

**ANNUAL MEETING OF THE
Board of Directors
Of
Northern Illinois Workforce Alliance, Inc.**
(The Workforce Investment Board serving Boone, Winnebago and Stephenson Counties)
And **Chief Elected Officials**

Tuesday, September 13, 2016
Rock Valley College; 3301 N. Mulford Road
Rockford, IL

I. Board Meeting Call to Order: Chairman Karen Brown called the Northern Illinois Workforce Alliance Board of Directors meeting to order at 8:08 a.m.

II. Roll Call: Board Members Present: Karen Brown, Michelle Cassaro, Gary Evans, Lori Fanello, Dan Grohens, Jerry Guinane, Brian Halsted, Greg Harle, June Hazzard, Tim Hood, Vanessa Hughes, Paul Logli, Beverly Long, Mike Mastroianni, Mike Nicolas, Amy Ott, Jim Pirages, Frank Rotello, Amanda Smith, Craig Steege

CEO Members Present: Bob Walberg (Boone County)

NIWA Staff Present: Darcy Bucholz, Cathy Cornelius, Pam Fettes, Robert Jones, Jr., John Strandin, Valerie Johnson

Guests and Partner Staff Present: Deb Alfredson, Karyn Abraham, Tom Austin, Jill Boepple, Sue Carmichael, Kari Cullen, Darryl Cummings, Ted Duckett, Valerie Ferguson, Courtney Geiger, Cindy Gordon, Iris Hale, Kim Haley, Margie Hartfiel, Jeff Hefty, Kerry Knodle, Mark Krupke, Pamela Long, Stacy McCaskel, Cheryl Metcalf, Rita Nesbitt, Jordan Priest, Crystal Saltow, Mark Spain, Ken Terrenoni, Mike Williams, Dan White,

Welcome: Karen Brown welcomed everyone and thanked the meeting sponsors:
Alpha Controls
Rasmussen College
OSF Saint Anthony Medical Center

Karen introduced the Chief Elected Officials, and thanked the staff for their continued good work.

III. Approval of Consent Agenda:

a. **NIWA Board Minutes of July 12, 2016**

Motion: Mike Mastroianni Second: Lori Fanello Approved

IV. Finance Committee Report:

a. June 2016 Financial Reports – Amy Ott reported combined percentage of expenditures related to training for the Adult and Dislocated Worker programs exceeded the goal of 40%, ending with a percentage of 46.3. Youth Workbased Learning Percentage is currently at 16.8% heading for the goal of 20% for a 2 year period. The Adult program ended the year at 104.1% of Training Funds Encumbered and the Dislocated Worker Program ended at 68.3%. Participant Service Levels were met or exceeded. We were able to serve more people with the same funding due to more enrollments in shorter term training programs.

- b. PY2015 Transfer of Funds (Dislocated Worker to Adult) – Approve a budget modification to the PY2015 grant agreement to transfer funds in the amount of \$200,000 from the WIOA Dislocated Worker program allocation to the WIOA Adult program funding stream.

Motion: Tim Hood Second: Craig Steege Approved
Mike Mastroianni and Amanda Smith abstained from voting

- c. PY2016 Transfer of Funds (Dislocated Worker to Adult) – Approve a budget modification to the PY2016 grant agreement to transfer funds in the amount of \$400,000 from the WIOA Dislocated Worker program allocation to the WIOA Adult program funding stream.

Motion: Tim Hood Second: Craig Steege Approved
Mike Mastroianni and Amanda Smith abstained from voting

V. Recognition – Program Award Winners:

Two representatives from our local workforce area were honored as State award recipients by the Illinois Workforce Partnership (IWP) - Mulenda Bisoga, a participant in the Rock Valley College Refugee program, and Jacqueline Penticoff, a TRADE program participant. According to IWP, “the winners were identified from a pool of impressive nominees from across the state and exemplify the tremendous impact of the local workforce system on economic development in Illinois.”

Other local program award winners included Alex Schumaker, Becky Orth and Kevin Melecio-Otero.

VI. Recognition of Board Member Service:

- a. Amy Ott – Outgoing Secretary/Treasurer – Amy will remain a member of the board as well as serve on the Finance Committee.
- b. Michele Cassaro – Incoming Secretary/Treasurer
- c. Shirley Walker – 15 years as a Board Member – Shirley dutifully served on the Northern Illinois Workforce Alliance Board since its inception up until her retirement.

VII. Maximizing Training Opportunities with Non-Traditional Options: A panel of experts in the field of non-traditional training options gathered to speak to the group about types of programs currently available and the benefits of such programs.

Bridge Programs: Amanda Smith told us how there are currently 40,000 adults in our region without a high school diploma or GED. Bridge programs work to help these adults gain their high school equivalency while working on career pathways. The career pathways program helps students gain skills in Healthcare, Transportation/Logistics and Manufacturing. The Integrated Career and Academic Preparation System (ICAPS) program allows students to work on gaining their high school equivalency while earning college credit. It is a 1 year program when students can earn a credential in either CMA or CNC, 3 additional industry recognized certifications and gain skills to earn a self-sustaining wage. The only pre-requisite to these programs is a reading level of 6th grade or higher.

Entrepreneurial Training: Stacy McCaskil is a professor of business at Rock Valley College. The Rock Valley College Business Department offers many opportunities for students to gain real life experience. There is a competency based program where students can demonstrate competency toward an Associate degree. Internships are also offered in conjunction with independent study courses. RVC also has many clubs that are entrepreneurial in design and help students gain project management skills. Basic college entry is the only qualification for these programs.

Work-Based Learning and Customized Training: Jeff Hefty is the Director for the Dislocated Worker Program at The Workforce Connection. Work Based Learning programs such as Work

Experience or Internships help participants get an opportunity to learn and demonstrate skills in a work-place setting. It is also an opportunity for employers to review the participant as they demonstrate their ability to learn and perform. Work Experience gets participants in the door. The salary is paid by WIOA funds. There is no cost to the employer. On-the-Job training places participants with some skills in a certain career in a job where they are further trained by the employer. At least 50% of the wages are paid for with WIOA funds to off-set the extra training cost to the company. Customized training is developed with the employer and the cost of the training is shared by WIOA and the employer or group of employers. The employer commits to hiring individuals after successful completion of the training. Eligibility for the WIOA programs is required.

Apprenticeships: Greg Harle, the Training Director for the Plumbers & Pipefitters LU23 spoke about apprenticeships. Apprenticeships include on-the-job training and classroom training. The Plumbers & Pipefitters apprenticeship is a 5 year program. Students receive 1600 hours per year of on-the-job training and 250 hours per year classroom training. Timeframes vary for different programs. Students are paid while enrolled in the program and wages are based on their progression through the program. There is no cost to participant. Through this training, individuals can earn while they learn and complete with an industry recognized credential for their specific trade. This program has an 85% completion ratio. A high school diploma or equivalency is the only requirement to apply to an apprenticeship.

These programs are under-utilized and require the board help to raise awareness in the community. There is also a need to raise awareness among business leaders of the need for job shadowing opportunities.

VIII. The Year in Review & Opportunities Ahead: Darcy Bucholz presented the group with a year in review and spoke about the new Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) that took effect July 1, 2015. She spoke about the work being done to come into compliance with WIOA. The Act focuses heavily on agency partnerships and The Workforce Connection is working with 18 partner agencies and a memorandum of understanding (MOU) was developed with all One-Stop Partners. The partners agreed to support, enhance and further develop the public workforce system. The System Vision states that the partners of The Workforce Connection will advance the economic vitality of the region by providing a quality workforce in response to employer needs through an integrated, accessible employer-driven system utilizing the resources of all partners to develop our human capital. Using this vision a 4-year Regional Workforce Plan was developed and a local plan. Going forward The Workforce Connection will continue to develop branding and communications; seeking to develop strategies for employer and public engagement as well as increase public awareness and increase knowledge among partners of The Workforce Connection. The Business Services Team is taking a coordinated approach for common access for talent development as well as shared goals and shared contacts. The team will focus on employer-driven strategies, employer coalitions and alignment of strategies to meet employer needs.

IX. Board Member Comments: Karen Brown again thanked everyone for coming and congratulated the award winners on their achievements. She commented that there is still a lot of work to be done and commended the Board and staff for accomplishments thus far.

X. Public Comment: None

XI. Adjournment: 9:34 am