



Benton-Franklin Workforce Development Council (BFWDC)
 Adult & Employer Linkage (AEL) Committee
 May 18th, 2023, 4:00 p.m. – Zoom.

<u>Present</u>	<u>Excused</u>	<u>BFWDC Staff</u>	<u>BFWDC Staff Excused</u>	<u>Guests</u>
Todd Samuel	Adolfo de Leon	Tiffany Alviso	Cynthia Garcia	Crystal Bright
Kate McAteer	Jennie Weber	David Chavey-Reynaud	Cyndelle Howell	Israel Delamora
Michael Lee		Jessie Cardwell		Jose Sandoval
Karl Dye		Becky Tuno		Juan Ortiz
		Isaac Estrada		Keri Lobdell
		Carya Bair		Lisandra Valencia
				Rebecca Williamson
				Ric Valdez
				Selma Velagic
				Scott Koopman

Call to Order

Todd Samuel started the meeting by welcoming everyone and called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m.

Jessie read the roll call while everyone responded. The meeting quorum was present. She asked guests and system partners to put their names and organization in the chat and thanked everyone for joining the meeting.

Motion to approve AEL Committee Meeting Minutes

The April 20th, 2023, Adult & Employer Linkage Committee meeting minutes were provided for members to review.

Karl Dye motioned to approve the April 20th, 2023, AEL Committee Minutes as presented, seconded by Todd Samuel; the motion was carried unanimously to approval.

National Association of Job Assistance (NAJA) Takeaways – Jessie

Child Care – National lack of availability, expensive, disproportionate effect on women. This issue must be addressed as access to childcare and the costs are significant challenges for parents. Some strategies mentioned were to look for grants to support childcare expenses and help those parents afford childcare to reach their employment goals. This helps promote providers' stability and encourages more involvement in the childcare system. Another strategy was to promote incentives for those in the informal childcare systems, such as family, friends, and neighbors who provide this support, and then invest more in childcare workers.

Todd Samuel, Board Chair, asked if this was something that the local (Benton and Franklin Counties) Workforce Centers were struggling with as well.

Jessie explained that part of the problem is access to childcare; childcare agencies are actively looking for talent so that they can open space to enroll more children. In childcare facilities and schools, there's a ratio of the number of kids to staff allowed. And so, this is an issue in their area. Furthermore, when they do get access, childcare costs are so high that it's hard for employees to afford it, and they decide not to return to work.

Board Member Karl Dye shared that a cluster of North Richland employers, including PNNL, WSU Tri-Cities, Energy Northwest, and Hanford contractors, have been looking at solutions amongst their HR professionals to develop a solution for their workforce regarding childcare. They're working with the Association of Western Businesses on childcare alternatives. Additionally, Karl shared that their team at TRIDEC has been meeting with their local Department of Commerce representative, Norman Chavez, as they have federal funds to help find a solution. There

has been discussion around piloting the Tri-Cities to address the gap. Karl expanded that it could involve a study of employers to obtain better data around this across the board. It could include piloting a stand-up childcare facility that might be regionally located and potentially a partnership with somebody like the Boys and Girls Clubs or YMCA or an organization doing after-school programs now. Norman Chavez has also been working with Tyson in Walla Walla County, as it's also become an issue for them. They are collectively getting support from the state through the Department of Commerce for this potential funding to mutually join forces with local partners to start a pilot childcare program in the Tri-Cities.

Board Member Michael Lee informed attendees of Columbia Basin College's (CBC's) early childhood education program and the numerous students earning their Eazy-E credentials at various levels, certificates, and degrees. They work hard at CBC to create a workforce for those in-demand jobs.

Diversified Funding – Need for funding outside of WIOA Title 1B—for example, ARPA, Youth Build, and state and local funding opportunities.

Jessie shared that throughout the conference, ARPA money was referenced a lot, as well as Hire 360, a philanthropic company, to provide services that a strict WIOA law cannot. Youth Build, a community-based education program serving the same population currently being served in Benton & Franklin counties, was a hot topic; youths 16-24 who have left high school before graduation have other risk factors. They will keep a close eye on the next round of funding.

- Cynthia and David are working with ESD123 and CPS, and we are pursuing CCWA funding.
 - The intent is to create clear pathways in the Technology, Healthcare, and Trades sectors. This proposal is due 6/14/23.
- Becky is working on a Department of Labor (DOL) grant for Infrastructure.
 - Initial information is due May 31st.

If you are aware of unrestricted funding opportunities, please let a BFWDC Team member know.

WIOA Reauthorization - Working on adding flexibility to WIOA Eligibility documentation, marketing and outreach, and Eligible Training Provider List (ETLP)- not this year.

This authorization will positively impact our customers. Some focus areas are to provide more flexibility to WIOA eligibility requirements and flexibility to utilize WIOA funding for marketing and outreach. Jessie shared that the Department of Labor (DOL) is developing an ETPL tool kit to make it easier for training providers to get on the ETPL and give WIOA participants more opportunities to receive training.

The Power of Partnerships - Mission alignment amongst partners is essential to build a shared resource network. This work is not a competition between agencies. When agencies have missions that align and can form a network to serve customers, the customers are the ones who benefit the most. They can access various services to help them reach their employment or training goals. Agencies do as well; resources are stretched to serve more people, and best practices are shared and learned from. Creating a network of partners to design innovative solutions to address business needs and to prepare individuals for and connecting them to career opportunities is the power of partnerships.

An example of this in their area is their Rapid Response Events: Jasmine Sanchez is our local Rapid Response Coordinator, and she does a fantastic job of coordinating services for impacted workers and employers when a layoff occurs. She quickly gets everyone to the table to provide affected workers with information to navigate their layoffs. Partners in this network include ESD to provide UI information, WSCB to provide basic service information, CPS for DW to provide specific program information, Community Health Plan of Washington for healthcare, CBCs worker retraining, and 211.

Revenue Generators - This is the power they bring to their community and was something heard from a speaker from DOL that describes their work. They create revenue generators; this positively impacts their community as

they help individuals become productive tax-paying citizens who shop locally and are self-sufficient. Their commodity is what employers want, talented candidates to fill their vacant positions.

Review PY23 Board Meeting Calendar – Jessie

Jessie informed members that a poll would be sent out to determine the best time to adjust the November meeting, as the WWA conference is that week. December's meeting is missing from the calendar as the trend has been to cancel it due to low attendance as people are out of the office. Starting in July, meetings will be offered in a hybrid model – invites will be sent out with links and locations.

WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker Update - Jessie

Jessie provided an overview of the Adult and the Dislocated Worker programs. Jessie provided information on strategic partnerships to keep performance outcomes on track, including recruitment and outreach, covering program expenditures and targets, follow-up, placement rates, and participant training scheduled for May 2023 - June 2023. She encouraged all to read the Program Performance Summary for the Adult and Dislocated Worker Program, included in the meeting materials. Lastly, Jessie shared that the BFWDC's annual state monitoring is underway. The BFWDC Team started the pre-monitoring work at the end of April, and the state has started reviewing policies virtually; next week, they will be on-site monitoring in person.

Community Development Block Grant - Becky

Becky provided an overview of the cumulative program performance summary, including outreach and program efforts and a participant success story. Five participants are currently placed at their respective food sites to support food distribution efforts.

Becky shared the to-date community members impacted (85,553), over two times the original program target of 40,000. This number is updated quarterly, with the next update occurring during June's reporting period. Becky discussed that the grant ends on June 30th, with the next update occurring at July's meeting.

QUEST Update – Jessie & Carya

Jessie shared program highlights as of April 30th, 2023, covering year-to-date spending, targets, services provided, and enrollments. All QUEST performance metrics exceed targets, and due to limits in Adult and Dislocated Worker funding, more QUEST customers are being served than planned.

Carya, Business Engagement Manager, provided effective practices, employment trends, and program strategies. Business engagement performance factors were discussed, including business outreach, events, and upcoming new business.

Economic Security for All - Becky

Becky shared the State and Federal cumulative EcSA program performance summary in the meeting packet covering program highlights and total employed exits through April 30th, 2023. Federal EcSA is 78.3% spent, and State EcSA is 91.9% spent; both are on track. Becky provided EcSA program highlights, including challenges, outreach, partnership efforts, training enrollments, and employed exits. Employed exit outcomes are currently behind target as customers are working through training courses and have yet to enter employment. Currently, ten customers are participating in training services under Federal and State EcSA. Outcomes will be reported in the coming months.

Together We Rise – Outreach to Historically Disadvantaged Communities – Isaac

Isaac provided an overview of April's OHDC cumulative program summary, included with the meeting materials, sharing program outreach, persons reached (6,314), referrals made (934), and research conducted.

Isaac shared the progress of the research piece of the grant, together with the research goals and community survey. Deliverables have been collected, and that information has been compiled to share from the communication guide. They continue to present the findings, continue further conversations on best practices, and discuss ways to utilize the research findings from Sonar Insights. There have been committee meeting presentations and a one-pager created to share information.

WorkSource Columbia Basin (WSCB) Update – Crystal

Crystal Bright shared the WorkSource operator report details included in the meeting materials. She highlighted April WorkSource site operations and customer feedback. Crystal summarized service delivery, discussing career and business services and community connections. PSA spots became available, and based on their ongoing relationship with Fox Telemundo, they reached out. WSCB put together a 30-second commercial now airing in both April and May ad spots. They hope the PSA ad will help build trust and knowledge of WSCB’s services.

Celebrate Champions – Jessie

Jessie shared that she learned “Celebrate Champions” in a session at NAJA regarding maximizing meetings. They want to take the time and recognize the extraordinary work being done. If you have a staff member or partner you would like to celebrate or acknowledge; please get in touch with Jessie Cardwell.

Jessie highlighted some of the customer feedback that Crystal provided in her report: Selma has received positive feedback that said, “Customer service is awesome.” Jessie commented that Selma does a fantastic job of always being there to help and assist and thanked her for her work in serving their customers.

Round Table/Agency Updates

Heather Woodruff, Career Path Services, shared that they are seeking space to host their all-staff conference in September. They need event space that can accommodate 100. Please get in touch with Heather if you know of a facility that can provide space for their corporate training and professional development annual event.


Next Meeting

- Adult & Employer Linkage Committee – Thursday, June 15th, at 4:00 p.m., on Zoom.
- Executive Committee - Tuesday, May 30th, at 4:00 p.m., on Zoom.

Adjournment

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

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 7/27/2023
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 Todd Samuel, Board Chair Date

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 7/27/2023
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 Cyndelle Howell, Administrative Assistant Date