



BOONE COUNTY
UPWARD MOBILITY

Jobs and Workforce Development Workgroup Minutes

August 28th, 2024, 1:30PM – 3:00PM

Boone Electric Community Building (1413 Rangeline, Columbia MO) and virtually via Zoom

Meeting Objective: Develop timeline for selected action steps.

Attendance: Alvin Cobbins (Minority Men’s Network), Beatrice Stewart (Flourish), Alaina Joyner (Flourish), Ron Schmidt (City of Columbia - CARE Program), DJ Johnson (Missouri Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development - Career Opportunity Training for Youth (COTY) Program), Lisa Driskel-Hawxby (REDI), Conrad Hake (Love Columbia), Megan Weaver (Moberly Area Community College), Daniel Crasnow (Central Missouri Community Action), Fontella Jackmon-Jones (Woodhaven), Jay-Dee Bush (Columbia/Boone County Health Department), Anthony Woods (Friendship Baptist), , Liz Sensintaffar (Job Point), Lester Woods (The Source Summit), Nikki Carter (MU Healthcare), Miles Gibson (First Last Mile), Chris Winter (Vocational Rehab), Joanne Nelson (Boone County Community Services Department (BCCSD)), Emilio Ayala Youngblood (BCCSD), Gina Jenkins (BCCSD), Victoria Woods (BCCSD), Kerby Webb (BCCSD), Verna Laboy (BCCSD)

1. Welcome and Introductions

Al opened the meeting with everyone present providing introductions. Verna asked anyone attending the workgroup for the first time to provide further explanation of their work.

- Ron Schmidt gave a brief summary of the CARE program, which focuses on job readiness training for students through summer placements at over one hundred work sites.
- David Johnson introduced, COTY, a new program which works with high school students interested in joining the workforce upon graduation. COTY focuses on overcoming barriers and preparing them with the skills that they need, including paid work experience and training.
- Chris Winter from Vocational Rehab works with businesses and connects people with these businesses to get them employment, assisting individuals with visible and invisible disabilities.
- Beatrice Stewart described the Prep 1 and Prep 2 paid internship programs offered by Flourish and is interested in expanding to include more job sites.

2. Select and strategize action step(s) from Action Step Assessment document

Comments were shared by someone with close ties to local businesses which provided insight on their perspectives and ideas to help future collaboration which were discussed by the group.

The workgroup discussed different approaches for how to move forward with their efforts, beginning by noting several attendees had common ties in their work related to youth or justice involved individuals. The importance of having appropriate representation in these conversations was discussed, with some noting that past meetings have had representatives from organizations working very closely with justice involved individuals. Local resources and initiatives were discussed, including Missouri Reentry 2030 – which would not be possible without having these difficult conversations. The goal of the Missouri Reentry 2030 program is to have people released from incarceration employed within 30 days and have them retain that employment for at least 9 months after employment. People commented on the importance of community education as part of these conversations, including discussions with local businesses.

The group continued to discuss the grouping of all action steps into “buckets” of shared interest and



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Individuals from different organizations worked on where they will list themselves as organizations working towards a specific action step. The group also listed additional organizations which are not currently being represented in the discussion who possibly has some stake in this work. There was discussion on where to begin, with consideration for splitting into different subcommittees or identifying an initial direction of focus. The group chose to proceed with youth involved actions steps because of the potential for direct impact on the target population and in consideration of the expertise of the individuals and organizations currently actively involved in the workgroup.

3. Closing

a. Partner Updates

An Upward Mobility community update will be on September 6 at Forum Christian Church, which will include a poverty simulation.

b. Summarize next steps

The workgroup reviewed the definition for Upward Mobility commonly shared on the agenda and would like to move forward with a slight revision to refine the way that we talk about the work we do. It was noted that the work remains the same. The workgroup plans to proceed by working and focusing on the youth at this time and make progress on that work. At the request of the workgroup, the upwardly mobile business practices definition will be added to future workgroup agendas.

c. Comments and Questions

The next workgroup meeting will be Wednesday, September 25, 2024, 1:30 – 3:00PM, in person at Boone Electric Community Building or via [Zoom](#).