

BRAD LITTLE
GOVERNOR

Wendi Secrist
Executive Director

Deni Hoehne
Chair

B. J. Swanson
Vice Chair

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

317 West Main Street, Boise, Idaho 83735-0510

Outreach Committee Meeting

Date: Wednesday, February 3, 2021

Time: 1:30 PM – 3:00 PM

Committee Members: John Young, Shelli Bardsley, Donna Butler, Dave Hannah, Marie Hattaway, Kaitlin McGuire, Kate Lenz, Georgia Smith, Sarah Buenrostro, Janelle Culley, Jeff Tucker, Linda Clark, Matt Van Vleet, Marilyn Whitney, Megan O'Rourke, Janet Pretti

Staff: Paige Nielebeck, Caty Solace, Wendi Secrist, Matthew Thomsen

Guests: Amelia Valasek

Call to Order at 1:34 p.m.

Roll call - Quorum Met

Review Agenda – No changes to the agenda

***Approve December 2, 2020 Meeting Minutes**

Motion by Ms. Bardsley to approve the December 2, 2020 meeting minutes as written. Second by Mr. Van Vleet. Motion carried.

Regents of the University of Idaho – Dig'nIT Internship Program

The Dig'nIT High School Internship Program is a summer STEM enrichment program designed to engage northern Idaho high school student's future-proof college and career opportunities. The University of Idaho Coeur d'Alene, committed to promoting college and career readiness, developed Dig'nIT in response to the needs of the northern Idaho community it serves. Dig'nIT promotes the university's STEM-focused initiatives by building a diverse workforce pipeline through internship opportunities to expose high school students to hands on, experiential learning experiences. Entering the ninth year, this unique internship program promotes STEM career choices and actively engages local business to provide a meaningful work experience for high school students. This eight-week program is designed for rising high school juniors and seniors; a critical time for students to begin making decisions about college and career. Dig'nIT has a proven record of success for the past eight years, with close to 70% of past interns continuing their education at a 2-year or 4-year institution. This is far greater than Idaho's declining go-on rate for graduating seniors and showcases the positive impact Dig'nIT has on our community and interns.

WDTF Request: \$29,069.84

In the application, U of I put a contingency plan in place so internship work can be done remotely. If employer partners have remote internship opportunities, that is covered under the proposal.

Interns are paid \$11.00 an hour, 30 hours a week, for 8 weeks.

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U of I will offer students soft skill training to ensure they have the skills they need to be successful in their internships. The students will have weekly check-ins with U of I staff to see how the internship is going. The employer will have bi-weekly check-ins with U of I to verify how the experience is going.

Looking at the budget, a majority of the WDTF funds will be used to cover the intern salary. Some of the funds will go towards program support and U of I has an indirect cost fee. There is a small marketing budget of \$200.

Discussion:

With its small outreach budget, and most of the funds going towards salaries this does not seem like an outreach project.

The program is a great program. It is important to explore how this program might be leveraged in other areas of Idaho. It is nice to see that U of I is offering soft skills and remote work training. Maybe some of the outreach can be deploying the program model throughout the state.

The Committee would like the application sent back to U of I for clarification.

There is a WDTF grant proposal under development that could fit under outreach projects or an innovation grant. A majority of the funds would be utilized to hire an individual to connect individuals with work-based learning opportunities. Ms. Secrist is looking for feedback from the Committee on which application this project might fit the best under.

- The Committee agreed that the project would fit under an outreach project application. The individual will be out making connections with businesses and creating opportunities for interns.

Idaho Commission for Libraries Outreach Update

Ms. Valasek provided an update on the Idaho Commission for Libraries. Please see attached presentation.

Libraries are eager to help Idaho with workforce needs. They are wanting to partner with other agencies and entities. One of the challenges small, rural libraries face, is not having the opportunity for individuals to have privacy for certain discussions (e.g., meeting remotely with a career planner or therapist). Libraries are trying to think creatively to overcome these barriers. The Council staff has been able to provide training with libraries on the Launch program.

Libraries are a great target for outreach efforts. From an ROI point of view, it is a low cost, high return location for individuals who are looking for employment.

WDC Outreach Programs Updates

The Committee had a long discussion at the December meeting about prioritizing outreach projects that are new or expanding. This discussion started during the review of the STEM Externship program outreach project application. The Committee requested Ms. Solace create language for the WDC grant website page to indicate the Outreach Committee's priorities. Ms. Solace reviewed the language she drafted.

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“The Workforce Development Council’s Outreach Committee reviews and provides funding for proposals that will provide public information and outreach on career education and workforce training opportunities, including existing education and training programs and services not funded by the training fund. Proposals to support new projects or the expansion of existing programs are preferred. Funding is provided on a reimbursement basis.”

The Committee would like Ms. Solace to add the presented language to the WDC grant webpage.

The deadline to spend the CARES Act Funds has been extended. The funds can be spent until they run out or until June 2021. At the beginning of the year, there was around \$300,000 left to spend. These funds can be used to fund 100% of training costs. Ms. Solace asked the Committee to continue outreach efforts for Idaho Launch. Idaho Launch can now be accessed through the front page of Next Steps Idaho.

The Next Steps steering committee is moving into the next phase of Next Steps. A big portion of this phase will be providing agency and community partners with the materials and trainings they need to speak to Next Steps. There will also be a digital campaign to get Next Steps in front of the adult and youth audiences.

Motion by Ms. Whitney to adjourn. Second by Mr. Tucker.
Adjourned at 2:26 p.m.