Region 08 PY17 Annual Report

# Executive Summary

Last year has been an event packed year for the One Stop Office in Region 8, Carroll Iowa. The region focuses on creating strong partnerships by identifying common goals. Region 8 core partners have worked together to facilitate many events in efforts to provide information, workforce development resources to business and to provide valuable training to job seekers. Core Partners have worked to form relationships among agencies serving people with disabilities, local schools, Adult Education, vocational training providers and businesses. Several events focused on encouraging conversations between educators and employers. The results of these conversations helps educators create “real world” guidance and training to their students and give businesses a way to communicate local opportunities to the area’s young people.

# Regional Initiatives/Partnerships

**Initiatives and/or partnerships specific to Region 8:**

This year Region 8 won the Veteran’s Incentive Award for offering exceptional service to Veterans with special emphasis on veterans with significant barriers to employment. The Carroll IowaWORKS Center enjoys being able to help veterans in many different ways, In July a booth was set-up on a weekend guard duty to be able to reach out to 82 National Guard members. Guard members were provided with information about the services at IowaWORKS. Staff members enjoyed the opportunity to meet with Guard members and to see them work together as a team.

The One-Stop had the pleasure of working with Mark, a dislocated veteran that utilized many services in our office. He attended the Job Readiness workshops, took the NCRC test to earn a certificate, attended Job Club and performed a mock interview. Mark worked with the Career Planners to write a resume that employers noticed. He was hired as a Shift Supervisor at a local production plant; this was not his ideal job. So Mark continued to use the office to search for other opportunities. His persistence paid off and he was referred and hired as a Quality Control Inspector and loves what he is doing. Mark states this is his dream job.

All Region 8 counties are Home Based Iowa counties. Office staff is assisting all veterans to upload their resumes to the HBI site for the extra assistance in job seeking. The award prize is a trip to Washington DC for two staff members. This is the second time the Carroll IowaWORKS has won this award.

IowaWORKs, Carroll High School and Pella Industries created the Employer Educator Connection, Be Me for a Day. Local businesses were invited to be a part of a career/curriculum-specific team, engage in a dialogue, and explore options that will benefit both the students and the business. The goal of the partnership is to provide educational and career-based opportunities for the students and to give employers a chance to work with students on potential career placement. Curriculum-focused teams were formed with 30 local businesses present. Each team chose the direction of the discussions of aligning curriculum with real-world standards, offering business representatives the chance to speak to students, providing business tours and project-based learning opportunities and exploring possible internships of mentoring opportunities. Other discussion topics include looking at target areas that may be missing in current curriculum but are skill sets required for 21st century careers and looking at community trends and ways to encourage young people to stay or return to build their careers in this community. Meetings continue to share successes and move the agenda forward.

# Employer Services/Business Engagement

**Strategies used to serve businesses in Region 8:**

The Region 8 Core Partners worked to facilitate a reverse career fair. Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation, Des Moines Area Community College and Iowa Department for the Blind worked closely with IowaWORKS to plan the event that was held at the DMACC Carroll campus. The group had 9 individuals participate – 3 high school students and 6 adults. A total of 17 employers visited the career fair and shared how impressed they were with the candidates and that they were so well prepared. All of the job seekers left the reverse career fair with at least one, if not several employers interested in them. Several job seekers were given paper applications to fill out and one employer mentioned trying to create a position for one of the high school students.

IowaWORKS staff worked with Midwest Partnership Economic Development to facilitate an Employer/Educator Summit. The summit’s purpose is to start a conversation between the region’s educators and employers that leads to providing quality skills training and helps employers communicate their workforce needs and employment opportunities to the region’s young people. The summit has 280 people in attendance. Iowa Workforce Development Director Beth Townsend spoke on future ready Iowa and the skills young people will need to meet the needs of Iowa Employers. Other events of the day, A presentation “A Little of This and A Little of That” by Lisa Smith, Region XII COG Career Planner and Amber Casebeer, IWD Advisor including a guest appearance from Rick Hunsaker, Region XII COG Executive Director . Main speaker Brenda Clark Hamilton spoke about preparing young people for successful employment. A lunch was provided with donations from Smithfield in Denison, Door prizes were donated by many businesses in the region.

Midwest Partnership Economic Development, IowaWORKS and Region XII COG partnered to facilitate “Teaching for the Workforce” conference. Te 4-day event was held at sites in Adair, Audubon, Greene and Guthrie Counties, The event is an interactive program that allows K-12 educators, counselors and administrators to experience today’s workplaces and build an understanding of essential concepts for workplace success. The experience will include tours and hands-on experiences at local companies as well as discussion between educators and industry experts.

# Promising Practices and Success Stories

**Success Stories:**

Deng came to America in search of a better life than what he experienced in Sudan. He was working at a local meat packing plant when his mother passed away in Sudan. Due to the extended time he needed for his mother's funeral, he lost his job. Deng came to our office with a positive outlook on pursuing a career in truck driving. He had done a lot of research with various community colleges. Upon completing a Title 1 application and completing the required assessment and paperwork, his training was appropriate and approved. He selected the DMACC Transportation Institute for his training. Title 1 assisted him with the tuition, fees and his transportation needs. Deng was highly motivated as he had to travel to Ankeny every day to the DMACC Transportation Institute which was over 240 miles round trip five days a week for six weeks.  As training occurred, Deng would keep me informed of his progress. His excitement would increase with each call as he was eager to share his success with passing his various tests and all the learning he was doing. After the classroom instruction was completed he headed to MN where he completed the 210 hour practicum with his sponsoring company and supervised on-the-job training. Upon the completion of the on-the-job training he secured an over the road driving job on the east coast. He is thrilled to be employed and would someday like to find something in the midwest, but for now he is happy and thankful to be employed. When he was thanking me for the assistance I offered, he said, "now you are a part of my family”. I do not have anyone in Sudan anymore and you are an important person in my life".

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