

The WorkPlace
Southwestern Connecticut Regional Workforce Development Board
Board of Directors Meeting
June 18, 2021

MEMBERS PRESENT

Alvarado Frank, Small Business Admin.
Bailey Leon, Comm. Fndtn Gtr New Haven
Bentley Larry, Consultant
Burgard May, BESB
Coley Thomas, CT Comm. Of Colleges
DeMarco Julie, Fairfield Senior Center
Falcon, Clodomiro, American Merchants Assn
Feldman Gary, US Computer Connection
Fuda Victor, CT DOL
Gill, Fred, Consultant

Grabinski, Joseph, Sikorsky
Hopkins Meghan, Operations Inc.
Loeser John, Small Business Consultant
Morgan David, TEAM, Inc.
Rafael Cindy, BRS
Seebeck Matt, SoNo Collection
Sheahan Margaret, Mitchell & Sheahan
Silverstone Bruce, Silverstone Consulting
Smith Dwayne Dr., CEO Housatonic CC
Watson Debra, People's Bank

OTHERS PRESENT:

Alcantara Cristine, The WorkPlace
Alicia Esley, The WorkPlace
Amacechi Nneanata, The WorkPlace
Arboleda Samantha, The WorkPlace
Barclay Joyce, The WorkPlace
Bartoli Maria, The WorkPlace
Barton Beth, The WorkPlace
Battle Stewart, The WorkPlace
Becker Allison, The WorkPlace
Benzant Constanza, The WorkPlace
Bissell Ben, The WorkPlace
Blanco Melanie, The WorkPlace
Brady Janet, The WorkPlace
Brighindi Millie, The WorkPlace
Brooks Desiree, The WorkPlace
Brooks Lorenzo, The WorkPlace
Burgos Lori, The WorkPlace
Bryant Rhaeshetta, The WorkPlace
Butler Andrea, The WorkPlace
Carbone Joseph, The WorkPlace
Carroll Tim, The WorkPlace
Colon Jennifer, The WorkPlace
Cruz Michelle, The WorkPlace
Daniels James, The WorkPlace
Deamico Bernadette, The WorkPlace
DeLeon Krystal, The WorkPlace
DeMarco Tim, The WorkPlace
DeMattia Donna, The WorkPlace
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

Foster Ruby, The WorkPlace
Frost Robert, The WorkPlace
Furness Dean, The WorkPlace
Gaffney Sue, The WorkPlace
Galassi Jason, The WorkPlace
Galletti Jennifer, TheWorkPlace
Garcia Yvette, The WorkPlace
Giegengack Theresa
Glazier Cal, The WorkPlace
Gomez Joan, The WorkPlace
Gopian Al, The WorkPlace
Hailey Gloria, The WorkPlace
Harris Elra, The WorkPlace
Harris Michelle, The WorkPlace
Hebert Cindy, The WorkPlace
Helwig Pamela, The WorkPlace
Hodge Ray, The WorkPlace
Hoekenga Craig, Hoekenga & Machado, LLC
Holtkamp Ashley, The WorkPlace
Hopkins Karen, The WorkPlace
Hopson Tanesha, The WorkPlace
Hull Suzette, The WorkPlace
Incerto Laura, Home Care at Home
Jackson Angela, The WorkPlace
Johnson Arnold, The WorkPlace
Johnson Ebony, The WorkPlace
Johnson Tiffany, The WorkPlace
Kelman Lauren, The WorkPlace
King Corey, The WorkPlace
Kosbob Jeremy, RYSAP
LaRoche Maria, TheWorkPlace
Laryea Ken, The WorkPlace
Leon Nestor, The WorkPlace
Lewis Sarah, The WorkPlace

Llanos Angie, The WorkPlace
Long Tom, The WorkPlace
Lopez Lily, Citibank
Makela-Johnson, Libby, The WorkPlace
Malony Lisa, The WorkPlace
Martinez Brandon, The WorkPlace
Martorelli Christina, The WorkPlace
McCarthy Mike, The WorkPlace
McGinnis Monica, The WorkPlace
McLawhorn Toni, The WorkPlace
Mederas Kinski, The WorkPlace
Brandon Medina
Medina Victoria, The WorkPlace
Mercurio Lisa
Montes. Grixaliz-Rodriguez, The WorkPlace
Morgan Mike, The WorkPlace
Mountain John, The WorkPlace
Mucherino Elaine, The WorkPlace
Munn Todd, The WorkPlace
Napier Diana, The WorkPlace
Nieves Carmen, The WorkPlace
Oberstine Ashley
O'Brien Patricia, The WorkPlace
Pacowta Mike, The WorkPlace
Parkmond Adrienne, The WorkPlace
Patton Cathy, The WorkPlace
Perez Gloria, The WorkPlace
Perez Joselito, The WorkPlace
Perez Lawrence, The WorkPlace
Perry Elizete, The WorkPlace
Perry Megan, The WorkPlace
Pisani Gabriella, The WorkPlace
Porter Angela, The WorkPlace

Proto Dennis, Ansonia Public School
Proto Mike
Robinson Don, The WorkPlace
Romano Fran, The WorkPlace
Rule Shannon, The WorkPlace
Russell Andrew, TheWorkPlace
Russo Tori
Sampson Tracy, The WorkPlace
San Roman Teresa, The WorkPlace
Santiago Priscilla, The WorkPlace
Santiago-Montes Yadiel
Sarro Mario, The WorkPlace
Savage Nordia, The WorkPlace
Shuster Ben, The WorkPlace
Stokes Mike, The WorkPlace
Szymanski John, The WorkPlace
Thornberg Dan, Aced by Interview
Tower Ellen
Venditti Debbie, The WorkPlace
Venditti Gino, The WorkPlace
Vermont Carolyn, Mayor's Office
Vitale Angelo, The WorkPlace
Vizcarrondo Celia, The WorkPlace
Watson Shirl, The WorkPlace
White Marlon, The WorkPlace
White Maurice, The WorkPlace
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 8:19 a.m.

Mr. Carbone welcomed and thanked everyone for their attendance at today's meeting.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

Mr. Carbone thanked everyone for their support and cooperation through this pandemic. The WorkPlace, nation and you have adapted as well. The WorkPlace has had volumes of work in the Cloud for the last three months. We have transitioned all our programs:

- 400+ Chrome books and laptops distributed
- 168,356 Impressions from Google Ads
- 162 completed P2E – far better than expected.

TRIBUTES:

CRAIG HOEKEGNA:

Mr. Carbone sadly announced the passing of Craig Hoekegna, Founder and President of Microboard Processing. He was brilliant, a family-oriented person, a humanitarian, and the real thing. He was a community leader and an advocate of those who needed a second chance. Mr. Hoekenga was a member of The WorkPlace Board of Directors and the Executive Committee. Mr. Carbone had the honor to speak at his memorial. It was a pleasure to be his friend, and we will miss him.

LINDY LEE GOLD:

Her commitment to Southern Connecticut State University is inspired by a belief that public education helps break the cycles of poverty. She recently donated \$500,000 to SCSU and the money will be used to establish the School of Business Endowment for Leadership Development. She has been an activist for 30 years.

JUNETEENTH – NEW FEDERAL HOLIDAY:

Juneteenth commemorates African American freedom and emphasized education and achievement. It marks the date in 1865 when the last enslaved African Americans were granted their freedom

U.S. EMPLOYMENT SITUATION:

Mr. Carbone reported that employment rose by 559,000 in May and the unemployment rate was 5.8%. Notable gains occurred in leisure and hospitality, health care and social assistance. The number of the long-termed declined by 3.8 million in May but it is 2.6 million higher than in February 2020. The long-term unemployed accounted for 40.9% of the total unemployed.

NATIONAL: Unemployment Rate is 5.8%

CONNECTICUT: Unemployment Rate is 8.1%

SWCT: Unemployment Rate is 7.7%

UI CLAIMS DEMOGRAPHICS:

COVID Recession: Jan-May 2021 Claims

COVID Recession: Mar.-Dec. 2020 Claims

| | | |
|------------------|---|---|
| Age | 44% between 20-39 years | 44% between 20-39 years |
| Gender | 53% Female | 55% Female |
| Income | 67% earned \$35K or less in the year preceding unemployment | 65% earned \$35K or less in the year preceding unemployment |
| Education | 47% have only a H.S. diploma and 78% have less than a Bachelors | 33% have only a H.S. diploma and 55% have less than a Bachelors |

| Jan-May 2021 Claims | Asian/Pacific Islander | Black/African American | Hispanic-Latino | Native American | White |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|--------------|
| % OF UI Claims | 4.2% | 17.5% | 20.7% | 0.4% | 57.3% |
| State Demographics | 5.0% | 12.2% | 16.9% | 0.6% | 79.7% |
| Variance | -0.8 | 5.3 | 3.8% | -0.2 | -22.4 |

SIGNIFICANT GRANT WINS:

Our wins continue in the last few weeks.

- \$200,000 Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training Grant from the Environmental Protection Agency.
- \$1.3 million YouthBuild Grant from the Department of Labor.

CARES ACT PROPOSAL – TELEWORK OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN OF COLOR AND INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES:

Mr. Carbone reported that we have applied for this grant. The Connecticut Office of Workforce Strategy is making available \$5 million in CARES Act funding for workforce projects that can be completed this year. We will focus on women of color and people with disabilities because data indicates they are the hardest hit during COVID. We will provide a credential in telework along with other supports and services. Our work will help job seekers access more flexible work options and improve their standing in job search.

APPRENTICESHIPWORKS EVENT:

The inaugural class of a new adult manufacturing training program is at Derby High School. Partnerships are between The WorkPlace, Housatonic CC and Derby Public Schools. The program started on June 9th with 16 people, and we have people for the next class. There will be a program for adults at night. The General Assembly has designated \$5 million for The WorkPlace to support apprenticeship programs across industries. There were only 2 grants awarded, the other was in Hartford. Mr. Carbone thanked Governor Lamont and all the partners.

STATE BUDGET:

Mr. Carbone indicated that The WorkPlace has done well and is grateful to the legislators. The current budget for our state programs: MCJTP, P2E LTU, P2E Re-entry, and Military to Machinist is \$4,050,000. The 2021/2022 budget is \$6,454,000. The \$2,400,000 in additional funding will help us serve 480 more people across programs.

OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE MORE PEOPLE – AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT

Resources will be set aside in various categories, including:

Criminal Justice - \$50,000,000

- Funds will be directed to violence interventions in municipalities with high crime and unemployment rates. Funding will support job training and evidence-based programming.

Workforce Development - \$130,000,000

- Funding will build on workforce investment strategies including certifications leading to in-demand occupations.

ROLE FOR STAFFING AGENCIES:

Engage Staffing is showing strong, sustained growth. Revenue has increased by 17% this year with a 36% increase in clients since January.

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 \$274,041,000. Our growth since June 2020 was \$50,768,000 (23% growth). This money is beyond our Formula Dollars. We have helped over 100,000 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 March 19, 2021, Board of Directors meeting.

CONSENT AGENDA: The Consent Agenda consisted of: 1) Resolution allowing Joseph M. Carbone, CEO, to sign contracts and other documents on behalf of The WorkPlace 2) Jobs First Employment Services and WIOA Youth Funding for the 2021-2022 Program Year. On a motion made and seconded, the Board of Directors unanimously accepted the Consent Agenda.

BOARD REAPPOINTMENTS AND NEW APPOINTMENT:

Reappointments:

Julie DeMarco, Bigelow Center for Senior Activities, Director of Human & Social Services

Doug Holcomb, Greater Bridgeport Transit, CEO

Sabrina Mancini, CT State Department of Education

Lindy Lee Gold, Dept. of Economic & Community Development, Sr. Regional Manager

Jim Oddo, Executive Search Professionals, Partner

Larry Saffran, Stelray Plastics, President

Mike Proto, Prestige Industrial Finishing, Director of Business Development

Mary Burgard, Bureau of Rehabilitation Services, Voc. Rehab Supervisor

New Appointment:

Nicole Russo, Microboard, CEO and President

On a motion made and seconded, the Board of Directors unanimously accepted the list of Reappointments and New appointment to the Board of Directors.

OPERATIONS:

Ms. Parkmond indicated that the Operations division is working to get ready for the expanding programming in:

- P2E
- MCJTP
- State Veterans Program
- Apprenticeship

UNITECT RENTAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM:

This program is through the Connecticut Department of Housing under the Rescue Act. We have a Call Center and a mobile bus (our former Coach). So far:

- Averaging over 1,000 calls a day
- 61,000 calls since March
- The number in the que is growing due to demand
- Live chat feature will begin soon
- 25 staff who are dedicated to the UniteCT operation.

2021 HEALTH PROFESSIONAL OPPORTUNITY GRANT (HPOG):

Ms. Parkmond stated that this program started many years ago for low-income families. The program provides a career path in health care occupations. Most start at entry level (Certified Nursing Assistants) and move along a career path with additional education and training. We are proud that 10 participants, who started in an entry level position, graduated with a nursing degree. Ms. Parkmond thanked the HCA staff, especially Nordia Savage and Angela Porter.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION:

Under the Manager, Ashley Holtkemp, we have:

- Weekly Newsletters on DEI topics
- Professional Development opportunities for staff
- Created a DEI Committee
- Working on creating and sustaining an inclusive culture.

SUCCESS!! RHODE ISLAND P2E TEAM:

Ms. Parkmond stated that our P2E programs work outside of Connecticut. We have a contract with Rhode Island. Our P2E team in Rhode Island, Cindy Hebert and John Mountain are working very hard. A video of a success story was shown. Scott MacDowell, a Back to Work Rhode Island participant, shared his experience and success through our P2E program.

COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE:

Tom Long stated that his is excited about our bid to Purplegator. Purplegator is a mobile first advertising agency selected to provide a multi-platform advertising solution with:

- Display ads and video ads running on Facebook and Instagram, YouTube, Snapchat, on the mobile web and in apps.
- Mobile Web and In-App banner ads that are geo-target to our region.

The targeted audience will be young adults, ages 16-24.

SUMMER INSPIRATIONS- A VIRTUAL WINE SAMPLING AND SILENT AUCTION BENEFITING DRESS FOR SUCCESS:

June 22, 2021 @ 6:00 p.m. - Event Emcee will be Laura Incerto, marketing professional and Founder of Women for Women Fairfield Social Networking Group.

HEALTH PORTAL – YALE NEW HAVEN HEALTH:

Yale New Haven Health (YNHH) has signed on to support our SCSEP application to continue the MaturityWorks program. YNHH has provided access to experts on a variety of health-related topics and virtual training to help us address issues of mental health and social isolation which have impacted our participants. They will have the protocols to getting back to work. A web portal will be available by June 30th with videos, schedule of live webinars, fact sheets, links for valuable resources and other tools.

AJOURNMENT: There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 9:20 a.m.

The next Board of Directors meeting will be held on September 17, 2021.
Respectfully submitted, Mildred Brighindi, Executive Assistant.