

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
Executive Committee Meeting
April 3, 2003

Chair Marilyn Potgiesser called the Workforce Development Board Executive Committee meeting to order at 7:32 a.m. at Michigan Works!/Upjohn Institute, 536 West Lovell Street, Kalamazoo, Michigan.

Committee Members Present: Thom Brennan (PS), Susan Einspahr (PS), Lisa Godfrey (PS), Joe Herdus (PS), Jerry Love (PS), Mary Oudsema (PS), Marilyn Potgiesser (PS), Suprotik Stotz-Ghosh (CBO) Membership – 9, Attendance –8 (89%), PS (88%)

Other Members Present: Armando Romero (PS)

Guests Present: David Artley (Kalamazoo County), Juanita Holley (Rep. Lipsey's 60th District Office)

Staff Present: Kathy Olsen, Craig Schreuder, Bob Straits

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: To approve the Workforce Development Board Executive Committee meeting minutes of
Thom Brennan March 6, 2003. **Support:** Jerry Love. **Vote:** Unanimously approved.

II. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Executive Committee

1. WDB Appointment –

Motion: To approve the appointment of David Allen, replacing Bill Cotton (retired) and representing
Joe Herdus Economic Development for the balance of a two-year term beginning immediately and ending December 31, 2003. **Support:** Susan Einspahr. **Vote:** Unanimously approved.

2. RFP Reviews – Craig Schreuder distributed a schedule of activities pertaining to the Request for Proposals (RFP) for WIA Adult and Dislocated Workers, Employment Services (ES), One-Stop Operator and Welfare Reform Programs. Members agreed that two teams would be formed for the RFP review process. One RFP team will review the adult, dislocated worker and ES proposals on Thursday, May 8 [Due to scheduling conflicts, this date was changed to Friday, May 9.] from 7:30 – 9:00 a.m. and the Welfare Reform proposals will be reviewed on Thursday, May 22 from 7:30 – 9:00 a.m. by the second team.

3. Poverty Initiative – Thom Brennan reported the County of Kalamazoo, the City of Kalamazoo and other partners held a joint meeting on March 11 where the major community entities signed a resolution to alleviate the causes of poverty in Kalamazoo County. Thom introduced David Artley from the Poverty Task Force. Mr. Artley reported when the living wage issue was on the ballot, there was an agreement between the Kalamazoo Chamber and the Living Wage Coalition that no matter what happened, something needed to be done to address poverty. After the election, a number of groups met to work on issues and created a concept paper as to how to address poverty by enhancing existing resources and without interfering with agencies and their influence in the community. Mr. Artley led the Executive Committee in a discussion of four poverty issues. The issues discussed included: perceived gaps in employment; barriers to employment; the top things that work to secure and maintain employment for those traditionally unemployed; and specific programs the poverty steering committee could and should take on. Punctuality, dependability; basic reading, writing and math; problem solving and the ability to work with others along with the willingness of employers to hire were the **top ranking recognized gaps** for individuals looking for and maintaining employment. An individual's self-esteem and motivation were viewed to be the second ranked gap.

Job Availability and lack of financial support for supportive services in the human services and education system were perceived to be the **top two barriers to employment**. Leveraging resources of time, materials and money; the ability to try different things with different people along with extended support for mentoring and coaching throughout the process; and starting at a younger age to teach basic skills and to break the cycle were seen to be **things that work** to secure and maintain employment for those traditionally unemployed. Members agreed there are many resources available in the community and there are many individuals not taking advantage of what is available. Linking people with services could be improved as well as creating a broader community awareness that poverty exists. Members also stressed the importance of gathering information from those currently living in poverty regarding what they viewed as gaps and barriers and what would work for them. Mr. Artley stated he would provide the committee with a summary of the discussion. Members were invited to attend the next meeting of the Poverty Steering Committee scheduled for Wednesday, May 28 at 10:00 a.m. at the Kalamazoo Region Chamber of Commerce.

4. **Planning for the May Quarterly Meeting** – Kathy Olsen announced the May 1 WDB Executive and Full Board meetings will be held at the Three Rivers Community Center. Members requested a legislative update and Juanita Holley from Representative Lipsey's 60th District office offered to give this presentation. Suprotik Stotz-Ghosh and Bob Straits agreed to give an update of the Poverty Initiative. Following the Monitoring and Evaluation Committee's report, members also agreed to have Suprotik give a presentation on the United Way's logic model tool used for program evaluation.

B. Monitoring and Evaluation Committee – Jerry Love reported the Monitoring and Evaluation Committee met at Employment and Training Connections (ETC) in Three Rivers to review the Welfare Reform Programs. At the review ETC staff highlighted what is being done in an attempt to increase the 90-day retention rate. Participants are given a quarterly newsletter that includes updates on program services. Curriculum for a character-building program is being used in the classroom. ETC staff attended training where they learned ways to transition from giving customer service to achieving customer satisfaction. ETC staff are incorporating field trips for program participants to area businesses in order that participants can learn more about the business and career ladders. Participants conduct job search in the afternoons, however when this was questioned ETC staff noted changes to the schedule are made on an individual basis based on postings or notices of job openings and a participant's desire to apply. ETC staff noted they are seeing many first time customers with a forty percent increase in the food assistance program. Five participants were interviewed. Overall, the participants were quite motivated and all indicated the caseworkers were extremely helpful mentors. One person had been through hard times with incarceration, a divorce and his first job was at McDonalds. He was able to advance to better paying jobs with more skill requirements because of his attitude and effort. The state was interested in observing the Monitoring Committee's process for reviewing subcontractors and Lisa Berger from the Michigan Department of Career Development spent a short time at the meeting observing the process. Lisa spent time after the meeting touring the service center and learning about the employment services available in St. Joseph County. Bob Straits reported the state is impressed that the Kalamazoo-St. Joseph Workforce Board members meet with participants. Jerry reported the committee reviewed the logic model evaluation tool used by the Greater Kalamazoo United Way. The committee agreed the logic model would be a good tool to use for evaluating Michigan Works programs. Staff from the United Way are available to train Michigan Works subcontractors in the use of this model.

C. Marketing Committee –Kathy Olsen reported employment service is busy with job fairs, business expos and career fairs. ES will have a presence at GOCC and KVCC for their student career fairs and is also participating in the Minority and Women owned business event at the Fetzer Center that will focus on business needs for a targeted population. In May, MW is partnering with the Greater Kalamazoo United Way for the Youth Job Fair to be held at the Youth Development Center and with the Kalamazoo Chamber for the Business Expo to be held at the Kalamazoo Radisson. MW is partnering with the Hope Network out of Grand Rapids in support of the HopeWorks Project. HopeWorks will reach out to faith-based organizations to assist them in enhancing their supportive services and to educate them about the services available and how to access them at the service centers. The HopeWorks Project can supply organizations with a computer and Internet access so that volunteers and staff, on-site at their facilities, can help persons seeking employment.

III. STAFF REPORTS

A. Program Status – Bob Straits reported goals are being met in most areas. There are some issues regarding the MIS system and performance standards. MIS reports are not reflecting the correct end dates and steps are being taken to rectify the situation. The Kalamazoo Gazette is doing an article on the summer youth program and a reporter will be calling some of the board members. At one time over 1,000 youth were enrolled in the summer program. This year the number served will be around fifty. In general, this is not a good year for youth employment.

