

DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT INITIATIVE

October 2013

Monthly Narrative Report

DEI State Project	Minnesota (Department of Employment and Economic Development)
Name of Person (completing report)	Lynn Douma
E-mail Address	Lynn.Douma@state.mn.us
Contact Phone #	651/259-7536
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A. Ticket to Work/Employment Network (EN) Activities

Note: local level Ticket to Work EN activities are included in the local activity section below.

- The EN has 65 Tickets assigned: 61 Tickets assigned prior to the start of the DEI project and 4 Tickets through the DEI project. To date \$62,138 in payments has been made to the EN (from the pre-DEI Tickets). A handful of additional Ticket Holders with assignable Tickets have been identified; DRCs are in process of explaining TTW and securing agreement from the Ticket Holders to assign the Tickets to the EN.
- State Co-Leads participated in Ticket to Work TA call with DJ Ralston and Mary Lynn Revoir of NDI to discuss implementation questions relating to the Ticket component of the project. (10/11/13)
- State Co-Lead participated in the Ticket/EN TA Office Hours hosted by NDI. (10/15/13)
- State Co-Leads participated in TA webinar with DJ Ralston, Mary Lynn Revoir, and Kevin Nickerson from NDI demonstrating the Ticket revenue projection tool. (10/25/13)

B. State Level Activities

DEED

- State Co-Lead conducted a review of the PACER Center activities and progress on the work plan to date. (10/3/13)
- State Co-Leads convened a meeting of the DEI Steering Committee (notes available on DEI project website: <http://mn.gov/deed/programs-services/office-youth-development/index/disability-employment-initiative/>). (10/3/13)
- State DEI Team had a conference call with Douglas Klayman and Rob Bartolotta from Social Dynamics to discuss collection of data on utilization of the identified strategies for the evaluation. (10/3/13)
- DEED's Youth Services Director and State DEI Co-Lead attended the regional DEI training for Rural MN CEP staff and presented the overview of Minnesota's DEI project, Partners for Youth. (10/9/13)

- DEED Staff visited two of the implementation sites, South Central/MVAC and Southeast/WDI, to review the progress of the project and provide technical assistance. (10/8/13 and 10/10/13)
- State DEI Co-Leads participated in the NDI webinar: Partnership and Collaboration Part 3: Sustainability. (10/17/13)
- State Co-Lead presented an overview of the MN DEI Partners for Youth project to staff at the St. Paul Social Security Administration District Office. (10/31/13)

PACER Center

- PACER staff Deborah Leuchovius and Sean Roy attended DEI Steering Committee meeting held at the MN Department of Education on October 3, 2013.
- PACER staff submitted several revised drafts of an online needs assessment survey for MN DEI stakeholders to DEI Steering Committee, local DRCs and State Co-leads for review. A final version was sent to State Co-Leads on October 28th.
- PACER staff communicated with State Co-Leads by email several times this month.

C. Local Level Activities

Minnesota Valley Action Center (South Central WSA)

- Disability Resource Coordinator (DRC) attended/participated in Ticket to Work related activities including:
 - Met with staff in Social Security Office in Martin County to discuss Work/Benefits Analysis and other services offered though that office on Oct. 9th.
 - Participated in the *Ticket to Work Office Hours* webinar hosted by NDI on Oct. 15th
- DRC identified two Ticket Holders using signed consent form; both Tickets were unassigned. One Ticket was then assigned to the DEED EN. A meeting with the youth regarding the second Ticket assignment is scheduled for November.
- Throughout the month the Disability Resource Coordinator (DRC) participated in the following activities:
 - On October 9th met with Social Security Office workers in Fairmont office, gave information and answered questions about DEI. Obtained contact information for youth who may need work benefits analysis or other services from this office.
 - Also on October 9th met with Martin County Community Transition Interagency Committee (CTIC) along with Jayne Spain from MDE to give information on DEI.
 - On October 10 attended Rural MN CEP, Inc's Disability Employment Initiative Training at Camp Ripley, MN.
 - On Thursday October 24th attended Mankato Area CTIC meeting. The CTIC plan for activities using their DEI grant funding was discussed.
 - Met with representative from SMILES Center for Independent Living in Mankato to discuss Integrated Resource Team (IRT) participation.
 - On October 17th participated in the NDI Webinar, *Partnership and Collaboration; Sustainability Part 3*.
 - On October 31st DRC met with MVAC Youth Program Coordinator and Vocational Rehabilitative Services DEI representative to discuss ways to improve information and referral process between the two providers. Goal is to ensure that

youth are getting the best possible services in a timely manner.

- Together with MVAC Youth Counselors, enrolled ten youth in DEI and held two IRT meetings. The first IRT meeting included the youth, MVAC Youth Counselor, Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor and DRC. This resulted in the youth co-enrolling in VR Services to get further assistance with transition to post-secondary education and employment.
- The second IRT meeting was with youth, DRC and county Social Worker, with a follow-up IRT including MRCI's *Track to Success* Program Coordinator. This resulted in the youth registering for the *Track to Success* Program with a goal of improving soft skills and social skills while gaining work experience.
- DRC met with and enrolled one youth in the Ticket to Work program during this month. Assisted this youth to contact *Work Incentives Connection* regarding questions about effects of work on benefits and had a preliminary discussion which will be followed with a full consultation at a later date.
- As of the end of October, 2013, 22 youth are enrolled in DEI. Staff has identified 9 additional potential new participants that they are working with to determine eligibility and appropriateness.
- One participant has been especially successful in moving forward with his career, employment and life goals. The steps he's taken and outcomes have been remarkable to see how it has changed his confidence and outlook and future path. Staff is very excited about this and hopes to see every DEI youth achieve the same success.
- MVAC staff is working internally to develop understanding, processes and buy-in which is enhancing the delivery of DEI services.
- Externally, the DEI continues to build the relationships and networks needed to support the youth towards success.
- Many areas of the local WorkForce Center system have made steps in working with DRC on this project.

Workforce Development, Inc. (Southeast WSA)

- DRC continued to work on IRT's and promoting *Guideposts for Success* among staff and partners. (Ongoing)
- DRC and partners planned additional meetings for collaboration.
- DRC worked with case managers on enrollment.
- DRC/WDI enrolled 4 youth in the DEI project for a total of 20 now enrolled.
- DRC reviewed and signed DEI Youth Action Plans and reviewed paperwork in all areas.
- DRC and MIS Specialist met with DEED staff to address issues of enrollment. (10/8/13)
- DRC attended CTIC meeting and presented CTIC role in Freeborn County. (10/16/13)
- DRC facilitated PACER Center training with front line staff to prepare them for their role in making assistive technology available to DEI participants. (10/17/13)
- Case managers in Rochester helped to plan a CTIC Transitions Fair for November 12th.
- Case Managers in Rochester participated in developing a brochure for shared services.
- DRC worked with PACER Staff to begin planning Cultural Diversity Parent meetings.
- DRC and four case managers attended trainings regarding strategies and resources to address mental illness in youth. (Two case managers helped to design this training specific to the needs of the DEI grant case managers.) This activity brought together 80

people from various youth serving agencies throughout SE Minnesota to address issues of youth mental illness. Six of the ten counties in the Southeast WSA were represented. (10/30/13)

Rural MN CEP

- Work Incentive Practitioner service brochure was completed and is being distributed to agencies in need of the service.
- Awareness posters placed in all eight workforce centers in support of Disability Employment Awareness Month. RMCEP published an article on its website as well. This initiative brought increased recognition to persons with disabilities that employment while on SSA benefits was encouraged and supported by RMCEP. (10/1/13)
- Youth Staff/Team Leaders/Managers and RMCEP DEI Team attended a two-day training for DEI and Ticket related topics coordinated by the DRC. VRS, PACER and other partners presented and attended the training. This represented the official launch of DEI in RMCEP's area and provided much needed training to front line staff. (10/9/13-10/10/13)
- DRC attended CTIC meeting with Jayne Spain, Department of Education, followed by Transition Expo. RMCEP booth provided DEI fliers and information regarding Key Train and youth work experience programs. These activities marketed the DEI in an area that had previously been unaware of the effort and provided some possible candidates for the DEI. (10/14/13)
- DRC attended a Disability Research Consortium hosted by Mathematica via webcast. This webcast provided best practice information that will be useful to staff as they work with persons with disabilities. (10/15/13)
- DRC presented to the Otter Tail CTIC with Jayne Spain. This was an introduction to the DEI for the area and a beginning to planning training in the area as part of the DEI. (10/16/13).
- Established two IRTs, one in Brainerd and one in Pine River. Both candidates agreed that the DEI enhancements would benefit them in completing post-secondary education and getting hired upon completion. (10/17/13)
- Established IRT in Detroit Lakes, incorporating KeyTrain work readiness training into the Individual Education Plan. Participant is already on a worksite working 10 hours per week after school. (10/21/13)
- Established IRT in Detroit Lakes. Blue Sky, Inc. and VRS collaborate on a unified plan. Since Blue Sky and VR have contracted for employment services, RMCEP will provide a secondary role. RMCEP will continue to make monthly contact as the participant is enrolled in WIA youth. RMCEP can also provide On the Job Training as a carrot for potential employers to take a second look if needed. (10/22/13)
- Work Incentive Plan presented to customer in Moorhead. Ticket assignment pending. (10/23/13)
- Established two IRTs, one in Bemidji and one in Clearbrook. Both candidates agreed that the DEI enhancements would benefit them in getting their high school diplomas along with making the transition from high school to post-secondary education. (10/24/13)
- Youth coordinator meeting held. Spent two hours discussing the DEI sign-up process along with modeling an IRT meeting. This training clarified the role and processes of the

DEI and the DRC. (10/28/13)

- RMCEP donated a computer, monitor, mouse and keyboard to Clearbrook-Gonvick High School to create a designated access point to Key Train for DEI/RMCEP participants. (10/29/13)
- Attended Bemidji CTIC Transitional Expo. Provided DEI fliers along with information regarding youth programs and benefits planning services. (10/29/13)
- Met with parents of DEI participant in Pine River to establish a unified collaborative plan as the participant prepares for post-secondary education. Also established partnership with VRS to provide additional resources. (10/31/13)

PACER Center

- Assigned PACER project staff continues working on the curriculum *Social Security and Benefit Planning for Transition-Age Youth*. PACER publication staff will be involved in formatting the publication text which will be presented in the PowerPoint's "notes" section. The next draft of the curriculum will be shared with State Co-Leads once it has been developed.
- PACER staff presented 2 sessions to 31 individuals on October 9th and one additional session on October 10th to 26 individuals attending the RMCEP regional training at Camp Ripley. PACER staff presented on 3 topics: the *Guideposts for Success*, a discussion of multicultural youth and family issues, and Assistive Technology. The *Guideposts for Success* PowerPoint used in the presentation by Sean Roy was previously used at the first DRC Roundtable. The session on working with multicultural families was led by PACER Multicultural Specialist Hassan Samantar and by Judy Moses. An assistive technology session held on October 10th presented by PACER Assistive Technology Specialist, Jonathan Campbell, included a hands on demonstration of applications and equipment as well as information about PACER's equipment lending library other regional resources. A similar session on Assistive Technology, also presented by Jonathan Campbell, was presented in Rochester on October 17th. This session was attended by 9 staff members.
- An Assistive Technology (AT) session for Mankato is scheduled for November 20th. PACER staff had further communication with the local DEI staff related to planning this session over the course of the month.
- In October, PACER staff assisted 5 individuals (3 parents, 2 professionals) in the MN DEI/Partners for Youth WSAs by providing them with information and individual assistance about employment, Social Security Benefits and work incentives, and opportunities for parents to attend training on these topics over the phone, via email, or in person.