

**Workforce Innovation Board of Ramsey County
Youth Committee Meeting**

Thursday, September 21, 2023, 3:00-4:00 PM

Members Present

Breanna Galuska
Jennifer Germain
Mary Sue Hansen
Hyon Kim
Paul Nikstad
Sheri Riemers
Nardos Tesfalidet

Members Absent

Tom Aasheim

Staff/Guests Present

Ling Becker, Workforce Solutions
Kristi Cobbs, Workforce Solutions
Charie Gill, Workforce Solutions
Mariann Macalus, Workforce Solutions
Brad Mahr, Workforce Solutions
Becky Milbrandt, Workforce Solutions

Call to Order & Land Acknowledgement

Chair Nikstad called the meeting to order at 3:02pm. Nikstad read the land acknowledgement aloud.

Approval July Minutes

Motion (Hansen/Galuska) to approve the July 20, 2023, Youth Committee meeting minutes as presented.

Motion carried by chat vote.

Updates

Cobbs provided updates on the following programs:

ARPA Initiatives: (1) Goodwill Easter Seals is providing a six-month Advanced Manufacturing Program to prepare young adults for high-demand careers in manufacturing. Participants spend 12 hours a week at Saint Paul College where they are engaged in hands-one learning and then matched with a local manufacturing employer to apply skills learned in the classroom. (2) Young Adult Career Academy in partnership with Ain Dah Yung Center (ADY) providing holistic workforce support from ADY program staff and Project Restore MN to learn about public sector careers. The six young adults are rotating throughout Ramsey County Parks & Rec, Public Works, Emergency Communications and with the County Commissioners, two of which have gotten full-time jobs with the county and others with the City EMS. (3) We are helping 166 young adults get their driver's license through the Driver's License Academy. At least 30 have finished the program. We just partnered with Change Drivers, who work with new immigrants and English language learners around driving and careers in manufacturing. New permit proctor sites will be launched later in the month in Ramsey County along with a virtual reality simulator. We get emails every day about young people obtaining their driver's license. The construction trades, healthcare, manufacturing and automotive are the biggest career pathway drivers of the young people enrolled in the program.

Milbrandt shared the following upcoming opportunities for young adults to do some career exploration

Career Connect Day and Construction Tomorrow: The *Career Connect Day* is being hosted by the Saint Paul Area Chamber on October 17 at Saint Paul RiverCentre with the WIB as the transportation sponsor. If you are interested in volunteering, contact Mahr or Milbrandt. The *Construct Tomorrow* event is on December 6 at the RiverCentre. The young adults get to try hands-on activities that simulate what it is like to work on a real jobsite. If you are interested in volunteering, contact Mahr or Milbrandt.

Mahr provided updates on the following:

Networking Event Recap: The Youth Works! Networking event will be held twice a year to share information, network and connect and show appreciation. The September 14 event was a huge success and a lot of fun.

Youth at Work Grantees and Convening Recap: Youth at Work is not a program run by the county but as the workforce development in this region we are tasked with convening all 16 of the grantees. The convening included information on how grantees can tap into opportunities and connections through the County's Workforce Innovation Board (WIB) as well as provided a space for providers to network and coordinate programing with one another. Ramsey County-based organizations received 34% of available funds. The 16 organizations represent more than a third of all funding grants across the state of Minnesota.

Committee Work Plan/Project

New Approach to Vern Vick Discussion: Mahr lead the discussion reviewing items from the last Committee meeting. Committee members were open to the idea of changing the description in the recognition of several years of workforce, incorporating a “rising star” and a “legacy award”. There was also support in tweaking the application questions for these two types of awards, to be “Ramsey County specific” since we are the governing body giving the awards and to include a work-related phrase such as “youth entering the workforce”. Also discussed was the Award Name since Vern Vick is not longer a familiar name in the community. Suggestions for a new name are to be sent to Mahr considering what is the award intended to recognize or accomplish; the population the recipient should serve; what type of work/service should they be engaged in; and does the award’s criteria align with the Youth Committee’s mission? Suggestion for name: Workforce Champions. Mahr provided a timeline aligning the award presentation at the April WIB meeting. More information to come via email.

3M SKILLED Documentary: Milbrandt provided a recap of the documentary produced by 3M in partnership with Generous Films. It follows the stories of four individuals in non-traditional skilled trades and addresses misperceptions that may be preventing more people from pursuing these careers. The Committee discussed possible screen events and opportunities in partnership with 3M in getting it seen by folks in the community; how to spread the word through social media with links, breaking up each of the clips; reach out to folks that are mentoring young people starting with schools; promote/market at Career Connect Day, establishing a skilled trade ambassador planning team, who then go out to sponsor the documentary in their spheres of influence. Becker will work with Galuska if there is an interest in the schools. The Committee was interested in sponsoring such events. Becker also shared information on Build Your Own Future Campaign on the Ramsey Means Business webpage. Further discussion at the next meeting for funding.

Sundance Foundation

Becker shared that the Sundance Family Foundation will be closing in December 2023 after 20 years of providing resources and support to youth employment organizations and programs. Because of Workforce Solution’s long-standing partnership and continued work in this space, the Foundation provided an Accelerating Prosperity Pathways gift of \$50,000 to Ramsey County. Workforce Solutions will use this gift to continue to support Earn and Learn programs, build alignments and intentionality to ensure practitioners have access to resources and employers, build additional networks of employer to support young people and leverage tools developed by the foundation to amplify bet practices for youth employment services.

Committee Member Updates

Third Town Hall Conversation on how to fight the Fentanyl and Opioid Crisis being held virtually September 28 from 6p to 8:30p. Encouraged to get the word out.

Encouraged to explore the SRFC’s Jobs & Training Resource Directory for Youth and Youth Adults and the Basic Needs and Wellness Resources for Ramsey County.

Other

No further items discussed.

Adjourn

Upon completion of the agenda, the meeting was adjourned at 3:58pm.

Next Meeting: November 16, 2023, 3:00-4:00pm via Zoom