

Commissioners in Attendance: **Co-Chair Shaver, Commissioner Montorio-Archer (via proxy), Commissioner Zumdahl (via proxy), Commissioner Cates, Commissioner Krauss, Commissioner Huelsmann, Commissioner Thompson**

Others in Attendance: **Eric Mayo, John Gordon, Paula Corrigan-Halpern, Jorge Artaega, Carly Ogletree, Kelly Sparks, Hannah Keller, Reshma Desai**

Co-Chair Shaver introduced Lisa Jones, Policy Manager for Workforce Development, at DCEO. Shaver noted the goal of the presentation is to understand what the state is currently doing when it comes to youth employment, how the state is thinking about the future work in this space, and how their future work impacts our Commission. Commissioner Shaver then turned the floor over to Lisa Jones.

Lisa began by talking about the main program funded by DCEO, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. WIOIA primarily serves three groups: adult job seekers, those facing barriers to gaining work (like the formerly incarcerated) and youth ages 16-24, both those who are in school and out of school. DCEO spends approximately \$40 million on youth programming per year, serving around 8,000 youth. Of that \$40 million, approximately 75 percent is spent on out of school youth. 25 percent is spent on youth-based learning, which is primarily internships. Overall, the state spends \$112 million on WIOIA funding. These services are delivered through 22 local workforce innovations boards, made up of local officials.

Jones continues that one of the newer program models for youth is the youth career pathways program. This involves not just placing youth in a job but providing a more holistic approach toward career readiness. With \$6 million, the program, the model has funded 40 programs and provided job training for 1300 youth. The programs must provide training in an industry or occupation that is on-demand, and youth must come out with sort of credential, and each program provider must have some sort of connection with business.

Jones concluded by discussing how DCEO has spent ARPA funds. \$50 million were spent toward workplace recovery efforts, which include job training and economic development programs. There is another program that helps with emergency needs of the worker, such as child care and rent. There is also an apprenticeship program that is currently working with adults but is just starting to test the youth waters. After the presentation concluded, Jones took questions from Commissioners and attendees.

Commissioner Huelsmann asked if there are any efforts in the department to connect clients with the human services workforce, where there is a huge need for staff. Jones replied that there haven't been any efforts recently, and that they generally look at local need when determining partnerships with business. There was an effort to prioritize early childhood education several years back. Commissioner Huelsmann noted that wages in this sector are growing, making it potentially attractive to new workers.

Co-Chair Shaver asked Jones to expand on how the department interacts with employers. Jones replied that the interactions start at the local level with the local workforce development areas. Each board is representative of local industries. Specialized teams then go out to interact with local businesses and inform them of the programs provided by the department. Some programs include on the job training

requirements, which for employers means DCEO will cover a portion of that employee's wages. DCEO also works with the US Chamber Foundation on a talent pipeline management strategy.

Eric Mayo then asked how the department specifically connects with disconnected youth, those youth who are currently unemployed and out of school. Jones then detailed DCEO's recruitment and outreach strategy, noting that they have been intentional about making greater connections with the secondary education system. The department is constantly thinking about how to expand services to reach the people that are hardest to serve. To reach more youth, the department needs to expand capacity to smaller non-traditional providers.

John Gordon asked if there were any geographical areas of need for the Department. Jones replied that rural areas generally are the areas of highest need, but the Southern suburbs of Chicago also could use additional assistance. Jones stated that capacity building is vital to reaching those populations.

Commissioner Cates asked for examples of non-traditional providers. Jones replied that she was thinking along the lines of faith-based organizations, but generally those types of organizations do not have the capacity to apply for the grants the department provides. Cates mentioned that ICIJA and the folks behind the R3 program both have done an excellent job of preparing smaller organizations for the grant-making process and that she was willing to connect them to DCEO.

Co-Chair Shaver thanked Jones for attending the meeting and explaining how DCEO is promoting youth employment in Illinois. He requested that John Gordon send Jones the commission's recommendations for her to review and give any note she may have. Jones thanked the commission for their interest and exited the meeting.

Co-Chair Shaver handed the floor over to Eric Mayo, who briefly discussed the yearly plan for the commission. Mayo also mentioned the creation of a youth working group to have youth in Illinois participate directly with the commission. Co-Chair Shaver said the ultimate hope that one day a youth or multiple youths can become full commissioners.

Co-Chair Shaver asked Curt Clemmons-Mosby if the commission needed to formally approve the 2022 calendar. Mosby mentioned that full approval was not necessary.

Commissioner's Cates and Thompson rose to speak to suggest that Friday's may not be the best days for youth to participate in commission meetings. Co-Chair Shaver decided that the commission would try out Fridays but would maintain flexibility.

Since there was no quorum, no votes were taken and the meeting was adjourned at 5:00 PM.