

**MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board, Inc.
Youth Council Meeting, June 11, 2019
TD Bank Conference Center, Springfield MA**

Voting Members Present:

Cleveland Burton - Chair	Kitty Doolittle	Heidi Rademacher
Kecia Bossie	Haydee Lamberty-Rodriguez	Mena Regan
Jennifer Connolly	Peter Longo	Pamela Westmoreland
Loretta Dansereau	Bob Paterwic	
Others Present:		
Jaeden Alejandro	Judith Kocik	Xiamara Rolon
Imanoi Cruz	Kelly Lamas	Daisha Serrano
Kara Blanchard	Norm LeBlanc	Nia Stimage-Norwood
Carrie Chevalier	Gladys Lebron-Martinez	Kiesha Torres
Bud Delphin	Abigail Ragland	Sergio Vicente
Dawn DiStefano	Lesha Ramos	Ana West-Reyes
Virgilio Gonzales	Clia Rodriguez	Kristen Wing
Candace Griffith		
MH Staff Present:		
Christine Abramowitz	Peta-Gaye Ewans-Porter	Amanda Mantilla
Katrina Bruce	Kathryn Kirby	Tiffany Munford
Mike Chechette		

Meeting Materials

Mailed Out: Agenda, Minutes of the March 12, 2019 meeting
Hand-Out: Proposed FY20 State Budget Line Items, MassHire Holyoke Career Center and HCC Flyers

MINUTES OF MEETING

I. Welcome, Approval of Minutes

Youth Council Chair Cleveland Burton called the meeting to order at about 8:35 a.m.; introductions were made and a vote to approve the minutes from the last Youth Council meeting, which were sent out with the agenda, was requested.

- **Action Taken:** A motion to approve the minutes of the March 12th meeting was made, seconded and approved.

II. Program Updates

A. WIOA Youth FY19 and FY20

Mike Chechette started off with noting that as we are in year 1 of the 2-year RFP, the Program Design Team members (Cleveland Burton, Peter Longo, Bob Paterwic, Jennifer Connolly, Pam Westmoreland, Loretta Dansereau, Mena Regan and Kitty Doolittle) have conducted the vendor site visits as part of our monitoring and thanked the team members. The visits were overall very positive and the Team members commented on the evaluation process, noting that the student interviews were especially well-received. He then reported that all the vendors are just about a

their planned service goals, will likely exceed them and that we are achieving performance outcomes. Site review letters will go out in July.

He then segued into a brief update on the new FY starting July 1st, noting we have about a 6% decrease in our WIOA funding which will need to be absorbed by all parties proportionally, including MassHire Hampden County. Contract negotiations will occur over the next few weeks.

B. School to Career (STC), STEM and YouthWorks Year-Round Planning

Starting with STC, she noted that the Directors and MassHireHCWB are in the process of applying for FY20 STC funds. The RFR was recently released there is a short turnaround with a due date of Monday, June 17th. We are applying for level funding which assists in placing youth in internship opportunities throughout Hampden County. There is a focus on paid STEM internships as well as unpaid STEM internships. This year, our goal of STEM placements was 155; we came in at 144% of our goal at 223. She noted that overall we did surpass our yearly goal of 1559 and actually placed 1617. The Hampden County Youth Council gave the STC a round of applause for their hard work.

On May 9th, STC Directors, school and workforce staff attended the Connecting Activities & Innovation Pathways Convening in Leominster, MA. Kathryn mentioned the valuable workshops held at the conference including “Developing Programming Using a Regional Labor Market Analysis” with Larry Martin from MHCWB as a presenter. As our work is driven by data, understanding LMI for both STC Directors and Career Facilitators is imperative for students to make informed decisions about their career pathway. The MassHire website www.masshirecwb.com was shared as an excellent resource for LMI or to contact Larry Martin for more LMI at lmartin@masshirecwb.com.

Other important STC events were held on May 9th as Loretta Dansereau held an annual River East STC recognition event on May 9th at the Ludlow Country Club. The events highlights outstanding employer/mentee teams that have done great work. Kara Blanchard shared a Job Event that was also held for Chicopee Public Schools on May 9th.

Christine Abramowitz mentioned the Massachusetts Work-Based Learning Resources notebook that was available at the conference and that this resource can be used across programs and not only for School-to-Career. The www.massconnecting.org website was shared as an excellent resource for all conference materials and other resources.

MassHireHCWB held Work-Readiness Train the Trainer Sessions, which was facilitated by Jennifer Murphy from the YWCA recently which were well attended. The workshops have grown in popularity throughout the years, are free and are offered in morning and afternoon sessions. Kathryn will announce the next training at the September 17th Youth Council Meeting.

Also this summer youth will be placed in paid STEM internships through the STEM @ Works grant. We will have youth working at WNU, Big Y, PHYX Repairs, Pioneer Valley Life Sciences and Mercy Medical Center.

Lastly, she covered the YouthWorks Summer Jobs program which kicked off with its annual summer jobs press conference on April 5th. The event was held at the Reed Learning Institute in Westfield and was attended by lawmakers, youth providers, youth, employers and the Mayors of Springfield, Chicopee, Holyoke and Westfield. Kathryn thanked the YouthWorks vendors, Valley Opportunity Council, New England Farm Workers Council, MassHire Holyoke and Westfield for their leadership in running the program.

Over 3000 applications went out to the field with 474 spots available. This year's budget is \$1.4M with vendors hopefully able to place 500 youth in subsidized work experiences through their creative leadership of encouraging employers to hire a youth for one subsidized youth. The state is encouraging YouthWorks vendors to increase the number of private sector business involved in the program.

The program will start on July 8th and run for 6 weeks. All youth will receive 15 hours of work readiness skills training through the Signal Success Curriculum, which focuses on Initiative, Dependability, Communications and Collaboration. Youth ages 14-15 will receive 90 hours of work hours this summer, while older youth will receive 125 hours with a max of 175 work hours with a minimum wage rate at \$12/hour. Vendors commented on where they are at with their program launches.

C. Healthcare Partnership of Western MA

Peta-Gaye Porter updated the council on two items:

- Newly posted on the <https://westernmasshealthcareers.org/> website are career pathway stories and there is also a link to post a story – to read a story go here: <https://westernmasshealthcareers.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/slide-2-map.pdf>;
- Secondly, on October 23rd at WNEU will be the next Pioneer Valley Healthcare Career Pathway Forum. More formal notices regarding this will go out as the date draws nearer.

III. Governor's Proposed FY20 Budget

Christine Abramowitz ran through a review of the proposed State Budget as it affects certain youth program funding which has now gone through both House and Senate amendment and approval process and next goes through a conference committee before sending to the Governor for signing and any vetoes.

IV. MassHire Holyoke Career Center Presentation

Gladys LeBron-Martinez, and her MassHire Holyoke Career Center Youth Team next presented on MHH's approach to serving the Holyoke (and beyond) youth community; including at the Center, via out-stationed staff at Holyoke and Westfield Public Schools, and regional employers such as Holyoke Medical Center, among many others. The staff each spoke about their services and then Sergio Vicente also highlighted their anti-violence work via their Shannon grant, which was especially moving to hear. Gladys ended on promoting their Diaspora youth summer project, as detailed on a program pamphlet, through funding via a competitive grant to CommCorp with MH Hampden County which will look to work with 14-15 year olds affected by Hurricane Maria and have a focus on food insecurity issues. The council thanked them for their presentation, enthusiasm and dedication, and for the MHH pens and tote bags!

V. Announcements and Next Meetings

- Holyoke Community College handed out a flyer to announce free dual enrollment summer courses starting July 8th in various computer applications.
- NEFWC announced their summer program kick-off on June 28th at the Springfield Library.
- It was lastly noted that the next full Youth Council Meeting will be on Tuesday, September 17, 2019.

The meeting adjourned at about 9:50 a.m.