

**PRI Steering Committee
Tuesday, April 21, 2015
1:00-2:30 pm, MI Works
MEETING NOTES**

NOTE MEETING DATE CHANGE to 3rd Tuesday of the Month

*Bringing the power of our collective knowledge and energy together to prevent and reduce poverty by **Inspiring, Advocating, and Connecting** through convening and incubation.*

Called to Order at 1:00 p.m.

Present:

Pat Riconi, DHS

Jim Moore, Disability Network

Doug Leary, NMCAA

Steve Wade GTRCF

Sharon Vreeland, GTCC & LCFCC

James Bruckbauer, MLUI

Janie McNabb, Networks Northwest

Sakura Raftery; Goodwill

Jennifer Hamilton, Salvation Army

Deb Haase, Father Fred

Tim Hamilton, Love, INC.

Tom White, Networks Northwest

Meeting Notes from 12/16/2014: No comments.

Project Reports:

- **Mentoring Training:** 7th Annual Mentoring Breakfast. Lisa Bottomley, MSU Extension Officer of the Year will be the speaker. 6/17, Wed evening, Faith Reformed Church 6:30 – 8 to talk to current and potential mentors to talk about racial, age, and other gaps between mentors and those they seek to serve. 6/18 9-4 Faith Reformed Church: Recruitment and Retention of Volunteers. All events are at no charge.

Convening conversations – Employment work group Update – Sakura & Janie:

Went to Traverse Area Human Resources Association to talk about Supportive Workplace Award, which is now open to nominations. The word is being spread by TAHRA and the Chamber. Nominations close May 1. Receiving the nominations will also help us better identify local businesses and their best employment practices for additional highlighting in the community. Judging criteria are based on innovation; worker retention and upward mobility; concrete results (attendance); promoting teamwork; leveraging partnerships with community resources; and supporting workers, particularly those on a lower income scale.

Networks Northwest held four meetings with local employers to discuss issues related to employment such as housing, childcare, transportation, and labor market information that can serve as barriers to recruitment. Information on each topic was presented to the group, the group provided their perceptions about why the challenges exist, and then the group brainstormed possible solutions. All the information was recorded and shared with

all participants. At the close of each session everyone was encouraged to follow up independently and immediately on any solutions that occur to them. About 100 employers attended from across the full spectrum of business sectors and sizes.

As a next step, Janie would like to create a resource guide. They might be able to leverage Networks Northwest Funds to have an employer such as Cherry Capital Foods right down how they developed their in-house childcare program so the information can be shared with other interested businesses.

Gaps identified that might be easily filled by one or more groups or agencies, whether with one employer or with many? Many of the ideas brainstormed at the meetings involved what individual employers can do to improve conditions more than where there are community resources. One idea that has worked for The Homestead and a nearby restaurant are coordinating split shifts so workers could obtain more hours at both places.

Hot Jobs Report generated by the Framework for our Future is now available. The online version has already been updated to remove the projected job growth column versus the printed copy. As soon as the report was released, area employers provided feedback that the figures were too low. We are also hearing that the wage ranges listed are more entry-level than average/with experience. The information is designed to be very up-to-date and very specific to the local job market. One goal is to print an abbreviated version for delivery to all area high school students.

Convening conversations – Next issue?

- **Employment Transportation Project – Jim Bruckbauer, MLUI:**
 - Exploring ways to encourage carpooling, bus and bike use, and walking to work (“Smart Commuting”) with large and mid-sized employers.
 - Developing business-sector champions for changes in transportation paradigms
 - Employers can help by making bus schedules available at work sites, providing transit passes (with both employer and employee receiving tax deductions), paying employees cash to not drive individually to work, etc.
 - Not many of these strategies are being employed locally. Why? Parking is generally ample, and people have longer commutes from home to work than many places. We also know that many of our local workers find transportation costs and access to a car to be an employment barrier.
 - This project is creating a guide for businesses that want to implement commuter programs and encourage smart commuting. Steps include: assessing transportation needs within the organization; analyzing the data and mapping where employees live in relation to each other and to the business; and developing and implementing strategies for their unique employee group.
 - Grand Traverse Resort & Spa and Casinos were having a problem with employee tardiness and absenteeism due to cars breaking down. They started by offering free BATA passes; currently the passes are available at a reduced cost. The company can take tax writeoffs for doing this.

- Hagerty Insurance: if employees commit to bicycle commuting at a certain rate per year, they receive money to use on bike-related expenses. They provide showers and lockers for biking employees.
- Passed around a draft for review. Hope to have guide completed within six weeks, to roll out during Smart Commute Week. Passed around a Marin County, CA guide on which they are building.
- Looking for approximately \$10,000 in funding for design, graphics, printing and distribution.
- As employers request the information, an Americorps Vista worker will be available to set up lunch meetings and workshops at companies with employees to discuss and encourage smart commuting, and to share information about existing resources.
- Leadership has to come from within employee peer groups. Employees are more likely to be influenced by what their fellow employees are doing than by what management is promoting.
- Group Response included:
 - the need to stress transportation alternatives not just for environmental reasons, but to address problems many in our community have with getting to work consistently and on time. It's an employee support issue.
 - Community-wide 511 ride-share service interesting...what about trying to promote ride-sharing information like this within a company or within a group of companies in close proximity. Developing a community-wide system might be overwhelming. Munson and Hagerty have internal ride-sharing posting systems.
 - Influencing the way managers approach scheduling. This probably requires a certain critical mass cluster of participating businesses.

PRI Finance Committee Update – Steve: Karen Emerson, Tim Hamilton and Steve Wade met three weeks ago for a preliminary financial discussion. As a group that is not a legal entity, PRI has never had a budget. There is currently about \$5,000 on hand, which would last about a year at current spending rates. Should we be doing centralized fundraising? What are the opportunities? Should each program we support be financially self-sufficient, fundraising for its needs? Largest single expense has been the Opportunity Conferences (\$10,000 - \$15,000) each, which have received support from underwriting sources. Other than that, about \$4,200/year would appear sufficient to support current operational levels.

Next, we need to come up with an historic reporting tool that tells the story of how many lives are touched, through what programs, and what the quantifiable impacts have been. Potential financial supporters are interested in measurable return on investment included in telling the story.

Should we be asking agency partners to make an annual monetary contribution to PRI? This could cover modest annual costs, and demonstrate partner commitment when we share the story with the larger community. The value of in-kind contributions already being made needs to be recognized as well.

Communications – PRI Report to the Community: How can we start to tell the PRI story through our individual agency experiences and recounting our group successes?

Tom White has been cleaning up and restructuring the PRI website. As we develop the story and the data, the website can be a valuable first and ongoing way to share.

At the December meeting we asked all groups and initiatives to share their stories from the past year. Revisiting the meeting notes might be a good starting point.

Who is/are our audience(s)? Do we need one static document, or do we need a library of interchangeable modules that can be configured at need for maximum impact with a given group?

Tom will have a look at the year-end meeting notes and at what additional statistics might be helpful, and think about a potential communications plan.

Next meeting - May: Prevention Discussion – Jim Rowlett

Meeting adjourned at 2:20 p.m.