

The WorkPlace

Southwest Connecticut's Regional Workforce Development Board

Board of Directors Meeting

September 15, 2023

Members Present:

Bing Carbone, Modern Plastics
Bruce Silvestone, Silverstone Consulting
Cindy Rafael, BRS
Dionne Pulcinella, M&T Bank
Dennis "DJ" Yaremich, Teamsters Local 1150
Doug Holcomb, GBT
Dwayne Smith, CSU
Frank Alvarado, Consultant
Heather Cavanaugh, Stamford Chamber
Jim Oddo, Exec. Search Professionals
John Loeser, CVS Health
Julie DeMarco, Bigelow CTR For Sr Activities
Lindy Lee Gold, Department of Economic & Community Dev.

Loni Richards, Service After Service
Mary Burgard, Vocational Rehab
Matt Seebeck, SoNo Properties
Meghan Hopkins, Operations Inc.
Mike Proto, Prestige Industrial Finishing
Monette Ferguson, Alliance for Community Empowerment
Nicole Russo, MicroBoard
Pablo Colon, Avangrid
Thomas Coley, CT State Community College
Thomas Sportini, IBEW Local 488 JATC
Victor Fuda, CTDOL
Willie McBride, WC McBride Electrical
Yecenia Acosta, CT DSS

OTHERS PRESENT:

Al Gopian, The WorkPlace
Alexa Williams, The WorkPlace
Alexandra Langston, The WorkPlace
Alfred Henderson, The WorkPlace
Andrea Smith, The WorkPlace
Angela Jackson, The WorkPlace
Angela Porter, The WorkPlace
Anne Leskow, The WorkPlace
Araceli Marquez, The WorkPlace
Ashley Holtkamp, The WorkPlace
Ben Bissell, The WorkPlace
Ben Schuster, The WorkPlace
Beth Barton, The WorkPlace
Brandy Johnson, The WorkPlace
Cal Glazier, The WorkPlace
Carrie McKeithen, The WorkPlace
Cathy Patton, The WorkPlace
Donna DeMattia, The WorkPlace

Charlene Lee, The WorkPlace
Charles Wilson, The WorkPlace
Chaylene Lee, The WorkPlace
Chelby Bragg, The WorkPlace
Corey King, The WorkPlace
Corinne Harris, The WorkPlace
Cristina Alcantara, The WorkPlace
Cynthia Torres, Future Forward CT
Davonnah Monk, The WorkPlace
Dean Furness, The WorkPlace
Deb Oliver, The WorkPlace
Debbie Venditti, The WorkPlace
Dennis Proto, Ansonia Public School
Desiree Brooks, The WorkPlace
Destiney Martin
Diana Napier, The WorkPlace

Dorcey Mvumbi ,The WorkPlace
Dwayne Miller, The WorkPlace
Elaine Mucherino, The WorkPlace
Elizabeth Acevedo, The WorkPlace
Elle Serendi, The WorkPlace
Elra Harris, The WorkPlace
Esley Romano, The WorkPlace
Felicia Edwards- Smith, Future Forward CT
Fran Romano, The WorkPlace
Francheska Beato, The WorkPlace
Frank Biancur, The WorkPlace
Gloria Falkowski, The WorkPlace
Gloria Perez, The WorkPlace
Joselito Perez, The WorkPlace
Kapree Trip, The WorkPlace
Kayla Montenez, The WorkPlace
Kimberly Hare, the WorkPlace
Kimberly West, The WorkPlace
Krystal Deleon, The WorkPlace
Leigh Roberts, The WorkPlace
Libby Johnson, The WorkPlace
Lisa Maloney, The WorkPlace
Lisandrey DeJesus, The WorkPlace
Lorenzo Brooks, The WorkPlace
Lori Burgos, The WorkPlace
Louie Reyes, The WorkPlace
Maria Bartoli, The WorkPlace
Maria Hernandez, The WorkPlace
Maria LaRoche, The WorkPlace
Maria Matarazzo, The WorkPlace
Mario Sarro, The WorkPlace
Marjae Jackson, The WorkPlace
Mark Douglas, The WorkPlace
Marlon White, The WorkPlace
Mary Dunleavy, The WorkPlace
Maurice White, The WorkPlace
Mayor Mark Lauretti, City of Shelton
Michael Gordan, The WorkPlace
Michael Hayden, The WorkPlace
Michael McCarthy, The WorkPlace
Michael Morgan, The WorkPlace

Grixalix Montes-Rodriguez, The WorkPlace
Hailey Gerna, The WorkPlace
Ilissa Torrs, The WorkPlace
Jane Siknd Edelstein, The WorkPlace
Janet Brady, The WorkPlace
Janet Williams, The WorkPlace
Janice Bruno, The WorkPlace
Jasmin Reyes, The WorkPlace
Jason Galassi, The WorkPlace
Jennifer Colon, The WorkPlace
Joanni Council, The WorkPlace
John Szymanski, The WorkPlace
Michael Stokes, The WorkPlace
Michelle Artis, The WorkPlace
Michelle Cruz, The WorkPlace
Mirlande Pressat, The WorkPlace
Monica McGinnis, The WorkPlace
Morgan Esdaile, The WorkPlace
Nicole Brewster, The WorkPlace
Paula Breeden, The WorkPlace
Phillip Foster, The WorkPlace
Pricillia Santiago, The WorkPlace
Rakiya Bello, The WorkPlace
Ray Hodge, The WorkPlace
Rob O'Mara, Griffin Health
Robert Frost, The WorkPlace
Saicha Griffin, The WorkPlace
Samantha Santos, The WorkPlace
Sean Fredriksen , The WorkPlace
Shanice Goffe, The WorkPlace
Shannon Rule, The WorkPlace
Shenika Slow, The WorkPlace
Shirl Watson, The WorkPlace
Stephanie Latha-Magee, The WorkPlace
Stephen Meskers, State Representative
150TH
Tamiaka Butler- Afable, The WorkPlace
Tarrol Stafford, The WorkPlace
Taylor Van Antwerp, The WorkPlace
Teresa San Roman, The WorkPlace

Thomas Powell, The WorkPlace
Tiffany Johnson, The WorkPlace
Tim Demarco, The WorkPlace
Todd Seitzinger, The WorkPlace
Tracey Sampson, The WorkPlace

Veronica Rodriguez, The WorkPlace
Victoria Medina, The WorkPlace
Vincent Santilli, Homes for the Brave
Yalitza Dormez, The WorkPlace
Yusuf Hasaan, The WorkPlace

Ms. Russo called the meeting to order at 8:15am.

President's Report

Mr. Carbone began his report by honoring Lew Miller, a long-term Board member of TWP & former chairman. Mr. Miller is currently the President at Helping Immigrant Thrive, Inc. assisting undocumented immigrants in NYC become taxpaying members of the community.




Mr. Carbone paid tribute to Shelton Mayor, Mark Lauretti. The City of Shelton developed a philosophy for the town that is inclusive of all populations. Shelton has also strived to keep taxes low so they can all stay there and thrive.

CT Labor Market: Connecticut's labor force declined for the 7th consecutive month in July as employers face growing challenges filling the state's 91,000 job openings. Job openings are now 30% above pre-pandemic levels. Individuals working and those looking for work is down 59,000 individuals since January 2022.

CT has recovered 98% of the 289,100 jobs lost due to pandemic shutdowns. Other states in the northeast, namely Vermont and Rhode Island are still behind.

<u>State</u>	<u>Recovery Rate</u>
New Hampshire	107%
Maine	98%
Massachusetts	103%
Connecticut	98%
Vermont	89%
Rhode Island	87%
Overall U.S. average	118%

Labor Market Trends: The Labor Force includes people aged 16 and older who are actively looking for work.

	July 22	July 23	%Change	
 U.S.	Labor Force	163,960,000	167,103,000	+1.9%
	Unemployed	5,670,000	5,841,000	
	Unemployment Rate	3.5%	3.5%	
 CONN.	Labor Force	1,928,700	1,896,800	-1.7%
	Unemployed	76,200	69,000	
	Unemployment Rate	4.0%	3.6%	
 SWCT	Labor Force	417,982	419,244	+0.003%
	Unemployed	18,857	17,617	
	Unemployment Rate	4.5%	4.2%	

Connecticut Labor Force: Since November 2021, the state has experienced a tight labor market where there are more jobs available than workers to fill them.

Affordable Housing: In the state budget Governor Lamont proposed investing \$600 million for affordable housing using a mix of state and federal resources, approximately doubling previous levels.

The investments include:

- \$100 million in down payment assistance to low and moderate-income homebuyers
- \$200 million for flexible housing & \$100 million for the Housing Trust Fund, with an emphasis on multi-unit housing in downtown areas close to transportation
- \$200 million to expand workforce development housing

Funding alone will not address immediate needs as housing takes time to create. Zoning concerns must be addressed, and financing needs to be put in place. There are multiple steps in each community to put a project forward.

Retail Concierge Academy (RCA): RCA is a \$750K pilot program funded by the state serving 100 people. RCA will provide individuals with the skills to create a better consumer experience by teaching techniques to become personal shoppers. Personal shoppers offer clients personalized advice based on several individualized factors. TWP will work directly with retailers, including those at the SoNo Collection sector partnership to develop a curriculum that is responsive to their needs.

Platform to Employment PY 2022-2023:

LTU	# Completed Career Readiness	# Placed in Work Experience	% Placed in Work Experience	# Hired After Work Experience	% Hired After Work Experience
September Cohort	18	15	83%	14	93%
November Cohort	52	42	81%	41	98%
February Cohort	47	40	85%	38	95%
March Cohorts	78	47	60%	42	89%
May Cohort	90	55	61%	53	96%
Totals	285	199	70%	188	94%

Re-Entry	ENROLLED	COMPLETED	# EMPLOYED	% EMPLOYED	RECIDIVISM	AVERAGE WAGE
July Cohort	19	17	12	71%	1	\$17.60
August Cohort	21	18	10	56%	0	\$18.11
September Cohort	16	16	15	94%	1	\$16.96
November Cohort	14	14	11	79%	0	\$16.95
January Cohort	28	22	16	73%	0	\$17.22
February Cohort	26	20	15	75%	0	\$16.43
March Cohort	32	29	22	76%	0	\$17.61
May Cohort	29	17	8	47%	0	\$18.71
June Cohort	27	21	18	86%	0	\$17.10
Totals	212	174	127	73%	2	\$17.41

Mortgage Crisis Job Training Program(MCJTP): The MCJTP has helped CT residents stay in their homes since 2008 by enhancing job skills to improve earning potential and the ability to sustain a mortgage with affordable monthly payments. MCJTP has enrolled 3,414 individuals, 2,865 individuals obtained training scholarship, 3,348 went through financial literacy workshops and 2,402 were offered housing counseling.

Driven to Serve: Our growth since September 2022 is up +\$36,528,324, which is 10.2%

Public Funding	\$321,649,787	\$326,062,086
Partner w/ Business and Foundations	\$13,418,281	\$13,473,694
Fee- For- Service	\$19,412,732	\$19,874,588
Total	\$354,480,800	\$359,410,372

Board Business:

Minutes: A motion made and seconded the Board of Directors accepted the minutes from the June 2023 BOD meeting.

Executive Committee Appointments: Dionne Pulcinella, Willie McBride and Meghan Hopkins On a motion made and seconded, the Board of Directors unanimously accepted the appointment for the three Board members to become member of the Executive Committee.

Consent Agenda: On a motion made and seconded, the Board of Directors unanimously accepted the Consent Agenda.

Operations Report

Ms. Parkmond began by introducing some of TWP's VP's: Mike Hayden, Sr. VP of Workforce Development, Cathy Patton, VP of Young Adult Services, Leigh Roberts, VP of Workforce Development and Mike McCarthy, VP of HR and Talent Development. Each of them shared information regarding their programs.

Mr. Hayden shared that TWP is collaborating with a company called Transfr to offer virtual reality training to students. Their mission is to train the future of every industry and open exciting new opportunities for talent across the globe and at home. Career pathways for workers who will be the future of every industry via hands on VR. Training technology. This training helps individuals see, try and get an understanding of various occupations and the tasks involved.

Ms. Patton shared insight on the youth division. Programs include:

- WIOA Youth (Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act)
- YouthBuild Bridgeport
- Bureau of Rehabilitation Services partnership
- Department of Children and Families partnership
- Building Better Futures
- American Rescue Plan Act- Youth
- Connecticut Youth Employment Program

These programs provide job training and employment opportunities for underserved youth, ages 16-21 while aiming to prepare them with future careers.

Mr. McCarthy provided an overview of the professional development trainings that TWP has been engaged in during and after the pandemic. Over 2000 hours of training has occurred for staff.

Ms. Roberts shared the programs within Health CareerRx Academy (HCA). HCA consists of the following programs: Career ConneCT, Community Health Worker and the Nursing Expansion Grant.

Occupational skills training options are: CNA, EMT, Community Health Worker, Sterile Processing Technique, Medical Assistant, Medical Administrative Assistant, Medical Billing and Coding, Pharmacy Tech, LPN and RN.

The HCA provides case management services to over 500 participants per year. Over 400 barrier removal services have been provided through stipends, gift cards, referrals, technology, and equipment this year.

Marketing Report

Mr. Long began his report by sharing organizations that are supporting TWP.

We Change Lives: Lockheed Martin has supported by providing resources for Apprentices for transportation, technology, work clothes and more.

M&T Bank provides access to Dynamic Works online programming to over 600 individuals across five states to expand their job skills and prepare them to re-enter the workforce. Courses support entry into various industries and focus on communications skills, and interpersonal skills including "Decision Making "and "Conflict Management". This also includes job seeker skills designed specifically for targeted populations such as veterans, re-entry, or workers with disabilities.

Synchrony Bank has assisted with operational support for Dress for Success by providing flexible funding for programming and support services.

Non-Profit Megaphone: \$90,000 in grant funds provided to promote our programs. TWP must maintain a click rate of 55 to maintain ads.

Comcast: Provided computers for 20 low-income, mature workers in Vermont to access job training, coaching and American Job Center programs.

Adjournment: There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 9:27am.

Our next Board of Directors meeting will be held on December 15, 2023.

Respectfully submitted,
Tiffany Johnson, Executive Assistant

