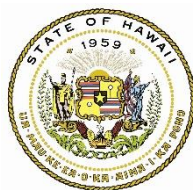


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GOVERNOR

JOSH GREEN
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



LESLIE WILKINS
CHAIRPERSON

ALLICYN C.H. TASAKA
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
830 Punchbowl Street, Suite 417, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Phone: (808) 586-8630 Web: <http://labor.hawaii.gov/wdc/>

Workforce Development Council's Employer Engagement Committee Meeting
Wednesday, January 16, 2019
2:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Princess Ruth Keelikolani Building
830 Punchbowl Street, Conference Room 321
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

MINUTES

ATTENDEES:

Glen Kaneshige, Committee Co-Chair, Nordic PCL Construction, Inc.
Brian Tatsumura, Committee Vice Chair, Briant 808 LLC
Judy Bishop, Bishop & Co.
Faustino Dagdag, Leeward Community College/Workforce Consultant
Neil Gytoku, Hawaii County Mayor's Representative
Lois Hamaguchi, University of Hawaii Office of Career and Technical Education
Michael Kamiya, Kamiya Gold, Inc.
Derek Kanehira, Hawaii Employers Council
Alison Lee, Department of Human Services – Vocational Rehabilitation

STAFF:

Allicyn Tasaka, Executive Director
Maria-Elena Diaz, Employment Analyst
Wayne Liou, Employment Analyst & Economist
Michelle Miyashiro, Office Manager

I. Call to Order.....Committee Co-Chair Glen Kaneshige

The meeting was called to order by Committee Co-Chair Glen Kaneshige at 2:34 p.m.

II. Approval of Minutes for the November 14, 2018 Meeting

Judy Bishop made a motion to approve the minutes of the November 14, 2018 meeting.
Committee Vice Chair Brian Tatsumura seconded the motion. The motion was carried by
unanimous vote.

III. Review and Discussion on Statewide Business Services Framework Draft Plan

Maria-Elena Diaz stated the purpose of the discussion is to get more input on the Business Services Framework Plan from employers. Although Dr. Kim Payton held stakeholder discussions in each of the counties, there was not a large employer presence, except for the Oahu AJC. The second purpose is to elaborate on the draft of the Business Services Framework Plan and provide more details for an action plan with measurable goals and timetables.

Judy Bishop remarked that this draft Business Services Framework Plan is only one piece of the puzzle and making all the American Job Centers (AJCs) functional is another piece of the puzzle; both pieces need to be addressed. Diaz agreed that developing functional AJCs are an important step to complete and stated that AJCs also need to develop their business services as required by WIOA; the business services framework draft will assist the AJCs in this goal. Committee members commented that business services and AJCs cannot be marketed until everything is in place since the reputation of the AJCs are at stake.

Diaz asked the committee what type of business services could the AJCs be offering that they are not currently? How can they improve on the services they currently offer that might encourage businesses to participate? Bishop responded that the first priority should be becoming effective, efficient, reliable and dependable; in short, fast and simple. Everything else will flow from there. Faustino Dagdag shared his experience of referring a business manufacturer to the AJC to find employees. He never received any referrals, even when Dagdag intervened on his behalf.

Dagdag asked Neil Gytoku, as a member from the neighbor island and in connection with an AJC trying to become fully functional, what he thinks a Business Services Framework plan should look like. Gytoku said he would go to private industry business owners and ask what services they want provided at the AJC. He wants to identify programs or classes the AJC can hold that would match with employer needs. Many of Gytoku's clients need workplace readiness types of courses to develop their employability skills. Although some say the problems are different in each of the counties, Dagdag believes the problems are the same, just to a different degree.

Brian Tatsumura commented that the AJC is funded by different agencies so that defines what needs to be done and what AJCs can do is defined by their partners. A business services plan should identify functions of AJCs and be consistent. Tatsumura said that as one state, there should be one plan. Especially with large employers who hire on each island, they should be able to go to any AJC and receive the same service. Tatsumura suggests conceptualizing the AJCs as "One AJC" with one business plan, where larger AJCs help smaller ones with some functions.

Lois Hamaguchi said that one commonality across the board is the need for workplace-readiness skills. One possibility is to make AJCs known as having excellent employees with workplace skills since technical skills can be taught by the company. The question is whether the AJC staff has the ability to put this in place so it becomes a standard training. Instead of trying to be everything to everybody, the AJC can provide what employers are looking for: workplace-ready employees.

Bishop added that the AJCs serve those with barriers to employment which creates a pool of entry-level employees. It should be clear what the AJCs can offer. In her opinion, if HireNet

worked well, this would be an excellent resource. Jobseekers could sign up with HireNet and if they needed workplace readiness skills they would receive the necessary education and training. This would be two excellent resources that AJCs could provide and they need to be done well.

Michael Kamiya said that outreach to businesses is an important point. As an employer, Kamiya wouldn't know the AJCs existed if he wasn't a part of the Workforce Development Council (WDC). In his small community in Hauula, he and other small businesses are looking for the type of people in the AJC database. Small business owners on the other side of the island don't have the time to go to the Oahu AJC. An outreach team who goes out to visit them would be very helpful. Kamiya tried using HireNet recently but has not received a response to his username request submitted over the weekend. He tried a search on "farm worker" but the term came back as too broad and gave no results. As a board member, Kamiya would like to be a positive success story for the AJC.

Dagdag suggested that if Kamiya can find people he would like to hire, then one of the AJC services might be to receive employer referrals of potential employees, and train them to be workforce ready. Bishop wanted to know who Kamiya would ask for if he called the AJC to refer a potential employee. Diaz responded that ideally anyone should be able to help him.

Derek Kanehira wondered how businesses know about these possibilities. Diaz responded that marketing materials to businesses about available services could be part of the business services plan. Kanehira also asked if Oahu AJC was seeing improvement of services, to which Diaz replied that PY 18 showed improvement compared to PY 17. Kanehira suggested that Oahu AJC assist other AJCs.

Hamaguchi suggested going after the low-hanging fruit to get quick wins. She pointed out that small businesses have different needs than medium and large-sized businesses, and development of services should reflect varying business needs. But before going out to market services, the staff at the AJC needs to be fully trained to accomplish what is promised and to ensure consistency in what they communicate to businesses. Dagdag suggested organizing AJC by functional titles, such as "new employee development coordinator" who would work with employers who are interested in training new hires.

Kanehira wanted to know what the AJC can do for a business. Kanehira has referred many people to the AJC and has received a lot of negative feedback. They are told to check the website since there is only one person who can't service everyone. Kanehira suggested that a list of business services that employers can ask for upon calling an AJC would be helpful.

Co-Chair Kaneshige mentioned that small businesses don't have the resources and support to focus on human resources, so this is opportunity to help them. Each success with a small business owner promotes word-of-mouth marketing, which is important in the network of small businesses. Kamiya pointed out that small businesses frequently hire populations with barriers to employment so they are a good fit with AJCs. Bishop believes the focus shouldn't only be small businesses, but also larger businesses that hire entry-level positions, such as McDonald's.

Hamaguchi said that the AJCs might also provide the small businesses with information about additional resources that are available to them in the community. The AJCs can then become a useful and practical consultant for small businesses.

Co-Chair Kaneshige stated that the AJCs can make an inventory list of the skillsets of their participants and determine which businesses have the positions with those needs. AJCs can approach those businesses to show them what they have to offer.

Kanehira expressed concern about the capacity of AJCs to provide the full range of services to multiple employers in a timely manner. Alison Lee discussed how collaboration among partners would increase effectiveness in serving employers. Bishop suggested adopting simple messaging that communicates value to businesses, and that the AJCs should start by doing a couple of things well, such as developing workforce ready, entry-level employees.

Executive Director Allicyn Tasaka suggested the possibility of the Hawaii Employer's Council (HEC) members providing mentorship to the AJC Business Team. Dagdag said that the Oahu AJC is planning on hiring a consultant for training. Hamaguchi suggested that the Society for Human Resource Management might also be a source of mentors. Bishop noted that there should be a systematic approach to continual training at the AJC.

Kanehira shared his experience with the apprenticeship program. HEC helped to get the word out and spoke to businesses about applying for apprenticeships. However, anyone who tried to connect with the apprenticeship program was given the response that there is a lot of paperwork involved and it might not be worth it. No one who initially expressed interest followed through with applying for an apprenticeship. The HEC is now hesitant to put themselves out there for workforce development initiatives. The committee discussed how accountability and feedback might be built into the AJC so this doesn't happen in the future.

Lee and Gytoku discussed successful job fairs on Oahu and Hawaii Island, respectively. Gytoku added that a survey was circulated to the participating employers and he will share those results with Executive Director Tasaka. Gytoku intends to have his staff go through the classified ads and contact businesses to see what their needs are and how AJC can help.

As the committee discussed next steps, Hamaguchi suggested seeing the presentation the business services team at the AJC gives. They can see the materials they have and see if they're hitting the mark with what small businesses want. This might lead to more informal training to ensure that everyone is consistent with the materials and messaging. The committee discussed going to the AJC to see the presentation and possibly do some role-playing. Kamiya offered to use his company as a case study.

IV. Next Meeting Schedule

A possible meeting at the AJC was discussed for February 15, 2019, at 9:30 a.m. Executive Director Tasaka will check on the availability with the AJC staff.

V. Announcements

None

VI. Adjournment

Co-Chair Glen Kaneshige adjourned the meeting at 4:00 p.m.