



**NIAGARA COUNTY
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD**

Joel Feuerman, Chairperson
Bonnie Rice, Executive Director

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Youth Committee Meeting Minutes – September 8, 2021
ZOOM Conference: Video and Audio Conference

Members Present: Dawn Cody, Kathleen Granchelli, Dennis Martinez, Dawn Wylke

Members Absent: Tomorrow Allen-Collins, Marille Clark, Brian Rotella, Michael Tambroni

WDB Staff: Helen Dennis, Bonnie Rice

The meeting was called to order by B. Rice at 10:00 a.m. through video and audio-conferencing using ZOOM. B. Rice led the meeting.

B. Rice provided an update on the WIOA Youth program, currently operated in-house by Niagara County Employment & Training Department (NCET). NCET's goal for the current year was 75 youth enrolled, and they have 58 youth enrolled as of 9/1/21, only 3 months into the current program year.

B. Rice reviewed with the Youth Committee the additional funding grants the WDB will be receiving to further serve youth. Two grant opportunities are available: WIOA SYEP (Summer Youth Employment Program) and NYS GVP (New York State Gun Violence Prevention).

The WIOA SYEP uses the TANF application and eligibility factors, youth applicants must live in the City of Niagara Falls and be ages 14-24. The grant is to be spent by December 31, 2021. Through the grant, eligible youth can be assisted with gaining subsidized work experience, supportive services such as hygiene packs, work boots, work clothes, transportation assistance, etc., incentives such as pay stipends or gift cards for achievements, and HSE or short-term training. Summer employment is the goal and there will be weekly reporting to New York State.

With the NYS GVP grant, Niagara County is to serve 50 individuals ages 18-24 residing in ZIP Codes heavily affected by gun violence. For Niagara County, 75% of the grant will be used to serve youth individuals through the WDB by NCET and must live within the City of Niagara Falls ZIP Codes (ZIP Codes 14301, 14302, 14303, 14304 and 14305). NCET will also have the ability to use up to 25% of the grant to serve individuals in the City of Lockport (ZIP Code 14094). The NYS GVP grant is to be spent by July 2022. The goal is for youth to obtain year-round employment. The grant allows for youth to be direct hires to a company, with up to 90% On-the-Job Training wage reimbursement possible. The grant allows for food purchases (which is planned to be offered with workshops and training. Example: pizza and soda following a soft skills training), supportive services such as hygiene packs, work boots, work clothes, transportation assistance, etc., incentives such as pay stipends or gift cards for achievements, computer tablets or wifi hotspots if needed for training or for the job, and HSE, short-term training, Registered Apprenticeship or Pre-apprenticeship. There will also be weekly reporting to New York State. B. Rice reviewed the checklist, supportive services and incentives counselors will be able to offer youth.

K. Granchelli mentioned that during the summer she was unable to find youth to employ through NCET's TANF Summer Youth Program. B. Rice stated that historically there are more



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business than youth for TANF, especially this summer due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. She noted that for these grants there have been press releases and outreach has been started to local Niagara County business in order to create a waitlist. The WDB does not have all of the information needed to begin using this funding yet.

D. Wylke stated that a presentation to students would be beneficial. The presentation should include all the information the counselor and grant can offer, as well as presentations from business owners involved in the grant so that students can understand the business and job opportunities available. D. Wylke stated that she would like to pursue a presentation and opportunities further once a timeline can be created. She also noted that a part of the presentation needs to address who and how students reach out to and apply for the opportunity.

B. Rice explained the hiring process to the Youth Committee. Job opportunities are based on youth choice and businesses available through the grant. Each counselor will assess the youth to determine needs specific to job placement.

K. Granchelli asked if youth are offered further services and guidance once they are placed into employment. B. Rice stated that counselors work with the youth and keep in contact with them while employed in both grant opportunities. For the NYSGVP grant's OJT opportunity, counselors work with the youth and keep in contact with them, but also have mid-point and end evaluations with the youth and the business to record progress and successes.

B. Rice also informed the Committee that the WDB and NCET are awaiting NYS funding. To date, funds are not yet available within the county. Once all information is received, counselors will work with business and youth to get the program up and running. D. Cody stated she will then be ready to outreach to businesses and set up a presentation for students and youth.

B. Rice opened the floor to further questions and announcements.

D. Martinez shared an update regarding the Inclusion Committee. The Inclusion Committee is planning a virtual business workshop on November 3rd. The workshop is designed to inform businesses of retention services available to help existing employees and future employees who develop disabilities or need assistance to remain employed. It will also further the businesses' knowledge of disability and inclusion services, opportunities and practices. D. Martinez also mentioned, regarding the grant opportunities previously discussed, that individuals with disabilities applying for the grant may also qualify for assistance with ACCES-VR which would assist with short-term job coaching, among other opportunities.

B. Rice asked the Youth Committee if there were any further questions or comments. None brought forward. The Youth Committee Meeting was adjourned at 10:32 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Helen Dennis