

UNION COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD  
AMERICAN JOB CENTER PARTNER COMMITTEE  
KRYSTAL CANADY, CHAIRWOMAN  
MEETING MINUTES: WEDNESDAY, August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2022 10:00AM via Zoom

**Committee Members**

1. Colleen Clayton, The Gateway Family YMCA
2. Cathy Waters, Urban League
3. Christine Backiel, Bridgeway
4. Dr. Lisa Hiscano, Union County College
5. Eva Altidor, Community Service Block Grant
6. Ed Faver, DVRS
7. Edna Aristilde, Youth Forward
8. Herb Caesar, NJSBDC
9. Isaias Rivera, Union County College
10. Jasmine Lee, Simon Youth Academy
11. Julio Sabater, Workforce Advantage
12. Lillian Roman, Union County American Job Center
13. Melissa Lespinasse, Department of Human Services
14. LaChelle Thompson, Housing Authority of Elizabeth
15. Nasrene Mondol, Union County American Job Center
16. Nicole DeAugustine, Division of Family Services
17. Nicole Soto, Job Corps
18. Perle Almeida, Union County American Job Center
19. Robert Croom, Union County American Job Center
20. Yunia Labaut, Workforce Advantage
21. Anthea Williams, NJDOL
22. Srabanti Sarkar, Proceed Inc

**UCWDB Staff**

Meredith Barracato

**Meeting Summary**

**Welcome and Introductions:**

Meredith Barracato thanked everyone for joining the meeting. Meredith Barracato informed the committee members Chairwoman Canady had a family emergency and was not able to attend the meeting.

**Review and Approval of June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2022 Minutes:**

Motion was made by Cathy Waters to approve the **June 22<sup>nd</sup> 2022** Committee Meeting Minutes. Robert Croom provided the second motion. Motion was carried.

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**NJDOL Updates:**

Meredith Barracato reviewed slides regarding NJDOL Labor Market Information that is located in the google drive folder. Meredith Barracato discussed the following LMI categories:

- Baseline Skills in Greatest Demand
- Industries with Most Job Opening
- Software and Program Skills in Greatest Demand

Dr. Hiscano mentioned communication skills or soft skills are in demand programs that many employers request. Dr. Hiscano mentioned the state has given NJBIA three million dollars to train Incumbent Workers.

Meredith Barracato also discussed the NJDOL Job Listing. She asked Anthea Williams to discuss the information NJDOL shares on job opportunities. Anthea Williams mentioned on a daily basis employers posts about 400 to 600 jobs on the National Labor Exchange portal. She added from this list NJDOL matches the job list to job seekers that are looking for work. Meredith Barracato asked if NJDOL has a tracking system identifying when job seekers have applied for a job and started working. Anthea Williams mentioned they do not have a system that tracks the applicants who got employed. Anthea Williams added that NJDOL uses the LOOPS system to track candidates. Cathy Waters asked if there are employers that work with individuals with criminal records. Anthea Williams said they have a list of ex-offenders friendly and will share the information with Cathy Waters.

**American Job Center Presentation:**

Nasrene Mondol shared a presentation of the American Job Center service delivery, performance, and initiatives. Presentation attached to minutes. Nasrene Mondol discussed how the AJC is looking into the drop out rate for customers in training. Nasrene Mondol added there are trends they have noticed based on the training data which supports the need for supportive services, better analysis of client skills and needs. Nasrene Mondol discussed the Pepsi Co hiring event. Edna Aristilde discussed the youth summer employment program. She added they have 84 youth enrolled in summer jobs located at parks and recreation, child care centers, and other non-profits throughout the county. Robert Croom mentioned the summer youth employment kickoff included a financial literacy workshop with Wells Fargo Bank and an opportunity to meet with their new employers. He added a few of the worksite have been interested in hiring the youth beyond the summer employment program.

**Committee Updates:**

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Meredith Barracato mentioned there have been no new committee meetings since the June 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting. Updates from the last meeting, 6/22/22, for Youth Committee, Disabilities Committee, and Literacy Committee are still valid. Meredith Barracato mentioned various committee members are having offline conversation based on the action steps and will share with everyone new updates at the next meeting in October.

Julio Sabater mentioned he was happy with the AJC and the Literacy Consortium have committed to create a seamless referral process.

### **Partner Updates**

Meredith Barracato asked the partners to provide a brief update on their program and share any special initiatives.

**1. Division of Social Service-NA**

**2. NJ Department of Labor Employment Services (ES)-** Anthea Williams mentioned there is a fintech company that is opening a facility in Berkley Height and will be having a recruitment event targeting Veterans. Anthea Williams discussed the Return and Earn program (On the Job training, OJT) that is being offered through NJDOL. She emphasized the need for the client to be assessed and only those individuals with identified skills gap will be eligible for the OJT grant. Meredith Barracato informed committee members the need for the WDB and AJC partners to adhere to the state and federal regulations. She added with recent NJDOL and USDOL monitoring there have been a number of findings local areas need to comply with.

**3. Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS)-** Ed Faver mentioned July is typically the slowest month. He added they have hired new staff, there are more regulations from the feds which they are trying to implement, and there is a return to pre-pandemic numbers. He added a lot of individuals are looking for CDL training.

**4. Simon Youth Academy-**Jasmine Lee said they have been getting referrals daily and they will be at capacity by September.

**5. Job Corp-** Nicole Soto mentioned Job Corp is recruiting for CNA, electrical, brick laying training programs for youth. Nicole Soto mentioned she is targeting youth in Elizabeth especially since they offer ESL services for youth. She asked committee members to invite her any upcoming events.

**6. Youth Corp (United Way of Greater Union County)- NA**

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**7. Union College-** Dr Hiscano mentioned they are actively recruiting for a few programs that will start in the fall. Isaias Rivera mentioned they are still working with Port Authority to plan a hiring event for the fall.

**8. America's Small Business Development Center-**Herb Caesar mentioned they have been focusing on entrepreneur training and the need to check the individual's credit for employment purposes.

**9. Workforce Advantage-** Julio Sabater mentioned they are still working remotely with clients on courses such as IC3 and various occupational programs. He added they have close to 100 students active who come from GA, SNAP and TANF program. He added they have been able to secure additional hotspots and laptops for the influx of students coming from WFNJ. He mentioned they have been looking to expand their language services because they are noticing more Middle Eastern and Haitian clients. Meredith Barracato asked Julio Sabater if they have seen an influx of clients since the mandate was reinstated as of 07/01/22. Pearl mentioned there is a mandate in place but Union County is following the good cause exemption so sanctions are not in placed. Perle added they are looking to follow the mandate in December once they establish procedures.

**10. The Family Resource Network-** NA

**11. The Gateway Family YMCA-** Colleen Clayton mentioned they are offering childcare with subsidies for working families. They offer a 7<sup>th</sup> grade leaders club which is free and focuses on youth workforce development. They are also working with Youth Forward to employ some youth at the Gateway Y. They are still hiring for various positions.

**12. Plainfield Public Library (PPL)-** NA

**13. Union Public Library-** NA

**14. Bridgeway Career Services-** Christine Backiel mentioned they are wrapping up the fiscal year and starting their new year. She mentioned 80% of their individuals were employed and pass their courses. She added they are open to referral for anyone who has mental health issues.

**15.Literacy of NJ-NA**

**16.Easter Seals- NA**

**17.Workforce 55+ Program- NA**

**18. Urban League-Reconnections-** Cathy Waters mentioned they are looking to incorporate more soft skills and communication skills to their clients. They are also focused on offering financial literacy especially for those individuals who are CDL drivers making over six figures. There behind the wall program has been working well and have someone who is going to Union College.

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**19.NJ Reentry Corp- NA**

**20.Community Services Block Grant-** Nicole DeAugustine mentioned there are no updates since the last meeting

**21.Housing Authority of City of Elizabeth-** Lachelle Thompson mentioned they are doing a food distribution event tomorrow. They are also hosting a pop-up shop for their clients. Meredith Barracato mentioned she will be sending Lachelle an invitation for the Youth Committee.

**22.International Rescue Committee- NA**

**23.NJ Department of Labor Coordination & Support- NA**

**24.Elizabeth Development Company-NA**

**25.Elizabeth Public Library- NA**

**26. PROCEED-** Srabanti Sarkar thanked the committee members for sharing their information because it made her realized there are more opportunities out there to help their clients. Proceed has to two programs rapid rehousing and homeless prevention program. She mentioned Proceed has an English conversation class. She asked committee members what would be the best avenue to help individuals who need to get a high school diploma. Meredith Barracato mentioned she will connect her to the American Job Center or Literacy Consortium after the meeting.

**Meeting Schedule 2022**

Wednesday October 19<sup>th</sup>                      10:00am

**Optional Meeting**

Wednesday December 14<sup>th</sup>                      10:00am

**COMMITTEE ADJOURMENT**