



## **METRO NORTH REGIONAL EMPLOYMENT BOARD MEETING NOTES**

Wednesday, December 10, 2014

Location: Biogen Idec, Cambridge, MA

Present: Reed Brockman, William Hart, Karen Sampson Johnson, Robert Jones, Lisa Amaya Price, Steven Sullivan, Tricia Tyler, Susan Walsh

Absent: Charlene Bauer, James Donovan, Joanna Dowling, John Drinkwater, Madeline Hoffman, Susan Jepson, John Kendzior, Danny LeBlanc, Rose Lydon, Kambiz Maali, Mina Reddy, Paul Richard, Larisa Schelkin, Cheryl Scott, Sandra Smith, Mark Tardiff, Mary Tighe, Juan Vega, Kerry Wollner

REB Staff: Linda Bass, Peter Farkas, Michael Hatfield, Kimberly Napier, Holly Vogel

Guests: Jay Linnehan, Middlesex Community College; Linda Rohrer, Career Source; and Christopher Brennan, The Career Place

In the absence of the Chair and Vice Chair, Executive Committee Member Sue Walsh facilitated the meeting.

Linda Bass noted that the official vote to recharter the career centers will take place during the March 2015 meeting, when more members will likely be present.

### **Review of September Meeting Notes: Sue Walsh**

Sue requested a motion to approve the notes of the September 2014 REB meeting. The motion was moved and seconded, and the notes of the September 2014 REB meeting were approved as presented.

### **Joint Committee Report: Sue Walsh**

Sue asked the board if they had any questions about the report. Linda Bass noted a few recent corrections: 1) Under "maintain existing performance factors," the item, "number of job seekers with repeat services," should read: "the number of new job seekers with repeat services." 2) In the 5<sup>th</sup> bullet, the "number of repeat job orders" has been replaced with "the number of employers with one or more job orders." 3) Under "target group" – the job placement rate is the only item that is being used as a goal, and the "number of repeat customers" is being used in that calculation. An additional goal is: the number of new customers in each of these target groups.

Sue then recognized the career centers and the REB for their work in the rechartering process. She noted that after we transitioned to having one operator for both career centers, everyone has approached this process as an opportunity for collaboration and finding new areas for working together – this is a testament to their commitment to the region and to their own performance. The team has been working toward incorporating operational changes while still maintaining a commitment to performance – and figuring out how to push performance in the absence of a complex funding formula.

#### **Youth Council Committee Report: Reed Brockman**

Highlights of the two meetings held this past quarter include: Stephen Warrington presented on opportunities available through Job Corps; Priscilla Golding discussed the new WIOA legislation; and Reed led several groups on a bridge tour. In addition, Future City (FC) is now up and running. This is a program in which students in grades 6-8 design their “dream city” of the future, incorporating real-world based technology. Students will present their model and ideas at the competition on January 31<sup>st</sup>. Volunteers are still needed. Website: [www.engineeryourfuture.org](http://www.engineeryourfuture.org).

#### **Comment on REB Update: Linda Bass**

Linda announced that the Metro North Healthcare Partnership was awarded \$179k of the Healthcare Workforce Transformation Fund Implementation Grant. This will be a two-year effort. Lahey Health, in partnership with Middlesex Community College, also received an award.

#### **Farewell to Bill Hart: Linda Bass**

Linda thanked Bill for his 17+ year commitment to the REB and presented him with a token of the REB’s appreciation for his long-term service.

#### **REB Meeting Time/Date Survey Results: Linda Bass**

Following a brief discussion about the survey results, it was decided that Linda would share the results via email with all REB members, and the topic will be discussed again at the March meeting.

#### **Business Engagement Open Discussion**

Context: WIOA emphasizes a job-driven approach, and the current trend of grantors requiring intensive participation by business in new initiatives, e.g., work experience, OJT, internships, commitment to interview, etc.

Discussion Notes – what can be done to ensure success?

- Segment employers (use a different marketing approach depending on the type of employer).
- Create a task force. Volunteers: Sandra Smith, Tricia Tyler, Chris Brennan, Reed Brockman, Karen Sampson Johnson, and Lisa Amaya Price (Linda will also send out an email to ask if any other members would like to volunteer as well).
- Define and coordinate specific roles of: REB, Career Centers, Employers
- Have a clear plan in place
- Determine what can be done to help ensure a good match
- Ensure interns are prepared (by working with training provider and employer)

- Goals/role should be determined before the internship commences
- Address behavioral aspects before internship commences – how to behave on the job
- Determine how to make administrative requirements less of a burden on the employer
- Send companies to meet students
- Look at Year-Up Model: External Mentor, Entry Level Worker – support network
- For each particular type of activity – define what it will take to make that activity successful
- Clarify type of internship: project-based vs. potentially long-term
- Have a curriculum in place
- REB can assist with coordinating logistics
- Define, and potentially assist with, administrative function
- Define the role of the training provider
- An external institution should get to know the internal employer to synthesize information
- Provide support to smaller employers, who may only take up to a few interns each year
- Ensure there is support for undergraduates and graduates, and additional support/structure for others
- Put systems in place for college students and adults who use the career centers, as well as youth
- Vary the types of offerings – e.g., job shadowing, mentoring, tours for adults, informational interviews, company visits to training programs to meet students, etc.
- Involve board members in key industries for all offerings
- Involve retailer organizations (Chris Brennan has contacts)
- Develop a clear understanding of the “talent mismatch” between employers and job seekers within the region; identify the specific needs of employers, and then develop a strategy to address those needs
- Career pathways can be used to highlight the areas where there are openings
- Focus on pipeline – potential career pathways
- Encourage youth and career changers to start on a clear career path
- Encourage strategic workforce planning within companies by, for example, creating business cases for companies to consider growing their own talent, or by outlining the benefits (in the long term, it will cost them less money).

### **Rechartering of Career Centers: Linda Bass, Linda Rohrer, Chris Brennan**

Linda Bass thanked the following Joint Committee members for their involvement in the rechartering process: Susan Jepson, Madeline Hoffman, Tricia Tyler, Sue Walsh, Philip Bronder-Giroux, Kam Maali, Lisa Amaya Price, and Cheryl Scott, as well as REB staff members Peter Farkas, Kimberly Napier, and Meelynn Wong. She then provided an overview of the rechartering process, as follows:

Last June, the decision was made to switch from a funding formula-driven performance model to a more collaborative model that is focused on goal-setting. In addition, youth services have been shifted to The Career Place, and more dislocated worker and adult funds are being allocated to Career Source. Because of these changes, the committee focused the rechartering

process on reviewing the goals that have been established over the years by the committee for performance; the factors that previously shaped the funding formula will now transition into goals for the career centers.

The rechartering process involved several components: REB staff conducted site visits at the career centers; career center directors developed their respective annual plans; REB staff facilitated Consumer Advisory Group meetings, where employers and job seekers discuss their experiences at the career centers; REB staff developed a comparative performance report and service to target group reports; and REB staff collected customer and employer satisfaction survey data. In addition, the committee met with career center directors to discuss their achievements, priorities and challenges. Many of the performance factors were reaffirmed. There is an emphasis on engaging the customer as measured by repeat customers, and whether people are getting decent, full-time, permanent jobs. The committee is also looking at the job placement rate and customer satisfaction. For employers, the focus is on repeat employers, employers who are placing job orders, and employer satisfaction. Services continue to be prioritized to four target groups: individuals with less than a high school credential, those who are 55+, persons with disabilities, and linguistic minorities. For each of these we looked at placement rate and the number of new customers coming into the center. We also looked at new customers in different categories: new employers, new customers in target groups, new veterans, and new youth. We also switched from counting employers with *repeat* job orders, to those with *one or more* job orders.

Linda Bass then presented a series of charts and graphs that demonstrate how the work of the Metro North career centers compares with that of career centers in other regions of the state, in addition to data which indicate customer demographics specific to the Metro North career centers. [Note: All data can be accessed via the Metro North REB website, here: <http://mnreb.org/REB.php>]

Linda Rohrer then highlighted some of Career Source's (CS) achievements, priorities, and challenges. In this past fiscal year, 7,800 individuals attended workshops; 8,500 used the Resource Room; and 6,000 received one-on-one job search support. In addition, Career Source served just under 400 employers; 335 employers listed job orders; and about 70 employers participated in recruitment. CS also attained 100% of its goals in WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs; exceeded the Emergency Unemployment Compensation Reemployment Eligibility Assistance program goals; and received the Silver Award from the Veterans State Grant. This past year CS also earned the largest amount of private revenues in its history (\$46k). Key priorities moving forward include: continuing achievements with the WIA program; increasing skills development courses; implementing Career Ready 101; upgrading space; becoming engaged as a partner with the casino; and continuing to strengthen collaboration with The Career Place. Funding is currently the greatest challenge for Career Source.

Chris Brennan then provided highlights on key achievements, priorities, and challenges as they relate to The Career Place (TCP). In this past fiscal year, TCP achieved 3,424 placements -- the highest number of placements in TCP's history, and TCP customer volume has remained high at 10,500 (with a staff of 30, some part-time). TCP also did well with WIA Adult and Dislocated Workers. TCP's core services such as WIA and Career Center seminars continue to be a key part

of their adult services. Priorities moving forward include: continuing to work on the Somerville Project with Danny LeBlanc; maintaining the quality and volume of TCP's youth programs, continuing employer engagement efforts; continuing to make inroads with OJT; working on grant proposals; continuing to work collaboratively on initiatives with Career Source; developing fee-based career development workshops; bolstering social media; and preparing for WIOA. TCP's top priority is funding. Chris then gave credit to Middlesex Community College for helping to ensure successful outcomes for the Metro North career centers.

Jay Linnehan (Middlesex Community College) then made comments attesting to the successful relationship between Middlesex Community College and the REB and career centers.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned.

**The next REB meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 18, 2015, 8:00 AM to 9:30 AM.**