



# ARKANSAS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

ARKANSAS DIVISION OF WORKFORCE SERVICES

## AGENDA

**AUGUST 4, 2023  
9:30 A.M.**

**VIRTUAL VIA ZOOM**

# AGENDA

**August 4, 2023**

## **ARKANSAS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING**

9:30 a.m.

*Estimated Time: 1 hour*

Call to Order.....Mr. Tom Anderson, Chairman

Roll Call.....Board Staff

### **Agenda Item 1: ACTION**

Approval of Minutes- June 15, 2023 Meeting

### **Agenda Item 2: ACTION**

Reimagine Workforce Grant Extension Request.....Mr. Eddie Thomas, Assistant Director  
Ms. Shenaye Johns, Reimagine Project Director  
Arkansas Division of Workforce Services

Presentation to Executive Committee .....Reimagine Grant Subrecipients

Shorter College (10 minutes)

University of Arkansas Global Campus (10 minutes)

Committee Open Discussion

Public Opportunity to Address the Committee

Announcements

Adjournment

Location - Via Zoom



**For Consideration of the  
Arkansas Workforce Development Board  
Executive Committee**

**August 4, 2023**

**AGENDA ITEM 1 – ACTION:** Minutes of the June 15, 2023, Arkansas Workforce Development Board meeting-Executive Committee.

**RECOMMENDATION:** It is recommended that the Arkansas Workforce Development Board-Executive Committee approve the minutes of the June 15, 2023, Arkansas Workforce Development Board meeting.

**INFORMATION/RATIONALE:** Minutes of the meetings are attached.

**MINUTES**  
**ARKANSAS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD- Executive Committee**  
**June 15, 2023**

The Arkansas Workforce Development Board- Executive Committee convened on June 15, 2023, beginning at 10:03 a.m. The meeting was conducted virtually. Chairman Tom Anderson presided with the following members voicing their presence: Mr. Tom Anderson, Mr. Miles Crawford, Ms. Candice Lawrence, Judge Brandon Ellison, Ms. Karen Breashears, Mr. Justin Majors, proxy for Mr. Clint O'Neal. A quorum was established.

Governor Sarah Sanders, Mr. William French, and Commissioner Joseph Baxter were unable to attend.

Chairman's Opening Comments: Chairman Anderson moved to the first agenda item.

**Agenda Item 1 – ACTION – Stipend Payments:** Chairman Anderson recognized Director Chad Brown. Mr. Brown stated that at the first board meeting of the year, the AWDB approved a resolution for board members to receive a stipend, however an amount was not approved at that time. Mr. Brown explained that the previously approved rate was \$110. He further explained that an amount would need to be decided and approved and made retroactive back to January 2023.

Chairman Anderson opened the floor for questions and asked for a motion after hearing no questions.

**Hearing none, a motion to approve the board member stipend amount of \$110, retroactive to January 2023, was made by Ms. Candice Lawrence, followed by a second motion by Ms. Karen Breashears. The motion carried unanimously with none opposed.**

**Agenda Item 2 – ACTION – ReImagine Grant Extension** Chairman Anderson provided a summary of the May 2023 Full Board meeting and discussions related to the ReImagine grant. Mr. Anderson stated that the full board tabled a decision to approve a request for a one year no-cost extension and deferred the decision to the Executive Committee. Chairman Anderson recognized Assistant Director Eddie Thomas to provide an overview of the current status of the grant.

Mr. Thomas explained that the grant period is a three-year timeframe that ends on September 30, 2023 and shared objectives of the meeting. He then recognized Ms. Shenaye Johns, ReImagine Project Director and asked that she share more details about the grant.

Ms. Johns stated the purpose of the grant and provided a detailed report of performance rates and program outcomes. Mr. Doss Burgess, ADWS Grants Manager was recognized and provided a detailed budget report of the grant's financial activities including state expenditures, subrecipient expenditures and remaining balances on the grant. Ms. Johns and Mr. Burgess asked if there were any questions.

Mr. Miles Crawford asked for clarity on the number of completers in the performance report. He stated that based on the report it seemed as if neither subrecipient was performing well based on percentages. Ms. Johns and Mr. Thomas explained that goals for each subrecipient was based on negotiated performance levels and differed based on the grant award.

Ms. Candice Lawrence asked which subrecipient requested an extension. Based on her understanding from the previous meeting, Shorter was requesting an extension but UAGC was indifferent. Director Brown explained that both subrecipients would be subject to participate if the extension was granted. Ms. Lawrence asked if the floor was open for discussion. Mr. Thomas confirmed that staff was prepared to answer any

questions at that time. Ms. Lawrence expressed her concerns with the overall outcomes of the grant and stated that based on the information provided, it might not be a good idea to extend the grant. Mr. Crawford agreed and stated that the board has a fiduciary responsibility to be good stewards of funds, thus an extension would not be a good use of funds. Mr. Justin Majors asked staff to explain the purpose of the grant and stated that if the objective of the grant was to assist individuals in finding jobs during the pandemic, then that may no longer need to be a focus, post-pandemic. He suggested that this may be the reason for low performance. Mr. Crawford agreed and asked if there was data to show the number of participants who found employment before completing the training programs. Mr. Thomas explained that he did not believe this data was available but shared that subrecipients hired retention specialist mid-way through the grant and could possibly be tracking this information now. Mr. Thomas shared that the extension would be a no-cost extension which allowed for an extra year of grant activity but no additional funds would be awarded to the state. He also explained that during the pandemic states received an influx of funds that were designed to provide comparable training opportunities as the ReImagine grant, thus creating competition amongst similar programs.

Mr. Thomas informed the board that there was another issue that required disclosing. The issue was related to the Idatify LLC contract between UAGC and the vendor. Thomas shared that state staff identified possible procurement and contract issues related to contract start and end dates and payment schedules, which could lead to questioned and disallowed costs. Mr. Thomas explained that the issues have been raised to the subrecipient and all parties have been discussing options for resolution. He then stated that next steps would be to vote to accept or deny the extension request and then present that decision to the US Department of Education.

Ms. Karen Breashears asked if there were plans to produce better results or if extending the grant would be “business as usual.” Mr. Crawford, Judge Brandon Ellison, and Ms. Lawrence asked for more clarity on the Idatify contract and its services. Ms. Johns stated that the amount of questioned costs appeared to be \$445,000. Ms. Johns also explained Idatify’s role in the grant project and additional details of the contract.

Ms. Breashears asked if the subrecipients regularly seek technical assistance in order to overcome challenges and reach their targets. She also asked if there had been other issues with the grant or subrecipients outside of performance. ADWS staff explained their role as grant administrator and a technical assistance arm for all partners of the grants.

Mr. Crawford and Ms. Breashears asked if other states are experiencing difficulty with program outcomes and if other states would be extending their grant. State staff explained that according to the DOE federal project officer, Arkansas is the only state that has not yet asked for an extension, despite all states struggling with performance. Ms. Lawrence and Mr. Crawford expressed their appreciation for those who wish to utilize grant funds in lieu of having them recaptured by the federal government. Both stated that their position is that if the grant has not proven to be successful and if there is no solid plan to improve outcomes, then the responsible action would be to return the funds to the federal treasury. Judge Ellison and Ms. Breashears concurred.

Mr. Thomas explained that if this grant is not extended, the agency would be committed to applying for future grants aligned with the board’s vision and mission. Board members continued discussion surrounding their views.

Ms. Breashears asked if the subrecipients were on the call and encouraged guests to provide more details if they were. Chairman Anderson opened the floor for public comments.

**Hearing none, a motion was made to not extend the ReImagine Workforce grant, by Ms. Karen Breashears; followed by a second motion by Judge Brandon Ellison. The motion carried unanimously with none opposed.**

**Board Open Discussion:** Chairman Anderson opened the floor for open discussion. Board members discussed available virtual platforms for labor exchange and resume' development services.

**Public Speaking Opportunity:** Chairman opened the floor for public comment, but there were none.

**Announcements:** Director Brown announced that the next meeting would be on August 15<sup>th</sup> at Pulaski Tech in Little Rock, AR. November 7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> WIOA partners will convene in Hot Springs. State board meetings are encouraged to attend.

**Adjourn:** As presented, Chairman Anderson adjourned the AWDB Full Board meeting on a motion made by Ms. Karen Breashears, followed by Judge Brandon Ellison making the second motion. The motion carried unanimously with none opposed. Meeting adjourned at 11:10am.

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Thomas Anderson, Board Chairman  
Arkansas Workforce Development Board

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Charisse Childers, Director  
Arkansas Division of Workforce Services

*Minutes recorded by Eddie Thomas  
Arkansas Division of Workforce Services Staff*

**For Consideration of the  
Arkansas Workforce Development Board  
Executive Committee**

**August 4, 2023**

**AGENDA ITEM 2 – ACTION** Reimagine Grant Extension Request

**INFORMATION/RATIONALE:** This agenda is to determine if the Reimagine Grant will receive a one-year extension. During the May 2023 Full Board Meeting, it was decided that the Executive Committee would meet to determine if the extension would be approved or denied for Shorter College and the University of Arkansas Global Campus (UAGC).

The AWDB Executive Committee met on June 15, 2023 and voted unanimously to deny the extension request.

Shorter College and UAGC requested an opportunity to address the board for reconsideration. Today's meeting will include presentations from both subrecipients.



# Reimagine Arkansas Workforce Overview

**Grantor:** U.S. Department of Education

**Grant Recipient:** Arkansas Workforce Development Board

**Subrecipients:** University of Arkansas Global Campus (UAGC), Shorter College

**Partners:** Arkansas Division of Workforce Services, Idatafy LLC

**Grant Description:** Reimagine Arkansas Workforce Covid-19 economic recovery project is designed to assist job seekers obtain employment and to assist employers find qualified workers. With this partnership specific goals and objectives were identified, that were created to help the state of Arkansas recover from the Covid-19 pandemic.

Goal 1: Create and expand short-term education and training opportunities that help citizens return to work, enter a job or start a business within in-demand industry sectors and occupations.

Goal 2: Remove barriers to training and ensure a quick return/start to employment or business creation by providing job assistance to participants.

## Highlights:

- Marketing efforts have led to enrollments of participants from all seventy-five Arkansas counties. As of 7-14-23, UAGC and Shorter College have collectively recruited and enrolled 2,916 participants.
- Partnerships have been formed with over 15 employers that has allowed for internship opportunities for many participants who, after completion, obtain full time employment.

## Challenges:

- Performance measures and outcomes trend lower than negotiated; specifically, employment placement rates and number of training program completers.

### **IDATAFY LLC Contract & Payment**

- During a review of the January 2023 monthly expenditure report, it was identified that a reimbursement request was made for Professional Services to iDatafy, LLC that were paid in advance of services being rendered. The UAGC contract with iDatafy LLC contained advance payments. All contracts over \$75,000 require an attorney review to certify that the contract does not require the state to be financially obligated to make payments for commodities or services before they have been received. The certification was made but the contract was executed with the advance payment schedule. The final payment was made to iDatafy, LLC in advance by UAGC seventeen months before the end of the contract in September 2022 in the amount of \$445,000.00. The term of the contract extends from 03/1/21 – 02/28/24. The period of performance on the federal award ends on 9/30/23. The Federal Project Officer confirmed that no expenses could be paid for if they were incurred after the period of performance.

## Financial Expenditures: (7-14-23)

- **Total Award Amount \$13,579,456.00**
  - **ADWS**                      **\$326,411.00**                      **remaining balance: \$170,982.20**
  - **UAGC**                      **\$10,088,551.00**                      **remaining balance: \$2,945,658.85**
  - **Shorter College**    **\$3,164,793.00**                      **remaining balance: \$2,027,369.66**
- **Total expended with all partners: \$8,435,445.29**
- **Remaining Balance \$5,144,010.71**

## State Board Action

Full Board met on May 3<sup>rd</sup> and deferred decision to the executive committee. Executive Committee met on June 15<sup>th</sup> and voted to deny the extension based on the following factors:

- Existing programs do not align with Arkansas in-demand occupations
- Program outcomes, specifically number of completers, are low in comparison to the number of program participants
- Employment placement data does not reflect a successful training-to-entered employment ratio
- Extending an additional year wouldn't be a responsible use of taxpayer dollars



DATE: Tuesday, August 1, 2023		Measure Type	Quantitative Data											
			Target						Actual Performance Data					
			Raw Number	U of A Ratio Target # 66.7%	Shorter Ratio Target # 33.3%	Cumulative Target #	Overall Target Goal #	%	Raw Number	U of A Actual Performance #	Shorter Actual Performance #	Cumulative Actual Performance #	Overall Actual Performance Goal #	%
Year 3	At least 15% of the participants will enroll state-wide during Year 1 in the existing UA Global Campus and/or Shorter College online, short-term training programs and participants will enroll 42.5% in Year 2 and 42.5% in Year 3.	Project		1334	666	2000	2000	100%		2798	187	2985	2000	149%
Year 3	At least 10% of the participants will enroll state-wide in new courses during Year 1 in the UA Global Campus and/or Shorter College online, short-term training programs and participants will enroll 45% in Years 2 and Year 3.	Project		667	333	1000	1000	100%		91	125	216	1000	22%
Year 3	At least 70% of the total participants enrolled will complete the online, short-term training programs during Years 1, 2, and 3.	Project		1401	699	2100	2100	100%		300	93	393	2100	19%
Year 3	At least 70% of the participants completing online, short-term training programs will identify as having a diverse background, recent high school graduate, unemployed, incarcerated, on probation/parole or underemployed during Years 1, 2, and 3.	Project		980	490	1470	1470	100%		2812	136	2948	1470	201%
Year 3	At least 80% of the participants applying for the online, short-term training programs will receive tuition assistance during Years 1, 2 and 3.	Project		1601	799	2400	2400	100%		2866	312	3178	2400	132%
Year 3	At least 80% of the participants will be employed the second quarter for employment after completing the online, short-term training program during Years 1, 2 and 3.	Project		1121	559	1680	1680	100%		69	16	85	1680	5%
Year 3	At least 80% of the participants will be employed full-time in an occupation that is directly related to the online, short-term training program in the second quarter for employment after completing the program during Years 1, 2 and 3.	Project		1121	559	1680	1680	100%		30	7	37	1680	2%
Year 3	At least 100% of the participants will be available to receive support services that meet individual needs during Years 1, 2 and 3.	Project		2001	999	3000	3000	100%		2866	312	3178	3000	106%
Year 3	At least 75% of the participants employed for online, short-term training programs will earn a wage earning above the poverty guide line during Years 1, 2 and 3.	Project		840	420	1260	1260	100%		52	6	58	1260	5%
**Year 3	At least 70% of connections/hires, collected on an ongoing basis through employers and participants, are made through the iDatafy resume-building program during Years 1, 2 and 3. <i>(Participants were setup with the iDatafy SmartResume app)</i>	Project		785	392	1177	1177	100%		2579	177	2756	1177	234%
**Year 3	At least 70% of connections/hires, collected on an ongoing basis through employers and participants, are made through the iDatafy resume-building program during Years 1, 2 and 3. <i>(Participants activated the</i>	Project		785	392	1177	1177	100%		479	36	515	1177	44%

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Performance Measure YEAR 3														
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**Year 3	At least 70% of connections/hires, collected on an ongoing basis through employers and participants, are made through the iDatafy resume-building program during Years 1, 2 and 3. ( <i>Participants were setup with the iDatafy SmartResume app</i> )	Project		785	392	1177	1177	100%		2579	177	2756	1177	234%
**Year 3	At least 70% of connections/hires, collected on an ongoing basis through employers and participants, are made through the iDatafy resume-building program during Years 1, 2 and 3. ( <i>Participants activated the SmartResume with iDatafy.</i> )	Project		785	392	1177	1177	100%		479	36	515	1177	44%
***Reporting	Number of individuals obtaining employment upon completion of training			0	0			#DIV/0!				0	0	#DIV/0!
***Reporting	Number of individuals who gained employment in the field they received training			0	0			#DIV/0!				0	0	#DIV/0!
***Reporting	Median earnings of the number of individuals who gained employment in the field they received training			0	0			#DIV/0!				0	0	#DIV/0!



# ADWS Board Meeting

August 4, 2023  
9:30 AM – 10:30 AM

# Agenda

Greetings .....	President Green
Enrollment Rate Partners.....	Dr. Valentine
Completion Rate Plan.....	Dr. Valentine
Employment Rate Plan.....	Dr. Valentine
Winrock Grant.....	Mrs. Kelly Huskey
Reimagine Participant/Corporate Internship Partner .....	Team Reimagine
Q & A.....	Arkansas Workforce Board





# Greetings

President Jerome Green

# Enrollment Partners





# Completion Rate Plan

- Assign each participant a designated tutor
- First week draft a completion plan
- Weekly check ins with participant (tutor/counselor)
- Weekly incremental incentives based on metrics
- Weekly data dives with support staff



# Employment Rate Plan

Little Rock DWS Job Network Vol. #179 07/25/2023



<https://www.dws.arkansas.gov>

Little Rock Workforce Center Free Resources and Services



1. Follow the link below

(DFA Intern – Accounting, Finance, Business Administration, Management, Marketing, Communications, Human Resources, Legal Studies/Law, Political Science, Public Policy/Administration, Cyber/Network Security, Web Development, Data Analytics, Computer Science, Business Information Systems, Management Information Systems, and other related majors )

- Share iDatafy opportunity during orientation
- Send iDatafy link to participants first week of courses
- Schedule an appointment with each participant with Director of Career Placement
- Share employment opportunities
- Send employment survey to each participant (bi-monthly/monthly based on duration of course
- Attend Shorter College Job Fair (2 per academic year/invitations to local job fairs
- Employer of the Week (Bi-monthly)
- Send out weekly employment opportunities

# Reimagine Completers/ Corporate Internship Partner Dialogue

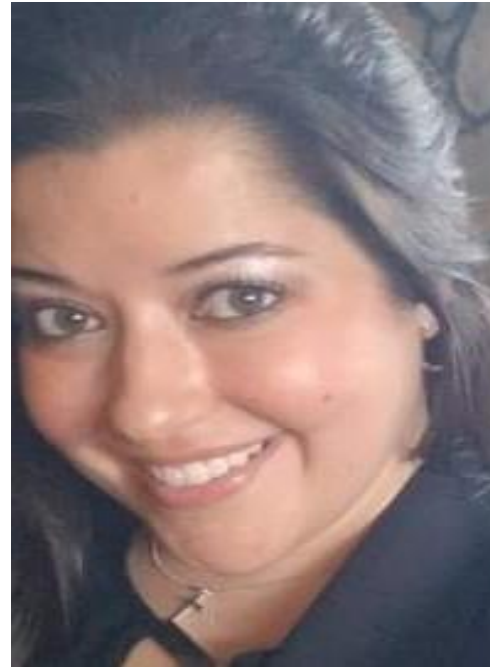
Corporate Internship Partner

Mr. Contrell Henderson

Made Enterprise



Brittany Rush  
Digital Marketing  
Fundamentals  
Cohort 7



Bivla Hunt  
Entrepreneurship Small  
Business Management  
Cohort 8



## Winrock Grant



provides technical support in the area of Financial Management to over 50 minority or women-owned small businesses

career placement director is working to establish partnerships for internships and employment

pipeline/bridge to increased corporate internship and employer partners (Entrepreneurship and Small Business Management, Human Resources, and Digital Marketing Fundamentals)

# Q & A

Any Questions?

