

# The WorkPlace Mobilizer

»» Think it forward.

January, 2017

## The WorkPlace Expands Offices to NYC



In a response to recent growth, The WorkPlace has secured new office space in Harlem (NYC) at 126th Street to operate the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP). The office will house staff members and SCSEP participants and features an open concept layout. The building is located in the heart

of Harlem enabling staff to provide service to over 320 participants in the four Burroughs - Manhattan, Bronx, Brooklyn and Staten Island.

## YouthBuild Comes to Bridgeport



Bridgeport is the largest city in Connecticut, and is faced with pressing issues; affordable housing and opportunities for youth employment. In response, The WorkPlace is

launching YouthBuild Bridgeport to address youth work readiness needs through a construction-industry career pathway.

Youth will receive academic and skills training focused on literacy and numeracy with the goal of attaining a high school diploma or GED and earn a industry recognized certification in carpentry, electrical, or HVAC. After a period of classroom and online learning, participants will build vital leadership skills through project-based learning in the community. They'll work with local affordable housing agencies Park City Communities and Habitat for Humanity to identify a construction-related problem, plan a solution, and execute a plan of improvement. The program begins in March and will provide 65 out-of-school youth with 240 hours of construction skills training.

For more information or to apply, contact Carmen Nieves at [cnieves@workplace.org](mailto:cnieves@workplace.org) or 203-610-8478.



## Dress for Success CEO Joi Gordon to Speak at Toast to Success! Annual Fundraiser



Mark your calendars! This year's *Toast to Success!* fundraiser to benefit Dress for Success Mid-Fairfield County will welcome Joi Gordon, CEO of Dress for Success Worldwide as the distinguished guest speaker.

Since joining Dress for Success Worldwide in 1999 and taking the helm in 2002, Joi's leadership has established Dress for Success as a leading organization in the economic and social development of underserved women. Joi is responsible for more than 115 affiliates in 13 countries, and has been recognized by prominent intuition's such as Crain's New York Business, the Financial Times, and Black Enterprise magazine. She was also named among Working Mother magazines



"Most Powerful Moms in Non-Profit". The benefit luncheon will be chaired by Connecticut Economic and Community Development's Lindy Lee Gold, and will take place on May 18th from 11:30am-1:30pm at The Patterson Club in Fairfield. Those interested in sponsorship opportunities should contact Bernadette Deamico at 203-610-8564 or [bdeamico@workplace.org](mailto:bdeamico@workplace.org).

## New Supports at the Health CareRx Academy

The Health CareRx Academy (HCA) is now offering more options to assist job-seekers with tuition and supportive services. Parents with young children or disabled dependents can participate in the Strengthening Working Families Initiative (SWFI), which will provide a number of support services including: academic supports, case management, child care, transportation assistance, and tuition assistance. The Concierge will provide a single point of access to child care for participants, essentially functioning as a headquarters for all child care-related information that participants seek. The Concierge will counsel families on available daycare and matching training/work schedules with transportation needs and offer immediate assistance to families needing emergency childcare. Health Career Academy participants can choose from one of several target occupations, including nursing, pharmacy technician, surgical technician, home health aide, dental assistant, and phlebotomist. Those interested in applying should contact the Health CareRx Academy at 203-930-1637.

## Human Centered Design Drives AJC Improvements



The WorkPlace and the Connecticut Department of Labor recently participated in a seven week class offered by the United States Department of Labor's Employment and

Training Administration on how to effectively implement a **Human Centered Design (HCD)** in southwestern Connecticut's American Job Centers. HCD is a design and management framework that develops solutions to problems by involving the human perspective in all steps of the problem-solving process. By involving participants in the creation of service delivery solutions, the AJC has been prompted to add additional services to meet the needs of job seekers and employers.

The AJC's recruited over sixty rapid employment assessment participants to take part in preliminary focus groups designed to foster conversations and gather innovative suggestions to improve AJC services. The data collected prompted a new LinkedIn photo booth in the Bridgeport AJC where customers can take professional headshots, and a dedicated Skype station where job seekers can interview virtually with prospective employers. Due to the success of the preliminary focus groups, a focus group with Jobs First Employment Services clients, WIOA youth and the Adult and Dislocated workers was conducted. Keep a look out for new changes at AJC's as we continue to weave customer feedback into tangible programming solutions.

## Platform to Employment: Open Enrollment

P2E operates statewide in Connecticut, and has placed over 1,000 people in jobs since the program began. Participants have come from 148 of the states 169 towns. The program is kicking off 2017 by offering open



President & CEO of The WorkPlace Joseph Carbone welcomed new P2E participants at the New Haven orientation in January.

enrollment in new classes across the state. Orientation sessions are staggered depending on the location. This program provides a support system of career development tools, career coaching and successful job search strategies combined with personal and family support services and financial counseling.

Platform to Employment has helped restore careers, dignity and strengthen communities by getting people back to work. Getting the unemployed re-employed is the single focus of this important initiative. If you have constituents who have exhausted unemployment benefits, Platform to Employment can help them return to work. To begin, those interested can visit [www.platformtoemployment.com](http://www.platformtoemployment.com) and complete the application.

## Young Women's League of New Canaan Supports AJC Emergency Food Closet



The WorkPlace received a generous grant from the Young Women's League of New Canaan for the Emergency Food Closet in the Bridgeport American Job Center. The grant will assist the Emergency Food Closet with providing food and feminine hygiene products to families, usually mothers, experiencing critical food insecurity as they wait for the appropriate public assistance or employment training programs to begin. In Connecticut, mothers spend at least \$20 to \$30 per week on diapers. Despite being a necessity for placing an infant into daycare, diapers are not covered by WIC, SNAP, or Medicare. When parents can't afford



diapers, they can't leave their child in daycare to go to work, leading to economic instability and continuing the cycle of poverty. In a recent study of food insecure families by Feeding America, 73% of families report choosing between paying for food and utilities. The Emergency Food Closet helps to relieve families from making these difficult choices so individuals can focus on caring for their loved ones and becoming employed. The Young Women's League of New Canaan understands that preparing for a job includes not being hungry and having the basic resources to support a child. Their support is making an impact by improving the lives of neighbors in our community.

### Visit Us

**The WorkPlace**  
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Web: [www.workplace.org](http://www.workplace.org)

**americanjobcenter**  
Locations:  
Bridgeport Ansonia  
Derby Stamford  
Phone: 1-866-859-8818

### Upcoming Events

**The WorkPlace Board of Directors Meeting**  
March 17, 2017, 8:15am  
Housatonic Community College, Beacon Hall

**Platform to Employment CT Graduation**  
March 9, 2017, 10am  
Connecticut Capitol Building, Old Judiciary Room