

Workforce Innovation and Performance Committee of the Monroe County/Rochester Workforce Development Board
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, June 4, 2024
8:00 to 9:00 AM
Meeting Scheduled via ZOOM

Present: Lia Festenstein, Jarmani Dozier, Jane Sullivan, Jennifer Geiger, Randy Andre, Bob Coyne, Rebecca Horowitz, Christina Bakewicz

Staff and Guest: Lee Koslow, Mary McKeown, Viatta Carter, Marisol Young, Laura Seelman, Daniel Donnarumma, Antwan Williams, Clark Rodman

Approval of Minutes:

A motion to approve the March 5, 2024 meeting minutes was made by Bob Coyne and seconded by Laura Seelman. The motion was carried unanimously.

Review of WIOA Adult/Dislocated Worker Program, Quarter 2 Performance, October - December 2023:

Lee Koslow began this discussion by reviewing the Adult and Dislocated Worker Performance, Program Year 2023, Quarter 2, on the WIOA primary indicators of performance for Monroe County. He noted the Workforce Innovation and Performance Committee is an oversight committee that takes a look at our Adult/Dislocated Worker performance from quarter to quarter, year to year. There are 5 different Federal Performance Indicators that we are measured on, plus 1 extra Indicator the Feds are looking for us to do, and New York State has made a priority for us. Performance is summarized in the Workforce Innovation and Performance Committee slideshow.

Enhanced Recovery Services Update:

Clark Rodman provided an update on the Enhanced Recovery Services Program for 2024, noting the ERS Program has proven effective in responding to multiple critical community needs, at once:

- To address the opioid health crisis in Monroe County and to serve those impacted by it.
- To assist those in recovery from substance use and/or mental health challenges.
- To increase the number of professional staff certified to treat individuals in recovery from substance use and/or mental health.

The target number this year was to assist 26 Participants. They actually have 38 active participants in this program. The reason the number is a lot higher than normally expected was due to receiving a lot of referrals around Thanksgiving, in addition to the steady referrals that were coming in earlier this year. Grant Funding Sources include:

- ESL Federal Credit Union (ended March 2024)
- Mother Cabrini Health Foundation (ends June 2024)
- County of Monroe Industrial Development Agency

With our Community Partners, there are 17 agencies that have signed formal Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) agreements with RochesterWorks, specifically with enhanced recovery services. A lot of these agencies are doing direct referrals to us, or helping with community presentations, or they are training providers.

Regarding ERS demographics, out of the 38 people we have had, 28 self-disclosed they were directly impacted by the opioid health crisis and 50% of these individuals self-disclosed they developed their addiction through prescription medications.

Clark reviewed the most common training requests, including:

- Certified Recovery Peer Advocate (50 classroom hours, plus 500 peer work experience hours)
- Certified Addiction Recovery Coach (60 classroom hours)
- Certified Peer Specialist (45 classroom hours plus 2,000 peer work experience hours)

Other training requests we receive include:

- Credentialed Alcohol and Substance Use Counselor (350 classroom hours+ up to 6,000 clinical work experience hours)
- Commercial Driver's License (4 weeks+)

Additional trainings that we provide include:

- Harm Reduction
- Family Supported Recovery
- Trauma Informed Care

The following Certifications/Credentials are actual achievements done since January:

- 5 Certified Recovery Peer Advocate (CRPA)
- 15 Certified Recovery Peer Advocate-Provisional (CRPA-P)
- 18 Certified Addiction Recovery Coach (CARC)
- 23 Certified Peer Specialist-Provisional (CPS-P)
- 1 Credentialed Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Counselor-Trainee
- 28 Narcan Administration Certifications
- 9 Mental Health First Aid USA-Adult Certifications
- 1 Family Peer Advocate (FPA) & 1 Youth Peer Advocate (YPA)
- 1 Certificate of Completion - Addiction Counselor Credential Training

Six people are scheduled for the Certified Recovery Peer Advocate NYS certification exam in June and July.

Supportive Services in the ERS Program include:

- Technology Assistance:
 - Laptop with 1-year Subscription to Microsoft Office
 - Basic Computer Skills Training (if needed)
 - Options: Coursera
- Transportation Supportive Services:
 - Bus Passes or Gas Cards
 - To obtain DMV Driver's License
- Interview Clothes/Work Clothes Assistance

Clark shared that we had a job fair on April 11th which focused just on recovery, mental health, and prevention services professional, and noted the following:

- 28 Job Seekers attended
 - Several grantees still in training/networking future prospects
 - 12 had never attended a job fair
- 11 agencies participated
 - 7 job offers made on site

- 14 second interviews were conducted within the next 2 weeks, and from those, another 5 job offers were made.
- 6 internship opportunities offered

In partnership with our Business Services Team, they will be having 2 more job fairs; 1 in July and 1 in October.

In closing, Clark shared a couple of success stories from 2 individuals that were in recovery from mental health and substance use, and both were applying for peer recovery positions. The following quotes reflect the positive experience these individuals had in the Enhanced Recovery Services Program:

- “Richard”, CRPA Intern at The Core Center, Male Disabled Combat Veteran:
 - “...Prior to meeting [RochesterWorks] was unemployed, struggling with no purpose and barely having an existence...Unemployed since 2020 from a mental breakdown and abandonment from my culture that left me not wanting to interact in society, let alone live.”
 - “...My first interaction with [RochesterWorks] gave me hope that someone would follow through with assisting me...they treated me as a person, which was a foreign concept to me, yet I allowed myself to trust [them]. They never let me down...”
 - “The overall experience of working with RochesterWorks has been a breath of fresh air in my life that needed people who would walk the talk. It helped me build confidence to step into my internship at the Center for Community Alternatives, trusting myself that I could return to work despite the fear of reoccurrence of my last job...The first 5 weeks of the internship have been an amazing learning experience of culture...”
 - “...Building these connections has vastly improved my life and fulfillment of my work therapy for Traumatic Brain Injury and is bringing a better understanding of being disabled in the workplace today.”
- “Melissa”, Full-Time at Compeer Rochester, Female Disabled Bilingual:
 - “I was dealing with grief and pain trying to find someone to blame. I found myself alone and in pain...I found myself again when I was introduced to RochesterWorks and support and guidance from people who believed in me, and others like me. No matter what we have been through or what we have done in the past...”
 - “...They gave me hope, strength, and tools to build my confidence to persevere and have a better look at what life could be...To recover and turn the pain into power to be able to help others who are not being seen, heard, and/or are misunderstood. I am certified and able to pay it forward to and for my community, to put it in a full circle of love, hope, strength and compassion along with building human connection...”
 - “...I was truly blessed to have a program like this in a community where we are screaming to save us, to help us, and teach us...To see and understand us by accepting us for who we are and where we come from to break the stigma so that together we can all be one community.”

In conclusion, Clark asked if committee members had ideas or know of other agencies who would like to partner with Enhanced Recovery Services (i.e., become an internship site, special events, send partner referrals/MOU, or even considering future funding) to contact Clark (crozman@rochesterworks.org). ERS is always looking for new partners and opportunities to help the program do more.

Discussion: Strategies for Getting the Most From Our Business Services Grants:

Laura Seelman began this discussion by reviewing some data on our program year, which runs July 1st through June 30th. Over the past year, we have made a significant effort to grow, enhance and make some adjustments to a lot of our Grant offerings for businesses to make them more accessible, to increase business participation, and just really try to improve things overall, and this committee has been a part of that. Some of the updates and changes that have been made include:

- June 2023 - WIP Committee & WDB Board approve On-the-Job Training (OJT) award amount maximum increase from \$5,000 to \$7,500
- September 2023 - WIP Committee & WDB Board approved Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) Grant Policy
- October 2023 - Approved for \$250K in funding from County of Monroe IDA to support OJT & IWT Grants
- December 2023 - Launch IWT Grant for businesses
- January 2024 - New Business Services staff member hired

Laura provided a general overview on the activity so far this program year, including:

- 60 Grant applications approved, serving 31 unique businesses, serving 88 individual trainees. This includes across our 2 hiring incentive grant programs, On-the-Job Training and Work Experience Tryout, as well as the new Incumbent Worker Training Grant Program.
- Applications Approved by Industry in all 3 programs include Skilled Trades, Advanced Manufacturing, and Non-Profit organizations.
- Total Funding Provided in all 3 programs include the following comparison, Program Year 2022 vs. Program Year 2023:
 - Overall, we have doubled the volume of grant applications that we have processed and the amount of funding we have been able to award to businesses over the last year (OJT ↑102%, WET ↑104%, IWT N/A).
- Total Trainees in all 3 programs show growth in comparison from being able to support 33 new hires to a total of 88 individuals receiving training over the past program year.
- Average Hourly Wage Rate for OJT and WET includes growth in the hourly wage rate for individuals who have been served through these programs. OJT has increased slightly (↑4.1%) and we have seen a higher increase in WET (↑12.9%).
- Average Award Amount, OJT and WET includes a significant increase in the OJT program (↑24.5%) and WET has increased slightly (↑8.2%).
- Industries Supported by Trainee, OJT and WET includes the industries we have been able to serve and the growth that we have seen in our previous program year compared to the current program year. We have grown particularly in the areas of Advanced Manufacturing and Skilled Trades. We also do a significant amount of work with Non-Profit organizations. There are areas where we would like to grow and see improvement. Healthcare is a huge need in the community. We have grown the number of businesses we have supported from 0 to 3 in the last program year, but there is still a lot of work to do.
- Job Titles Supported by Trainee, OJT and WET includes the different job titles we have been able to support through these hiring incentive grant programs.

Laura also provided a brief overview of the new Incumbent Worker Training Grant Program, including:

- Program launched late December 2023
- We have provided \$26,677 to businesses to train 32 individuals, average cost/trainee \$833.65. The business itself does have to contribute a certain percentage towards the grant. The percentage differs depending on the size of the company; 10%, 25%, or 50% in total.

- Industries served include Advanced Manufacturing, Business Services, Non-Profit, and Printing.
- Examples of Training supported include a lot of soft skills, leadership-type skills, as well as administrative and customer service-type skills.
- We are excited with the potential to continue growing this program offering. We are in the process of working with the team at COMIDA so that we can reapply for another year beginning in October, to be able to continue to offer and grow these programs, in addition to having some of our WIOA funding and things like that available.

Lee thanked everyone for the very good discussion today.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Lia Festenstein and seconded by Antwan Williams. The motion was passed unanimously.

Next Meeting Scheduled: September 10, 2024

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 AM
Submitted by: Mary McKeown

Reviewed by:
Lee Koslow 6/17/2024
Laura Seelman 6/14/24