

**KENTUCKIANAWORKS BOARD MEETING
GREATER LOUISVILLE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
Thursday, September 30, 2021 – 8:30 a.m.-10:00 a.m.
Virtual Meeting via Zoom**

Members Present: John Archer, Andy Bianco, Caitlin Blair, Kimberly Blanding, Jennifer Carman, Cornelius “Neal” Cotton, Sarah Davasher-Wisdom, Rebecca Fleischaker, Eric Friggle, Tony Georges, Michael Hesketh, Jenny Lampton, Dr. Marty Pollio, Sadiqa Reynolds, Jonathan Westbrook

Welcome and Greetings - *Chairman Georges*

Chairman Georges welcomed everyone to the Board Meeting and thanked them for attending. He also encouraged everyone to take a moment and look at the Annual Report and the Program Dashboard when they have time.

Update and Celebration: JCPS, Recent Visit from the Secretary Of Labor Marty Walsh, and On-going COVID Challenges- *Tony Georges, Superintendent Marty Pollio*

Chairman Georges, Superintendent Pollio, Michael Gritton and a few others met with Secretary of Labor Marty Walsh at Doss High School not long ago. Chairman Georges says he feels the meeting went well and Mr. Walsh walked away with a real sense of what could be done with connecting High Schoolers to jobs. Mr. Walsh got a chance to look at some of the good things happening through the Academies work that is being done. Dr. Pollio chimed in to say amidst all the challenges our community is facing with youth violence and the enormous challenge of COVID, JCPS is on the cutting edge of keeping schools open and keeping staff and students safe while continuing to do leading work connecting students to employment opportunities. The Secretary of Labor was able to meet with a student who hadn't been successful with school prior to being introduced to the Academies. The student found some passion in the Manufacturing Program and progressed to a work program at GE Appliances 2 days a week and is attending Doss High School 3 days a week. Now he is in the Kentucky FAME program, working at GE Appliances and they are paying for him to attend JCTC. We visited the Class Act Federal Credit Union. The Secretary of Labor was blown away that this is a full Credit Union that kids are experiencing inside their high school. During a time when it is difficult to get kids certified our Academies schools continue to do all they can to have more success stories. This was a fantastic opportunity to showcase what we've done as a community.

Review and Approve Minutes from August 2021 Meeting - *Tony Georges*

A motion to accept the August Meeting minutes was made by Neal Cotton and seconded by Dr. Pollio. The motion passed unanimously.

Review and Approve Consent Agenda from POC Meeting - *Cindy Read and Mike Hesketh*

Ms. Read reminded the Board the Consent Agenda items go before the scrutiny of the Program Oversight Committee before they are brought to the Board. Last week the POC approved the purchase of 29 licenses for the Launchpad case management system for a total cost of \$58,000. Due to the purchasing guidelines for larger purchases that are not bid out, Louisville Metro Government requires that the KentuckianaWorks Board approve such purchases.

KentuckianaWorks seeks approval to contract directly with Launchpad to purchase 29 licenses at \$2,000 per license for a total yearly cost of \$58,000 as approved by the POC. A motion to accept the Consent Agenda was made by Mr. Archer and seconded by Mr. Westbrook. The motion passed unanimously.

Highlights from Annual Report and Racial Equity Dashboard - Aleece Smith and Michael Gritton

Michael began with highlights from the Year in Review. Even in a year where we had to deal with COVID and our foot traffic was way down the big picture numbers show we still helped nearly 1,000 people get jobs and over 1,200 certificates were awarded. We successfully raised \$3.5 million dollars of new money from the city, the state and from grants we chased where we could. A video was then played of a customer the Equus team helped in the Career Center. The participant expressed how appreciative she was to the Equus staff. She said she had someone trying to help her secure a position, they had free tools available that assisted her in her quest for employment. Equus staff showed her how to create a LinkedIn account, they assisted her with her resume and she was assigned a Mentor. She stated that coming from a bigger town and not having issues finding employment there she thought it would be no issue when relocating to Louisville. The challenge proved greater than she expected and she is thankful the Career Center was there to assist her. The participant found a great new career in the Administrative Field.

The second video was of a young participant who testified on our behalf last year to the Metro Council when we were advocating for additional money for our Young Adult program. The participant had started using drugs, dropped out of school and became homeless before coming to the KYCC for assistance. She states that not only did they help with her professional development but they helped her to see a different side of Louisville than she was experiencing before the program. KYCC helped her get a GED, pay for college and rent, get a good job and two internships. She encourages anyone that sees her video to not give up, reach out to places like KYCC because they are turning lives around.

The last video was of a gentleman who was assisted by the KCAC staff. Keith was living with addiction and was homeless. Then, he started his path to recovery and a career. He needed a higher education to work in addiction counseling. The KCAC helped make that a reality. Keith says the staff made it okay to ask questions and become comfortable with receiving help. He is now working on his master's degree and is an Executive Director at a medical detox facility. He credits the KCAC staff for helping to complete his paperwork and helping to build his confidence to go out and pursue new opportunities to be self-sufficient.

Switching to the Racial Equity Dashboard, Aleece Smith took the floor. Aleece reminded the Board about half way through last program year we invited the Board to a Strategic Planning Retreat via Zoom. During that retreat KentuckianaWorks Strategic Priorities were set and Racial Equity is at the top of that list. Since January 2021 we have been able to secure an additional \$500,000 from the City through the SummerWorks program specifically for Racial Equity work. We have also been able to secure an additional \$250,000 for the KentuckianaBuilds program and over \$843,000 to expand the Code Louisville program to Code KY. Priorities tracked separately can be viewed throughout the year in the POC Reports or Director's Report.

Sharing the KentuckianaWorks Program Dashboard, Aleece stated that not much has changed since Sarah Ehresman shared her version around the beginning of this calendar year. The chart still shows the breakdown by race, ethnicity, gender and now zip codes by program. If there aren't enough participants that meet a particular threshold we do not include that data in the dashboard. The numbers show that over 40% of the participants we serve across all programs are Black or African American. Just under 40% are White. When looking at job placements the numbers are flipped. African Americans who are placed in jobs are just under 40% and White participants are closer to 50%. Average wage data has been added to the Dashboard since it was last presented to you. You can see how our participants are doing with their hourly wage by race by program. This is a really good way to get a snapshot of what's going on with our programs and see where we can address disparities and where we can do better.

Mike Hesketh gave kudos to the team on the progress they've made with the Dashboard data and the flexibility of the tool. Mr. Hesketh asked if there had been anything identified as a priority to begin to address based on the data provided. Michael Gritton answered that this Dashboard shows that although we are enrolling African Americans at a higher rate than other races, we continue to show fewer placements at lower wages. We are having discussions with some of our partners in the community to address those placement numbers. Sadiqa Reynolds chimed in to say she hadn't seen these numbers prior to this meeting and vowed to look at the data more closely. Andy Bianco suggested that since the Dashboard is approximately 9 months old it might be helpful to speak with some of the program participants to get a sense of what worked and what did not work for them and use that in conjunction with the data. Aleece made a note that in addition to beginning to speak with participants we are looking to rolling out a Unified Survey so we can collect additional feedback on how participants feel they were served at the Career Centers.

SummerWorks 2021 and What's Coming in 2022 - Chris Locke

Chris Locke started by reminding the Board the SummerWorks program was started by Mayor Fischer in partnership with KentuckianaWorks in 2011. The program mostly serves young adults in high school and targets young adults with barriers to employment in priority zip codes. SummerWorks staff recruit young people ages 16-21 and help them register, prepare for, connect to, and get hired for summer jobs at private sector companies or placed in sponsored work-and-learn experiences at nonprofits/public agencies. SummerWorks also helps employers find their future workforce. In the first year of SummerWorks 200 young adults were placed in jobs. In 2015 KentuckianaWorks Board affirmed partnering with GLI to support JCPS' efforts to transform 14 comprehensive high schools by launching the Academies of Louisville. In 2019 KentuckianaWorks commissioned a study conducted by KYStats that confirmed SummerWorks participants are more likely to graduate high school, enroll and stay in college, and more likely to be employed and stay employed after high school. In the Summer of 2020, amid the pandemic and summer programs across the country closing, local foundations stepped forward to grant unprecedented resources (\$1.4 million dollars) for jobs and to help ensure a safe and healthy COVID free Summer. In 2021 the Mayor and Metro Council doubled the SummerWorks budget from \$500,000 to 1 million dollars making it's SummerWorks largest investment to date. Since 2011 7,400 young adults have been directly placed and over 39,000 young adults have worked at a Champion Employer. Research says that early work experiences (in the form of summer jobs, internships, co-ops, apprenticeships) can make a big difference in a young person's life.

SummerWorks helps young adults earn money, get real world work experiences, build a network and gain career skills. In 2021 we had 2,173 young adults sign up for the SummerWorks program. 728 completed soft skills training, there were 586 direct placements and 3,200 Indirect Placements. 80 of 141 organizations directly hired a young adult from the program. 50% of the youth served are within that priority population we have identified in terms of zip codes, high schools and other barriers.

2021 is the last year of the 5 year grant cycle, KentuckianaWorks is issuing a RFP for contractors. Mr. Locke provided the procurement schedule. Some program emphasis will be shifting in 2022. SummerWorks will now be a key part to a larger Talent Development System instead of being seen as a stand-alone program. SummerWorks will also start to look to connect young adults to jobs year-round instead of finding opportunities that run June - August. Chairman Georges thanked Chris for his presentation.

Discussion: Cutting-Edge Work - Michael Gritton

KentuckianaWorks has been in talks with the Bloomberg Philanthropies organization for about a year. We will be getting a planning grant from them and we intend to hire someone who wakes up every day thinking of ways to grow the amount of youth apprenticeships. KentuckianaWorks is planning a trip with our colleagues at JCPS to Charleston, SC probably in December to go look at the way they are doing apprenticeships and we are inviting anyone who may be interested to attend.

Michael reminded the group we had Jim Lancaster come present to you in August. Michael and Mr. Lancaster have gathered information from the 7 non-profit organizations they are working with and will try to convene a second meeting in the next week or 2 to make sure we are staying in close touch with them about what we are all imagining we can do together if we can get the kind of investment we are hoping to get from the American Rescue Plan funding. We will keep you updated as this progresses through the City and processes become clearer.

KentuckianaWorks confirmed with our Regional Department of Labor colleagues that the Bi-State plan we submitted in collaboration with Southern Indiana Works was the first one submitted in the Country. Our plan includes 2 Workforce Boards in different states submitting a single plan through both of their Governors to be recognized as a Region for Federal Government purposes. There is a grant from the Commerce Department called the Good Jobs Challenge Grant Opportunity that we plan to convene a team to try to dig a little more into. River Ridge in Southern Indiana is building an on-site childcare facility to try to find a way to combat some of the barriers around childcare. We have had conversations with some of our local Employment partners and have found they are facing some of the same issues with employees having childcare concerns. We are starting to imagine if we could use this Federal Grant to test some new delivery models both around childcare and around transportation. We will be digging more into that in October.

In closing, Michael reported to the group that our friend Sarah Ehresman gave birth to a healthy baby boy named Levi on Monday. Mommy and baby boy are doing great. Congratulations Sarah!

After 5 years today is the last day for staff member Joi McAtee. Joi will be moving over to the Mayor's office to be a part of their Office of Equity and will be working on a project where the City is trying to broker and encourage more community conversations around these Racial Equity topics. Congratulations Joi.

Chairman Georges took the floor and welcomed our new Board member Kim Blanding to the KentuckianaWorks Board. Ms. Blanding comes to us from Norton Healthcare where she leads Talent Acquisition and Workforce Development. Ms. Blanding expressed that she is excited to join the Board and looks forward to working with everyone.

Chairman Georges then adjourned the meeting. The next meeting was scheduled for Thursday, November 18.

Staff:

Michael Gritton
Patrick Garvey
Bryan Griffin
Chris Locke
Latricia Swope
Lada Gasparac
Cindy Read
Aleece Smith
Bailey Preston
Stacy Roderick
Angella Wilson
Katie Elliott
Jaime Disney
Joi McAtee
Barbara Ferrell
Mary Rosenthal
Regina Phillips
Brian Luerman
Dr. Darrius Brooks
Lori Matos

Contractors/Guest

Joshua McKee
Brianna Henson
Charlotte Kerns
Rena Sharpe
Sara Dodeci
Renee Walters
Lisa Thompson
Regan Wann
Monica Collins
Patricia Williams
Christine Tarquinio
Jennifer Carmen
Shatrece Johnson