

Governor's Council on Blindness and Visual Impairment (GCBVI)
Employment Committee Meeting Minutes
August 14, 2017

Members Present

Nikki Jeffords*
Tanner Gers*
Jordan Moon*
Terell Welch*
Jim Strohacker*
Kevin Foster*

Members Absent

Staff Present

Lindsey Powers, Admin. Assist.
*Teleconferenced

Guests Present

Call to Order and Introductions

Nikki Jeffords called the meeting to order at 2:03 pm in the RSA Conference Room, Phoenix, AZ. Introductions were made a quorum was present.

Approval of August 8, 2017 Meeting Minutes

Terell Welch motioned to approve the minutes from the August 8, 2017 meeting. Jordan Moon seconded the motion. The minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote.

Strategies for Inviting Employers

Nikki Jeffords stated the Employment Committee needed to focus on getting buy-in from employers, which would encourage employers to attend the E75 Diversity Builder Award Event. Jim Strohacker stated Motorola chose keynote speakers that attendees and other employers would want to hear speak. Mr. Strohacker suggested the committee invite high profile individuals to attend such as Senators, which would encourage media coverage of the event. Jim Strohacker stated he could contact Channel 15 and request a news anchor attend the event and be the keynote speaker, which would guarantee media coverage. Nikki Jeffords inquired whether a news anchor would agree to be the emcee for the event. Jim Strohacker stated a media anchor would be the keynote speaker and highlight the theme that the job ready clients were not disabled, but were abled. Jordan

Moon stated his agreement that the committee would benefit from media coverage, but cautioned against using a news anchor as the keynote speaker. Mr. Moon noted the keynote speaker should have some experience as a blind or visually impaired individual, or experience hiring blind and visually impaired individuals. Nikki Jeffords stated the committee should create a more professional event and would benefit from having an emcee. Jim Strohacker stated he was pleased to contact large companies such as Intel, Bank of America, and Go Daddy as well as Human Resource and hiring professionals. Nikki Jeffords stated the committee should invite the Governor to attend the event and inquired whether the Governor had been invited to previous events. Lindsey Powers stated the Governor had been invited to attend through his staff.

Kevin Foster inquired whether the committee held similar events in the past. Nikki Jeffords stated the committee held two E75 Diversity Builder Award Events, which were held at the Foundation for Blind Children (FBC). She noted the next event would be held at Ability 360. Nikki Jeffords stated about 75-100 individuals attended previous events, although the committee wanted to focus on inviting more employers to attend. Kevin Foster inquired whether the committee had developed an elevator speech to be used when talking to employers about the event. Terell Welch stated the committee developed a Save the Date flyer, which could be used when talking to employers. Nikki Jeffords stated the event recognized employers that were committed to becoming diversity builders, and noted the committee recognized about five employers at the previous event. Kevin Foster inquired regarding the types of employers the committee wanted to invite. Tanner Gers stated the committee wanted to invite employers that had hired blind and visually impaired individuals, employers that were "blind curious" about hiring blind and visually impaired individuals, and employers that could learn about hiring blind and visually impaired individuals. Nikki Jeffords stated the committee invited employers that hired blind and visually impaired Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) clients in previous events, although the committee did not invite a sufficient number of employers. Kevin Foster stated the committee could invite a speaker that could address the gap in knowledge regarding the abilities of blind and visually impaired employees.

Nikki Jeffords stated Tanner Gers contacted Tucson Electric Power and noted the CEO agreed to be a keynote speaker at the event. Tanner Gers stated Tucson Electric Power was locating funding to hire two visually impaired individuals and were interested in potentially creating a call center and hire mostly blind and visually impaired individuals to work in the call center. Mr. Gers stated Tucson Electric Power was a role model as a large organization that had experienced success in hiring blind and visually impaired individuals. Kevin Foster stated the committee would benefit from inviting

an individual in executive leadership that could demonstrate an initiative in hiring blind and visually impaired individuals. Mr. Foster stated the CEO of Tucson Electric Power could indicate why the company's diversity initiative helped the company be innovative and competitive within that field. Nikki Jeffords stated the committee could also benefit from inviting a lawmaker or someone that could create more visibility to the event. Kevin Foster stated the CEO of a large company would encourage other CEOs to attend the event. Kevin Foster suggested the committee develop some talking points for the CEO to discuss at the event in addition to the CEO talking about his or her company. Nikki Jeffords inquired whether Tanner Gers would follow up with Tucson Electric Power regarding the CEO's ability to be the keynote speaker for the event. Tanner Gers stated he spoke to an employee of Tucson Electric Power and would request the scheduling director arrange a time for committee members to talk about the possibility of the CEO speaking at the E75 event.

Jordan Moon motioned that the CEO of Tucson Electric Power be invited to be the keynote speaker of the E75 Diversity Builder Award Event. Terell Welch seconded the motion. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

Terell Welch motioned for Jim Strohacker to be a member of the Employment Committee. Jordan Moon seconded the motion. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

Tanner Gers motioned for Kevin Foster be a member of the Employment Committee. Terell Welch seconded the motion. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

Nikki Jeffords stated the committee had the Phoenix Rescue Mission cater the food at previous events and inquired whether the committee wanted to continue to use the organization. Jim Strohacker inquired regarding the budget for the event. Lindsey Powers stated Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) agreed to sponsor the event by funding the event planner for the event. Terell Welch stated the committee had requested the Phoenix Rescue Mission to cater the next event.

Terell Welch inquired whether the committee could invite Dick Monaco, Arizona Industries for the Blind (AIB), and Tucson Electric Power to both be keynote speakers for the event. Nikki Jeffords stated she was not sure whether Dick Monaco would be an appropriate keynote speaker at the event. Jordan Moon stated Mr. Monaco could be invited to speak at the event. Steve Foster suggested the committee identify individual to speak on an employer panel at the E75 event during the lunch portion of the event.

E75 Website Discussion

Nikki Jeffords stated Jim Strohacker was willing to develop an E75 website. Jim Strohacker stated the committee would need to identify the funds in order to host the website domain, and decide on a website name.

E75 Marketing Discussion

Terell Welch stated the first E75 event had a higher attendance and noted that Charles Schwab wanted to sponsor the event, although the Department of Economic Security (DES) could not accept credit card donations. Kevin Foster stated the committee would benefit from building a relationship with the Marriot, which could donate the use of space for the event.

Kevin Foster stated the committee could use the event to cultivate a relationship with the Business Leadership Network (BLN). Nikki Jeffords stated the committee was interested in building a relationship with the BLN and obtaining local and national buy-in.

E75 Program Development Discussion

Nikki Jeffords suggested Jim Strohacker spearhead the development of the E75 program.

Agenda and Date for Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Employment Committee would be on August 21, 2017 from 2:00-3:00 pm in the RSA Conference Room, Phoenix, AZ.

Agenda items are as follows:

- Strategies to Invite Employers
- E75 Website Discussion
- E75 Marketing Discussion
- E75 Program Development Discussion

Announcements

There were no announcements.

Public Comment

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

Adjournment of Meeting

Kevin Foster moved to adjourn the meeting; Jordan Moon seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously. The meeting stood adjourned at 3:00 p.m.