**State As a Model Employer (SAME) Task Force**

**March 13, 2020**

The Guest and participants in attendance and via conference call introduced themselves in their official capacities.

Executive Director Bambi Polotzola briefly discussed upgrading the format of the disability employment survey and marketing. Bambi asked members for their suggestions

Doug Bordelon mentioned that someone within his department may be able to assist with the marketing. It was suggested that a committee be established within the SAME Taskforce to further develop the marketing and outreach project objectives. The Taskforce would like to implement a holistic, internal and external approach for the marketing initiatives.

The committee will seek to improve the format of the survey, and a holistic approach will be made to increase participation, and the committee will encourage each agency to create their own internal plan to increase survey confidential participation and marketing. The committee will help with creating a new design, and each department will be advised to develop a plan to increase marketing within their department.

Members discussed the possibility of making it competitive among agencies in an effort to make the project fun which in turn will increase agency participation.

It was mentioned that a plan should be created to provide the survey individuals who do not have computers. It was mentioned that DOTD and departments expressed concerns in regards to participation. It was mentioned that the agencies should make the recommendations to the task force to help overcome the various obstacles and encourage more participation.

LRS update: Brenda will circulate an example email of an uplifting employment success story to create awareness.

Voice technical grant update: Rachel mentioned that a Great dialog took place with the participating agencies, and that she would like to create additional linkages with the community and provide additional support.

It was mentioned that the task force should consider Creating a tool kit for hiring managers, and how to be more inclusive with employees and train agencies on how to screen resumes.

DOTD update: Focusing on partnership with Baton Rouge Community College. Will work on transition between regular internships and student internships, and increase recruitment opportunities.

Ban the box” discussion took place among taskforce members regarding positions that are safety sensitive, in regards to what background checks are needed and or required.

It was mentioned that agencies that have high turnover is where the taskforce should focus on the most.

Community of practice trainings, featuring subject matter experts in different. There will be three trainings, Rachel, at the Same meetings, second Friday of every month. Joe Maronne, will be presenting on Behavioral Health and employment. May. Customized employment and internships.

Sue Killam- Mentioned that a Pilot program is scheduled through March 31, 2020 “training of trainers” and is currently working with cohorts to develop multiple formats of the University of South Florida, Grant from WINTAC to create statewide customized employment training that can be utilized in the state. It was mentioned that the WINTAC provides program content guidance. Customized employment is a process is by which employers are working with individuals with disabilities in-depth to find out what they need to be successful and enable the employees to meet the employer’s needs. The goal of the program is to match employers with the ability of the individual. The retention has been extremely well for long term employment, and is currently focused on individuals with more significant disabilities, but can be used for any employee with a disability. IPS intentional placement support- behavioral needs. It was mentioned that Sue is still trying to identify the best model for the interest of the employee and employer.

Ashley Jefferson- mentioned that this is third year that the state has been involved with employment to include the population that includes mental health issues.

OBH has built a strong foundation with LRS. Currently creating an operating plan from the documents. This plan will help make a greater present in the community and participating with the Louisiana Governmental entities. More information will be provided in the near future. Joe Maronne will be a subject matter expert.

Ashley mentioned that she is working on bringing the two agencies (OBH and LRS) together to provide greater services, focus on a coordinating in a liaison role, and will not participate in the operations, LRS.

Bambi mentioned that the webpage was created in February 2020, and contains the employment resource guide, SAME task force executive order link, SAME report, and data, and the various agencies state plans, and the employment awareness video featuring the Governor. It was mentioned that the webpage should include links to the leo trainings, the LRS webpage, newsletter, survey data.

The taskforce will reach out to providers, LGE’s for information and content for the webpage. It will have content that highlights the progress of departments.

Should highlight the definition of a disability so that interested parties may gain access to the education.