

Ramsey County Workforce Investment Board  
**Youth Council Meeting**

June 26, 2008

**Members Present**

Kirk Hayes  
Bernie Hesse  
Peter Jessen-Howard  
David MacKenzie  
Matt Reinartz  
Jody Yungers

**Members Absent**

Billy Collins  
Abe Hassan  
Doug Hubbard  
Sheldon Jensen  
Becky Johnson EA  
Dale Maristuen  
Rick Polanski  
Dean Shawbold EA  
Rick Vazquez

**Staff/Guests Present**

Jazzma Bennett, Outreach to Schools  
Mary Jo Gardner, WIB Staff  
Dwayne Green, Workforce Solutions  
Kate Raleigh, WIB Staff

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**Call to Order**

Kirk Hayes, Chair, called the meeting to order at 3:40 p.m.

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**Approve Minutes**

**Motion** made by David MacKenzie with second by Jody Yungers to approve the April 24<sup>th</sup> minutes as presented.

**Motion carried.**

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**Reports**

**Building Lives**

The ad hoc continues to meet to determine the best approach to take when approaching the state legislature for sustainable funding in the 2009 biennium. Next week a larger group will meet (ad hoc plus Corrections from Ramsey and Hennepin Counties and HIREd) to discuss Building Lives on a larger scale- possibly in connection with the federal earmark request. Staff is very close to sending letters of inquiry to private foundations for bridge funding to use until sustainable funding is dedicated. There was discussion on the options of approaching the project as a Workforce initiative or a Corrections initiative. There was an update given on the \$200k of WIA funds dedicated to Building Lives through Workforce Solutions; the staff member who will work with this population is in the process of transitioning her case load and beginning work on Building Lives. Anyone interested in working on the Building Lives project is welcome to do so.

**YouthLEAD Event**

The YouthLEAD Event from June 17 was a success. There were 170 people in attendance with 58 youth being recognized for their achievements, 49 of which were present to accept their recognition. Every case manager highlighted the accomplishments and good qualities of each of their youth. Tubby Smith, head coach of the U of MN Basketball team, spoke at the event. Thank you to the youth staff for all of their work on this event.

**TriWIB Meeting**

WIB members from Washington, Dakota-Scott, and Ramsey Counties were invited to participate in a TriWIB meeting that took place on Friday, June 13<sup>th</sup>. The meeting was set up to allow WIB members to meet each other, discuss local issues and suggest common initiatives the three WIBs could work on together. There was a panel presentation that provided the WIBs with background information on business needs, labor market information (LMI), demographic information and education needs. Speakers included U.S. Representative Betty McCollum, Bill Blazar from the MN Chamber of Commerce, Rachel Hillman from the MN Department of Employment and Economic Development's (DEED) LMI division, Martha MacMurray from the State Demographer's Office, Mark Misukanis from the MN Office of Higher Education and Keith Ryskoski, Superintendent from Stillwater Area Schools. The panel indicated that the area has a changing and aging workforce in need of education to train the future workforce and retrain current workers, with business needed as a strong partner for education. All youth need to be prepared for the workforce and disparities in

preparation need to be addressed. The groups of WIBs from across the four counties came up with initiatives that were then ranked by all attendees. The number one issue that came out of this activity was working better with youth and connecting business and mentors with this project.

#### City of Saint Paul Youth Program

Matt Reinartz gave an update on the City's Youth Job Corps and First Place Programs. There were 32 youth accepted in to the First Place program- 21 of which are working. While the youth are not employed in private businesses, they are all placed in positions within the City that match with their interests. In order to apply for the First Place program, youth must write two essays- one indicating the type of job they want for the summer and one citing the skills they hope to gain through this job. Sites hosting include Public Works garage, libraries, Parks Environmental Team, Human Resources, and Tree Trust. The program looks forward to having the private sector involved in the future. The City attorney is currently working on the finishing pieces of the contract with Ramsey County that will hire a youth job developer for the City and County. In the general City Job Corps program, 635 youth have been employed thus far. Matt passed out a document detailing the demographics of the youth employed, including their ethnicity/race, gender, age, persons from female headed households, household income, and zip code.

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#### **Outreach to Schools Update**

Dwayne Green, Workforce Solutions, and Jazzma Bennett, Outreach to Schools Intern, were present to discuss the Outreach to Schools program. DEED awarded interested areas a small grant (\$10k) to provide career and college counseling assistance at high schools through a college intern. The program is in its third year, and participating schools GAP and Johnson HS have been happy with the program and look forward to continuing the program in future years.

College interns are trained by the WorkForce Centers' Resource Rooms to assist students with career planning and post-secondary education access. Jazzma Bennett has been working at Johnson High School for the past school year. Jazzma works in the College and Career Resource Center and has helped with college applications, job applications, career planning and financial aid applications. Jazzma was in charge of a project to encourage youth to apply for post-secondary education programs; 97% of the graduating class applied to one of these programs.

Dwayne Green presented an application requesting another year of funding for this program. The Youth Council must approve this application before it may be submitted to DEED. There was discussion on expanding the program, but there are barriers at many schools that would not allow the interns to work directly, one-on-one with the students.

**Motion** made by Jody Yungers with second by Pete Jessen-Howard to submit the Outreach to Schools application for future funding.

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#### **Update from Committees**

Jody Yungers gave an update from Goal I. She reported that Terry Zurn's staff at Workforce Solutions recently completed an inventory of what local schools are doing in regards to career counseling. Most of the schools surveyed did have a resource or career center for students, though some of the smaller alternative schools did not. The results of this survey will be distributed to Youth Council members. Next steps include gathering a subgroup to define how to address gaps in service.

PACER recently took the data from the Youth Council's resource map, created a few years ago, updated the information and put those resources in their resource map, Project C3. DEED and the Department of Education are both supportive of this map. It has not been marketed yet but it is felt this is a later step in the process.

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#### **Review of Youth Council's Committee Structure**

Postponed.

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#### **Vern Vick Award**

Nominations are being sought for the Vern Vick award. Any thoughts or ideas on individuals or organizations that should be recognized for their work with youth and employment are welcome. Staff will send out more information on the award.

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**Update on VISTA Program**

The FWIB were awarded a grant to help pay for a fund development consultant to create a development plan with the FWIB/WIB. The City of Saint Paul is supporting a VISTA volunteer to work full time with the WIB staff for one year to help with fund development and communications. The VISTA will start in August.

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**Other**

Pete Jessen-Howard gave an update on his new position with Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative. He discussed the disproportionate minority community in corrections.

The Workforce Committee is meeting on July 10<sup>th</sup>- 1:00-2:30 to begin talking about the WIB's strategic plan, including discussing the planning process. All WIB and Youth Council members are welcome to attend- the meeting notice will be sent to all.

The State Demographer Tom Gillaspay will be at the next WIB meeting on August 7. All are welcome to attend. A meeting notice will be sent.

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**Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned upon completion of the agenda at 4:53 p.m.

**Next Meeting:** August 28, Ramsey County Workforce Center- Saint Paul