

The WorkPlace
Southwestern Connecticut's Regional Workforce Development Board
Board of Directors Meeting
September 21, 2018

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Bailey Leon, Community Foundation Gtr New Haven
Bentley Larry
Broadie Paul, Housatonic Community College
Burgard Mary, BESB
Falcon Clodmiro, Falcon, Vargas Assoc.
Gill Fred, MTA Metro North Railroad
Gold Lindy-Lee, DECD
Grabinski Joseph, Sikorsky Aircraft
Holcomb Doug, Gtr. Bridgeport Transit
Iannucci Richard, Port 5 Naval Veterans

Johnson Aresta, Bridgeport Public Schools
Lohr Jim, Carpenter, Carpenters Labor Mgmt Program
Morgan David, TEAM, Inc.
Oddo Jim, Frontier Communications
Proto Mike, Prestige Industrial Finishing
Rafael Cindy, Dept of Rehab. Services
Saffran Larry, Stelray Plastic Products
Sheahan Margaret, Mitchell & Sheahan
Sportini Thomas, IBEW Local 488 JATC
Watson Debra, People's Bank

OTHERS PRESENT:

Alvarez Cynthia, Literacy Volunteers
Andrews Cowlis, CT DOL
Austin Charles, The WorkPlace
Bartoli Maria, The WorkPlace
Beno Greg, NESCO
Blanco Melanie, The WorkPlace
Breedon Paula, The WorkPlace
Brighindi Millie, The WorkPlace
Burgos Lori, The WorkPlace
Burton Jack, The WorkPlace
Carbone Joseph, The WorkPlace
Chatlos Lori-Lyynn, CT DOL
Collins Marilyn, Literacy Volunteers
Cronin Kelly, Literacy Volunteers
Deamico Bernadette, The WorkPlace
Furness William, The WorkPlace
Garcia Yvette, The WorkPlace
Giegengack Teresa
Gonzales Joyce, The WorkPlace
Harris Elra, The WorkPlace
Hildago Patricia, The WorkPlace
Hopkins Karen, The WorkPlace
James Juanita, FCCF
Jones Desiree, The WorkPlace
Kelman Lauren, The WorkPlace
Klemme Kevin, The WorkPlace
Laryea Kenneth, The WorkPlace
Lauretti Mark, Mayor of Shelton
Lawrence Lyn. CT DOL
Leon Nestor, The WorkPlace
Lessard Danial, Spothook
Lewis Sarah, The WorkPlace
Loewe Wayne, The WorkPlace
Long Tom, The WorkPlace
Lopez-Cordone, Eileen, UI Holdings

Makela-Johnson Libby, The WorkPlace
Matorelli Christina, The WorkPlace
McCarthy Mike, The WorkPlace
McNair Cynthia, The WorkPlace
Medina Victoria, The WorkPlace
Miles Brendan, LifeBridge
Morgan Mike, The WorkPlace
Mucherino Elaine, The WorkPlace
Napier Diana, The WorkPlace
O'Brien James
Pacowta Mike, The WorkPlace
Page James, University of Bridgeport
Parkmond Adrienne, The WorkPlace
Patton Rory, The WorkPlace
Perry Megan, The WorkPlace
Purcell William, Valley Chamber of Commerce
Robinson-Patton Cathy, The WorkPlace
Roby Alf, The WorkPlace
Russo Nicole, Microboard Processing
Santilli Vince, Homes for the Brave
Savage Nordia, The WorkPlace
Szymanski John, The WorkPlace
Tetreau Mike, First Selectman Fairfield
Thompson Jade, The WorkPlace
Turner Aaron, The WorkPlace
Venditti Debbie, The WorkPlace
Venditti Gino, The WorkPlace
Vitale Angelo, The WorkPlace
Vizcarrondo Celia, The WorkPlace
Ward Amani, The WorkPlace
Williams Pandora, The WorkPlace
Williams Terri, The WorkPlace
Yaremich Dennis, Sikorsky Aircraft
Yeager John, BHCare
Zaremby Joel, The WorkPlace

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

PRESIDENTS REPORT:

Mr. Carbone welcomed all Board members and guests. In attendance: Mayor Mark Lauretti, City of Shelton and Michael Tetreau, First Selectman of Fairfield. Mr. Carbone stated that our districts and state have taken some bad hits, having lost thousands of jobs in manufacturing. The Valley sector of our district is having a comeback. You will hear some of the reasons from companies who have been ahead of the curve.

TRIBUTES:

Mr. Carbone mentioned that he has the distinct pleasure to pay tribute to outstanding people, businesses and elected officials who have done some extraordinary things.

THERESA GIEGENGACK:

The WorkPlace has a very active Board of Directors. The Executive Committee meets every month and we have been fortunate to have great people on this committee. Terri has been on the Board and Executive Committee for 5 years. She started her career in Westport, then as the Director of Human and Social Services in Fairfield. She has been a part of our most successful and interesting projects. Terri is also a member of our Dress for Success Advisory Council. Even though she is quiet, here presence is always known. Terri retired on June 20, 2018 and we thank her for her extraordinary service.

LEW MILLER:

Lew Miller has been an institution on workforce development, not just in our region and state but across the country. He has been a donor to The WorkPlace for many years. He and his wife, Jean established the Lew and Jean Miller Endowment Fund. He has been helpful and generous with his advice as well. At his recent 90th birthday, he asked his guests to make a donation to The WorkPlace in lieu of a gift to him. Mr. Carbone thanked him for all that he does, in particular, to The WorkPlace.

PHIL WHITE:

Mr. Carbone stated that his focus today will be on businesses in the Valley. Better Packages was previously located in Shelton from 1924-2014. They are currently located in Ansonia. Better Packages manufacture water-activated tape also known as paper tape dispensers. Their facility in Tampa, Florida has been moved to Ansonia. They have created a training center and are an employer who has taken the responsibility to provide training, skill upgrading and education to create a smarter workforce.

U. S ECONOMY:

Mr. Carbone reported that on a national level job growth in August added 201,000 jobs marking 95 consecutive months of job gains. The Unemployment Rate remained very low at 3.9%. The job gains were driven by professional and business services. We are talking about jobs that have a multiplier effect. These numbers show a healthy national economy. The GNP should grow in the years to come and this will intensify greatly the shortage of skilled workers.

CONNECTICUT EMPLOYMENT TRENDS (CHART)

2008 2018 Chg. vs. 2008 % Chg. vs. 2008:

Mr. Carbone noted that this is a 10-year comparison of job sectors. Mr. Carbone discussed some of the trends.		
Health Care & Social Assistance	13.3%	
Financial Activities		14.3%
Manufacturing		-15.2%
Leisure & Hospitality	11.8%	
Retail		-4.9%

Mr. Carbone stated that this is a part of the shift in Connecticut and this is not healthy.

SOUTHWESTERN CONNECTICUT TRENDS (20 TOWN REGION) JULY, 2008 – JULY 2018:

The Labor Force is up 1,894 – Employed up 7,323 – Unemployed -5,429 and the Unemployment Rate is -1.3%. Keep in mind that is a 10-year review. There is a scarcity of skilled thinkers in the workforce.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARDS HAVE A CHOICE:

Workforce Development Boards are regional entities created to implement the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). There are 593 local WDBs and 53 State and territorial WDBs. Formula Funding is based on the characteristics of your population. The makers of the original Act had the wisdom to see the changes ahead. They told every Governor to determine (not us) the standard for the number of WIBs in their state. Under WIOA we guide the workforce system for a region of 20 cities and town and accomplish this by administering job training and the preparation of funds distributed by state and federal agencies. Our choice is to be creative with the opportunities WIOA allows so we can have maximum impact in the in the communities we serve.

INITIATIVES:

Mr. Carbone said to think of The WorkPlace as a specialty shop. We will try to create projects that will touch every part of our economy as we can to have programs were by we can help our employers be prepared for the future. Connecticut's competitive edge and ours has never been the cost of labor or the cost of housing, it's been being smart. We continue to find ways to create pipeline of skilled talent to meet the growing needs of employment.

MANUFACTURING ACADEMY – STAFFING AND RECRUITING SOLUTIONS:

Mr. Carbone announced that we are close to receiving a contract that will enable us to do some interesting things, to assist manufacturers in our region to enhance the skills of their current workforce and build a workforce for the future. When you invest in an employee it is an investment. We need to promote this.

EMPLOYMENT FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES:

Nationally, people with disabilities are employed at less than half the rate of people without disabilities (regardless of the quality of the job). We will make The WorkPlace more portable in that we will have products ready for individuals with physical and cognitive disabilities to have access to workforce development services. We are talking with a firm that is a residential and service facility. We will work with them on workforce development among other services.

JOB CORPS – NEW HAVEN JOB CORPS CENTER:

Mr. Carbone noted that this is a first time adventure for The WorkPlace. The Job Corps is both a residential and service operation. There are centers in New Haven and Hartford. The WorkPlace has partnered with an applicant from Texas who applied to be the general manager of the New Haven facility. Adrienne Parkmond represented The WorkPlace at a meeting in Boston where official presentations were made.

AMERICAN JOB CENTERS (LIST OF LOCATIONS, OPERATOR/PROVIDER, VALUE):

Mr. Carbone reported that The WorkPlace has picked up 2 more locations since our last meeting. They are in Corning, New York and Newport News, Virginia.

CONTINUED GROWTH IN OPERATIONS:

P2E – P2E is prospering in our state. The districts are up and running for this fiscal year. Mr. Carbone noted that 84% of the participants were hired by an employer with an average wage or \$49,173. This is revenue positive for the State of Connecticut as the individuals that move into employment become taxpayers.

P2E RHODE ISLAND:

A new grant was awarded in the amount of \$500K to provide P2E services to unemployed workers over 50.

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 78,000 people in our region have had one form of service or another. This approach to our work has brought in \$188,305 million dollars. Our growth since September, 2017 is+ \$24,787,000 (15.2%). The research part of this goes to help people in Southwestern Connecticut.

Mr. Carbone thanked everyone for their support.

BUSINESS:

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

On a motion made and seconded, the Board of Directors unanimously approved the minutes of the June 15, 2018 Board of Directors meeting.

BOARD MEMBER NOMINATIONS AND RE-NOMINATIONS:

Sabrina Mancini Education Consultant Connecticut State Department of Education	Lindy Lee-Gold Senior Regional Manager Ct. Dept. of Economic & Community Development
Mary Burgard Vocational Rehabilitation Supervisor Dept. of Rehabilitation Services – BESB	Doug Holcomb Chief Executive Officer Greater Bridgeport Transit
Larry Saffran President Stelray Plastics	Mike Proto General Manager Prestige Industrial Finishing
Lori Ann DeLeo Recruitment Specialist ASML	
Julie DeMarco Human & Social Services Director Bigelow Center for Senior Activities	

On a motion made and seconded, the Board of Directors unanimously approved the Nominations and Re-Nominations to the Board of Directors.

SECTOR STRATEGY HIGHLIGHTS: MANUFACTURING IN THE VALLEY:

Mr. Bailey introduced Bill Purcell, President of The Greater Valley Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. Purcell thanked Mr. Bailey for the kind introduction and thanked Mr. Carbone and Tom Long for inviting him to today's meeting. Mr. Purcell congratulated Mr. Carbone for his distinguished career as President of The WorkPlace and his valued and innovative spirit to the Valley Region. Mr. Purcell stated that since his arrival in Connecticut from Massachusetts, The WorkPlace and Chamber have been joined at the hip. We have worked together on the CYEP, the opening of 2 AJCs (in Ansonia and Derby), the P2E program, HCA and a partnership in organizing two job fairs in the Valley. The focus today is on manufacturing in The Valley. He has the distinct honor of introducing 2 distinguished leaders from the Valley. There has been a 20 year trend of the loss of jobs in manufacturing. Connecticut has the diverse array of 45,000 manufacturing companies who employ 159,000 people. Manufacturing generates 11% of Connecticut's GSP and represents a total of 96% of all of the state's exports. Every dollar spent in manufacturing means \$1.35 in economic activities to our state.

Mr. Purcell introduced Nicole Russo, President of Microboard Processing, Inc. She and her father, Craig, founder of MPI have been big boosters and supporters of The WorkPlace. MPI manufactures the most complex electronics for the Aerospace Defense. MPI were two who were awarded the 2006 Team Innovators of the Year, recognized by the Chamber.

Ms. Russo stated that MPI is located in Seymour and was started in Stratford 35 years ago. The company started as an electronic manufacturing service provider and made a comparison as to what we are today. In Seymour MPI has a 60,000 square foot facility with 120 employees. Today they build the most complex products in the world. MPI manufactures 400,000 products yearly and are sought by customers around the world for our technology. One of their most important assets is our employees. We continually hire and train internally. MPI is now hiring and Ms. Russo extended an invitation to visit MP's facility. They believe that within the next 5 years they will double in size based on the business they have now. They could not do this without the help of The WorkPlace and State Departments of Economic and Community Development and Labor in helping with the skills gap.

Mr. Purcell introduced Patrick Monahan, Vice President of Operations at Thule, Inc. The North American Headquarters of Thule, Inc. is located in Seymour.

Mr. Monahan stated that Thule designs and builds products that help people who are passionate about their active life style. Thule was founded in 1942 in a small town in Sweden. In 1989 they moved their facility to Seymour. The market is different in Europe and the U.S. and they needed to develop their own products for the U.S. market. What really got them going in Connecticut was the mountain bike boom in the 90's and they became global market leaders. Thule's products have grown from 5 categories to 22 categories. Thule Group was awarded the 2017 Aquarion Environmental Champion Award for Businesses in Connecticut. They have 9 manufacturing sites and many distribution centers throughout the world. They have a new facility in Poland and sites in Chicago, Seymour and Brazil. They have a 200,000 square foot facility in Milford and in Seymour they have gone from 70,000 square feet 110,000 square feet with 2 additions. Because they cannot expand further at the Industrial Park Facility they will be building a new facility next to us (70,000 sq. ft.) that should be ready in February. 2019 will be the biggest investment for production equipment in the U.S. and with this transition we will need skilled people. They will continue to grow in Seymour.

Mr. Bailey thanked Mr. Carbone and Ms. Parkmond.

AJOURNMENT: There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 9:30 a.m.

The next Board of Directors meeting will be held on December 21, 2018.

Respectfully submitted, Mildred Brighindi, Executive Secretary