

Meeting Minutes

Disability Committee

April 7, 2010 at Morris County Library

Attendees

Members: Donna Buchanan, Maureen Craven, Rachael DiCioccio, Lyn Krisa, Lucile Nering, Holly Shuart, Maddi Sink, Carmela Slivinski

Staff: Jack Patten

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m.

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS) Update

Maureen Craven opened the meeting by asking those present to give a detailed introduction to their agencies and their roles for the benefit of newly-appointed Disability Program Navigator Donna Buchanan.

Maureen reported on two recent events presented by the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services and held at County College of Morris. The first, ***Life After 21***, was a two-part training series addressing the concerns of students with developmental disabilities ages 19 through 21, and their families, as they approach the adult service systems. ***Life After 21***, Part I, provided:

- Skills and tools to plan supports and services based on individual needs;
- A brief overview of NJWINS, Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) Day Services and Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS);
- Resource information regarding DDD Day Program/Day Service options; and
- DVRS contact information.

This session also included "The Provider Marketplace", an opportunity for families to become acquainted with Adult Agencies/Service Organizations providing local supports and services.

The second event, ***Pathways to Adult Life***, was dedicated to the needs of children between the ages of 14 and 19. This session is produced through collaboration between the Division of Developmental Disabilities, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services, the Department of Education, the Division of Disability Services, and the Boggs Center.

The purpose of this training is to assist students and their families with making informed choices during the transition process from school to adult life. At these sessions, a representative from each agency provides an overview of responsibilities and their services

to transitioning students. Families have an opportunity to meet their local contact representatives and follow-up with individual concerns.

Maureen suggested that Donna attend the monthly Partnership for Transition and Employment Services to learn about area job development and placement initiatives for persons with disabilities.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Coordinator Report

Lyn Krisa reported that Donna Buchanan will assume the ADA Coordinator position effective immediately, and Lyn will no longer be part of the Committee.

Lyn reported on pending changes in the General Assistance (GA) welfare program. Cash assistance to employable GA recipients will end June 30, 2010. Since a significant percentage of GA recipients are persons with disabilities, often undiagnosed, this change will have a considerable effect on resources available to this population.

Disability Program Navigator (DPN)

Donna Buchanan introduced herself to the Committee and presented a brief summary of her role and responsibilities. Maureen Craven will provide Donna with extensive resources on serving persons with disabilities to facilitate her orientation to the position.

A general description of the Navigator's duties is as follows:

The Navigator serves as an expert on workforce development issues and policies impacting individuals with disabilities who are seeking employment, skill development, job retention assistance, or career advancement through the One-Stop Career Center system (including access to WIA training which is typically underutilized for individuals with disabilities). The Navigator develops linkages and collaborates on an ongoing basis with employers either individually or through their business relations team (as applicable in the state or local area) to facilitate job placements for individuals with disabilities and serves as a resource on Social Security Administration's work incentive and employment support programs. The Navigator also serves as a resource to the workforce investment community within their service area to ensure the availability of comprehensive knowledge on federal, state, local and private programs that impact the ability of individuals with disabilities to enter and remain in the workforce.

Workforce3 One Disability and Employment Resource Page

Jack Patten reported Workforce3 One has released a new disability and employment resource page to make employment-related information and promising practices available to the workforce system. This new disability and employment community of practice will help promote positive employment outcomes for people with disabilities and expand the capacity of the One-Stop Career Center system to serve customers with disabilities. The new resource also has information to help the business community understand disability employment-related topics such as tax incentives and recruiting, and accommodating employees with disabilities.

Jack distributed a handout with the site address, <http://disability.workforce3one.org>. He recommended it as a good resource for the Committee.

Summer Youth Program

The group discussed last year's Summer Youth Program and noted that enhanced work site matching and participant and employer orientation would improve the program. Jack Patten informed the group that there were major national evaluations of last year's Summer

Youth Program. They unanimously identify the untimely US DOL program approval (March 2009) as hampering all facets of program activities. Jack noted that preparation for this year's Summer Youth Program, if there is one, will start at least ten weeks later than last year.

New Business

Lucie Nering shared information on ***Dare to Dream in 2010: High School Student Leadership Conference***. The conference will be held at County College of Morris on June 4 from 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Dare to Dream is a "student leadership conference that highlights the importance of student self-advocacy and leadership. Each conference features accomplished students and adults with disabilities who have demonstrated exemplary self-advocacy and leadership skills. Additionally, the conference program includes a variety of concurrent breakout sessions that provide conference attendees opportunities to gain insight into the transition and self-advocacy process. Students will also participate in workshops led by their peers who are developing their own self-advocacy and leadership skills. Workshop topics will include goal setting, self-discovery, student self-advocacy, and planning your future."

Lucie Nering is the contact person and would be happy to help anyone with questions. She can be reached at (973) 664-2246.

The next Committee meeting is scheduled for July 7, 2010.