

COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT / ADULT LITERACY / DISABILITY ISSUES

July 20, 2023

Zoom Participants

Tom Bianco, Co-Chair

Joe Ferrari, DWD

Lois Forman, Jewish Family Federation

Jane Garraty, GC Chamber of Commerce

Jenn Macchione, St. John of God Community Svcs.

Adam Morina, RCSJ

Theresa Rohlfing, Center for Independent Living

Les Vail, WDB Chair

Eileen Gallo, WDB Staff

Bridget DiGiambattista, WDB Staff

Lorrie Covolesky, Abilities Solutions

Danielle Fithian, Goodwill Industries

Natalie Fortunato, South Jersey Dream Center

Frances Harwell, FBO

Jennifer Mauro, Goodwill Industries

Michelle Pandolfo, GC Human & Special Svcs.

Joe Spencer, RCSJ

Jennifer Shaw-Knab, DVRS

Allison Spinelli, WDB Staff

Visitor

Jeffrey Shisler, Abilities Solutions

Tom opened the meeting at 8:30 am.

A motion to approve April 20, 2023 meeting minutes was made by L. Vail, seconded by J. Mauro.

Adult Literacy

Joe S. reported their fiscal year just ended and they had an exceptional year for adult education programs. They had 244 students enrolled (goal-229). There were significant gains made with the students- close to 70% of the students that entered the program achieved at least one measurable skill gain in their studies.

HSE/ESL currently has 3 enrolled through TANF; WLL has 2 actively working with an instructor.

Adult Education programs HSE/ESL will be moving to Student Services building on August 1. This will allow students to gain access to more resources, they will be able to partake in tutoring services, and have access to mental health services through Acenda as well as counselors & advisors in student services.

WLL Activities

Robert reported 9 clients attended; 3 have exited; 1 obtained a diploma; 1 gained employment; 1 stopped attending. 3 new clients and 6 clients attending. Eileen stated there is a discrepancy in reporting and asked Robert to forward her report.

Literacy NJ

Nicole reported they are holding ESL classes during the summer, and fall they will offer computer literacy classes and ESL, HSE, reading, writing & math as well as one on one tutoring. They offer both Zoom and in-person classes throughout the county, with most in-person classes being held at Mosaic Family Success Center in Glassboro.

Transportation

Tom reported ridership for East-West Shuttle was 2,092 one-way trips; internal shuttle trips -695; total ridership was 2,788. There was an increase of 1.9% from May – June.

Agency Updates

DVRS – Jennifer reported Project Search at Jefferson Hospital/Washington Twp. held first cohort graduation in June. Six interns graduated, 4 are employed; 2 at Jefferson Hospital and working to assist the last intern with employment. The next cohort will start in September 2023 and will have 7 interns participating. There will be a signing day in August and they will start September 7th. DVRS just completed 511s with Abilities Solutions and all went well.

Abilities Solutions - Lorrie introduced Jeffrey Shisler, the new incoming President & CEO of Abilities Solutions taking the place of Susan Perron. Jeffrey will assume the role on September 1, 2023. They were awarded a DVR

Preemployment Transitions grant which offers internship opportunities for students ages 14-21 and still in school. They are developing flyers and will be recruiting. The students will be placed into an employment site of their choice and will earn money, which is covered under the grant. She asked the members of the board if they know of any employers that would be interested in participating as employment sites for an intern.

St. John of God – Jenn reported their day program and supportive employment program are both expanding and are looking to hire 2-4 direct support professionals and 2 employment specialists.

The Disability Employment Job Fair will be July 27, 2023.

A motion for adjournment was made by L. Vail, seconded by L. Covelsky.

The next meeting will be on October 19, 2023.

Respectfully submitted,

Bridget A. DiGiambattista, WDB Staff