

Building a Detroit Jobs Alliance: Workforce Services Stakeholder Group
April 13, 2012 Meeting Summary

Participants

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Jaimie Phillip, Restaurant Opportunities Center of Michigan
Jen Irish, Detroit Regional Workforce Fund
Judith Brantley, Focus: HOPE
Anthony Thornton, Lighthouse of Oakland County
Michael DiRamio, Holly Parker, Carrie Floyd, Corporation for a
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Introduction & Timeline

The Feb 9, 2012 event held at United Way kicked off the effort to build a Detroit jobs alliance focused on a collective action plan and policy agenda for creating pathways to employment and careers for Detroit residents. The effort focuses on community engagement, capacity building, and policy advocacy and is principally focused on city- and region-wide systems change. The Detroit Regional Workforce Fund is incubating the Detroit jobs alliance effort, and Corporation for a Skilled Workforce is managing the effort. The Workforce Service Delivery stakeholder group is one of five groups that emerged from the Feb 9th event. The rough timeline is to have 2-3 sessions for each of the five groups leading up to a series of coordinated action planning meetings in the late summer/early Fall and formation of a governance structure. In addition to identifying areas for coordinated action, the five stakeholder groups are also meant to be a forum for peer-to-peer learning and exchange of ideas and identification of areas for capacity building that would be helpful to participating organizations.

The intent is for the Detroit jobs alliance to be stakeholder-driven. As employer engagement received 36% of the votes in a poll of stakeholders at the Feb 9th meeting, and roughly half of the “game changing” ideas under this topic at the Feb 9th event were also on the topic, the first meeting of the Workforce Service Delivery stakeholder group focused on promising practices and opportunities around employer engagement.

Summary of Discussion: Employer Engagement

Practice/Program	Needs Addressed	Outcomes	Gaps/Opportunities	Resources/Tools
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighborhood Jobs Pipeline <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Coordinating services in a geographic area to expose residents to employment opportunities. ○ Includes onsite interviews and pre-screening, connection to other support services. ○ Held an interview week with employers devoted to hiring locally. ○ Offers pre-screening for employers (background check, drug test) • WARM trainers – asking employers to do something new • Leveraging relationships – Detroit Chamber, etc. • Larger employers –better to collaborate in outreach to them • Attack in two ways – on the individual/community level (for smaller employers) and through a network (for larger employers) • Relationships with staffing organizations offer mutually beneficial outcomes • 741 Collaborative in Chicago noted as promising example • Center for Working Families <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 3 year case management program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18-26 Construction training for those with limited experience • Range of needs addressed (low income, at risk youth, substance abuse, etc.) • Previously convicted, felonies, etc. – very difficult to employ • Resident exposure to local employment opportunities is a real gap (NJP addressing this disconnect) • Retention in employment • Challenges after employment placement • We build relationships with employers one at a time – it takes commitment and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment placement (Young Detroit Builders) • Guidance Center Focus group – employers helped design program with internships, mock interviews, placements, some teaching involvement, etc. • Employers devoted to hiring locally 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collectively approaching employers? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Collaboration – incentives to working together ○ Consistent language – support with shared approach/outreach to employers, materials • Eligibility for training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Soft skills ○ Literacy • Upfront barriers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Substance abuse ○ Housing ○ Basic skills ○ Transportation • Building a work identity/soft skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How to connect with resources to support this? • Participants outside 18-24 age group have little available services to help them • Employer fatigue is an obstacle to bringing them to the table • Continued funding for successful programs is a real challenge – foundations and other resources always want to fund the next new thing • Discrimination of those with felonies or previous convictions • Required partners for most DOL, DOJ, etc. federal grants include employers up front so training programs are built around their needs. • Employers are looking for direction from 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Participant/resident information ○ Labor market information ○ Other agencies' efforts and successes, challenges • Professional development on specific barriers, models, approaches • Common marketing materials for employers • List of employers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Coordinated approach ○ Identify new employers, multiple approaches • Consider piloting a program with organizations working together to reach employers in coordinated fashion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provide menu of services based on resident

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sector partnership model – addressing shared workforce needs • Work directly with contractors to refer graduates (success: more placements) • Employer mentorships • Identify training needs of employers • Expanding on training with existing employer relationships • Employers up-front: placing, tailored training, etc. • Work experience program (temporary employment, On the Job Training, etc.) • Focus groups of local employers for guidance • Financial literacy coaching (CWF), soft skills training, employer referrals • Earn and Learn <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Subsidized employment for hard to employ combined with training • Build a trusting relationship with employers – allows for them to trust placements • “Businesses are more flexible than you think if you just ask.” 	time		<p>our agencies on what we need from them, but it must be more coordinated</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are so many applicants for each job, employers don’t have to hire the harder-to-place folks • We need to find ways to incentivize hiring, build trust and credibility for the participants and their outcomes on the job • There is lots of return/value in providing soft skills training and commitments (from providers) that participants placed with employers will meet their needs, be backed by the providers’ full resources – the power of the network behind the participants • Policy opportunity: incentive collaboration and network building for coordinated employer engagement • Need: good data about population and needs – profiles, commercial landscape, growth industries and related skills, etc. • Also need information about other successful models – creative information about how to better serve our participants 	needs (a seamless system of support)

Next Steps

- By late summer/fall: provide recommendations for DJA coordinated action
- Consider moving immediately on tools such as community asset mapping—useful for marketing available services to employers and workers
- Next meeting at Focus: HOPE – watch for Doodle meeting scheduler and reply with your availability
- Next meeting focus: Resident engagement and continuum of support