

**Union County Workforce Investment Board
Business & Industry Committee**

UCEDC, 75 Chestnut Street, Cranford, NJ 07016

Tuesday, June 10, 2014 at 9:30 AM

AGENDA

- I. Welcome and Introductions Erich Peter
- II. Presentation: John Ehret
NJ Dept of Labor & Workforce Development
Union County/Regional Labor Market Report
- III. Discussion: Antonio Rivera
a. Business 2 Business Networking Reception May 20th
b. Business 2 Business Networking Reception October 22nd
c. Workforce Innovation Business Center
- V. Next Steps Erich Peter
- VI. Next Committee Meeting **TBD**

Committee Members:

Erich Peter, Union County Economic Development Corp. (Co-chair)	Present
John Perry, Council for Airport Opportunities (Co-Chair)	Present
Richard Capac, Leaf Group, LLC	Present
Gary Alessio, Print Tech	Absent
James Brady, The Savor Group, LLC	Present
Anadir Liranzo, Omega Maintenance Corp.	Present
Kevin Lynott, AGL Resources, Elizabethtown Gas	Absent
Gary Pfarr, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local 102	Absent
Pamela Capaci, Prevention Links	Absent
Stan Robinson, Jr., SHR Marketing	Present

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Meeting Summary

1. Mr. Erich Peter welcomed everyone to the Business & Industry Committee meeting at 9:30am. Self introductions followed.

2. Mr. John Ehret from New Jersey Dept. of Labor and Workforce Development provided the committee with a current detailed Union County/Regional Labor Market report. Mr. Ehret first reviewed Union County's current demographic population and how that relates to the current employment data. Union County's population is comparable to size as it was in 1970. The current unemployment rate for Union County is 6.6%. Trade, Transportation, Utilities is greatest employer with the Manufacturing Industry having the greatest loss. Manufacturing provided Union County with the highest annual wages, however 34% of jobs lost in 2008-2009 came from the manufacturing industry. Over the past 5 years Union County has seen 13000 jobs lost in manufacturing. Currently, we are out performing in Professional Business Services, increasing approx. 2000 jobs.

Mr. Ehret also mentioned the NJ Dept of Labor and Workforce Development is currently able to take job posting data, analyze it and identify true needs of employers. This is data can be broken down to location, industry, job title, etc. Wage data is collected regionally through the Occupational Employment Survey. This provides a good analysis of job title and wage, all of which is publically available.

Job Skills are also able to be analyzed based on these job postings. This tool combined with employer conversations provide a great resource to see what skills job seekers are lacking. This data finds that technical skills aren't enough to get a job; soft skills are just as important. Employers are also finding that many job applicants right out of school are missing the "hands-on" aspect of training. This data is crucial as the WIB can evaluate training opportunities and create programs to provide these essential skills to our clients.

Mr. Ehret discussed that current job seekers must also be aware of how they are constructing their resumes. Companies are using computer systems to process resumes, these computer systems often rank job seekers based on key words in their resumes. Job seekers need to be aware of these key words so they can be picked up by the computer programs algorithms.

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On The Map, is another tool and computer program that shows where people work and where they live. Based on 2011, it states that only a small amount of the population actually live and work in Union County. Most residents leave the county to work. An analysis of this data is helpful in understanding jobs in the area and skills of our residents.

3. Mr. Antonio Rivera thanked those who attended the Business 2 Business event, it was very successful. We will be taking feedback from that event and applying it to our next event, planned for October.
4. Mr. James Brady suggested that each WIB member make a commitment to hire just 1 person through Union County programs. Ms. Anadir Liranzo said she has attempted to hire, but had very difficult time finding quality employees due to lack of soft skills. She also experienced some difficulty working with state and county agencies.
5. Mr. Antonio Rivera notified the Committee that as of today the WIB is in negotiations with UCC and other partners to take over the Retail Skills center at the Jersey Gardens mall and rebrand it as a training center and a business center, the Workforce Innovation Business Center. Currently the Retail Skills Center is used to train Elizabeth and local residents to obtain the National Professional Certification in Customer Service. With this new project the WIB can work on specific training curriculums such as soft skills and focus on the immediate training needs of Union County. This center will also do Entrepreneurship training with partners such as UCEDC. Businesses will also be able to use this center for their everyday needs as well as trainings and workshops. Mr. Rivera mentioned this would help with the problem Ms. Liranzo mentioned with difficulty working with state and county agencies as it would bring both business and government agencies closer together. Mr. Rivera will keep the Committee notified as this project develops.
6. The Committee also discussed possible ways to keep in touch with each other in between meetings. Possible virtual ideas/forums were discussed. Committee members will also email Antonio Rivera any ideas or thoughts that might be helpful in the creation of the Business Center before the WIB meeting on 6/27/14.
7. The next Business and Industry Committee meeting will be held two weeks before the September WIB Board Meeting. At this time the new County

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Factbook will be available by the NJ DOL containing up to date information regarding demographics and the workforce.

8. The Business and Industry Committee meeting adjourned at 10:53am.