

Ministers and Employers Minutes  
January 8, 2007, 11:30 – 1:00  
Department of Labor

- I. Rev. Mosley opened in prayer and Clay Gilbert led group introductions.
- II. Jobs for Life- Rev. Mosley reported
  - a. Have 2 meetings left
  - b. 10 participants dropped down to 8, 5 or 6 got jobs (ARMC, Holiday Inn, etc.), 1 who got a job is still attending
  - c. Ministers are very grateful for the support of the employers who've been teaching courses
  - d. Will have Graduation Ceremony and know details about the next class soon- will get info to Clay to send out
  - e. Need to have an employers Jobs for Life meeting so employers who have supported this class can develop plan to get other employers on board for next class- need to invite prospective employers to graduation
  - f. Employers need to evaluate first program to decide what changes may improve the program.
  - g. Need to develop process for getting new class together—how to recruit participants.
- III. Transitioning Felons- Stanley Johnson (TOPPSTEP) and Deborah Gowen (Athens Justice Project) reported
  - a. Stanley has been able to place 5 people
  - b. Still need more employers to work with since there are still people having trouble finding employment because of their records
  - c. Salina Elswick has worked with Stanley, said it was good to have another person/agency to help support employees and prevent turn-over- better address “no call/no shows”
  - d. Many jobs are Service Industry- low pay/long hours/high stress- need employees to know that you may start at bottom, but if you give it 6 months you get into a better position
  - e. Lack of soft skills are a major barrier to keeping/advancing in a job- should even be taught in schools
  - f. Soft Skills are discussed in Dept. of Labor workshops and Key Train
  - g. Jobs for Life is good because its sole focus is soft skills (not hard skills)- it includes resume writing, attitude, interviewing, dress, etc.
  - h. Need to hold a forum to educate employers about Jobs for Life/TOPPSTEP/AJP so that they know they can get support for their employees and reduce turn-over (SHERM, Chamber)
  - i. Athens Justice Project provides the social work services that some employees need to deal with family crises, prevent relapse, etc. If an employer is having trouble with an employee, they can refer to AJP.

- j. It might be important for employers and the support organizations (including ministers) to continue to develop strategies to address some of the issues of these families and employers that may help assure long term employment.
- k. Judge Sweat added that they are trying to get a Day Reporting Center opened in Athens- this would also help provide structure- a place for people on parole and probation to take classes, etc. Day Reporting Centers- web link to a video about the program which can be found on the Department of Corrections website, [www.dcor.state.ga.us](http://www.dcor.state.ga.us). The judges have been asking for location of a day reporting facility in Athens for some time now. Any input that committee members could give to our legislators on this may be helpful. This is the link:  
[http://www.dcor.state.ga.us/NewsRoom/VideoLibrary/Video\\_DRC\\_wmv.htm](http://www.dcor.state.ga.us/NewsRoom/VideoLibrary/Video_DRC_wmv.htm).

- IV. Adult Education- Red Petrovs passed out copies of the “Tough Choices or Tough Times” The Report of the New Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce (<http://www.skillscommission.org/executive.htm>) a report on education reform from Early Education through Adult Education. The report includes recommendations to:
  - a. Create a set of Board examinations to determine the academic route of students
  - b. Recruit, train, and deploy teachers from the top third of h.s. students going to college
  - c. Develop standards, assessments, and curriculum that reflect today’s needs and tomorrow’s requirements
  - d. Create high performance schools and districts everywhere- change how the system should be governed, financed, organized, and managed
  - e. Provide high quality, universal early childhood education
  - f. Give strong support to the students who need it most (longer school days and years as well as added services)
  - g. Every member of the adult workforce would be able to access literacy skills
  - h. Create personal competitiveness accounts- GI Bill for our times
  - i. Create regional competitiveness authorities to make America competitive.

- V. Childcare-
  - a. Burton and Burton is interested in sharing their program with the group. Will be available after Valentine’s day
  - b. Jean Gowen’s presentation was useful in describing ways churches and employers could support Early Care and Learning
  - c. Clay heard about a church in Atlanta that has a unique program:
    - i. Wonderful Days Preschool, St. James Episcopal Church, Marietta, 770-428-9961, 4 year olds – 2 classes of 15 each (total 30 w/ a capacity of 32), 5 days/ week, 8:30 – 1:00, FREE – designed for “Low Income” only they use the Federal poverty guidelines & fed.

Lunch program guidelines, Provide: Breakfast & Lunch,  
Transportation, Primarily Hispanic population, Funding: Church,  
grants, other fund raisers

- d. Will look at ways Churches and Employers can be involved in Early Care and Learning at next meeting
  
- VI. Other- Tim Johnson mentioned that a group is submitting a grant that would work with employers to get their employees signed up for work-supportive programs like the Earned Income Tax Credit. These work-support programs help reduce turn-over and increase productivity by helping stabilize the economic situations of the workforce. More information will be shared as the project evolves.
  
- VII. Next meeting- February 12, 2007, 11:30-1:00, Department of Labor