

## APPRENTICE AMBASSADOR WORKGROUP MEETING



**Date:** May 22, 2025

**Time:** 1:00 PM – 2:00 PM

**Location:** Online

**Room:** [Zoom Link](#)

### Members Present:

☒ Anthony Fuhrmann

☐ Corey Young

☒ Craig Schmidt

☒ Daniel Serota

☒ Danielle Kuglin-Seago

☒ Jan Keresztes

☐ Lazaro Lopez

☐ Sean Glowacz

☐ Sheree Speakman

☒ Sheryl Morris

☐ Taylor Black

☒ Terry Stroh

### Others Present:

☒ Jennifer Foil

☒ Julio Rodriguez

☐ Larry Fitzpatrick

*Quorum: 7*

*Majority of Quorum: 4*

Time	Item
1:00	<b>Meeting Called to Order</b> Sheryl Morris welcomed the workgroup to this meeting. Members greeted each other and shared updates.
1:05	<b>Roll Call of Members and Approval of Previous Minutes</b> Morris called for a motion to approve the meeting minutes from the previous April 2025 Workgroup Meeting. Terry Stroh started the motion. Danielle Kuglin-Seago seconded the motion. The motion carried. The minutes were approved into the public record as presented.
1:10	<b>Ambassador Panel Update</b> Antonio Gomez opened the floor for workgroup comment on the Apprentice Ambassador's panel discussion that took place at the 2025 Illinois Workforce Summit. Panelists two of the ambassadors (United Airlines, Birkey's) and their two employer sponsors. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Morris praised the Summit for being impactful despite its short duration.</li> <li>• Gratitude was expressed to the support team (Gomez, Jordan Johnson, Jennifer Foil) and mentors.</li> <li>• Positive feedback was shared about the panel featuring apprentices and employers.</li> <li>• Kuglin-Seago was thanked for preparing Val, which helped her confidence.</li> </ul>

Time	Item
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Thurman and Fitzpatrick's mentor-mentee relationship was highlighted as a success story.</li> <li>Photos from the Summit were shared on WorkNet and Apprenticeship Illinois social media.</li> </ul>
1:15	<p><b>June PD Update</b></p> <p>Gomez indicated that the June PD virtual session is on track. Gomez had not heard back from Eric Herman (Teneo), who would be the speaker for the public relations training. Serota indicated that he would text Herman to confirm.</p>
1:20	<p><b>Ariel Lozner – Continued Membership</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discuss if Ariel will be kept on as a participant for the 2025 cohort based on availability and previous outreach.</li> </ul> <p>Despite Robert Naumann (Lozner's employer) and Sheree Speakman's (Lozner's mentor) repeated attempts to re-engage, Ariel Lozner has been unresponsive and has not attended an event. He also indicated that he would be unable to attend the June PD session. Consensus was reached to formally remove Ariel from the cohort. Gomez will draft a communication that Morris and Speakman will review before sending.</p>
1:30	<p><b>2026 Program Format – Suggested Changes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proposed Idea: Move ambassador professional development to a monthly, 1-hour virtual webinar format.</li> </ul> <p>Gomez proposed, per 2024-2025 Cohort feedback that the PD sessions be switched to a virtual format next year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10 sessions: 1 Kick-Off (90 mins), 9 monthly (1 hour each).</li> <li>One in-person PD in June and optional in-person graduation in December.</li> </ul> <p>Benefits discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased accessibility and flexibility.</li> <li>Cost savings for employers and ambassadors.</li> <li>Easier scheduling and potential for higher-profile speakers.</li> <li>Better engagement tracking and reduced burden on employers.</li> </ul> <p>There was general agreement on the proposal, with some concern regarding the timing for high school students. The workgroup suggested to front-load the in-person meeting. Gomez indicated that it might be better, if the funding proposal to create a stipend goes through, to wait to ensure participant buy-in so that participants aren't receiving the money and disappearing. Julio Rodriguez indicated that the Dept. of Commerce &amp;</p>

Time	Item
	Economic Opportunity (DCEO) would not be able to provide stipends, particularly not direct cash.
	<b>2026 Cohort – High School Participation</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updates from DCEO legal</li> </ul>
1:50	Gomez gave an update on DCEO Legal’s recommendations regarding high school participants. One of the concerns brought up by this year’s cohort was the lack of liability waiver paperwork, particularly for high school participants. DCEO Legal indicated that liability paperwork is needed across the board, but that the increased paperwork and parental sign-off needed to include high school participants in the Apprentice Ambassador program leads them to recommend not to pursue high school participants in the 2026 Cohort. Gomez indicated that ISU and NIU follow suit in their recommendation to hold off until more robust waivers can be put in place. The workgroup agreed to follow the above recommendation.
	<b>Public Comment</b>
1:55	Morris asked regarding the possibility of creating an Apprentice Ambassador Badge. There was general agreement with the badge, with some concerns raised regarding “logo-mania.” Gomez indicated he would look into the possibility of creating a badge and then the workgroup can decide if they would like to implement.
2:00	<b>Adjournment</b>