

**Governor's Council on Blindness and Visual Impairment (GCBVI)
Employment Committee Meeting Minutes**

July 12, 2018

Members Present

Nikki Jeffords*
Terell Welch*
Nathan Pullen*
Tanner Gers*
Jordan Moon*

Members Absent

Bea Shapiro
Kevin Foster

Staff Present

Lindsey Powers, Council Liaison
*Teleconferenced

Guests Present

Call to Order and Introductions

Terell Welch called the meeting to order at 10:12 am in the Council Liaison Office, Phoenix, AZ. Introductions were made a quorum was present.

Nathan Pullen stated that Amy Porterfield, GCBVI Chair, and Nikki Jeffords had asked if Nathan Pullen would be interested in being the Chair of the Employment Committee and he accepted. Nathan Pullen stated he had been a GCBVI council member for approximately eight years and a member of the Assistive Technology (AT) Committee, although he was interested in employment as well.

Nikki Jeffords stated that she and Amy Porterfield were excited that Nathan Pullen had agreed to be the Employment Committee Chair. Nikki Jeffords stated the committee had accomplished a lot during the previous year and she was excited to keep the momentum going.

Approval of the May 29, 2018 Meeting Minutes

Terell Welch motioned to approve the minutes from the May 29, 2018 meeting. Nathan Pullen seconded the motion. The meeting minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote.

Employer/Community Partner Survey Discussion

Tanner Gers stated the survey was developed to allow employers to provide information over time and did not require an employer to divulge information that would compromise that organization. Mr. Gers stated that he and Kevin Foster developed the three questions to be included in the survey. Nathan Pullen inquired whether the survey would be modified over time or whether the same survey questions would be distributed. Tanner Gers stated the same survey questions would be asked to track the results from the survey and identify any patterns within the responses. Tanner Gers stated his opinion that the questions could be more specific although he did not have historical experience in developing surveys.

Tanner Gers stated the survey questions were:

- What works well?
- What does not work well?
- What can we do to help you or make improvements?

Jordan Moon stated the questions were open ended, which would require the committee members to categorize the responses. Nikki Jeffords stated the questions did not need to focus on the event, which was more of a catalyst for bringing awareness regarding the employment of blind and visually impaired individuals. Tanner Gers stated the survey questions could inquire whether an employer had hired, or currently employed a blind or visually individual. Nikki Jeffords stated a survey question could inquire regarding the apprehensions that employers had regarding hiring blind and visually impaired individuals, or an employers' top three concerns. Terell Welch stated surveys typically included one fill in the blank question, which could ask the employer for recommendations. Nikki Jeffords stated the committee members could develop some potential survey questions for discussion at the next committee meeting.

Committee Activities Discussion

Nikki Jeffords stated she recently submitted the committee's report for inclusion in the GCBVI Annual Report. Ms. Jeffords stated that she included Terell Welch and Tom Hicks' presentation at the Governor's Summit on Civic Engagement and Volunteerism, the development of the E75 video, the 3rd E75 Diversity Builder Event, and the Business Breakfast.

Nikki Jeffords inquired whether Jordan Moon heard anything further regarding the committee potentially holding a job fair at the National Federation for the Blind of Arizona (NFBA) Conference in August. Jordan Moon stated he spoke to Donald Porterfield, NFBA President, who indicated that anyone interested in participating in the Job Fair would be required to

pay the conference registration fee. Jordan Moon stated he would appreciate the committee members support in contacting employers and inviting them to attend the job fair. Nikki Jeffords stated the committee could potentially invite successfully employed blind or visually impaired individuals to speak about their employment experiences. She noted that some blind and visually impaired individuals tended to give up on job seeking and would benefit from hearing the success stories of employed blind and visually impaired individuals. Nikki Jeffords inquired whether the committee should consider holding a job symposium rather than a job fair. Jordan Moon agreed that a job symposium would be easier to accomplish due to time constraints.

Terell Welch stated he spoke to his supervisor, who recommended that the committee hold a reverse job fair, which would not put pressure on the employers to set up a table. Nikki Jeffords suggested the committee consider holding a reverse job fair at the Vision Rehabilitation and Assistive Technology Expo (VRATE) which would allow the job ready clients to be prepared to speak to the employers. Nathan Pullen stated the NFBA Conference could provide information to the job ready clients, so they would be more prepared to network with employers at VRATE. Jordan Moon stated the NFBA Conference would be approximately two hours and employers could provide tips for seeking employment. Nikki Jeffords noted that individuals were not required to pay a registration fee at VRATE, which might attract more individuals. Jordan Moon stated the NFBA Conference was scheduled for August 31, and he would develop a draft email that committee members could review prior to distributing to employers. Terell Welch inquired whether the blindness comprehensive programs could include job fair attendance as part of their job readiness experience. Nikki Jeffords stated staff from Foundation for Blind Children (FBC), Arizona Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired (ACBVI) and SAAVI Services for the Blind could bring students as well. Jordan Moon stated he could inquire whether organizations could receive group rates when bringing student to the NFBA Conference. Nathan Pullen stated that Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) could potentially pay for clients to attend the job symposium. Jordan Moon inquired whether Nikki Jeffords would be willing to develop a draft email to be sent to employers. Nikki Jeffords stated she would work with Jordan Moon on an email to be distributed to employers.

Nikki Jeffords stated the committee would need to begin planning for the next E75 event as well. Jordan Moon stated the previous E75 event was successful, although the committee waited too long to request feedback from the employers that attended the event.

GCBVI Strategic Plan Discussion

This item was tabled.

Agenda and Date for Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Employment Committee will be on August 8, 2018 from 3:00 am to 4:00 pm in the DERS Conference Room, Phoenix, AZ. Agenda items are as follows: Agenda items are as follows:

- Employer/Community Partner Survey Discussion
- Job Symposium Discussion
- E75 Event Discussion
- GCBVI Strategic Plan Discussion

Announcements

Tanner Gers stated that he would be unable to participate on the committee for a brief period. Nikki Jeffords stated that Tanner Gers could be a Community Member of the Committee so that he absence would not affect quorum until he was able to participate again. Ms. Jeffords noted that she would speak to Kevin Foster as well regarding his ability to participate on the committee as well.

Public Comment

A call was made to the public with no responses forthcoming.

Adjournment of Meeting

Nikki Jeffords motioned to adjourn the meeting. Jordan Moon seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 a.m.