

# The WorkPlace Mobilizer

»» Think it forward.

October, 2018

## Growing and Supporting Career Centers

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires each Workforce Board to contract for an American Job Center Operator. Operating career centers has enhanced our ability to provide access to



opportunity for job seekers, a talent pool for employers and continues to provide opportunities for more growth. We are proud to announce that we have been awarded new contracts to operate career center activities in Newport News, VA and Corning, Hornell, Elmira, Montour Falls, NY. We are now operating career centers in five states. Delivering superior



service and dependable operations is part of our character and we take value the chance to work with other workforce boards.

## Funding Milestone: Re-Entry Job Center

The WorkPlace was awarded a 3-year grant for \$1,495,000 from the U.S. Department of Labor to create a re-entry job center. The grant will serve 188 youth between the ages 18 to 24 in our region.



Program activities will focus on employing young adults in 7 occupational sectors: Construction, Automobile Services, Hospitality Services, Culinary Services, Retail, Healthcare and Manufacturing. Funding will be used to provide participants with intensive case management, assessments, peer support, GED completion, credential-bearing training, job readiness and occupational skills training. In addition, there will be tracks available for participants to pursue apprenticeships. The program design relies on interagency cooperation to provide supports that will increase the chance for a successful reentry into the community and workforce.

## Summer Youth Program Wrap Up

The 2018 summer youth earn and learn program was a great success as 289 youth participated this year. The program which is funded by the Connecticut Department of Labor is designed to give youth the opportunity to explore career interests, develop positive work habits and marketable skills. In addition to the work experience, younger youth had the opportunity to participate in our Career Development programs. About 50 youth between ages 14 and 15 participated in a 6-week project-based career



exploration program. A team at the Cardinal Shehan Center created a YouTube Station and Talk Show to discuss topics such as mental health, bullying, time management skills and how to cope as a teenager when you are faced with certain types of adversity. The other team from Goodwill of Western Connecticut presented the design for a mobile "YouthWorks" App to provide career information, résumé building, and local entry level job opportunities. The app is designed to track the participants progress and assist with improving their training and work experience as well as personal growth goals.



## Dress for Success Sponsors The James Vick Foundation & UBWLAX

The James Vick Foundation (JVJ) is non profit organization geared towards providing youth the opportunity to participate in well-structured sports. They believe youth do better in the classroom, have lower stress levels, higher self esteem and will be more successful later in life. The University of Bridgeport woman's lacrosse team (UBWLAX) hosted a free clinic for female lacrosse players between the ages of 14-18 at the university. The clinic was sponsored by Dress for Success Mid-Fairfield County and was staffed by the UBWLAX coaches and players. The participants worked and learned new skills to improve their game and finished the clinic with a scrimmage. Sarah Lewis, Program Manager, Dress for Success, stated, "The JVJ has opened up opportunities for youth to participate and excel in sports, regardless of their financial status. It was amazing to watch the young athletes learn from athletes at the University of Bridgeport. Dress for Success Mid-Fairfield County was thrilled to partner with the JVJ to ensure that every woman and girl has the tools she needs to succeed."



### Platform to Employment Continues to Create Opportunity

Since 2011, Platform to Employment (P2E) has helped over 1,700 of Connecticut's long-term unemployed residents find work. The program empowers individuals, fosters self-sufficiency and focuses on performance improvements with measurable outcomes. The 5-week preparatory program addresses social, emotional and skill deficiencies caused by long term unemployment. In the month of September, the Waterbury and Bridgeport cohort classes celebrated their graduation ceremony. Between the two cohorts, 74 interviews were scheduled, before graduation. As President Joseph Carbone stated during the ceremony, "There is confidence in Platform to Employment, confidence that it prepares people and addresses the barriers that unemployment creates." New classes are ready to begin their 5-week program and we are excited to see the unique journey that each individual will embark on.



### Health CareerRx Academy: Success Story

Robin's career of five years as a Medical Secretary abruptly came to a close, leaving her in a state of financial instability. Robin recounts visiting the American Job Center and noticing a Health CareerRx Academy (HCA) flyer with "Let Us Build Your Pathway to a Brighter Future" in bold blue letters.

Through tuition assistance and job readiness training, Robin was provided valuable, lifelong tools that helped empower her to create a better and brighter future! Robin acknowledges that she could not have done it without the support and assistance of HCA's Eligibility Specialist team and her Career Counselor.

Fearlessly, Robin was able to successfully pass the Certified Professional Coder Exam and is now pursuing a career in Medical Billing and Coding.

"Some people are gifted, some people are special, I like to call myself determined. Success takes time and hard work to achieve. Thanks to the Academy for challenging me to do my best!" – Robin M.



### Visit Us

**The WorkPlace**

350 Fairfield Avenue  
Bridgeport, CT 06604  
Phone: (203)-610-8500  
Email: [info2@workplace.org](mailto:info2@workplace.org)  
Web: [www.workplace.org](http://www.workplace.org)

**americanjobcenter**

Locations:  
Bridgeport      Ansonia  
Derby              Stamford  
Phone: 1-866-859-8818  
Web: [www.ajcswct.com](http://www.ajcswct.com)

### Upcoming Events

**Valor Award Ceremony**  
November 1, 2018 at 6:00PM  
Port 5 Naval, Bridgeport, CT

**Board of Directors Meeting**  
December 21, 2018 at 8:15am  
Beacon Hall, 2nd floor, Housatonic Community College, Bridgeport, CT