



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Local Director Chosen for ETA Panel at Youth Conference

(Fredericksburg, VA) – The Employment and Training Administration (ETA), a division of the United States Department of Labor (DOL), administers the Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA) Youth Program that President Obama signed into law on July 22, 2014. The WIOA Youth Program serves youth ages 14-24 and provides them with educational and employment training services nationwide.

On May 25-26, 2016, the ETA’s Philadelphia Office will host a WIOA Youth Spring Conference that will include attendees from federal, state, and local ETA offices, Health and Human Services, and educational partners. The conference will be highlighting successful WIOA youth programs across the region. Employment Resources Incorporated’s (ERI) Youth Program in Fredericksburg has been selected by ETA as a “successful WIOA program” in Virginia representing Planning District 16.

An ERI representative has been invited to attend the WIOA Youth Conference and serve on a panel. Ms. Faranda Ferguson, M.Ed., ERI’s Transition Services Director who oversees the WIOA Youth Program for ERI, will be attending the conference and representing ERI on the WIOA panel. “I am extremely honored to be asked to sit on the WIOA panel and represent our program and our organization,” said Ms. Ferguson. “I am also very proud of the hard work and dedication of our WIOA staff members and clients, who

make this program successful.” ERI’s two Transition Specialists, Ms. Jennifer Bishop and Ms. Diana Lee, assist the local WIOA clients in two major areas; education and employment training.

In the education component, ERI’s staff provide services such as basic tutoring in math and reading, help in getting their high school diploma or GED, and assistance with college placement tests and applying for financial aid. Staff also assists the client through the process of enrollment in college and vocational schools and programs.

On the employment training side, ERI’s Transition Specialists provide assistance in Work Readiness Training which includes how to complete job applications, improve their interviewing skills, and even job shadowing opportunities. WIOA staff meet with clients in the community to discuss what their barriers to employment may be such as childcare, transportation issues, and assess any other barriers that may prevent them from obtaining work. “Partnerships play a key role in the WIOA Youth Program and ERI’s staff are very connected with organizations like the Department of Social Services, Job Corps, the United States military, and a variety of local agencies and non-profit organizations that provide much needed services to our clients,” said Roarke Anderson, ERI’s President. “Our staff never cease to amaze me in their ability to evaluate the client’s needs, then serve as their advocate and connect them with the specific resources they need to be successful.”

The ETA’s priorities for the panel discussion with attendees at Philadelphia’s WIOA Youth Spring Conference will be career pathways, collaboration and customer-centered design as it relates to the WIOA program. Information on how ERI designed their program, engaged community partners, recruited and retained youth, and credential attainment will be shared by Ms. Ferguson with the conference attendees.

Employment Resources Incorporated is a private not-for-profit organization with offices located in Fredericksburg, Virginia that serves the city of Fredericksburg and multiple cities and counties in the region. ERI operates the Gladys H. Oberle School in Fredericksburg, an accredited alternative private special education day school for high school age children which includes The Wilson Center for Vocational Studies programs. Its mission is to provide youth and young adults with the education and skills they need to become successfully employed, self-sufficient and contributing members of their community.

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