



**Mountain Desert Economic Partnership**  
Regional Education and Economic Development

**Team 2 Meeting Minutes**

April 21, 2020

10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

Zoom

**In attendance:**

Matt Wells, MDCP JPA

Kendle Crowell, MDCP JPA

Andy Page, MDCP JPA

Kim McNulty, OneFuture Coachella Valley

Sheila Thornton, OneFuture Coachella Valley

Carmina Maust, Culture Plug

Shannon Shannon, Saddlerock Reverse Mortgage

Dave Olney, Hesperia USD

Lori Mente, Hesperia USD

Cathy Abbott, Victor Valley College Foundation

McKenzie Tarango, Hesperia USD

Ron Williams, Victor Valley UHSD

**1. *Welcome and Introductions***

**2. *What is MDEP's role during this crisis? How does MDEP stay relevant and emerge from the crisis poised to lead/drive economic development?***

- Beacon of hope
- Help economic development and recovery through innovative ideas
- Sense of community - use existing and build new relationships and networks through this group to achieve results
- If people didn't know what MDEP was before COVID, they should coming out of it.
- Team-specific work:
  - Team 1: Innovation - How do current realities impact innovation support needs? Before, innovation targets were largely around new businesses/startups. Are there innovation supports that can be offered to support existing businesses to make money during these challenging times (e.g. can we support businesses learning how to pivot their focus)? What does our economy have as advantages (e.g. we aren't heavy in the hotel business) and thus opportunities?
    - Cathy Abbott reviewed the face shield project that is being spearheaded by Lisa K. Kennedy and pushed through MDEP Team 1:

- Districts have been asked to donate 3D printers and transparencies to BCC to contribute to make the large order of face shields, which is now up to 15,000
- College Foundations getting involved to find ways to fund material
- State is still determining if SWP funds can be used without getting students involved to do the work and so the end product can be donated to local hospitals.
- The federal government has approved Perkins funds can be used to donate items to local medical facilities in need
- Team 3: Mechatronics - Can we use platforms like Nepris in two ways: (1) To engage students in conversations about jobs that are currently in demand? (2) Bring real, meaty conversations about real problems to students? (e.g. A real chat of depth with someone or a panel of business leaders discussing trying to weather layoffs, lack of demand, new sanitation demands, etc.)
- Team 4: Essential skills - Is there a subset of essential skills that can be deployed as key in the current economic environment? For instance, can MDEP deploy a Top Ten Essential Skills for Remote Hiring/Job seeking in this environment, etc. that would lift up students to be an asset as HD weathers and emerges from this situation? Students exiting HS right now aren't going to be able to drop off a resume like before or conduct an interview like before. How can we support their transition to the workforce or later ed?

### **3. Team 2 Update and Projects Underway**

- Dave Olney discussed the 4-year access proposal:
  - We still need affordable four year access, but now we have an unknown economic situation and challenges that we need to consider moving forward.
  - Many states have huge economic strife in the education system.
  - Still need an affordable university system - existing UC's, Cal States, etc. are going to be in the same budget crunches as K12 will be.
  - Opportunities will emerge through this crisis. Impacted programs at Cal Poly using existing VVC instructors can be an affordable way for Cal Poly to continue offering programs that they may have had to cut otherwise due to budget restraints
- Is the goal of the team the same as before the crisi?
  - Yes, we still need affordable access to higher education. Possibly now, more than ever.
  - We were targeting more the engineering, aviation, manufacturing industries from the beginning, so we should still move forward in that direction because that is a strength in the HD region.
  - Concern of losing momentum because of the face to face restrictions. Students aren't able to get the applied learning in certain programs, like welding, but meanwhile our local industry is hurting for new welding staff.
- How does our work need to change?
  - Everyone is going to be looking for economic efficiency and use of resources.
  - We need to know from employers what has changed and what is expanding (we have Manufacturing in the HD as a major employer, so that will play into our favor and offer solutions for employment of students seeking higher ed.

- We may have an economic recovery that is different from other regions because of our strong industry, so that needs to be captured in the value proposition.
- We need to showcase the shift of what opportunities have been created by the COVID crisis.
- The idea of Manufacturing and Engineering development fall into the STEM scope, but we may want to stay away from that terminology. We need to play more toward the economic base of what will be thriving and the emerging technology in those sectors. Showcase the opportunity for jobs, not so much STEM.
- Job descriptions in every sector are about to change and many industries will work in conjunction with one another in a post-pandemic world.

#### **4. Reviewing Value Proposition**

- Do we need to tweak anything based on the current situation we are in? Is the message still relevant to the times?
- VVC and BCC info need to be the most up-to-date numbers.
- Next step needs to be reaching out to those in higher education to review and give suggestions.
- Cathy Abbott discussed the outreach that is already taking place at VVC with Cal Poly or others. We don't want to reinvent the wheel.
  - Cal Poly asked VVC to change their course codes to engineering codes so they align specifically with Cal Poly's. That was almost completed before school closures.
  - The meeting between VVC and Cal Poly hasn't happened yet, so they need to revisit that discussion and get something scheduled virtually.
  - The timeframe of VVC and Cal Poly partnership is still up in the air. The ultimate goal was to get to the Bachelor's degree offering. We may be in a better position now to speed up the process, though. It's a unique opportunity. People wanted better online offerings before COVID and now we are almost being forced into it. We can add to economic efficiency by using the resources we already have to pump out more degrees.
  - Access to technology is a hurdle for students in the region, so that is something that will need to be addressed for a permanent online platform structure.
  - We don't necessarily need more buildings at this point - we need to invest in areas that can be responsive to things like technology needs so schools/students don't miss a beat.
  - Q: Can the "classrooms" be stretched to incorporate WBL to the places where the jobs are and where the industries are emerging? Cathy indicated that VVC was already moving in that direction for the Fall using online labs and such, but they are still trying to figure out logistics for the hands on sections that are so important.
- Feedback on content:
  - Need something that indicates the Mountain Desert region on the front page.
  - There needs to be a story mpa: what is the problem, resolution and what's the audience's role?
  - We have some solutions already (Cal Poly courses at VVC), which need to be laid out directly.
  - Need cleaner data on VVC and BCC. Need accurate data from BCC.
  - Integrate innovation concepts to the projected outcome
  - Add more visuals to highlight why our region is more attractive (aerial view of SCLA full of planes)

- Add numbers about the high school pathways on the Regional Career Pathways page. Show visual(s) of students working on equipment in those classes
- Needs to be a sales piece. It seems dry currently, so it needs to be more marketable and attractive to luring in the university audience.
- Include data about distance learning on the Career Ready page. This will show the flexibility of our students and how quickly they have adapted to the technology.
- Include information on the Innovation Center once those details are more finalized. That is a definite selling point for our region and shows investment into a community that is already working together.
- The problem statement (the why) is closing the education gap (pg. 6) and that should be at the beginning of the document with a powerful visual.
- As part of the “sales piece” we need to show something about why people would want to live here. That is a piece of the puzzle for any students we are trying to attract or keep here.
- Needs to be made clear who the audience should be and what we are “selling”
- Agreed that the initial document should be geared toward presidents at Universities and we can always take pieces of it to build a proposal for businesses and community
- Subcommittee was scheduled to work with Culture Plug to speed up the design and completion of the presentation by creating a storyboard:
  - Subcommittee Members: Dave, Shannon, McKenzie, Cathy, Matt, Andy and Culture Plug
  - Dates for meeting will be set over the next few weeks - Lori Mente will send the dates

**5. MDEP Conclave Save the Date - August 19, 2020**

- The hope is to hold this event in person, but we will plan accordingly as the time comes.