



**SANTEE-LYNCHES  
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD  
Virtual Youth Committee Meeting via Zoom  
Thursday, December 10, 2020 – 10:00 AM**

**Minutes**

**Youth Committee Members Present:** Calvin Hastie, Sr., Chairman, Barbara Brown, Jeannine Gamble, Brenda Gardner, Melena Hodges, Ramona Lies, Sharon Teigue

**Youth Committee Members Absent:** Corp. Fred Brantley, Jade Davis, Penny Dulin, Sonya Levine, Veronica Robinson, Brian Jones

**Staff Present:**

Areatha Clark, Deputy Executive Director/Chief, Workforce Development  
Esmonde Levy, Workforce Development Manager  
Freda Amerson, Workforce Development Coordinator  
Becky Minegar, Santee-Lynches RCOG Administrative Assistant II

**Guests:**

Caroline Rogerson, Eckerd Connects – Workforce Development  
Dominique Joseph, Legal Assistant, Hastie Law Firm  
Ashton Armstrong, Emerging Leader Representative  
Jaquan Johnson, WIOA Youth Participant

**I. Call to Order, Welcome & Introduction**

Chairman Calvin Hastie called the Santee-Lynches Workforce Development Board's (WBD) Youth Committee meeting to order at 10:05 AM and welcomed everyone.

Ms. Caroline Rogerson introduced her guest; Jaquan Johnson, WIOA participant. Mr. Esmonde Levy introduced Ashton Armstrong, Emerging Leader representative, and Chairman Hastie introduced his guest, Ms. Dominique Joseph.

**II. Approval of Meeting Minutes – October 8, 2020 (M)**

Chairman Hastie called for a Motion to approve the Minutes from October 8, 2020. **A Motion was made by Ms. Sharon Teigue and seconded by Ms. Ramona Lies.** There being no discussion, Chairman Hastie called for the vote. **All were in favor and the Motion passed unanimously.**

**III. Youth Performance Update**

Ms. Caroline Rogerson with Eckerd Connects - Workforce Development, reviewed their Youth Performance Report for PY'20 through October 2020. The Youth program is at 61% of its enrollment with

a goal of 145 participants to be enrolled. As of October 2020, they have enrolled 88 participants. She stated they are on track for their performance measures in enrollments.

Work Ready Services reviewed: Thirteen (13) Work Experience contracts have been written with four contracts currently active and 39 participants have completed Career Smart.

Year-to-Date Outcomes reviewed: They have had 110 Measurable Skill Gains, 2 GEDs & Diplomas, 41 Occupational Credentials, and 45 Placements. They also had 34 participants enter training with 12 participants currently active. Eleven (11) youth are currently active in Adult Education.

Ms. Rogerson stated their largest interest in training has been in CNA, Phlebotomy and EKG. Other training programs entered into have been in Masonry Labor Readiness in Kershaw County, Certified Medical Assistant, Certified Administrative Medical Assistant, Pharmacy Technician, Veterinary Assistant, Forklift and Welding. A discussion followed regarding Masonry Labor Readiness. Ms. Rogerson explained this is an on-site pre-apprenticeship program which teaches the youth participant the art of brick masonry/building buildings.

As part of her Mid-Year Review, Ms. Rogerson explained they have transitioned their two-day Career Smart program to a virtual platform and has seen very good results. She reviewed the training programs attended thus far by Youth enrolled in their WIOA program. Also explained was that they are offsetting tuition costs with Florence/Darlington Technical College and Central Carolina Technical College through available scholarships. These scholarships are provided primarily for continuing ed courses/programs. Chairman Hastie asked if there are any training opportunities in the legal field? Ms. Rogerson stated at this time they do not have any providers on the Eligible Training Providers that offer legal training programs. Chairman Hastie indicated there is a great need for Administrative Assistants in the legal field. He stated if an opportunity arises for a Work Experience he would like to be informed.

In continuation of the Mid-Year Review, Ms. Rogerson provided a listing of WEX locations where participants were able to gain hands-on experience: Caterpillar, Bicycle Corporations of America, Clarendon County Council on Aging, SC Works Sumter, Habitat for Humanity, Kershaw County Humane Society, Caris Healthcare, and Second Chance Animal Shelter. Ms. Rogerson stated they have had one youth complete their Work Experience at Bicycle Corporation of America and has transitioned to On-the-Job-Training (OJT). The OJT for youth is new and is being funded by Restoration Grant Funds.

Ms. Rogerson then shared a youth success story:

From studying for GED classes, to becoming a Professional Truck Driver, John Pfeifer III is now working the job of his dreams. Throughout the years, John watched his Father, a professional truck driver, work day in and out to make ends meet for his family. When asked who inspired him to become a Truck Driver, it was a no brainer for John to say that his Father inspired him. John started his journey by attending GED classes at the Sumter County Adult Education Building. He stated that he really appreciated the staff and was thankful for their assistance to help him get closer to his dream job. John said, "Without my career coach, Ms. Kelly, I would not have gotten my CDL License. She helped me get what I wanted in life." Ms. Kelly introduced John to Eckerd Connects and enrolled him in the WIOA program on March 2019. She went above and beyond to help John reach his goal to become a Truck Driver. John's first Truck Driving job was at Hodge Trucking Company, Inc., as a full-time employee making \$10.00 an hour. Now, he is working at Thompson Industrial working full-time making twice as much as his first job.

Ms. Rogerson highlighted four WEX2Work Youth participants and provided an update on where they are now: Jaquan Johnson interned at Caterpillar and has is now working full time at Continental Tire. Mr. Jaquan Johnson shared his story with the Youth Committee. He stated he interned at Caterpillar and is

currently employed at Continental. He is very appreciative to the program and getting his logistic Certification. Mr. Johnson answered several questions from the committee, one regarding his hiring experience with Caterpillar. He stated he had to go through a temp agency before being hired on permanently. Another question was what inspired him and kept him going through the process? He stated his Career Coach and teachers. He appreciated the teachers showing care and concern for him. He has since told friends about the program.

A discussion followed with - has there been failures in the program? Ms. Rogerson explained there are failures along with all of their successes. She further explained someone may join the program and think they are ready for the next step, but they are not, which may be because of their support system at home. Ms. Rogerson explained they do referrals to different agencies to assist the participant with their barriers.

Ms. Rogerson continued with WEX2Work Youth participants: Telisa Brooker interned at Caris Healthcare and is working at Lake Marion Nursing Home and is attending Pharmacy Tech. Shatoria McCoy attended Patient Care Technician training and has received Phlebotomy and EKG Certifications and is employed with Sumter Health and Rehab. She is currently attending CCTC majoring in Biology and Psychology with a minor in Neuroscience. Travis Sears attended forklift training and decided manufacturing was not for him. He attended CCTC for EMT training and is now working with BNT Transportation as an EMT.

Ms. Rogerson explained Eckerd Connects has a Success Award that is a unique scholarship program that originated as an attempt to fill a critical need and providing support financially in categories that are not necessarily considered to fall in the traditional definition of WIOA. In 2020 Eckerd Connects was granted \$31,000 for the fiscal year to contribute to success awards. To receive an award, they must have an application submitted by the Career Coach highlighting what they have done in the program. Ms. Rogerson shared an update on recent Success Award recipients:

- Lakin Rogers received a Success Award because of her success in the WIOA program. She obtained her GED within three months of starting at Clarendon County Adult Education; she received her CNA Certification at Central Carolina Technical College and is currently attending a provider in Florence to become a Certified Medical Assistant. After receiving her CNA certification, she obtained employment at an ER in Lake City, SC and has since gotten employment at Colonial Healthcare as a Certified Medical Assistant. While she was transitioning her employment status, she and her family were greatly affected by the pandemic. She was out of work, had to travel back and forth to training, and raising three children on her own. She was awarded \$500 gift card to Walmart.
- Ashley House came to the WIOA program as someone who needed a leg up to obtain full time stable employment outside of the fast-food industry. Ms. House attended Administrative Medical Assistant Training and after passing her certification exams she started a Work Experience at SC Works Sumter at the front desk. After four weeks on the Work Experience, she was hired full time by Eckerd Connects as the Workforce Operations Assistant. On her first week on the job, Sumter had terrible storms and her car was damaged in the flooding. Through a Success Award she was able to get her car repaired.
- Brandi Haley attended Veterinary Technician training at Midlands Technical College. Her goal is to run her own rescue center. When Ms. Haley entered the WIOA program, her home life was toxic and to remove herself from that situation. She was forced to live in a shed with no running water, no heat in the winter months, very little food and struggling with her basic needs. While Ms. Haley was attending training, she was provided transportation to and from training. In addition, her Success Award application was approved, and she was awarded \$1,000 which covered her first two months

of rent in a new place and helped with food and gas. Ms. Haley was hired at Second Chance Animal Shelter.

Ms. Rogerson shared a video of Ms. Haley thanking Eckerd. Ms. Rogerson added these participants are examples of what hard work and dedication can do.

A discussion followed on what we can do as a committee to assist/recognize these participants. Chairman Hastie suggested highlighting these individuals at a City Council meeting.

#### **IV. Financial Report**

Mr. Esmonde Levy provided the Youth Financial Report thru October 31, 2020 of Program Year 2020:

##### **Chart 1: Program Year 2020 Eckerd Youth Total**

Eckerd spent \$172,461 of \$460,000.00 (contact amount) (37.49% expended), leaving a balance of \$287,538.

Mr. Levy stated they have weekly meetings with Eckerd and are keeping a close eye on financial and programmatic matters.

##### **Chart 2: Eckerd Dislocated Worker Monthly Trends**

July 2020 - \$24,628

August 2020 - \$50,692

September 2020 - \$55,598

October 2020 - \$41,542

#### **V. Other Business/Committee Discussion**

Mr. Brenda Gardner announced the Emerging Leadership program will be starting up again but not sure if it will be face-to-face or virtual. They will be having a virtual retreat for the participants next week. She also reported they are not sure if the 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Manufacturing Expo will be held this year. A discussion followed with how the participants are selected. Ms. Gardner stated the applications are sent to the school career specialists and they send the application to the students who they think will be interested in the program. We then review the applications and the videos. It was further discussed how the “C” students can receive this type of training and be provided opportunities. Mr. Gardner stated other things are reviewed, not just the academic grades. The barrier comes more from the student feeling like they can do it or will be picked. She stated this is something that can worked on with communication to the career specialists.

Ms. Barbara Brown shared that she is currently volunteering with Christopher Beland who operates Crestar Health, which is a counseling and community support clinic out of Norfolk, VA. She stated he is in the process of opening an office in Sumter this fall. She continued, he is a believer in corporate social responsibility and has started a 12-week pilot program called Wellness Reentry Program for individuals who are re-entering society after incarceration. This program includes job skills, interviews, guest speakers, and hands-on skills development efforts. There is no cost to participants.


Chairman Hastie shared he is noticing that more and more young people are having mental issues. Ms. Rogerson stated Road of Independence is a good resource. Jeannine Gamble with DSS stated they also send referrals there. She stated NAMI is another youth program that is very good. Chairman Hastie added, there are programs communities are not aware of and it is important to share as much information as possible.

Chairman Hastie thanked everyone for their participation.

**VI. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:55 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Becky Minegar, Administrative Assistant II  
Santee-Lynches Regional Council of Governments