

# Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board (KWIB) Committee Meeting of Workforce Participation

**DRAFT MINUTES**

April 11, 2023; 9:30am – 11:00am EST



**Visit the following link to view the recorded meeting:**

[https://kwib.ky.gov/PublishingImages/WPS\\_041123/WPS\\_041123.mp4](https://kwib.ky.gov/PublishingImages/WPS_041123/WPS_041123.mp4)

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**IN-person MEMBERS PRESENT:** Amy Luttrell, **Virtual MEMBERS PRESENT** – Heidi Margulis, Stephanie Collins, Laurie Mays, Zach Morgan, Myra Wilson, Sam, Ethan Schrage, Betty Whittaker, Johnny Pittman, Jon Sowards, Leslie Sizemore, Kaye McAfee, Lindsey Trent, Madison Sandford, Johnny Collett, Jacob McAndrews, Todd Trapp, Amy Glasscock, Dr. J.C. Gregory, Jessie Schook, John Mountjoy, Trace Chesser, Aaron Poynter, Shauna King-Simms

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Rosalind Harvey, Alisher Burikhanov, Debbie Dennison, Elishah Taylor

## **9:31 AM CALL TO ORDER**

**Amy Luttrell, Chair** and CEO / President of Goodwill Industries of Kentucky, Inc., called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. She commented on the Louisville shootings that happened and offered her condolences. Amy shared that while the committee had not met in a while, it is time to revisit the Strategic Plan, readopted in 2020. She reminded the committee of the four (4) main goals of the strategic plan: Engage Employers; provide educational pathways; review workforce participation and to review and better align resources. She asked Alisher Burikhanov, Executive Director, KWIB if he would like to share.

Alisher acknowledged the Louisville shootings and offered his condolences. He then thanked everyone for attending the meeting and shared the Workforce Participation objectives, to help start the discussion.

Amy shared the focus of this committee has been to *identify and remove barriers* for priority population listed in the strategic plan including veterans, individuals with disabilities, re-entrants from the corrections system, individuals in recovery from substance abuse, young adults transitioning out of foster care, among others. She stated that previous meetings have included sharing resources to assist these groups but recognizes a *big challenge identifying all existing resources* still exists. There are systemic disincentives keeping people from the workforce.

She shared that there are two open jobs for each Kentuckian looking for a job. She shared recent updates about the Family Resource Simulator (Benefit Cliffs calculator) that has been created to provide examples of different family types and the benefit cliffs that exist and how pointing these out can change future policies to help mitigate disincentives to work.

She shared several programs that are demonstrating success including work with the re-entry population, Teleworks, Code Louisville, other initiatives and work being done to engage youth and young adults. Amy yielded to members of the committee for additional discussion.

Johnny Collett provided an update about *RETAIN* Kentucky. He stated that they have been working to support non-work-related people with injuries to get them back into the workforce. He shared more about the programs and the need for employer engagement. The main three areas this team is reviewing is 1. Increase employer awareness of workforce accommodations, 2. Create a more centralized place to go and learn about best practices, and 3. Highlighting people with disabilities as untapped talent.

Amy talked about the importance of alignment in response to a comment by Heidi Margulis and opened the floor again for discussion.

Johnny Pittman, Oxmoor Auto Group and chair of the Opportunity Youth Sub-Committee, expressed that he appreciates the continued discussions but resources are needed to show employers how to work with these different marginalized populations. We need programmatic changes to engaging employers. Zach Morgan shared [the Fair Chance Academy](#) offered by the Chamber has a program that teaches employers how to interact with these different groups of untapped talent.

Amy moved the discussion to the veteran population. Trace Chesser, USA Cares, shared an online platform for employers to engage with the veteran population through transition into the workforce. Leslie Sizemore, Council on Postsecondary Education (CPE) and Jessie Schook, Kentucky Community and Technical College Systems (KCTCS) discussed a new program coming out and how they will be helping untapped talent populations and employers. Discussion continued.

Alisher brought the focus back to discussing the objectives and deliverables of workforce participation committee that exist within the Strategic Plan. What is relevant, what needs to be modified, and what needs to be of priority focus?

Shauna King-Simms turned the discussion to engaging foster youth groups and engaging clients of KTAP and SNAP programs. This opened the discussion about youth and foster populations. Employers need supports to hire this population. Myra Wilson shared a program in the Cumberlands that will be starting. Discussion continued.

Amy Luttrell opened the floor to discuss the overall goals and objectives for the workforce participation group. She asked for input on changes, items to be removed, or items to remain.

Myra Wilson, Director of Workforce, Cumberlands added that funding for marketing or outreach is small, and a **focus** should include **building awareness** so people understand ongoing resources. Todd Trapp, Cabinet for Health and Family Services/ Department of Child Based Services (CHFS/DCBS) shared that [KYNECT](#) (Kentucky Connect) is a great resource for jobseekers and employers.

Jon Sowards added that we may **have additional data to gather** including cultural factors and attitudes need to change to get many returning to the workforce. He felt like a gap in

understanding what populations work remotely or in the gig economy might affect reported number of those in the workforce. From this Amy then opened the discussion on whether we should look at labor force participation by county, since there is a wide range of participation rates, and asked how we should market Kentucky. Discussion continued to include the currently retired population.

Amy summed up several insights from the meeting including providing **additional employer supports**, being **intentional about bringing awareness of resources** to jobseekers and employers, **reviewing and aligning current programs**, making employers aware of **incentives** that could be used in hiring of certain populations, and **leverage funding**.

She asked if there were any others. Several lifted gaining community support. Kaye McAfee, Kentucky Housing Corporation (KHC) expressed that they have been meeting people where they are in the community and that **focus groups or listening sessions** have been helpful.

In closing, Amy wants to bring a few highlighted points to the Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board (KWIB). She looks forward to sharing discussed items members of the Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board.

**10:57 am Adjournment**

Amy Luttrell