



NOVA Workforce Board July 22, 2020 Study Session Meeting Minutes

PRESENT: M. Alvarado, S. Borgersen, J. Chu, V. Dang, L. de Maine, R. Foust, C. Galy, H. Goodkind, E. Hamilton, K. Harasz, S. Levy, M. Lucero, A. Manwani, J. Miner, J. Morrill, S. Porter, C. Springsteel, and A. Switky

ABSENT: T. Baity, C. Cimino, L. Dalla Betta, P. Guevara, B. Guidry-Brown, L. Labit, J. Ruigomez, and J. Sugiyama

ALSO PRESENT: NOVA staff K. Stadelman, L. Jackson, and E. Stanly; and guest speaker Justine Burt, Founder and CEO of Appracel

Meeting was held remotely via videoconference call.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Co-Chairperson A. Switky called the meeting to order at 12:05 p.m.

2. PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS

No public announcements.

3. STUDY SESSION

Discussion Topic:

What recommended policies, metrics and partnerships should be considered to address the challenges facing sustainable jobs, job equity/access across race/ethnicity and education, and job quality?

Over the past several years, the Board has hosted a study session at the July meeting as an opportunity for members to have a conversation about a topic that touches workforce in greater depth, which is not always possible during regular Board meetings. With the “nested crisis” that the community is facing with the pandemic, economic downturn and racial inequities, this is the time to reimagine how the Board wants the world to look in the future and its role in this effort.

Guest speaker Justine Burt, Founder and CEO of Appracel and author of *The Great Pivot: Creating Meaningful Work to Build a Sustainable Future* presented on environmental justice and equity in planning for the post-COVID-19 recovery and a sustainable economy. Highlights of her presentation and the discussion that followed included:

- When the book, *The Great Pivot*, was first written it was before green jobs and sustainability were at the forefront of the discussion. Now this idea is gaining more traction.
- Across the United States, 40.8 million filed for unemployment insurance (UI) from mid-March to late May and 39 million are not in the labor force; in California, EDD has

processed 7 million UI claims and spent \$35 billion on unemployment insurance in just over 3.5 months.

- The work necessary to build a sustainable future will entail: decarbonized energy system, decarbonized transportation system, circular economy, dramatically reduced food waste, and healthy forests, waterways, soils and wildlife populations.
- Examples of projects that are creating a sustainable future include: building more bike lanes with different types of bumps for protection as an alternative to public transit; reclaiming construction materials for new building construction, instead of discarding them, that has led to a job creator project in Portland for the formerly incarcerated; a tool lending library in Berkeley has been a job creator and is promoting recycling tools; turning paper and plastic collected from the ocean into other products has resulted in a job creator recycling project; a food reuse project that trucked unused food in Oregon to Los Angeles for distribution; restarting the Civilian Conservation Corps; and restoring wildlife conservation. Projects like these create good green jobs and are good for a sustainable environment.
- There are a variety of financial tools that can be used in promoting a sustainable economy: private sector can offer bootstrapping, crowdfunding, a line of credit, direct public offering, and private equity; the public sector can offer a parcel tax, green bonds, and cap & trade; and the non-profit sector can offer philanthropy, State grants, fee for service, and feebates.
- Design Charettes: For each green project, you need to bring to the table: environmental justice, labor, finance, training, technical expertise, marketing and policy. Green jobs bring together the concept of IKIGAI or “reason for living” and the overlapping concepts of what you love, passion, mission, what you are good at, profession, vocation, what the world needs, and what you can be paid for.
- This economic downturn presents crisis as well as opportunity and our legacy is to ensure the wellbeing of future generations.
- In response to questions, these green jobs will require different skill-sets, so retraining will be an important element to consider and the right kind of retraining will ensure a successful transition. It will also be critical to prioritize what jobs to focus on. Marketing will be necessary to encourage businesses to change their business practices and support should be offered to those who are willing to take that risk.
- A recommendation was made that instead of creating different silo programs, as part of the recovery effort, to establish a big recovery bond to support a variety of programs, such as green projects, as well as funding for housing and transportation that will put the economy on a sustainable path. A recovery plan has to be broader.

Breakouts groups were asked to answer the questions: How might we leverage policy to address job quality and sustainability? and How might we measure current state and “trend arrow” in job equity and access? Highlights of the discussion that followed included (but were not limited to):

- A significant percentage of jobs aren't returning in the recovery. We will need the private sector for help with financing and should target shovel-ready projects. It will be important to ensure equity and equal access to employment and the community colleges can play an

invaluable role in this effort. Also, in looking into the future, establishing a basic income for all will help to level the playing field. The way to measure success will be through data, specifically, demographics and salary levels, and a systemic review of racism.

- Digital access will be critical and adopting a policy of universal access to technology will be a good first step. People will be working in different jobs with limitations around labor requirements. Universal access to and portable health care will be essential.
- We need to look at both accessibility to and sustainability of jobs for those who need it the most, but what does it mean to be equitable and how does one determine who needs it. At one member's company, during the economic downturn, it was important to reprioritize precious resources that were most important to the company that resulted in some employees without any roles. In response, the company developed guiding principles for determining where these individuals should go. When workers, who had roles, wanted to be considered for these other opportunities, the decision was made to just focus on those workers who no longer had roles. They were the priority. The process involved assessing skill sets and knowledge and matching these individuals with the new roles that were needed in the company. The result was that nearly everyone who needed a new role was offered one in the company.

4. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 1:30 p.m.