MINUTES

Youth & Education Committee
January 20, 2016
Attendees: Susan Ronga, Interim Chair, Chris Irving, WIB Director, Cynthia Miller, Amin Jihad, Davidene Alpart, Rosemary Pino, John DePalma, Alan Concha, Mark Vankampen, Ashiri Lopez, Marcia McNeel, Cristhian Barcelos, W. Graulich, Kirk Lew SETC, Andrea Newton, Pedro Tavarez

Introductions
Susan Ronga, of PACE/Paterson Adult Continuing Education, Interim Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:11 a.m.

Minutes
Minutes were reviewed and accepted.

Discussion WDB Director Christopher Irving
Chris Irving introduced Kirk Lew Regional Representative from State Employment Training Commission (SETC) and explained that Kirk Lew will address the changes under the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) it adjust and realigns the way youth programs are facilitated, procured and monitored after which the committee have invited some youth from our programs that we are currently working with.

Chris Irving extended a thank you to all the youth attending today and noted that the purpose is to hear from the youth on their experiences in the programs, what are you learning and once you have completed the program what are your needs which this is an important fact finding mission to determine are we doing a good job, how can we improve in supporting the youth to find more opportunities and advancement in their life.

WIOA Update Mr. Kirk Lew Policy Analyst SETC
Kirk Lew noted that it is very important that he attends the WDB meetings to help create a systemic policy. Kirk Lew explained that he has worked with the youth and youth with disabilities for 20 years and this is something that he has lived and he understands that it is hard work and it is good to see people coming together and thinking about the challenges that the youth face and also extended a thank you to the youth and ask that they be honest. Kirk Lew noted that he will explain from a State level on what is happening and then talk about what will happen on a local level the following highlights were reported:

- Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act was passed by President Obama on July 2014 which there are four different Acts within that Law Workforce Services of New Jersey (1.) Title I Program which is where the youth fit in (2.) Title II is the Literacy (3.) Title III and Title IV DVRS and all of the funds come into New Jersey and then allocated to the local areas to be utilized for the youth, specific populations, specific programs and services which by law each local area have to provide these services.
- Kirk Lew noted that WIOA has some drastic changes and that WIA was reauthorized in 1998 and continued to be reauthorized until
2014 because unfortunately the system did not operationalize appropriately and what the State is doing now is to put young people in the path of sustainability to a career path and the WIOA provided a chance to reset the employability system and look at it from a strategic perspective and look at the needs of each local area because the needs of Passaic County will be different from other local areas.

- The big changes from WIA to WIOA are we went from a system that required only 30% of the funds be allocated to out-of-school youth that has now changed to 75% and in the past local areas worked with the schools which was easier now the law requires us to partner, figure out the external system and internal capacity in order to find people in the street in the community so we are working with an audience that is not captured and may be transit and has been out of the system for a while so we have to coordinate with our partners within the county.
- Kirk Lew talked about some of the planning which SETC have required every area to start thinking about the planning conversation in the summer of 2015 and provided planning guidance to each of the WIB Directors, One-Stop Operators and Youth Leaders to hopefully look at how do they look at their youth programs strategically and looking at major concerns such as how do you recruit young people for the program, how do you retain the people how are the youth counselors involved, how do you keep them engaged, how do you ultimately create a career path and then look at worked base learning strategy.
- The priorities under work based learning is there should be training with work experience 20% of the funds that come into a local area should be dedicated to work experience that requires someone to have a theoretical instruction in apprenticeship, internship, job shadowing, mentoring and on the job training utilizing other parts of our systems ITAs and OJT grants and hopefully encourage employers to work with our youth and the employers is a key component.
- Kirk Lew noted that they are looking at the frame work regionally and look at high quality partnerships that are career driven and credentials for our youth that make sense. The Plan should be career driven guidance. The Plan is due on January 25, 2016 should be 3 year plan twelve pages max. Kirk Lew also noted if needed that he is a resource as well and can always share and provide direct services to make sure everyone is on the same page.

Q&A
How do we see or help immigrants who do not have a legal status when they have to go through the One-Stop Career Center?
Kirk Lew explained that there have been some discussion on the issue unfortunately there are certain things that cannot be accessed through the system because the system is not just WIOA and is illegal.

Davidene Alpart noted that it is not that the One-Stop do not want to serve that population the issue is the roadblock with the Department of Labor dollars.
Kirk Lew noted that there are some funding from the state level to review and that there will be further discussion.

**WIA Youth Panel**

Sue Ronga introduced the youth that will participate on the Youth Panel from PACE/Youth Corps., Greater Paterson Youth Build and Catapult Learning Center and explained that the goal is to find out how we can better serve the youth and their colleagues in their schools and noted that we work with out-of-school youth that had obstacles in the past which brought them into the program and want to move on to college or other type of careers. The committee would like to hear about their experiences in the program and where they would like to go moving forward.

**Greater Paterson Youth Build**

**Student 1:** Stated that before coming to Youth Build she was attending Job Corps. by force. Student had problems at East Side High School and had teachers that did not care. When entering Youth Build the staff cared and was helpful in getting her GED. Student stated that she is interested in two careers Registered Nurse and Correctional Officer and have hopes of attending College. Student stated there were no obstacles with Youth Build the only obstacle was class work (Math) when she was in school.

**Q&A**

**How did you find out about Youth Build?**

Student stated that a family member referred her while she was pregnant. She called Ms. Smith and was helped immediately.

**What was some of the changes from East Side to Youth Build?**

Student stated that the people cared

**Do you feel that you have the tools to succeed?** Yes

**Do you have any direction to how to get to your goal of being a nurse?** Student stated that she attended Lincoln Technical School and graduated in 2010 with Medical Tech. Certificate.

Davidene Alpart explained that the One-Stop Career Center can help and wanted to let all the students know that they are not alone.

**Student 2:** Student stated that he had attended East Side High School and Kennedy High School and that he lacked motivation was not focused and easily distracted so after he turned 17 he dropped out of high school and got a job worked for 3 years and put school on the back burner. His sister told him about Youth Build which he always wanted to attend school. Student stated that he was surprised because they provided a mental toughness program and the staff really cared and he was able to tell them things about his life that he had never shared with anyone else. His goal is to join the Military but his family is against that decision and he is still figuring things out. Student stated that career wise he is studying to take the HiSet and that the only obstacles were the ones that he made for himself and in Youth Build for the first week they worked out, did some activities, worked together in
groups and had conversations where the counselors were very forth coming about their own life which made it much easier to talk.

Q&A
How will you make the decision of going to the military without the support of your family?
Student stated that he is thinking about that because he will have to leave his family and girlfriend.

What motivated you?
Student stated that he was getting older and tired of doing nothing to better himself.

Student 3:
Student stated that she was in and out of Passaic High School and East Side High School, left in the 11th grade because the family moved to another state so when she returned they wanted to hold her back so she dropped out and decided to attend Youth Build. She stated that her goal is to attend college to become an Ultra-Sound Technician or attend a trade school to become a Cosmetologist and she just received her High School Diploma with high scores. Student stated that her obstacles was lack of motivation which she did not have while attending high School.

Q&A
What motivated you?
Student stated that she knew that she needed to get her life together because it felt as if this was her last chance to get it right and she has a daughter to support and she felt stuck while watching other people move on.

PACE/Youth Corps
Student 1: Student stated that she attended East High School before going to Youth Corps and she was very distracted because of the students so she left to find somewhere to finish high school because she did not want to quit school and Youth Corps gave her so much support. She stated that her career goals is to be a model and she will have to do pageants and her back up is to get her HSE and going into the medical assistant field. She stated that the obstacles were her self-esteem, not trusting people and not having confidence which Youth Corps helped to gain her confidence.

Student 2: Student stated that he came to this country 5½ months ago and was told that he could not attend Kennedy High School because of his age and was upset but was provided the opportunity to attend Youth Corps. Student stated that the teachers helped with his future ambitions which is to be a Registered Nurse or Information Technician and there were no obstacles in the program everything worked out fine more than he had expected and he just graduated.

Q&A
Davidene Alpart asked if he has spoken to a counselor or someone
at the One-Stop Career Center to help in becoming a Registered Nurse. The student stated that he has contacted someone from Passaic County Community College EOF Program which he is very interested in doing and he has an appointment card to meet with counselor at the One-Stop Career Center.

Catapult Learning Center

Student: Student stated that she attended Passaic High School and had to leave due to an emergency and was told that it would be better for her to drop out and get her GED. Student stated that her career goal is to become a Substance Abuse Counselor or Detective and have hopes to attend college. Student noted that she is receiving great support and help form Catapult because they put the pressure on her to succeed.

Q&A

What obstacles did you have?

Student stated that there were no obstacles

What was the difference attending High School and now attending Catapult Learning Center? The student stated that the difference was at Catapult the teacher put more pressure on the student to complete the program and they are in a class room setting. Catapult also invite colleges to come and give presentations.

Sue Ronga noted that the students all had some obstacles and were able to overcome them on their own to participate and/or complete the program and extended congratulations for their accomplishments and a thank you for participating on the focus group panel.

Kirk Lew stated that every young person is entitled to four program elements such as tutoring, alternate schools, adult mentoring etc. and look at who is developing those services and a discussions should take place here on where are the gaps and how do you fill the gaps because the best programs are built out of the relationships which we heard today over and over and Passaic County have 3 programs that are built within the same concept and we have to figure out how do we duplicate what works, how do we supplement and how are the young people being connected to the adult system of services that could help in resume writing and most important that this is drive services. Kirk Lew extended a thank you to the youth as well for attending.

The meeting concluded at 11:04 a.m.

The schedule for the next meeting: TBD