

**Workforce Central Florida
Board of Directors
Strategic Retreat**

**Valencia College
Collaborative Design Center
1800 S. Kirkman Road, Orlando, FL 32811**

**Thursday, October 10, 2013
1:00pm to 5:00pm**

NOTES FROM RETREAT

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Wendy Brandon, Dr. Angela Adams, Greg Beliveau, Diana Bolivar, Paul Bough, Robert Brown, Deborah Clements, Melanie Cornell, William D'Aiuto, Eric Jackson, Leland Madsen, William Merck, Brian Michaels, Tirso Moreno, Sheri Olson, Dr. Joseph Sarnovsky, Chuck Todd, Eric Ushkowitz, Larry Walter, and Mark Wylie

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Steve Clelland, Lorna Garrow, Taylor Pancake, Jack Plettinck, Jovanna Sayan, Dr. Sanford Shugart, Dr. Robert Spooney, Richard Sweat and Larry Walter

STAFF PRESENT:

Pamela Nabors, Kevin Neal, Leo Alvarez, Kameel Abdurrahman, Tonya Elliott, Homer Boone, Joyce Hinton, Anika Holmes, Sherry Voss, Nilda Blanco, Susan Awad, Chad Kunerth, Jason Lietz, and Kaz Kasal

GUESTS PRESENT:

Mark Brewer/Community Foundation of Central Florida, Rick Beasley, S. Florida Workforce Investment Board, Tom Phillips, Capital Workforce Partners and Holly Wiedman, Metro Orlando EDC

Ms. Nabors welcomed board members to the retreat and announced her thanks and appreciation to Dr. Shugart for hosting this event at his location, as well as providing the food and beverage refreshments. Ms. Nabors also thanked Ms. Clements and Mr. Jackson for sponsoring the beverages and concierge at the close of the retreat.

Mr. Brewer, the main facilitator for this retreat, greeted the board and asked each of the board members to express what is important to them as WCF moves forward.

Dr. Adams: More focus to get the WCF brand name out in the community, so community knows about WCF and services provided.

Ms. Cornell: Collaboration between agencies and like organizations.

Mr. Brown: WCF should become the backbone for preparing people for jobs for future.

Ms. Brandon: "Connect" into the future.

Mr. Wylie: Lining up the community to its potential – what corporations are not located in Orlando? WCF has the opportunity to create and strengthen employment potential.

Ms. Bolivar: Focus on education – training and development; this is a big piece. There is a major skills gap – job vacancies not filled due to people lacking required skills. Need to train people on these required skills so they can fill job vacancies. Also effectively collaborate so efforts are not duplicated – have a collective impact and engage the community.

Mr. Bough: 1) Focus on the jobs for future – manufacturing and high tech. Build a workforce supporting STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) jobs. 2) Focus on core functions: from services to job seekers, to constantly improve customer service – look at best practices.

Mr. Jackson: WCF should be the best practice leader in the business services – create a world class in business services.

Mr. D'Aiuto: Focus on leadership in business services for stable employment.

Mr. Madsen: Increase collaborative efforts between WCF and the state to attract new businesses to Florida. By 2030, Florida will be the third largest population in the nation.

Mr. Todd: Agriculture is now more high tech – it is important to train people in high tech and science based job skills as these are the skilled needed to fill the in-demand jobs. Make entrepreneurs and private industries aware of WCF services – WCF should be the backbone.

Ms. Olson: Increase services in Lake County – this is a diverse county. Make the business community aware of WCF and grow the high tech talent.

Mr. Sweat: Keeping score with the right metrics is important. We need to pick the right goals and the community will follow the leadership of this board.

Mr. Michaels: Focus on education and youth – dollars spent on youth - what is invested for youth now is worth 10 times more than when they become adults. Become the employment backbone through collaboration: unrestricted income, community-based support and "champions" to promote WCF.

Mr. Beliveau: 1) Collaborate – employers are using their own funds to train youth on basic job skills (soft skills) in order to effectively/successfully interact with the rest of the workforce. 2) employers need employees, but no one to fill jobs – skill sets do not match. There is a big void between jobs and skills needed to fill these jobs.

Dr. Sarnovsky: Focus on bridging youth to workforce. Youth have the technical skills, but need to learn and adapt to work environment – “learn to learn.” 1) Should measure/report to business community the number of those in workforce that are prepared at certain ability levels and proficient in certain critical thinking areas. 2) Prepare/train for the right kind of jobs that are in demand.

Ms. Clements: Finding the right balance between the job seeker and the employer. Who is the customer: the employer or the job seeker?

Mr. Moreno: Need to focus on how to match people to actual jobs. How job seekers, who come from other places/countries, can successfully compete for jobs. How people can improve their jobs skills, make their jobs skills transferable and sell their job skills.

Mr. Ushkowitz: It is important that WCF, EDC, and chambers work together to continue to grow the workforce/talent in the region. Good jobs are vital to the health of our economy. The importance of WCF cannot be overstated.

Presentations at this retreat were provided by Mr. Brewer, Mr. Beasley, Mr. Phillips and Ms. Wiedman.

Mr. Brewer divided the board up into 5 groups and asked them to discuss and present on the following areas: 1) identify outcomes for a three-year window of how WCF should look, 2) how to measure and identify measures, and 3) who we should partner with to get things done and what resources?

The board reconvened and the lead from each group provided a presentation as follows:

Mr. Beliveau:

His group concurred with S. Florida: the customer is the employer and the product is the employee. This should be demand driven by the employer – need to increase job placements by 50%. Find out the exact needs of the employer – what are the jobs are here and now, and customize training needs to fit this demand; need to create a greater pool to train. Need to leverage resources to become broader based and be the “backbone” agency – collaborate with other agencies. Need to understand the skills gap – what are the issues. Once in the job, what skills sets are needed to retain, enhance and promote employees?

Mr. Sarnovsky:

Need to focus on Return On Investment (ROI). Focus on two distinct populations: youth category and overall category. Need to focus on employers’ needs and what employability skills are needed, especially in demand soft skills. Concurred with “backbone agency” concept – need to “broker” partnerships and create dashboard to measure this. We should be the place employers come for job seekers with these employability/soft skill sets. Also need to follow-up after an individual is placed on the job to make sure they are successful on the job

Mr. D'Aiuto:

Focus on how to improve business services side and make WCF more attractive to employers to increase penetration. Data gather via satisfaction surveys from the business sectors we service. Three areas of focus: 1) survey employers who are not using are services and why, 2) market high demand jobs, broaden services on this and 3) leverage partnerships with chambers, economic development organizations in the region to make sure we are strategically aligned.

Mr. Michaels:

Focus on being an example of best practices (define, design and implement) in the state. Concurred with being the "backbone" agency – we need to be collaborative and increase partnerships and relationships with the business community – we need to be the resource in our community for answers and solutions. Increase our performance measures and our survey scores with a focus on increasing services and quality – with this comes the importance of following up after the individual is hired to increase job retention and also getting low skilled workers back into training. Communication support – be proactive and use the media to our advantage. Increase support/early intervention to youth population – what is done for youth now is worth 10 times more than when they become adults. Board members should be our "champions/ambassadors" in their outreach in the community. Also look at other resources: unrestricted income, fee for service.

Mr. Sweat:

Need to be impactful and effective in the community. We need to measure our effectiveness through education, employment and economic environment – dollars spent and Return On Investment. Have a 3 year plan – using effective performance metrics that drives accountability, continued improvement and ROI.

Mr. Brewer closed with the following points:

- 1) Thanks for the hard work today.
- 2) Data collection (i.e. survey) – replace this with human interaction, bringing people together to share their information and measures.
- 3) Strategic partnerships - let third parties put WCF on their stages and vice versa.
- 4) General trend in America – non-profit sector does not need board members, we need volunteer leadership to solve problems. Focus on the mission – talk on each other's stages.