



South Suburban Cook County American Job Center at Prairie State College

Monthly Partners Meeting

October 20th, 2022

10:00 am

In-Person Meeting Attendees:

Kim Kunce, Prairie State College; Niasa Hollins-Watson, National Able Network; and Camilla Benjamin, scaleLIT.

Virtual Meeting Attendees:

Christopher McElroy, South Suburban College; David Stephens, South Suburban College; Debbie Newman, Calumet Area Industrial Commission (CAIC); Georges Sanon, Prairie State College; Jillian Campbell, Illinois Department of Employment Services (IDES-DVOP); Maria Diana Gutierrez, South Suburban College; Matt Weis, National Able Network; Meg Dawczak, Moraine Valley College; Rochelle Chambers-Hyndman, DRS (South Region); Taryn Giddings, South Suburban College; Vicky Garcia, Prairie State College; Ema Mailhot-Beutel, scaleLIT; Megan McGinty, scaleLIT; and Nidia Mejia, scaleLIT.

Agenda:

- Meeting Format Survey Results
- [Quarterly Update](#) & Network Directory
- Dashboard
- Customer Feedback and Success Stories
- Partner Updates
- Networking

OSO Update:

- The meeting format survey results were shared by OSO.
- We shared the quarterly update as well as the network directory.
- We also shared the dashboard engagement rate for South Suburban Cook County AJC at Prairie State and on-site survey data.
 - Prairie State has no Active Workshop Surveys
- Lastly, we discussed how to handle customer survey responses, and requested a point of contact who will receive this information monthly to distribute to team members.
- [Click here to view the October South Suburban Cook County AJC at Prairie State Resources Newsletter.](#)

Partner Updates:

South Suburban Cook County American Job Center at Prairie State College Building Update

- South Suburban AJC at Prairie State College reopened to the public on July 21st.
- The center is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and accepts walk-ins.
 - Customer surveys have been posted on-site to be completed after orientations.
 - Niasa Hollins-Watson is the new Site Director/Programs Manager for WIOA Title I in Chicago Heights 708 709-7971; nhollins-watson@nationalable.org.
- The campus continues to welcome students for in-person classes.

Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA Title I-B)

National Able Network

- In-person orientation is held on Thursdays at 10:00 am and virtual orientation is on Tuesdays at 1:00 pm.
- Hosting in-person Career Events every other Wednesday at the Center.
- Recruitment for all programs is ongoing, but heavily recruiting for Dislocated workers and the ConstructionWorks program.
- Orientations have been well attended.
- Robert announced that there will soon be a scaleLIT Navigator at Prairie State and Harvey as well as other Suburban Centers.

Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership (CCWP)

- The next Career Connector event is scheduled for October 28th from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at Harper College. [Click here to learn more.](#)
- The Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership (The Partnership) has been awarded a Good Jobs Challenge grant from the U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration (EDA). The EDA's Good Jobs Challenge will award the Partnership \$18.5 million for employer-led workforce development.

Trade Adjustment Act (TAA)

National Able Network

- Orientations are no longer held, but services are still provided.
- The Cook County Trade Program has expired as of June 30th. Once each state has run out of funds, the programs will end indefinitely. Projecting that programs will continue for the next 2-5 years.
- Trade is an entitlement program so individuals in the program are still receiving benefits.
- Staff is focusing on federal advocacy in D.C. to encourage Congress to respond with Trade Act reauthorization. So far there has been no action, but hopeful for reauthorization by the end of October.
 - [Click here to download the TAA Advocacy Document](#) shared by Matt Weis.
- Contact Daniela Cueva at dcueva@nationalable.org for more information about how to support and advocate.

Veteran's Forward

- National Able has a CSBG Transitional Job Program for Veterans, for any veterans who could benefit from support in managing barriers to employment.
- The last scheduled Veteran's Forward orientation was May 25th, 2022. All subsequent orientations have been postponed until further notice.
 - For any veteran-specific services, referrals, etc. after next week, the contact will be Michelle Malone. She can be reached via email at mmalone@nationalable.org or via phone at (312) 994-4297.

WIOA Title I-Y

Youth Job Center (YJC)

- Actively recruiting for all programs. Benefits and programs are formatted differently than Adult or dislocated work programs.
- The YJC's This Way Onwards initiative connects youth ages 16 to 24 with job opportunities at Old Navy. To complete the application process, two-day training is required. There is still space for direct placement. [Click here to view the flyer.](#)
- Lucretzia Jamison is the new Executive Director at Youth Job Center. She can be reached at ljamison@youthjobcenter.org.
- Youth Job Center is offering a free [IT program](#) and a [Healthcare training program](#).
- For more information contact Tiara Davis at tdavis@youthjobcenter.org or Francesca Snow at fsnow@youthjobcenter.org or NuDonna Williams at nwilliams@youthjobcenter.org.

Prairie State College

- The first session of ESL classes is still going, the second session started on October 3rd.
- Registration for Spring Classes starts next week. There will be an Open House 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. on Saturday, October 29th.
- Prairie State College is also hosting a Veterans Day program on November 10th
- Soon, the Forklift ICAPS Program will be available to the public. Flyer to come.
- FASFA Workshop for GED and ESL students is being hosted in October, the flyer is to come.
- Evaluation Credential Workshop for ESL students, two sessions about converting degrees from other countries into valid credentials in the U.S.
- A Financial Aid Literacy Workshop is in the works; please contact Vicky Garcia if you would like to present resources or training.
- Fall registration is in progress, enrollment has increased.
- Students who were unable to join the August start date will be able to join the second onramp in October. [Click here to learn more about the high school equivalency preparation course.](#)
- ESL students can register in person. [Click here to learn more about the ESL classes and registration.](#)
- The Prairie State College Office of Military Student Affairs will have a representative from Jesse Brown VA's VITAL program at the Military Student Affairs Center every second Thursday and fourth Wednesday of the month.
 - The VITAL program is there to help veterans navigate their needs and concerns and maximize their unique skill set of strengths, skills, and life experiences as they develop and translate their interests and talents into an academic setting.
 - Reach out to Georges Sanon, Coordinator of the Office of Military Student Affairs, at gsanon@prairiestate.edu.
 - [Click here to download the brochure.](#)

South Suburban College

- ESL Manager Diana Gutierrez shared that ABE and ESL classes are at Midterms.
- SSC will continue offering a CNA bridge program and a welding ICAPS program in the winter and spring semesters.
 - Registration for Winter and Spring classes will open on November 1st.
- [Click here for Spring Session ESL flyers](#)
- [Click here for Spring Session GED/HSE flyer](#)
- If anyone is interested in becoming a volunteer tutor, Volunteer Training will be taking place at the Oak Forest Campus from November 1st through November 17th.
- Midlothian Public Library continues to host ESL classes.
- South Suburban College plans to kick off Family Reading Night Events in November

Moraine Valley Community College

- The Fall Semester for HSE and ESL is well underway, with overall enrollment numbers higher than in previous semesters.
- The Spring Semester will begin at the end of January and will last until May 2023; there is already a waitlist for spring classes.
- The first cohort of the Caregiver Class just ended their session, which went extremely well. The second session is October 22nd and October 28th. This is a free class.
- Offering some classes virtually but the majority are in person
- HSE and ESL classes for the fall semester will begin on September 17th. Enrollment is extremely high, and students are eager to begin classes.
- Special classes for the bridge to healthcare, critical thinking, and career pathways are still open to HSE and ESL at the main campus.
- Citizenship classes are being taught at Blue Island and Main Campus. Flyer for Spring Class offerings to come.
- Moraine Valley Community College Adult Education is offering free Adult Education classes. [Click here to learn more.](#)
- Reach out to Meg Dawczak at dawczakm@morainevalley.edu for more information.

Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES)

- Individuals can call the 1-800-244-5631 number if they are experiencing difficulties with UI claims and can schedule an in-person appointment through the self-service benefits portal.
- IL Job Link holds a workshop every day at 3:30 p.m. The most recent version of IL Job Link is very nice, and it looks and feels like Indeed.
- IDES is meeting with claimants by appointment only. IDES and National Able Network staff can help walk-ins set up appointments to work through any issues or answer questions.
- A Job Readiness Workshop will be held at the Harvey Office soon, 50 people have registered already.

Veterans Forward

- If you have any questions or veteran customers who need employment services please reach out to Michelle Malone at mmalone@nationalable.org with any questions.

Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS)

- All FSCRCs are open for in-person services but phone lines and portals are still live.

- Effective July 1, 2023, income standards for All Kids Premium 1 and 2 benefits have been increased.
 - [Click here for information about the increased income standards.](#)
- IDHS Cook County Office staff received new laptop computers to enable continued virtual customer contact and services through the ABE portal.
- Partners who handle Ukrainian Parolee cases can refer Ukrainian non-citizens to SNAP, Medical, and other cash programs.
- Customers are exempt from the SNAP work requirements until June 2023. Individuals do not need to be working or enrolled in work programs to receive SNAP.
- Customers now have the option to receive texts or emails about their benefits. Customers can set up notifications through Manage My Case on the <https://abe.illinois.gov/abe/access/> website.
 - Customers can get alerts whenever there are notices about interviews, benefits expirations, or denials.
 - Call Center number: 1-800-843-6154
- Individuals who are unable to receive Medicaid and earn below the federal poverty level can apply online or at the local IDHS office.
 - [Click here to visit the ABE \(Application for Benefits Eligibility\) website.](#)
- [Click here for information about the upcoming Virtual Recruitment Presentations](#)

Vocational Rehabilitation

IDHS Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS)

- DRS is open and provides services, accepting referrals. All services are being offered remotely.
- Partners can connect with the field offices via phone or website. They continue to accept referrals online. Services are being offered remotely. [Please encourage residents to visit DHS public page to learn more about DRS services and the application process.](#)
- [Click here for new Disability Benefits 101 website](#)
- Reach out to Rochelle Chambers-Hyndman, rochelle.chambers-hyndman@illinois.gov or Biswa Phuyal at biswa.phuyal2@illinois.gov with any questions.

Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)

National Able Network SCSEP

- Wendy Harris, weharris@nationalable.org, SCSEP Career Coach and primary contact for SCSEP. Please reach out to Wendy for direct referrals, questions, or other information.

Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

Housing Authority of Cook County (HACC)

- Reach out to Kevan Casson at KCasson@thehacc.org with any questions.

Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)

CEDA

- Contact Lohnjonice Allen, the North Regional Manager, at lallen@cedaorg.net for more information.

Job Corps

- Traditional enrollment at Paul Simon Job Corps is ongoing.
- Reach out to Brittney Davis at davis.brittney@jobcorps.org with questions about Paul Simon Job Corps. Contact D'Lonra Gary with questions about the Joliet Job Corps Center at gary.dlonra@jobcorps.org.

Legal Aid Chicago

- Legal Aid Chicago offices are open by appointment only.
- Legal Aid Chicago has legal teams specializing in a variety of areas, covering employment, immigration, education, child and family services, records relief, public benefits, and veterans. All services are completely FREE.
 - The Senior Services program through DFSS and the Fair Housing program continue to be offered to Cook County residents.
 - Legal Aid Chicago also has a new program for LGBTQ survivors of domestic/sexual/dating violence, stalking, and harassment.
- Regina encourages all partners to use Legal Aid Chicago as a resource for clients and teams. If you are interested in having any legal teams share a presentation with your team or customers, reach out to Regina at rrizzo@legalaidchicago.org.

Calumet Area Industrial Commission (CAIC)

- Through the One Workforce Program, CAIC can cover tuition, books, and fees for students pursuing manufacturing at 10 community colleges and other providers. [Click here to learn more about the One Workforce Program.](#)
 - CAIC can support students who are completing training at any of our Adult Education Partners at this AJC (Moraine Valley Community College, Prairie State College, and South Suburban College) and are interested in pursuing a Manufacturing Career Pathway. There is still H1B funding available.
 - [Click here to view the Approved Manufacturing Programs.](#)
 - You can also refer high school seniors who may be interested in manufacturing to the interest form on the website.
- Reach out to Debbie Newman at debbie@calumetareaindustrial.com or Melissa Veach at melissa@calumetareaindustrial.com with any questions.

Next Steps:

- Updated flyers can be submitted to the OSO email address at oso@scalelit.org.