

2002 Pacific Northwest Farmworker Summit

Workforce Development – How to Maximize Impact for Farmworkers

The last workshop of the FW Summit was Workforce Development Services – How to Maximize Impact for Farmworkers. The agenda for this workshop included short presentations by;

- Larry Sanchez, Washington State Employment Security
- Rogelio Valdez, Idaho Department of Labor
- Ron Hauge, Oregon Human Development Corporation
- Amparo Prusia, U.S. Department of Labor

Followed by small interactive workgroups that were assigned to respond to these five questions

1. What's working well in your local workforce system in serving farmworkers?
2. What's not working so well in your local workforce system in serving farmworkers?
3. What would you like to see improved in your local workforce system for serving farmworkers?
4. How well are your local 167, mainline WIA and Wagner-Peyser (Employment/Job Service) providers working together to serve farmworkers? Describe some 'best practices'.
5. What could be done to better integrate your local

167, mainline WIA and Wagner-Peyser (Employment/Job Service) to provide workforce services to farmworkers?

A summary of their responses to each question is provided below.

1. What's working well in your local workforce system in serving farmworkers?

- Bilingual Staff [5 similar responses]
- Outreach to farmworkers [3 similar responses]
- Working close with all partners [3 similar responses]
- GED classes [3 similar responses]
- Wealth of info about available jobs in Spanish [2 similar responses]
- Migrant education children eligible for health, accident insurance [2 similar responses]
- Honest interest in services to monolingual clients
Limited English speakers are priority [2 similar responses]
- ATT has a hotline to Spanish services
- Other methods of communicating: media, radio.
- Computer database
- Dual enrollment to get longer training
- Well organized 167 in Washington state
- Matching/Identifying needs
- Sharing costs – leverage in resources
- Childcare available
- Funds for skill development
- Special funds from state government

- One-stops (All one-roof)
- Youth program and 167 together help whole family
- Supportive services
- Referral system
- Education of partners of all services available
- Language appropriate information
- Location streamlines access to training
- Agriculture priority
- Successful recruitment
- Integration of materials (videos) from Mexican Consulate regarding interviewing and job search

2. What's not working so well in your local workforce system in serving farmworkers?

- Partnerships (MOAs/some one-stops don't want to serve farmworkers; Mandate that providers are educated on how to better serve farmworkers; Dissemination of services between agencies; Missing partners; Competition in between partners; Many areas still trying to develop a partnership/integration system; Better communication between 167 and WIA partners) [7 similar responses]
- Lack of funding [4 similar responses]
- Unemployment insurance (Outreach - they do not have the time to do outreach due to time restraints; centralized; unemployment insurance system is confusing for Spanish speakers due to the phone system) [3 similar responses]
- Eligibility requirements [2 similar responses]
- Not enough bilingual staff [2 similar responses]
- Translations (Computer database translations are not sufficient) [2 similar responses]

- Woodburn – time constraints
- Confidentiality issues between agencies
- Different documentation requirements
- Different definitions – need uniform definition of farmworkers
- Lack of health services eligible for farmworkers
- Lack of ESL services
- Technology not user friendly to farmworkers
- We are not aware of supportive services
- Politics between rural and urban offices
- Barriers to self-access
- There isn't a holistic approach to service farmworkers
- No equal access LEP
- Extensive record keeping
- No job ladders
- After eligibility no service for undocumented workers, no funding
- Referred workers must not have documentation to get hired
- More one to one time (do resumes)
- In Oregon there is an increase in the dialect-speaking people. The language problem is a large barrier because they cannot access services.

3. What would you like to see improved in your local workforce system for serving farmworkers?

- Direct outreach to farmworkers [5 similar responses]
- More bilingual staff [4 similar responses]
- More funding [3 similar responses]
- Better translations [3 similar responses]
- One-stop partnerships [3 similar responses]

- Data, Information Systems [3 similar responses]
- More training [2 similar responses]
- Need better communication with farmers, ranchers, and growers to identify their needs.
- Better connections with the community
- Commonality of culture and definition of farmworkers
- Worker's rights and responsibilities
- Political support and educating legislators
- Ombudsman – “real-time” response
- Improve communication
- Changes in legislation (national and state levels)
- More agricultural employer involvement
- Need streamline paperwork
- Community college need to develop work place literacy courses (more targeted ESL) “industry” English

4. How well are your local 167, mainline WIA and Wagner-Peyser (Employment/Job Service) providers working together to serve farmworkers? Describe some ‘best practices’.

- Quarterly meetings with WIA 167 programs [2 similar responses]
- OHDC Klamath Falls, Oregon – works w/state employment office, community college, learning center, Work Connections, and other one-stop partners.
- OIC Yakima, Washington – works with several agencies. Networking is going in a positive direction.
- Job Corps gives youth more opportunities.
- OHDC Woodburn, Oregon – building capacity and

- does more training
- Outreach to employers
- Not the right people in the jobs
- Need strong advocates
- Sharing money
- Personal contact
- Pilot training project in nursery industry with big employer match to train current workers
- Collaborative job assistance
- Workshops in Spanish in which all partners can refer to
- UI information available in Spanish
- Have 167 located in one stop
- Bilingualize your unit – multilingualize
- Dual enroll
- State is making it a priority
- Transition center was created
- Team goes to employer before layoff and make presentation
- Problem solving
- Marketing of diverse groups of job seekers with employers/new businesses
- Partners understand their particular roles and work together holistically

5. What could be done to better integrate your local 167, mainline WIA and Wagner-Peyser (Employment/Job Service) to provide workforce services to farmworkers?

- Loosen confidentiality regulations between 167 and other Wagner-Peyser to better serve clients [2 similar responses]
- Representation in local and statewide boards [2

similar responses]

- Mandated workshop at one-stop for all providers to understand migrant and seasonal farmworkers and services available [2 similar responses]
- Preservation of 167 funding
- ERIC – OED – work w/partners to improve relationship w/farmers for them to understand they are not a reporting agency, they just need information
- OHDC – may help some undocumented workers because they may have some other non-employment programs to offer support services
- Bilingual staff
- Acknowledge stress
- Provide financial incentives to businesses for providing training for agricultural workers
- Marketing farmworker services to businesses
- Better exchange of MIS info
- Bilingual signage
- Appropriate job referrals
- Joint meetings
- Bring all cultural units to table for funding
- Communicate among each other so not to jump from program to program
- Local referrals
- Outreach
- Eliminate MOU's and move to true partnerships
- Leadership at and from the top
- Encourage more collaboration
- Need to pass state law (Oregon) to cover farmworkers with unemployment insurance
- Better networking with farmworkers and one-stop system