

Wisconsin LGBT Chamber: Announces new workforce development program

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MILWAUKEE, WI – The Wisconsin LGBT Chamber of Commerce Foundation has announced the launch of IRIS – its new workforce development program targeted at LGBTQ+ youth. The program, Inclusive Refinement of Individual Skills, aims to teach career skills to LGBTQ+ youth entering the workforce.

“Through my AmeriCorps service with the Wisconsin LGBT Chamber, I have seen just how essential youth workforce development is, especially for youth who are part of the LGBTQ+ community,” said Momo Dahlke, AmeriCorps VISTA and IRIS Program Manager. “My goal in creating this program is that youth will learn the skills needed to enter the workforce and advance their careers in whatever field they are passionate about.”

The course is based entirely online and is made up of 5 learning modules, covering topics such as resume creation, interview preparation, soft skills, digital professionalism, and job search tips.

IRIS aims to fill gaps left by current career development programs which overlooks those with less access to financial and social capital, such as people marginalized on the basis of race, ethnicity, social class, sexual orientation, or gender. IRIS also takes into consideration unique challenges faced by LGBTQ+ youth in the workplace, such as hostility on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity and expression.

IRIS will be accessible online and is completely free to all participants. Participants can access the course on computers, tablets and phones and the format of the course allows each student to complete the learning modules at their own pace. There are interactive components built in, such as the potential to receive feedback

on resumes created as part of the course.

The IRIS Workforce Development program was made possible thanks to generous contributions from Meijer and Enterprise Holdings Foundation.

“The Chamber is very thankful for the support we have received from both Meijer and Enterprise Holdings Foundation to help fund this project. We appreciate their commitment to youth development in Wisconsin,” Dahlke added.

More information on the IRIS Workforce Development Program can be found online at <https://wisconsiniris.com/>.