

REGION 15 PY18 ANNUAL REPORT

Executive Summary

During PY18, Region 15 continued WIOA implementation and compliance. The Title I staff was restructured to align with funding levels and WIOA duties and responsibilities. Title III staff was also restructured to align with the new RESEA program and with implementation of the new case management system and customer flow for WIOA compliance. Our focus between Title I, II, III, and IV continues to be to assist those with barriers and/or multiple barriers to employment. Iowa continues to have low unemployment rates and these are the individuals that come through our doors every day, needing assistance from all of us. Within this report, anytime we utilize the word “we”, it is in reference to all core partners Title I, II, III, and IV as a team.

Regional Snapshot

Region 15 is comprised of the following ten counties: Appanoose, Davis, Jefferson, Keokuk, Lucas, Mahaska, Monroe, Van Buren, Wapello, and Wayne. All WIOA core partners are located in the same building as the American Job Center (AJC). Title I, Title III, JVSG, and PROMISE JOBS are located within the AJC. Title II and IV are across the hall in the building. This co-location helps us provide the best services to our customers. We are also located on the Indian Hills Community College North Workforce Campus which provides access to the Regional Entrepreneurship Center and Ottumwa Job Corps.

Regional Initiatives and Partnerships

In July and August, we held Students in the Workplace. Students in the Workplace is a three-day program for students to learn the skills employers are looking for when hiring. Students learned what is needed to be successful and live independently. IowaWORKS, Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services, and Indian Hills Community College were able to work together, to ensure that students were provided the most current and up to date information. Students were able to have fun working together on team projects, engaged with outside speakers and practiced their interviewing skills with speed mock interviews. Students with an IEP were exposed to A Game, To Share or Not to Share, Disability Services, Registered Apprenticeship, and Employer tours.

During the October 2018 Staff In-Service day, Core partner staff from Title I, II, III, and IV completed the Workforce Innovation Technical Assistance Center (WINTAC) Integration Continuum Assessment to see where we were at and where we needed to go for WIOA integration. We focused on the following areas: Case Management, Career Pathways, and Career Services. During the assessment Staff felt we were in Collaboration phase for Career

Services and Career Pathways and Coordination phase for Case Management. Overall we walked away with a timeline for process improvement and overall improvement for integration.

Also during the month of October, the region partnered with Iowa Workforce Development and the Future Ready Iowa Initiative to host three Future Ready Iowa Summits. The summits were open to the community to educate on the importance of post-secondary education/credentials. Summits were hosted in Pella on October 1st, Centerville on October 10th, and Ottumwa on October 30th.

On January 14th we started a partnership with Indian Hills Community College to assist students in developing their career path and developing their resume. We noticed we were not getting very many students in the center and wanted to be able to reach out to them and provide assistance and make them aware of the services we offered. We developed the Career Assistance Center on Main Campus. We meet with students on Mondays and Wednesdays from 1pm-4:30pm at Bennett Student Services.

We have a very strong partnership with Ottumwa Job Corps. During PY18 we started conducting Registered Apprenticeship Orientation sessions each week at the Job Corps Center to inform students on the process and benefits of becoming a Registered Apprentice. We also held our annual Job Readiness Boot Camp on October 24th. This event also included over 50 students from area school districts. The Job Readiness Boot Camp was designed to help students overcome barriers and become more informed in their career choices.

On April 24th we partnered with a community wide effort to integrate Bridges Out of Poverty into the community. We have attended several informational meeting and next steps with our community partners. We will continue to build on this partnership.

Employer Services and Business Engagement

During PY18, Region 15 held multiple events to assist employers with their recruiting and training needs. Region 15 has an integrated Business Services Team that meets weekly to coordinate upcoming events and also holds a quarterly Business Service Team meeting with additional partners to discuss needs and partnerships.

One of the most popular Employer's Council of Iowa (ECI) events we have held has been providing OSHA training to employers. We hosted three OSHA Certification events on August 23rd and 24th, October 25th and 26th, and on January 24th and 25th. We were able to get 72 employees certified. During PY18 we held an additional seven ECI events. These events ranged in topics such as Change Management, UI Law, Albia Chamber, Critical Skills, Strategies and Communication, Hiring Under-represented populations, and the New Employer IowaWORKS System.

On April 18th, we held our Annual Southern Iowa Career Fair in partnership with Indian Hills Community College. The event had over 100 employers/organizations/colleges represented

and over 900 job seekers. It is one of the largest Job Fairs in the area and attracts representatives from multiple states and all across Iowa.

The IowaWORKS Ottumwa AJC held its second Future Ready Block Party Job Fair on May 9th at the Ottumwa Mall, drawing a large crowd with more than 60 vendors, interactive games, and a \$600 scholarship for a High School Senior interested in attending Indian Hills Community College. Vendors were encouraged to make their booths more interactive than a typical job fair – The US Air Force brought a putting green to draw in potential recruits, Heartland Humane Society talked about their services with the help of some canine and feline friends, and Indian Hills Culinary Program actively printed out edible images for sugar cookies during the event. The IowaWORKS team worked with iJAG students and created an interactive event called a Selfie Scavenger Hunt. Participants had to solve five clues, take a selfie showing the clue, and show it off at the registration desk. When they finished the tasks, they were entered for a drawing of prizes from all over Ottumwa.

Promising Practices and Success Stories

1. Rapid Response

Region 15 held Worker Information Meetings for Mahaska Health Partnership and Shopko during PY18.

Daniel was laid-off (business closing) from Fairfield Casting in 2017. He attended one of our Worker Information Meetings and met with Career Planner Carissa McClellan. We enrolled him in the Dislocated Worker program. Daniel wanted to go back to school at IHCC for Electrical Engineering. He believed this would allow him to find gainful employment elsewhere that will lead to self-sufficiency. Daniel worked with Career Planner Stephanie Bard throughout his schooling and assisted him as barriers arose. Daniel graduated during PY18 with a degree in Electrical Engineering and is now working for the Natural Gas Pipeline of America as an E&C Technician making \$33/hour.

2. Registered Apprenticeship

Region 15 assisted in registering five employers as Registered Apprenticeship Sponsors. Those employers include Besco Electric, Becker Electric, Kelderman Manufacturing, Drish Construction, and Musco Lighting. On November 13th, during National Apprenticeship Week, we hosted an event in partnership with Job Corps to raise awareness of the many opportunities Registered Apprenticeship offers. We were honored to have the Honorable Governor Kim Reynolds and Lt Governor Adam Gregg as guest speakers. We also had presentations by Stacy Bandy, Oskaloosa High School Principal regarding Iowa Quality Training using PDSA, along with an Educator Panel and an Employer Panel.

3. Offender Re-Entry

Mary came in the office after being involved with the justice system. Mary met with Offender Workforce Development Specialist Rich Kennedy. Part of her recovery was to clear the household of a past relationship, and find reliable transportation along with employment. She was in the market for anything but a major barrier was transportation and the desire to work alone or outside. Rich met with Austin Ball, HR Director for Soil View. He stated that he wanted Veterans but he would look at anyone that fit his mold of an ideal candidate. Rich pitched Mary to him and he scheduled an interview the next day. Austin came into Rich's office that day and told him that he would extend a job offer to Mary. Mary has a job making \$17 an hour. She also has a company truck and four-wheeler. Mary's day starts when she opens her front door and ends when she walks back in it. She has overcome all barriers and works alone and outside.

4. Serving Customers with Disabilities

On October 4th, in honor of National Disability Awareness Month, we hosted an Employapalooza event in partnership with Goodwill of Central Iowa. The event kicked off with our keynote speaker, Mr. Steve Faulkner discussing People with Disabilities and Future Ready Iowa. We had two series of Breakout Sessions providing discussion on Strength Finder, Disability Disclosure, Communication, Time Management, 30-minute makeover, and Accommodations in the Workplace. We then had a Goodwill Fashion Show and Job Candidate Showcase followed by a Job Fair. The event was held at the Bridgeview Center in Ottumwa.

5. Veteran Services

Region 15 won the Veteran Service Award during PY18.

Bradford came to the IowaWORKS Ottumwa AJC for PROMISE JOBS orientation. The PROMISE JOBS case manager recognized that Bradford was a Veteran with Significant Barriers to Employment and referred him to the Veteran's Representative. The Veteran's Representative, PROMISE JOBS case manager, Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation, Veteran's Health Administration, and Wapello County Veteran's Service Officer participated in an Integrated Resource Team Meeting to identify different ways to help Bradford. Bradford began a Work Experience Placement in the AJC working with the Veteran's Representative. This placement allowed him an opportunity to gain skills in an office setting and provided him early access to hot jobs. Bradford was offered a position with a production company at \$18 per hour.

6. Priority of Services

On 11/8/18 IowaWORKS partnered with Mahaska County Agricultural and Rural Development on a Job Fair held in Oskaloosa. During this Job Fair a Veteran's Representative was made available to assist with networking for Veterans in the Job Fair. Local donations made it possible for Veterans in attendance to receive a free pulled pork sandwich from a local restaurant, a bag of donated HBA items for male and female Veterans, and gift cards to another local restaurant in Oskaloosa.

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