**Susquehanna Workforce Innovation Partnership (SWIP) Quarterly Meeting**

August 8, 2017 • 2 p.m. – 4 p.m.

*Hosted by Harford County Office of Economic Development at the Groundfloor*

**Introductions:**

The meeting kicked off with introductions and participants were asked to share recent WIOA-related challenges. These challenges included:

* Data collection and sharing among WIOA partners
* Meshing partners’ varying measures of success and coming up with common performance measures
* Getting resources for customers, particular for hard-to-serve populations
* Integrating job skills into lesson plans
* Common intake form
* Pathways to jobs for GED recipients

**Attendees:**

* SWIP partners Debra Stevens (Cecil College), Bruce England (SWN), John Mayhorne (HCC), Gwen Haney (SSAI), Cora Grishkot (HCDSS), Jerry Reyerson (HCDSS), Kimberly Justus (SWN), Clara Henry (SWN-UC), Debbie Atkins (HCDSS), Sharon Miller (DLLR), Belinda Miller (SWN), Julie Brown (SWN), Sarah Pinto (Cecil DSS), Dorothea Phillips (Cecil DSS), Nicole Parr (CCPS), Joseph Ricci (SWN), Bayo Adetunji (DLLR), Linda Siegel (SWN), George Balog (DLLR), Denise Carey (DLLR), Judy Potter-Brown, Alyssa Bonser (DORS).
* Shemel Bowden and Heather Evans from DLLR Unemployment Insurance attempted to join via conference call but we had technology problems in the conference room and were unable to connect them to the meeting.
* Facilitators were Joan Michel and Sandy Cormack

**Interviews of Workforce Partners:**

* Joan Michel conducted interviews of many workforce partners at the state and local levels. The interviews provided a great deal of insight and ideas for increasing the region’s service to job seekers and employers.
* Comments and ideas from the interviews were shared in the slides presented at the quarterly meeting. Attendees used these ideas to create the draft vision statement and action plan for FY18.

**Vision for Susquehanna Workforce Innovation Partnership (SWIP):**

* Meeting attendees discussed a draft vision statement that was written using input from interviews. The original draft statement was: “Susquehanna job seekers receive a seamless suite of training and support services so that they possess the skills necessary for their employers to compete in the local, regional, and global economies.” Discussion included the following points:
  + This vision statement makes it appear that the focus is the employer, not the job seeker. We need the vision statement to reflect both customer groups (job seekers and businesses)
  + While it is a seamless process that we want, it is an ‘individualized’ suite of training that is needed
  + Goal is for self-sufficiency in our job seekers.
* Vision was revised to read: “Susquehanna Workforce Innovation Partnership (SWIP) provides Susquehanna job seekers an individualized suite of support services so they possess skills for businesses and enterprises to compete in the local, regional, and global economies.”
* Comments from SWIP members are welcome!

**Workforce System Barriers:**

* Attendees then engaged in a discussion of workforce system barriers – both barriers embedded in the WIOA system (structural) and barriers that our clients face. Information sharing among WIOA partners emerged as the most impactful barrier within the WIOA system. For clients, the most challenging barrier is having a background with criminal justice or substance abuse. Few employers are willing to work with those job seekers.
* WIOA partners recommended bringing health and human services and substance abuse resources to the SWIP table. As a result, SWIP included actions related to these two barriers in their FY18 action plan.

**FY2018 Action Plan:**

* Input received during the interviews of WIOA partners was organized into three categories: Communications and Awareness, Job Connections, and Client Service. These three categories form the structure of the FY18 action plan.
* The SWIP was asked at the August 8 meeting to discuss and choose three actions for each of the three categories. This was completed at the meeting and included as an appendix to these meeting notes.
* The Action plan will be sent to SWIP members for comment, and then people will be asked to lead and support each of the nine actions. Progress on these actions will be tracked at subsequent partner meetings.

**Next Quarterly Meeting** will be November 14, 2017, at the Groundfloor Training Room at 2021-D Pulaski Highway, Havre de Grace, MD 21078. Call in line will be 712-775-7031 and meeting ID is 164-642-706#. **Highly recommend in-person attendance.** Conference lines very unreliable at this facility. Also, in-person attendance helps us form stronger relationships and reach our goal of a seamless workforce system. Thanks for making the drive!

| **Appendix A: SWIP ACTION PLAN FOR FY2018** | | |
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| Draft Vision Statement: Susquehanna Workforce Innovation Partnership (SWIP) provides Susquehanna job seekers an individualized suite of support services so they possess skills for businesses and enterprises to compete in the local, regional, and global economies. | | |
| **Focus Area One:**  **Communication and Awareness** | **FY18 Action Steps/Milestones** | **Lead** |
| Outcome:  WIOA partners, staff members, clients, and area businesses understand resources and capabilities of workforce system. | * Bring health/human services and mental health partners to the table with SWIP to help identify gaps, resources, and funding for clients with mental health and substance abuse challenges |  |
| * Conduct cross-training for staff members that work directly with clients |  |
| * Develop reference guide on workforce system capabilities and resources – one version for line staff and one for customers |  |
| * Track progress of common intake form and provide input where necessary |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Focus Area Two:  Job Connections** | **Action Steps/Milestones** | **Lead** |
| Outcome:  Regional job availability/demand and employee preparation / training are tightly linked. | * Identify pathways for clients from education to in-demand careers |  |
| * Gather, curate, and share available employer data on entry-level skills, in-demand careers, employment opportunities |  |
| * Expand soft-skills training opportunities for customers, particularly interviewing skills and add job fair prep class |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Focus Area Three:  Client Service** | **Action Steps/Milestones** | **Lead** |
| Outcome(s):   1. Job seekers experience minimal barriers when using workforce system resources 2. Employers recruit local candidates with appropriate skills | * Explore customer intake process across all partners and identify collaborative service delivery improvements | Linda |
| * Identify new resources and solutions for hard-to-serve populations |  |
| * Study feasibility of cross-partner universal assessment tool |  |
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