

# The WorkPlace Mobilizer

»» Think it forward.

September, 2017

## WorkPlace Selected as One-Stop Operator for Metro North Region



Metro North Regional Employment Board

Following a competitive selection process, The WorkPlace has been chosen to operate the Metro North Regional Employment Board (REB) career centers in Cambridge, Chelsea and Woburn, Massachusetts. Starting October 1st, 2017, The WorkPlace will assume operation of the centers, meeting the employment and career advancement needs of individuals and the workforce needs of businesses. Service delivery will be molded using a consumer-centered design, which ensures satisfaction from job seekers and employers by constantly evolving to improve procedures based on customer feedback. The Metro North Regional Employment Board covers twenty cities and towns in the Massachusetts counties of Middlesex and Suffolk.

The WorkPlace currently oversees the operation of eight American Job Center one-stop's located in Bridgeport, Derby, Stamford, and Ansonia, Connecticut, Providence, West Warwick, Woonsocket, and Wakefield, Rhode Island, as well as a mobile Career Coach. "The WorkPlace is looking forward to working with job seekers, businesses and the Metro North REB to provide quality employment programs to Massachusetts," said CEO and President Joe Carbone.

## Citizens Bank Supports Financial Literacy for Retail Career Academy Participants

Citizens Bank recently announced The WorkPlace as one of six Connecticut non-profits recipients of the *Citizens Helping Citizens Manage Money* financial literacy initiative. Citizen's \$10,000 contribution will enable The WorkPlace to provide financial literacy workshops for participants of the Retail Career Academy, with topics ranging from the basics of checking accounts, to the intricacies of household budgeting and long-term financial planning. "We are helping our customers bank better by improving their financial literacy," said Lisa Maass, President of Citizens Bank, Connecticut. "Learning how to manage money is the first step individuals can take in achieving their financial goals".

The Retail Career Academy delivers core retail skills and career readiness to prepare adults to become valuable and self-reliant members of the community, which promotes pathways to help unemployed or underemployed workers return to work.

*Citizens Helping Citizens Manage Money* is part of the bank's broader Citizens Helping Citizens program, which addresses hunger, economic development, financial education and volunteerism.



## Federal Legislators Visit YouthBuild Bridgeport and MaturityWorks



In August, The WorkPlace welcomed U.S. Congressman Jim Himes and U.S. Senator Richard Blumenthal for discussions with participants of two federally-funded job training programs.

Congressman Jim Himes visited with participants of The WorkPlace's YouthBuild Bridgeport program on August 3. YouthBuild Bridgeport helps unemployed young people who did not complete high school earn a GED, learn a construction trade, and serve the community by building affordable housing through a partnership with Habitat for Humanity.

Himes listened intently to testimonials from participants, many of whom come from difficult situations such as incarceration. "This program has me looking in a different direction," said participant William Roberson. "Before I got here my head was screwed on backwards. My head is straight now." Himes said that he intends to take what he learned with him to Washington D.C. "Stories move people, and it's my job to make sure federal grant dollars for programs like this keep coming".

U.S. Senator Richard Blumenthal participated in a roundtable discussion with participants of the *MaturityWorks* program on August 21. The senior job training program is funded by the U.S. Department of Labor's Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP), and is the only federal job training program focused exclusively on helping older Americans return to the workforce.

The visit came soon after Senator Blumenthal and twenty-two colleagues in the U.S. Senate signed a letter to leaders of the Senate's Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies urging robust funding for the SCSEP program in fiscal year 2018.



## Partner Highlight: Sweet Pea Home Daycare



Strengthening Working Families Initiative's (SWFI) Child Care Concierge Maria Bartoli was searching for an affordable childcare solution for participant Jazmin when she met Ms. Williams, owner of Sweet Pea Home Daycare. Jazmin was enrolled at Housatonic Community College for Patient Care Technology, and was having a hard time finding childcare coverage that would work for her school schedule and budget. Ms. Williams worked with Maria and Jazmin to set an affordable rate, and scheduling flexibility that included afternoon pick-up for Jazmin's son, and childcare coverage on Saturdays.

After Jazmin's childcare needs were met, Sweet Pea expressed interest in working more broadly with SWFI to provide affordable childcare to other participants. Ms. Williams offered discounts to the parents, and went out of her way to develop relationships with the children she cared for. She even offered to pick up children at bus stations and homeless shelters to ensure that the parents could get to work on time. She shared that her motto is, "try to help people who

are trying to help themselves". Her efforts have enabled participants to return to school or work with confidence that their children were safe and taken care of. Sweet Pea Home Daycare has been an incredible asset to the SWFI program, and we thank Ms. Williams being a valuable partner and caring business owner.

*SWFI is a program of The WorkPlace's Health Career Academy, which provides a full-time child care concierge and healthcare occupation training for parents with dependents under the age of 13.*

## Nominate an Outstanding Veteran



In honor of Veteran's Day, The WorkPlace will host the 5th Annual "Service to Country and Community" Awards at Port 5 Naval Veterans in Bridgeport, CT.

The WorkPlace is calling on the community to nominate a veteran who honorably served the nation in the military, and continues to add to the quality of the community. The veteran's military history, their support of veteran programs and services, and contributions to civic activities and community initiatives will be considered when selecting the awardee.

Nominations are also being sought for a company that has made a commitment to hiring veterans, and an organization that has worked to improve the lives of veterans. Past awardees include a veteran who became a school principle, a telecommunications company that prioritizes hiring local veterans, and a non-profit that works with veterans suffering from PTSD.

Nomination forms can be found online until September 25th by visiting <http://www.workplace.org>. Questions may be directed to Sarah Lewis at [slewis@workplace.org](mailto:slewis@workplace.org) or 203-610-8496.

## Assisted Services Center Provides Training for People with Disabilities

Since 2002, people with disabilities have received individualized counseling, job search assistance, access to resources and adaptive technology assistance at the American Job Center in Bridgeport through the Assisted Services Center. The Assisted Services Center is open to any jobseeker aged 18 or older with disabilities, commonly those with sight and hearing impairments.



Program Manager Caitlin Mongillo is an advocate and employment resource for individuals with disabilities who are looking for a job. Caitlin works with each individual to identify their career goals and assists participants in accessing available resources. She also trains participants on a variety of assistive technology devices. "People with disabilities are often seen only for their challenges, but have so many strengths and inherent abilities," said Caitlin. "This program seeks to ensure their understanding of this fact and inspire them to reach their fullest potential through employment."

For more information on the Assisted Services Center, contact Carmen Arbelo at 203-953-3232.

## Visit Us

**The WorkPlace**

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**americanjobcenter**

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

## Upcoming Events

### **Lean Awareness Workshop**

September 26, 2017, Ansonia American Job Center, 4 Fourth Street

### **Service to Country and Community Awards**

November 2, 2017, Port 5 Naval Veterans