



## Iowa Workforce Development Board

### Minority Unemployment and Outreach Committee

## APPROVED RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the work conducted by the Minority Unemployment and Outreach committee including holding multiple listening tours attended by several hundred Iowans, in five counties (Polk, Black Hawk, Pottawattamie, Marshall and Dubuque) and several correctional facilities in Iowa; reviewing labor market information and demographic information from the state; talking with and gathering input from nonprofits and educators, as well as businesses; reviewing the Future Ready Iowa Alliance strategic recommendations; and lengthy discussion by committee members, input and discussion from employers, educators, and nonprofits, the Standing Committee makes the following recommendations to reduce the minority unemployment in Iowa.

1. Increase awareness, alignment and coordination of opportunities that can lead to employment in high wage jobs with career path for upward mobility among underserved populations. Ideas for how to accomplish this include:
  - a. Increase access to internships, registered and industry recognized apprenticeships and credentialed training, and training in work readiness.
  - b. Create a statewide public service announcement campaign to recruit minorities into high demand, skill jobs.
  - c. Look to outside state vendors to create the marketing campaign and outreach plan. The effectiveness of this can be increased by utilizing and expanding work already accomplished by similar work done to increase awareness of Future Ready Iowa.
    - The campaign design will highlight minorities who are already in the high demand fields or have overcome barriers on the way to their success. For example, utilizing the “breaking barriers” message developed by the third party vendor for Future Ready Iowa marketing.
    - Provide information regarding income levels and education or training required to attain credentials in a high demand career field. For example, did you know that welding pays \$20/hour and only takes 10 months to earn a credential? Or did you know registered nursing provides over 1000 new jobs each year?
    - With each one of the ads, there would be information on how to either apply for the career(s) or enroll in a program

to embark on a career path in a high demand field either by (1) applying for job(s)/apprenticeships(s) or (2) enrolling in a program to earn the credential in these fields. We would like to use social media platforms, billboards, posters, brochures, and paid media.

- Take advantage of career fairs around the state to promote diversity hiring opportunities as well as make more contacts between employers and applicants.
- d. Enhance partnerships with existing organizations including local economic development groups, community colleges, high schools, all sectors of higher education faith based groups and nonprofits to increase outreach and education on training and employment opportunities in each region.
  - e. Increase awareness and outreach of information through Iowa state government agencies, such as IWD, DOE, IDEA, about existing programs.
  - f. Create awareness and outreach through the Employers Council of Iowa and its 16 regional efforts across the State.
  - g. Create awareness and outreach through the Iowa Association of Business and Industry (ABI) and its 1,500 member companies (at least one of which is located in each of Iowa's 99 counties).
  - h. Through ABI, coordinate awareness and outreach of information through other business organizations such as the Iowa Business Council, the Iowa Chamber Alliance, the Iowa Chamber of Commerce Executives organization, and trade organizations such as the Iowa Bankers Association, the Iowa Credit Union League, etc.
  - i. This awareness campaign should also encompass employers to encourage more diversity and minority hiring, as well as the value of a diversified workforce. Provide information regarding strategies to recruit and retain a diversified workforce.
  - j. Through Broadlawn Medical Center, Teach and Tech Job Training/Employment Program, to train and find employment in the healthcare field.
2. Address barriers that minorities face in finding/keeping good jobs.
- a. Transportation was identified as one of the biggest barriers across the State including lack of public transportation in total and during 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> shift operations.
  - b. Access to affordable, quality child care, especially during 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> shift hours.
  - c. Reduce barriers to getting drivers licenses for work purposes by providing/increasing DOT waivers for removal of driver's licenses for child support/non-moving violations.
  - d. Support strategies that addresses the "cliff effect". The "cliff" effect has long been identified as a disincentive to increased wage opportunities because of the disproportionate impact of a pay increase to the reduction of benefits.
  - e. Expand access to financial literacy classes.

- Martin Luther King’s financial/economic suggestions from 1968 that including asset building as a model, to break the cycle of generational poverty.
  - Utilize software to deliver or enhance a continuum of financial literacy services for every stage of life for the individual/family served.
  - Add financial coaching to IWD services and make it a requirement for relevant services (or attach to all state benefits receipt).
  - Increase financial literacy training available through IWD or partners who are providing the current services.
  - Encourage employers to provide financial literacy training to employees.
- f. Increase summer/youth internship programs-- with emphasis on increased access for minority students. The \$250,000 provided for summer 2019 through Future Ready Iowa Act is a good start.
  - g. Increase investment in Family Development and Self-Sufficiency (FaDSS) Program. The program is currently only available to Promise Jobs recipients. 47% of program participants are from underserved populations. The program is financed by the Department of Human Services and administered by the Department of Human Rights (DHR). The goal is to stabilize families employing 2 generation approaches.
  - h. Support practices, policies and legislation that remove barriers to employment opportunities in the application phase due to criminal records, in the industries and positions where it is appropriate and not otherwise statutorily prohibited. Work with employers to identify ways to ensure they can develop practices that maximizes applicant pool. Provide outreach to employers educating them on prescreening practices which may create automatic-elimination of potentially qualified applicants, including holding statewide summit in April 2019.
3. Increase funding opportunities for minority education and workforce training, like Future Ready Iowa Last Dollar Scholarships, PACE/GAP/State funded programs at community colleges, access to HiSET/ESOL programs.
    - a. Consider set aside of certain percentage of dollars for these and other programs for minority populations (regardless of participant income level).
    - b. Partner with nonprofits around the state like Goodwill Industries, United Way, and Evelyn K. Davis Center for Working Families, etc., throughout the State to provide additional funding to programs with proven success rates or expand access to ESOL classes.
  4. Other opportunities to address issues:

- a. Develop mentorship programs for minorities (one-on-one or class setting) or (align with mentoring provided in Future Ready Iowa Last Dollar Scholarship).
- b. Identify mentors who are willing to volunteer time and/or mentoring services.
- c. Solicit businesses to volunteer staff to be mentors including developing a system to match potential mentors and mentees.
- d. Recommend employers track hiring data for minorities to crease awareness and make commitment to increased minority hiring.
- e. Distribute best practices by employers with the most success in hiring minorities.
- f. Work with labor unions and trade groups to increase access to apprenticeship programs for minorities.
- g. Create an asset map of available resources, programs and groups working with minority and underserved populations to better leverage existing programs.
- h. Make speakers available to provide free training/education at conferences, seminars, workshops hosted by business organizations, employers, nonprofits, educators, community colleges, economic developers and other workforce stakeholders regarding value of diverse workforce, best practices to recruit and retain diversified workforce and hiring tips to create a diverse workforce.