

Working Committee # 2: Employment, Education and Training Meeting - Minutes

Date: January 24th, 2012

Time: 10am to 12pm

Attendees: Mahalakshmi Samiappan(Resident), Karen Evans (TDSB), Jorge Silvestri (MNLCT), Helena Huang (ACCES Employment), Yoga Arulsubramaniam (TESOC), Mani Mahadeva (NWS LIP), Rezwan Karim (NWS LIP), Michelle Davis (NWS LIP)

- Welcoming and Objective of the meeting
- Updates on Education Round Table
 - Held on November 25th 2011 and was attended by Medix College, Seneca College, Centennial College, TDSB, and TCDSB
 - The roundtable stemmed from LIP conducted employer interviews which identified:
 - Gaps in getting newcomers ready for the workforce
 - What can educational institutions do?
 - Ensure better referrals and assessments
 - Incorporate a workplace culture component into their curriculum
 - Become more aware of what each other provides
 - More career planning
 - Find better ways to assist students in getting jobs and retaining them
 - There was a discussion to have another meeting in February 2012 to further explore:
 - A central referral system
 - Educational pathways for students and educational institutes
 - Issues of placements for students
 - Members suggested waiting until new structure is established to conduct any follow up discussions with educational institutions.
 - Community organizations should ensure all colleges meet certain standards in their academic and liability policies before taken on any of their students for placements.
- Future direction of the LIP project
 - Structural change to LIP

- CIC proposed 4 large LIPs for Toronto and 1 City-Wide LIP
 - Toronto will be divided into 4 regions (Central North and South, and East and West quadrants)
 - CIC proposed that the existing LIP's can decide who will lead the new LIP's:
 - Catholic Cross Culture was selected to be lead agency for the East Region (Scarborough) LIP
 - Draft proposal will ask for 5 staff and \$500,000 – which will have to be negotiated with CIC, as the original CIC proposed budget is \$400,000 for 4 staff
 - CIC stated that the new LIP can conduct research only in areas that have not yet been researched
 - Their hopes to be included in the proposal one website for the Scarborough LIP
 - The work plan for next years' LIP will be developed based on all current LIP's work done to date and common themes found from all four LIP's.
 - Proposed Working Structure:
 - One Partnership Council and an Immigrant Council
 - Working groups will be established with inception of the project.
- Resident's Meeting Feedback – LIP conducted a meeting with its newcomer and immigrant members who have participated in different Working Committees and the Partnership Council.
 - They expressed interest in participating in new the LIP structure
 - Suggested future activities
 - Organize job fair
 - Connect with employment agencies
 - Website - NWS LIP website is very useful, would like to see this continued
 - Want more English conversation circles, especially for seniors
 - Senior programs/ groups – so they can participate in recreational activities
- Job fairs, private colleges & employment opportunities
 - Job Fair- organizing Committee should follow basic guidelines when arranging job fairs and choosing organizations to participate in job fairs
 - How to advocate with job fair organizers:
 - Have job fair organizers at the table and encourage them to screen those who apply to participate as organization representatives. Employers who have job openings and ready to recruit should be given priority
 - Develop a document of best practices of job fairs and share that with member organizations.
 - This document can be shared with ministries and colleges

- Another option is to have sections for certain types of job providers (Ex: Government employers, manufacturing companies, retailers or department stores, communications companies, recruiting agencies, etc)
- Bigger issue - do the participating employers really offer any jobs? Organizers should avoid inviting false companies or those that have a reputation for taking advantage of employees or scamming them
- Staff are sometimes pressured to invite many agencies regardless of whether they offer real jobs
- Educate newcomers of what type of employers attend job fairs and what types of jobs might be offered
- Sector specific job fairs (Ex: food industry) might be effective in some circumstances
- This might be difficult based on the availability of resources to the agency.
- Toronto Employment and Social Service (TESS) organized a sector specific job fair.
- ACCES Employment conducts mini job fairs at their office where 2 to 3 employers attend and do a mini interview with 20- 30 candidates
- Information meeting with HR groups who have skills and education on what employers are interested in
 - Newcomers can benefit from understanding what employers are interested in during interviews
 - It will also help to understand language gaps and cultural gaps
- Should the LIP host a job fair?
 - The LIP should be involved and advocate with organizations that facilitate job fairs
 - Best practices can be shared and continued even if the LIP is not present
- Many new immigrants become victims of employment related scams and other fraud, in which the NWS LIP has developed a report on the many different types of fraud and scams not just employment related.
 - It was suggested to pilot the Scam and Fraud presentation with ESL or LINC students.
 - This information will also be helpful for the seniors. A pilot presentation can be organized with TESOC seniors group
- Proposed activities for next phase (under new structure)
 - Education Roundtable:
 - Develop a tool or system to assist settlement workers when referring to an educational institution: Referrals to upgrade skills, select universities and colleges

- Next meeting, brain storm on referral tools for colleges and universities and decide if another roundtable will be useful
- Colleges can inform newcomers if they need to go back to school to get them on their career path
 - Invite colleges to brainstorm - on how they expect the newcomers to approach them
 - Preparation of individuals who are returning to the education field after sometime or
 - Mothers who need to prepare for work and school once children become of school age
- LIP to assist in the process of opening up more mentorship opportunities and placement for newcomers:
 - Retired individuals and staff in companies who have the time available to be mentors
 - Mentors will sign an agreement document of responsibilities
- Create a document to prepare newcomers for interviews - all the possible interview forums and types
- A brainstorming session will occur among the committee and then the colleges and universities
- Need to discuss and address the needs of spouses or partners who have language difficulties
- Wrap up
 - Next WC #2 meeting will take place February 21st 2012, from 10am – 12pm at ACSA, 4155 Sheppard Ave., Upstairs Boardroom