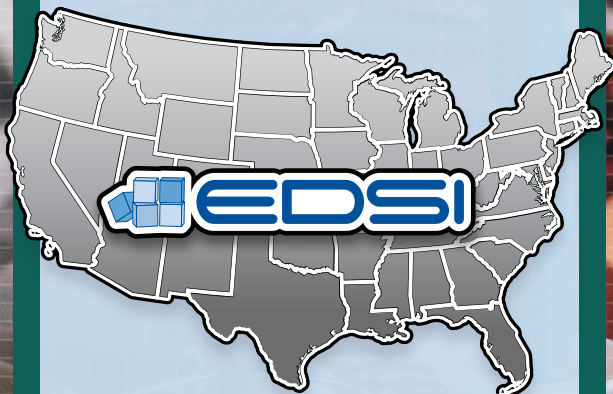


NATIONAL APPEAL Local Feel

In This Issue:

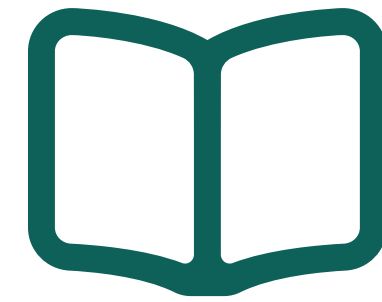
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Introducing This Month's Issue



Click to hear from our Director of Change Leadership Christina Dusenberry as she introduces Volume 5 of the *National Appeal Local Feel* and speaks on EDSI's commitment to sharing best practices, innovations and services, while also thanking and celebrating our customers, employees and communities.

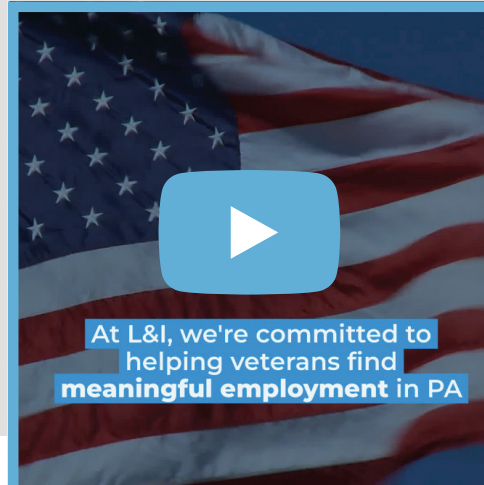


Best Practices

Delaware County Veterans Grant Expands Outreach, Training and Employment Services

Delaware County, PA

EDSI's Delaware County region was thrilled to receive \$200,000 in employment program grant funding for veterans from the Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry in support of The Jobs for Veterans Act (JVA), PL 107-288. Check out this video to see how we're putting the funding to work.



Click to view the EDSI Vets video and learn more about this program.

The Delco team is very passionate about serving veterans, and sometimes, they admit it is challenging to reach these former servicemen and servicewomen. In recent months, this funding has helped increase veteran outreach efforts by newly hired Veterans Program Career Coach, Michael Bate. He has hit the ground running since he started this past summer, and as a veteran himself, he is passionate about serving this population. Michael's outreach efforts have led to 11 participant enrollments in October alone!

One of the first things Michael decided to do to personally connect with his fellow veterans was to go out into the community. He enjoys connecting with veterans at the Delaware County Community College's computer lab. There, he talks with the vets about their employment needs to see if they're interested in signing up at the career center to receive pre-employment assistance or explore direct-hire placement with area employers. Veterans are offered these support opportunities:



- **Career Acceleration Programs – short-term, in-person or online training in high-priority industries: Customer Service, Construction, and Information Technology**
- **Behavioral Health Advocate – individualized counseling, referrals, support groups, etc.**
- **Employment Readiness– resume creation, interview preparation, connection to employers**
- **Hiring Events – Next one planned for winter 2024**

“ | Veteran participant testimonial

Formerly enrolled participant and Army Veteran Vaughn Thomas joined the Veterans program on October 2, 2023. Vaughn shared that: “my goal is just to find quick employment to get some money in my pocket.” Our program staff helped create a resume for him and the BSR team helped him fine-tune his employment searches. On October 12, 2023, he was hired to be a nighttime maintenance worker at Walmart. Within two weeks of working at Walmart in that position, he was interviewing for the nighttime Supervisor position, and has currently been working in this position as of November 6th.

Veterans Day Appreciation Event

On November 11 – Veterans Day, EDSI was honored to welcome local veterans to a resume workshop and appreciation lunch hosted in part by some of EDSI's own veteran staff and catered by Mission BBQ. The staff is very grateful for the opportunity to continue supporting veterans in their career journeys.



Juneteenth Celebration Brings Community Together

Delaware County, PA

EDSI Delco attended the Rose Tree Media School District Juneteenth event to commemorate the holiday. The event was a celebration and connection opportunity as many local minority-owned businesses had booths, and EDSI was able to host a booth and share the resources our programs provide. The event also featured spectacular performances from local dance and karate groups. This was our second year attending the Juneteenth event and we were able to make deeper connections in the community. We will continue to celebrate and support the community year-round.



Grow Detroit's Young Talent Program Enters 3rd Year

Detroit, MI

EDSI was proud to be an employer partner working with the City of Detroit to launch another great year of the Grow Detroit's Young Talent (GDYT) program that offers 150 students summer virtual work experiences in high-demand industries. [Read more about it here.](#)

Special thanks goes out to Innovative Learning Solutions (ILS) Manager Akilah Paramore and our Michigan ILS team for supporting the Detroit region with this great program and many others.

The program's press launch event was attended by ILS Manager Akilah Paramore and Marketing Director Casey White. Other attendees pictured at left included Albion College rising sophomore and three-year GDYT participant Josiah Graddick; DESC Director of Program Operations Misty Evans; Detroit City Council Member Mary Waters; City of Detroit Deputy Mayor Todd A. Bettison; and Be-Moor Radio Chief Visionary Officer Dennis Talbert.



Mock-tober Workshops Connect Jobseekers with Employers and HR Managers

Kerr-Tar, NC Region

NCWorks Career Center is proud to offer an update on the success of the Mock-tober events that helped jobseekers prepare for employment.

During the Month of October employers were invited to the NCWorks Career Center to participate in a Community Outreach Event called Mock-tober. Human Resource Managers provided valuable input as they practiced interviewing with the community to prepare them for employment.

This experience was not only beneficial to jobseekers but also to the Human Resource Managers who participated. In this 3-part series of Mock interviews, The HR Managers focused on:

- **Preparing candidates for the interview**
- **Completing applications**
- **Interview questions to ask the employer**
- **How to follow up with potential employers**

The HR Managers shared that Mock Interviews allowed them to connect to the community and identify qualified candidates. The shared goal was to assist jobseekers with obtaining gainful employment, however there were other benefits.



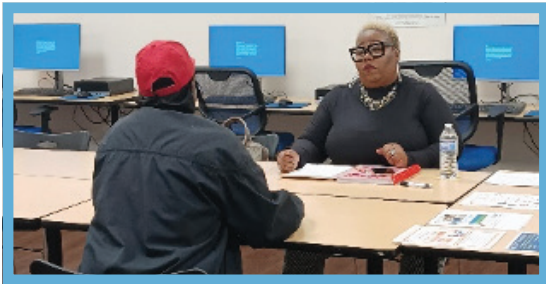
Employer benefits

- **Employers became more present in the community**
- **Increased employer interactions with potential job candidates led to job creation**
- **Employers were able to identify skill sets in candidates within the local community that could benefit their company**
- **Opened the dialogue to the biggest barriers/challenges that jobseekers face**

The partnership between the Career Center and HR managers from the local area to provide customized small workshops will continue in the future.



If you are interested in learning more about the mock interviews or other workshops to replicate in your region, please reach out to our team at (252) 598-5200.



Staff Success Story: Allen Brown, Career Advisor

Ashland City, TN

Not everyone can say they have walked in the shoes of the customers they serve, but Allen Brown can. He too, was an America’s Job Center customer several years back after he decided to leave the fast-food business behind. He was committed to doing a good job but felt underappreciated and underpaid. Allen decided he was ready to pursue a different career path, so he sought help and began taking advantage of the job center’s Title I services, including career assistance and job readiness workshops.

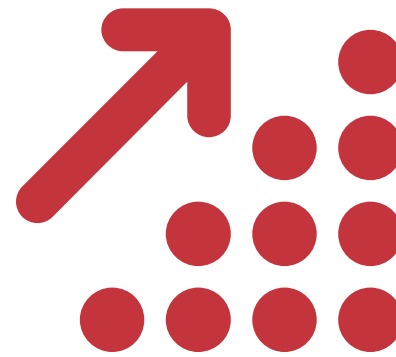
After a few months of being a regular at the job center, many EDSI staff took notice of Allen’s consistency and dedication to bettering himself, so he was given the opportunity to volunteer at the job center. As he got to know the staff and learn new skills, he was eventually offered a job opportunity as an Intake Specialist. Although he was somewhat intimidated about everything he had to learn in a new office environment, his dissatisfaction with his job prior to EDSI was his motivation to keep going, as he knew he never wanted to revisit the feelings of disrespect and demoralization, not to mention being paid too little.

Allen continued building his knowledge of the workforce development industry and all the functions of the job center and after two years, he was offered a new position as Career Advisor. In this role, he feels a sense of responsibility to support those who are struggling with career-related and life struggles, because he was in a similar situation. He enjoys being able to share his story to encourage his customers. He also appreciates EDSI’s company values and culture and says the close-knit “we’re in this together” company spirit helps him feel supported and confident.

“I can relate to many customers coming into the center for assistance. The most fulfilling part of my job is being invested in someone else’s success and helping them overcome their barriers in life in order to find a long-term sustainable career.”

Allen recommends anyone going through hard times to reach out to a local job center for help and he urges them not to let pride get in the way of figuring out what can improve their situation.



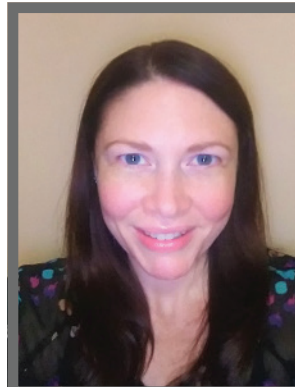


Program Innovations

Behavioral Health Advocates: Supporting Mental Health in Workforce Development



| Featuring:



Shaliyah Jones

Behavioral Health
Coordinator –
Luzerne/Schuylkill
County, PA



Matt Morris

Behavioral
Health Advocate
Performance
Specialist – Bucks/
Montgomery County,
PA

Q&A Spotlight: BHAs Provide Crucial Services for PA Jobseekers and the Staff Supporting Them

Providing mental health support is a crucial part of serving customers, particularly in the workforce development industry, which is why more and more regions are hiring Behavioral Health Advocates (BHAs) to be part of their staff.

As a matter of fact, in Pennsylvania, the State now mandates that all Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) service providers have a BHA on staff. A BHA is a Master's-level social service professional who provides in-depth counseling to participants through career centers and One-Stops across the country, with the goal of providing support and removing personal barriers so participants can land and keep a job.



In this Q&A with Behavioral Health Advocates Matt Morris and Shay Jones, who work for EDSI, a national workforce development consulting firm, you will learn more about the essential work they are doing, more about the BHA role, and how participants are transforming their lives because of this support.

Q1: What is the role of a BHA and why is it important?

SJ: The role of a Behavioral Health Advocate is to address any stressors or barriers a participant may be experiencing by providing brief and solution-focused counseling. We listen and offer support, link them to community resources that may be helpful, provide referrals to partnering organizations, and work with them to achieve their individualized goals. Ultimately, BHAs provide emotional support and a safe space for participants in need.

BHA's are able to "meet each individual where they are" due to the way service delivery has

evolved to be more a more flexible, blended role. There isn't the expectation from the participant to have to meet with us but we bridge the gap between the long wait list for a formal counseling intake appointment to something that is more immediate, needs-based and accessible without having to make a long-term commitment. It's a nice "pick and choose" type of service that centers around how to keep working on health and overall wellness as a priority.

Q2: Matt, you were the first BHA hired by EDSI to work with jobseekers in PA and the State took notice. Tell us more about the intended service delivery and where things stand now.

MM: I was initially hired by Montgomery and Delaware Counties in 2018 as a Behavioral Health Advocate as part of a grant to explore providing mental health support to participants in the workforce development industry. The BHA service delivery plan was initially intended to be presented to participants as a traditional onsite pre-scheduled, hour-long

counseling session where a treatment plan was developed, and a subsequent cadence of visits would follow. Once I started meeting with participants, it became apparent that the usual format was not the best fit for our participants because:

1. When people are seeking employment assistance, they are looking to get a job and keep a job, so being able to commit to or prioritize a prior engagement (i.e. 1-hour weekly counseling session) proved to be difficult or added unnecessary stress.
2. A 1-hour session developing a comprehensive treatment plan felt overwhelming for participants. Shifting to a 30-minute timeframe allowed us to focus on the "here and now" and address immediate

needs. Participants found value in the initial BHA session, because people kept returning for more sessions.

In 2020, the State of Pennsylvania took notice of the positive participant outcomes. For example, participants reported reducing or eliminating barriers and securing employment. The State decided that BHAs would become a mandatory part of all TANF and EARN programs operated by EDSI. Now, it is mandated for all participants receiving services to meet with a BHA for an initial assessment. Currently there are 8 BHAs working in the EARN programs operated by EDSI in Pennsylvania and meeting the regulations that the State requires. BHAs serve participants in the programs listed at left and may also be available to other programs throughout EDSI.

To continue learning, read the rest of the blog and view the 2022-23 annual report below.

 | Blog

 | Annual Report

Service Learning Projects Offer Hands-On Experience to Participants

Lehigh Valley, PA

In Lehigh Valley's WIOA and DHS Individualized Career Services, the Instructors on the Client Services Team have implemented Service Learning Projects to take participants beyond the classroom and engage them in rich and positive learning experiences with community partners for a powerful purpose. These

experiences have quickly become a best practice for the Lehigh Valley, as they develop important workplace skills and career interests, promote thoughtful action and reflection, and cultivate teambuilding through meaningful engagement with the participants and their communities.



their communication skills among peers, clients, and leaders. Another participant stated that they would be reaching out to continue volunteering for the organization.

Service Learning Days not only build skills and relationships for the participants, but also strengthen the relationships between PA CareerLink® Lehigh Valley and their community partners by providing them excellent services and increasing exposure to available services.

“A huge thank you to you and your team today! You guys were amazing and did a fantastic job! It was a super busy day, but your volunteers seriously did AMAZING and we are so appreciative you donated your time with us!” ~ Project of Easton

In just one day, the Service Learning Project turned seven strangers into a team working toward a common goal and building a sense of camaraderie through service. This day of helping community members less fortunate further demonstrated that knowledge is not only from teacher to student but is often more effectively gained through guided experiences with the environment, better preparing our jobseekers for workforce engagement and career success.

The most recent Service Learning Project was with a group of seven participants across the EARN, WIOA Adult, and Out-of-School-Youth programs, serving Project of Easton, a community partner. The participants volunteered in the food pantry as shopping assistants and served a total of 51 families in three hours. After the project, the group had lunch together and reflected on the experience. Some of the participants stated that it helped identify their own strengths and weaknesses, and developed

Re-Entry Simulation Attended by Northern Middle TN Team

Montgomery County, TN

The Northern Middle TN EDSI team had the opportunity to participate in a re-entry simulation on August 18 at the Montgomery County AJC. Over 50 participants from various agencies, employers and workforce companies joined the TDOL Office of Re-entry in a simulation of the barriers that justice-involved citizens leaving incarceration may face.



St. Louis Agency on Training and Employment Awarded Funding for YouthBuild

St. Louis, MO



Incredible work is happening in our St. Louis, MO region! EDSI is proud to be a collaborative partner helping youth on their journey to employment through attainment of high school certifications and skill development in high-priority industries including construction and healthcare.



Read all about the YouthBuild construction skills training program in this article from the state of Missouri's website.





Blogs Published

What is a Memorandum of Understanding and Why is it Important?

EDSI's latest blog installment highlights workforce development and WIOA expert, Terri Kaufman as she shares the latest on MOUs and why they are important in our industry.



Read blogs here.



Terri Kaufman
Workforce Development Specialist

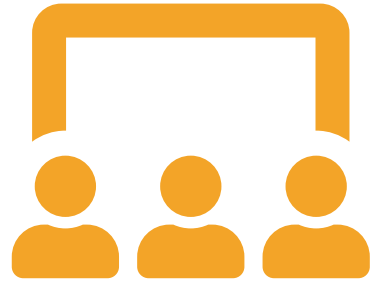


Roe Falcone
Director of Strategic Partnerships

LGBTQIA+ Jobseeker Support: A Customized Approach

EDSI is answering the call of LGBTQIA+ jobseekers to create customized job search workshops and resources, and provide groundbreaking programming aimed to support this community and encourage workplace inclusivity.





Conferences Recap

SEMCA Michigan Works! Conference

At this year's Michigan Works! Annual Conference, EDSI was a silver sponsor, and WIOA Program Coordinator Kathleen Newton received the Shining Star award for all the amazing work she does for the Livonia WIOA program. Congratulations, Kathleen!



Florida Workforce Development Summit

Numerous team members from our Florida region attended this year's Workforce Professional Development Summit, "Together WE Are Better" sponsored by the Florida Workforce Development Association. EDSI was a booth exhibitor and an event specialty sponsor.

This conference provided a variety of workshops specially selected to help all workforce staff at every level of their organization.



Awards & Accolades

EDSI Named Apprenticeship Ambassador

EDSI was selected as an Apprenticeship Ambassador by the DOL in recognition of efforts to provide guidance and education across the U.S. on the development and implementation of apprenticeship programs, thanks in large part to our awesome consulting and curriculum teams as well as our resident expert on all things apprenticeship, Adina Tayar, Regional Apprenticeship Coordinator.



Click here to read more about this ambassadorship in this press release.

Detroit Free Press Names EDSI a Winner of the Michigan Top Workplaces 2023 Award

EDSI has been awarded a Top Workplaces 2023 honor by Detroit Free Press for the 9th year. The list is based on employee feedback gathered through a third-party survey administered by employee engagement technology partner Energage LLC. The confidential survey measures

15 culture drivers that are critical to the success of any organization: including alignment, execution, and connection, to name a few.

“Earning a Top Workplaces award is a badge of honor for companies, especially

because it comes authentically from their employees,” said Eric Rubino, Energage CEO. “That’s something to be proud of. In today’s market, leaders must ensure they’re allowing employees to have a voice and be heard. That’s paramount. Top Workplaces do this, and it pays dividends.”

“I am so proud of our EDSI family and the way we show up for each other each and every day, said Kevin Schnieders, EDSI CEO. Receiving the Top Workplaces award shows that we put people first and we’re committed to a culture centered

around our core values of Show Up, Smile and Support. As we continue to grow and learn, I’m certain we will provide even greater service to our customers, colleagues, and community. Thank you for this very significant honor.”

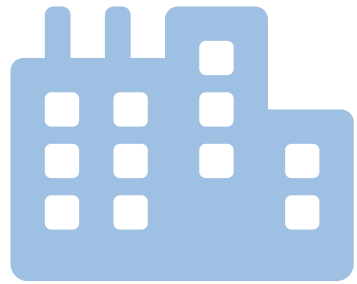


EDSI Named 2023 National and Metro Detroit Best and Brightest Award Winner

EDSI won a spot on the Best and Brightest Companies to Work For list again this year. After submitting an extensive application, the 2023 winning companies were assessed by an independent research firm that reviewed a number of key workplace measures relative to other nationally recognized winners. This is the 14th winning year for the Metro Detroit program and 12th year for National!



For a complete list of 2023 winning companies click here.



New Business



Contracts won between July and November

Michigan

- Labor and Economic Opportunity (LEO) – Adult Education Professional Development Services

Missouri

- St. Louis County – WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker Program
- Missouri Full Employment Council – Development of Job Center Connect Initiatives & Automated WIOA Eligibility System

Pennsylvania

- Luzerne/Schuylkill – Youth Reentry Program Grant



Stay Connected



EDSI.com/company-info



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[Click here for Stevens Amendment information.](#)