

February 23, 2021 JEDE Committee Meeting

Written Comments by Deanna Krehbiel, Executive Director of Economic Development & Corporate Training (EDCT) at San Bernardino Community College District

Introduction:

Thank you committee members and Chair Cervantes

My name is Deanna Krehbiel, and I am the Executive Director of Economic Development & Corporate Training (EDCT) at San Bernardino Community College District representing the California Community College Statewide Collaborative UpSkill.

In addition to collaborating statewide, we work very closely with our neighbors at Riverside Community College District's contract education unit representing Norco, Riverside City, and Moreno Valley Colleges. The primary purpose of contract education is to provide a rapid response of customized short-term programs that offers economic prosperity and vitality, support, and assistance through training, employment, and workforce and economic development. Contract education improves the lives of its local community by providing lifelong upskilling for all populations to stay competitive in their 30 to 40-year career supporting technological changes in the workforce and promoting economic prosperity through wage gains. Contract education does not receive any funding from the state chancellor's office nor from strong workforce money. They operate by obtaining public and private contracts and grants. As such, they are limited by how much funding they can obtain and by the requirements of the contracts and grants. Contract education is not operating at maximum compacity due to these funding constraints.

Last year during the pandemic for example, EDCT which is only one of the 45 active contract education units served 662 incumbent workers, 150 justice-involved individuals, and 42% of businesses served were small businesses. In 2019, we served 1,830 incumbent workers. We placed 97 justice-involved individuals into full time permanent employment. At \$79,000 per person per year to incarcerate them that is a total annual savings to the state of \$7,663,000. With funding, imagine what we can do across the state.

Meeting Small Business Needs:

1. How have the needs of businesses you serve changed since March 2020?

Businesses needed to train their employees on how to work from home virtually including how to supervise and manage employees, dealing with virtual challenges, and self-management skills. For essential workers, businesses needed COVID-19 and OSHA safety and change management to continue to work in a safe environment.

In addition, there was an increased need for diversity, equity, and inclusion training. An example of this diversity training is E-Z UP. They trained 100 employees with a customized diversity and inclusion training which was delivered virtually in both Spanish and English.

2. Have you had to modify your program or services in order to better meet the needs of small businesses? If so, can you provide examples?

Yes. We had to invest in software, learn how to use the zoom platform, train our trainers on how to use zoom, and convert our training plans into a virtual platform. We learned how to train under socially

distancing regulations, utilize masks, and reduced the number of participants we served to verify their safety.

An example is in August 2020, EDCT partnered with the San Bernardino County Probation Department to provide certified forklift and OSHA 10 training to participants residing in juvenile hall. Over the last two years the county probation office and EDCT have been working together to provide effective vocational training to probationers in the local area. Because there is such a high demand for logistics in the region, EDCT designed a program that the trainee would have the best opportunity for employment. EDCT's vocational forklift program consists of 36 hours of training in OSHA 10 safety and three different forklift types that are the most widely used by local employers. Once a participant successfully completes the 36 hours of training, the certifications are immediately added to the individuals resume.

Prior to release, EDCT staff and probation officers work together to assist the participants with completing employment applications with local employers. While all are concerned with how COVID-19 has affected the economy and many have been furloughed from their jobs, we strongly believe that as a training agency, we can still provide the best opportunities for employment in the region. During the in-person classroom and hands-on forklift training, our staff took every precaution to ensure the safest environment for both the students and staff. Gratefully, we were notified by probation that two weeks after the training none of the students or staff reported any symptoms related to the coronavirus. All 13 participants were released and obtained employment.

3. What strategies have you used to address the disparate impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on women- and minority owned businesses?

On a local level, San Bernardino Community College is working on capital improvements and creating a pipeline to focus on women and minority owned businesses. For training purposes, our grants and contracts limit our scope and scale to their requirements. With a sustainable funding source, contract education could focus some activities to addressing specific needs such as women and minority owned businesses.

4. Does your organization and/or organization that funds you track clients by race and gender? How does your program try to ensure diversity among your client bases?

Yes. One of the largest funding organizations is the California Employment Training Panel (ETP). ETP requires that we collect this data on all participants under the contract. As such, EDCT collects this information on all participants for all contract and grants to help us to understand our target audiences.

- Statewide Hispanics and Asians account for more than half of the training hours completed and the number of enrollees, evidence of the diverse and inclusive employment base.
- Ethnic Distribution for the UpSkill statewide collaborative: Hispanic 48%, White 31%, Asian 9%, Black 4%, Other 8%

San Bernardino CCD is a Hispanic Serving Institute and serves underrepresented minorities, marginalized populations, and justice-involved individuals in addition to incumbent workers. Contract education is limited to the scope and scale of the grants and contracts they receive.

5. How has the lack of PPE impacted small businesses during the pandemic?

PPE was a critical issue in the Inland Empire as well as across the state. EDCT manufactured and distributed over 2500 face masks to assist our local businesses. These include small medical offices, fire

departments, police departments, hospitals, and long-term care centers. One example is Walter Bramson's Medial office which was the only medical office in Running Springs, CA. They had a staff of 9 people and if they caught COVID-19 it would shut down the only medical office in the area.

Organizational Changes:

1. How has COVID-19 changed how you run your organization?

First, we learned how to work from home virtually and then how to work with businesses that are also working from home. Next, we pivoted within 2 weeks to transform all training plans to a live virtual format and then train all our trainers on how to utilize zoom and train from a virtual perspective.

In addition, contract education became even more culturally competent and provided training with an increased focus on COVID -19 and OSHA compliance and included diversity, equity, and inclusion training.

In December, EDCT trained Qycell Corporation, a small business, in person supervisory skills. Most of the participants had never had any formal supervisory training and this helped them to address skills gaps and strengthen their newly promoted supervisory team.

2. Will you retain some of these changes post COVID-19?

Yes. Virtual training and hybrid models are here to stay. However, we are receiving more requests for in-person training.

Challenges:

1. What are small businesses telling you are their greatest challenges?

Access to skilled workforce, challenges to establish a safe environment, and strengthening partnerships during the pandemic.

2. Has the pandemic provided greater clarity as to how income inequality and structural racism impact California?

Most of those who lost their jobs and are essential workers are largely people of color. These individuals will require training to regain employment and to strengthen our essential workforce. Essential workers that the state is depending on, include logistics, grocery workers, and manufacturing.

3. From your organization's perspective, what have been the three biggest challenges?

1. Funding
2. Access to Software – Example Amatrol eLearning platform which would supplement hands-on training in a virtual format. Increased safety as the virtual platform allows participants to become comfortable before performing actual hands-on. Lack of access to these types of software programs. If purchased and utilized on a statewide basis would be far cheaper than on a per college level.
3. Businesses accepting justice-involved backgrounds. In order for individuals to successfully reintegrate back into society, they need to work. The more businesses that refuse to hire justice-involved the less opportunities for them to successfully reintegrate.

Advice:

1. What are the most important actions the state can take to support economic recovery?

- a. Funding for contract education start-up and sustainability. Without funding, it is very difficult for any organization to begin let alone sustain operations. In addition, funding to scale and expand training for the local community and regional businesses' needs.

The UpSkill statewide collaborative 5-year data:

- Trained 45,654 individuals from 3,000 employers over 172,000 training sessions.
- After training, the average wage gains was 20%.
- The participant retention rate was 97% and the average cost of 40 hours of training per trainee averages \$855.
- The average annual new tax per trainee in revenue back to the state was \$450.

- b. Access for all who need immediate employment without limits of contract and grants. Access for those who need upskilling to retain employment. Education is no longer just a linear process with the endpoint of a single diploma, but a continuous and fluid process helping individuals adapt to changing technological, economic, and social conditions.

According to the World Economic Forum, Future of Jobs “By 2022, no less than 54% of all employees will require significant reskilling and upskilling.” And according to Pew Research 87% of workers believe it will be essential to get training and develop new skills throughout their work life in order to keep up with changes in the workplace.

- c. Develop the business engagement message regarding what contract education at your local community college can do for you. – Not common knowledge and small businesses tend to be the last to know due to limited employees.

2. Do you have any words of advice to other organizations trying to serve small businesses during the pandemic?

To partner with your local community college contract education unit. They are uniquely positioned to respond quickly and effectively to employer training needs and deliver customized introductory and advanced skills training to marginalized populations, historically underrepresented residents, individuals with barriers to employment, incumbent workers, justice-involved, students, unemployed, under-employed, and entrepreneurs within its community.

Example-On Friday, we will be graduating 9 participants who attended the UpSkill Statewide collaborative's Utility Line Clearance Arborist training. This 200-hour 5-week program is a collaboration with Butte Community College, PG&E, Utility Arborist Association, IBEW Local 47, North American Training Solutions, California Conservation Corps, SoCal Edison, and Mowbray's Tree Service.

The participants receive 4 industry-recognized certificates and have all been offered full-time employment earning a starting wage of \$21.63 per hour.

3. What needs to happen in order for California to build back better?

Systemic change to include funding for contract education units across the state.

Of the 116 community colleges, only 45 have active contract education units due to lack of funding. Contract education expands the services of the community colleges system. Together they provide a holistic approach to serving their local and regional businesses.

Contract education units are uniquely positioned to respond quickly and effectively to employer training needs and deliver customized introductory and advanced skills training to marginalized populations, historically underrepresented residents, individuals with barriers to employment, incumbent workers, justice-involved, students, unemployed, under-employed, and entrepreneurs within its community.