

Governor's Council on Blindness and Visual Impairment (GCBVI)
Employment Committee Meeting Minutes
September 5, 2018

Members Present

Nathan Pullen
Nikki Jeffords
Terell Welch
Jordan Moon
Bea Shapiro

Members Absent

Kevin Foster

Staff Present

Lindsey Powers, Council Liaison

Guests Present

Call to Order and Introductions

Nathan Pullen called the meeting to order at 3:03 pm in the RSA Conference Room, Phoenix, AZ. Introductions were made a quorum was present.

Approval of the August 8, 2018 Meeting Minutes

Bea Shapiro motioned to approve the minutes from the August 8, 2018 meeting. Nikki Jeffords seconded the motion. The meeting minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote.

Employer/Community Partner Survey Discussion

This item was tabled.

Job Symposium Discussion

Nathan Pullen stated the Job Symposium at the National Federation of the Blind of Arizona (NFBA) Conference included an hour-long employment panel presentation with Peckham, HR professionals, and APS. Mr. Pullen stated the employers offered guidance to individuals seeking employment such as how to apply for jobs, completing resumes and interviewing for jobs. Nathan Pullen stated the symposium also included an opportunity for individuals to perform mock interviews. Nathan Pullen stated that some individuals did not understand the function of the room with the mock

interviews and thought the tables were part of the exhibitor tables, which caused some confusion. Nathan Pullen stated most individuals were not prepared to talk to employers and did not come with resumes for review, which could be communicated better at upcoming events. Nikki Jeffords stated the committee could consider partnering with Ability 360 in offering training for individuals interested in home health careers, which was becoming a large industry. Nathan Pullen stated home health care companies would likely welcome blind and visually impaired individuals as employees, as they were typically loyal employees. Jordan Moon stated the overall planning of the event went well and the panel discussions were great. Mr. Moon stated he would have liked more individuals to have attended the event although he received positive feedback from individuals that attended.

Future Events Discussion

Nikki Jeffords stated the Vision and Rehabilitation and Assistive Technology Expo (VRATE) Committee felt that VRATE was not the right event for a Reverse Job Fair. Nikki Jeffords suggested the Employment Committee consider holding an employer workshop or event in Spring. Ms. Jeffords cautioned the committee from overwhelming employers with blindness events, which could be detrimental to the committee's cause. Jordan Moon agreed that the VRATE Committee expressed reluctance to hold a Reverse Job Fair at VRATE. Jordan Moon stated his understanding that the mission of the E75 Diversity Award events was to educate employers and that a small workshop would be a great way to do that. He noted that an employer workshop could include Assistive Technology (AT) and Orientation and Mobility (O&M) instructors. Nathan Pullen inquired whether the VRATE Committee would still like individuals to speak about hiring blind and visually impaired individuals as well as hear from employed blind and visually impaired individuals. Nikki Jeffords stated VRATE would like to invite individuals to speak regarding employment of blind and visually impaired individuals. Nathan Pullen stated he could invite someone to speak about employment and how employment could affect one's Social Security as well as Business Enterprise Program (BEP) operators. Nikki Jeffords stated she would like to see presentations from successfully employed blind and visually impaired individuals such as BEP operators and individuals employed through Arizona Industries for the Blind (AIB). Terrell Welch inquired whether VRATE focused on AT and technologies for the blind and visually impaired. Jordan Moon stated that VRATE did focus on technologies for blind and visually impaired individuals although some vendors might provide technologies for individuals with other disabilities. Terrell Welch stated DesTechAZ would hold a conference in Arizona, which was not focused on AT, but could provide an opportunity for the committee to reach out to other partners in the community. Jordan Moon agreed and noted that the VRATE

Committee was trying to be more innovative and expand the community partnerships. Nikki Jeffords stated one challenge was that many individuals were apathetic and not willing to consider different exhibitors or presenters at VRATE.

Nathan Pullen stated that Ability 360 had agreed to donate the use of the Conference Room for the upcoming E75 Diversity Builder Award Event. Mr. Pullen noted that the conference room was reserved on the last Friday of January but was available on February 1, 2019 if the committee was interested. Nathan Pullen inquired regarding the outreach process for E75 events. Nikki Jeffords stated at the previous event, Kevin Foster spoke as an employed visually impaired individual, Marc Ashton spoke as an employer of blind and visually impaired individuals and Tucson Electric Power spoke regarding their experiences hiring blind and visually impaired individuals. Nikki Jeffords stated that Peckham could speak as an employer of blind and visually impaired individuals and Amy Porterfield could potentially speak about empowering blind and visually impaired individuals. Bea Shapiro stated the Department of Economic Security (DES) Director could be asked to speak at the E75 event as an employer of individuals with disabilities. Nikki Jeffords stated that Peckham had agreed to speak as an employer of blind and visually impaired individuals and stated that Terell Welch could speak as a DES employee. Jordan Moon stated that Rich Sorey, Services for the Blind Visually Impaired and Deaf (SBVID) Program Manager could speak at the event. Nikki Jeffords stated that Nathan Pullen could speak as an individual knowledgeable in the employment of blind and visually impaired individuals. Nathan Pullen stated that he or Dan Martinez could speak, although the committee might benefit from inviting a higher-level individual to speak. Jordan Moon stated he could invite a State Representative to attend the event as well. Jordan Moon stated Amy Porterfield, Donald Porterfield, or Rich Sorey would be great presenters at the event. Mr. Moon noted that individuals would be interested to hear about the BEP program as well as most employers were not familiar with the program. Nathan Pullen stated several BEP operators hired individuals with other disabilities and could expand the conversation with employers. Terell Welch inquired whether any committee members had a contact in the DES Director's Office. Nathan Pullen stated he could contact the Public Information Officer (PIO) who could discuss the event with the Director.

Jordan Moon suggested that the committee present Peckham with their award prior to their presentation at the event. Terell Welch noted at the previous event, he was not able to shake the employer's hands due to a table in the front of the room. Mr. Welch suggested that Amy Porterfield recognize the employers at the event. Nathan Pullen stated BEP or the café at Ability 360, Cultivate Café, could potentially cater the event. Terell Welch

stated the committee used the Phoenix Rescue Mission as a caterer for previous events, and noted the cost was reasonable. Jordan Moon stated if BEP operators catered the event, it would reiterate the message of the event. Nikki Jeffords stated the committee asked for donations from the NFBA, Arizona Council of the Blind (AzCB), the Arizona Participating Operators Committee (APOC) and the Auxiliary Legion in the past. Nikki Jeffords stated that AIB would likely have a new CEO at the next E75 and that individual could be invited to speak at the event.

Agenda and Date for Next Meeting

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

- Employer/Community Partner Survey Discussion
- E75 Event Discussion

Announcements

There were no announcements.

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 4:00 p.m.