Diversity and Inclusion

Promoting Equity: Targeted Outreach to Vulnerable Populations – Celina Shands, Full Capacity Marketing, and Maryanne Conlin, Full Capacity Marketing

Diversity, equity and inclusion are woven into the fabric of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act in serving some of the most vulnerable populations. Yet, the pandemic has created the necessity for workforce and education providers to re-evaluate traditional outreach methods (community events, office walk-ins) that are no longer effective in reaching these target audiences. This session is designed to help participants understand why a new recruitment lens is required during COVID-19 and how to: 1) use a formula to create personas and effective messages that engage vulnerable populations; 2) apply the messages to the best virtual mediums to maximum exposure for your programs; and 3) rethink your website and create a simple recruitment landing page to generate leads. Case studies and an outreach toolkit will be shared to deploy an effective recruitment campaign to boost enrollments among vulnerable populations.

Career Coaching for Spanish Speakers – Celia Garcia, Jobs Skills Institute

For Latinos in the workplace, many barriers and stereotypes keep them in a revolving door to outdated jobs with no clear career path. It is not enough to merely find employment today. To be successful in the new world of work, they need better quality work opportunities, upskilling, and higher wages. This workshop will cover many social, economic, educational, and workforce strategies that need to be utilized when addressing the Latino English learner (EL) target population to support their transition to new careers and entrepreneurial options that can reposition them for increased wages and continued career advancement. Career coaches will learn to build an inventory of businesses that will hire support and upskills Latinos in the workforce.

The Need for And Power Of Racial Equity In WD Circles! – Coach D, Darrell Andrews LLC

Workforce Development has the unique ability to be center stage for the topic of Racial Equity in the workplace. Our ability to help job seekers of color achieve academic outcomes, engage in job training and find meaningful employment, is a game-changer relating to DEI. This powerful workshop will provide attendees with the tools to better understand, create, advocate for and establish equitable systems in workforce development circles and within our organization. Racial Equity is not as difficult as many have made it, there is a more inclusive way of communicating this topic that focuses more on the misunderstanding than the belief in racism.

People need to have conversations on this topic, not intensive training that causes them to tune out. This workshop will provide instruction on how to accomplish Racial Equity Systems in a manner that is beneficial to all.
How Colorado is Cultivating an Equitable Workforce Ecosystem – Hannah Matthys, Colorado Department of Labor and Employment, and Rudy Sanchez, Colorado Department of Labor and Employment

Please join us as we walk through the powerful Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) “learning journey” that we have led at the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment. It is a journey that includes a long history of EDI efforts, a strong values-based culture, and strategic EDI initiatives that have helped to cultivate a teachable heart for Colorado’s entire workforce ecosystem. We invite you to come celebrate our journey, and we hope you find some inspiration of your own, along the way!

As workforce professionals, we believe that we are uniquely positioned to lead the way in this most important work. As we work toward connecting jobseekers, educators, and business to advance the American economy, it is important to level the playing field by giving “everyone a chance” to succeed and thrive, not just the select few. This is the true power of equity and inclusion!

We are excited to share our learned experiences and strategies with you. Whether you just starting your EDI journey, or you are well on your way to creating positive cultural change, this workshop is for you.

Five Truths About Racism and How It Impacts Workforce – Mike Fazio, Workforce 180 LLC and Mahdi Davenport, CEO of Soul Focused Group

To create systemic change, we first need to alter the thoughts and actions of people who comprise the system. The system is comprised of everyone and everything that makes up our communities that we each serve. The workshop examines the role of racism in our subconscious programming and empowers you to take responsibility and action for the inequitable outcomes that racism creates. This workshop encourages attendees to confront subconscious racial programming and heal from racism’s ugliness to build a more equitable workforce development future. The workforce system is designed to help everyone the same, but is equality the same as equity? Learn what can we do as workforce professionals to assist employers and our participants--as well as our coworkers--to understand the need for more education and empowerment to achieve meaningful change which can impact outcomes. A truly inspirational workshop experience once you know the facts.

Strategies for Equity and Inclusion: COVID-19 and Beyond – Brian Ingram, National Disability Institute, and Melissa Turner, U.S. Department of Labor Office of Disability and Employment Policy (ODEP)

During COVID-19, many American Job Centers and core workforce system partners shifted to virtual services. COVID-19 highlighted the accommodation needs of people with challenges to employment, including people with disabilities, and the workforce staff who support them. This interactive session will provide resources that support the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act’s (WIOA’s) Section 188 equal opportunity and non-discrimination requirements. Presenters from the LEAD/WIOA Policy Development Center and the Office of Disability Employment Policy will discuss effective COVID-19-related and general accommodation practices based on real scenarios and provide examples of successful implementation of equal opportunity policies, procedures, and practices implemented by workforce staff and partners across all four WIOA Titles. LEAD’s work has included:

• Collaborative training to promote a cross-systems approach that supports job seekers, AJC staff, and
partners.
• Use of case scenarios related to services during COVID-19 and beyond.
• Promising and proven practices from the field.

Creating Trauma Informed Workplaces is Equity at Work – Janell Thomas, National Fund for Workforce Solutions, and Greg Martinez, Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership

As a nation we are living through a period of collective trauma. But even before COVID, too many U.S. workers—disproportionately people of color—were living with toxic stress and trauma. In order to be truly inclusive and equitable, workplaces need to be trauma informed to meet the needs of employees and communities. This area is still very new to workforce development. Leveraging the expertise of a diverse trauma-informed working group convened by the National Fund for Workforce Solutions, this session will introduce how toxic stress and trauma show up at work and outline steps and provide frameworks that other workforce systems can use to begin their journey to becoming trauma informed. Presenters Janell Thomas of the National Fund and Greg Martinez of the Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership, both members of the working group, will highlight the Trauma Informed Approaches Guide and the Workforce Development Trauma Informed Care Toolkit which outlines steps and provides the tools other workforce systems can replicate to begin their journey to becoming trauma informed.


The purpose of this session is to provide workforce system professionals with strategies to increase equity and access in the workforce. The session will cover how we can advance workforce development through diversity, equity, and inclusion by building a talent pipeline that is reflective of our society. This session will also provide insight on how to create metrics for DEI in workforce development, especially considering WIOA performance metrics, leading to understanding how policies that are barriers to equity and inclusion exist and can be changed. Participants will also learn how to have effective and safe conversations about race relations in the workplace.