

DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT INITIATIVE

July 2013

Monthly Narrative Report

DEI State Project	Minnesota (Department of Employment and Economic Development)
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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 73 Tickets assigned from activity prior to the start of the DEI project. No Tickets have yet been assigned by the three DEI implementation sites.
- State DEI staff finalized the Consent Form for checking Ticket assignability and the Ticket Assignment Agreement for Ticket holders who choose to assign their Ticket to the DEED EN.
- State DEI staff participated in the Ticket to Work webinar: “Effective Practices Supporting Youth in Transition in Achieving Employment and Self-Sufficiency”. (7/16/13)

B. State Level Activities

DEED

- There was a change in the state leadership of the project when the State Project Lead, Anne Fischer, resigned effective 7/16/13. Lynn Douma and Larry Eisenstadt were designated State Project Co-Leads as of 7/16/13. They have been involved in various aspects of the project since the development of the proposal in mid-2012.
- The State Project Team provided additional clarifying information to DOL regarding the state’s grant modification request (originally submitted to DOL on 5/16/13) and met via conference call with DOL’s National DEI Project Manager, Randee Chafkin, and Gary Lewis and Corey Bullock from DOL Region V office regarding the modification request. (7/12/13)
- State DEI team members continued to work on finalizing the Data Sharing Agreement with Social Dynamics and on developing the process for transmitting the data to Social Dynamics for the DEI evaluation.
- State Co-Lead met with PACER Center and MN Dept of Education to review activity supported with DEI funding.

PACER Center

- PACER staff communicated with State Co-Leads by email and phone throughout the month and met with Co-Lead Larry Eisenstadt (7/25/13) regarding PACER's contracted activities.
- Revised June drafts of the MN DEI promotional flyer, the MN DEI Youth Profile, and MN DEI Youth Action Plan to incorporate feedback from MN DEI June 20 Roundtable participants.
- Submitted final draft of MN DEI promotional flyer, the MN DEI Youth Profile, and MN DEI Action Plan to DEED.
- Draft of newsletter article about the DEI project and youth services available to youth with disabilities through local workforce centers for Fall 2013 issue of the *PACESSETTER* is still under development.
- Working draft of online needs assessment survey for stakeholders in MN DEI implementation regions around PACER expertise areas is still in process. It was originally anticipated that this activity would be completed by this time; however, this activity was on hold while DEED personnel changes were in process. Now that DEED has assigned new Project Co-Leads for the MN DEI Project work has resumed. MDE and STC staff will also be consulted in the development of this survey to ensure it is appropriate to the needs of CTIC stakeholders as well as WSA staff and to ensure that Assistive Technology (AT) trainings to be conducted later this fall are customized to address local and site-specific AT training needs.

Minnesota Department of Education

- Contracts are in place with seven CTICs. Each CTIC will be coordinating a minimum of two training sessions a year in collaboration with the DRCs. Topics for the trainings will relate to the Guideposts for Success and may include information on: service coordination; Disability Benefits 101 website; integrated competitive employment; Ticket to Work; Plans for Achieving Self Support (PASS); career planning, self-advocacy. CTIC and MDE staff will hold planning meetings which will be followed by the development of a training plan submitted to MDE.

C. Local Level Activities

Minnesota Valley Action Center (South Central WSA)

- DRC met with the Director of LifeWorks to discuss DEI services. (7/1/13)
- DRC met with Director of Disability Services at South Central College to discuss services at the college and how students can access it as well as the DEI services. (7/15/13)
- DRC attended the Nicollet County Children's Mental Health Collaborative meeting to discuss DEI services. (7/16/13)
- DRC attended the WorkForce Center Partner Training Day to network with staff from partnering agencies. (7/18/13)
- DRC met with the DRC from the Southeast Implementation Site to consult on DEI process and services. (7/19/13)
- The local DEI team met to discuss the process for DEI services in our local area. (7/22/13)

- DRC met with Employment Services staff to discuss the DEI project. (7/23/13)
- DRC met with the Vocational Rehabilitation Services staff to review the referral process and the partnership agreement. They discussed how to work best together to serve youth in the area. The DRC has a great partnership with VRS and they are supportive of the initiative. (7/31/13)
- Throughout the month, the DRC continued to work on the process and customer flow of participants from the time of application at MVAC and/or registration at the WorkForce Center to determine where the DRC role will fit in to best serve youth in the area. As well as the role of the DRC in the Ticket to Work Program.
- Throughout the month, the DRC continued to work on the Resource Mapping tool to connect with existing partners and possible new partnerships to identify the services available as well as the service gaps for youth with disabilities.
- Throughout the month, the DRC continued working with 3 youth who are currently on youth programs to learn more about youth services, the youth counselors' work and barriers to employment that youth with disabilities face.
- Throughout the month, the DRC has identified current youth who have a documented disability, reviewing their case files and case notes to understand their unique needs as well as talk to youth counselors about how she might be able to assist with DEI and Ticket to Work.
- As MVAC staff have been accepting new youth applications they have noted youth that could be eligible for the DEI project.

Workforce Development, Inc. (Southeast WSA)

- DRC continued to work on developing Integrated Resource Teams (IRTs) and promoting Guideposts. (ongoing)
- DRC worked on adding detail to Benchmarks tool from DEI Orientation. (ongoing)
- DRC met with youth counselor who serves Goodhue and Wabasha counties and reviewed caseload and eligible current enrollments for the DEI. (7/2/13)
- DRC met with youth counselor who serves Olmsted and Dodge counties and identified current participants who would be eligible for the DEI. (7/9/13)
- DRC participated in Ticket to Work webinar "Effective Practices Supporting Youth in Transition in Achieving Employment and Self-Sufficiency". (7/16/13)
- Met with MNVAC DRC to discuss progress and collaborate on ideas. (7/19/13)
- Scheduled CTIC meetings for fall for Freeborn County, Olmsted County, and Houston County.
- DRC presented DEI project update at the WDI Manager's meeting. (7/29/13)

Rural MN CEP

- Eight Cornell University Benefits Planner Certification courses attended by Sue Hilgart and Greg Kaiser (DRC) and certification exam taken. The courses included significant reading and homework requirements. This will allow RMCEP to provide benefits planning services at a much lower cost than using fee for service contracts and could provide a source of flexible revenue as a result of fee-for-service opportunities. (7/1-7/31/13)
- RMCEP developed a DEI policy to provide guidance to program coordinators and case managers prior to launch. This includes service strategy flow charts. This guidance

provides a base of knowledge that can be built upon as implementation progresses. (7/1-7/31/13)

- Internal DEI Team (Terry Janes, Vicki Leaderbrand, Arlyce Cucich and Greg Kaiser) discussed strategies and plans on how to implement the DEI. This is a recurring monthly meeting to identify best practices and challenges. (7/11/13)
- Plan for Achieving Self-Support (PASS) Training at the Bemidji SSA office conducted by SSA Area Work Incentive Coordinator (AWIC) Joani Werner and attended by VR Representatives/Manager. Also established contact with SSA's Bemidji Area Work Incentive Liaison. (7/16/13)
- Fee-for-Service discussion regarding the feasibility offering Benefits Planning services to VR. Recommendation to the RMCEP board will move forward. Awaiting approval. (7/16/13)
- Joani Werner (SSA AWIC) and Greg Kaiser have met on two occasions to discuss how to effectively market to and serve Persons with Disabilities (PWD). (7/16 and 7/29/13)
- DRC conducted work site visits conducted. Spoke with both employers and potential DEI candidates about current work experiences and challenges as they pertain to the disability the participant has. All participants were enrolled in WIA services or Minnesota Youth Program (MYP). (7/22-7/23/13)
- Disability Managers Working Group consisting of Terry Janes, Greg Kaiser, Steve Jacobs (VR Manager), Tom Anderson (VR Manager), Dan Wenner (RMCEP Director) and Kathy Carney (DEED Regional Area Manager) met to discuss how RMCEP, VR and DEED can form a regional working group to collaborate on how to bring the respective agencies together to better serve PWD. (7/24/13)
- RMCEP DEI Policy presented during an Internal Communication Meeting where team leaders and managers were given the opportunity to provide feedback. This presentation gained some buy-in among those in attendance. More importantly, it provided some much needed specifics on how the DEI was going to be implemented. (7/25/13)
- DEI/PACER workshop presented by Judy Moses from PACER. Workshop provided an opportunity for the DRC to talk about how RMCEP is building a capacity to better serve PWD. This also provided some valuable training regarding SSA work incentives for transitioning youth. (7/29/13)

PACER Center

- Working draft of Power Point parent training curriculum on Social Security and Benefit Planning for Transition-Age Youth was revised based on feedback from State Project Lead
- Disseminated flyer for July 29th pilot training on Social Security and Benefit Planning for Transition-Age Youth for parents in Baxter MN to 635 addresses.
- Conducted pilot training in Baxter, MN on July 29th. Training was attended by 17 individuals, 13 parents and 4 professionals including the WSA's DRC, Greg Kaiser.
- Additional parent trainings on Social Security and Benefit Planning for Transition-Age Youth are scheduled for September 18th in Alexandria, MN on and Sept 30th in Bemidji, MN.
- PACER staff met with RMCEP DRC to plan initial staff discussion with Hassan Samantar, PACER multicultural staff working with Somali youth with disabilities and their families in MN. Tentative plans are for this to take place on October 10th or 11th, as

part of regional training activities to be held at Camp Ripley.

- PACER staff will also be providing an overview presentation on the *Guideposts for Success* to WSA staff attending this event.
- Internal meetings were held with PACER staff to discuss initial planning for future activities including multicultural activities in South Central and Southeast WSA regions, customized on-site training on Assistive Technology by STC staff in all 3 WSA regions; potential topics of the first webinar on diversity topics.
- Drafted a list of the ZIP codes for each of the implementation regions to help PACER advocates identify PACER callers and families that reside in implementation site regions.