Mockinterviewapalooza in Tempe: partnerships and diverse marketing strategies helps young adults and novice job seekers prepare for employment

November 27, 2018 - Tempe, AZ / The Mockinterviewapalooza hiring event, at the Tempe Public Library increased the interviewing skills of young adults with disabilities and novice job seekers. The hiring event, hosted by the Tempe Mayor’s Commission on Disability Concerns (CDC), Tempe Strategic Management and Diversity Office, in partnership with ARIZONA@WORK and Arizona Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) was a success due to strategic marketing and collaboration activities.

The event consisted of five half-hour sessions where applicants rotated through three activities: Interviewing Workshop: provided by RSA Region 1 Pre-Employment Transition Service Specialist Jennifer Kelley, included information on interview etiquette and employer expectations; 30-Second Elevator Speech/Verbal Resume: applicants provided a verbal resume to a room of employers who provided immediate feedback, and 10-minute Interviews, facilitated by Employment Coordinator Terell Welch, with about 30 employers, who gave immediate feedback, guidance, and rubric evaluations.

Ginny Dauler-Phinney said, “The SCORE program through Scottsdale School District wants to extend their thanks and appreciation for putting this event in place. Our students benefitted greatly from the actual experience of interviewing with employers and the rubric evaluation gave each student an honest perspective on how their interviewing style
presented to an employer. In addition, their elevator speech gave them insight into how to present themselves, both professionally and personally, to an employer.”

The event’s purpose was to provide an opportunity for young adults with disabilities and novice interviewers to improve their job seeking skills with actual employers. Involved were 47 Human Resource interviewers from 31 employers who served 137 registered applicants and additional walk-in attendees.

When marketing to the disability communities and young adults, additional time and multiple marketing avenues work best. The event was marketed through Vocational Rehabilitation Employer Liaison Timothy Stump BS, MA, CPRP CRC with ARIZONA@WORK, to numerous community partners and employers. Information was also shared at presentations, meetings, and via word of mouth. Marketing began about nine months prior to the event.

A direct email campaign was conducted by Region 1 Transition Specialist Betty Schoen, M.A., C.R.C., with RSA, to schools around the Tempe/Phoenix areas; and to distribution lists compiled by planning committee members, as well as via word of mouth. Tempe ADA Compliance Specialist Michele Stokes emailed Mockinterviewwapalooza information to over 100 disability agencies, disability networks, Commission members, and East Valley disability service providers. Information was shared via Tempe’s social media accounts, as well.
In addition to the Tempe Union High School District schools, the Phoenix Day School for the Deaf, and other high school districts from around the Valley bringing young adults to interview, at least two agencies who serve people with low vision or blindness facilitated attendance, namely Foundation for Blind Children and Southern Arizona Association for the Visually Impaired (SAAVI) along with others.

This event was also supported by Tempe Library professionals, American Sign Language Interpreters, vocational rehabilitation counselors, job developers, educators, and volunteers.

This collaborative disability employment event supports Tempe’s Strategic Management Goal 3.13 Disability Inclusion. For questions or information on how you can support similar activities in Tempe or for information about the Tempe Mayor’s Commission on Disability Concerns, contact Tempe ADA Compliance Specialist, Michele_Stokes@Tempe.gov / 480-350-2704. For information about RSA services, contact Region 1 Transition Specialist Betty Schoen, M.A., C.R.C., at BSchoen@azdes.gov. For employer information or information about ARIZONA@WORK contact Vocational Rehabilitation Employer Liaison Timothy Stump BS, MA, CPRP CRC at TStump@azdes.gov / 602-717-8516. For information about Pre-employment Training and related services contact RSA Region 1 Pre-Employment Transition Service Specialist Jennifer Kelley at JKelley@azdes.gov / 602-542-0277.

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Tempe resident Jordan Moon with SAAVI applicant

Interview evaluations with Deaf applicants with American Sign Language Interpreters

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