

The WorkPlace
Southwestern Connecticut Regional Workforce Development Board
Board of Directors Meeting
December 18, 2020

MEMBERS PRESENT

Agosta Yecenia, DSS
Alvarado Frank, Small Business Admin.
Bailey Leon, Comm. Fndtn Gtr New Haven
Bentley Larry, Consultant
Burgard May, BESB
Carbone Bing, Modern Plastics
Coley Thomas, CSCU
DeMarco Julie, Bigelow Ctr For Sr Activities
Feldman Gary, US Computer Connection
Fuda Victor, CT DOL
Gill Fred, Gateway CC

Gold Lindy-Lee, DECD
Grabinski Joe, Sikorsky
Holcomb Doug, GBTD
Loeser John, Small Business Consultant
Lohr Jim, Carpenters Labor Mgmt Program
McSpedon, Matt, JPM Chase
Oddo Jim, Exec. Search Professionals
Richards Loni, Service After Service
Sheahan Margaret, Mitchell & Sheahan
Smith Dwayne Dr., CEO Housatonic CC
Watson Debra, People's Bank

OTHERS PRESENT:

Acevedo Liz, The WorkPlace
Alcantara Christine, The WorkPlace
Alicia Esley, The WorkPlace
Amacechi Nneanata, The WorkPlace
Arboleda Samantha, The WorkPlace
Artis DiaMond, The WorkPlace
Arruda Christine, The WorkPlace
Baker Imani
Balut T
Baptiste Christine, The WorkPlace
Barclay Joyce, The WorkPlace
Bartolomeo Dante, CT DOL
Bartolomey Luis, The WorkPlace
Bartoli Maria, The WorkPlace
Battle Stewart, The WorkPlace
Becker Allison, The WorkPlace
Benzant Constanza, The WorkPlace
Bissell Ben, The WorkPlace
Brady Janet, The WorkPlace
Breedon Paula, The WorkPlace
Brighindi Millie, The WorkPlace
Brockmeyer Ren
Brooks Desiree, The WorkPlace
Brooks Lorenzo, The WorkPlace
Brown Kerra
Bryant Rhaeshetta, The WorkPlace
Burgos Lori, The WorkPlace
Burton Jack, The WorkPlace
Butler Andrea, The WorkPlace
Camacho Maria, The WorkPlace
Campos Rosalie, The WorkPlace
Carbone Joseph, The WorkPlace

Carroll Tim, The WorkPlace
Charpentier Mark, The WorkPlace
Collins Pam, The WorkPlace
Colon Jennifer, The WorkPlace
Costa Beth
Crawford Dianna, The WorkPlace
Cruz Michelle, The WorkPlace
Daniels James, The WorkPlace
Deamico Bernadette, The WorkPlace
DeMarco Tim, The WorkPlace
DeMattia Donna, The WorkPlace
DiBacco Joe, Ansonia Public Schools
DiLeo Carmen, Career Resources, Inc.
Douglas Maurice, The WorkPlace
Downes Vernon, The WorkPlace
Dunleavy Mary, The WorkPlace
Edelstein Jane, The WorkPlace
Falkowski Gloria, The WorkPlace
Ferreira Jane, Mercy Learning Ctr
Franqui Marie, The WorkPlace
Frost Robert, The WorkPlace
Furey Angie, The WorkPlace
Furness Dean, The WorkPlace
Galassi Jason, The WorkPlace
Galletti Jennifer, TheWorkPlace
Ganim Joseph, Mayor of Bpt.
Garcia Yvette, The WorkPlace
Garcia Judy
Gerena Hailey, The WorkPlace
Gibbs Michelle, The WorkPlace
Giegengack Theresa
Glazier Cal, The WorkPlace

Gomez Joan
Gopian Al, The WorkPlace
Grota Justin, The WorkPlace
Graham Cheval
Hailey Gloria, The WorkPlace
Harris Elra, The WorkPlace
Harris Gwen, Career Resources, Inc.
Harris Michelle, The WorkPlace
Hawkins George
Hebert Cindy, The WorkPlace
Holtkamp Ashley, The WorkPlace
Hopkins Karen, The WorkPlace
Hopson Tanesha, The WorkPlace
Hull Suzette
Jackson Angela, The WorkPlace
Johnson Arnold, The WorkPlace
Johnson Ebony, The WorkPlace
Johnson Kim
Joyce Kara, The WorkPlace
Kearse Carrie, The WorkPlace
Kelman Lauren, The WorkPlace
King Corey, The WorkPlace
Lathem-Magee Stephanie, The WorkPlace
Lawrence Lyn, CT DOL
Laryea Ken, The WorkPlace
Lazaro Karen
Lee Sean, The WorkPlace
Leon Nestor, The WorkPlace
LeBron Amanda, The WorkPlace
Lewis Sarah, The WorkPlace
Llanos Angie, The WorkPlace
Long Tom, The WorkPlace
Madden Shelley, The WorkPlace
Makela-Johnson, Libby, The WorkPlace
Malony Lisa, The WorkPlace
Martin Sharon
Martinez Brandon, The WorkPlace
Martorelli Christina, The WorkPlace
McCarthy Mike, The WorkPlace
McCrae Pam, Life Bridge
McGinnis Monica, The WorkPlace
McLawhorn Toni, The WorkPlace
McNeil Desiree, The WorkPlace
Miller Lewis
Miniman Jennifer, The WorkPlace
Montes. Grixaliz, The WorkPlace
Morgan Mike, The WorkPlace
Mountain John, The WorkPlace
Mucherino Elaine, The WorkPlace
Napier Diana, The WorkPlace
Nicholas-Xavier Taylor, The WorkPlace
Nieves Carmen, The WorkPlace

Numbers Nelson, The WorkPlace
O'Brien Patricia, The WorkPlace
Pacowta Mike, The WorkPlace
Padilla Javier, The WorkPlace
Paleologos Celeste, The WorkPlace
Parkmond Adrienne, The WorkPlace
Patton Cathy, The WorkPlace
Patton Rory, The WorkPlace
Peeler Donna, Career Resources, Inc.
Pelletier Gayle, The WorkPlace
Perez Gloria, The WorkPlace
Perry Megan, The WorkPlace
Pizzaro Jose, The WorkPlace
Porter Angela, The WorkPlace
Proto Dennis, Ansonia Public School
Proto Mike
Richardson Tynisha, The WorkPlace
Robinson Don, The WorkPlace
Rojas Alejandro, The WorkPlace
Romano Fran, The WorkPlace
Romano Stephen
Roux Paula, State of Mass.
Rule Shannon, The WorkPlace
Sampson Tracy, The WorkPlace
San Roman Teresa, The WorkPlace
Santiago-Montes Yaeiel
Santiago Priscilla, The WorkPlace
Santilli Vince, Homes for the Brave
Sarro Mario, The WorkPlace
Savage Nordia, The WorkPlace
Seymour Holly, The WorkPlace
Shackner Bob
Shuster Ben, The WorkPlace
Simpson Stacey
Smith Stephanie
Smith Jon
Stokes Mike, The WorkPlace
Sutton Matt
Szymanski John, The WorkPlace
Thomas Debra
Tiller Anna, The WorkPlace
Toti Cynthia, The WorkPlace
Tripodi Bill
Troutman Randy
Turner Danielle, Career Resources, Inc.
Venditti Debbie, The WorkPlace
Venditti Gino, The WorkPlace
Venter Charles
Vereen Fred
Vermont Carolyn
Vitale Angelo, The WorkPlace
Vizcarrondo Celia, The WorkPlace

Wade Douglas, Wade Dairy
Watson Shirl, The WorkPlace
White Maurice, The WorkPlace
Wiggins-Blathers Sheila, The WorkPlace
Wilber Nancy, Career Resources, Inc.
Wilderman Scott, Career Resources, Inc.
Williams Janet, The WorkPlace
Williams Pandora, The WorkPlace
Williams Terri, The WorkPlace

Wrenn Regina
Wynter Nigel, The WorkPlace
Zaremby Joel, The WorkPlace

The quarterly meeting of The WorkPlace Board of Directors was held via a Zoom Meeting. Leon Bailey, Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:16 a.m.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

**How did we do?
What did we learn?
Where do we go from here?**

Mr. Carbone stated that this is our 3rd Board Meeting via Zoom and things are going well.

TRIBUTES:

We pay tribute to our First Responders: Fire, Police, EMTs and Military who have kept us safe and healthy and for the well-being of our communities every day. A Tribute was also made to Kaitlyn Shake who is on the City Council in Stratford and a nurse at Norwalk Hospital.

A YEAR OF MILESTONES:

During this pandemic we have done the following:

MARCH: Moved to full remote – Daily staff training begins – 4:00 p.m. Gratitude call begin. We had a quick conversion.

April: Hosted Facebook watch party for youth programs, HCA distributes care packages to clients.

MAY: Dress for Success begins virtual training, completed successful DOJ grant application for Re-Entry programming.

JUNE: WorkPlace video statement on Black Lives Matter movement. Won national SCSEP grant application. Launched new AJC website.

JULY: Launched P2E 2.0 pilot program – to overcome long term unemployment related to Covid.

AUGUST: Launched virtual P2E Re-Entry program, 1st Youth Program Virtual Summit.

SEPTEMBER: Engage Staffing opens new storefront on Fairfield Avenue, implemented CARES Act funded training for Community Health Workers.

OCTOBER: Successful move into new offices at 1000 Lafayette Boulevard, submitted 4-year workforce plan to the state, rebranded Youth program under CareerHub.

NOVEMBER: Launched Apprenticeship program, \$2 million dollar grant.

DECEMBER: We had a meeting of the regional Chief Elected Officials regarding our communities, the pandemic impact and goals moving forward.

Mr. Carbone thanked the entire WorkPlace staff for their dedication and for the services they have provided to our participants.

UNEMPLOYMENT RATES:

NATIONAL: unemployment rate is 6.7% and the number of unemployed is 10,735,000

CONNECTICUT: unemployment rate is 8.2% and the number of unemployed is 154,600.

INDUSTRY IMPACT IN SOUTHWESTERN CONNECTICUT

Retail was down 9.3%

Health Care & Social Assistance is down 7.2%.

Leisure & Hospitality is down 12.8%.

UNEMPLOYMENT CLAIMS BY EDUCATION – SWCT:

Less than High School – 9.9%

High School Grad – 42.5%

Some College – 21.9%

Bachelors – 16.7%

More than Bachelors – 9.0%

PROCESSED INITIAL UNEMPLOYMENT CLAIMS BY AGE – SWCT:

Under 20 – 3.1%

20 to 29 – 23.9%

30 to 39 – 20.4%

40 to 39 – 17.2%

50 – 59 – 19.3%

60 – 69 – 12.3%

70 to 79 – 3.2%

CONNECTICUT'S UNEMPLOYMENT CLIFF:

Mr. Carbone indicated that in January 2021, 37,748 CT residents are receiving assistance through CARES Act PUA program for those who are self-employed. In February 2021, 9,807 people who are currently receiving extended benefits could lose support. In March 2021, 58,671 people currently receiving PEUC could begin to exhaust extended benefits and in April – May 2021, 77,233 people currently receiving regular unemployment insurance could exhaust benefits. A total of 183,485 will be at risk of becoming long-term unemployed.

WHAT DID WE LEARN?

- Access and proficiency with technology is more important than imagined.
- Telework has gained greater acceptance and will continue as a workforce option. This will help those with disabilities. This is not a new term but was never taken seriously.
- There is a greater demand for certifications and professions in public health occupations.
- The move to on-line retail was exponential, impacting technology, e-commerce and distribution.
- We need to strengthen relationships with the transportation industry including FedEx, UPS, DHL and USPS. The WorkPlace is not as connected but we will be.

P2E 2.0 OUTREACH:

Mr. Carbone stated that P2E 2.0 was designed specifically for those who were laid off because of COVID-19. Mr. Carbone announced that The WorkPlace has signed contracts to deliver P2E 2.0 in Rhode Island and Westchester County.

PLATFORM TO EMPLOYMENT – PROGRAM YEAR 2019 – 2020 RESULTS:

Mr. Carbone noted that there is growing discrimination for those 50+ who are trying to get back to work and are experiencing long-term unemployment across the state. The results of our 2019-2020 program show a **Hired after Work Experience rate of 89%**. Mr. Carbone noted that the average wage is \$50,000.

We are in our 7th year of the program and cohorts continue. Cohort 7.1 has just finished. Bridgeport had a **Hired after Work Experience rate of 90%**. Hartford had a **Hired after Work Experience of 100%**.

Cohort 7.2 started in December and individuals are already being hired. Bridgeport: **100% Hired after Work Experience**, Hartford: **100% Hired after Work Experience** and Waterbury: **50% Hired after Work Experience**.

P2E RE-ENTRY – 2019-2020:

Classroom Cohorts -72% secured employment with an average wage of \$14.64.

APPRENTICESHIPS:

Mr. Carbone announced that we have won our first grant in the amount of \$1.9 million dollars over a 4-year period. Our partnerships will create a pipeline of new, highly skilled workers who are trained in the skills businesses need. We will be a national model. Bigelow Tea and Microboard Processing are in the process of designing new Registered Apprenticeship Program in partnership with ApprenticeshipWorks and Housatonic Community College. Partnerships with Ansonia and Derby Schools, and ongoing outreach with referral agencies to support recruitment. We were selected to participate in an Urban Institute Study examining youth apprenticeship best practices. We were invited to present “Concierge Model” on the US DOL webinar to Youth Apprenticeship Readiness Grantee’s across 16 different states.

A CULTURALLY AWARE ORGANIZATION:

Mr. Carbone stated that as a society, we are changing. Progressive organizations train to accommodate diversity in culture and respect the tradition of others. It is important to be conscious of one’s own culturally shaped values, beliefs, perceptions and biases. We need to show more respect to others. We have hired a Diversity Person at The WorkPlace, and we are the first in the country to do this.

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

Mr. Carbone noted that at every Board of Directors meeting he show results of our entrepreneurial approach to our business. This approach to our work has brought in \$261,303,000. Our growth since September 2020 was \$21,930,000. This money is beyond our Formula Dollars. We have helped over 100,00 people with our services in one way or another. Mr. Carbone thanked the Board, Partners, Funders, Elected Officials and staff for their support.

BUSINESS:

MINUTES: On a motion made and seconded the Board of Directors unanimously accepted the Minutes of the September 18, 2020 Board of Directors meeting.

CONSENT AGENDA:

The WorkPlace Budget 2020-2021. On a motion made and seconded the Board of Directors unanimously approved The WorkPlace 2020-2021 budget as recommended by the Finance Committee.

OPERATIONS:

Adrienne Parkmond announced that business, the world and The WorkPlace have been disrupted. We had to pivot and stay connected with our employees and customers in a meaningful way. A panel discussion ensued with 4 participants: Bob Schaker, Joan Gomez, Imani Baker and Tynisha Richardson, who have come from our various programs: P2E, Youth Department, HCA and our AJC. They discussed their experiences, their building of confidence and the support they have received from staff. Ms. Parkmond stated that we have had the honor of joining them on a piece of their journey and in their life. This is what propels us at The WorkPlace.

COMMUNICATIONS:

Tom Long indicated that since our last Board Meeting, we have a new brand for our Young Adult Programs - **CareerHub**, formerly **YouthWorks**. We will still serve those 16-24 years of age with a host of services geared toward this population.

We will be updating our new partners page – www.AJCSWCT.com, for Job Seekers and Employers. A chat feature will be added to the Job Center which will provide the opportunity for clients to chat with a staff person during business hours. Acknowledgements were given to Melanie Blanco, Scott Wilderman and Nestor Leon for all their help.

NEW EMPLOYER SERVICES PAGE ON WORKPLACE WEBSITE: www.workplace.org:

Included in the new page:

- Resources to help businesses find, train and grow a quality workforce
- Connect with Business Services for recruitment options at no-cost
- Learn about internship, apprenticeships and work experience programs.
- Connect with labor market information, resource guides and services.

GOOGLE GRANT – NOVEMBER ACTIVITY:

Number of Clicks: 1,495, Impressions: 11,293 – Grant Money: \$6,542.34.

The Average CTR was 13.24%.

- 37 clicks for P2E
- 29 clicks to apply for Maturity Works
- 14 clicks to apply for P2E Rhode Island
- 6 clicks to apply for ApprenticeshipWorks.

The communities with the most activity (clicks) were Stamford, Bridgeport, Providence, New York, Hartford and New Haven.

WEBSITE CLICKS BY AGE:

18-24 - 144

25-34 - 264

35-44 - 200

45-54 - 239

55-64 - 257

Under determined – 257

Greater than 64 – 134

Grand Total 1,495

9.7% were Young Adults, this needs to increase - 26.1% were Maturity Workers

AJOURNMENT: There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 9:33 a.m.

The next Board of Directors meeting will be held on March 19, 2021.

Respectfully submitted, Mildred Brighindi, Executive Secretary