



**Workforce Alliance (WA) Youth Employment Committee
Meeting Minutes
October 15, 2024 – 11:30 AM**

1. Welcome and Introductions

The Workforce Alliance Youth Employment Committee assembled via ZOOM. Chair Rod Blackburn called the meeting to order and self-introductions were given.

2. Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Youth Program Final Performance for Program Year 2023

Denise Houston reported on final performance outcomes for the WIOA Youth program for Program Year 2023, which ended June 30, 2024. The data was finalized at the end of August and has been submitted to the Department of Labor. The program met or exceeded all performance measure standards. It is doing particularly well in regard to the wage levels that the youth are earning. The performance goals for 2024 and 2025 have increased.

Report was received and filed.

3. 2024 Youth Employment Project (YEP) Final Report

Amanda Duncan presented the final report for the YEP program in 2024, which included some large increases compared to last year. The program served over 5,700 students and 2,800 gained employment, which equated to just over \$4,000,000 in estimated wages earned. The report has a breakdown of employers hiring by high school summer internships versus those that hire seasonal, part-time or temporary positions. A few new features have been added to the report from last year including tracking those that participated in Roadtrip Nation activities such as the number students engaging on the platform, visiting the hub and website, and completing the curriculum. Reporting has also been added in regard to student engagement with the Transfr virtual reality headsets including a breakdown of the modules used by those students. Currently, the WA has three headsets; they are very popular with students and there has been a large request for use. Transfr continues to add new modules. Each headset costs \$5,000 a year. Staff have applied for grants in order to obtain funds for the purchase of additional headsets. Other Local Areas in Kansas will be contacted in regard to the possibility of partnering on a deal to buy more headsets.

Report was received and filed.

4. 2025 Youth Employment Project Planning

The WA convened project and community partners for a 2025 YEP planning session on September 30, 2024; a follow up of that meeting was provided. Committee members are the core group of this meeting with other community partners, schools and employers invited to join the discussion in an effort to identify strategies to achieve program goals. Meeting outcomes included working on a call to action to business and industry for hiring youth by demonstrating to them that doing so is an investment in the future of their business as it creates career awareness and builds a workforce. There is a need for a detailed tool kit for employers that can simplify the process of hiring youth. It was suggested that key employers be identified in order to plan outreach. Emerging careers, such as in the mental health industry also need to be identified and targeted. The Kansas Leadership Center is creating some programming around youth and there is a potential for some collaboration. Review of career interest surveys is necessary in order to do employer outreach and match up with appropriate students. A follow up planning meeting will be scheduled prior to the Thanksgiving holiday in order to develop identifiable goals that all will start working on collectively. Staff will contact committee members with potential dates and schedule the



convening when most can attend. It was noted that with full employment, employers have had the opportunity to be more open to hiring youth than they have ever been. Part of planning for the future needs to include looking at strategies for when full employment is not the case such as researching careers with traditionally hard to fill positions such as social work, teaching, etc. There is an opportunity to bring local governments on as employers to host internships. The WA has been reaching out to the Regional Economic Area Partnership and the Chief Elected Officials Board in this regard. Jill Kuehny, CEOB member, has proposed a challenge for each member to hire at least one intern. Tools have been requested prior to the first of the year to make the process of hiring a young person simple including an outline of what an internship looks like as well as how to recruit and onboard interns.

5. **Partner Updates**

- Tyrone Baker, YMCA reported that the Job Prep program has a goal of enrolling 350 kids this year and expressed gratitude for the ongoing support of the WA and the cross referral partnership between the two organizations.
- Na'shell Williams shared that the City Wichita Way to Work program would begin taking applications in January and is considering adding new partners and additional hours. She also suggested that potential changes to engagement with 17-year-old participants may be made. She expressed appreciation for the WA hiring interns this summer and heard positive feedback from them about their experiences.
- New Work Based Learning data has been received and will be shared with the Committee at its next meeting in December.

6. **Consent Agenda**

Approval of the minutes from the August 20, 2024 meeting were presented to the Committee for review and/or approval.

Alana McNary (Debbie Kennedy) moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Motion was adopted.

7. **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:11 PM.

Attendees:

LWDB Youth Employment Committee Members

Rod Blackburn, Partners in Education, Chair

Stacia Kaylor, Textron Aviation

Debbie Kennedy, Wichita Children's Home

Tyrone Baker, YMCA

Alana McNary, Professional Engineering

Consultants

Na'Shell Williams for Sally Stang, City of Wichita

Lori Hladik for Jakobe Davidson, Spirit

AeroSystems

Staff/Guests

Stephanie Anderson

Marcy Aycok

Chelsea Daniel

Amanda Duncan

Denise Houston

Keith Lawing

Shirley Lindhorst

KC Schumacher

Lindsay McWilliams, Goodwill