**Workforce Alliance (WA) Youth Employment Committee**

**Meeting Minutes**

**August 20, 2024 – 11:30 AM*­­***

1. **Welcome and Introductions**

The Workforce Alliance Youth Employment Committee assembled via ZOOM. The meeting was called to order and self-introductions were given. Stacia Kaylor, K-12 coordinator at Textron Aviation, was introduced as a new committee member replacing Phet Namphengsone.

1. **Program Updates**

KC Schumacher shared an update on the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Youth program. Youth staff and leadership continue to focus on expanding the program. Orientation sessions are offered virtually twice a week, which addresses transportation and childcare barriers that many participants experience. The fourth Roadtrip Nation (RTN) class in partnership with CPRF has been completed. Currently, seven participants have successfully completed the program; the classes have helped participants narrow down career interests and find relevant work experience. A new Youth Services Specialist has been hired and is conducting site visits, completing annual documentation for all work experience employers, seeking new work experience opportunities for youth participants and performing community outreach to attract more youth to the program. WIOA Youth program enrollment has exhibited sustained growth, increasing from 88 participants in January to 108 in July 2024. There is a program goal of 150, but staff could and wish to serve around 200. It was noted that the RTN tools are being used in the schools in addition to CPRF partnership. Blackburn asked about usage and outcomes for the RTN project and would like to see data on funds invested and the resulting outcomes of the program. Staff will prepare a detailed report for the next meeting to share with committee members. Staff have also been in discussions with RTN about how to take the program to the next level and inject some additional resources in order to grow the impact of it.

Denise Houston reported on performance outcomes for the WIOA Youth program for Program Year 2023, which ended June 30, 2024. Final performance data for the program year will be entered by August 31, 2024. Preliminarily, the program is exceeding all performance measure standards.

Amanda Duncan provided an update on the statewide Work-Based Learning (WBL)program. Final program year 2023 numbers were presented that include data from each workforce area across the state; many outcomes have improved from last year. Each local area receives funds from the state for WBL activities. In Local Area IV, two WBL Intermediaries are funded, which allows the WA to partner with schools and work with students on career exploration activities. The report includes tracking students by career pathway in high school, type of activities participants engaged in, number of referrals into WIOA Youth program and a breakdown of school districts, which has grown significantly statewide.

*Report was received and filed.*

1. **2024 Youth Employment Project (YEP) Update**

Duncan provided an update on activities and goals for YEP in 2024. The data is preliminary and final results will be shared when available. 5,765 students were served less than the goal of 6,000. Compared to last year, there was less workshop participation, about the same number of badges and certificates earned and fewer participants in Camp HYPE due to a decrease in funding and a camp cancellation. There was slightly less employer engagement overall; however, more employers participated in job fairs. Fewer students participated in job fairs, but more were involved in internships. The number of outreach events increased and referrals to the WIOA Youth Program were about the same. Messaging and outreach about the program continue to be made in communities to employers with the hope of creating more summer internship opportunities or providing other opportunities that contribute to youth employment for young people that can be tailored to student career interest and goals. Chelsea Daniel, WA Work Experience Coordinator, provided information on the Career Camp HYPE’s that took place this summer. Very positive feedback has been received from employers and youth and more feedback has been received from parents this year, which has also been very good. Through partner collaborations and business connections, the camps provided classroom presentations, tours and in-depth financial literacy for participants. The camps also include the use of virtual reality equipment, which allows students to experience virtual hands on experiences in many different types of careers. Staff have applied for a distance learning grant, which would provide the necessary funding for additional headsets for three years. Staff are also continuing to work to expand the internship model outside of the Wichita area.

*Report was received and filed.*

1. **2025 Youth Employment Project Planning**

Staff discussed scheduling a convening of community partners to participate in planning for the 2025 Youth Employment Project (YEP). 2025 goals were proposed and members were asked for feedback. The convening would include discussion on key goals, data tracking and reporting, building on successes and looking at way to improve aspects that were less effective. The focus is to increase the number of employers offering work experiences that relate to a young person’s career interest and goals. Committee members would be the core group of this meeting with other community partners, schools and employers being invited to join the discussion in an effort to identify strategies to achieve program goals. Staff will contact committee members with potential dates and schedule the convening when most can attend. The Committee agreed on the need to gather more success stories and anecdotal evidence to support the cause of increased employer engagement. More tracking of outcomes of students in paid and unpaid internships that result in employment with that employer is also needed. Lawing emphasized the importance of demonstrating a positive return on investment (ROI) to encourage more businesses to participate and suggested diversifying employer partnerships to provide more opportunities for young people.

1. **Partner Updates**

* The YMCA’s Job Prep program was very successful summer again this year with 240 fully graduating from the program, which included a 12 week learning session and 10 weeks of employment over the summer. Approximately the same number of young people were served this year as last and YMCA staff are looking to increase that number in 2025.
* Textron had 150 interns this summer; 400 young people applied. Interns are between 16 and 19 years of age. Interns were placed across all departments of the organization with attempts made to match them with their career interests.
* WSU Tech has seen a significant increase in first-time freshman enrollment, this is being attributed this to successful summer community programs like Camp HYPE.

1. **Consent Agenda**

Approval of the minutes from the February 20, 2024 meeting and Program Year 2023 (PY23) budget update were presented to the Committee for review and/or approval. Chad Pettera provided an update on the budget, noting that all work-based learning funds were expended by May, but new funds had been received in July. RTN expenses that were supposed to be billed last year were billed this year and make up most of the outreach and capacity building line item on the YEP budget.

*Debbie Kennedy (Cody Griffin) moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Motion was adopted.*

1. **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:35 PM.

**Attendees:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *LWDB Youth Employment Committee Members* | *Staff/Guests* |
| Rod Blackburn, Partners in Education, Chair  Cody Griffin, WSU Tech  Stacia Kaylor, Textron Aviation  Debbie Kennedy, Wichita Children’s Home  Mim McKenzie, YMCA  Alana McNary, Professional Engineering Consultants | Auston Cooley  Chelsea Daniel  Amanda Hill  Denise Houston  Keith Lawing  Shirley Lindhorst  Chad Pettera  KC Schumacher | |