



A Private-Public Partnership Serving Kalamazoo and St. Joseph Counties  
222 S. Westnedge Avenue, Kalamazoo, Michigan 49007-4628

**Workforce Development Board Meeting Minutes  
February 2, 2006**

WDB Vice Chair, Mary Oudsema called the meeting to order at 7:38 a.m. at the Upjohn Institute for Employment Research, 300 S. Westnedge Avenue, Kalamazoo, Michigan.

**Members Present:** Nasim Ansari (PS), Rick Anderson (Labor), Robin Baker (At-Large), Dennis Berkebile (PS), Thom Brennan (PS), Diana DeGraaf (PS), Diane Donovan (PS), Susan Einspahr (PS), Lisa Godfrey (PS), Jim Harrington (PS), Joe Herdus (PS), Margie Hojara-Hadsell (MRS), Chris Kadulski (DHS), Mary Oudsema (PS), Marilyn Potgiesser (PS), Bernie Stankewicz (Educ), Suprotik Stotz-Ghosh (CBO) [Membership 25, Attendance-17 (68%), PS-11 (65%)]

**Members Absent:** David Allen (Econ Dev), John Boss (Labor), Erv Heidbrink (Labor), Myra Johnson (PS), Ellen Kisinger-Rothi (CBO), Jerry Love (PS), Linda Marcon (PS), Armando Romero (PS),

**MW Staff Present:** Ben Damerow, Jeanne Konrad, Barbara Newhouse, Kathy Olsen, Craig Schreuder, Kara Stewart, Bob Straits

**Guests Present:** JoAnn Bailey (WSDC), John Davis (DHS), John Dillworth (Goodwill), Tom Drabik (PS), George Erickcek (WEUI), Curt Mastos (HRDI), Tim McGann (LMC), Michele O'Connell (Y.O.U.), Karika Phillips (Y.O.U.), Dolly Roselip (Y.O.U.), Tom Rueber (Y.O.U.)

**I. Recognitions**

On behalf of the WDB, Mary Oudsema presented a plaque to Michele O'Connell recognizing her as the 2006 Alumni of the Year representing Kalamazoo and St. Joseph Counties. Michele thanked the WDB for selecting her to receive the award. She also thanked the Adult Program staff at Y.O.U. for recognizing her potential. She stated she was thankful for the education, confidence and most importantly, a job and she was looking forward to working with staff at Y.O.U. and Michigan Works.

Mary Oudsema presented a plaque to outgoing chair, Thom Brennan in recognition of his distinguished and devoted service as 2004 and 2005 chairperson of the Kalamazoo-St. Joseph Workforce Development Board.

**II. Approval of Minutes**

**Motion made by Marilyn Potgiesser and supported by Thom Brennan to approve the WDB meeting minutes of November 5, 2005. Motion carried.**

**Motion made by Susan Einspahr and supported by Thom Brennan to approve the WDB Executive Committee Meeting minutes of January 5, 2006. Motion carried.**

**III. Program: Economic Outlook - George Erickcek, W. E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research**

George Erickcek gave a presentation on the economic outlook for Kalamazoo and St. Joseph Counties. The presentation included local and national data, the impact of productivity gains on employment, the state's economy, local trends for Kalamazoo and St. Joseph Counties, and an economic forecast for Kalamazoo County. A copy of the Power Point presentation was distributed to those in attendance.

**IV. Committee Reports**

**A. Executive Committee**

- 1. DHS Employment Related Supportive Services** – Craig Schreuder requested Board consideration and approval of the Department of Human Services (DHS) Employment Related Supportive Services Plan. He reported the purpose of the plan is to transfer \$20,000 of Temporary Assistance for Needy Family Funds (TANF) from the Michigan DHS to the Kalamazoo-St. Joseph MW Agency for the purpose of providing employment-related supportive services to Family Independence Program (FIP) clients enrolled in the Work First Program in St. Joseph County.

**Motion made by Lisa Godfrey and supported by Thom Brennan to approve the DHS Employment Related Supportive Services Plan. Motion carried.**

2. **Michigan Prisoner Re-Entry Initiative** – Ben Damerow reported Michigan is one of the top ten states with high recidivism rates for parolees. In the State’s effort to reduce the recidivism rate, Kalamazoo County was selected as one of eight pilot sites for the Michigan Prisoner Re-Entry Initiative. The Initiative is a three phase program that begins with “Getting Ready Workshops” held with prisoners prior to their release. During the “Going Home” or “ReEntry” phase, staff from local agencies meet with prisoners at the prisons during the final month prior to their release to assess needs and set up appointments for their first day of release. The third phase, “Transition into the Community,” can last up to two years. Twenty community organizations are collaborating for this initiative and Goodwill Industries was selected as the service provider for workforce development services. Proposals to provide mentoring services are due on February 15. The State is planning to expand this initiative to seven additional counties in the second year and the entire state by the third year.
3. **Healthcare Apprenticeships** - Jeanne Konrad gave an update on the Healthcare Apprenticeship Program designed to develop entry level workers and create lattices for career growth in the healthcare industry. The apprenticeship standards include related training and education necessary to complete the apprenticeship program. Jeanne reported she has been meeting with local employers and three have expressed interest in moving forward with the Apprenticeship Program. She is also working with KVCC regarding the resources in education necessary for this initiative. To promote the initiative, Jeanne reported she will be giving a presentation at the Kalamazoo Chamber’s Job Summit, at the Michigan Conference on Career Education later this month, and at the Long-Term Care Conference in March. She reported there was an article in the January 29, 2006 issue of the Kalamazoo Gazette regarding the Apprenticeship Program and copies were made available at the meeting for attendees to review.

**B. Monitoring and Evaluation Committee** – Suprotik Stotz-Ghosh reported Linda Marcon agreed to Co-Chair the Monitoring and Evaluation Committee meeting. In January, the committee met at Youth Opportunities Unlimited to review the Youth Program and services for both counties. Committee members interviewed five program participants who had many positive comments about their experiences in the program and the support they received from the Y.O.U. staff. Suprotik also reported he has been facilitating meetings with subcontractor staff for the purpose of examining the Michigan Works System, strengthening local partnerships with business and education, and improving the local MW image.

**C. Marketing Committee** – Kathy Olsen reported Michele O’Connell was honored at the 2006 Alumni Event held in Lansing last week and she was one of only a few who were chosen to be videotaped for a Michigan Works promotional video.

**V. Staff Reports** – Bob Straits reported youth program performance is slightly lower than expected; however should be offset by higher numbers during the latter quarters of the year when most youth participants exit the program. Other program performance is on target. At the State level, Paula Cunningham, president of Lansing Community College, was recently appointed to take over as the Director of Labor and Economic Growth. At the federal level, the reauthorization of TANF is proceeding; however the program design is going in the opposite direction of the State’s planning. Minimal changes are expected with the reauthorization of the Workforce Investment Act. The Kalamazoo County Board of Commissioners appointed Nasim Ansari to replace Tom Drabik on the Workforce Development Board.

**VI. Member Time** – Suprotik Stotz-Ghosh announced free tax service is again being offered at numerous locations for low income individuals. Additional information regarding locations and times can be obtained by calling 211, the County’s Information Center.

**VII. Citizen’s Time** – Tom Drabik announced the Model Program has evolved into Employment Retention Solutions and there will be a panel presentation at the Kalamazoo Chamber’s Job Summit.

**VIII. Next Meeting** - The next full WDB meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 4, 2006 at a location to be announced. The next Monitoring and Evaluation Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 16, 2006 at the Kalamazoo Michigan Works Service Center, and the next Executive Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 2, 2006 at 7:30 a.m. at the Michigan Works administration office.

**IX. Adjournment** – With no further business to discuss the meeting was adjourned at 9:00 a.m.