



South Suburban Cook County American Job Center at Prairie State College

Monthly Partners Meeting

April 20th, 2023

10:00 am

In-Person Meeting Attendees:

Niasa Hollins-Watson, National Able Network; Rene Cabregas, Illinois Department of Employment Services (IDES); Reginald Whitley, (IDES); and Camilla Benjamin, scaleLIT.

Virtual Meeting Attendees:

Anna Slater, Illinois Department of Employment Services (IDES), Christopher McElroy, South Suburban College (SSC); Destanee Williams, Youth Job Center (YJC); Francesca Snow, (YJC); Jean Mukwaya, (IDES); Ken Cohn, South Suburban College (SSC); Kim Kunce, Prairie State College; Marcelo Valencia, (IDES); Matt Weis, National Able Network; Meg Dawczak, Moraine Valley College; Nikki Rogers, (IDES); NuDonna Williams, Youth Job Center; Taryn Giddings, (SSC); Valencia Giddings, Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS); and Virginia Garcia, Prairie State College; Ema Mailhot-Beutel, scaleLIT; Nidia Mejia, scaleLIT; and Robert Guzman, scaleLIT.

Agenda:

Meeting Objective: Discuss the next steps for partners around current OSO projects.

- Short-Term Referral System Buildout
 - Contact Collection
 - User Instructions
- Business Services Project Next Steps
- On-Site Staff & Lobby Schedule for Q1
- Partner Updates
- Networking Topic: Airtable Forms

OSO Update:

- OSO gave an update and the next steps for the roll-out of Airtable referral forms. Partners will utilize Airtable to send and receive referrals to other AJC partners.
- OSO will be collecting points of contact via the [Point of Contact Airtable Form](#) to assist in setting up partner accounts to be used in May.
- In May OSO will begin providing technical training and support to partners throughout the roll-out of Airtable.
- OSO announced that the Business Service Project had been launched and invited

Business Services Staff to complete the [Inventory and Assessment Survey](#) as well as Join a Focus group.

- OSO is meeting monthly with Business Service Leaders to keep the project moving forward with the hope to launch Focus Groups in May and Project Working Groups in June.
- Camilla Benjamin shared the Schedule for On-Site Partners who provide direct services and Lobby Time for staff. Camilla requested that partners review and provide feedback on the information.
- ScaleLIT will have a Career Pathways Navigator who will be located at the Prairie State College and Harvey American Job Centers.
- [Click here to view the April South Suburban Cook County AJC in Prairie State Resources Newsletter.](#)

Partner Updates:

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

- The center is open to walk-ins Monday through Friday. Adult Education staff are available from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- The center welcomes walk-ins and the resource is available.
- The campus continues to welcome students for in-person classes.
- IDES continues seeing participants by appointment only.
- A new HVAC system was recently installed.
- The ATOC building is full, all offices are in use.
- Looking into adding panic buttons to building entrance desks, IT staff is currently working with Title 1 partners on this.

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

National Able Network

- In-person orientations are currently on hold. National Able is still hosting virtual orientations Tuesdays at 1:00 pm.
- The center is doing well, and there has been an increase in inquiries.
- Recruitment for the ConstructionWorks program is ongoing.
- Reach out to April Walton at awalton@nationalable.org and Niasa Hollins-Watson at nhollins-watson@nationalable.org with any questions.

Veteran's Forward

- Still actively taking new participants and serving veterans in the Chicago area.
- For any veteran-specific services, referrals, etc. contact Michelle Malone via email at mmalone@nationalable.org or phone at (312) 994-4297.

WIOA Title I-Y

Youth Job Center (YJC)

- Continuing to bring in youth for all programs, Continuing to take referrals to keep people moving through programs.
- Auto programs and Health programs are in full swing.
- Destanee Williams is a new Career Advisor located at Chicago Heights Office and at Prairie State College on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays 9 am- 5 pm.

- There has been a steady flow of interested youth and currently in the process of co-enrolling with other partners.
- [Click here for more information about Health Care Training Program.](#)
- The Auto Program will begin in a few weeks.
- Contact Francesca Snow at fsnow@youthjobcenter.org, or NuDonna Williams at nwilliams@youthjobcenter.org with questions or to refer youth aged 16-24 for these programs.

Prairie State College

- The first session of Spring classes will end on April 27th.
- Registration for 4-week Summer classes is open.
- Prairie State College will be hosting a Math GED boot camp for the first time, about 50 students are interested and 25 are already set to join the first week of May.
- Spring classes are currently in session. The second Spring session will begin on Monday.
- Staff members continue to work with students in HSE and ESL classes.
- Prairie State College is looking for volunteer tutors in math and reading. You can send referrals to Kisha Brown at nbrown1@prairiestate.edu.
- Georges, Coordinator of the Office of Military Student Affairs, is in the office every day and is available to meet with partners or veterans throughout the week. The office stays open until 7:00 pm on Wednesdays and closes at 5:00 pm on all other days.
 - Georges can help students and families who are trying to certify and receive military benefits.
 - Reach out to Georges Sanon, Coordinator of the Office of Military Student Affairs, at gsanon@prairiestate.edu.

South Suburban College

- Classes are in full swing, and the late Spring 8-week session has just started. Registration for the second session begins April 17th.
- No IET or ICAPS classes held over the summer
- Hosting the first in-person graduation since 2019 on May 19th!
- ESL classes are being offered at the Midlothian Library on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Saturdays. [Click here to view registration dates for upcoming classes.](#)
- South Suburban College will soon be offering a Manufacturing Certification course and a Solar Program.
- Reach out to Matthew Beasland at mbeasland@ssc.edu if you have any questions or Christopher McElroy at cmcelroy@ssc.edu with questions.
- For tutors for anyone who cannot read, contact David Stephens, Literacy Grant Manager Adult Education, at (708) 596-2000 Ext. 2558.

Moraine Valley Community College

- Spring classes will finish on May 13th. This year, there will be only one Summer Session, which will run from July 10th to August 31st.
- The Fall Session will start mid to late September.
- [Click here to see the schedule for ESL Conversation Classes.](#)
- While ESL enrollment is strong, HSC enrollment could benefit from more inquiries
- Contact Meg at dawczakm@morainevalley.edu if you have any questions about these special ESL classes.

Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES)

- Upcoming Employment and Resource Fair on April 21st. [Click here for the flyer.](#)

- Candace Balenger at candice.balenger@illinois.gov is the new Local Office Manager.
- Jean Mukwaya at jean.mukwaya@illinois.gov is a new Office Supervisor
- Participants continue to receive services such as workshops.
- IDES is meeting with claimants by appointment only. This month, over 40 participants have received services.
- Additionally, veterans are receiving assistance in their job search.
- Crystal Catlett is the IDES representative at Prairie State College's South Suburban Cook County AJC. Connect with her via email at crystal.m.catlett@illinois.gov
- 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.

Veterans Program (IDES)

- Reginald Whitley will begin hosting employment and job development workshops at Prairie State College. Reach out to him at reginald.whitley@illinois.gov with any questions.
- Please connect with Jilliann Campbell (DVOP) via email at jilliann.campbell@illinois.gov for more information.

Veterans Forward at National Able Network

- Still actively taking new participants and serving veterans in the Chicago area.
- For any veteran-specific services, referrals, etc. contact Michelle Malone via email at mmalone@nationalable.org or phone at (312) 994-4297.

Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS)

- Upcoming Employment and Resource Fair on April 21st. [Click here for the flyer.](#)
- There has been an unfortunate rise of 'skimming' with SNAP benefits. Benefits are being taken from hacked EBT Machines. Customers should contact IDHS immediately to get a new card and freeze their old card.
- To prevent skimming, customers are being encouraged to change their pins to safeguard their benefits every month.
- With the winding down of the pandemic, starting this month customers need to submit a redetermination for continuous medical benefits. Applications are being sent out, so customers should confirm that their address is correct in the system.
- The number of caseworkers on-site has increased.
- All FSCRCs are open for in-person services but phone lines and portals are still live.
- Partners who handle Ukrainian Parolee cases can refer Ukrainian non-citizens to SNAP, Medical, and other cash programs.
- 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
 - [Click here to visit the ABE \(Application for Benefits Eligibility\) website.](#)
 - [Click here for information about the upcoming Virtual Recruitment Presentations](#)

- [Click here for information about the increased income standards](#)
- Reach out to Valencia Funches at valencia.funches@illinois.gov with questions.

Vocational Rehabilitation

IDHS Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS)

- The field office is open for limited in-person services for current clients who do not have means of telecommunication.
- 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 the direct link to make a DRS referral.](#)
- [Click here for the new Disability Benefits101 website.](#)
- Contact Rochelle Chambers-Hyndman at rochelle.chambers-hyndman@illinois.gov or Nicole-McNeal McGee at nicole-mcneal.mcgee@illinois.gov for 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)

- Awardees are eligible to receive scholarships.
- Reach out to Kevan Casson at KCasson@thehacc.org with any questions.

Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)

CEDA

- Contact Lisa Baugh, Regional Manager, at Lisa.Baugh@cedaorg.net for more information.

Job Corps

- Traditional enrollment at Paul Simon Job Corps is ongoing. Enrolling 16-24 who are interested in starting a career.
- Reach out to Justin Greer at Greer.Justin@jobcorps.org with questions about Paul Simon Job Corps.

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. Funding will end in Fall 2024. [Click here to learn more about the One Workforce Program.](#)
 - CAIC can support students who are going to any of the three Adult Education providers at this AJC - Moraine Valley Community College, South Suburban College, or Prairie State College - and are interested in pursuing a Manufacturing Career Pathway.

- CAIC can work with other providers, like Jane Addams Resources Corporation (JARC), to cover the cost of any Manufacturing programs.
- You can also refer high school seniors interested in manufacturing to the interest form on the website.
- Email Debbie Newman at debbie@calumetareaindustrial.com or Melissa Veach at melissa@calumetareaindustrial.com with any questions.

Next Steps:

- Submit updated flyers to the OSO email address at oso@scalelit.org.