



**Division of Aging, Adult and Behavioral
Health Services**



P.O. Box 1437, Slot S530 · Little Rock, AR 72203-1437
501-682-2441 · Fax: 501-682-8155

April 18, 2018

Andrea S. Bridgewater
National Director of Operations
Experience Works, Inc.
4401 Wilson Blvd, Suite 210
Arlington, VA 22203

Dear Ms. Bridgewater:

I want to thank you for the hospitality offered to the DAAS Program Coordinator during her visit with your Experience Works Staff member Amy Risk. The advance preparation of your staff made the process go smoothly and efficiently. Enclosed are the results of the December 15th, 19th, and 20th, 2017 Program Assessment of your organization's administration of the Senior Community Service Employment Program for the State of Arkansas.

There was one finding of non-compliance found during the assessment. The finding is detailed in the enclosed report. If you have any questions or require technical assistance please contact Program Coordinator Lynn E. Keith at either 501-320-6595 or lynn.keith@dhs.arkansas.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mark White".

Mark White
Deputy Director
Division of Aging, Adult, and Behavioral Health Services

Enclosure

cc: Ronda Gilbert-Hines
Lynn E. Keith

**ARKANSAS DHS AND DAAS
SENIOR COMMUNITY SERVICE EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM (SCSEP)
ASSESSMENT REPORT
Program Year 2015**

NAME OF SUB-GRANTEE: Experience Works, Inc.

PROGRAM YEAR ASSESSED: July 1, 2015-June 30, 2016 (Assessment Dates: December 15, 2017, December 19, 2017, and December 20, 2017)

CURRENT PROGRAM YEAR: July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2018 (Program Year Assessment for PY 2015)

REVIEWER: Lynn E. Keith, DHS DAAS Program Coordinator

SUB-GRANTEE STAFF: Amy Risk, Experience Works, Inc. Employment and Training Coordinator
Martha Bennett, Experience Works, Inc. Employment Training Coordinator

SYNOPSIS OF SCSEP ASSESSMENT

Amy Risk, Experience Works, Inc. Lead Employment and Training Coordinator (ETC), Martha Bennett, Experience Works, Inc. Employment and Training Coordinator (ETC) and Lynn E. Keith, DHS Program Coordinator of the Division of Aging and Adult Services, visited host agencies and participants in order for Ms. Keith to assess Experience Works, Inc. and its management of the SCSEP Program. The Assessment was successfully completed.

Amy Risk provided Lynn E. Keith, DHS Program Coordinator, with the Experience Works Handbook which has all the forms required to participate in the program per the Department of Labor's regulations. Amy Risk provided Lynn E. Keith the participants' files that were to be interviewed in order for Lynn E. Keith to review the files before the assessment.

Lynn E. Keith acquired more comprehension into the operations in the administration of the SCSEP Program by Experience Works through interviews with Experience Works staff, SCSEP participants, SCSEP participant supervisors, host agencies, along with a review of the documents required for the program.

ASSESSMENT VISITS

On December 15, 2017, Lynn Keith met Amy Risk and Martha Bennett at the Host Agency North Little Rock Health Department located at 2860 Willow Street, North Little Rock, AR (Pulaski County). The North Little Rock Health Department serves as a host agency for participant Mr. John Watson. Carla Isabell, Clerical Supervisor, serves as Host Agency Supervisor for Mr. John Watson. However, Ms. Isabell was out ill that morning so Ms. Carey Woods, Health Dept. Administrator was interviewed instead. The interviews took place at the North Little Rock Health Unit and by observation; it is a safe environment with excellent working conditions for SCSEP Participant John Watson. This Host Agency is a perfect match for the participant. Lynn E. Keith conducted a host agency file review and found it to be in compliance. Ms. Woods stated that in the past she was able to hire participants from the program, however due to funding restraints she is unable to hire anyone right now. Ms. Woods did state that the participants from the program are extremely beneficial to the organization and make a substantial difference by helping the organization run smoothly and efficiently.

The next site visit on December 15, 2017 was with Host Agency Goodwill Industries of Arkansas in Jacksonville, AR (Pulaski County) with SCSEP Participant Ms. Cassie Brown. Ms. Jackie Burton serves as the Host Agency Supervisor and is also the Goodwill Store Manager. This is a new Host Agency and Ms. Burton is extremely pleased with the program. The observation of the Goodwill Store in Jacksonville, AR is safe with excellent working conditions for SCSEP Participants. During the visit, Lynn E. Keith interviewed Ms. Burton and Ms. Brown. She also conducted a host agency file review and found it to be in compliance. However, during the interview of Ms. Brown it was noted that Ms. Burton as a new Site Supervisor may have inadvertently supplanted a regular part-time position with a SCSEP Participant position. Amy Risk, Martha Bennett, and Lynn E. Keith discussed this issue with Ms. Jackie Burton and explained again that it is not allowed. No Host Agency is allowed to replace a regular unsubsidized position with a SCSEP one. While reviewing the policies again with Ms. Burton they also reviewed the policy of encouraging SCSEP participants to apply for positions at the Host Agency when a hiring opportunity did become available. Ms. Brown stated that she would like to apply for a position if one would become available as she enjoys her work with Goodwill Industries.

On December 19, 2017, Lynn E. Keith, SCSEP Program Coordinator, met Amy Risk and Martha Bennett, from Experience Works in Vilonia, AR (Faulkner County) at the Vilonia Senior Center. The Vilonia Senior Center (it is also part of the Faulkner County Council on Aging, Inc.) and serves as a host agency for participant Martha (Sally) Lanham. Ms. Nell Waddell, Senior Center Director serves as the Site Supervisor and is responsible for supervising Ms. Lanham. The observation of the Vilonia Senior Center is safe with good working conditions. Lynn E. Keith interviewed both Ms. Lanham and Ms. Waddell while at the Senior Center. Ms. Waddell is a former SCSEP Participant and consequently was appointed Director of the Senior Center 13 (thirteen) years ago due to her position as a SCSEP participant. Ms. Waddell is an enthusiastic advocate for the SCSEP Program and she stated that she believes the training opportunities participants receive do lead to full-time job prospects. Participant Ms. Lanham is very happy with the program and is enjoying learning new skills, while at the same time being able to use her current skills to help make improvements at the Center. While at the Senior Center, Lynn E. Keith also conducted a host agency file review and found it to be in compliance.

The next site visit was the Salvation Army in Conway, AR (Faulkner County) that serves as the host agency for SCSEP Participants Ms. Rebecca (Becky) Edwards. Ms. Debbie Hendrix is the Site Supervisor and responsible for supervising the SCSEP Participants. The observation of the Salvation Army Office was it is both safe with good working conditions for the participants. During the visit, Lynn E. Keith interviewed both the participant Ms. Edwards and the Site Supervisor Ms. Hendrix. Ms. Keith also conducted a host agency file review and found it to be in compliance. Ms. Edwards has served at other Host Agencies but she stated that she enjoys this assignment the best of any so far because she works with people in need on a daily basis. Ms. Edwards has learned skills such as dealing with all sectors of the public both in person and on the telephone. She is aware she is making a difference in their lives and enjoys it. Ms. Hendrix stated if funding was better she would like to be able to hire Ms. Edwards. Ms. Keith, Ms. Risk, and Ms. Bennett took the opportunity to compliment Ms. Edwards on her attire and counsel her regarding her self-image. Ms. Hendrix has had a problem with her wardrobe in the past, but she was well dressed on the day of the interview. Furthermore, Experience Works is working with her to get new dentures in order to help further improve her self-esteem and increase her probability finding unsubsidized employment. Ms. Risk stated it was as if Ms. Edwards had bloomed while working at the Salvation Army.

On December 20, 2017, Lynn E. Keith met Amy Risk and Martha Bennett in Batesville, AR (Independence County) at the Workforce Center that serves as a Host Agency for Ms. Opal Mobley, 79 years old and works harder than younger people per her Host Agency Supervisor, Ben Baxter who is the Manager of the Workforce Center. Ben Baxter is responsible for supervising the SCSEP Participants and has for the past 10+ years that they have been a Host Agency for the Program. After observing the facility it is safe and a wonderful work

environment for the participants. Lynn E. Keith interviewed Ms. Mobley and Mr. Baxter and he stated he would hire her in a second if he had the available funding. But in the meantime he requested that she not be moved to another job assignment because he depends on her due to her reliability, intelligence, and her work ethic. Ms. Keith also conducted a host agency file review and found it to be in compliance.

On December 20, 2017, Lynn E. Keith met Amy Risk and Martha Bennett in Batesville, AR (Independence County) at the Independence County Senior Citizens Program. This Host Agency serves as a host agency for two SCSEP participants, Mr. Davy Bundren and Ms. Leta Jones. Mr. Davy Bundren job is currently working in the kitchen helping with preparing and serving the Senior Center Meals. Ms. Leta Jones is serving in the role of receptionist for the Senior Center. Ms. Selina Wallis, Executive Director of the Senior Center and is the Supervisor for SCSEP Participants that work in all areas of the Center. After observing the Independence County Senior Citizens Program, it has both a safe work environment along with having good working conditions for the participants. Ms. Keith also conducted a host agency file review on both participants and found both files to be in compliance.

During the visit Lynn Keith interviewed both of the SCSEP participants. Both of the participants were homeless/living in a homeless shelter when they came to work for the Senior Center through the SCSEP Program. One of the participants has been able move out of the shelter into an apartment. The other participant is still living at the homeless shelter, but both are making great strides to getting back on their lives back on track. Ms. Wallis stated that she wished they had more computers in the Senior Center so that the participants would have more opportunities to learn more computer skills on site. She is an advocate for the program and has hired several prior participants in the past.

SCSEP ELIGIBILITY

It is a requirement that SCSEP participants have no other employment outside of their SCSEP assignments. During enrollment in the program, Experience Works provides a form with a statement that all applicants are required to sign attesting to the fact that they are unemployed when they enter the program. All Participants are 55 years old or older, residents of Arkansas upon entry into the SCSEP program, and the participant and his or her household has an income level at or below 125% of the Health and Human Services Poverty Guidelines adapted for the Senior Community Service Employment Program. Priority is given to individuals with the greatest economic need.

COMMUNITY SERVICE ASSIGNMENT

Every participant has a JobReady Individual Employment Plan (IEP) which is an internet-based questionnaire to find out their skills, and it helps provide participants with a specific job and a job description that best fits their needs and qualifications. The JobReady IEP also assists Experience Works in matching the participant with an appropriate host agency. SCSEP participants are paid the State of Arkansas's minimum wage of \$8.50 an hour as of January 1, 2017 while on their community service assignments and they may work a maximum of 18 hours per week. SCSEP participants that are EW Participant Assistants may work up to a maximum of 24 hours per week depending on their assignments. Experience Works provides workers' compensation coverage as required by state law for all the SCSEP participants. Experience Works has a required four-hour orientation for all participants; however, all participants are paid for the four hours. During the orientation, Experience Works' staff reviews in detail each element of the Senior Community Service Employment Program Participant Orientation Record with each new participant. The participant signs and dates the Orientation Record certifying that she/he has received the information and understands the policies and the information provided in the supplemental documents. The Experience Works' staff member also signs and dates it.

HOST AGENCIES

Experience Works maintains Host Agency Agreements with each of the host agencies. The agreements are reviewed annually and on an as needed basis. Examples are changes in contact information or in location. All agreements are signed and dated by the Experience Works staff member and the Host Agency Representative.

Experience Works requires host agencies to provide safe work environments for participants. A safe environment includes giving participants the necessary tools and/or protective clothing or devices, prohibiting drug and alcohol use, and providing training on health and safety. Experience Works completes a safety review with new host agencies using a Safety Monitoring Checklist to ensure the work environment is safe for participants of the SCSEP Program. Experience Works does annual safety reviews.

UNSUBSIDIZED PLACEMENT

Participants' entering unsubsidized employment after participating in the SCSEP Program for Program Year 2015 is twenty (20). This is the number of participants who exited the program for jobs.

Participants' entering unsubsidized employment after participating in the SCSEP Program and were still employed for the first quarter after leaving program is eighteen (18) for PY 2015. Experience Works staff continues to follow up with participants after they exit the program for at least a year.

The Host Agencies have a responsibility is to notify their SCSEP Participants when suitable jobs are available at the Host Agency and to consider them for host agency employment.

PROGRAM MANAGEMENT and SCSEP FILES

SCSEP Participant Files

Participant files are all scanned and uploaded into Experience Works Share Program that can be accessed by the staff members. DAAS staff now has access to Experience Works Share Program if needed to review files whenever necessary.

Participant's Files contain the following items:

- Participant Application
- Eligibility Information
- Recertification Eligibility Information
- Income Worksheets
- Individual Employment Plans in the JobReady Program
- Participant SCSEP Training Assignment
- Offer of a Physical Exam Form
- Training Record that is updated on the Individual Employment Plan
- Participant Orientation Record Review
- SCSEP Participants receive a copy of the DAAS SCSEP Termination Policy/Procedures
- Grievance Resolution Procedure for SCSEP Participants and Applicants
- Individual Durational Limit Procedures

Memorandums of Understanding and Involvement with Department of Workforce Services

Currently, the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding with the State WIOA is in progress. In the past, Experience Works has had Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) in place with each of the Local Workforce Investment Boards due to them being one of Department of Labor SCSEP's National Contractors. However, due to the changes with the One Stop Shops, Experience Works is currently working with the State WIOA and the signing of MOU from Arkansas Department of Workforce Services which includes new arrangements between Experience Works and The Department of Workforce Services is in progress. As soon as they receive a copy of the MOU they will sign it. Per the State of Arkansas WIOA Office the financial piece will come later in the year. The State of Arkansas Workforce Program has notified the Department of Labor that the final documents will be sent to them after the deadline.

Experience Works' Staff Training

Experience Works has an online training program titled Experience Works University for staff members. Staff members are required take all training classes. Amy Risk, ETC, has completed all the trainings to date. Martha Bennett, who has just been hired recently, is working on getting all of her training classes finished.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The participant's files that are on Experience Works Sharefile software were printed and reviewed. One issue found was that several of the IEP's were missing from the files that were given to Ms. Keith to review. Ms. Amy Risk explained that some of the IEP's have not been uploaded into the participant's files due to the fact that they are new participants or they had transferred to another job assignment. Also, it was discovered at the Goodwill in Jacksonville that there may have been an incident of accidental supplanting of a SCSEP position where there would have been a regular paid position. This was addressed at the Host Agency with the Host Supervisor. The Corrective Action Form states the following: Findings, the Required Corrective Action, the Date the Corrective Action Must Be Completed, the Date of Completion, and a Comments column. Experience Works should complete the Corrective Action Forms and submit them with any requested documents to Lynn E. Keith, DHS DAAS Program Coordinator by February 28, 2018.

**Arkansas Department of Human Services
Division of Aging and Adult Services
Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)
Program Assessment and Corrective Action Form**

SCSEP Sub-Grantee: Experience Works, Inc.

Date(s) of SCSEP Assessment: December 15th, 19th, and 20th, 2017

The Assessment included the following:

- Host Agency Visits
- Participant and Host Agency Interviews
- Experience Works Staff Members Amy Risk and Martha Bennett Interviews
- Participant and Host Agency Files were reviewed
- Experience Works Participant Files

Participants:

Leta Jones and Davy Bundren , Independence County Senior Center, Batesville, AR(Host Agency)

Opal Mobley, Independence County Workforce Office , Batesville, AR (Host Agency)

Martha (Sally) Lanham, Vilonia Senior Citizen Center, Vilonia, AR (Host Agency)

Rebecca Edwards, Salvation Army, Conway, AR (Host Agency)

File Reviews and Interviews	Required Corrective Action	Date Corrective Action Must Be Completed	Comments	Date Completed (To be filled in by DAAS)
Leta Jones Finding: Missing IEP	Copy of IEP	Feb. 28, 2018		
Davy Bundren Finding: Missing IEP	Copy of IEP	Feb. 28, 2018		
Opal Mobley Finding: Missing IEP	Copy of IEP	Feb. 28, 2018		
Martha (Sally) Lanham Finding: Missing IEP	Copy of IEP	Feb. 28, 2018		
Rebecca Edwards Finding: Total File	Copy of Entire File	Feb. 28, 2018		
Goodwill Industries Finding: Supplanting	Discussion and explanation at the site visit but need to follow-up with a	Feb. 28, 2018	Please send DAAS a copy of the letter and signature	

of SCSEP Position in place of an regular position	letter and extra training with the supervisor to make sure they understand all the rules of the program		after the counseling of the site supervisor	
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CONCLUSION

After visiting the Host Agencies, interviewing staff members responsible for supervising the SCSEP Participants, and interviewing the Participants of the Program, all are satisfied with their experience with the Program and the management of it by Experience Works, Inc. There were no complaints regarding Experience Works, Inc. management of the program from either Host Agencies or Participants.

Experience Works has hired Martha Bennett as an Employment and Training Coordinator (ETC) staff member and Amy Risk is the new Lead ETC for the State of Arkansas.

Experience Works, Inc. has the capacity to manage the SCSEP program following all necessary federal and state policies and procedures. Ms. Terri Jones, Senior Auditor from the Department of Human Services Office of Payment Integrity and Audit just finished auditing Experience Works, Inc. and found that the company to be in compliance with Federal and State Guidelines, and no finding were noted.

The issue of the lack of an IEP in the participants file needs to be rectified by sending a copy of the IEP's to the DAAS office by February 28, 2018; the issue regarding Goodwill Industries Supplanting of SCSEP Position in place of an regular position was handled at the time of the site visit but a follow-up letter to the Host Agency Supervisor and extra training with the supervisor to make sure she understands all the rules of the program is in order and a copy of the letter due to the DAAS by February 28, 2018. Otherwise, Experience Works Inc. is managing the SCSEP Program for DAAS following the Department of Labor Standards along with the policies and procedures of the State of Arkansas.