

Youth Council Meeting Minutes

Tuesday

April 15, 2025

12:00 PM - 2:00 PM

Huntington One-Stop

Meeting Facilitator: Heather Merritt - Youth Supervisor/ SNAP E&T Case Manager

Present: Bradlee Jordan, Kaitlyn Blankenship, Rachel Patterson, Tonya Wallace, Sara Hatfield, Christina Adkins, Brian Hankins, Jeff Miracle, and Beth McCulloch. Region 2 Staff: Melissa Bias, Malissa Dishman, Heather Merritt, and Courtney Harrison; Region 2 WIB Youth: Bryanna Farnsworth, Samantha Arbogast, Michelle Raney, and Alexis Miller. Attending virtually: Amanda Brubaker.

Call to Order: Melissa Bias – Executive Director Region 2 Workforce Investment Board

Minutes: There was a motion to approve the minutes from our last meeting on March 18, 2025, by Bradlee Jordan and Kaitlyn Blankenship seconded the motion.

Region 2 Youth Report:

- Melissa Bias shared the Region 2 WIB needs youth for the youth program. Please share any information with us of any youth you may know who could use our assistance.

Guest Speakers introduced by Heather Merritt, Youth Supervisor:

- **Christina Adkins (Prester)**- Christina is the Regional Drug Control Policy Coordinator. She explained the overdoses taking place amongst the youth in our middle and high schools, as well as our colleges. (ADHD meds is just 1 source of youth overdoses.) Christina told us to be aware of the Spike Alert, which they send out through the state. A spike alert means: the average of overdoses occurring at the time is really high above the average. A predictive spike alert means: the state knows certain places correlate; so, Franklin County or Columbus, Ohio, correlates here. If overdoses start occurring in those places, within 32 to 36 hours the spike overdoses will begin occurring here. If we hear of a predictive spike happening, alert others that there is a bad batch of drugs in town and have Narcan on hand to administer to the community. Christina gave Narcan Training at the end of the Youth Council Meeting.

- **Sara Hatfield (Dress for Success)**- “Our mission is to empower women by providing them with a network of support, professional attire, and making sure they have all the tools & resources they need to thrive at not only work but life as well. We are a Global Organization with affiliates in over 142 cities across 21 countries. Locally our affiliate, River Cities, was started in 2006 by a women’s studies class at Marshall University. We have served nearly 10,000 women in our community. We need volunteers. We accept and need business casual clothing donations, of all sizes, Monday through Wednesday from 10am-4pm at: 541 9th St. Huntington, WV.”

Youth Presentation:

- **Heather Merritt** began by introducing the 4 youth who are working with R2 WIB on Work Experience Contracts and their goals/accomplishments: Bryanna, Alexis, Michelle, & Samantha. Heather also gave an update on Brock, who is working on his CDL’s, and the twins, Quinton and Zachary, who are at Goodwill working on Work Experience Contracts.
- **Courtney Harrison** updated us on Autumn, who has now completed all of her training and is planning to begin working with us on a W.E. Contract next week. Courtney has also been working with Preston and Dakota who are working on completing Penn Foster High School. Heather and the Youth Career Planners informed everyone of the outreach they have been attending.

Open Floor Discussion

- **Dress For Success River Cities: Spring Overstock Sale! May 17th from 10am-5pm.**

Adjourned at 1:14pm

Respectfully Submitted by Malissa Dishman