

MEMORANDUM

TO: Workforce Development Board Executive Committee

FROM: Christopher Donnelly

SUBJECT: Approval to Extend Equus Youth Agreement

DATE: June 12, 2025

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Executive Committee approves extending the existing agreement with Arbor E&T, LLC, dba Equus Workforce Solutions, to provide WIOA Title 1 Youth case management services in the northern portion of Monterey County for an agreement term of July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026, in an amount not to exceed \$650,000 to serve 66 youth.

BACKGROUND:

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) enacted a comprehensive youth employment program to serve eligible youth, ages 14 through 24, who face barriers to education, training, and employment. The Monterey County Workforce Development Board (MCWDB) WIOA youth program provides counseling, training, work experience, and placement services, and focuses primarily on out-of-school youth ages 18 through 24.

Equus was selected to provide WIOA Youth services following an RFP process in early 2022 in which only one proposal was received, and based on a sole-source recommendation, Equus was approved to provide WIOA services to youth in the northern portion of Monterey County from July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023. The 2022-23 agreement executed with Equus was amended for 2023-24 to provide \$750,000 for case management services for 97 youth.

Last year, Equus and Turning Point case managers worked closely together to support several MCWDB initiatives. The Youth programs collaborated to provide the Green Cadre program using CaliforniansForAll funding until September 2024, then used WIOA funding to provide a similar program to continue assisting the residents of Monterey County in the areas of Climate and Food Insecurity. In addition, the programs also provided aerospace manufacturing internships for young adults through Joby Aviation and two Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) courses through Central Coast College. Finally, in May 2025, the two programs enrolled participants for a Hospitality training cohort.

DISCUSSION:

For the coming year, Equus Youth North will need to continue to focus on providing increased outreach to local businesses to obtain additional WEX locations and opportunities. MCWDB expects Equus to increase the level and quality of services to youth participants, including new, in-person workshops and online trainings for priority industry sector and demand jobs.

In addition to providing enhanced WIOA programming, the Youth programs will need to develop new, Green Cadre programming with CaliforniansForAll (CA4ALL) funding to serve the communities within Monterey County, based on the recent receipt of a \$1,998,840 grant. Equus Youth North will receive