

## WDC Board Meeting

We will launch the process for selection of the **2021 Nancie Payne Award** in early October. That award is given to a business that exemplifies the values longtime former Board Chair Nancie Payne. It recognizes companies demonstrating workplace excellence and customer service, meaningful employee engagement, a constructive, diverse and progressive workforce culture that commit to continuously improving business management practices to ensure successful mission achievement. Prior winners have included among others Sierra Pacific, Smokin' Mo's BBQ, Thurston County Chamber and SERVPRO of Grays Harbor and Pacific Counties. Please contact Arissa if you would like to serve on that Review Committee.

Gearing up for the **2021 Regional Economic Forecast and Innovation EXPO December 2, 2021, at Great Wolf Lodge!** The economic development organizations of five counties will focus on workforce development and education as the future of economic development. This year's Economic Forecast marks the 13th anniversary of the region's five leading economic development agencies collaborating to create the region's largest conference that focuses on economic vitality and community development as it is today and as it will be tomorrow and beyond! Any Board Member wanting to attend should contact Arissa for registration.

**Reduction in Force (RIF) for My Journey Out Beyond (MyJOB)** program effective September 15. Four staff have been laid-off and the Program Manager position reclassified to provide other more broad-based services for justice-involved individuals needing workforce services. Despite many efforts we are unable to make the program financially viable. We can no longer carry large personnel costs and not produce adequate pay points to cover expenses. Contract funding changes and the impact of COVID have devastated the MyJOB program model and its ability to be successful. We remain committed to the importance of workforce development skills for the young people in the juvenile rehabilitation (JR) system. We will begin immediately to shift our services to a much reduced, limited service model for students in JR.

**PacMtn Mandatory Vaccination Policy...**In accordance with PacMtn's duty as an employer to provide and maintain a workplace that is free of known hazards, we are adopting a mandatory Covid-19 vaccination policy to safeguard the health of our employees, their families, our customers and visitors, and the community at large. Effective October 18, 2021 PacMtn WDC will implement a mandatory Covid-19 vaccination policy as a condition of employment. All employees will be required to show proof of Covid-19 vaccination or request a medical or religious exemption. This policy also extends to PacMtn WDC direct service contractors, as a condition of performing work under the contract.

PacMtn will continue to monitor the circumstances of the virus and reserves the right to make any changes as are deemed warranted. This vaccination mandate is part of our heightened attention to the virus—mask wearing, social distancing, enhanced cleaning and personal pandemic hygiene. We will also be reconstituting the front desk reception position that provided additional pandemic cleaning and reminders of the required protocols.

**Farewell, Good Luck and Thank you AmeriCorps Members!** This year, PacMtn again had the opportunity to have four AmeriCorps Members serve with us providing services. **Elizabeth Mai** worked with the Community Jobs Program within our Poverty Reduction Team to provide Life Skills classes, job opportunities, and workplace readiness to TANF recipients who chose to engage in job activities to obtain employment. **Lanna Keltner** worked with the Youth Team to provide some of our UpLift! Job Readiness classes to our Gainful and Dependable Goal-oriented Employment and Training (GADGET) participants as well as being a connector for the GRAVITY students. **Pamela Ward** worked with the My Journey Out Beyond (MyJOB) Workforce Development Specialists to ensure that services were in place for those in the Juvenile Justice Facilities located throughout the State. **Sara Smith** was an integral piece of the WorkSource Thurston Pilot and re-opening strategy that went live at the end of June, providing key walk-up services to those who needed the assistance. We are happy to announce that Pamela has decided to stay for a second year of service and we are in process of recruiting three additional members to get our team back up to four. This October, our new AmeriCorps Team will be providing assistance to our Community Development Block Grant, the Poverty Reduction Team, the MyJOB Team, and the Thurston Job Champion Network.

**PacMtn will serve as Fiscal Sponsor for “ASHHO”.** In the Bengali language ASHHO means to instruct or call someone to “COME” join. As an acronym for the organization it also describes their mission:

- **A**dvocate for survivors, communities of color, under-served, marginalized people.
- **S**erve our communities with kindness, compassion and professional services
- **H**onor **H**umanity in all that we do because all people matter
- **O**rganize community resources, education, gatherings, trainings & events.

The organization has received endorsement, encouragement and financial support from the Thurston EDC, Thurston Strong and Thurston County government in the development of a **Community Cultural and Job Training Center**. PacMtn has agreed to provide compensated financial services for a period pending the finalization of ASHHO’s IRS designated 501(c)3 tax status, approximately 6-9 months. The strong mission alignment, PacMtn’s infrastructure and administrative ease makes the partnership mutually beneficial.

**PacMtn staff focus on healthy eating.** We promote Health and Wellness through various aspects i.e. weekly walks, Wellness Wednesdays, and quarterly activities. Recently, **Garden Salad Bar** and **Benefits of Juicing** was offered during lunchtime. These activities are organized by the Wellness Team. In August we installed a **self-serve Micro Market** in the break room. The Market provides a wide variety of snacks and other healthier eating options.

**WA Workforce Association letter to Governor Inslee** asks additional help with statewide computer Management Information System. See the attached letter.

### **Stories of Hope and Impact**

We received this **story from our ESD partner...the power of partnerships to benefit participants.** "Lewis County Employment Practitioner was working with an individual who had been referred by another participant who previously used WIOA services. The new customer had been incarcerated for 35 years and was struggling to find employment. DVR assisted him with getting CDL training, but he was having difficulty breaking into the field with no recent or relevant work experience. Employment Practitioner provided career guidance, coaching, and resource navigation to help with meeting basic needs as participant diligently looked for work. Participant was also connected to the Work Ready Navigator, who established a work-based learning (WBL) experience at The Moore Wright Group. This gave him important work experience to add to his resume. The WIOA Adult program provided transportation assistance to ensure participant was able to get to and from the worksite each day. We hoped the WBL would turn into employment, whereby the employer could use On the Job Training (OJT), but that did not work out. However, the experience he obtained helped him secure another position at ADS as a Maintenance Worker. This position is expected to lead into a truck driving position as he familiarizes himself with the business. He is earning \$20/hour and is now able to support himself free of any public assistance. He is so grateful for the support, guidance, and encouragement he received while enrolled in the WIOA Adult program."

**Success story from our WorkSource Youth Partner...** "Participant, KS passed her final test and obtained her GED! Youth Talent Advisor indicates great pride in KS progress. When they first met she was in the process of dropping out of traditional high school. On her 17th birthday she was introduced to GRAVITY (GED+ Re-engagement, Alternative Vocational Individualized, Training for Youth.) and she completed her GED in less than 4 months. Next steps for KS include filling out the FAFSA next week and then enrolling at Centralia Beauty College so she can earn some money and eventually enrolling in traditional college. Congrats to KS--another very capable young woman who will do many great things!"