

**New Jersey State Employment & Training Commission
Disabilities Issues Committee Meeting Minutes
March 4, 2010**

Janice Levine Center, Rutgers University
Piscataway, NJ

Attendees

Savannah Barnett	Eileen Gallo	Javier Robles
Juanito Chiluisa	Joe Gazzara	Luis Rivera
Vito DeSantis	Bob Haugh	Julia Stoumbos
Bill Ditto	Sue Gilligan	
Dana Egreczky	Alice Hunnicutt	
Harriet Findlay	Joseph Jennings	
Brian Fitzgibbons	Jennifer Joyce	
Judy Formalarie	Elaine Katz	
Nicky Gacos	Michele Martin	

Welcome/Opening Discussion

The meeting commenced at 12:20 with a welcome and introductions by the Chair, Nicky Gacos. Minutes from the last meeting were reviewed and approved by all. Judy Formalarie expressed regret that Robin Widing could not attend the meeting as she needed to be in Washington DC.

New Jersey Chamber of Commerce/Business Leadership Network Presentation

Dana Egreczky, Senior Vice President of Workforce Development, NJ Chamber of Commerce, gave a presentation on the partnership between the Division of Disability Services and the New Jersey Chamber of Commerce Foundation. Ms. Egreczky presented on the background of the foundation and the background of the New Jersey Business Leadership Network (BLN). They have established a website, www.accessibleemployment.org. Three projects have been established with the help of DiscoverAbility funds: the Disability Supplier Diversity Program (DSDP), Disabilities at Work (DAW), and an educational piece on skills initiatives.

The DSDP program is a product of the US BLN and functions to issue credentials to certify businesses as “disabled-owned,” which can be useful to corporations who wish to recruit disabled-owned businesses to diversify their supply chain. The NJ BLN will be recruiting and training volunteers for site visits, to help successful applicants be ready to work with larger corporations, and to promote the use of the credential among businesses.

The Disabilities at Work program is an effort to identify and reward businesses that go beyond compliance in hiring practices and/or support of people with disabilities. There will be a DAW Internet radio show on the Voice America Business Channel every Wednesday at noon, starting April 14.

The educational work on skills initiative seeks to correct the incongruity between available jobs and skills of people with disabilities. It will focus on the need for potential workers to be skilled

to do the job that employers offer while at the same time, educate the employer about their lack of understanding regarding hiring people with disabilities.

DiscoverAbility NJ

Michele Martin updated the group on the progress with the DiscoverAbility NJ plan since the last meeting. Screenshots of the social networking platforms being used were distributed, as well as presenting a live Internet demonstration. Ms. Martin discussed how the website and blog (www.discoverabilitynj.org) function to cross promote efforts within the state and seek to provide useful resources for both businesses and job seekers. There is a link on the blog to submit story ideas as well as a link to sign up for the upcoming newsletter, a feed for the DiscoverAbility NJ twitter account, a link to become a Facebook fan, and an event calendar. Michele will monitor comments and questions on the blog and will accept submissions to the events calendar. Submissions must make clear if pre-registration or a fee is required. The question of accessibility of the site was raised and the CBVI and/or Disability Rights NJ can review it.

New Business

New Jersey Senate Bill 771 was distributed by Eileen Gallo of the Gloucester County WIB and introduced for discussion among the group. The bill establishes county-based centers for transition for young adults with developmental disabilities. This is to replicate what has been created in Gloucester County. Several concerns were discussed. The group was advised to present testimony at the committee hearing if they have suggestions or reactions.

Judy Formalarie updated the group about local WIB Disability Issues Committees. She will be working through Robin at regional WIB chair meetings to first inform them of regional Disability Issues meetings. Three regional meetings will then be scheduled for April/May.

Jennifer Joyce distributed APSE brochures to the committee to explain what APSE does.

Alice Hunnicutt updated the committee on the federal "Keeping Students Safe Act."

Vito DeSantis will send information about legislation in the House of Representatives about accessible technology for new flat panel appliances.

Bill Ditto informed the Committee that they will be presented with questions about the DiscoverAbility plan for the next meeting. He will use the responses for leadership direction, discussion and feedback.

Events

- Career Options Day will be held on April 20th at the JFK Conference Center. Harriet Findlay expressed a need for more vendors. If interested, contact her directly.
- The Commission on the Blind and Visually Impaired will be celebrating its 100th anniversary this year and holding two functions. In April there will be an event for

consumers at the Rutgers Law Center on legal matters concerning people with disabilities. An event in October will follow.

- Dare to Dream student leadership conferences will be held in May and June throughout New Jersey. For more information contact Robert.Haugh@doe.state.nj.us.

Judy Formalarie reminded the group to send any announcements to her and she would distribute them to the committee.

The meeting adjourned at 2:40

Next Meeting:

May 11, 2010 – 12:15 – 2:00 p.m.

Janice Levin Center, Rutgers University

Piscataway, NJ