



TO: Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan

FROM: EarlyWorks

DATE: Nov. 13, 2017

RE: Update on Head Start talent outreach to local universities and colleges

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At the Head Start talent meeting on Sept. 21, agency human resources representatives highlighted the skills gap as an ongoing challenge to effective recruitment for the program. In addition to job fairs to fill immediate openings, the group decided to work collectively to make outreach to local academic institutions. The aim is to reach students earlier in their academic careers to inform them about the specific degree requirements, career opportunities and benefits of working in Head Start.

Such an effort is too time consuming for individual agencies, but collectively - sharing the outreach and implementation - it allows the group to undertake this necessary work. EarlyWorks serves as a coordinator.

### **Summary of outreach to-date**

In the last eight weeks, we have participated in meetings with six academic institutions. The meetings included at least one human resources representative from a Head Start agency and a member of the EarlyWorks team.

- Baker College (Wayne Metro hr representative)
  - Carol Williams, program director, Early Childhood Education (Allen Park)
  - Susan Finerty, Early Childhood Education Site Coordinator
  - Mary Jane Merren, program director, Early Childhood Education (Clinton Township)
- Henry Ford Community College (Wayne Metro hr representative)
  - Marlene White, director, Children and Families Program
- Madonna University (Development Centers hr representative)
  - Mary Tomczyk, director, Early Childhood and Child Development
- Oakland Community College (OLHSA hr representatives)
  - Tiffany Wright-Ofeimu, coordinator, Early Childhood Education Program
- Oakland University (OLHSA hr representatives)
  - Ambika Bhargava, program coordinator, Human Development and Child Studies
  - Julie Ricks-Doneen, director, Lowry Center of Early Childhood Education
- Rochester College (Focus Hope, Matrix hr representatives)
  - Essie Bryan, director, Career Services and Early College
  - Mel Blohm, dean, School of Education

The academic contacts were appreciative of the outreach, and the opportunity to connect more directly with the collective effort. While many of the academic institutions have relationships with one or more of the Head Start agencies, they were enthusiastic about making additional contacts and saw the benefit of talking about Head Start career opportunities holistically.

In every meeting, we identified immediate and near-term opportunities for Head Start representatives to “show up” on campuses to speak about the field and specifically working in Head Start.

- Baker College: Present at early childhood student group meeting (Dec. 5 of Jan. 9)
- Baker College: Present during Freshman 110 class (Fall 2018)
- Baker College: Network with agencies to improve their approach to practicum placements (ongoing)
- Henry Ford Community College: Head Start focus for biannual department Information Session (April 2018)
- Henry Ford Community College: Include Head Start talent information in department’s student newsletter (Q4 2017 or Q1 2018)
- Madonna University: Participate in Spring College of Education Job Fair (Spring 2018)
- Madonna University: Present at Early Childhood Club professional development event (Spring 2018)
- Oakland Community College: Partner with university in efforts to expand awareness/instruction to high school students (TBD)
- Oakland University: Present to Intro class (Fall 2018)
- Rochester College: Participate in Dec. 6 campus job fair (information shared with agencies)
- Rochester College: Prepare 20-minute Head Start overview video for Intro class (Fall 2018)
- Rochester College: Prepare short video for capstone proposal (Spring 2018)
- Rochester College: Partner with more agencies to help students complete their observation hours
- Rochester College: Present at a Career Services professional skills development class (Spring 2018)

**Next steps:**

The Head Start talent group meets again on Nov. 17. The group will discuss and plan for the current opportunities, and plan for the next round of university and college outreach.