

**Union County Workforce Development Board**  
**Minutes of the Youth Investment Council Sub-Committee**  
**Union County Administration Building**  
**Conference Room, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor & Via Conference Call**  
**July 21, 2016 at 5pm**

**Committee Members:**

Pete Capodice, Co-Chair, Union County Vocational Technical Schools  
Gloria Durham, Genesis Solutions  
James Horne, United Way of Greater Union County  
Glenn Nacion, Chairman, UCWDB  
Amy Wagner, Deputy County Manager  
Denise Palazzo, Mills at Jersey Gardens

**Staff:**

Antonio Rivera, Director, UCWDB

**Guests:**

Tim Clark, Simon Youth Foundation

**Meeting Summary:**

- I. The sub-committee of the Youth Investment Council convened to hear a presentation by Tim Clark regarding the Simon Youth Foundation's efforts to assist high-school drop-outs.
  
- II. Mr. Clark's presentation regarding the vision and mission of the Simon Youth Foundation:
  - a) Regarding the drop-out crisis: every 26 seconds a student decides to drop out of high school; those who drop out are disqualified from 90% of the available jobs; and they will earn \$450,000 less over their lifetimes.
  
  - b) Regarding Simon's Local Impact: Over 3,000 people are employed at The Mills at Jersey Gardens; sales at the mall year year are over \$850 million; and The mall and its manager, Denise Palazzo, are involved in both municipal and county business organizations and tourism groups.

- c) A local and county partnership with the Simon Youth Foundation would bring strategic advantages, including: space and infrastructure build-out, renovation, and the Third-Teach Concept employed by the Simon Youth Foundations.
- d) The Simon Youth Foundation exercises alternative models to reach disenfranchised youth; graduating students receive a diploma, not a GED; on-time graduations; career / workforce development; a nationally recognized innovative network and a dedicated scholarship program for the graduating youth; opportunities to collaborate with other Simon Mall tenants; job and internship opportunities at the mall; and capital improvements such as furniture and minor refreshes.
- e) The Third Teacher Concept advocated by the Simon Youth Foundation fosters a creative education environment; inspires students with innovative technology and design; and promotes an individualized and differentiated learning environment.
- f) To date, the Simon Youth Foundation has 26 academies in 12 states with a cumulative 90% graduation rate and has successfully graduated 14,000 since 1998.
- g) The student profile from 2010 through 2014 demonstrates that 46% of the students are Hispanic / Latino; 32% are white / Caucasian; 21% are black / African American, 1% other. The free and reduced lunch population is comprised of 45% of the total, while 12% are pregnant or parenting; and 8% has experienced homelessness.
- h) Members of the committee were impressed with the presentation by Mr. Clark and emotionally moved by the student video watch during the presentation.

- i) The concept of having the Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders and the Union County Workforce Development Board partnering with the Simon Youth Foundation to design-build a Simon Youth Academy locally was very attractive to all present.
  
- j) Further study and evaluation of the positive impact the Simon Youth Foundation and the Mills at Jersey Gardens was the order of the day.

III. Adjournment