



Montana Department of  
**LABOR & INDUSTRY**  
State Workforce Investment Board

## **State Workforce Investment Board Youth Council**

**May 30, 2012  
State Capitol, Room #137**

**Council Members Present:** Marty Copps- Chair, Margaret Bowles – Vice Chair; Marcie Buster, Dan Dolan; Karen Duncan; Jake Gustin; Jono McKinney

**Council Members Absent:** Curt Campbell, James McDonald

**Guests:** Stephanie Gray, Lynda Schuldheisg, Lisa Newman, Mary Berg, Linda Moody

**Staff:** Leisa Smith, Kali Wicks

### **I. Welcome and Introduction**

Ms. Wicks conducted roll call. A quorum was present. Ms. Wicks went over housekeeping and noted that the meeting would be recorded for accuracy of the minutes. Chair Copps welcomed guests and new Council members, and reminded all present that the meeting will be conducted under Robert's Rules of Order. The agenda was approved by consensus. Karen Duncan motioned to approve the Minutes from December 14, 2011. Marcella Buster provided a second. Minutes were approved by the Council.

### **II. Montana Conservation Corps**

Jono McKinney, CEO/President of Montana Conservation Corps (MCC) and a new member to the Youth Council, gave a presentation on the Corps to better familiarize the Council with the programs and opportunities the Corps provides. Mr. McKinney discussed the crew model of the corps, its mission and values, and the various services available to youth and veterans. He also mentioned specific projects across the state, including tree-planting, stream restoration, fencing, and trails. Mr. McKinney also highlighted the recent federal emphasis (provided through Training and Employment Notices and Guides) on summer youth employment and partnership with public land agencies and conservation corps to expand opportunities for WIA youth and young adults. Mr. McKinney talked about the MCC as a way to provide green job skills for youth, creating pathways into public lands jobs, and also the benefits of skills such as teamwork, leadership, and self-esteem, that involvement in the corps can provide. The presentation is available at: [http://swib.mt.gov/docs/Web%20Documents/5-30-12/YC\\_MCC.pdf](http://swib.mt.gov/docs/Web%20Documents/5-30-12/YC_MCC.pdf)

### **III. Future ForGED Initiative Report**

Margaret Bowles, ABE/ABLE (Adult Basic Education/Adult Basic Literacy Education) Director for the State of Montana, provided a short overview of the history of the Future ForGED campaign, and updated the Council as to current developments. Ms. Bowles informed the group that after a planning meeting with SWIB staff and Casey Kyler-West, Department of Labor's Communication Officer, several areas of concern regarding the campaign were raised. The first of these was that the campaign lacked a specific goal or message. Although Future ForGED was targeted at helping at-risk youth to obtain a GED, a measurable goal needed to be identified for accuracy and planning. The second issue was funding. The original campaign provided funding for materials, some of which still remain, but no more funding is available for staff, travel, promotions, etc. The third issue identified was staff time. In the fall, the campaign was able to enlist the help of a college intern, who developed informational materials for a media campaign, and made contacts with several GED-recipients that might be willing to make TV and radio appearances. However, the intern was unable to continue and the group was reluctant to try to enlist another intern. Inquiries were made with several other state departments and volunteer services, but no solution for a substantial amount of time was available. The fourth issue raised was timing. Ms. Bowles notified the group that in 2014, a private company will be taking over the GED, which will increase the rigor and price of the test, and will also change the format. This intensifies the importance of gaining the GED before the change occurs. Ms. Bowles also met with OPI (Office of Public Instruction) representatives for the Graduation Matters initiative to keep them apprised of the Future ForGED campaign.

Following discussion, the Council tasked the staff to take the following action:

- 1.) Follow up with Town Pump on a Reward for GED completion/Scholarship offer
- 2.) Follow up with GED-recipient contacts for advice & ideas on how to continue campaign
- 3.) Organize a core-team meeting to determine: 1.) GED-recipient involvement and 2.) campaign goals

#### **IV. Adopting ARRA Youth Barrier to WIA Youth**

Connie Kinsey, the State Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Youth Coordinator at the Department of Labor and Industry presented information to the Council on the 6<sup>th</sup> Barrier WIA youth eligibility requirements.

Ms. Kinsey told the Board that during the summer of 2009, the State Workforce Investment Board approved expansions to the current requirements for the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. These expansions included at risk youth (including those with a disability) who require additional assistance to complete an educational program; children of incarcerated parents; migrant youth, Native Americans; youth aged out of foster care, court involved youth, or youth at risk of court involvement. At the close of the summer of 2009, the barriers reverted to their original requirements.

Ms. Kinsey stated that she would like to ask the board to again amend the current WIA 6<sup>th</sup> Barrier, this time permanently, in order to bring Montana in line with the nation's current requirements, and to implement advice received during a monitoring from USDOL. This advice requested that the requirements for youth be more specific, as the current eligibility requirements

are too broad and make it difficult to serve a young person who may come in and not know or want to talk about the different ways they qualify.

After some discussion, Dan Dolan made a motion to amend the 6<sup>th</sup> barrier youth eligibility requirements. Marcy Buster seconded the motion and the council unanimously voted to approve the changes. The updated 6<sup>th</sup> barrier requirements are listed below (changes in bold).

WIA youth eligibility requirements

An eligible youth is an individual who:

1. Is not less than 14 and not more than 21 at time of enrollment;
  2. Is a low income individual; and
  3. Is within one or more of the following categories;
    - a. Deficient in basic literacy skills;
    - b. School dropout
    - c. Homeless, runaway, or foster child;
    - d. Pregnant or parenting;
    - e. Offender;
    - f. **Is an at-risk youth AGE 14-21 who requires additional assistance to:**
      - (1) **complete an educational program: a youth who is at risk of dropping out of high school as documented by his/her school or a youth who previously dropped out of an educational program OR a youth with poor attendance patterns in an educational program during the last twelve calendar months;**
      - OR**
      - (2) **secure and hold employment: a high school graduate (or equivalent) who has not held a full-time job for more than three consecutive months and lacks work readiness skills necessary to obtain and retain employment as documented by the youth objective assessment and described in case notes;**
- and has one of the following characteristics:**
- **Out-of-School Youth**
  - **Child of Incarcerated Parent(s)**
  - **Youth who “aged out of Foster Care**
  - **Lacks occupational goals/skills**
  - **Disabled**
  - **Migrant Youth**
  - **Limited English Language Proficiency (LEP)**
  - **Chronic behavior problems at school**
  - **Native American**
  - **Court Involved Youth**
  - **Youth At-risk of Involvement**
  - **Refugee**
  - **Substance abuse**
  - **Family Literacy**
  - **Victim/witness of domestic violence or other abuse**

## **V. Informational Updates**

Margaret Bowles, ABE/ABLE Director for the State of Montana and also a member of the youth council provided the group with an overview of the educational services provided by Adult Basic

& Literacy Education programs. Ms. Bowles then updated the group regarding the TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families) Education Support Grant, which provides \$100,000 per year for two years for a summer program for DPHHS (Department of Public Health And Human Services) and ABLE to work together to expand access to basic education by providing a bridge service to clients. Five ABE programs were selected through an RFP (Request For Proposal) process to provide these services, including: Bozeman Adult Learning Center, Community Health Partners in Livingston, Hardin/Crow Agency Adult Program, Missoula Lifelong Learning Center, and Literacy Volunteers of America: Bitterroot.

Ms. Bowles and SWIB Director Leisa Smith reported to the group on the Mountain Plains Adult Education Association Conference, an eight state regional meeting for ABE providers, which was hosted in Helena, Montana this year. Both women noted that a key take away from the conference was the importance of Career Pathways. Ms. Smith noted that congratulations were in order for Ms. Bowles, as she received the Award of Merit for Outstanding Contribution toward Furthering the Concept of Adult Education at the conference, which is the highest award given by the association.

Ms. Bowles notified the Council on the topic of Graduation Matters, Superintendent Juneau's Initiative focused on increasing the number of students graduating from high school, establish relationships between K-12 schools and community partners, and expand opportunities for students. This initiative is based on the original model from Missoula Public School District and recently received a large donation from the Washington Fund.

Ms. Smith advised the board concerning Training and Employment Notice (TEN) 35-11, titled "Opportunities for the Workforce System to Support the Summer Jobs + Initiative". The initiative, aimed at providing opportunities for work experience for youth through private business and workforce programs, also supplied tool kits for employers to help them learn to employ youth for internships, volunteer work and paid employment.

## **VI. New Business**

The Council continued the discussion of membership, as they are currently looking for tribal representation and will be taking recommendations for review.

Ms. Smith notified the Council as to WIA PY (Program Year) 2013 Funding, stating that Adult, Youth, and Dislocated Worker programs received a 7-10% increase from last year's levels, and that Wagner Peyser funding was cut, but that the levels were manageable for Montana. She stated that the most difficult piece for the SWIB was that the 15% of Governor's set aside funding that the board uses to fund innovated programs, pilots, and give grants was recently cut to 5%, only providing for the federal requirements including staff and the administrative running of the board, and oversight. There was hope that this would be reinstated to 15% in PY 2013, but it will remain at 5%.

The SWIB staff will coordinate with the youth points of contact and will organize a Future ForGED Core Team meeting within the next two weeks. Depending on the results of those

meetings and scheduling, a follow-up meeting via go-to format will be held with the Council in late June or early July. Staff will up-date the council on the upcoming meeting via e-mail.

## **VII. Public Comment**

Chair Copps called for public comment.

Lisa Newman of Career Training Institute of Helena stated that she wanted to thank Connie Kinsey and her staff for all their help with the Summer Youth Program, as they share the frustrations of some of the eligibility requirements, but anything that can be done to align those requirements more with the WIA requirements would be much appreciated.

Chair Copps adjourned the meeting at 11:24 a.m.