

# The WorkPlace Mobilizer

»» Think it forward.

July, 2017

## Governor Malloy Visits LEAP II Program at York Correctional Institute



York Correctional Institute held a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for the LEAP II program, which provides pre-release and certification services at an American Job Center recently established inside

the prison. Governor Dannel Malloy and Correction Commissioner Scott Semple listened to the experiences of three LEAP II participants prior to the ceremony in a prison classroom that had been converted into the job training center. Representatives from various non-profit and advocacy groups then gathered for the dedication ceremony, which included remarks by elected officials, agency leaders, and testimonials from inmates enrolled in the program. "Operating a successful correctional facility that does its best to ensure that the inmates never return requires the availability of specific pre-release services that provide inmates with the tools to become productive members of society and our economy," said Malloy. "This program will make a real impact on recidivism." LEAP II is a program of The WorkPlace, made possible by funding received from the U.S. Department of Labor.

## Rhode Island Sector-Based Platform to Employment Program

The WorkPlace was awarded \$127,000 from Real Pathways Rhode Island to operate an enhanced Platform to Employment program, focused on preparing and placing long-term-unemployed individuals for work in manufacturing. The program will help long term unemployed individuals and dislocated workers overcome psychological, social, financial and professional barriers to employment.

Platform to Employment in Manufacturing (P2E-M) participants will complete a five-week "boot camp" with career coaching and guidance, resume-writing assistance, and mock interviews to address their professional needs. No-cost behavioral health services and financial counseling will help address some of the personal needs that result from long-term-unemployment. Participants will also have access to a subsidized work experience in the manufacturing industry.



To date, The WorkPlace has operated seven Platform to Employment cohorts in Rhode Island, and has built a base of partners that make a sector based program possible. P2E-M will serve 50 participants over a six-month period.

## Participant Achievements Celebrated at Annual Awards Ceremony



Family, friends and colleagues gathered on June 29th to celebrate the accomplishments of over 90 outstanding students, graduates and professionals who participated in Southwest Connecticut workforce system this year.

The Annual Awards Ceremony recognizes exemplary businesses and professionals, but perhaps more importantly, honors the hard work and successes of participants who often go unrecognized: youth who have overcome numerous barriers



to achieving their career and education goals, returning citizens who are dedicated to starting fresh, and veterans who are searching for meaningful work after service to their country.

Keynote speaker Cynthia Mullins, Legal Counsel and Chief HR Officer at the Stamford based JMW Consultants, Inc. who once utilized the Summer Youth Employment Program in Connecticut, emphasized lifelong learning as the key to success in today's changing global marketplace. "Lifelong learning is required of all of us to stay competitive, relevant, informed and skilled."

Towards the end of the ceremony, two special awards were presented by The WorkPlace's President & CEO Joseph Carbone. The Valley Community Foundation was honored with the annual Philanthropic Leadership Award for their dedication in supporting programs and services that enhance the quality of life for Valley residents. Bridgeport Mayor Joseph Ganim received the Presidents Award for his commitment to improving opportunities available to returning citizens.

## Information Sharing Series Increases Visibility of Valley American Job Centers



As a result of the 2016 WIOA Planning Meetings, The WorkPlace gathered partners of the American Job Center network in the Valley for a series of information sharing meetings aimed at increasing awareness of services and increasing opportunities for collaboration. The four-part series, made possible by a grant from the Valley Community Foundation, facilitated conversations on opportunities for collaboration among agencies. Strategic partners including TEAM, Inc, CT Department of Labor, Valley Regional Adult Education, and the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services are



among the agencies taking part in the series. "The AJC information Sharing series has created a true network of partners that work to support Valley residents with the best quality services," said Nestor Leon, VP of Operations at The WorkPlace. "The series addressed the need for increased communication and collaboration among participating agencies, and we hope to use the strengthened partnerships to enhance opportunities available to Valley residents."

### Partner Highlight: Habitat for Humanity



Habitat for Humanity of Coastal Fairfield County (Habitat CFC) is a nonprofit organization that builds communities and

improves lives by eliminating sub-standard housing and creating affordable homeownership possibilities for families in Fairfield County. They have a reputation for success in transforming abandoned properties into homes for tax-paying community members throughout the region. They also operate a ReStore in Stratford, Connecticut that sells quality new and used furniture, appliances, home accessories and building materials to the public for a low cost.

Habitat CFC partners with YouthBuild Bridgeport to provide youth participants interested in careers in the construction industry with training and work experiences. Participants are now working with Habitat CFC staff to build a duplex on Deforest Street in Bridgeport. In addition, Habitat CFC provided the trainees with classroom and construction workspaces, and helped coordinate an employer recruitment event to introduce participants to potential employers. "This is a partnership that works," said Carmen Nieves, Program Manager of YouthBuild Bridgeport. "Habitat CFC has been an exceptional partner for us. Their flexibility, creativity and service based learning opportunities are restoring more than homes. They're changing lives."

### Retail Career Academy Graduates Summer Youth



YouthWorks Summer Earn and Learn participants celebrated the completion of a customer service training offered through the Retail Career Academy this month. Participants completed an intensive 6-day classroom training focused on customer service, store operations, selling, and retail career paths. At the conclusion of the training, they successfully completed the exam to obtain the nationally recognized customer service certification offered through the National Retail Federation. The graduated attendees were motivated to continue the pursuit of a career in retail from Tim Phalen, President of the Connecticut Retail Merchants Association, and Carol Green, President of Benman Industries. Participants are now using their newfound skills as they begin summer work experiences made possible by YouthWorks.

### Visit Us

**The WorkPlace**

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### Upcoming Events

*The WorkPlace Board of Directors Meeting*  
September 16, 2017, Housatonic Community College, Beacon Hall

*Service to Country and Community Awards*  
November 2, 2017, Port 5 Naval Veterans