

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

Thursday, March 16, 2023, 3:00-4:00 PM

Members Present

Breanna Galuska
Mary Sue Hansen
Hyon Kim
Gaye Adams Massey
Paul Nikstad
Sheri Riemers

Members Absent

Tom Aasheim
Karen Gerdin
Jennifer Germain

Staff/Guests Present

Ling Becker, Workforce Solutions
Kristi Cobbs, Workforce Solutions
Charie Gill, Workforce Solutions
Zach Kiekow, 30K Feet
Mariann Macalus, Workforce Solutions
Brad Mahr, Workforce Solutions
Rachael Molenaar, Workforce Solutions
Kyla Saka, 30K Feet Student

Call to Order & Land Acknowledgement

Chair Nikstad called the meeting to order at 3:03pm. Nikstad read the land acknowledgement aloud.

Approval January Minutes

**Motion (Massey/Kim) to approve the January 19, 2023, Youth Committee meeting minutes as presented.
Motion carried by chat vote.**

Youth Program Provider Spotlight: 30,000 Feet

Kiekow and Saka shared information and services about 30K. They offer youth 14 to 18 years old hands-on, project-based experiences inspired by arts and culture to reach students in ways traditional teaching might not. They offer after-school academic support, programs for those seeking employment in the tech industry, connect aspiring artists with professional teachers to support their talent and help upcoming student artists increase their ability to connect with traditional learning material. Saka shared her experience with and opportunities within the tech geek program.

Youth Works! Updates:

Newsletter: Mahr shared the restart of the monthly newsletters that is now reaching broader sections of the community. The newsletters highlight County programs, new initiatives, and success stories - to name a few - focusing on workforce and youth development. Currently, there are over 440 subscribers.

Orientation Webinars: Gill provided an update on the kick-off of the Youth Works! Orientation webinar held earlier in March. The monthly orientation, offered on the second Wednesday of the month, is for anyone who supports young people in our community to learn about employment and training programs and resources. We look forward to sharing this opportunity with others and will be included in the newsletter. Becker shared that practitioners and web page resources were added. The goal of all of this is to provide those in the county a baseline level of information.

ARPA Update

Young Adult Career Academy: Cobbs shared that the Career Academy provides exposure to public sector careers, networking opportunities, and work readiness skills. She shared highlights from one individual's positive experience who was part of the first cohort of seven young adults. She provided an update on the start of the second cohort of eighteen young adults who are rotating throughout various County and City departments.

Power Within Us: Gill shared information on the pilot program which helps support young adults ages 16-24 who are currently on probation in Ramsey County connect to paid job training and education programs. The kickoff event is scheduled for April 1 at Arlington Hills Community Center. The ongoing resource sessions will be held each month through June on the first Saturday at Arlington and the first Tuesday at the Frogtown Community Center.

Director Updates

Legislative Update: Becker provided a quick legislative update noting she will be testifying tomorrow for an increase in funding for the Minnesota Youth Program to prepare our future workforce. This funding will help get more people internships and help in doing outreach to schools that this Committee has previously discussed.

Teacher Externship Day: No update provided at this meeting.

Ramsey County Visits Job Corp.: Becker shared that several County staff visited Hubert H. Humphrey Job Corps Center to learn more about Job Corps, to get a first-hand look at the building construction, painting, and sign & display trades and in creating a partnership with the Center for employment and internship opportunities.

WIB Meeting Preview: Becker provided a preview of next month's WIB meeting focusing on youth employment with a panel of young adults, which will also include a youth employment data walk.

In-Person Committee Meeting: Becker shared the idea of having an in-person Committee meeting at Job Corps if people were interested and had a preference as to when – May or September. After some discussion it was determined September would be the likely month.

Committee Work Plan/Project Update

2023 Vern Vick Award Nominations: Nikstad led the discussion stating nominations were submitted, reviewed and voted online. If you did not vote online, Nikstad encouraged speaking up now. He reported that this award is given annually to someone in the community who has had a positive impact on youth; however, it can be more than one recipient. Mahr shared that there were nine nominees and provided information on how it was narrowed down to five finalists; i.e., non-finalist nominees either weren't directly tied into the type of work this Committee is doing or the uniqueness of the work didn't reach as highly as others'. The discussion showed that there were gaps in the way the evaluation occurred in the surveys: industry leadership or program leadership; the age range that is being supported; commitment to youth development.

The Committee members will vote for their top two either in the chat or by emailing Mahr. Mahr will then tally the votes and let everyone know the winner by email.

Becker stated that the whole process can be looked at in the summer/early fall for next year given the gaps that have been raised during this conversation

Motion (Massey/Kim) to vote for their top two award recipients. Motion carried.

Committee Member Updates and Other

Kim thanked everyone for allowing her to be part of the team.

Nikstad shared that the Job Corps has a Community Relation Luncheon on March 29 and all are invited to go. Just let him know and he'll get you an invite. A few County Commissioners and local community will be in attendance.

Massey shared that due to inclement weather the Black History Month Celebration at the YWCA of Saint Paul has been rescheduled to March 23rd from 4p to 6p. Everyone is welcome to attend.

Adjourn

Upon completion of the agenda, the meeting was adjourned at 3:59pm.

Next Meeting: May 18, 2023, 3:00-4:00pm via Zoom