

## SLTEC Meeting Minutes

Wednesday August 5, 2009

West Valley Employment Center

Attendees: Amy Davis, Roberta Williams, Jill Boyle, Amy Davis, Jennifer Bastian, Jeff Erekson, Julia Bench, Jill Boyle, Donna Gonzalez, David Heier, Sonja Needham, Summer Palmer, Christine Kronkow, Debbie Pazos, Paul Ledesma, Jared Smith, Roberta Williams, Laurel Morris, Faye Martell, Vicki Giesler, Tala Lakin, Kim Lam, and Amber Adams.

Guests: Karla Aguirre, David Heirer, Tonia Jones, Brian Christensen, Jason Merriam, and Laurie Adair.

Excused: Tracy Taggart, Joe Tate, Sean Morris, James Glade, Joe Tate, Brent Anderson, and Sarah Gloyn.

Paul welcomed the group to the meeting. David Heirer introduced himself as the HR Manager for UTA then Amy Davis; HR Generalist with ATK introduced herself. Laurel introduced Karla Aguirre, the Central Region Program Manager and acknowledged Tonia Jones, West Employment Center Manager.

Tonia welcome the committee to her center and offered services.

Brian Christensen and Jason Merriam from the West Valley and Downtown Employment Centers Upfront Teams shared a presentation on what the customer experiences when he enters a DWS office. Jason discussed that the Downtown Employment Center deals with a large homeless demographic. The Upfront Team assesses the customer's need and gets him going in the right direction. There are 2

aspects of DWS services: Employment Counseling and Eligibility. The offices are used as a sight to apply for state assistance programs. The Financial Assistance Program is designed to help people get by till they are working. The General Assistance Program is to help people with disabilities. The Training Program is the only program wherein the employer counselor, rather than an eligibility specialist can determine eligibility. In this program there is a big focus on matching up the customer with employer needs. There are new training funds available for UI recipients from Obama. A customer can apply for a pell grant through an educational institution and then see if eligible.

Brian noted that DWS received some stimulus money for the purpose of hiring a few temporary employees to aid in providing reemployment services to job seekers. These additional workers provide computer assistance and help individuals apply for Unemployment. Workshops are available to all DWS customers and many are being referred to them as this time. The Winway Resume Building Program is available in DWS offices. Most DWS services are available on the DWS website, [jobs.utah.gov](http://jobs.utah.gov) Customers who qualify for intensive services are assigned to a specific worker (Employment Counselor) in a specific office.

The DWS offices are open 7 am to 6 pm, which allows working customers to take care of business before and after work. Karla pointed out that the workshops can now be scheduled on the website. Laurel pointed out that there are a lot of people using DWS services who are not receiving state assistance and that there is a huge variety of customer needs in the offices. Only a portion of job seekers on the DWS data base (approximately 22%-25%) are receiving any kind of financial assistance. Many have

never entered the offices. In the past, 60% of the database was currently employed. However, with the impact of the recession that number is has flipped.

Unemployment recipients may be approved to attend school and still receive benefits. Letters are being sent to recipients to let them know about this opportunity.

Karla explained that On the Job Training (OJT) may be available for dislocated (laid off) workers or people who meet low income guidelines. An employer may be reimbursed for up to six months for 50% of the wages of a trainee who qualifies for the OJT program. The employer is expected to hire the trainee permanently at the end of the training period. Bill Montague (801-468-0041) is the OJT expert and is available to answer questions about the program. Faye added that the Business and Community Liaisons are also very knowledgeable about OJT and related services.

Paul asked about trends. Jason mentioned that prior to September all the Downtown Office customers were homeless and now it's a much more diverse group. He cited one customer with a master's degree who has been working for 42 years. His wife came into the office with him and was embarrassed to be there. The offices are bombarded with people in need of intensive services. Many are first-time visitors. Many are professionals with higher education who are in need of a little more help-especially in the area of resumes. Laurel mentioned that some job orders placed on-line are closing within 30 minutes at this time they were posted.

Tala reminded employers about the Work Opportunities Tax Credit (WOTC). Employers may qualify for tax credits when hiring individuals who fit within special categories, ex-offenders, people with disabilities, refugees etc. She also mentioned that

bonding is available to protect employers who hire individuals with criminal backgrounds and financial troubles.

The refugee population has a lot of intelligence, but language barriers cause limitations.

Amy mentioned that with her company's layoffs, workshops are the DWS service she needs most.

Laurie Adair came as a guest of Christine. She represents CB Richard Davis, a Fortune 500 company that specializes in commercial real estate.

It was determined that the committee would have a retreat, but it would be a 3-4 hour planning session rather than a day. This meeting should include an economic update, a DWS update, and a legal update. This meeting will be held on October 7<sup>th</sup>.

Laurel will be sending the feedback on what employers want included in the DWS workshops to committee members.

It was suggested that future committee meetings should include a highlight of host members where the host company addresses what is happening in its employment situation.

Karla mentioned that it's possible that by October a straw of DWS' new organizational structure will be in place.

Laurel is working on bringing back the free morning workshops.

Faye shared that the Department is conducting a usability study. This will allow sample employers to give feedback on how well the job posting system works.

**Next meeting: Retreat October 7<sup>th</sup> from 7:30-12 at UTA.** More details to come.

