

## **Arizona Apprenticeship Advisory Committee (AAAC)**

### **Public Meeting**

Wednesday, July 12, 2023

8:00 am

Meeting Minutes

#### **COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT (Virtually)**

Mr. Dennis Anthony, Chairman (Arizona Public Service)

Ms. Cindy Gutierrez (Arizona Department of Education Career and Technical Education)

Ms. Deb Furlong (Maricopa County Workforce Development)

Ms. Denise Kingman (Pima Community College)

Mr. Frank Grijalva (International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers)

Ms. Karen King (Training Director, Tucson Electrical JATC)

Ms. Katie Chapman (Salt River Project)

Ms. Linda Vedo (Central Arizona Project Apprenticeship Coordinator)

Ms. Melissa Huffman (City of Phoenix)

Mr. Paul Cozza (TechOne IT)

#### **COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT**

Vacancy (Arizona Industrial Commission)

Vacancy (Business & Industry)

#### **STAFF PRESENT for Department of Economic Security/Registration Agency**

Joann Bueno, Arizona Apprenticeship Office (Interim State Apprenticeship Program Lead)

Robert Demeter, Arizona Apprenticeship Office (Apprenticeship and Training Representative)

Ms. Corinna Pereira (Multi-State Navigator DOL – invited by Staff)

#### **CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Anthony called the meeting to order at 8:02 am.

#### **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Mr. Anthony welcomed all committee members and asked all in attendance to introduce themselves.

#### **ACCEPTANCE OF APRIL 12, 2023 MINUTES**

Mr. Anthony requested a motion to accept the AAAC meeting minutes of April 12, 2023. A motion was moved by Ms. Furlong, and seconded by Ms. Gutierrez. The motion to accept minutes was unanimously approved by those present as submitted.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

## **DES APPRENTICESHIP STAFF UPDATE**

Ms. Joann Bueno provided an update on the changes with the Arizona Apprenticeship Office staff. William “Willie” Higgins retired in April 2023 and Ms. Bueno has been assigned to be the Interim State Apprenticeship Program Lead until the position is filled appropriately following state protocols.

The Arizona Apprenticeship Office is now comprised of Ms. Bueno as the Interim State Apprenticeship Program Lead, a Program Specialist for the Southeastern Region, Brynn Gieron, and two Apprenticeship and Training Representatives (ATRs), Robert Demeter and Gina Revere. All the new members of the team have only joined the AAO early this year.

## **STATE APPRENTICESHIP EXPANSION FORMULA FUNDING**

Ms. Bueno shared the recent award of \$678k from the Department of Labor (DOL) through the State Apprenticeship Expansion Formula (SAEF) Grant. The performance period for the grant commences on July 1, 2023 and ends on June 30, 2024. The grant aims to increase the expansion of Registered Apprenticeship programs and participation throughout the state particularly focusing on the healthcare, manufacturing, education, logistics and warehousing, cyber security, and information technology industries. To meet the goals for the grant, the AAO will be adding three to four more FTEs to the team.

Ms. Bueno added that this is year one of five for the SAEF. There are two kinds of funding under the grant – formula and competitive funding. The AAO will be submitting for formula funding for the first two years and evaluate the AAO’s performance measures and discern the feasibility of proposing for competitive funding in the subsequent years.

## **RE-EVALUATION OF ARIZONA APPRENTICESHIP ADVISORY COMMITTEE (AAAC)**

Mr. Anthony explained to the Committee there may be a need to re-evaluate the composition of the AAAC due to some of the sectors required to be represented may no longer be serving a purpose or even have relevance.

Ms. Bueno provided a brief history of the structure of the AAAC as stipulated in Executive Order 2013-01 by Governor Jan Brewer. The Committee is comprised of thirteen members: four representatives from Business & Industry, four representatives from Employee Organizations, one representative from a Postsecondary Education organization, one representative from a Workforce Development organization, one representative from the Arizona Industrial Commission, one representative from the Arizona Department of Education, and one non-voting representative from the DOL Office of Apprenticeship (OA).

Ms. Bueno informed the Committee that the assignment for the Arizona Industrial Commission has been vacant for many years. Likewise, the seat for the Office of Apprenticeship has been vacant since the movement of its former representative to another state coupled with the directive from the DOL that OA representatives are not to have a seat on any committees and will only serve as resource and guidance.

Mr. Anthony opened the floor for deliberation on the composition of the Committee. Many cited that the Committee has been able to function despite the lacking those two other members. Ms. Vedo added, however that perhaps keeping the two positions but identifying sectors, other than the Arizona Industrial Commission or the OA, may be an opportunity to invite additional voices from other sectors to the table. Mr. Anthony asked the other members to try to identify what those other sectors may be. Everyone felt that the current makeup is already an appropriate representation and that the Committee’s objectives are being met as it is.

With the DOL OA directive, it was further determined that there is indeed a need to re-evaluate the Committee's membership. A motion was moved by Mr. Frank Grijalva to remove the two positions thus, reducing the Committee membership to eleven members.

The motion was amended by Mr. Grijalva to make all members voting members. This was also seconded by Ms. Vedo. The motion to propose a reduction in the AAAC membership to eleven members and to ensure that all representatives are voting members was unanimously approved by those present.

The letter with proposed changes will be drafted by Ms. Bueno and submitted to Mr. Anthony for endorsement by the Workforce Arizona Council to the Governor for approval.

### **RENEWABLEWORKS and SOLAR ENERGY CONTRACTORS**

Ms. Bueno sought the guidance of the Committee regarding several entities trying to register apprenticeship programs connected with solar energy construction. Some companies are not able to register programs as there are no specific apprenticeable occupations identified for solar power construction. Most, if not all, of these solar-related occupations are in electrical.

Ms. Bueno adds that one particular company that has tried to register is RenewableWorks which is affiliated with TrueBlue and PeopleReady which are temporary staffing companies. According to DOL OA Bulletins 2010-17 and 2016-26, temporary staffing or labor leasing agencies are not allowed to be sponsors of registered apprenticeship programs.

RenewableWorks maintains that they are not a labor staffing company but rather a subcontractor to EPCs that build solar farms. However, they are trying to register a program for Construction Craft Labor and do not have anything indicated in their documents about work involving solar power.

The Committee acknowledged Ms. Bueno's concerns and weighed in on the matter. Ms. Chapman suggested that the AAO not approve nor deny the registration just yet but rather get more information and clarification from the company to be presented to the Committee again for a decision. After much discussion, Mr. Grijalva moved a motion to advise the AAO to neither approve nor deny the registration of the program, to request more information, and to provide guidance to help RenewableWorks be in compliance and render them eligible for registration with the State. The motion was seconded by Ms. Chapman and unanimously approved by those present.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

#### **UPDATE ON STATE APPRENTICESHIP & EEO PLAN BASED ON CFR 29:30 AND CFR 29:29 PART A**

Ms. Bueno updated the committee that AAO has submitted a state plan relevant to this year for approval, stating that once approved, the Committee will need to review and approve the state plan prior to submitting it to DOL for final approval and signature.

#### **UPDATE ON GRANTS TEGL 15-19 & TEGL 17-18:**

Ms. Bueno shared that TEGL 15-19 has been extended to June 30th, 2024 to complete the proposed scope of

improving data sharing and data integrity within the Arizona Job Connection workforce system. No cost modifications were included with the extension.

On the other hand, TEGL 17-18, with its goal to serve 800 apprentices, has reported 837. The grant ended on June 30th, 2023.

### **OUTSTANDING APPRENTICE AWARDS CEREMONY UPDATES**

Ms. King informed the Committee that the gathering of sponsorships, ticket sales, and nominations is in its early stages and will be expecting most of the submissions closer to the deadline. Ms. Bueno volunteered the AAO to remind the program coordinators of the August 1<sup>st</sup> deadline for submission.

Ms. King further clarified that the nomination fee of \$75 is exclusive of the event tickets for the nominated apprentices and other guests, which are worth \$65 each. If paid via credit card through PayPal, the charges will be done separately.

Ms. Huffman also added that the commemorative coins from last year's event were not all distributed accordingly. Ms. Huffman has been appointed to ensure the complete distribution of the coins to its recipients at this year's event.

In light of Willie Higgins' recent retirement, Ms. Vedo suggested honoring the former State Apprenticeship Program Lead with a lifetime achievement award as part of the ceremony. Everyone chimed in their enthusiastic agreement to the idea and Ms. Vedo formally made the motion to invite Willie Higgins to the event and present him with a Lifetime Achievement Award for Apprenticeship. The motion was seconded by Ms. King and Ms. Furlong.

### **STATUS REPORT**

#### **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:**

Mr. Dennis Anthony welcomes Ms. Bueno to her new role and shared with the Committee how they have been working together with realignment since Mr. Higgins retired in April.

Mr. Anthony also shared that under their program, all pre-apprentices have gone out for their dock rotations and finished their six-week ground school. The job posting and hiring season for APS has been moved up to next year and thus be accepting applications in January and will post for pre-apprenticeship positions in October. The program will try to onboard more in the spring and work by the beginning of the summer season instead of mid-summer which gives the individuals an easier time to acclimate to the temperature.

Further added were the program's efforts to get their outstanding apprentice nominations in and are looking forward to the event in November.

#### **APPRENTICESHIP ACTIVITY REPORT:**

Ms. Joann Bueno: There are currently 5,931 active apprentices and 245 active programs. Ms. Bueno proudly mentions that female participation in apprenticeship is at an all-time high at 11.5%

Ms. Bueno added that the AAO continues its efforts in expanding apprenticeship in more non-traditional

occupations in industries such as manufacturing, healthcare, and in education through teacher apprenticeships. Another major focus area is apprenticeships in the semiconductor industry beginning with NXP Semiconductors.

Furthermore, Ms. Bueno shares that increased interest has been received from various local workforce areas that have been dormant in recent years such as Mohave/La Paz, Coconino, and Pinal counties. Likewise, increased interest in the creation of career pathways through pre-apprenticeships and youth apprenticeships has also been received. Ms. Bueno shared that she will be presenting on this topic at the ACTEAZ Summer Conference on July 18<sup>th</sup>.

**Ms. Pereira (DOL Multi-State Navigator):** Submitted and shared with the Committee her 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Report for Region 6 which included information about the nominations for the Advisory Committee on Apprenticeships (ACA), the Apprenticeship RA Academy on Apprenticeship.gov, incorporation of DocuSign on the Apprenticeship Agreements from RAPIDS, and information on uploading event details for National Apprenticeship Week. She has also informed the Committee that she has forwarded the invitation for the outstanding apprentice awards to her tribal programs and they are also looking forward to participating in the event.

## **COUNCIL MEMBERS REPORT**

**Ms. Melissa Huffman (City of Phoenix):** Currently has 59 apprentices.

**Ms. Cindy Gutierrez (Arizona Department of Education Career and Technical Education):** Kevin Imes, the new State CTE Director has been appointed recently. Mr. Imes comes from thirty years of experience in Education and was a superintendent for the STEDY CTED in Yuma and is very knowledgeable and proactive in working with business and industry.

Ms. Gutierrez added that the ACTEAZ conference begins on July 14<sup>th</sup> and will be held in Tucson. Several apprenticeship programs will be in attendance providing some hands-on exhibitions and some class-type presentations. Ms. Bueno from AAO will be presenting on the CTEs and RAPs.

Ms. Gutierrez also shares that there will be a CTE Skills Commission meeting on July 16<sup>th</sup>. This convening aims to discuss CTE Standards and likewise be able to continue with plans to align CTEs with RAPs.

**Ms. King (Tucson Electrical JATC):** Graduated 32 apprentices on June 4<sup>th</sup> at a ceremony where 325 people were in attendance. Ms. King talked about their new building, though occupied, is not yet at its full occupancy.

Ms. King also shares that their program had taken in 60 apprentices out of the 65 pre-apprentices they had. Throughout the probationary period, five more were terminated from the program. In total, there are 173 apprentices currently, the highest the program has ever had.

**Ms. Chapman (Salt River Project):** Currently has 150 apprentices, with three recently graduating from one substation. Ms. Chapman informs the Committee that their program is currently looking into a Dispatcher Operator apprenticeship and hopes to register the new occupation later in the year so hiring can commence in the spring. This is in anticipation of further growth in the next five years as well as filling positions that will be vacated due to mass retirement.

**Mr. Paul Cozza (TechOne IT):** Currently has four apprentices and is anticipating registration of five more in August as software developers and computer generalists.

**Ms. Linda Vedo (Central Arizona Project Apprenticeship Coordinator):** Currently has six apprentices and is preparing to post for two more.

**Ms. Denise Kingman (Pima Community College):** Currently has seventeen employers and is trying to accommodate the upsurge of inquiries from various industry sectors. Ms. Kingman shares the addition of an FTE to focus on healthcare and IT apprenticeships.

Ms. Kingman provided an update on the IRAM, the advanced manufacturing consortium grant which ends on July 14<sup>th</sup>. Subsequently, PCC is also working on a Community Health Worker program grant and has been working closely with the AAO and Arizona Western College.

Ms. Kingman also mentions that they are aiming to hold events and activities to celebrate National Apprenticeship Week and will ensure that those are uploaded on the site Ms. Pereira mentioned.

Ms. Kingman also shares their efforts to promote and create pre-apprenticeships at their advanced manufacturing building which, she invites everyone to take a tour of. They encourage their current students as well as non-students to try out their pre-apprenticeship boot camps to get a sampling of the apprenticeship. Participants that are interested after the boot camp are given the chance to be interviewed.

**Ms. Furlong (City of Phoenix Workforce Development):** Has been promoted to oversee all of Business Services at the City of Phoenix Workforce Development along with its program operations. The aim is to align funding sources to efficiently and most effectively serve their participants and employers. COP has been evaluating their work-based learning funding to be able to support apprenticeship programs and hopefully get approval for its implementation by August. Also in the pipeline are efforts to promote and increase pre-apprenticeships, starting with the development of one at South Mountain Community College for construction.

Ms. Furlong also added that COP has been working with Maricopa County, which is actively supporting apprenticeships through its ARPA funding. A sample of this collaboration is through the Healthcare Apprenticeship Accelerator happening on August 30<sup>th</sup> at GateWay Community College.

## **CALL TO THE PUBLIC**

Mr. Anthony asked the public for any comments.

Ms. Rachel Koch from Granite Construction introduced herself and informed the Committee that she is new to her organization and would like to learn more about Registered Apprenticeships in Arizona. The members of the Committee chimed in with various suggestions. Ms. Chapman offered advice to be familiar with their program standards and with the Code of Federal Regulations. Mr. Anthony suggested finding opportunities to network with other program coordinators and mentioned the Arizona Western Apprenticeship Coordinators Association (WACA). Other Committee members also offered opportunities to connect and provide guidance. Ms. Bueno, on behalf of the AAO, has also reached out to offer assistance.

## **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be on October 11, 2023. Same format (Virtual).

Committee members will be notified with an invitation to the next meeting to include an agenda for the meeting

and draft minutes of this meeting. Future meetings are scheduled quarterly on the second Wednesday of that month (January, April, June, and October) from 8 am – 10 am.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Anthony adjourned the meeting at 9:58 am.