

# Partner4Work

Executive Committee 8:00AM July 29, 2019

412-430-0330; 529031

1. Welcome and call to order

*Dave Malone*

2. General Business

**ACTION:** Approve the Minutes from April 3, 2019, Executive Session

3. Service Delivery

*McCrae Martino*

**ACTION:** Approve policy changes as recommended by the Service Delivery Committee. (Summary of recommendations appear on pages 3-8.)

4. Contract Recommendations

*P4W Staff*

**ACTION:** Approve a \$550,000 contract award to EDSI for the Work Ready Program from Oct. 1, 2019, to Sept. 30, 2019, with the option to renew for three additional years at the discretion of P4W.

(Summary of recommendation begins on page 9.)

**ACTION:** Approve a \$164,200 contract award to Point Park University to serve between 50-75 TANF eligible students in PY19-20, with an option to renew for three additional years at the discretion of P4W.

(Summary of recommendation appears on page 12.)

**ACTION:** Approve a \$149,400 contract award to Keep it Simple to build capacity in building and sustaining Industry Partnerships in targeted sectors.

(Summary of recommendation appears on page 12.)

**ACTION:** Approve a \$400,000 contract award to Midwest Urban Strategies to oversee Partner4Work's Federal Grant portfolio directly connected to a multi-city consortium for the period of August 1, 2019, through June 30, 2023.

## Partner4Work Executive Committee minutes Executive Session

9:30 a.m. April 3, 2019

P4W offices; and 1-877-820-7831; 396334

**Participating:** Joe Belechak, Debbie Caplan, Mark Latterner, LaTrenda Leonard Sherrill, Jess Trybus

**Staff:** Earl Buford, Ray Herron, Jennifer Pajewski

Chair Mark Latterner opened an Executive Session of the Executive Committee at 9:38 a.m. to discuss personnel and other legally protected matters.

**No actions were taken.**

The meeting adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

## **P4W Policy Recommendations**

**July 29, 2019**

To ensure alignment with WIOA and additional state and federal requirements, Partner4Work must develop program policies that guide how WIOA-funded Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth services are delivered in Pittsburgh and Allegheny County. These policies must be voted on and approved by the Partner4Work Board of Directors prior to local implementation.

In Spring 2019, Partner4Work staff conducted a review of local WIOA training policies (Individual Training Account, On-the-Job Training, Customized Job Training, Incumbent Worker Training, and Transitional Jobs) to identify opportunities for revising these documents to enhance flexibility and capacity to develop new, employer-driven training programs. The review was a collaborative effort across the Program, Strategy, and Compliance departments and was supported by best practice research and available participant and training-related data.

As a result of this review, Partner4Work staff presented recommendations for policy revisions to the Service Delivery Committee on June 26, 2019. These recommendations largely focus on reducing locally-imposed restrictions on job seekers and employers, not required by state or federal policy, and increase local flexibility in determining funding available for training programs. The committee voted to approve the recommendations and present to the Executive Committee for final approval.

## P4W Training Policies – Recommended Revisions

Recommendations	Program Impact	Fiscal Impact
<b>Individual Training Account Policy</b>		
Describes requirements for using WIOA-funded Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) in Pittsburgh/Allegheny County. An <i>Individual Training Account</i> is a funding mechanism through which eligible individuals can access quality training to obtain employment in high demand occupations.		
<p><b><u>Recommendation #1: Revise funding level cap to \$5,000 for an ITA</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remove current method for determining ITA funding levels, which sets funding caps based on annual openings and average wages of the training occupation based on HPO data.</li> <li>Change will allow participants to receive up to \$5,000 in ITA funding annually.</li> <li>Exceptions to the \$5,000 limit may be permitted if there is a written commitment of an employer to hire (pending P4W funding availability).</li> <li>All programs on the ETPL approved by another LWDB must meet P4W ETPL criteria to receive funding.</li> </ul>	<p>Less restrictions on P4W's ability to fund training programs, particularly programs aligned with industry partnership initiatives.</p> <p>Less need for P4W to regularly approve exceptions for ITA funding levels.</p> <p>An increase in programs on the ETPL that may qualify for the full \$5,000 ITA amount.</p>	<p>Potential that P4W may fund ITAs over \$5,000 (if there is an employer commitment to hire);</p> <p>The current estimated ITA cost per participant is <b>\$4,276</b>, which indicates participants typically qualify for the \$5,000 funding cap. Further, only <b>7 of 119</b> participants from July 2018 – March 2019 were capped at the \$2,500 level. Therefore, these changes to how ITA funding levels are determined should have minimal impact on the number of ITA participants who can be served.</p>
<p><b><u>Recommendation #2: Remove restriction on quitting employment to attend training:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remove language in ITA policy that prohibits individuals from quitting their current employment to attend training;</li> <li>Instead, it should be determined based on an assessment that an individual is in need of training to obtain or retain employment at the self-sufficiency wage or wages comparable to or higher than those from previous employment. (WIOA Requirement)</li> </ul>	<p>Creates less restrictions on a participant's ability to access training, including removing a barrier for individuals in low wage jobs that want to pursue training along a career pathway.</p>	<p>May lead to additional individuals being eligible for training and, thus, an increase in demand for training dollars. However, this is difficult to determine with current information and should be monitored accordingly.</p>
<p><b><u>Recommendation #3: Limit individuals to a maximum of \$5,000 in ITA funding per year:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain the ability of Individuals to receive multiple ITAs if along a career pathway, while setting a limitation on the total amount of funding the individual may receive within a given program year.</li> </ul>	<p>Enable participants to pursue multiple trainings along a career pathway to support continued career growth. Sets some limits to encourage employment following training completion.</p>	<p>Reduces risk of individuals pursuing multiple trainings within a program year with a high cost per participant.</p> <p>Helps to ensure a more equitable distribution of ITA funds across participants.</p>
<p><b><u>Next Steps:</u></b> P4W will develop a research and data-driven ETPL policy that sets higher standards for our local ETPL than statewide criteria.</p>	<p>Setting higher local standards will help to further maintain quality of locally-funded training programs in Allegheny County.</p>	<p>Potential greater return on investment if funds are only directed toward programs that meet P4W's higher local ETPL standards.</p>

### Customized Job Training Policy

Describes how WIOA - Customized Job Training (CJT) funds are to be administered in Pittsburgh/Allegheny County. *Customized Job Training* means training by an employer or employers or by a training provider in conjunction with an employer that is provided to five or more paid participants concurrently while engaged in productive work in a job.

<p><b><u>Recommendation #1: Revise priority industries to align with P4W industry partnerships:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include language to focus funding on IPs: “P4W will prioritize funding for training in Manufacturing, Construction, Healthcare, Information Technology, Retail and Hospitality, Transportation and Logistics, Financial Services, and the Public Sector and Education”.</li> </ul>	<p>Small update to align with the full range of P4W IP industries.</p>	<p>Affirms that P4W will prioritize funding toward IP industries.</p>
<p><b><u>Recommendation #2: Set reimbursement rate at 50% the cost of training instead of different rates by employer size. Set criteria for increasing the reimbursement rate to 75% (or maximum permitted):</u></b></p> <p>Recommended Language: “Partner4Work will consider an increase in the reimbursement rate to 75%, taking into consideration one or more of the following factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Size of the employer(s) with an emphasis on small businesses;</li> <li>• The characteristics of the participants taking into consideration whether they are individuals with barriers to employment;</li> <li>• The quality of employer-provided training and advancement opportunities, for example if the CJT contract is for an in-demand occupation and will lead to an industry-recognized credential;</li> <li>• Wage and benefit levels of employees (at present and anticipated upon completion of training);</li> <li>• The degree to which an employer’s practices align with the principles of a <i>High Road Employer</i><sup>1</sup>;</li> <li>• Other relevant factors, as appropriate.</li> </ul>	<p>Creates wider range of criteria for which P4W can increase the employer reimbursement rate to 75% (or maximum permitted), while setting a standard 50% for all employers (including large).</p> <p>This should reduce potential funding roadblocks when P4W pursues CJT programming with employers.</p>	<p>Could potentially lead to an increase in the number of employers who qualify for 75% reimbursement rates; This might lead to higher cost-per-participant in some instances.</p>

<sup>1</sup> This is a term that was adopted by the [American Sustainable Business Council](#) and has been used during P4W’s development of industry partnerships.

<p><b><u>Recommendation #3: Incorporate timing requirement to prevent employers from being able to establish multiple individual OJTs rather than a combined CJT.</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insert language: “Employers training 5 or more individuals within a single quarter (3-month period) must meet the requirements for CJT rather than OJT”.</li> </ul>	<p>This will help to ensure that employers are set at the lower CJT cap when training multiple participants within a given quarter rather than establishing individual OJT contracts with multiple participants.</p>	<p>This will help maintain a lower cost-per-participant cap for employers training multiple participants within a short time period.</p>
<p><b>On-the-Job Training Policy</b></p> <p>Describes how WIOA – On-the-Job (OJT) funds are to be administered in Pittsburgh/Allegheny County. <i>On-the-Job Training</i> means training by an employer that is provided to a paid participant while engaged in productive work in a job.</p>		
<p><b><u>Recommendation #1: Revise priority industries to align with P4W industry partnerships:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include language to focus funding on IPs: “P4W will prioritize funding for training in Manufacturing, Construction, Healthcare, Information Technology, Retail and Hospitality, Transportation and Logistics, Financial Services, and the Public Sector and Education”.</li> </ul>	<p>Small update to align with the full range of P4W IP industries.</p>	<p>Affirms that P4W will prioritize funding toward IP industries.</p>
<p><b><u>Recommendation #2: Set reimbursement rate at 50% the cost of training instead of different rates by employer size. Set criteria for increasing the reimbursement rate to 75% (or maximum allowed):</u></b></p> <p>Recommended Language: “Partner4Work will consider an increase in the reimbursement rate to 75% (or maximum allowed), taking into consideration one or more of the following factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Size of the employer(s) with an emphasis on small businesses;</li> <li>• The characteristics of the participants taking into consideration whether they are individuals with barriers to employment;</li> <li>• The quality of employer-provided training and advancement opportunities, for example if the OJT contract is for an in-demand occupation and will lead to an industry-recognized credential;</li> <li>• Wage and benefit levels of employees (at present and anticipated upon completion of training);</li> </ul>	<p>Creates wider range of criteria for which P4W can increase the employer reimbursement rate to 75% (or maximum allowed), while setting a standard 50% for all employers (including large).</p> <p>This should reduce potential funding roadblocks when P4W pursues OJT programming with employers.</p>	<p>Could potentially lead to an increase in the number of employers who qualify for 75% reimbursement rates; This might lead to higher cost-per-participant.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The degree to which the employer’s practices align with the principles of a <i>High Road Employer</i>;</li> <li>• Other relevant factors, as appropriate.</li> </ul>		
<b>Incumbent Worker Training Policy</b>		
Describes how WIOA – Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) funds are to be administered in Pittsburgh/Allegheny County. <i>Incumbent Worker Training</i> means training by an employer or training provider in close partnership with an employer that is provided to a paid participant while engaged in productive work in a job.		
<p><b><u>Recommendation #1: Revise priority industries to align with P4W industry partnerships:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include language to focus funding on IPs: “P4W will prioritize funding for training in Manufacturing, Construction, Healthcare, Information Technology, Retail and Hospitality, Transportation and Logistics, Financial Services, and the Public Sector and Education”.</li> </ul>	Small update to align with the full range of P4W IP industries.	Affirms that P4W will prioritize funding toward IP industries.
<p><b><u>Recommendation #2: Increase reimbursement rates to the maximum permitted under WIOA:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WIOA requires reimbursement rates for IWT to be based on employer size. WIOA allows the following reimbursement rates for the cost of training:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 90% of the cost of training (50 or fewer employees) – <i>P4W currently allows 80%</i></li> <li>○ 75% of the cost of training (51-100 employees) - <i>P4W currently allows 60%</i></li> <li>○ 50% of the cost of training (More than 100 employees) – <i>P4W currently allows 40%</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Provides for a moderate increase in the percentage for which P4W can reimburse employers for IWT and creates policy more closely aligned with what is permitted under WIOA.	May lead to a higher cost per participant for IWT.  There will be a need to monitor to ensure spending does not exceed 20% of P4W’s total Adult/DW WIOA allocation.
<p><b><u>Recommendation #3: Increase funding cap of IWT to align with the funding cap for customized job training from \$1,000 to \$5,000 per participant.</u></b></p>	Provides flexibility for Partner4Work to make higher investments in IWT per participant.	A higher potential cost-per-participant may lead to fewer participants who can be served annually with IWT funding.  P4W will need to continue to monitor spending to ensure no more than 20% of WIOA funding is spent on IWT.
<b>Transitional Jobs Policy</b>		
Describes how WIOA – Transitional Jobs (TJs) funds are to be administered in Pittsburgh/Allegheny County. <i>Transitional Job</i> means paid work experience that: 1) Is time limited and subsidized; 2) Is in the public, private, or nonprofit sector; 3) Is provided to individuals with barriers to employment who are chronically unemployed or have an inconsistent work history; 4) Is combined with comprehensive employment and supportive services; 5) Is designed to help participants establish a work history, demonstrate success in the workplace, and develop the skills that lead to entry into and retention in unsubsidized employment.		

<p><b><u>Recommendation #1: Remove language that specifies that TJ services will be procured.</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• P4W should still reserve the right to procure TJ services, particularly programming that incorporates other employment and supportive services.</li> <li>• However, it is also possible for a TJ to be set up similar to an OJT, with an employer providing work experience while employment and supportive services are managed by the Title I Adult/DW provider.</li> </ul>	<p>Provides flexibility for P4W to develop TJ programs with employers outside of the requirement for competitive procurement.</p>	<p>Policy change could create additional options for P4W-funded TJs. There will be a need to continue to monitor spending so that it falls P4W does not spend more than 10% of their WIOA funding on transitional jobs.</p>
<p><b>Underemployed Definition</b></p> <p>WIOA encourages state and local boards to develop definitions for underemployed, as a part of their criteria for determining eligibility and priority status for WIOA Adult/Dislocated Worker services.</p>		
<p><b><u>Recommendation #1: Incorporate the following definition of underemployed into P4W policy:</u></b></p> <p>Partner4Work defines “underemployed” as meeting one or more of the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An individual who is employed less than full-time who is seeking full-time employment, including individuals who may be employed at full-time across multiple positions, but are seeking full-time employment at a single position;</li> <li>• An individual who is employed in a position that is inadequate with respect to their skills and training;</li> <li>• An individual who is employed, but earning a wage that is below the self-sufficiency wage as defined by Partner4Work’s Self-Sufficiency Policy; or</li> <li>• An individual who is employed, but whose earnings are not sufficient compared to their previous position’s earnings from their previous employment.</li> </ul>	<p>This definition can be incorporated in P4W Adult/DW eligibility policy, clarifying that individuals who are underemployed can still qualify as a Dislocated Worker or Priority of Service individual.</p>	<p>This policy may help to increase dislocated worker enrollment and, thereby, participants funded through dislocated worker dollars.</p>



**Work Ready RFP 2019**  
**July 29, 2019**

**1. BACKGROUND**

The Work Ready Program aims to help participants of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) stabilize barriers to employment and take steps toward self-sufficiency and meaningful employment. Primarily governed by the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services (PADHS), Work Ready aims to support participants in their transition from receiving public benefits to sustained participation in the workforce by focusing on Intensive Case Management (ICM), career services, supportive services, training services, and job placement and retention services. Although Work Ready is a workforce development program, the approach to services is holistic, focusing on addressing a broad range of needs at the individual and household level. Effective models for Work Ready utilize strong case management and supportive services with effective job training and preparation, aligning with the P4W vision of a world-class workforce development system.

Partner4Work began overseeing the Work Ready program in October 2017, inheriting oversight from the Allegheny County Department of Human Services (ACDHS). ACDHS delivered Work Ready services through a contract agreement with Life's Work of Western PA. Upon assuming oversight, Partner4Work decided to continue utilizing Life's Work as the contracted provider of Work Ready services for the first two years of the program without immediately issuing a Request for Proposals (RFP), maintaining stability during the transition from ACDHS. The annual value of the contract with Life's Work has been approximately **\$535,000**.

**2. REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)**

Partner4Work issued an RFP to identify a qualified agency to deliver Work Ready services on May 24, 2019, with proposals due by June 21, 2019. The period of performance is to include a base contract year that begins on October 1, 2019, and ends on September 30, 2020, with three subsequent option years, exercised at the discretion of Partner4Work. Total funds expected to be available are estimated at **\$550,000** for the period of October 1, 2019, to September 30, 2020. The RFP is located here: <https://www.partner4work.org/document/request-proposals-allegheny-county-work-ready-program/>

In response to the Work Ready RFP, Partner4Work received five proposals from the following agencies:

- Educational Data Systems, Inc. (EDSI)
- Goodwill of Southwestern PA
- PHASE 4 Learning Center, Inc.
- Life's Work of Western PA
- Pittsburgh Community Services, Inc. (PCSI)

### 3. PROPOSAL EVALUATION

Each proposal was carefully reviewed and scored by a total of eight Partner4Work subject experts, according to criteria included in the RFP, shown below.

❖ **Organization Overview:**

- Basic organizational description
- Past experience
- Administrative and fiscal capacity

❖ **Program Narrative:**

- WORK READY service location(s)
- Staffing plan
- Enrollment and orientation
- Communication with the CAO
- Intensive Case Management (ICM)
- Supportive services and referrals
- Career-related services
- Training and Education Services
- Activity tracking and engagement
- Client incentives
- Business engagement
- Performance
- Site administration and operations
- Technology
- Administration
- Transition plan (if applicable)

❖ **Budget and Budget narrative**

❖ **Attachments:**

- Reference letters
- Service flow chart
- Program organizational chart
- Key staff resumes or minimum qualifications
- Letters of support

100 points were made available for each proposal received, distributed across the above criteria, assigned by each of the proposal evaluators. Scores were due from all proposal evaluators by July 10, 2019. The aggregate scores for each proposal are shown below.

	EDSI	Goodwill	Phase 4	Life's Work	PCSI
Median Score	68.5	68.0	64.0	60.0	56.0
Average Score	69.3	68.2	63.3	59.9	55.9

After submitting and aggregating scores, the proposal evaluation team met on July 12, 2019 to discuss the rationale behind the scores and form recommendations for award or next steps in the procurement process. The evaluation team identified proposals submitted by EDSI and Goodwill as providing high value and quality to Partner4Work for the Work Ready program.

#### **4. RECOMMENDATION**

Based on the feedback and analysis of the proposal evaluation team, the Partner4Work Program Team recommends making an award of \$550,000 to Educational Data Systems, Inc. (EDSI), to purchase Work Ready services in accordance with the RFP and EDSI's proposal, for the base contract year beginning on October 1, 2019 and ending on September 30, 2020, with three subsequent option years, exercised at the discretion of Partner4Work.

EDSI's proposal represents a strong opportunity for Partner4Work to leverage the existing work and location of EDSI's EARN program for Allegheny County and the City of Pittsburgh, as well as the agency's broad experience running Work Ready and EARN programming in Pennsylvania. EDSI's proposal also demonstrates strong plans for case management, assessment, family advocacy and staff development, which are all PA DHS priorities. Finally, EDSI's proposal incorporates a range of innovative technologies, partnerships and client activities that are well-aligned with Work Ready goals and objectives.

## Post-Secondary Connections and Retention

- Partner4Work released a Request for Proposals (RFP) for Post-Secondary Connections and Retention on May 30, 2019. The procurement sought programs serving TANF-eligible young adults between the ages of 17-24 with a focus on assisting students currently enrolled in a 2-year degree program successfully complete and transition to a 4-year institution while providing ongoing career exploration, readiness, and exposure. The procurement placed a strong emphasis on work experience, supporting college students where they are, and creating systemic linkages that will allow students to succeed. Possible funding was capped at \$170,000 per year in the RFP.
- Partner4Work received one proposal from Point Park University (lead) and the Community College of Allegheny County (CCAC). The proposal was scored by a team of reviewers for program model, cost-effectiveness, and compliance. **The review team and Partner4Work staff recommend entering into a contract with Point Park University for \$164,200 for PY19-20 to serve between 50-75 TANF eligible students.** CCAC will be a sub-recipient of Point Park University.
- The program will support students through career readiness and placement in a work co-op or other experiential learning program.

## Industry Partnership

- Partner4Work released a Request for Quotes (RFQ) on July 8, 2019, for a Business Services Support Contract. This group or individual would be responsible for building and sustaining Industry Partnerships in targeted sectors and more fully integrate business needs into the public workforce system. The successful group or individual also would be responsible for planning and executing the strategy for coordinating services between employers and PA CareerLink® Pittsburgh/Allegheny County.
- Partner4Work received proposals from Pittsburgh Community Services Inc. and Keep it Simple. The proposals were scored by a team of internal and external reviewers who assessed proposals for effectively delivering business services to employers, connecting employers to the public system, maintaining relationships, and cost-effectiveness. PCSI earned an average score of 72.75; Keep it Simple earned an average score of 82.25.
- **The review team recommends entering contract negotiations with Keep it Simple for \$149,440.**