

Subregional Roundtable – November 16, 2023

Hosted at YSEDC and via Zoom

Attendees

YSEDC	Brynda Stranix Cynthia Roderick	bstranix@ysedc.org croderick@ysedc.org
PG&E	Johnnise Foster-Downs	jdfd@pge.com
Regional Housing Authority	Gustavo Becerra	g.becerra@regionalha.org
Sutter County One Stop	Rinky Basi	rbasi@sutter.k12.ca.us
Yuba-Sutter Chamber of Commerce	Janelle Willis	jwillis@yubasutterchamber.com
Alliance for Hispanic Advancement	Rose Mary Avila	ravila@ozhomeloans.com
Center for Worker's Rights	Daniela Urban	daniela.urban@rightscenter.org
EIC	Jesus Mata Maikhou Thao	jesus@everydayimpactconsulting.com maikhou@everydayimpactconsulting.com
Civic Tread	Sherrel Branch Pristina Zhang Kiara Reed Xitalaliti Shafer	Sbranch@civictread.org pzhang@civictread.org kreed@civictread.org xshafer@civictread.org
Valley Vision	Evan Schmidt Maritessa Bravo Ares	evan.schmidt@valleyvision.org maritessa.ares@valleyvision.org

Valley Vision Presentation: Evan Schmidt

Evan provided a slide presentation to describe the strategies, goals and objectives of California Jobs First (CERF) Program for the Capital Region.

Key priorities

- High Quality Jobs – creating jobs and pathways into those jobs.
- Equity-centered – having processes and resources centered around disinvested communities.
- Low Carbon Transition – working to transition to a lower carbon economy.
- Catalyze Investments – to bring in investment from Federal Government, private financing, and foundation grants to build capacity and investments infrastructure and other shovel ready projects.

Challenges

- Increasing economic disparities across all types of demographics.
- Increasing negative impacts to environment and health due to climate crisis such as wildfires, flood, etc.

Solution

- Create a shared regional vision.
- Center the voices of those who are experiencing disparities. To address issues those who have been historically excluded and who will benefit from the program.
- Create more high-quality jobs in sustainable industries.

Goals

- Create a collaborative enabling our region to make collective decisions. 130 organizations involved to date and still growing.
- Produce a regional roadmap for economic development by prioritizing the creation of accessible, high-quality jobs in sustainable industries.
- Attract investments into the region from diverse sources to maximize impacts.
- Create high-quality jobs to support economic growth and equity.

Align with the YSEDC's CEDS.

YSEDC presentation – Brynda Stranix

See attached Presentation slides. This slide deck identifies changes already made to reach the greater populations of Punjabi and Spanish speakers.

Purpose

Determine information desired from low-wage workers in Yuba and Sutter Counties that would support Tactic 2 of Goal 2 in the CEDS "Improve Understanding of All Ethnic Cultures that Live and Work Within or Visit the Region."

Background

Challenges are employers and workers have two different points of perspectives and speaking different languages. Employers are thinking about the overall success, longevity and growth of their business which would include labor talent and labor costs. Whereas low-wage workers are looking at stability and their everyday survival. We are looking to develop realistic questions that benefit both the economic community, the business community and workforce partners and yet convey the needs of the worker population.

Some of the questions to ask employers might be

- How could an employer be more sensitive to the cultural needs of the worker population?
- What networks are available or needed by businesses? Such as interpreter services or address workforce issues with employees in a language that the worker could understand.

Some of the questions to ask employee would be:

- Do you trust the job when you are applying or accepting a position? Is it based on where the job is posted, friends or relatives have worked there before?
- What would encourage you to leave your job to seek a higher quality job? CWR has found that their clients are not willing to leave their jobs due to stability regardless of the potential to improve their position due to the uncertainty of a new job, cultural changes etc.
- Would a committee of existing employees help alleviate this issue?
- Do they prefer larger employers, smaller employers, centralized HR or diffused HR.

Open discussion

Rinky Basi – Sutter County One-Stop

Although we do offer translation services, they are limited by the employers who are willing or able to accommodate this service, which makes it difficult to transition new employees into a position. However, a good example of an employer who took a regional view when hiring the 1300 employees

and collaborated with local workforce agencies to ensure the potential employees understood the culture of Hard Rock Hotel and Casino. Possibly educating employers of the workforce that is available to them and possibly developing a model for employers to follow.

Rose Mary Avila – Alliance for Hispanic Advancement (AHA)

Of the seasonal workers, the greatest issue they had was transportation to work areas. Some were paying as much as \$35 a day for transportation, which is a substantial portion of their daily paycheck. Perhaps there could be a way to work with employers in this sector to develop transportation for their employees or work with Yuba-Sutter Transit to develop routes to main agriculture areas and have employers arrange to pick up at these locations and transport them. This would improve their take-home pay and provide stability. This also would help with carbon emissions.

Daniella Urban – CWR

This issue with transportation is a good example of the need to identify and understand the barriers workers are facing to help determine which questions we need to ask to formulate a solution. Hard Rock is an excellent example of overcoming barriers, and it would be helpful to find out how they address them. Also, to develop the strategy to get the buy-in from both the employer and the employees. What the employers need. Is economic support, resources etc.

Brynda Stranix – YSEDC

Will reach out to Hard Rock to possibly use their methods as a model for others to use. Possibly lean on Hard Rock and their employees to share their hiring experience and work experience.

Rose Mary Avilia – Alliance for Hispanic Advancement (AHA) & Janelle Willis – YS Chamber of Commerce Partnering with Hispanic Chamber of Commerce who has a 12-week program and resources available to assist employers to address workforce issues, and HR. They possibly would have a series of questions to ask workers and would share with the group.

Daniella Urban – CWR

This meeting purpose is developing understanding what questions where the answers would be important to businesses. We already know that they want higher wages, but this response is a conversation ender and is not helpful to businesses or to develop a strategy. Examples of this would be high turnover, issues with transportation, and digging deeper into the why.

Brynda asked Johnnie Foster Downs (PG&E) if she could reach out to their HR to put a list of questions together that would be helpful for the process and answers they would be needing as well.

Gus Beccera – RHA

Mr. Beccera stated that as an organization who serves low-income with affordable housing and serves the hard-to-reach populations. He offered his organization to be a conduit for outreach. A lot of the properties have community centers which could be utilized to assist the targeted population.

Additional questions discussed

What would it take to have you become documented, so you become hireable?

What is it that is holding you back?

Post-meeting tasks

- YSEDC provides time period for CEDS committee members to provide more feedback on potential questions to low-wage workers and holds them to that deadline
- YSEDC sends information to CERF Subregional Partners
- Outreach questions developed by CWR based on the information from the CEDS committee. CWR sends to CERF Subregional partners for feedback
- CWR begins outreach on these questions