

The WorkPlace
Southwestern Connecticut's Regional Workforce Development Board
Board of Directors Meeting
March 16, 2018

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Alvarado Frank, US Small Business Administration
Bailey Leon, Comm. Foundation Gtr New Haven
Bentley Larry,
Bogen Arthur, CT Brownfield Land Bank
Broadie Paul, Housatonic Comm. College
Burgard Mary, BESB
Fuda Victor, CT Dept. of Labor
Gold Lindy-Lee, DECD
Grabinski Joseph, Sikorsky Aircraft
Holcomb Doug, Gtr Bridgeport Transit

Hudson Celina, Citibank, N.A.
Iannucci Richard, Port 5 Naval Veterans
Loeser John, IBM
Mancini Sabrina, CT Dept. of Education
Marasco Reina, Valley Regional Adult Education
Morgan David, TEAM, Inc.
Rafael Cindy, Dept. of Rehab. Services
Silverstone Bruce, Aquarion
Sportini Thomas, IBEW Local 488 JATC
Watson Debra, People's United Bank

OTHERS PRESENT:

Acosta Yecenia, DSS
Austin Charles, The WorkPlace
Barry Jean, The WorkPlace
Bartoli Maria, The WorkPlace
Bissell Ben, The WorkPlace
Blanco Melanie, The WorkPlace
Brighindi Millie, The WorkPlace
Brody Janet, The WorkPlace
Carbone Joseph, The WorkPlace
Carbone William, Ex. Dir. Justice Programs
Charles Michael
Charpentier Mark, The WorkPlace
Collins Marilyn, Literacy Volunteers
Cowlis Andrew, DECD
Deamico Bernadette, The WorkPlace
Downes Vernon, The WorkPlace
Eller Gina, Stratford Continuing Ed.
Ellis-Moten Alisha, The WorkPlace
Ferreira Jane, Mercy Learning Center
Finnegan Steve, LifeBridge
Furness William, The WorkPlace
Garcia Yvette, The WorkPlace
Giesert Andrew, Life Bridge
Gomes Edwin, State Senator
Gonzales Joyce, The WorkPlace
Hildago Patricia, The WorkPlace
Hopkins Karen, The WorkPlace
Imbrogno Dave, Staffworks
James Juanita, FCCF
Johnson Aresta, Bpt. Bd of Education
Jones Desiree, The WorkPlace
Kelman Gary
Klemme Kevin, The WorkPlace
Laryea Kenneth, The WorkPlace
Lawrence Lyn. CT DOL

Leaman-Miller Jamie, Literacy Volunteer
Leichtman Jeff, Global Inf. Strategies
Leon Nestor, The WorkPlace
Lewis Sarah, The WorkPlace
Loewe Wayne, The WorkPlace
Long Tom, The WorkPlace
Lopez-Cordone Lisa, :U:IL Holdings
Makela-Johnson Libby, The WorkPlace
Mazzonna Barbara, Justice Education Ctr
Medina Victoria, The WorkPlace
Morales Jose, The WorkPlace
Murphy Pat, The WorkPlace
Napier Diana, The WorkPlace
Paquin Gayle, Family Centers
Parkmond Adrienne, The WorkPlace
Peralta Ramon, Peralta Design
Randall Lisa, Right at Hand
Randall Tim, Right at Hand
Roman Nelson
Ryan Eileen
Sandstrom Lisa, Literacy Volunteers
Savage Nordia, The WorkPlace
Shah Ravish, AIHT
Streit Lisa, Milford ETA
Trammell Bruce, The WorkPlace
Valentine Nancy
Venditti Debbie, The WorkPlace
Venditti Gino, The WorkPlace
Vermont Carolyn. Urban Family Devel.
Vitale Angelo, The WorkPlacd
Vizcarrondo Celia, The WorkPlace
Wilderman Scott, Career Resources, Inc.
Yaremich Dennis, Sikorsky Aircraft
Yeager John, BHCare
Robinson-Patton Cathy, The WorkPlace

The quarterly meeting of The WorkPlace Board of Directors was held at Housatonic Community College, 900 Lafayette Boulevard, Bridgeport, Connecticut. Leon Baily, Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:22 a.m. and welcomed everyone to the Board meeting.

PRESIDENTS REPORT:

Mr. Carbone paid recognition to Senator Edwin Gomes. He will be retiring from the State Senate but his presence in Bridgeport will go on for a long time. Mr. Carbone thanked in advance our Board Chair, members of the Executive Committee and the Board for their unwavering support, encouragement to explore and to think big.

TRIBUTE:

Right at Home of Greater Fairfield County.

Mr. Carbone stated that at every meeting he has the distinct privilege of paying tribute to those who have done outstanding work in our region. They bring things into our region that honor and promote the interest of workforce development. In the past, Mr. Carbone has spoken on the aging population of Southwestern Connecticut. There comes a time when health needs grow and people have to leave home to be closer to medical care. Today we pay tribute to the Right at Home of Greater Fairfield County. Their offices are across our region in Monroe and satellite offices in Danbury and Westport. They have been selected by Caring.com as one of America's top-rated in-home care agencies. The annual list highlights in-home care service excellence and aims to help families in their search to find care for their elderly loved ones. Mr. Carbone introduced Lisa and Tim Randall of Right at Home of Greater Fairfield County.

Lew and Jean Miller:

Mr. Carbone stated the Lew Miller is a legend in our workforce business and paid tribute to him and his wife who have been so generous to The WorkPlace. He has devoted most of his life to workforce development. He was a former member of our Board as well as Chairman of the Board. He encouraged us to think big and do things that were bold. Lew and Jean Miller launched our Scholarship Fund with a \$100,000 donation and subsequent contributions in 2000 and 2004. In 2011, Lew and Jean each contributed to help start our P2E Program. Additionally blue chip stocks were donated in 2015 and 2018.

ECONOMIC REPORT:

NATIONAL:

Mr. Carbone indicated that the Economic Report received several days ago is one of the strongest in 20 years. Across the United States 313,000 jobs were added in February which was stronger than economists expected and the biggest since July 2016. The unemployment rate stayed at 4.1% which is the lowest in 17 years. More Americans are coming off the sidelines and into the labor market. This is important because the labor force participation registered its best one-month gain in nearly 8 years. We had seen a decline in years and the numbers are gaining. Manufacturing businesses hired 31,000 workers and there were 28,000 jobs created in Finance.

CONNECTICUT LABOR MARKET:

Mr. Carbone stated that Connecticut's report came out shortly after the National report. Jobs in Connecticut grew by 5,500 jobs. The unemployment rate was at 4.5%, down from 4.9% a year ago. Overall the number of jobless residents declined by 7,100 but the state's labor force decreased by 13,100. When businesses are looking to expand here, they need a more skilled workforce. We have only regained 80% of the jobs we lost in the great recession. We are the lowest of all the states in the North East and are the lowest 5 in the entire nation. In our 20-town region we lost jobs in Professional and Business Services. These are low wage and middle class jobs. We have a diminishing middle class.

LABOR SHORTAGE:

The overall Connecticut population has been declining for the past 3 years and this compounds our problem. The labor force is not doing well. The birth rates are declining and the death rates are increasing. More people are moving out of Connecticut for other states. Fifty out of every 50 graduates from college leave the state.

THE NEED FOR SKILLED WORKERS:

Business cycles change and go through a profound series of changes. The rate of change that businesses are going through is escalating and they need to move quickly. They are in need of people who are critical thinkers who are committed to continued education and training. Part of our new focus has to begin to make this shift to make our system reflect this need. Mr. Carbone announced that early next month, The WorkPlace will be having its first meeting with our 20 elected officials to begin a format of change. We will follow through with meetings with educators, businesses and CBOs who support us. We need to carry our message forward to help employers and customers.

EMPLOYER INVESTMENT IN THEIR WORKFORCE:

Mr. Carbone announced that The WorkPlace has a program ready to do this. In a few hours we will have a meeting to put the finishing touches on the program. This is an important move for us. We want The WorkPlace to be in a position to help employers do a profile of their workforce, to recognize and test which employees have great potential for advancement. We can develop a tool and equation to help industry understand how more productive they can be. This is not an expense for businesses but an investment. ASML in Wilton is an industry that employs 1,000 people in our region. They are high tech both in manufacturing and corporate. They are likely to be our first industry partner to try this out. If this becomes successful it will become a catalyst to convince other employers to do the same.

PERCENT UNEMPLOYED OVER 27 WEEKS BY AGE (CHART):

Since 2008 the percent of the workers 25-34 and 35-44 groups has dropped below 20%. At the same time the 45-54 age group has remained steady above 20%. The percent of workers 55+ and unemployed for over 27 weeks has increased from 17% to 21%. We must become a voice for them.

CHALLENGES FACING OLDER WORKERS:

Many older unemployed people face a myriad of challenges that may keep them behind as companies hire more people. Their struggles are daunting. In the days of long-term unemployment under P2E there are similarities as to where we are now. They are fighting the prejudices that come with age. The WorkPlace is exploring a partnership with the National AARP and National Easter Seals to gather national support to move the Department of Labor and other departments to provide some remedy and ways in which to help older workers to not lose their enthusiasm and to fight the atrophy that sets in when a person has been out of work a long time. This is important data to watch. Mr. Carbone is proud of his staff who will work with these two groups. We will be a national change agent to help these 50+ get recognized by the government and get the help they need.

RECOGNIZING WORKFORCE CHALLENGES:

Mr. Carbone noted that for years our approach has been holistic. We will continue to focus and address the needs of the whole person and the multitude of barriers that impact a successful job search. We will expand on the success of industry specific programs such as the HealthCareer Academy and the Connecticut Advanced Manufacturing initiative. We support the Housatonic Community College Manufacturing Academy. Every graduate gets a job and are earning decent wages. We will have a stronger partnership with community colleges to implement training services which easily adapt to meet employers' needs.

BUILDING PROJECT:

Mr. Carbone stated that we are in a negotiation stage. The WorkPlace is trying to do the right thing. As more and more of our revenue is going into the cost of our space, the higher rent is coming out of our program numbers. We cannot diminish the size and numbers of our programs in order to pay a higher rent. We are trying to create a multi-million dollar asset that will add to the investment we have made in our national stature. We will accomplish our objective and move forward on this. We are narrowing our field of choices. We will continue our research, get appraisals and look at locations for the space we need. We have brought together other not for profits in the region who want to be a part of our new home. We have run our project through the Federal Reserve Bank of New York to

ensure we get high grades in our community in this investment project. We have 5 lenders waiting to support us. Hopefully by June we will have an opportunity to make a definitive choice, certainly by September. This will be an important decision by The WorkPlace. It is also important to have investment capital. This will be one of the biggest achievements ever made by The WorkPlace.

DRIVEN TO SERVE - AN AGGRESSIVE PURSUIT OF FUNDING TO SERVE MORE PEOPLE:

Mr. Carbone noted that at every Board of Directors meeting he shows the results of our entrepreneurial approach to our business. We can document that over 70,000 people in our region have had one form of service or another. This approach to our work has brought in \$177,648 million dollars. Our growth March 2017 is+ \$26,478.000 (17.5%). The research part of this goes to help people in Southwestern Connecticut.

Mr. Carbone once again thanked The WorkPlace Board of Directors, the Executive Committee, senior staff, WorkPlace staff, partners in our system and funders.

BUSINESS:

Consent Agenda: WIOA Youth Funding Recommendations and JFES Funding Recommendations PY 2018 – 2019 vendors. (Attached)

John Loeser inquired about the amount of funding for the in school program. Adrienne Parkmond explained the funding split between in school and out of school programs under WIOA and the cost differential of the in school program.

Board Member Nominations:

Aresta L. Johnson, Ed.D – Superintendent of Bridgeport Public Schools
Ramon Peralta, Jr. – Founder and Creative Director, Peralta Design, LLC in Shelton, CT

Motion was made to cast one Ballot – Consent Agenda and Board Member Nominations were unanimously approved by the Board of Directors.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

On a motion made and seconded, the Board of Directors unanimously approved the minutes of the December 15, 2017 Board of Directors meeting.

PANEL DISCUSSION:

Adrienne Parkmond announced that we will be having an exciting panel this morning. The panel will discuss in depth what goes on in our programs, what we do, why we do it and our strategies to keep up with challenges.

Ms. Parkmond introduced the panel:

Scott Wilderman - President/CEO of Career Resources, Inc.
Nordia Savage – Director of our HealthCareer Academy. The Academy has been in operation since 2011
Sarah Lewis – Program Manager of Dress for Success.

The panel discussed program offerings and services available to individuals in our region.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 9:35 a.m.

The next Board of Directors meeting will be held on June 15, 2018.

Respectfully submitted, Mildred Brighindi, Executive Secretary