

**Minutes of the
Q3 Workforce Development Council
Thursday, September 7, 2023
NDSU Extension Center, Dickinson, ND and
via TEAMS audio/video connection**

Members present: Dave Farnsworth, Senator Michelle Axtman, Jace Beehler, Josh Blackaby, Donald Campbell, Kellie Carlson, Erik Christenson, Jason Ehlert, Tifanie Gelinske, Cindy Griffin, Chancellor Mark Hagerott, Lyn James, Howard Klug, Landis Larson, Guy Moos, Representative Emily O'Brien, Katie Ralston Howe, Stan Schauer, Damian Schlinger, Wayde Sick,

Guests present: Paige Kuntz, Janna Pastir, Janelle Kilgore, Laura-Oster-Aaland

Staff present: Ruth Lacher, Sherri Frieze

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Dave Farnsworth, Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. welcoming members and guests to NDSU Extension Center in Dickinson.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion: It was moved by Howard Klug, seconded by Lyn James, to approve the June 1, 2023, minutes. Motion carried.

WIOA AUDIT UPDATE

Ruth Lacher

Ruth talked about the federal audit review that was conducted recently at the local job service. The audit review lasted one week with policies, procedures and agreements being looked at, along with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, that provides federal funding to various programs along with some state funded programs. The report will come back in a month, and the findings of that audit report will be shared with the council at the fourth quarter WDC meeting.

WDC MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Katie Ralston Howe

New members appointed to the council are:

Josh Blackaby – Energy Sector

DJ Campbell – Sanford Hospital

Erik Christenson – Rugby Hospital

Emily O'Brien – Grand Forks Representative

Michelle Axtman - Bismarck Senator

Jace Beehler – appointed as a proxy for Governor Burgum

Pending UAS sector – 2 members

NATIONAL GOVERNOR'S ASSOCIATION (NGA) CONFERENCE UPDATE

Dave Farnsworth

The NGA Center for Best Practices hosted the Summer Workforce Symposium of the National Association of State Liaisons for Workforce Development Partnerships and the National Association of State Workforce Board Chairs in Fargo, August 8-10.

The symposium brought together state workforce development leaders representing more than two dozen states. Governor Doug Burgum took part in the event, and discussed several major workforce-related bills, the impact of artificial intelligence (AI) on the economy, the importance of equipping K-12 students with technology skills to set them up for success in the workforce.

Katie Ralston Howe, was elected to the National Association for State Liaisons for Workforce Development Partnerships executive committee, marking the first time that North Dakota has had representation at this level. In this role, Ralston Howe will continue serving on the association's executive committee which mentors new state workforce liaisons and directors, develops programming for association members and state workforce board chairs, and guides the association's views on proposed policies and programs that impact workforce development in every state.

OFFICE OF LEGAL IMMIGRATION (OLI) UPDATE

Paige Kuntz

Paige gave an overview of the OLI

Office Objectives

- Develop and implement a statewide strategy to support recruitment and retention.
- Advise and make recommendations to the governor, legislative assembly, and state agencies.
- Develop a pilot program that support businesses pursuing or employing work-authorized immigrants and supporting communities to develop integration plans and activities.
- Partner with other state agencies to develop and administer programs or services related to immigrant integration.

Initial Tasks

- Complete comprehensive study to best support employers, communities, individuals, and families.
- Engage with other state's Offices of Immigration/Office of New Americans (ONA) for learning and identify potential activities.
- Participate in the ONA Network education, training, and best practice development.

Vision for Global Talent Taskforce

- Represent agencies industries, employers, community-based organizations, and members of the immigrant/New American communities in ND.
- Engage stakeholders.

Future Activities

- Identify long term-goals, activities and tasks of the Office based on the research findings.
- Develop pilot project framework supporting businesses that are hiring and employing global talent, communities that are welcoming newcomers, individuals, and families who are choosing North Dakota as their new home.
- Provide technical assistance and support to employers and communities welcoming newcomers.

Office Goals

- Improve employer awareness of national and international recruitment pathways.
- Improve employer retention of international talent.
- Improve immigrant and New American's awareness of and access to services, resources.
- Increase and improve community welcoming activities.
- Improve the quality of life reported by immigrants and New Americans living and working in ND.

NORTHSTAR PROMISE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM
ND Higher Education Workforce Investment
Janelle Kilgore - UND
Laura Oster-Aaland – NDSU

ND and MN high school graduation projections 2020-2037

- With the landscapes of ND enrollments, ND is trending up with high school graduations from 2021-2032; 2,500 projected growth. Minnesota is trending downward for high school graduates.
- ND has a 33% increase in high school graduates
- MN is down 1.6%
- USA – down 5.5%

More states will be coming into ND to recruit our students, and ND will need to keep students in our state.

MN graduates 65,000 students per year; ND graduates 7,000 students. ND will always need MN graduates for higher education and workforce.

MN is Investing in Workforce

An existing MN state need-based grant

- \$2,600 to 12,000 per student
- \$202 million disbursed in 2022 to 69,425 students
- 55% of state grant recipients had a family income of \$40,000 or less

MN North Star Promise Program

To be implemented in fall 2024 to allow the existing MN state need-based grant and the MN North Star Promise.

- NDSU, UND and NDSCS in top 10 out of state destinations for first year Minnesota students
- MN is #1 exporter of students.

Student rank for fall enrollment in 2021 for students from MN

- #1 NDSU
- #2, Univ. of Wisconsin, Madison
- #3, Univ. of Wisconsin, Eau Claire
- #4 UND

ND Career Builders Scholarship

A potential tool to compete with MN students

- 129 high demand occupations
- Eligible for up to \$17,000 for tuition, fees, books, and supplies
- 1:1 matching private or public funding
- Student must maintain 2.5+ cumulative GPA

- Associate degrees or four semesters of qualifying bachelor's degrees
- Student has a legal obligation to live and work in ND for at least 3 years following degree completion or required to repay funds.

ND Career Builders Loan Repayment

- Applicants hired into their current position (within 24 months) can apply by completing the application with their employers
- Employer must commit to matching funds
- Applicant must show proof of living in ND, employment in a high need or emerging occupation in ND, proof of degree completion and a student loan billing statement at the time of application.
- Payments up to \$5,667 per year, or one third of the applicant's outstanding student loan balance,
- whichever is less
- Total repayment over three years.
- Bachelor's programs in the final years qualify for the scholarship
- Matching fund is open to private and public funding sources

ND Career Builders Program

- Need more employers to know about the program
- Promotion and marketing of the ND Career Builders program to ND Employers
- Chamber events to educate how Career Builders Programs help workforce
- Feeder from NDUS institutions to increase the workforce in ND
- Internships and apprenticeships with ND institutions.

SOUTHWEST MANUFACTURERS GROUP

Guy Moos

Dickinson is noted for high amount of manufacturing companies per capita.

In the 1990s, a group started bringing manufacturers to Dickinson of the pros and cons of the industry.

That group consists of Baker Boy, Steffes, Killdeer Mountain Manufacturing Inc., Fisher Industries, and TMI.

Manufacturers are needed with 2 million available in the U.S., by 2025

84% of manufacturers reported a moderate to severe shortage of available qualified workers.

87% of manufacturers anticipate the shortage of workers will impact the ability to meet customer demand.

2016 – collaborated with the Greater ND Chamber to promote ND Dream It, Do It.

- Presented by company ambassadors
- SW K-12 schools
- Social Media
- Job opportunities
- Wage ranges
- Employee benefits
- Company culture

2019 – Covid timeframe. The Southwest Manufacturer’s group of five came together to promote **Manufacturing Day** that happens the first Friday in October every year. Companies, Ambassadors, Hands on experience, educational providers. 600+ students from our region to attend

Recruitment Tools

Job Service
Indeed
Social Media
Scholarships
Staffing agencies
Job Fairs
Career Builders
Open houses
Internships
Bakken Grow
DSU Technical courses

Other factors affect manufacturers growth

Dickinson jobless rate
Energy industry
Boomers retiring
Rest of the country doing better
Interest rates

WORKING LUNCH UPDATES BY AGENCY REPRESENTATIVES

Becca Cruger – Grand Forks Region EDC

- 1200 jobs added to region
- Unmanned and autonomous sector

Challenges

- Manufacturing sector
 - Employers are growing
 - LM Wind Power – added over 100 jobs
 - Cirrus – added 200 jobs with the need for expansion
 - Low unemployment in the region
 - Need to develop strategies around the manufacturing sector.

Kellie Carlson – TrueNorth Steel

Working with Workforce Hope

- Have made offers to 10 Ukraine employees
- A need to hire 30-40 more employees for 2024 year

Challenges

- Housing
- Language

Josh Blackaby – SandPro

- Growth with employees this year has happened
- Excited with Bakken Grow program
- A lot of opportunity in energy field now
- A lot of opportunity in the automation field now

Landis Larson – ND AFL-CIO

- Sign on bonuses
- Relocation bonus
- Training for welding
- Training building for construction building in Bismarck – grant with United Tribes

Rep. Emily O'Brien

- Side business of painting and drywall – working with those that have a criminal background
 - Rehabilitation phase
 - Housing help
 - Daycare assistance

Stan Schauer – Adult Education

- With the additional \$500 thousand last session, workforce training grants were created.
 - Integrated Education & Training (IET) Grants are currently being serviced
 - IET = Training for GED and high school prep
 - 24th Century soft skills
 - Workforce training
- More funding, more time, and more partners to get the three woven together contextually.
- Third year with this program

Tifanie Gelinske – Greater Fargo Moorhead EDC

- 91 primary sector business visits conducted recently with 66% looking at company expansion, along with the need for workforce: 900 open jobs
- Launch talent attraction campaign, doing through RWIP funds
- Working with Be More Colorful and Golden Path Solutions for a deep dive into manufacturing with ND WIG funds received.

Jason Ehlert – ND Building Trades Unions

- Record number of Apprenticeship hires, even greater numbers for 2024.
- Electricians are needed the most.
- Road and Highway projects
- Flood Diversion project
- Hector International project

DJ Campbell

- Staffing, 2000 positions needed
- Hiring through contracts; paying 3-4 times the regular salary
- International recruitment, long term nursing needed, radiology, respiratory therapy
- Board of nursing has created apprenticeships for LPNs.

Erik Christenson – Heart of America

- Radiology Technology need in healthcare
- Contract labor huge problem in healthcare
- Apprenticeship program with Lake Region
- Healthcare career program with local high school
- Nursing home staff needed

Lyn James – Bowman Mayor

- Challenges with daycare
- Healthcare short staff issue

Wayde Sick – Career and Technical Education

- CTE construction expansions are happening with many schools around the state
- Work Base Learning coordinators – 14 new grants with 1 more to grant out.

Damian Schlinger – Vocational Rehab

- Transportation is still a challenge to get to work
- Will participate in a public transportation study
- Processes that intersect across states to access workforce, NGA discussions

Katie Ralston Howe

- Public comment period for RWIP – ARPA dollars help fund this program for regions
- Find the Good Life – 2000 leads in the pipeline

Howard Klug – Williston Mayor

- City of Williston, struggling with police, fire department, workforce for service arena

Cindy Griffin - Harvestone

- Needing to be more creative with hours of employment and job skill swapping

NEXT STEPS

Katie Ralston Howe

WDC Q4 meeting to be December 7 – location to be determined as the date draws closer. Subcommittees to be put together soon and will meet this month to develop recommendations for the council by third quarter next year.

- Career Exploration
- Technical Skills Gap
- Removing Barriers
- Recruit and Retain
- Occupational Licensure – 2 chairs from Legislature; one from House and one from Senate

Subcommittee Chairs will give updates at 2024 meetings

OUTGOING CHAIR, Dave Farnsworth

Katie Ralston Howe

Thank you Dave, for 12 years of Leadership for the Workforce Development Council.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further discussion, motion was made by Moos seconded by Klug. Motion carried and the meeting was adjourned at 2:00 p.m.