



FIU Embrace-Employment Committee

Conference Call

Minutes from September 1, 2017

FIU Embrace-Employment Committee Members Present Telephonically

Brenda Lampon, Area Director of Miami-Dade and Monroe, Vocational Rehabilitation

Milton Vescovacci, Shareholder, GrayRobinson, P.A.

Roy Ripak, Regional Vice President of Walgreens

Yogi Hernandez Suarez, Vice President and Chief Medical Office, Care Delivery Organization of Humana

Staff Present

Elizabeth Alvite, Coordinator of Administrative Services, FIU Embrace

Lester Roviroso, Manager of Administrative Services, FIU Embrace

Nicole Attong, Director, FIU Embrace

Others Present

Deborah Chin, Manager, The Daniel Jordan Fiddle Foundation Transition and Adult Programs UM-Card

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 4:03 p.m. by the chair Milton Vescovacci. Everyone was invited to introduce themselves.

Overview

The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the items carried forward from the last committee meeting, discuss and get approval for the employment conference budget and location, and finalize the visit to the Walgreens Warehouse.

At the beginning of the meeting, the chair requested that the review and acceptance of the minutes is tabled and that the agenda is modified to discuss two items:

(a) The visit to the Walgreens Warehouse

1. Mr. Ripak shared that the purpose of this visit is to include a 2-hour tour of the Warehouse in which 53% of the 700 employees have some type of disability. Positions within the Warehouse range from auditors to supervisors, which provides meaningful employment for these individuals with disabilities. This Warehouse is the most productive Warehouse Walgreens owns across the nation

and is extremely high functioning. Mary Partin was working to have representatives from Southwest Spirits and Badia Spices to join the tour. The tour is not to exceed 12 visitors.

(b) The Employment Conference

Employment Conference Update

Milton shared that the goal of the Employment Conference is to increase awareness and encourage participation of other employers to hire individuals with intellectual disabilities and to maintain meaningful employment. The following changes to the agenda were discussed and agreed upon.

- The maximum participants will be adjusted to reflect 250 as the additional 50 spots will be reserved for Michelle Palacio to invite members of the legislature, the County Commission and local Government.
- The 9:20 am Panel *Policy Discussion* should include the Deputy Director of ACL as the “federal representative speaker” as identified by Nicole Attong as well as distinguishing Mr. Dietz, a local attorney who will focus on the tax breaks and financial incentives available to employers. Mr. Vescovacci suggested to incorporate a document produced by Autism Speaks on the analysis of federal laws that touch on the rights of individuals with disabilities. This document could be provided as a handout. Mr. Vescovacci will connect with Mr. Albert Lopez of Autism Speaks to request the document.
- The 10:30 am *Discussion* was changed from a Key Drivers panel discussion to a discussion on the *Employer’s Experience and Strategy in the employment of individuals with disabilities*. Milton indicated that he was passionate about this topic being covered in the conference. Nicole is to reach out to Mary Partin to include Mary’s suggestions of speakers, Jill Houghton, President and CEO of USBLN and a representative from ODEP.
- The 11:35 *Panel Discussion* was pending a theme and/or title, Nicole, Yogi and Milton collaboratively explored the theme “*Concept to Reality: Journey of the Good, the Bad and the Ugly*”. Committee members discussed that this panel would focus on the support provided by supported employment organizations and other entities whose goal is to work with the individual needing assistance and the employer to ensure that the employee maintains employment and integrates into the organizations culture.
- During lunch each table will have a topic area and a moderator will facilitate the discussion. A student will take notes and all the information will be compiled and shared with the committee after the conference.
- The Keynote was switch to immediately following lunch (approx. 1:40pm).
- The panel discussion after the 3:30 pm break was replaced with Yogi and a potential individual employer to do the closing remarks. Yogi will close the conference with the call to action.

The budget of the Conference including venues, meals and the travel of the speakers was reviewed by the committee. The total estimated cost of hosting the Conference at the FIU-

MMC Graham Center Ballrooms is estimated to be about \$40,000 with the understanding that law enforcement fees will need to be factored into the budget. This cost will be based on the type and number of dignitaries attending the conference. FIU Embrace will cover the costs of the honorariums, flight and hotel of speakers included affected individuals

Milton Vescovacci motioned to approve the FIU-MMC Graham Center Ballrooms as the venue for the Conference as well as approval to move forward with the projected budget for the Employment Conference. Mr. Ripak seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Establish Tasks

Based on the goals of the committee, the committee agreed to focus on the following tasks:

1. Mr. Ripak will provide additional dates for the visit to the Walgreens Warehouse in Connecticut as the dates provided did not work for all parties.
2. In accordance with the Employment Conference, the committee agreed to focus on the following tasks:
 - Milton will reach out to Mr. Albert Lopez regarding use and distribution of the document Autism Speaks produced on the federal laws that touch on the rights of individuals with disabilities.
 - Nicole will connect with Dr. Shanna Burke and Mary Partin regarding the implementation of the contacts Mary suggested in the 10:30 am discussion. Additionally, Nicole will speak to and confirm panel speakers from the 9:20 am panel discussion.
 - The next FIU Embrace-Employment Subcommittee Conference Call will focus on sponsorships, the conference agenda and the speakers at the Employment Conference.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 5:16 p.m. by the chair Milton Vescovacci.