



**Employment & Training Committee Meeting
February 13-14, 2024
Washington, DC
Meeting Minutes**

- I. **Welcome and Introductions (*Stephanie Beckhorn, Director, Employment & Training, Michigan Department of Labor & Economic Opportunity; Courtney Arbour, Director, Workforce Division, Texas Workforce Commission*)**
 - Chair Stephanie Beckhorn welcomed everyone to the meeting and led the attendees in a round of introductions.

- II. **Delivering Workforce Services to Individuals & Communities Impacted by the Opioid & Substance Use Crisis (*Robert Kight, Director, Adult Services & Workforce System, U.S. Department of Labor, Employment & Training Administration, Office of Workforce Investment; Ashley Moore, Workforce Analyst, U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, Office of Workforce Investment; Julie Wirt, Assistant Deputy Director, Ohio Department of Jobs & Family Services, Office of Workforce Development; and Casey Tiefenwerth, Special Grants Program Manager, Maryland Department of Labor, Division of Workforce Development*)**
 - Robert Kight and Ashley Moore delivered a presentation on USDOL-ETA's opioid response initiatives, including: (1) Dislocated Worker Grants, (2) National Health Emergency Demonstration Grants, (3) the Recovery Ready Workplace Resource Hub, (4) an opioid webinar series, and (5) a Dislocated Worker Grants Community of Practice.
 - Julie Wirt then presented on Ohio's various opioid grants to address the National Health Emergency, including: (1) the Trade and Economic Transition Grant, (2) the Ohio Emergency Recovery Grant, (3) the Holistic Care Grant, and (4) the Fresh Start Grant. Julie Wirt also highlighted resources like the state's Opioid Toolkit.
 - Casey Tiefenwerth presented on the Maryland's multiple grant programs within the substance use disorder space, including: (1) the National Health Emergency Grant, (2) Certified Peer Recovery Specialist Training for Incarcerated Individuals, (3) Workforce Development for Persons in Recovery, and (4) the Recovery Friendly Workplace Pilot Program. This presentation included information on the impact of these investments, key lessons learned, and promising practices.
 - Committee members asked several questions and discussed related work in their respective states.

- III. **Staffing Recruitment & Retention (*Rivka Liss-Levinson, PhD, Senior Research Manager, MissionSquare Research Institute*)**
 - Rivka Liss-Levinson began the session with a brief overview of MissionSquare Research Institute and then presented on several key trends on the U.S. public sector workforce.

Key issues covered included: (1) the aging of the public sector workforce, (2) pandemic-related burnout, and (3) the increase of hard-to-fill positions over the past decade.

- Rivka Liss-Levinson then highlighted seven strategies that state agencies can implement to bolster recruitment and retention, including: (1) increasing compensation, (2) showing appreciation and recognition, (3) providing financial wellness resources, (4) prioritizing employee mental health and well-being, (5) emphasizing community impact, (6) implementing DEI initiatives, and (7) fostering employee development and engagement. Each of these strategies were supported by recent surveys and reports developed by MissionSquare Research Institute on the public-sector workforce.
- Committee members asked Rivka Liss-Levinson multiple questions and discussed recent staffing challenges and related initiatives in their own states.

IV. State Roundtable (Session 1 of 2)

- Attendees discussed recent initiatives, promising practices, and challenges with their peers. Topics of discussion included: (1) the Wagner-Peyser Act Staffing Final Rule, (2) the NPRM on Strengthening TANF as a Safety Net and Work Program, (3) the NPRM on National Apprenticeship System Enhancements, (4) the House WIOA Reauthorization Bill, and (5) new or upcoming workforce initiatives in their states.

V. Federal Partner Update (*Kim Vitelli, Administrator, U.S. Department of Labor, Employment & Training Administration, Office of Workforce Investment*)

- Kim Vitelli provided updates on several recent and upcoming policy, funding, and technical assistance initiatives.
- The policy update covered: (1) TEGL No. 10-23 on Reducing Administrative Barriers to Improve Customer Experience in Grant Programs Administered by the Employment and Training Administration; (2) TEGL No. 19-23 on Planning Estimate for WIOA Youth, Adult, and Dislocated Worker Program Allotments for PY 2024; (3) TEGL No. 09-23 on Requirements, Priorities, and Technical Assistance for SCSEP Stand-Alone State Plans for PYs 2024-2027; and (4) USDOL's NPRM on National Apprenticeship System Enhancements.
- The funding update covered: (1) Round 2 of the State Apprenticeship Expansion Formula grant program, (2) Round 2 of the Apprenticeship Building America grant program, (3) Rounds 4 and 5 of the Growth Opportunities grant program, (4) Round 5 of the Pathway Home grant program, (5) the PY2024 SCSEP National Grants Competition, (6) the forthcoming National Farmworker Jobs Program, and (7) the availability of funds through the National Dislocated Worker Grants program.
- Kim Vitelli also highlighted other initiatives like the Youth Systems Building Academy and the inaugural Youth Apprenticeship Week, which is scheduled for May 2024.

VI. Artificial Intelligence Session (*Courtney Arbour, Director, Workforce Division, Texas Workforce Commission; Adam Leonard, Director & Chief Analytics Officer, Division of Information Innovation and Insight, Texas Workforce Commission; Kelly Folks, Director of the Division of Employment and Training, Colorado Department of Labor and Employment;*)

and Stephanie Mufic, Business Innovation & Strategy Unit Manager, Colorado Department of Labor and Employment)

- Courtney Arbour and Adam Leonard presented on the Texas Workforce Commission's ongoing exploration of the use of AI in their operations. Topics covered included: (1) the potential to streamline operations and automate repetitive tasks, (2) the development of tech sandboxes to test various applications of AI, (3) the ability to improve job postings and interview questions for staff recruitment, and (4) the potential for the use of machine learning in fraud prevention.
- Stephanie Mufic and Kelly Folks first presented on general applications of AI to work and various AI-driven platforms (e.g., ChatGPT, Bing CoPilot, and Canva). They then highlighted several specific uses of AI in the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment's operations, including: (1) labor exchange and (2) case management.
- NASWA staff highlighted the *AI State Uses Cases and Policies* document that Workforce ITSC has been developing and agreed to share with Committee members.
- Committee members asked several questions and discussed related work in their respective states.

VII. Committee Business Session

- NASWA staff provided an update on items like: (1) upcoming Committee Meetings, (2) NASWA's *2023 State of the Workforce Report*, and (3) NASWA's *2024 Legislative Priorities*.
- NASWA staff also highlighted several recent policy engagement efforts, including: (1) NASWA's response to the Office of Family Assistance's TANF RFI, (2) the current process for developing a collective response to USDOL's NPRM on National Apprenticeship System Enhancements, and (3) the ongoing development of a WIOA Reauthorization Principles & Recommendations document.
- Committee members had the opportunity to highlight their concerns related to USDOL's Apprenticeship NPRM and the House WIOA Reauthorization Bill.

VIII. Workforce Innovation Awards (Danielle Williams, Assistant Administrator, Division of Employment and Training, Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development; Dr. Ellie Hartman, Chief Evaluation Officer, Workforce Data Integration System, Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development; and Michelle McNertney, Division Administrator, Workforce Services Division, Iowa Workforce Development)

- Danielle Williams and Dr. Ellie Hartman presented on Wisconsin's Worker Connection Program. The presentation included an overview of the program and its goals, a description of the program's unique service delivery model, the outreach strategies undertaken, the sector training programs utilized, and the program's various impacts.
- Michelle McNertney presented on Iowa's Reemployment Case Management Program, which connects unemployed Iowans with reemployment services early on in the job search process.

IX. Strengthening Workforce & Adult Education Partnerships (William Durden, Director, Basic Education for Adults, Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges;

Board Chair Elect, National Association of State Directors of Adult Education (NASDAE); Marilyn Pitzulo, Associate Chief, Indiana Department of Workforce Development, Division of Workforce Strategy; Board Member, National Association of State Directors of Adult Education (NASDAE)

- William Durden and Marilyn Pitzulo delivered a presentation covering: (1) an overview of NASDAE and its top priorities and (2) key issues facing state Adult Education leaders such as services for refugees and immigrants, digital literacy, and federal Short-Term Pell legislation.
- Marilyn Pitzulo then presented on several Adult Education initiatives in Indiana, including the state's Workforce Education Initiative.
- William Durden presented on Washington State's Adult Education program and several recent initiatives, including: (1) Integrated Digital English Acceleration (I-DEA) classes, (2) the High School+ program, and (3) the Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training (I-BEST) model.
- Committee members had the opportunity to ask questions and share related work in their respective states.

X. *Workforce Development Opportunities through the Inflation Reduction Act and U.S. Department of Energy Programs (Rachel McCleery, Senior Advisor, U.S. Department of Treasury, IRA Program Office; Maya Goodwin, Senior Advisor, Workforce and Economic Opportunity Policy, U.S. Department of Energy, Office of Energy Jobs)*

- Rachel McCleery began the session with a presentation covering: (1) an overview of the Inflation Reduction Act; (2) relevant tax incentives in the renewable energy, manufacturing, electric vehicle, and other sectors; and (3) the Inflation Reduction Act's prevailing wage and apprenticeship requirements, which have the potential to increase employer demand for apprenticeship programs. Rachel McCleery then highlighted several relevant resources that Committee members can access.
- Maya Goodwin provided an overview of the Department of Energy's Office of Energy Jobs and then highlighted several opportunities for state workforce agencies to leverage various Department of Energy funding sources for workforce development.
- Committee members had the opportunity to ask questions and share related work in their respective states.

XI. *State Roundtable (Session 2 of 2)*

- Attendees discussed recent initiatives, promising practices, and challenges with their peers. Topics of discussion included: (1) the Wagner-Peyser Act Staffing Final Rule, (2) the NPRM on Strengthening TANF as a Safety Net and Work Program, (3) the NPRM on National Apprenticeship System Enhancements, (4) the House WIOA Reauthorization Bill, and (5) new or upcoming workforce initiatives in their states.