

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Meeting

Wednesday, February 24th, 2021

8:30am

Via Zoom (due to continued Covid pandemic)

AGENDA:

1. Strategy Discussion on engaging youth during the pandemic
 - Update from Center Leadership on current engagement activities
 - Determine missing partners and processes that could increase enrollment and garner successes
 2. Strategy discussion on increasing employment for justice-involved individuals
 3. Discussion on how to increase partner engagement with Tri-Parish Works
 4. Other Business
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Serving Plaquemines, St. Bernard & St. Tammany Parishes

CERTIFICATION OF INABILITY TO CONDUCT ESSENTIAL BOARD FUNCTIONS DUE TO COVID-19 HEALTH EMERGENCY

In accordance with Executive Proclamation JBE 2020-59, issued by Governor John Bel Edwards on May 14, 2020, the First Planning District Workforce Development Board (FPD WDB) is providing for attendance at essential meetings via teleconference or video conference as allowed during the pendency of the COVID-19 health emergency. Pursuant to JBE 2020-59, the FPD WDB will provide attendance for the Community Development Committee meeting on Wednesday, February 24th, 2021 at 8:30 a.m. via Zoom and livestream in a manner that allows for observation and input by members of the public, as set forth in this Notice posted on February 17th, 2021. The FPD WDB would otherwise not be able to conduct essential business.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86876974636?pwd=ZDIPL1JvTkRJUIlCeUgzN096ZTVRQT09>

Meeting ID: 868 7697 4636

Passcode: 345760

One tap mobile

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Dial by your location

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+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)

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FIRST PLANNING DISTRICT
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
Community Development Committee Meeting

Date February 24, 2021

Location Zoom due to continued Pandemic

Sign-in Sheet

Signature

		Signature
1	STEPHANIE DUPEPE	<i>Stephanie Dupepe</i>
2	JIM CARLSON	<i>Jim Carlson</i>
3	CHIQUITA LATTIMORE	
4	RACHEL MACKEY	<i>Rachel Mackey</i>
5	KIM RUGON	
6	STACEY RETZLAFF	
7	JENNIFER BARNETT	<i>Jennifer Barnett</i>
8	MELISSA KIRSCH	<i>Melissa Kirsch</i>
9		
10		

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES**

Wednesday, February 24th, 2021

8:30am

Via Zoom (due to continued Covid pandemic)

In attendance: Stephanie Dupepe, Rachel Mackey, Dr. Jim Carlson, Jennifer Barnett, and Melissa Kirsch.

The meeting was called to order. Chairwoman Dupepe opened the meeting by indicating that it had been quite a long time since this group had met.

1. The first item on the agenda was a strategy discussion on engaging youth during the pandemic. Ms. Dupepe recognized Ms. Kirsch who shared some of the many challenges the Tri-Parish Works Centers have encountered this past year in engaging eligible youth. She shared that the work experience program was shut down initially when most employers were closing their doors. Two programs had just gotten underway when the pandemic hit: an Out of School JAG program at NTCC and United Way Youth workshops. Ms. Kirsch indicated that efforts to engage youth have included an on-line job readiness program, as well as continued efforts to place youth at work experience sites. Discussion ensued. Ms. Barnett stated that numerous new efforts were underway to engage at-risk youth and included things such as:
 - a. Increasing connectivity with Counselors, Transition Coordinators and School-to-Work staff at the High Schools
 - b. Targeting those graduating from High School that are at-risk and lack direction on where they go next
 - c. Increasing social media and outreach efforts and seeking referrals from the various non-profits and agencies that work with this youth population

Chairwomen Dupepe also suggested reaching out to James Samaritan Center and the Family Promise Homeless Coalition as they may have referrals to make to the Center. She also shared how critical it is to constantly network and ensure regular outreach to partners so they are always aware of the WIOA programs.

2. The next item on the agenda was a discussion on re-entry initiatives and increasing employment opportunities for these individuals. The Chairwomen asked for Stephanie Mills to be added to this committee as she is on the front-line of this initiative. Goodwill also has a strong involvement in re-entry and they are represented on the committee through Ms. Kim Rugon. She was unable to participate in today's meeting. Updates were provided on the efforts currently underway in St. Tammany and across the state. LWC was providing information sessions for employers to encourage hiring of the formerly incarcerated. In addition, the Center continues to support the local re-entry efforts through the

various WIOA programs such as: transitional jobs, OJT, occupational skills training, and/or job placement.

3. The next item for discussion was on increasing partner engagement with Tri-Parish Works and the Workforce Board. Much discussion ensued and the following potential efforts were considered a priority:
 - a. Utilizing the Outreach Contract to develop regular communication to partners either through a newsletter or eblasts, etc.
 - b. Committee would like to learn more about the Unite Louisiana referral platform as a possible tool to better connect all partners in the area to better ensure clients do not fall through the cracks or get to the services they need. Ms. Kirsch was asked to set up a demonstration of the platform and invite all committee members.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Employment Opportunities for Justice-Involved Individuals

The Problem

Louisiana has the 2nd highest rate of incarceration in the country. As a result, 1 in 3 Louisianans have a criminal record - approximately 1.5M people. However, this is not because incarcerated individuals do not want to work. Analysis of formerly incarcerated individuals between 25 and 44 years old indicates that 93.3% were employed or actively looking for work, versus 83.8% of the general public in this age range. However, prior research suggests that some employers are reluctant to consider individuals with criminal records.

5x

Unemployment rate for formerly incarcerated compared to general public

\$78-87B

National GDP loss due to lack of employment opportunities for formerly incarcerated people

While the lack of employment opportunities negatively impacts those with a criminal history, it also impacts their families. The children of justice-involved individuals are especially affected. Many of the women caught up in the justice system are mothers and the primary caretakers and breadwinners for their children. Additionally, the lack of employment opportunity impacts the economy by reducing the number of workers contributing to the workforce. Each year, the unemployment of justice-involved individuals creates a loss of about \$78 to \$87 billion in the national GDP.

\$4.5B

The annual loss in Louisiana GDP is \$4.5 if people released from supervision are not hired

Assumptions

- If people released from supervision are unemployed, the LA unemployment rate will increase to 9.7%
- A 1% decrease in employment for a consecutive 3 month period will result in a 1.2% GDP decrease across the state.

The Opportunity

Employment provides economic stability after release, while also reducing recidivism and associated state costs. A study conducted in Ohio, Illinois, and Texas showed that the more wages one earned two months after their release, the lower their likelihood of reoffending.

The predicted probabilities of reincarceration dropped by 30% (from 23% to 16%) for people who had a job that paid at least \$7 per hour. Additionally, employment creates more opportunities for the children of incarcerated people. The alternative (living below the poverty line) has adverse effects on children's educational readiness and physical health.

The expansion of employment opportunities could also impact employers. A study based on 1.3M U.S. military enlistees showed that those with criminal records were promoted quicker and to higher ranks than other enlistees. Moreover, the attrition rates due to poor performance were comparable regardless of criminal background.

Employment opportunities could generate **\$11M/yr in annual operating cost** associated with reduced recidivism.

Assumptions

- \$16,251 is the average cost per person in prison (2015).
- If the reincarceration rate drops similarly to that of other states, LA's first-year reincarceration rate will drop by 30% from 14.6% to 10.2%.

Employing formerly incarcerated people could help upwards of **57,000 families**.

Assumptions

- 4.7% of the prison population is female, so roughly 71,250 women are formerly incarcerated
- 80% of women in jail are mothers and most of them are primary caretakers of their children.