



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

Workforce Development Board Executive Committee Meeting Minutes December 4, 2008

Workforce Development Board Chair, Mary Oudsema, called the meeting to order at 7:08 a.m. at the W. E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research, 300 S. Westnedge Avenue, Kalamazoo, Michigan.

Executive Committee Members Present: Thom Brennan (PS), Susan Einspahr (PS) Mary Oudsema (PS), Marilyn Potgiesser (PS)

Members Absent: Dennis Berkebile (PS), Lisa Godfrey (PS), Joe Herdus (PS), Jerry Love (PS), Barry Visel (PS)

MW Staff Present: Kathy Olsen, Craig Schreuder, Kara Stewart, Suprotik Stotz-Ghosh

Guests Present: John Davis (DHS), Jill Ferris (MRS), Bob Harrison (LMC), Jennifer Lemon (Goodwill), Cincy Sullivan (KRESA/Y.O.U.)

In the absence of a quorum, no official business was conducted. The following reports were provided:

STAFF REPORTS

Program Status Report - Suprotik Stotz-Ghosh reported two program status reports were included in the agenda package. The first report provides data for the current program year. He noted the goal for older youth is employment and for younger youth the goal is education. For the Jobs Education and Training (JET) Programs, the contract goals for employment and retention were increased to meet federal requirements and there is a strong emphasis on work participation rates. Although the job market is tight, the Michigan Prisoner Re-entry Initiative (MPRI) continues to employ approximately 24% of the participants. Members requested that employment at 90 days be added to the MPRI section of the report. The Comprehensive Approaches to Sex Offender Management (CASOM) grant expires in March 2009 and the Securing Children's Opportunities, Possibilities and Empowerment (SCOPE) Program expires in March 2010. The funding for both was designed to create models for statewide implementation. The second report included data regarding annual performance and demographics for the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) programs that ended June 30, 2008 and the JET programs that ended September 30, 2008. It was noted that the number of female participants in JET far exceeds the number of males and that a large percentage of JET participants have an education level that is below 12th grade.

Legislative Update – Suprotik Stotz-Ghosh reported recent news in the media has highlighted a stimulus package being drafted by President Elect Obama's administration that includes creating and retaining 2.5 million jobs through rebuilding our country's infrastructure and public sector employment. Staff anticipates that a portion of those programs would be implemented through Michigan Works. Governor Granholm signed an Executive Order cutting the State's budget for this fiscal year that may affect programs funded with General Purpose/General Fund (GF/GP) dollars.

Program Plans – Kara Stewart reported the Kalamazoo-St. Joseph Michigan Works Area (MWA) plans to use the Disability Program Navigator (DPN) Grant funding in the amount of \$13,684 that includes carry-in, for the professional development of staff, the purchase of assistive technology equipment, and capacity building of MWA professionals. The Disability Awareness Resource Team (DART), a standing advisory committee of the Kalamazoo-St. Joseph Workforce Development Board, will assist in the planning and use of these funds. Funding in the amount of \$37,195 will enable additional training opportunities for eligible individuals under the No Worker Left Behind (NWLB) initiative. This funding may only be used to support direct training and is capped at \$5,000 per year for two years (for a total of \$10,000) for each individual. Funding must be secured from other sources for "wrap-around" services such as assessments, training referral, job placement assistance and follow-up services. Additional funding in the amount of \$177,000 is being requested to provide a wide range of training for special projects, target groups and individuals eligible under the NWLB guidelines. Funds from this source will be available for "wrap-around" services; however, at least 60% of the funds must be identified for direct training expenses.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Executive Committee – Mary Oudsema requested input regarding the program for the February 2009 quarterly Workforce Development Board meeting. She reported previously announced plans were to recognize the alumni nominees and their employers at the February meeting. Other possible program ideas included: updates on MPRI, DART, and the Education Advisory Group (EAG); training options available at Kalamazoo Valley Community College (KVCC); and a presentation on Labor Market Information (LMI). It was suggested that the LMI presentation be coordinated with training for front-line staff. The consensus of members present was that the February agenda include recognition of the alumni nominees; brief updates on MPRI, DART and EAG; and a panel presentation on training from KVCC.

Monitoring and Evaluation Committee – Kathy Olsen reported the Monitoring and Evaluation Committee reviewed the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Adult Program and services during the month of November. The four participants interviewed were extremely grateful for the assistance they received and all acknowledged the caring staff; in particular, they mentioned Tom Rueber and Shelly Bixler-Martin. The participants were enrolled in a variety of training options that included PC technician, Certified Medical Administrative Assistant / Certified Medical Biller, RN and truck driving. The service provider staff reported a significant number of individuals have expressed interest in training through the No Worker Left Behind (NWLB) initiative; however, many do not follow through. Staff is making efforts to diversify training options such as the automotive, welding and police academy programs at KVCC; however, CNA training continues to be the most popular. Future training possibilities include a Hospitality Academy as well as something with the film industry. Kathy reported dual program enrollments are increasing which helps to maximize dollars available for support to each of the individuals. Service provider staff has been meeting with Borgess Healthcare to implement On-the-Job (OJT) training for new hires. She also reported service provider staff indicated that most of the hurdles they face are due to the economy and that the support from Michigan Works admin staff and the Monitoring and Evaluation Committee has never been better.

Marketing Committee – Kathy Olsen reported Michigan Works was one of the sponsors for the Kalamazoo Leadership Breakfast in November featuring speaker Bill Strickland. The sponsorship included recognition on the Chamber web page, on the event program and the MW logo was displayed in the front of the room at the event. The Road Construction Apprenticeship Readiness (RCAR) Training was featured as a Best Practice at the State's Poverty Summit with over 5,000 individuals in attendance. Representatives from Kalamazoo community organizations gave the presentation on RCAR with Andy Levin moderating the session. RCAR was also featured as a best practice at the State's WorkKeys Conference in November. Panelists included Marsha Black-Watson, MDLEG; Alecia Suber, MDOT; Jim Hahn, Carpenters Training Director; JoAnn Bailey, RCAR instructor, and Kathy Olsen representing Michigan Works. Kathy reported advertisements were purchased in the Business Review, the Kalamazoo Chamber of Commerce map project and in the annual program for the St. Joseph County FOP Benefit. A system-wide MW orientation and celebration was held on November 4 for all staff located at the MW service centers in Kalamazoo and Three Rivers. The agenda for the training included a presentation on the Business Services model. A number of door prizes donated by Board members, MW staff and the MW Association were given away during the training. Kathy expressed thanks on behalf of all staff for the door prizes that were donated. Upcoming events include a MW sponsorship for the annual Walk for the Homeless, the annual Alumni Award celebration in Lansing on February 3, 2009, local recognition of alumni nominees at the February 5 WDB meeting, and framed certificates for employers upon completion of OJT training.

Suprotik Stotz-Ghosh reported a number of individuals met with Bill Strickland following the Leadership Breakfast event for further discussion. Individuals were interested in taking portions of the model and implementing them in the Kalamazoo area and a team will be traveling to Pittsburg to further explore options. The Kalamazoo Community and Irving S. Gilmore Foundations will provide a convening role for future meetings and Michigan Works has offered to take the lead in discussion as it pertains to youth in workforce development. Susan Einspahr noted that the Welding Program at Holly Fisher's Smart Shop is an excellent example of a similar training already in place in Kalamazoo.

MEMBERS TIME – Marilyn Potgiesser reported she has taken on a new responsibility at Bronson and will be heading up Patient and Family Centered Care. She stated that Bronson is very supportive of the work of the Workforce Development Board and has recommended a replacement. Kathy Olsen reported the appointment of a replacement will follow the State's nomination procedures.

CITIZENS TIME – John Davis reported Martin Luther King III was the keynote speaker at the Michigan Poverty Summit. He participated in a focus group on housing and indicated that a lot can be done in our State's systems that does not require additional resources. Kathy Olsen reported she participated in a focus group on workforce development and participants in attendance expressed their gratitude for the use of fax machines and computers at the Kalamazoo Michigan Works and for the assistance of helpful staff.

Cincy Sullivan reported on the increase in traffic at the Service Centers as a result of individuals filing new unemployment claims and the extension of unemployment benefits to Michigan residents who are currently receiving unemployment payments. She explained that in order to receive unemployment benefits, individuals must post their resume on the Michigan Talent Bank and doing so must be verified at a Michigan Works Service Center. She reported the telephone and Internet are available at the Service Centers for these customers to use; however the customers are experiencing difficulty getting connected to the Unemployment Insurance Agency via the telephone line to file their claim. The UI office is recommending that customers use the Internet for faster filing but they are finding that the computer connection to the UI website is extremely slow. Per a directive from the Unemployment Agency, Michigan Works staff can assist customers in following directions; however, they cannot interpret UI policy. Customer survey cards have continued to show excellent or good service throughout this period of high traffic and there have been no fair or poor ratings. She attributed this to the care and sensitivity of the Service Center staff.

Cincy reported staff provided Rapid Response services to employees who were laid off at Wisconsin Air. MPI recently announced layoffs but declined Rapid Response services. On a positive note, Cincy reported that staff processed 1,060 applications for recently announced job openings at Graphic Packaging and they are also working with another local company that plans to hire 30 new employees. In January, staff will be working with Kaiser Aluminum to assist with their hiring process and with the Calhoun County Michigan Works to assist with the hiring process for a solar energy company. Michigan Works partnered with Kalamazoo Public Schools Adult Education and now offers GED classes at the Kalamazoo Service Center and with Housing Resources to offer on-site housing assistance at the Kalamazoo Service Center.

NEXT MEETING – The next Executive Committee meeting is scheduled for 7:30 a.m. on Thursday, January 8, 2009 at the W.E. Upjohn Institute, 300 South Westnedge Avenue, Kalamazoo, Michigan. (It was noted this is the second Thursday due to the New Years holiday.) The next full Workforce Development Board is scheduled for 8:00 a.m. on Thursday, February 5, 2009 at the W. E. Upjohn Institute. The next Monitoring and Evaluation Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 15, 2009 from 7:30 – 9:00 a.m. at the Youth Opportunities Unlimited office located at 422 East South Street, Kalamazoo, Michigan.

ADJOURNMENT – The meeting was adjourned at 8:51 a.m.

Craig Schreuder _____ Date

Mary Oudsema _____ Date