

Business Engagement Committee Accomplishments, December 2023 – February 2024

Charge:

- The charge of the BEC is to provide guidance and direction to help bridge the gap between Illinois' important business sectors and employers, and the Illinois workforce development system.

Priorities:

- Enhance and support the development of regional industry-led sector partnerships.
- Developing compelling messages that respond to employer needs.
- Identifying and employing effective methods of communication to employers.
- Improving data and information regarding business engagement.

Leadership: Co-Chairs

- Andrew Warrington, andrewwarrington@uccenvironmental.com, UCC Environmental, Inc.
- Jess Wright, jess.wright@dura vant.com, Dura vant Corp.

Q4 Accomplishments and Progress Toward Workplan:

- Much of the Committee's efforts during this quarter were given to the brainstorming, creation and development of a Business Engagement "Track" at the April WIOA Statewide Summit in Collinsville.
- Following discussions at the Committee's December and January meetings, the following five sessions were developed and submitted to the vetting committee for the Summit. A sixth session submission was combined with another submitted session and





ILLINOIS WORKFORCE INNOVATION BOARD

- will be held as a plenary session. Note also that these submissions are likely to evolve in both content and presentation as the Summit approaches:

1. *How to Talk to Businesses and Employers About the Workforce Development System*

▶ Presenters:

- ▶ Antonio Garcia, Lake County Workforce Development (Waukegan)
- ▶ Lee Reese, St. Clair County Workforce Development (Belleville)
- ▶ Tory Davis, IDES (Peoria)

▶ Summary:

- ▶ A discussion session featuring a panel of WIOA Business Services representatives around the topic of “How to talk about the workforce development system to businesses and employers.”

▶ Takeaways:

- ▶ Have a consistent message to employers.
- ▶ Value and utilize Labor Market Information.
- ▶ Research the business prior to initial contact.
- ▶ Understand how to develop a solid partner referral process.

▶ Area of BEC Focus:

- ▶ Messaging

2. *Unlocking Potential: Navigating Workforce Development Resources for Inclusive Hiring*

▶ Presenters:

- ▶ Biswa Phuyal, IDHS (Chicago)
- ▶ John Hall, Will County Workforce Division (Joliet)

▶ Summary:

- ▶ This session workshop unveils successful strategies employed to engage businesses in hiring non- traditional talent. Seasoned workforce development





ILLINOIS WORKFORCE INNOVATION BOARD

professionals will take center stage, sharing their expertise and guiding the audience through the real conversations and strategies necessary to secure buy-in from partners and employers. Attendees can expect a comprehensive exploration of the resources essential for fostering an inclusive workforce, making this workshop an invaluable opportunity to catalyze positive change in the realm of workforce development.

▶ Takeaways:

- ▶ Understanding if you look for non-traditional talent, you will find success!
- ▶ You have to work as a workforce development system to make this happen. (Buy-in from partners first, then you will get buy-in from employers)

▶ Area of BEC Focus:

- ▶ Messaging

3. *Marketing Apprenticeships to Employers*

▶ Presenters:

- ▶ Jennifer Serino, Lake County Workforce Development (Waukegan)
- ▶ Jamie Corda-Hadjaoui, Lake Land College (Mattoon)

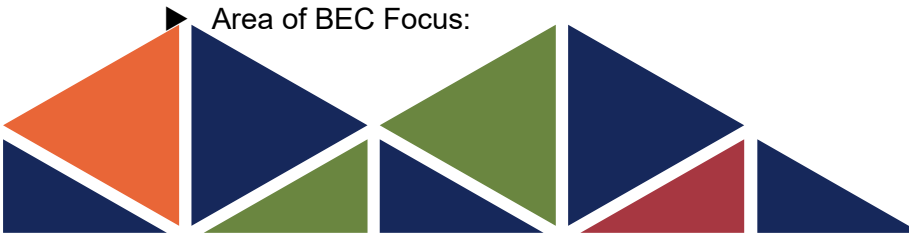
▶ Summary:

- ▶ How are local areas and regions using Unified Business Services Teams (BSTs) to market apprenticeships to employers? Featuring a panel of BST representatives who are marketing apprenticeships under the Apprenticeship Grant.

▶ Takeaways:

- ▶ An employer collaborative approach where employers can learn and better understand work-based learning including apprenticeships with and among peers can have greater success.
- ▶ To have the BST effectively promote apprenticeships, the BST members must be able to recognize when to bring apprenticeship into the discussion with employers.

▶ Area of BEC Focus:





ILLINOIS WORKFORCE INNOVATION BOARD

- ▶ Marketing

4. *Transforming Industries Together: Strategies for Attracting Employers to Sector-Based Partnerships*

- ▶ Presenters:

- ▶ Kim Kuchenbrod, Northern IL University and U.S. Chamber of Commerce (Armstrong)
- ▶ Lee Reese, St. Clair County Workforce Development (Belleville)
- ▶ Kraig Kisting, National Tube Supply Co. (University Park)
- ▶ Antonio Garcia, Lake County Workforce Development (Waukegan)

- ▶ Summary:

- ▶ Talent Pipeline Management (TPM) Practitioners lead this interactive session actively involved with industry-sector partnership development and management in economic development regions. Participants will learn how to develop their “elevator pitch” for recruiting employers, how to organize an effective business service team to lead the partnership, how to remove barriers for employer engagement and the ROI for employer participation. The session is facilitated by a TPM faculty member and graduates of the TPM Academy.

- ▶ Takeaways:

- ▶ Tools to recruit and engage industry partners – Do your homework first!
- ▶ Take away best practices from individuals leading industry-sector partnerships.

- ▶ Area of BEC Focus:

- ▶ Industry Partnerships

5. *Using Data to Drive Business Engagement*

- ▶ Presenters:

- ▶ Marty Johnson, IDES (Springfield)
- ▶ Dee Reinhardt, Illinois workNet (Springfield)





ILLINOIS WORKFORCE INNOVATION BOARD

- ▶ Erik Makela, IDES (Springfield)
- ▶ Summary:
 - ▶ What data sources exist that can provide information and guidance to business services professionals who are seeking businesses to contact. In particular, how can they use these data sources to examine national/state business conditions, local/regional business trends and granular individual businesses and their specific needs. Featuring a panel of data experts.
- ▶ Takeaways:
 - ▶ A frequent inquiry from business owners/human resource managers is “how do I learn more about wages for specific occupations in my area?” This session will assist in locating and utilizing the wage data available to BSTs.
 - ▶ Business service reps need a plan when approaching lead development: 1) which employer needs are the BST ready to fill now, and 2) how can the BST figure out the price point for those skills, such that both employers and WIOA customers are happy?
- ▶ Area of BEC Focus:
 - ▶ Data

