STJ Center Community Outreach - Meeting Minutes

<u>NPC representatives in Attendance:</u>
Mark Vest- VP Learning & Student Services
Jason Foutz- Chief Operations Officer
Nicole Ulibarri- Apache County Coordinator
Tina Gonzalez- St. Johns Center Manager

<u>Community Members in Attendance:</u>
Ed Burgoyne- SJUSD Superintendent
Becky Caballero- SJHS Counselor
Bill Johnston- SJPD Interim Chief
Corrine Guttierez- Workforce Case Manager
Jamie Smith- Apache County Library Dist.

Date:	October 31, 2017 9:00 am
Scheduled:	NPC – St. Johns Center, Room 1
Location:	65 S Third West, St. Johns, AZ 85936

M I N U T E S

Meeting began 9:00 am

Introductions-

The group introduced themselves, and each explained what their roles/positions are in the community, or with the college.

Purpose of Meeting

Mark Vest explained to the group that the purpose of the Community Outreach is to provide the college, the Apache County Higher Ed Committee, and the Apache County Coordinator with feedback on how we are doing. He asked the group to consider what NPC in St. Johns can do better, and what were the current needs of the community.

Discussion

Presidential Search

Mark Vest informed the group of the retirement of Dr. Jeanne Swarthout at the end of this year. Jason Foutz explained the process of hiring the next college president. The college is using a consulting group R.H. Perry to perform a nationwide search with hopes of attracting a larger candidate pool. Jason explained the timeline to the group and some tentative dates for interviews of semi-finalist and finalists. Mark and Jason both expressed the importance of community feedback in the interview process. All in attendance were encouraged to provide feedback at candidate forums, as this information is very valuable to the NPC District Governing Board when making decisions. The group was informed that the specific dates and times for these forums will be posted on the college website, and the R.H. Perry website when available.

Changes the May Affect Apache County

Mark discussed some future changes that are happening in Navajo County, and how they may indirectly affect services in Apache County. The Cholla Power plant is expected to close sometime around 2025. This could widely affect both communities, and is expected to cause a 12-14% reduction in tax revenue for Navajo County. This will have an effect on the budget of the college. NPC is trying to be proactive and look for ways now to improve efficiency, reduce costs, and form more partnerships. One of the partnerships they are looking to expand is the Talon project. Mark provided a brief description of what the Talon Project is, which is a dual enrollment program at local high schools. Classrooms at various sites are connected using Cisco distance technology. This technology was purchased through a grant, and after the grant ends the college would like to continue to offer these services through some type of partnership. The group discussed the possibility of forming a consortium to help cover costs once the grant runs out. Becky Caballero stated she felt the project was going great, and that the college has done a great job working with the schools in regards to schedules and communication. Ed Burgoyne stated St. Johns School District is very interested in continuing the partnership and would like to continue offering services once the grant has ended.

Challenges

Mark discussed that Apache County Higher Ed currently has one teaching position that is vacant, this position was for CIS/BUS faculty. The county has decided not to fill that position right away as they explore some other options of how to better use the funds that were being used for that positon. One possible option they are exploring is to use those funds to upgrade the current distance classrooms to the new Cisco Technology. Mark explained that the college will begin upgrading their equipment over the summer, and that if Apache County chose not to upgrade they would not be able to connect to the distance learning classrooms. As the college begins transferring the Video System over the summer this will limit the number of distance courses offered. The college is going to try to help alleviate some of that by offering more internet, live, and audio classes to be able to offer courses to students. The group discussed the possibility of connecting the Talon classroom at the High School to Video 1 System over the summer. Ed felt this could be possible but that NPC would have to check with the SJHS principal to be sure there were not projects that would interfere.

The group discussed how these classrooms were currently working at the high school and the overall opinion was very positive. Becky felt like the use of technology was helping prepare students for future classes whether at NPC or at a University. Bill Johnston discussed how using technology to keep community members taking classes in the community instead of traveling is something that is important and a real benefit.

Community needs for Technology and Training

Jamie Smith talked to the group about the need for adult students to be provided with instruction for basic computer skills. Many people come in to the public library to use the computers and do not know the basics of how to get on the internet or even compose an email. Many of the population that the library deals with are people who are older, or live off the grid. Many times when they come in to the library that is the only time they deal with technology. It would be helpful if the college could provide more opportunities or partner with the library to help teach them these skills.

The group discussed the need for dependable internet in the community. Community members usually park between the college and the library to use the Wi-Fi because they do not have any other way to access the internet. The group discussed that this is a real need of the community and something that needs to be worked on in the future.

Meeting adjourned: 10:35