



The Schreiber Research Group (TSRG) is a team of experts whose mission is to improve substance-use-related outcomes through community outreach, consulting services, and research.

The Schreiber Research Group
Workforce Development Workgroup Meeting Minutes
2.24.2025 via Zoom

Attendees:

- Tara Castaneda - Community Lead, Mile High Youth Corps
- Pam Denahy – City of La Junta, Director of Tourism
- Melany Grinstead - Colorado Department of Labor
- Lauren Kerr - TSRG
- Jason Key – TSRG, AmeriCorps VISTA member
- Christopher Menges - Otero County Health Department, Substance Use Disorder Program Director
- Rob Oquist - Otero County Commissioner
- Maddie Peloff – TSRG, Data Coordinator
- Maureen Rikhof - City Council Member, Recovery Friendly Employer
- Donna Rohde - Otero County Department of Human Services
- Terri Schreiber - TSRG

Work Group Mission and Norms:

Mission:

This workgroup will discuss topics surrounding workforce development initiatives for people in recovery. Long term goals of this work group include identifying which organizations will play a role in providing services and programming, and identifying what services and programming are needed. The group aims to develop a communication strategy, identify recovery, friendly workplace employers, and secure physical space for work, workplace center.

Norms:

- i. One person speaking at a time
- ii. Use raise hand function if someone else is speaking
- iii. Respect others' opinions

Meeting purpose: [Brief summary]

Jason Key provided an update on his literature review and AmeriCorps recruitment, noting federal funding uncertainties. Tara Castaneda and Jason updated the group on their presentation to the SEBREA board, which received positive feedback. The group discussed potential physical spaces for a workforce center, with Melany Grinstead suggesting shared space.

Agenda items:

- i. Americorps updates
 - a. Jason delivered an update on his literature review and implementation of a program plan
 - b. Terri and Maddie discuss the availability and uncertainty of federal funding and how it affects the possibility of hiring another AmeriCorps member
- ii. Southeast Colorado Business Retention Expansion and Attraction (SEBREA) Meeting
 - a. Tara reported that her and Jason's presentation went well, and they will continue to be in contact with several members
 - b. Rob reported that several SEBREA group members were interested in expanding the market analysis's investigation into their counties. Tara will manage follow up with the group.

Other discussion items:

- i. Physical location
 - a. Tara discussed the possibility of the workforce center becoming mobile and Eastern Plains Youth Corps looking for space to rent
 - b. Melany brings up the possibility of sharing cost
 - c. Terri discusses the possibility of using grant funding
- ii. Interviews for market analysis
 - a. Terri, Rob, Tara and Donna discuss which community members in the SEBREA meeting are willing to be interviewed and how best to engage with them
- iii. Resource Navigation and Yeehaw Updates
 - a. Maureen Rikhof explains the challenges of creating a resource directory and the need for a dynamic tool to help people navigate available resources.
 - b. Terri Schreiber discusses the need for a brochure or flyer consolidating information on public benefits for individuals with substance use disorders.
 - c. Maureen Rikhof and Christopher Menges agree to share their resource navigation efforts and consider collaboration with the HRSA project team.
 - d. Maureen and Jason report that Yeehaw is experiencing challenges securing funding, so the organization plans support workforce development efforts but does not have the capacity to take on much new work currently
 - e. Christopher Menges advocates for a roving peer support specialist to provide immediate assistance in crisis situations, especially during warming center operations.

- f. Tara Castaneda shares the success of the Regional Resource Roundtable in La Junta and the importance of collaboration among organizations.

Action items

- Tara Castaneda - Reach out to Heather at the La Junta Library to discuss the Regional Resource Roundtable and potential involvement.
- Terri Schreiber - Reach out to Melany Grinstead at the Workforce Center to get estimates on potential shared space and costs.
- Terri Schreiber - Coordinate with the Yeehaw group to explore opportunities for collaboration on the public benefits resource.
- Tara, Jason, and Maddie - Follow up with Danelle Berg to get the contact information for the county personnel interested in workforce development opportunities for people in recovery.

Next meeting:

Date: March 26, 2025 Time: Following HRSA Quarterly Meeting Location: The River Church at 109 W 5th Street, La Junta, CO.