

Memorandum

To: NYC Workforce Investment Board Members
From: Les Bluestone, Employer Engagement Committee Chair, NYC WIB
Date: September 27, 2011
Re: Employer Engagement Committee Quarterly Report

The purpose of this memo is to inform NYC Workforce Investment Board (WIB) Members on the activities of the Employer Engagement Committee since the Board's previous meeting which was on June 16, 2011.

1. Committee Members

- Chair – Les Bluestone, Blue Sea Development
- Marion Boykin, Time Warner Cable
- Lakythia Ferby, HRA
- Katy Gaul, HRA
- Nikki Georges-Clapp, NYCHA
- Richard Mast, Bloomingdale's
- Daphne Montanez, DYCD
- Jesse Nieblas, CVS
- George Ntim, Marriott
- Michelle Pinnock, NYCHA
- Ray Singleton, HRA
- Marc Leff, Maimonides Medical Center
- Rae Linefsky, C3 Consulting
- Jackie Mallon, SBS

2. Key Activities

The Committee conducted the following business during the third quarter of 2011:

The following priorities and role of the committee for the first and second quarters include:

- **Promote NYC's workforce system in business community** by serving as ambassadors to external audiences and potential partners (i.e. committee members advocate to their networks the Department of Small Business (SBS): NYC Business Solutions Recruitment Services (middle wage jobs).
- **Increase utilization** of the public workforce system by WIB business members- goal for 100% utilization,
- Mobilize committee members to **fundraise** from the private sector for the **Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP)**.

During the September meeting hosted by Marion Boykin at Time Warner Cable (TWC), the committee heard from several individuals. Council Member Diana Reyna spoke about Jobs and Workforce Development in New York City from her perspective as the Chairperson of the NYC Council's Committee on Small Business. She noted the importance of making New Yorkers more aware of the public workforce development and business services offered. In conversations with businesses she has heard concerns that range from having difficulty accessing capital to being financially unable to keep or expand their workforce. She stressed to the members to think creatively about ways in which the public sector can more effectively make alliances with businesses, i.e. utilizing technology for marketing purposes.

The Committee also heard from individuals at Time Warner Cable. Director of Recruiting, James Molloy, spoke about hiring and training opportunities and skill level requirements. Mr. Molloy noted that having consistency and an open dialogue between the employer and public workforce system is key to creating and maintaining a successful relationship. He also reiterated the importance of soft skills while hiring.

At the same meeting, the Committee further discussed accomplishments and challenges to date, and possible future direction and goals. Some accomplishments noted included fundraising for the SYEP program and the Professional and Financial Services Roundtable for NYC Business Solutions recruitment staff. The Roundtable was graciously hosted by member Stuart Saft at Dewey & LeBoeuf, LLP. Positive feedback was received from event attendees and a strong interest for additional events was stressed. Outreach through board members' personal networks has been challenging and all members' feedback on how to generate involvement is

encouraged. The Committee will continue to focus on employer engagement issues, some of which are noted above, and explore other strategies to assist City agency workforce services and advocate for them to the business community.

Some of the additional initiatives mentioned include:

- **Increase advocacy and marketing efforts** of successful public workforce development programs and services offered. (i.e. develop **Op Eds and or an article/column** in neighborhood papers that highlight a particular program and services to be co-authored by and attributed to WIB members. Potentially utilizing TWC's On-demand platform was also suggested).
- **Increase knowledge about career pathways in to High Schools** (i.e. informing students of the opportunities and basic foundations, curriculum development). The WIB Policy Committee is currently exploring this matter so we will work to align efforts.
- **Learn more from employers** how the public workforce system can better engage them in these initiatives (i.e. placement and retention).
- **Explore ways to attract and make unemployed and under-employed** workers aware of how the City's workforce development services can provide benefit to them.
- **Roundtables**. Host additional forums with employers and NYC workforce services providers. Need to determine what fields/sectors would be ideal to highlight (i.e. retail, hospitality, technology, transportation, etc.).

3. Next Steps

The next Committee meeting is being scheduled for late 2011 or early 2012. Committee members are asked to approach their personal networks about the NYC Business Solutions Recruitment services. Les and Lea will be contacting individuals for feedback on methods of outreach (i.e. potential OpEd/article/column program topics), Roundtable topics, and to solicit for referrals from within their networks. Additionally outreach to business organizations and groups continue and we are planning to give a presentation at the November Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce meeting and are working to establish similar dates with the chambers of commerce for the other boroughs. Please contact myself or Lea Kilraine (lkilraine@sbs.nyc.gov) to learn more about business development services or other enquires, etc.