

**State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) Employment and Partnerships  
Committee Meeting Minutes**  
November 29, 2018

**Members Present**

Carol Carr  
Adam Robson  
Jennifer Baier  
Fiona Falbo  
Susan Voirol  
Tim Stump

**Members Absent**

Judith Castro

**Staff Present**

Lindsey Powers

**Guests Present**

Wendy Parent-Johnson  
Jeremiah Lopez

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**Call to Order and Introductions**

Carol Carr called the meeting to order at 2:04 pm in the DERS Conference Room, Phoenix, AZ. Introductions were made and a quorum was present.

**Approval of October 29, 2018 Meeting Minutes**

Adam Robson moved to approve the minutes of the October 29, 2018 SRC Employment and Community Partnerships Committee meeting. Carol Carr seconded the motion. The committee approved the minutes by unanimous voice vote.

**Community Partnership Engagement Discussion**

Wendy Parent-Johnson stated she worked with Employment First in Kansas and South Dakota. Ms. Parent-Johnson stated her previous work experience included work as a rehabilitation counseling in special education and in job coaching. Wendy Parent-Johnson stated had recently relocated to Arizona but was excited to partner with other organizations.

Carol Carr stated the Employment and Partnerships Committee had not been meeting regularly, although the committee had reviewed the Vocational

Rehabilitation (VR) Self Employment Policy and provided feedback to Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA). Carol Carr stated the committee was coming back together to focus on the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and the employment requirements. Carol Carr stated she contacted the key individuals working at different organizations with the hope that the committee members could work together on the same goal. Ms. Carr stated she also hoped to dispel the myths of employing an individual with a disability. Carol Carr stated the Southwest Autism Research and Resource Center (SARRC), Linkages and Tim Stump, Employment Coordinator were doing great work and she hoped to bring everyone together and collaborate on promoting employment of individuals with disabilities. Carol Carr stated there would be changes to funding and accountability as well as integrated competitive employment.

Susan Voirol stated that Untapped Arizona was the affiliate for the U.S. Business Leadership Network (BLN), which had changed their name to Disability In. Ms. Voirol stated the organization was currently transitioning and had not been as active lately. Tim Stump stated that he had not heard from Untapped Arizona for quite some time. Susan Voirol stated she had been in contact with Deb Pryor, Untapped Arizona, and had expressed that there had been a lack of understanding in the community. She noted that providers had high hopes regarding new initiatives with youth and mentorship but had not heard from the entity recently. Adam Robson stated the concepts were great, although providers had not seen action. Carol Carr stated she hoped that each committee member could work on the project for one year with monthly meetings. Carol Carr stated she would bring Federal updates to the committee to begin implementing changes at the state level. Wendy Parent-Johnson inquired whether community partners referred to employers, community members or agencies. Carol Carr stated she would like to address all areas, although the committee was focusing on employers in order to educate employers. Carol Carr stated that Disability In provided outreach to corporations, but often that information did not trickle down to smaller businesses. Carol Carr stated the committee needed to identify how to effectively communicate the message. She noted the Department of Education was obligated to support WIOA and the Governor was in support as well. Susan Voirol stated the committee could be missing some disability populations including individuals with significant disabilities.

Carol Carr asked that each committee member give a brief overview of what their organizations were doing. Fiona Falbo stated that she had worked with SARRC for three years, which had been a non-profit for 20 years. Fiona Falbo stated she was the Liaison between the business community and the clinical team, made up of clients and students. Ms. Falbo stated that services were paid through VR, private pay or insurance. She stated SARRC had a new employment program with 60 partners and 78 locations in various

industries and different levels of jobs. Fiona Falbo stated SARRC explained the employment process and described the support the organization would provide to the company and the client. She stated that SARRC could provide autism awareness training as well as job coaching and onboarding. Carol Carr inquired how SARRC recruited businesses. Fiona Falbo stated clients drive some of the need and would express an interest in working with a certain company. Ms. Falbo stated SARRC was developing an internship/volunteer program where individuals could experience different work environments and be potentially be placed in an employment pool. Susan Voirol stated the Project Search was offering a similar program, although all organizations were encouraged to offer employment programs. Carol Carr stated the benefit to having a directory of business industry partners that organizations could work with.

Jeremiah Lopez stated he worked with Linkages in rural Arizona, Pima County. Mr. Lopez stated Linkages was a non-profit organization that provided employment opportunities to veterans, wounded warriors, and job seekers with disabilities. Jeremiah Lopez stated he would talk to the employers about their job openings, and would share that information, including specifics of the job such as if a background check is required or if the job is part time or full time. Jeremiah Lopez stated he also helped the employers by soliciting untapped talent and creating those connections. He noted that Linkages also assisted with job fairs and would collaborate with other organizations. Jeremiah Lopez stated the job board worked well to connect the employers with job seeking individuals. Carol Carr inquired whether Jeremiah Lopez had a list of employers that continued to hire individuals with disabilities. Jeremiah Lopez stated Linkages had a list of all businesses that hired individuals with disabilities although the database tracked the number of individuals hired by each business. Carol Carr inquired regarding the number of employers engaged with Linkages. Jeremiah Lopez stated Linkages was working with approximately 150 employers, although the relationship was different with each employer. He noted that employers could log into the job board to post a job, or the job announcement could be integrated from other job boards. Fiona Falbo inquired whether Linkages was in Maricopa county as well. Jeremiah Lopez stated Linkages was not in Maricopa county, although the organization did occasionally have clients and employers in Pinal county. Carol Carr requested that Jeremiah Lopez offer a brief description of Linkages. Jeremiah Lopez stated Linkages started 20 years prior by a business man in the auto industry, who began working with the Beacon Group, which had a car washing contract. He noted that Linkages became the link between the provider and the employer.

Jennifer Baier stated that Valley Life had three primary funding sources of the Division of Developmental Disabilities, VR, and Mercy Maricopa. Jennifer

Baier stated Valley Life worked with the State Set-Aside and offered janitorial, clerical and printing services. Ms. Baier stated there were four job developers, which had transformed the services. She noted that Valley Life worked with behavioral health clients although the challenge was in working with individuals with significant disabilities due to an understanding of employers. Jennifer Baier stated Valley Life encouraged employers to tour the campus. Carol Carr stated Valley Life worked with Circle K, which was committed to hiring one individual with a disability at each location.

### **Agenda and Date for Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the SRC Employment and Community Partnerships Committee will be on January 14, 2019 from 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm in the RSA Conference Room, Phoenix, AZ. Agenda items are as follows:

- Community Partnership Engagement Discussion

### **Announcements**

There were no announcements.

### **Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

### **Adjournment of Meeting**

The meeting was adjourned at 2:00 pm.