



PLANNING COUNCIL MEETING

Monday, August 13th, 2018

12:30 – 2:00pm

Rio Grande Legal Aid Conference Room, 4920 I-35, Austin, TX Texas

Attendees: Helen Gaebler, Kenneth Thompson (TxDFPS), Michelle Collins (Integral Care), Reggie Smith (Community Representative), Bree Williams (ECHO), Sara Worthington (TRLA), Rebecca Farrell (Community Representative), Darla Gay (Travis County District Attorney), Cathy McLaugherty (Travis County Justice & Public Safety), Mary Moran (TCSO) Sherri Cogbill (Texas Department of Criminal Justice), Laura Henderly (APH) Wes Jurey (Redemption Bridge), Garrett Groves (ACC), Don Tracy (ACC), Sarah Binion (Defy Ventures), Annette Price, Francene Helaire, Jaime Rodriguez

Support: Kelly Nichols, (WNA), Laylee Safa (WNA), Tray Frazier (Roundtable Fellow)

I. **Introductions (Kenneth Thompson)**

Kenneth Thompson called the meeting to order at 12:38pm and facilitated a round of introductions.

II. **Vote: July 2018 Minutes (Kenneth Thompson)**

Bree moved to approve the July 2018 minutes. Rebecca Farrell seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

III. **Recognition of Annette Price's Contributions to the Roundtable as Advocacy Fellow (Helen Gaebler)**

Helen and Kenneth thanked Annette for her outstanding service as a A/TCRRT Advocacy Fellow and presented her with a certificate of appreciation. Annette is now the Texas Advocates for Justice statewide coordinator at Grassroots Leadership.

IV. **Update and Discussion on the *Developing Talent Pipelines* partnership (Garrett Groves, Austin Community College and Wes Jurey, Redemption Bridge)**

Reggie and Kelly shared that they were recently invited by ACC's Garrett Groves to discuss how the Roundtable's efforts on second chance employment could potentially align with ACC's workforce development and certification offerings. ACC and Redemption Bridge are currently focusing on moving 10,000 Central Texans out of poverty and into higher paying jobs by creating new pathways to the workforce. Wes Jurey discussed his work as the Founder and Executive Director of Redemption Bridge, a non-profit intermediary, focused on establishing new models for Workforce Development, capable of meeting the unmet demand for specific types of workers, inclusive of youth & adult offenders and Veterans.

Emphasis was placed on the importance of building a collaborative environment that serves every partner and eliminates silos. Efforts will start with the creation of a formal steering committee to bring together key stakeholders (such as school districts, local chambers of commerce, etc.) to get their buy-in. The next step involves putting a formal educational structure

and pipeline to employment in place. It will be essential to build awareness within industry partnerships of the potential benefits as well as special needs involved in hiring underserved populations like veterans and individuals coming out of incarceration.

The group discussed potential barriers to entering specific trades, including licensing restrictions for individuals exiting incarceration. Logistics and manufacturing do not currently have such licensing restrictions in place. Construction and IT do currently have restrictions barring individuals exiting incarceration but work could be done to push back on this legislatively.

It is important to keep in mind that a lack of barriers for certification does not necessarily mean a lack of barriers to employment. One of the biggest challenges can be a lack of understanding on the part of employers. It will be essential to the success of this program to have early buy in from employment consortiums on providing second chance employment opportunities. Matchmaking will be done on the back end to ensure that this training program will in fact lead to employment. ACC plans to leverage a model that already exists in this community doing HVAC training with adults. Employers are engaged with students from day one in the classroom. Tying training directly to employers has led to high hiring rates overall.

To be successful, ancillary services such as soft skill support, childcare, transportation, and housing will need to be considered. Outreach will need to be done to find out the needs of each community. Support for employers will need to be in place as well. Efforts must be tailored to fit each unique region; a one-size-fits-all approach simply won't be successful.

The price tag for certified production technician training at Lockhart women's facility training is currently estimated at \$1,500, while HVAC training at Georgetown is approximately \$3,000. It will be important to find a sustainable model for funding so that price can be brought down. The hope is that businesses and prisons will be motivated to fund tuition because of the money they will save in the long run by participating in this type of program.

Garrett shared that they are working to launch a pilot project to provide education within the Lockhart Prison. By September, there should be a plan in place on how to provide certification training within the prison that will eventually expand into multiple occupational sectors and move beyond entry level.

Reentry Roundtable could explore potentially partnering with Redemption Bridge and ACC to build capacity to do some of this work in a sustainable manner. Planning Council members raised important questions that would need to be addressed before getting involved: What sort of support will be needed to help folks get and keep these jobs? How will we ensure the inclusivity of this program? How do we help individuals establish more than just a job but a career that might equate to more economic stability?

ACTION: Rebecca Farrell will talk to Don Tracy, Director of Continuing Education at ACC, about this. She shared that he is interested in joining the Planning Council.

V. Strategic Plan Update & Discussion – Goal #1: Community Engagement (Tray Frazier and Kelly Nichols)

It has been a year since the strategic plan was developed. For the next few meetings, the Planning Council will briefly discuss progress on each goal.

Kelly reported on several community engagement opportunities RRT seized over the past year, including partnering with CAN on educational events, cohosting a screening of the documentary *Untouchable*, engaging with the Statewide Reentry Conference, RAP Speaks with Wildflower Church in South Austin, participating in Second Chance month, appearing on Kenneth's radio show, and co-sponsoring a Texas disabilities forum with UT.

At the moment, community engagement efforts are focused on reaching out to three contacts in Pflugerville, Northwest Travis County (Jonestown), Manor, and Del Valle. Additional contacts are needed at this time.

ACTION: Michelle Collins email Kelly and Tray about a connection she has in Del Valle.

ACTION: Kenneth will connect Kelly to a contact of his in Jonestown.

ACTION: Kelly will reach out to Emmaus Catholic Church in Lakeway as they do robust prison outreach and may be a good contact. They may also be able to share information on others within the faith community doing social justice work that aligns with the Planning Council's mission.

VI. Misc. Announcements and Roundtable

Sara Binion, Director, Monitoring & Evaluation for Defy Ventures, shared information on her organization with the Planning Council. Defy Ventures has built a six to eight month program around job readiness that can be completed in or outside of prison and be utilized by any level of. Sara invited the group to reach out to her with any questions they may have.

ACTION: Laylee will send out the Defy Ventures brochure to the Planning Council.

VII. Meeting adjourned at 1pm.

Planning Council Meeting

September 10th, 2018

12:30 – 2:00pm

Ending Community Homelessness Coalition (300 E. Highland Mall Blvd.)