**Communications Committee Meeting**

Thursday, March 11, 2021, 10:00 – 11:30 AM

**MEETING MINUTES**

Attendees

*Attendees*: Brit Ayers, Jamie Harris, Susan Kaliush, John Lane, Molly Mesnard, LiLi Taylor and Emma Wilson.

Handouts

March Agenda, Committee Activities Overview Document, Status Updated March Newsletter Topics Guide, PROPOSED April Newsletter Topic Guide Template

1. **Opening**

Committee Chair Susan Kaliush opened the meeting, welcoming members.

1. **Old Business**

*WIOA Alignment Group (WAG) Updates:*

Co-Chair Kimberlee Schultz shared the Committee Activities Overview presented at the February meeting of the WIOA Alignment Group.

*Update on Compiled Email Distribution List*

Multiple Communications Committee members have added a combined total of 70 additional emails to the shared Google Sheet Katherine created for the group to use. New email addresses included contributions for state staff in Southern Maryland, and local staff serving the Tri-County Council, Baltimore County and Harford County. No additional emails were contributed for DORS, DHCD or DHS. Kim explained that the way the DORS system is set up makes it very work-intensive to selectively collect frontline staff. As an alternative, she is forwarding a request to Regional Directors to encourage their staff to subscribe. LiLi volunteered to reach out with information on how to subscribe to the local WIOA Title I Directors for the other counties as well as the Labor Exchange Administrators.

*Newsletter Analytics*

Issue #23 (February 2021) of the newsletter was released on February 24, 2021. Susan noted that the open rate was 12% (636 unique opens), significantly down from the previous month. The total open rate was 25%. The newsletter was issued one day behind schedule, at about 1:00 pm. We have started reporting limited analytics data to the WIOA Alignment Group. To ensure we are comparing apples to apples for them and also for our own month-to-month tracking, we will collect analytics data on the Wednesday prior to the WAG meeting.

1. **New Business**

*Status Updates on March Newsletter Content*

LiLi walked the Committee through the March topic outline approved at the February meeting of the WIOA Alignment Group. All articles are complete. Subject matter experts are still reviewing one article.

*Proposed Topic Outline for April*

The proposed April newsletter content will focus on partner program services for incarcerated individuals and returning citizens. Committee members suggested the following topics:

* Feature Story – Profile of the Office of Correctional Education
* Success Stories – We have good success stories prepped for this section
* COVID Corner – Report on how educational activities in correctional facilities been implemented during the pandemic and highlight on re-openings.
* Did You Know
  + Occupational Training Initiatives for Incarcerated Women: Opioid Operational Command Center Grant and Women’s Bureau Grant
  + Profile of the Reentry Navigator Role
  + *Benchmarks of Success* Training Updates
  + COABE Conference and TESOL International
  + Accessibility Tip of the Month

**Next Steps**

* **LiLi** will write up meeting minutes and send to committee members for review/approval along with approved and proposed topic outlines.
* **LiLi** will post the March meeting agenda and approved minutes on the [Benchmarks of Success website](https://www.dllr.state.md.us/employment/wioasuccess.shtml#:~:text=Benchmarks%20of%20Success%20is%20a,the%20earning%20capacity%20of%20Marylanders%E2%80%A6).
* **LiLi** will reach out to Title I Directors in local areas and Labor Exchange Administrators to encourage them to subscribe..
* **Emma Wilson** will follow up on correctional facilities in Montgomery County where correctional services are delivered.
* **Jamie** will send LiLi the name of a good contact in the Office of Correctional Education.
* **John** will follow up with Katherine to see if DHS has any content to contribute.
* **LiLi** will begin work on articles for the April newsletter.

**Next Meeting:** Thursday, April 8, 2021 10:00 – 11:30 AM