council members for updates on their programs. Howard Allen spoke about prior externship programs for high school or middle school teachers in STEM. He spoke about Mike Strem of Strem Chemical who had a successful externship for a chemistry teacher from Swampscott. Mike Strem then said that he had a young intern who gave up his time and is still with Strem Chemical and attending college but that the externship program in Newburyport is pretty much dead.

Howard then spoke about a job shadow at UPS thanks to Cal Williams making the connection. A Haverhill teacher attended and a requirement was to put a teaching model together which can be presented two times a year. The object is to allow students to understand that UPS is not just a brown truck but the logistics of delivering with 99% accuracy. Mike Strem also noted that having an externship requires building it into the work schedule and takes a lot of time. Howard then talked about Verizon developing externships in other parts of the country but not in New England. Before the economic downturn and the takeover of the Lawrence Public Schools we also had an externship at Polartec and Bostik with lots of discreet math and quantitative analysis.

Discussion followed on whether there is a list of possible internships and externships available in the community. Howard said that the Merrimack Valley Economic Development Council had five colleges participating and several meetings with the kinds of lists we are talking about but since the downturn that has ended.

Mike Strem asked if there would be any stipends and Cristy said they would be paid out of Connecting Activities funds. Denise Perrault shared a list of businesses that may be considered as mentors from the recent job fair.

Lisa Coy then said that YouthBuild has a new cohort with 33 youth in their academic and carpentry program. Ellen Weinhold said that the Methuen Family Self-Sufficiency program has 32 families (all single women) and she was pleased that they have their 13<sup>th</sup> home buyer who bought a two family home in Lawrence. She explained that they work on education, employment, economic self sufficiency and assets. Once they become more self sufficient the rent is raised and put in escrow and then given to them at the end of the program to use as they wish.

Denise Perrault said that the annual meeting of Lawrence Community Works is March 26<sup>th</sup> and they have an after school program and Movement City for youth.

Steve Noroian said that DMH works with individual with mental health issues to set goals. He said that out of 900 individuals 180 are young adults who are very motivated to work. He said they try to work with them to move them out of the system.

Cal Williams then reported on the NAWB Conference in Washington and brought back a legislative brief to share along with a WIA – Youth Program update highlighting the reduction in youth funding over the past three years. Cal also spoke about a meeting with Senator Warren and expressed dismay over the block grants for WIA which she said she does not support and will work to block.

## **VII. Adjournment**

**Having no further business Howard Allen made a motion to adjourn seconded by Steve Noroian. Motion passed and meeting was adjourned.**

Respectfully submitted,

*Mary Kivell*

Mary Kivell  
Recorder