



MINUTES OF PUBLIC MEETING OF THE  
MARICOPA COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD YOUTH COMMITTEE

Thursday, December 11, 2025 – 9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.

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**Members Present:**

Anne Landers, Brittany Holmes, Dr. Meredith Critchfield, Jessica Ruiz, Marie Raymond, Tina Drews

**Members Absent:**

Anna Yap, Che Collins, Barbara Coakley, Danielle Lertique, JakinDee Kosaka, Jessica Rivera-Garcia, Robert Garcia

**Call to Order.**

Chair Anne Landers called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m. and requested roll call.

**Roll Call.**

Roll call was conducted by Management Analyst, Madison Ginsberg. Quorum was not confirmed.

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**Welcome, Opening Remarks, and Meeting Objectives.**

Chair Landers welcomed everyone to the meeting and reviewed the objectives and goals for the committee. Chair Landers announced that since there is not a quorum, the Consent Agenda will be postponed to the next meeting.

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**Consent Agenda.**

**Meeting Minutes:** September 11, 2025

Postponed.

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**Information/Discussion Only.**

**AZ Youthforce**

Samantha Hansen, Director of Workforce Development & Career Pathways, shared updates from AZ Youthforce, a workforce development program through the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Valley.

Program Overview:

- Recruits' youth ages 14–21 from both BGCAZ clubs and local high schools
- All participating youth complete 30 hours of essential/soft-skills training before beginning internships
- Three program tracks: Group Internships, Career Internships, and an Entrepreneurship Track
- An additional “Emerging Leaders” clubhouse track provides 14–17-year-olds with paid stipends for assisting club operations during the summer

Training & Support:

- Essential-skills curriculum developed in partnership with a community college instructor and aligned with Boys & Girls Clubs of America
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- Workshops cover financial literacy, résumé preparation, personal branding, communication, and career exploration
- Youth receive support from case managers (20–25 students each)

#### Outcomes & Data:

- 983 teens have completed internships since inception
- 709 program participants are attending college
- Competency in essential skills is measured through pre- and post-surveys and the Arizona Career Readiness Credential assessment

#### Discussion:

- Questions addressed: liability insurance for minors in internships, collaboration with ARIZONA@WORK, and methods for assessing skill mastery.

### **Workforce 2 You**

Diane Meza, Executive Director of Maricopa IT Institute, shared a presentation about the Workforce Professional Skills credential.

#### Overview:

- The Workforce Professional Skills Credential is a free, non-credit, self-paced online course that was developed in partnership with industry and is offered through the Maricopa IT Institute and all 10 Maricopa Community Colleges
- The credential is open to high school students and community members, requiring only a simple five-minute registration

#### Courses:

- The course consists of five modules covering essential workplace skills and is updated annually based on employer feedback
- Recent course additions include key performance indicators, public speaking, and virtual meeting etiquette
- Students who score 80% or higher on the final exam earn a digital badge recognized by employer partners
- Approximately 200–300 students are currently enrolled, with capacity to scale to 800 as more faculty integrate the course and as internship programs begin requiring it

#### Discussion

- Members noted alignment with components of the former Arizona Career Readiness Credential and expressed interest in future statewide conversations about reviving standardized career-readiness tools.

### **Youth Workforce Services Update**

Andrew Lucero, Workforce Development Program Manager, gave an update on youth workforce services:

#### Data:

- As of December 1, the program is serving 261 active youth, with an additional 482 active clients in the apprenticeship program, 246 of whom are youth
  - The team has delivered 2,308 services to youth participants, including 143 supportive services such as transportation, tools, and training-related assistance.
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- Key program activities include 63 youth in occupational skills training, with healthcare representing 52% of enrollments, followed by transportation, IT, and construction
- The team has 51 active work experiences, offering paid opportunities at \$16/hour plus a \$500 completion incentive, with healthcare again the leading field of interest

Process Improvements Implemented:

- Enhanced outbound communication, more youth-friendly application steps, creation of a “youth lab” for assessments, and dedicated one-on-one youth orientations
- These changes have led to significant increases in engagement, with scheduled enrollments nearly doubling compared to the same months last year

A new promotional video created with the communications team is now being used in follow-up emails and on the website to support outreach. Board members commended the Youth Services Team for strong performance, growing partnerships, and increased visibility across the County. A youth success story was shared by Career Advisor Rebekah Keizer.

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**Call to Public.**

Chair Landers called for public comment. No public comments were made.

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**Adjourn.**

Chair Landers asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Jessica Ruiz moved to adjourn. Marie Raymond seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 10:01 a.m.

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