

DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

Office of the Director

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WIC Advisory Committee
DRAFT - MINUTES OF MEETING
February 27, 2024

Via Tele/Video-Conference and In-Person Attendance

In Attendance:**DIR Staff**

Sulma Guzman, DIR Deputy Director of
Legislation and Regulatory Affairs
Luang Chau, DIR Labor Commissioners Office
Legal Unit
Teresa Bichsel, DIR Labor Commissioners
Office Attorney
Sean Ahearn, DIR Office of Legislation and
Regulatory Affairs
Raul Galvan, DIR Division of Apprenticeship
Standards
Eva Dimenstein, DIR Cal-OSHA Compliance
Adele Burnes, DIR Deputy Chief of Division of
Apprenticeship Standards
Vanessa Soto, DIR Office of External Affairs

Committee Members:

Rashida Harmon, Senior Council with CA Civil
Rights Department Outreach & Education
Unit
Meg Vasey, Tradeswomen taskforce
Sheri Learmonth, CEO of Marina Mechanical
Ashley Matthews, Special Projects Manager
for Fresno Regional Workforce Dev. Board
Julia Hatton, CEO of Rising Sun Center for
Opportunity
Maria Coronado, Western States Regional
Carpenter Council Carpenters
Donna Rehrmann, CFO of Stomper Company

I. Welcome and Introductions

Sulma Guzman, DIR Deputy Director of Legislation and Regulatory Affairs

II. Approval of November 2023 Meeting Minutes

- A. Motion: Approval of June 2023 Minutes
- B. Vote: Meg Vasey motioned to approve, Maria Coronado seconded.

III. Division of Apprenticeship Standards Update

Adele Burnes, DIR Deputy Chief of Division of Apprenticeship Standards

- A. Important Staffing Changes: DAS has hired new staff relevant to the committee.
 - o Lisette Cruz, equity and inclusion apprenticeship consultant, former

apprentice.

- Richard Robles, area administrator
- Amanda Hodges, apprenticeship consultant
- Jean Marie Duval, apprenticeship consultant
- Raul Poble, apprenticeship consultant
- Michael Rolfe, apprenticeship consultant
- Justin Dinade, apprenticeship consultant
- More staff coming, including someone specifically assigned to supporting the ERiCA Grants.

B. Ab2358 update

- Background: Passed in 2018, Ab2358 enabled DAS to account for EEO considerations during its support and review of CAC related programs.
- Rules package due to be finalized today by OAL.

C. More Gender Representation Data

- 3.95% of new CAC apprentices in 2023 identified as women, up from 3.73% in 2022.
- For CAC building apprenticeships, the percentage was 3.81% in 2023, up from 3.56% in 2022.
 - Looking at trendline, the percentage of new CAC building trade apprentices identified as women has returned to its pre-pandemic numbers, although it is still below its high of 3.87% in 2018. The raw number of new female CAC apprentices is also still below the 2018 and 2019 numbers.
 - Meg Vasey asked if the number showed new registrations as apprentices or new indentures, explained the difference. Adele Burnes said it was new registrations, but noted that they plan to present the data for retained and completed in future
- DAS showed table breaking down new registrations by trade, expressed regret that table did not show completion rates.
 - Meg Vasey asked if DAS had a chance to look at individual high-performing, high-percentage programs, expressed value in such data. Adele Burnes replied not yet, too many programs to look at.

IV. **ERiCA Grant Update**

Adele Burnes, DIR Deputy Chief of Division of Apprenticeship Standards

- A. We now have two quarters of data reported.

- 1st quarter activity didn't have much data, but 2nd quarter (q4 2023) has substantial information.
 - Still waiting on childcare program information.
- B. DAS has worked with OEA on outreach materials. Presentation by Vanessa Soto on behalf of OEA that reviews several programs.
- Build California:
 - 65 activations/total of 117 activations since May 1 2023
 - 148 individuals completed at least one online academy course from website, of which 32% were female
 - 6.4 impressions within California through Meta Ads platform, of which 48% were women.
 - Carpenters Training Trust Fund for Northern California
 - Three apprentices are part of first cohort of Apprenticeship Trailblazers
 - San Diego and Imperial Counties Electrical Training Institute
 - 1089 interactions
 - San Diego Community Building Trades Council
 - 14 Scholarships to apprentice and journey-level women in trades to attend annual Tradeswomen Build Nations Conference.
 - TradesWomen
 - Reached 100 women via outreach presentations, career fairs, etc.
 - 4 Apprenticeship Workshop events, 25 outreach presentations
 - Rosie The Riveter Trust Certification Awards Dinner.
 - CA State Building and Construction Trade Council
 - Visited 8 of 8 Joint Apprenticeship and Training Centers participating in the ERiCA grant.
 - Comment in Chat: "Program by Program avg. retention rates for men and women are available at DAS"

V. WIC Workplan and Timeline – Facilitated Discussion

- A. During previous meeting, there was a large discussion about establishing timelines, goals, committee mandates, etc. This discussion is a brainstorming session to follow up on those questions.
- B. Recap of Labor Code Sec. 107.7.1 which provides legislative mandate. Says the committee should develop recommendations to be presented to DIR. Doesn't specify timeline, offers flexibility within the framework of the mandate.

C. Opening question to committee members: Do you know what you want the recommendations to look like? Or do you need more information?

- Meg Vasey sought clarification on what unit of the DIR the WAC committee recommendations would go to, pushed for deliverable, measurable goals such as doubling the number of women in construction, specifically, and a focus specifically on women with “tools” vs professional women in construction or female business owners.
 - Laid out a 5 step plan.
 - Set goals (Committee is here)
 - Sulma Guzman asked for clarification if these five goals were for the committee, or for DIR. Meg said these were more stages.
 - Identify major barriers for women (Mostly done already)
 - Look at pipelines for women to go into trades and identify barriers or bottlenecks.
 - Identify best actors to apply leverage to address the bottlenecks.
 - Make specific recommendations for action, not just to DIR but informally to others too.
 - Measure DIR’s progress in the broader stages every year.
- Julia Hatton noted the lack of ways and lack of funding to measure the impact of the childcare programs, worried it might stymie efforts to get more funding. It takes funding to do the analysis
- Donna Rehrmann recounted experiences mentoring high school girls, asked if DIR could facilitate more outreach on a high school level
- Maria Coronado shared outreach experiences she saw as successful, specifically the program Career Connections, which gets the word out about carpentry to high schoolers and turns out second level apprentices. She expressed a need to offer support to women already in trades and boost retention, for instance sending text messages to trades women, offering mentorship, possibly a letter from the Governor on completion of program; Urged broadening and stiffer enforcement of DEI mandates for anyone entering construction.
- Julia Hatton seconded Maria Coronado’s points, expressed a need to change the workplace culture of construction, which goes beyond training. One way to shift the culture is normalizing ideas like childcare stipends or on-site childcare but deferred to other committee members on how to accomplish this.
 - Ashley Matthews offered ideas: Meeting with training programs or

other all women cohorts for feedback on what they are seeing; inviting partner programs to present, like her own and Julia's, to see what has been successful; and creating a resource connections database or networking system.

- Cruz Lissette pushed for having “boots on the ground” to know what is actually happening in industry; uniformity of programs, closing gap between training and industry practice; ensuring standards already laid out are met; and fostering trade connections with counselors and consultants.
- Meg Vasey noted that existing Federal regulations of apprenticeship programs mandate DEI training for all journeyperson and interacting contractors. The state has parallel regulations passed in 2017. The state does not necessarily need new DEI rules, but WIC can use help with the implementation of existing rules from DIR or other government entities. Perhaps change can come through better implementing or enforcing of existing rules. At least programs need to hear DEI complaints and respond to complaints that come up.
 - Sulma asked Meg to clarify if she meant that every apprenticeship program needs to have a response and tracking process for harassment. Meg responded that yes, *some* process is required under state and federal codes. Having a process is supposed to be part of their regular audits, but the regs are not yet in place. Sulma noted that this is an area that may benefit from a model plan
- Sheri Learmonth seconded concerns about workplace culture impact on women. Said that as an employer, it is the employer's responsibility to ensure a proper work culture, and that apprentices are afraid to tell the program because they may be “blackballed.” How do we empower them so they don't have that fear?
 - Sulma asked Sheri to clarify what would happen if an apprentice reported an issue, and what she meant by “blackballing.” Sheri responded that the typical situation is that a female apprentice faces an issue, the program learns and wants to do something about it, but the apprentice doesn't proceed for fear of being blacklisted by other employers within the same trade or jurisdiction.
- Meg Vasey gave an example of blackballing. In a small local union where everyone knows everyone else, the person you want to complain about has connections to the apprenticeship coordinator or the business manager. Nobody hires you again. Even in larger unions, everybody talks and shares information about workers. Went on to note that the complaint structure puts onus of action, and responsibility or backlash, on the person going forward to make a complaint. There are programs that

owners, especially public owners, can engage with to make these changes. This may be outside of the committee's scope, though, so are there non-regulatory leverage points that can be used?

- Maria Coronado honed in on phrase "leverage points." Recounted similar anecdotes about reluctance to go on record. Along with resources, networking, and a place incidents can be reported, she recommended a field taskforce of "ninja"-like investigators; encouragement of real consequences for infractions and accountability frameworks.
- Cruz Lissette recounted a proposed program called the Green Dot Program, that marks people who have received DEI training with a green dot on their hardhat so they can't feign ignorance.

VI. Discussion

A. Sulma Guzman summarized the discussion:

- Meg's 5 stages: 1. Set measurable goals, 2. Identify major barriers, 3. Create pipelines for women to navigate getting into construction, and identify bottlenecks and where DIR can do the most to overcome those bottlenecks, 4. Identify leverage points, 5. Develop specific recommendations for actions in both short and long-term goals
- The desire to evaluate the EriCA grants specific to the success of childcare funding
- Outreach to highschoolers and others, give thought to how to get the word out
- Not only identify how to get women into programs but how do we get them to stay? Through networks, support, addressing worksite harassment or discrimination
- Protections exists, but a possible model plan that can be shared with employers, as they play a critical role in ensuring a safe workplace
- Address the very real risks women face if they come forward with these types of complaints, like blackballing and having to face off against corporate lawyers
- Signaling on the jobsite what type of training each individual has received
- Wants to take up Julia and Ashley's offer to present information about their programs.

B. Review of chat messages:

- Luang Chau from LCO shared a link to a 2021 report with recommendations to improve worksite culture.

- We need more employers like Sheri.
- Donna identified the barrier on the pipeline information
- Top down training for company leadership and bottom-up training for workers.
- Need for more women in industry leadership.
- “Third stage of pipeline journey out. Continuous employment works, site culture challenges. Continuous skills, acquisition, professional leadership.”
- Green Dot Program started in Portland, OR, has spread to other states via Rise Up.
 - Sulma expressed interest in hearing from Rise Up at the next meeting.

C. What should the next meeting look like?

- Meg Vasey wants the committee to agree on the measurements they will track, e.g., apprenticeship entry, apprenticeship retention, women in union leadership? And the data that supports where we are now, as well as what we will be tracking in the future
- Julia Hatton asked about how to get in front of more employers.
 - Meg Vasey followed up by asking about how to get contractor input. How do they look at this and what do they think are practicable places to make change?
 - Sulma asked if Meg was suggesting that the committee invite contractors to the meeting. Yes, Meg suggested asking big general contractors, industry reps, contractor associations, specifically mechanical sub-contractors, and ask them specifically to how to make worksite culture to improve the number of women on their jobs.
- Sulma recapped suggestions and repeated that she wants to invite Ashley and Julia to present. Also interest in having a presentation from Rise Up. In next meeting the conversation can continue on where the committee can assist and what the committee needs to identify and deliver these recommendations to DIR.

VII. Public Comment (Limited to 3 min per person)

- A. No public comments.

VIII. Adjournment

- A. Scheduling next meeting, avoiding overlap with the California Conference on Apprenticeship Convention, April 30-May 3