



Missouri Workforce Development Board
November 10, 2021 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
Meeting Minutes
Conference Call

Members Present: Chair Len Toenjes, Tony Bryan, Cara Canon, Dr. Don Cook, Celeste Cramer, Kristie Davis, Dr. John Gaal, Tim Gaines, Stephanie Garret, Director Annu Hui, Commissioner Gary Jungermann, Gregg Roberts, Todd Spencer, LeRoy Stromberg, Joshua Tennison, Virgil White, and Jill Williams

SWDB Staff: Allyssa Johnson and Dr. Mardy Leathers

CALL TO ORDER & WELCOME: Chair Len Toenjes called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM and welcomed everyone.

ROLL CALL: Allyssa Johnson conducted roll call and quorum was declared.

REVIEW & APPROVE SEPTEMBER 8, 2021 SWDB MINUTES: Chair Len Toenjes asked if there were any questions or comments on the September 8, 2021 SWDB Minutes. Dr. John Gaal moved to approve the minutes and seconded by Director Anna Hui and Tony Bryan. The minutes were approved.

TRADE ACT ASSISTANCE: Jennifer Roodhouse shared the Trade Act Assistance program is an opportunity for the public workforce system to support trade impacted workers to return to work. Missouri' Trade Act Navigators are reaching out to possible trade impacted workers from Cerner layoffs and Trizetto. Both of these companies sent jobs to India in early 2021, and the trade impacted workers can access tremendous benefits through training opportunities and other necessary job center services. Missouri's Office of Workforce Development staff support the impacted individuals through reemployment services and upskilling opportunities.

OPEN DISCUSSION—APPRENTICESHIPS: Chair Toenjes reviewed that describing an apprenticeship can be challenging in today's workforce. Chair Toenjes also shared he was an apprentice, which led to a successful career.

Dr. John Gaal shared that registered apprenticeship is a great opportunity and has increased in popularity since 2012. In Missouri we have strong registered apprenticeships which have consistent elements of mentorship, on-the-job-training, and related classroom instruction. However, there are other stakeholders describing training as an apprenticeship, but may not have the necessary elements that make up a registered apprenticeship.

LeRoy Stromberg added a strong mentorship component is necessary for the success of an apprentice.

Jill Williams shared that the healthcare industry has some apprenticeship programs in the state such as the Patent Care Technician program. Further, there is interest in investing and expanding this model in the healthcare industry, but the employers are struggling with the required paperwork of an apprenticeship program. There is great retention, recruitment, and development opportunities with apprenticeship because the apprentice knows the wage increase is forthcoming.

Chair Toenjes asked what a typical healthcare apprenticeship looks like. How does the employer recruit? How is the related training offered?

Jill responded that it is different for each career or occupation. The length of the apprenticeship and training varies depending on the required certifications needed for the occupation.

Tony Bryan agreed with Dr. John Gaal in regards to the three required components of an apprenticeship program. Registered apprenticeship has a lot of fluidity in the standards and work plans. There is a lot of flexibility for employers to build a training solution that fits their needs. Registered apprenticeship is not as rigid as it appears.

Chair Toenjes asked Dr. Leathers if there is a way to communicate the flexible approach to apprenticeship.

Dr. Leathers underscored the core value of apprenticeship is that it is employer drive. The employer determines the design of the work plan, even if the employer is using preexisting registered apprenticeship standards.

Tony Bryan added pre-apprenticeships are very helpful to building a talent pipeline, but have added to the confusion on apprenticeship.

Chair Toenjes agreed, the term pre-apprenticeship is almost misunderstood more than apprenticeship.

Dr. Leathers shared that developing a certified pre-apprenticeship framework to directly connect to registered apprenticeship should help with the confusion.

Chair Toenjes asked if any of the Local Workforce Development Board Directors on the call would share what is happening at the local level for apprenticeships.

Amy Sublett, the Central Local Workforce Development Board, started receiving more inquiries from employers in the region as a talent solution to the workforce challenges. Businesses are more open to different solutions including skilling up an incumbent worker or managing new talent. Most of the inquiries on apprenticeship are in the manufacturing industry.

Diane Simbro, Local Workforce Development Board Director of the Northeast region, agreed there is more interest from employers. Registered apprenticeship allows apprentices to earn and learn, which is very attractive.

Dr. Leathers shared, Governor Parson declared this week Apprenticeship Missouri week. The largest summit in the nation will be held on Tuesday, November 16th to celebrate Apprenticeship week.

COURSERA PARTNERSHIP: Sam Combs from Coursera thanked the board for allowing them to present today. Sam also expressed his gratitude to the partnership with Missouri in serving citizens. During the past year and a half there has been a major disruption in the workforce, which allows for a great opportunity to provide access to develop new skills and on ramp into careers to stay relevant in the economy.

Coursera recognizes the challenges and changes, and is partnering with Missouri to focus efforts to ensure individuals are prepared for employment. Coursera offers a wide variety of courses including technical skills and soft skill development. These courses are developed in partnership with institutions and employers across the globe. Coursera programs can be customized to meet employers' needs in local areas. There are several gateway programs available, which are designed to support individuals' transition to a job of stability into a destination career. Coursera is constantly adding programs, especially in entry level course content. This is designed for adult learners who may not have experience in the industry or who only have a high school diploma. Jeff Kaplan from Coursera shared, the partnership with Missouri began last year as a ready and easy option to deploy training to Missourians. This allows for wage increases and promotions. Coursera can help break down barriers for career advancement, and promote equity.

Chair Toenjes asked about the Coursera partnership in other parts of the country.

Jeff Kaplan responded there are several states Coursera is partnering with on a variety of scales and efforts. This includes partnerships with additional employers.

Sam Combs added you can take a system wide approach with Coursera, for example SNAP E&T. There is an evolution of curation of content, but using Coursera as a backbone for the apprenticeship model to rapidly respond to employers' needs.

CONSTRUCTION FORUM: Tom Finan presented the Construction Forum is a 501 (c) 3 that focuses on economic opportunities to create a resilient workforce. There are various resources the Construction Forum manages to better connect employers and job seekers to opportunities within our state, such as a digital hub. The digital hub allows for data collection and job posting for our members. The Construction Forum shares information on career events that support the youth. The Construction Forum strives to connect with Missouri's youth to provide awareness of construction career pathways. The Construction Forum website has seen an increase in page views and interest in construction careers.

Dr. John Gaal commented his appreciation for the Construction Forum for filtering information and data to share with its members.

Diana Wilhold shared that the challenges facing the construction industry are similar across all industries. It is important to have commitment to support the workforce needs and to eliminate silos.

Chair Toenjes asked how the Construction Forum is connecting with the Local Workforce Development Boards.

Diana Wilhold said she has a strong partnership with the Associated General Contractors. The Construction Forum has strong partnerships with Community Based Organizations and educators to collaborate with entities to share information and logistics. These partnerships allow the Construction Forum to raise awareness and information and collaborate on particular issues.

STATE DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Dr. Mardy Leathers shared the Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development's (DHEWD) strategic plan is defining the planning process, which will set goals for the department. The proposed vision of DHEWD is to put Missourians on a path to learn, work, and prosper. The principles that guide the department are people focused, workforce aligned, equity centered, and impact driving. These principles guide the department's goals of the best educational attainment and workforce participation in the Midwest. For Missouri to be the best in the Midwest in educational attainment this will require 243,000 more Missourians to complete a certificate, credential or degree program. For Missouri to be the best in the Midwest on labor force participation, the public workforce system must engage 312,000 more Missourians in employment. To meet these big goals, the department proposes 24 initiatives which will be presented to the Coordinating Board for Higher Education. Four of these initiatives will be led by the Office of Workforce Development and presented to the State Workforce Development Board Executive Committee on December 14th.

Dr. Leathers also shared the 4th Annual Apprenticeship Missouri Summit will be held on Tuesday, November 16th. This is the largest apprenticeship event in the nation and will host 140 in attendance. The theme for the summit is connecting Missourians to work through the Future of Work. This event also includes a special award entitled the Legacy Award, which will honor a very special apprenticeship leader in the state.

LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD REPORT: Sally Payne shared how the Ozark Region is engaging the youth population. This program was rebranded in 2018 entitled Build my Future. This allows the youth and employers to better connect with the branding of the program. This program allows for hands on learning opportunities in partnership with schools in the area. This model of engagement is now mimicked around the state, including Kansas City. This effort was underway prior to COVID.

When the pandemic hit, the program transitioned into a virtual career academy was launched to focus on work readiness for the youth. Given the challenges with the pandemic, there is an emphasis on physical, mental and financial health. More than 250 youth were enrolled in two weeks, which is a substantial increase compared to one year enrollments. This program was also recognized as a promising practice by the United States Department of Labor.

Chair Toenjes asked what the status of TEAM?

Sally responded that for the first time, TEAM is working on a large grant application to help diversify the funding.

Chair Toenjes responded the collaboration is wonderful. He asked about the collaboration between the State Workforce Development Board and TEAM.

Sally Payne responded the SWDB meeting are more conversational and it is helpful for the LWDB Directors to hear the strategic direction. The SWDB meetings are more informative, intentional, and focused conversations to solve labor shortages.

Diane Simbro added that TEAM is working on regionalism. In many cases the LWDB Directors have alignment, but not always.

Amy Sublett shared the cross workforce collaboration is increasing. Tony Bryan has attended local board meetings which he has shared great information with the board.

Chair Toenjes asked for an update on the work with Ken Mall.

Dr. Leathers shared everyday OWD is working on the implementation of Job Centers of the Future. Earlier we heard about the Trade Act Assistance adjustments and certifications, providing information to the board on collaboration, CompTIA and Coursera partnerships, and Employer Relations and Engagement changes. OWD is working to be flexible, leveraging virtual services and local teams. It is how the public workforce system approaches the engagement with the public and its services.

QUESTIONS, COMMENTS, & CLOSING REMARKS: Chair Len Toenjes thanked staff for putting together a great agenda. Thank you to the board members and presenters for being here and sharing your perspective.

Dr. John Gaal moved to adjourn and Tony Bryan seconded.

The meeting ended at 11:56 PM.