

ODEP/HSCF Annual Alliance Report

Year II: September 23, 2012 – September 23, 2013

9/22/12

I. Alliance Background

Date Signed 9/23/2011

Overview

The U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) and The HSC Foundation's (HSCF) National Youth Transitions Collaborative (the Collaborative) signed a formal Alliance agreement in recognition of the value of establishing a collaborative relationship to promote the employment of youth and veterans with disabilities. Through this formal agreement, ODEP and the Collaborative intended to provide the its members and other stakeholders with information, technical assistance and access to resources that would help build the capacity of regional and national organizations to empower youth and young veterans with disabilities to create a self-directed path to employment.

Through the Alliance, ODEP and the Collaborative worked together to achieve the following education and outreach goals:

Disseminate ODEP's and its technical assistance centers' disability employment-related policy products, trainings, and education materials on evidence-based research and effective transition practices at conferences, local meetings, forums, roundtable discussions, etc. to develop an understanding among the Collaborative members on how to help youth and young veterans with disabilities prepare for and attain competitive, integrated employment.

Jointly develop information and materials on the advancement of the employment of people with disabilities and in communicating such information to the Collaborative, nonprofit organizations, and other stakeholders serving youth and young veterans with disabilities.

Raise awareness and engage a larger community among the Collaborative, nonprofit organizations, and other stakeholders to facilitate an open dialogue and enhance partnerships that result in solutions that benefit partners, and youth and young veterans with disabilities.

The ODEP/HSCF Implementation Team members for Year II:

HSCF: Jessie MacKinnon, Vice President, Programs and Partnerships; Ryan Easterly, Manager, National Youth Transitions Initiative/HSCF Contributors: Richard Luecking, Chair, National Youth Transitions Collaborative Leadership Council and President, TransCen, Inc.; Curtis Richards, Vice-Chair of National Youth Transitions Collaborative Leadership Council and Director, Center for Workforce Development - Institute for Educational Leadership

ODEP: Laura Ibañez, Policy Advisor and Alliance Coordinator, Youth Policy Team; Carol Dunlap, Business Development Specialist, Policy and Communications & Outreach (PC&O) Team; Sara Mahoney, former Business Development Specialist, PC&O Team and WRP Lead; Amber Cheek, Presidential Management Fellow, PC&O Team; Patrick Cokley, Policy Advisor, Employer and Workplace Policy Team; Cherise Hunter, Research Analyst, Division of Policy Planning and Research, ; ETA: Jennifer Kemp, Unit Chief, Youth Policy and Performance.

This report covers the period 9.23.12-9.23.13.

II. Implementation Team Meetings

During Year II of the Alliance, three in-person team meetings were held at the National Youth Transitions Center (NYTC): March 20, 2013, July 17, 2013, and September 23, 2013. In addition to these meetings, monthly update calls were held plus project specific calls such as calls to orchestrate “DC Career Essentials”, a networking event for professionals and interns who are new to working in D.C.

III. Outcomes

Education and Outreach:

- October 16, 2012: Hosted 6 WRP interviews at NYTC to help connect highly qualified candidates with disabilities to internship opportunities with employers from both the private and federal sectors.
- April 12, 2013: Disseminated ODEP’s “Youth in Action” tip sheets through the Collaborative’s network, which includes 45 members (at the time of dissemination). Topics included: Becoming a Stronger Self-Advocate, Leading Your Transition Planning, Learning Disability History, Getting Involved in Volunteering, Serving on Decision-Making Boards, Participating in Internships, and Work-Based Experiences.

- May 9, 2013: Promoted the Campaign for Disability Employment's series of "Because" posters in the NYTC lobby (a different poster was displayed each week) to encourage parents, teachers, coaches and mentors, and future employers to increase their expectations of youth with disabilities to pursue a career and life of their choice. Photos of HSCF's lobby display were posted on CDE's Facebook page and received 2,785 people views, 74 likes, 20 shares and 60 clicks on the poster download link.
- June 11, 2013: Organized/hosted its second annual networking event, "DC Career Essentials", for 49 professionals and interns, ODEP staff delivered workshops focused on Soft Skills, Professional Branding, and Effective Communication. Twenty-eight participants attended last year's networking event.
- April - May 2013: Members provided feedback on their interest areas. Based on the feedback received, the Collaborative may consider exploring these areas in the future: 1) Enhancing members' expertise in Youth Development and Leadership, Connecting Activities, and School-based Preparatory Experiences; 2) Engaging members in policy development opportunities in order to leverage their collective power to make some positive change for youth and young veterans with disabilities.
- July 19, 2013: Promoted 2013 National Disability Awareness Employment Month (NDEAM) posters were available. The PDF versions of the posters were available in both English and Spanish plus the message also included a link to the Federal Citizen Information Center for placing orders for additional posters.
- September 12, 2013: Organized/ planned a Webinar on the Soft Skills curriculum and videos series to HSCF Collaborative members.

Policy Adoption:

- July 18, 2013: The HSC Foundation adopted the Guideposts for Success framework to assess individual Collaborative members' programmatic capacities.

IV. Conclusion of Alliance

This two-year Alliance concluded on September 23, 2013. To reflect on the accomplishments and lessons learned and celebrate the outcomes, ODEP and HSCF Alliance staff, including special guests, met at the NYTC. All were in agreement that this Alliance enabled both organizations to work together to pursue common goals related to positive change for youth with disabilities, including young veterans.

V. Beyond the Alliance

ODEP and HSCF will continue to communicate and work together. The close working relationship that was formed during the two years of this Alliance has allowed each organization to understand each other and build an ongoing supporting network. Furthermore, both ODEP and HSCF will continue to work together to advance policy development opportunities related to improving transition outcomes for youth and young veterans with disabilities.