



Denton County Workforce Success Leadership Meeting

4:00PM November 14, 2024

Hybrid Meeting

Welcome

Meeting called to order by Dr. Roxanne Del Rio at 4:05PM.

Yearly Accomplishments by Shelby Redondo

Ms. Redondo presents VITA results from the 2024 tax season, with \$1,318,821 in net tax refunds, and a significant increase in VITA volunteers. A new Economic Mobility Manager has been hired to oversee VITA, additionally VITA sites at Denton and Lewisville ISD are to come in 2026. Goals for the next tax season include more volunteers, as well as expanding partnerships.

Next, Economic Mobility accomplishments are presented by Ms. Redondo. 67 hours of Economic Mobility work was completed by the Economic Mobility Ambassador at VITA sites, and 35 individuals have completed the Economic Mobility Pathways training. Next steps include Economic Mobility EMPathways Training expansion for case managers with local non-profits to better track client progress and success. United Way Denton County is working with DCTA to contact legislators in order to increase transportation access to the largest employers in the county. Additionally, United Way Denton County is working with Connected Nation to increase digital literacy in the community through courses at Christian Community Action and Metrocrest Services to address digital barriers such as online job applications, virtual healthcare appointments, and online applications to social services.

Lastly, Ms. Redondo presents the success of the Job Skills Workshop led by Scott Wood. Mr. Wood spends an entire day once a quarter leading the workshop, a total of 280 hours of job readiness and skills education with 35 participants. A question is asked about whether tracking is available for the career success of the participants in the workshop. Ms. Redondo answers that most of the participants are unemployed, and tracking is not yet available. Although, they are hoping to start tracking career success with the new Economic Mobility Manager. A question is asked about whether Workforce Solutions is

able to collaborate with the Job Skills Workshop. Ms. Redondo explains that participants of the workshop are referred to Workforce Solutions at the conclusion of the workshop, however it would be beneficial for Workforce Solutions to attend the Job Skills Workshop to form a better connection.

Workgroup Updates

Childcare workgroup updates are given by Shelby Redondo. Childcare subsidies have opened in October. There is a funding ask for the Texas legislative session of \$2 billion for childcare subsidies in order to alleviate the waitlist for childcare.

Data workgroup updates are given by Dr. Leng Hwey Jeng. Christiana Davis has connected the workgroup to Sanger's Economic Development Director, who will be joining the Data Workgroup as well as the Workforce Success Leadership Team in December. Jocelyn Widmer elaborates that the workgroup is exploring obtaining regional data through a database called Light Cast. A question is asked about who may have access to the database, and Ms. Widmer explains that a license is required to utilize Light Cast, and United Way Denton County is hoping to obtain the license in order to access the data.

Economic Mobility Workgroup updates are given by Dr. Roxanne Del Rio. Dr. Del Rio celebrates that the workgroup has successfully graduated the first cohort of 8 non-profit staff earning the Economic Mobility Pathways certification. Ms. Redondo presents the new Economic Mobility Bridge, which includes "I" statements to promote ownership and self-sufficiency of the individual through the Economic Mobility process. Ms. Redondo adds that Denton County income specific data will be added to the Bridge to customize the Bridge to the county. Dr. Del Rio states that the next Job Skills Workshop will be held on December 4th, 2024. Additionally, United Way Denton County is hosting an Urban Institute Upward Mobility Framework Workshop November 22nd, 2024, from 9:00am-11:00am. The purpose of the workshop is to advance upward mobility and racial equity for individuals and communities.

Backbone Support Updates

- Denton County Behavioral Health Leadership Team is finalizing the strategic plan. The Leadership Team will have a draft of the strategic plan for the next meeting in December. The Cross Care Collaborative workgroup has formalized a recommendation for both the Behavioral Health Leadership Team as well as the Housing and Homelessness Leadership Team, focusing on the intersection of behavioral health and the criminal justice system. The Behavioral Health Leadership Team will celebrate 10 years in 2025.

- Denton County Housing and Homelessness Leadership Team is hosting several events for Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week in November. The Denton County Homeless Coalition's first Inaugural Walk will be on November 16th to benefit the Barriers fund, which directly supports ALICE households obtain or maintain housing. Additionally, Denton County Housing and Homelessness Leadership team is preparing for the Point in Time Count on January 23rd. They are looking for 200 volunteers for the count, and donations through the Amazon Wishlist.
- The Texas Veteran Commission Grant of \$300,000 was received in July, thereafter \$75,000 has been spent to assist with mortgage, rent, utilities, and car payments for 21 veterans, 1 surviving spouse, and 5 dependents.
- VITA training has begun for the 2025 tax season. The new Economic Mobility Manager will be introduced at the next Workforce Success Leadership Team meeting.

Public Comment

No public comments were addressed.

New Business

No new business was addressed.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned by Dr. Del Rio at 4:50PM.

Ling Jeng

Ling H Jeng
DCWSLT Secretary