The WorkPlace  
Southwestern Connecticut's Regional Workforce Development Board  
Board of Directors Meeting  
September 16, 2022

MEMBERS PRESENT
Acosta Yesenia, CT Dept. of Social Services  
Bentley Larry, Consultant  
Burgard Mary, Vocational Rehabilitation  
Coley Thomas, CSCU  
Colon Pablo, Avangrid Foundation  
DeMarco Julie, Bigelow Ctr for Sr Activities  
Falcon Clodomiro, The Falcon Vargas Group  
Gill Fred, Gateway Community College  
Gold Lindy-Lee, DECD  
Holcomb Doug, Greater Bridgeport Transit  
LaBella Michael, TD Bank  
Loeser John, CVS Health  
Morgan David, Team Inc.  
Oddo Jim, Exec. Search Professionals  
Proto Mike, Prestige Industrial Finishing  
Rafael Cindy, BRS  
Richards Loni, Service After Service  
Russo Nicole, Microboard  
Smith Dwayne, Housatonic Community College  
Sportini Thomas, IBEW Local 488 JATC  
Sheahan Margaret, Mitchell & Sheahan  
Truini Brian, UFCW 371

OTHERS PRESENT:  
Acevedo Elizabeth, The WorkPlace  
Alcantara Cristina, The WorkPlace  
Allen Danee, The WorkPlace  
Amaechi Nneanata, The WorkPlace  
Artis Michelle, The WorkPlace  
Barton Beth, The WorkPlace  
Battle Stewart, The WorkPlace  
Bethea James, The WorkPlace  
Bissell Benjamin, The WorkPlace  
Brady Janet, The WorkPlace  
Breeden Paula, The WorkPlace  
Brewster Nicole, The WorkPlace  
Brooks Lorenzo, The WorkPlace  
Andrea Butler, The WorkPlace  
Carbone Joseph, The WorkPlace  
Cruz Michelle, The WorkPlace  
Timothy DeMarco, The WorkPlace  
D. Furness William, The WorkPlace  
DeMattia Donna, The WorkPlace  
Douglas Maurice, The WorkPlace  
Edelstein Jane, The WorkPlace  
Falkowski Gloria, The WorkPlace  
Galassi Jason, The WorkPlace  
Garcia Jessica, The WorkPlace  
Garcia Judelca, The WorkPlace  
Garcia Yvette, The WorkPlace  
Gerena Hailey, The WorkPlace  
Giacobbe, Marilia  
Glazier Calvin, The WorkPlace  
Gomez Joan, The WorkPlace  
Gopian Al, The WorkPlace  
Greene Dustin, The WorkPlace  
Hailey Gloria, The WorkPlace  
Hare Kimberly, The WorkPlace  
Harris Elra, The WorkPlace  
Hawkins, Janene  
Hernandez Maria, The WorkPlace  
Hodge Ray, The WorkPlace  
Hull Suzette, The WorkPlace  
Jackson Angela, The WorkPlace  
Johnson Arnold, The WorkPlace  
Johnson Libby, The WorkPlace  
Johnson Tiffany, The WorkPlace  
Keel Debra, The WorkPlace  
Khan, Juliette  
Klarides-Ditria Rep. Nicole  
Krueger Katherine, The WorkPlace  
Langston Alexandra, The WorkPlace  
LaRoche Maria, The WorkPlace  
Lary Wanda, Career Resources  
Laryea Kenneth, The WorkPlace  
Latham-Magee Stephanie, The WorkPlace  
Llanos Angie, The WorkPlace  
Long Tom, The WorkPlace  
Lopez Brandon, The WorkPlace  
Lawrence, Lyn, CT DOL  
Maloney Lisa, The WorkPlace  
Mari Barbara, The WorkPlace
Ms. Sheahan, Vice Chair called the Board of Directors meeting to order. Ms. Sheahan introduced guest speaker Jonathan Vazcones of M&T Bank. Mr. Vazcones manages the M&T grant to nonprofits in low-income cities for Long Island and NY. He delivers workshops on leadership development, social change, and success to students across New York City. Mr. Vazcones has a BA in Economics and Philosophy and serves on the Board of Futures Ignite. He is also a 1st generation college student from Ecuadorian native parents.

GUEST SPEAKER:
Mr. Vazcones gave the history of M&T Bank. M&T was founded in 1956 in Buffalo, New York. They are a community bank serving New York, Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Connecticut, Virginia, West Virginia, Washington, D.C, Florida and now New England. They are headquartered in Buffalo, New York and are organized around 26 community bank regions led by local regional presidents. The M&T customers bank with them at nearly 1,500 locations across fourteen states along the East Coast.

M&T Purpose and Values:
M&T wants their communities to understand they can rely on them to get involved and help them grow even stronger. They take an active role in the communities they serve. M&T has given $34.9 million in grants to more than 2,800 nonprofit organizations across eight states and the District of Columbia that support and revitalize communities, help charitable organizations, and grow local economies in 2020. Volunteerism is very much at the heart of the M&T mission. They provide their team with the opportunities to drive positive change and make a difference.
PRESIDENT’S REPORT:
Mr. Carbone noted that we are facing a protracted period with shortage of workers. Companies need to make a bigger effort to find and hire workers with the relevant skills. CNBC ranked Connecticut’s cost of living eighth highest in the country and its cost of doing business sixth highest, with both scores unchanged from last year.

CONNECTICUT LABOR MARKET:
Mr. Carbone spoke about the labor market numbers. The labor force sums up the number of people that are employed and the number of people that are seeking employment. This will tell a business that is interested in investing in CT whether or not they will be faced with a potential talent. We are starting to move in the right direction but the market is still challenged by the lack of people with critical thinking skills.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Labor Market Data</th>
<th>Feb 20</th>
<th>May 22</th>
<th>June 22</th>
<th>Jul 22</th>
<th>% Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SW CT</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labor Force</td>
<td>407,159</td>
<td>409,220</td>
<td>413,221</td>
<td>417,982</td>
<td>2.66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>18,470</td>
<td>16,985</td>
<td>17,740</td>
<td>18,857</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment Rate</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONN.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labor Force</td>
<td>1,950,800</td>
<td>1,895,100</td>
<td>1,901,300</td>
<td>1,899,200</td>
<td>-2.64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>66,800</td>
<td>78,700</td>
<td>76,000</td>
<td>70,400</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment Rate</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labor Force</td>
<td>164,546,000</td>
<td>164,376,000</td>
<td>164,023,000</td>
<td>163,960,000</td>
<td>-0.36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>5,787,000</td>
<td>5,950,000</td>
<td>5,912,000</td>
<td>5,567,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment Rate</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sector Indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector Indicators</th>
<th>July 22'</th>
<th>Change vs. Jan. 21'</th>
<th>% Change vs. July 21'</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Retail</td>
<td>44,400</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Services</td>
<td>11,400</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Care &amp; Social Assistance</td>
<td>63,900</td>
<td>1,600</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Activities</td>
<td>36,200</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>29,800</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leisure &amp; Hospitality</td>
<td>47,700</td>
<td>4,100</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional &amp; Business Services</td>
<td>65,300</td>
<td>-200</td>
<td>-0.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>13,200</td>
<td>-600</td>
<td>-4.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information</td>
<td>11,600</td>
<td>-500</td>
<td>-4.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>40,100</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Non-Farm Employment</td>
<td>402,200</td>
<td>8,700</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Healthcare sector has the most growth. The most disappointing part of the graph is the financial activities. The rate of compensation is less than what it used to be. Manufacturing has a 5.3% healthy gain. It is growing and thriving! Hospitality is making a slow comeback, but we are getting there.

**Workforce Trends:**
Connecticut has the sixth oldest population in the nation. At 41.5 years, the state’s median age is exceeded only the three other New England States, Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, along with West Virginia and Florida. Thousands of people are expected to retire in the coming years, increasing demand for age-related services and decreasing the number of available, skilled workers. Between 2010 and 2040, Connecticut’s population over 65 years is on pace to increase by 57%. However, its population between the ages of 20 to 64 is projected to grow less than 2% and the population age 18 and under is projected to decline by 7%.

In many CT towns there is a substantial gap between available housing and the housing needs of broader constituency of potential residents. While not every worker seeks to live in the town where they work, driving communities include homes that are affordable to local workers living where you work. Living where you work provides a host of quality-of-life benefits including reduced community cost/time, which translates to more time for family and other pursuits.

**Next Steps:**
Connecticut needs to increase the population of young, trained workers with critical thinking skills. The attention needs to be made to retaining mature workers and incentivizing these individuals including part-time, shared work and flexible work schedules.

Employers need incentives to invest more in technology and incumbent worker training. A greater investment is needed and quality of life matters, especially in urban districts.

CT needs greater implementation of remote work for broader more diverse workforce. Government dollars has a huge role to investment in the upgrade to their technology.

**Remote/Virtual Employment Opportunity** - Is a response to the labor market challenges. Remote work expands the talent pool for employees to reach the top talent across the country. It can also improve a business’s brand and make an employer more attractive to applicants. It improves employee retention and companies that offer remote work experienced a 25% lower turnover rate.

**CareerConnectCT:**
Office of the Workforce Strategy awarded $669,000 over 2 years to develop a remote program to prepare people for remote work. This program certifies participants to ensure they have the technology skills, and the ability to work independently in a remote setting. Customer service skills is a huge focus needed for remote work. Trainees receive mentoring, career coaching, workforce readiness training and occupational skills training. All participants that complete the training will receive a Home Office start up kit.

**Healthcare Career:**
The Office of the Workforce Strategy awarded The Workplace $7,500,000 over 2 years to scale our Healthcare Academy statewide to train 760 individuals in the healthcare field. This program will continue to grow in the healthcare workforce in CT. The WorkPlace has a track record of our success and the success continue to grow.
Trainings offered in the following occupations: CNA: Home Health Aide; Phlebotomist; EKG Technician; Emergency Medical Technician; Pharmacy Tech; Community Health Worker; Central Sterile Processing Technician and Dental Assistant.

**Apprenticeships:**
Mr. Carbone stated that we hired a new director for ApprenticeshipWorks, Louie Reyes.

- We partnered with Bigelow Tea to add a new apprentice position- Tea Mixer/Metal handler.
- The WorkPlace is also working with SW CT Manufacturing Regional Sector Partnership on comprehensive skills standards manual for the top 10 shared critical occupations.
- New business partnerships with Router Aerospace in Bridgeport and Stratford Industries on their Registered Apprenticeship Program implementation.
- 10 participants completed summer “Manufacturing Workforce Readiness Bootcamp” at Derby High School.
- This fall 17 participants started CNC one training at Platt Tech High School.

The participation for this program has been excellent. Every month we can say there are several people that have become employed as a result of their training.

**Building Better Futures Connecticut:**
The WorkPlace received 1.5 million funding from the state of Connecticut over two years to leverage our YouthBuild and Reentry programming and create a statewide holistic approach to support justice involved youth between the ages of 16 to 24. This grant will provide access to occupational skills training and hands on work experience in the Construction, Energy, Manufacturing and Culinary sectors. Additionally, participants receive GED, preparation, life skills and job readiness training, leadership skills development and support such as transportation assistance. This will be an opportunity to grow a new program and engage in community partners.

Mr. Carbone gave a huge thank you to everyone at The WorkPlace for making this happen.

**BOARD BUSINESS:**

**Minutes:** On a motion made and seconded the Board of Directors accepted the minutes of the June 17, 2022, Board of Directors meeting.

**Adjournment:** There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 9:32 a.m. The next Board of Directors meeting will be held on December 16, 2022.

Respectfully submitted,
Michelle Artis, Operations Coordinator