

# STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2026

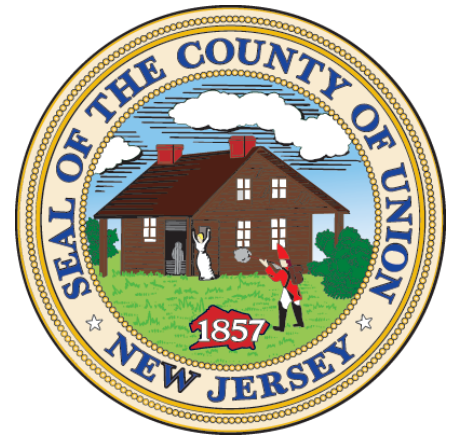
UNION COUNTY  
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD



FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WORKFORCE  
INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT OF 2022







I am thrilled to announce the release of the Union County Workforce Development Board's 2022-2026 Strategic Plan. This plan is an important component of the Union County Board of County Commissioners' ***"Building a Stronger Union County"*** initiatives. The success of this plan is due to the invaluable contributions from the Union County Workforce Development Board of Directors, private sector employers, economic development professionals, leaders from community-based organizations, and the support of labor unions.

Your partnership in shaping the future of our workforce is inspiring. The Union County Workforce Development Board aims to build a workforce that is ready for the opportunities of tomorrow, and we are making significant progress towards that goal. Your unwavering commitment to providing the necessary resources and support for the up-skilling and development of our workforce is what makes Union County a truly special place to live and work.

With your assistance, we are able to offer targeted training programs and employment services that equip our residents with the skills and knowledge necessary to thrive in our ever-evolving economy. This is no small feat, and I am grateful for the hard work and dedication that each and every one of you has demonstrated in contributing to the success of our workforce development initiatives.

We know that the key to our collective success lies in collaboration, innovation, and a steadfast commitment to empowering our residents. I am confident that we will continue to work together to create a dynamic and thriving workforce that will drive our economic growth and shape the future of Union County.

I would like to take a moment to recognize and express my deepest gratitude to the Union County American Job Center Operator, the Union County American Job Center Network Partners, and the career services providers who have dedicated their time and energy to putting people into quality jobs.

Once again, thank you for your continued support and partnership in building a brighter future for our community. I am honored to serve as your Union County Commissioner, and I look forward to working with you all as we build a stronger, more prosperous, and more inclusive Union County.

**Sergio Granados, Chairman**  
**Union County Board of County Commissioners**  
**Commissioner Liaison to the Union County Workforce Development Board**



I am excited to share with you the release of the Union County Workforce Development Board 2022-2026 Strategic Plan. This plan is the culmination of countless hours of hard work, dedication, and collaboration by our partners, stakeholders, and community members. I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to the staff of the Union County Workforce Development Board for their outstanding work on our organization's strategic plan. Your expertise and dedication in crafting this document have proven invaluable to our team.

At the core of this plan is our commitment to building a workforce that is ready for the opportunities of tomorrow. We recognize that a skilled and adaptable workforce is essential to driving economic growth, and our plan outlines the strategies and initiatives that will help us achieve this goal.

Our plan aligns with the objectives of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), which seeks to promote economic growth and enhance the quality of the workforce. Through our partnerships with private sector employers, economic development professionals, community-based organizations, labor unions, and American Job Center Network Partners, we are confident that we can achieve these objectives.

Our plan includes initiatives to expand apprenticeships and work-based learning opportunities, increase access to training and education, and provide support to underrepresented groups in the workforce. We are committed to ensuring that all members of our community have the tools and resources necessary to succeed in the 21st century economy.

We recognize that our success is dependent on collaboration, innovation, and a commitment to excellence. We are proud to have such dedicated partners and stakeholders who share our vision for a thriving and dynamic workforce.

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to everyone who contributed to the development of this plan. Your hard work and commitment to economic and workforce development is inspiring, and we are confident that we can achieve our goals with your continued support.

Together, we can build a brighter future for Union County. I am honored to serve as the Chairman of the Union County Workforce Development Board, and I look forward to working with all of you as we strive to achieve our shared vision.

**Kamran Tasharofi, M.D., Chairman**  
**Union County Workforce Development Board**

# Union County Workforce Development Board of Directors

## **Kamran Tasharofi, MD, Chairman**

Union County Healthcare Associates

## **Stan Robinson, Jr., Vice Chairman**

Workforce Development Board  
SHR Marketing, LLC

## **Hilary McCarron, Secretary**

Workforce Development Board  
Port Authority of NY & NJ

### **PRIVATE-SECTOR**

James R. Brady, Savor Group

Gloria Durham, Qunnection Management

Curry Bucu, Trinitas Regional Medical Center

Richard Capac, Crowne Property Management

Salvador Garcia, Jr., MAS Development Group

Edwin Gomez, Barcode Elizabeth

Alan Rutan, Rutan Mechanical

Courtney Villani, Villani Bus

Jessica Cohen, Bristol-Myers Squibb

Tina M. Earley, Jersey Central Power & Light

Jenny Davis Toth, Port Authority of NY & NJ

### **EDUCATION**

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Gwendolyn Ryan, Union County Vocational  
Technical School

Dr. Margaret McMenamin, Union College

Kelly Drakeford Ledet, Kean University

### **GOVERNMENT PARTNERS**

Debbie-Ann Anderson, Union County  
Department of Human Services & Union  
County American Job Center Operator

Juanito Chiluisa, NJDOL, Employment Service

Edward Faver, NJDOL, Vocational Rehabilitation  
Services

### **ORGANIZED LABOR**

Richard Malcolm, Ironworkers Local No. 11

Paul Belardo, Regional Council of Carpenters

Roshan White, UA Local No. 24 Plumbers

### **COMMUNITY-BASE ORGANIZATIONS**

Teresa Soto-Vega, PROCEED, Inc.

Morgan Thompson, Prevention Links

Melynda Disla, Gateway Family YMCA

Bernadette Griswold, Community Access Unlimited

### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Erich Peter, Union County Economic Development  
Corporation





# Union County Workforce Administration and Operations Team

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Union County Board of County Commissioners  
Liaison to the Union County Workforce Development Board

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County of Union

**Amy C. Wagner, Deputy County Manager**

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**Meredith Barracato, MPA, Policy & Strategic Planning Advisor**

Union County Workforce Development Board

Please direct all comments regarding the strategic plan to  
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# UNION COUNTY

## WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

### STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2026

INFOGRAPHIC OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE  
WORKFORCE INNOVATION & OPPORTUNITY ACT OF 2022

#### GOVERNOR PHIL MURPHY'S VISION

"to reestablish New Jersey as an economic and innovation leader, as a place where diverse talent, companies, and ideas flourish, where real pathways exist to the middle class, where all residents can prosper, and where environmental stewardship, fiscal prudence, and high labor standards are promoted and encouraged....[t]o unlock long-term, resilient economic growth, we must create a New Jersey economy that is both stronger and fairer."

*Phil Murphy*



#### JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

##### STRATEGY 1

Expand access to opportunity

##### STRATEGY 2

Train individual for in-demand jobs

##### STRATEGY 3

Match talent to jobs



#### BLUEPRINT FOR TALENT DEVELOPMENT

##### STRATEGIC INTENT 1

Regional framework

##### STRATEGIC INTENT 2

Results-driven high-quality partnerships

##### STRATEGIC INTENT 3

Career pathways

##### STRATEGIC INTENT 4

Community alliances

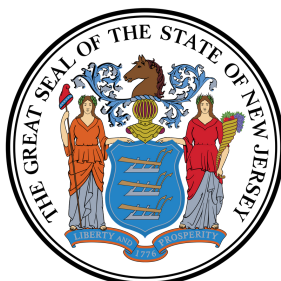
##### STRATEGIC INTENT 5

System integrity



#### STRATEGIC PRIORITIES WIOA IMPLEMENTATION

- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act policies, procedures, and guidance
- Support State vision, goals, strategies, recommendations, policies, and operational guidance
- Procurement of American Job Center operator, and career services providers
- Employer incentives, participant training, and supportive services
- Budget management
- Comprehensive economic development
- Soft Skills, digital literacy, virtual learning, industry-valued credentials, co-enrollment, and career pathway
- Participant and youth voice
- Quality assurance monitoring
- Measuring performance
- Board governance, MOU, IFA
- Local and Regional planning



#### SUPPORTING GOALS

##### GOAL 1

Ensure all career-seeking New Jerseyans have the education and training necessary to access high-quality employment.

##### GOAL 2

Ensure businesses and employers that are offering high-quality employment in New Jersey can quickly and efficiently fill their talent needs.



#### FUTURE OF WORK TASK FORCE POLICY ROADMAP

##### RECOMMENDATION 1

Create Lifelong Learning Accounts for all New Jerseyans and fund the accounts of low-wage workers and encourage and provide mechanisms for employers to match funds for lifelong learning.

##### RECOMMENDATION 2

Further develop the State's Training Explorer to help workers make informed decisions about lifelong learning and training.

##### RECOMMENDATION 3

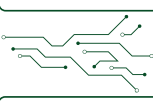
Encourage all employers to invest in worker training, lifelong learning, and reemployment and create financial incentives for small and medium-sized employers.

##### RECOMMENDATION 4

Support innovation and skills collaboratives and other ongoing initiatives to align New Jersey's education and workforce systems and align individuals' education with their desired career pathways.

##### RECOMMENDATION 5

Continue to expand low-cost opportunities to access degree programs (including access to community colleges), career and technical education, and training, apprenticeships, and pre-apprenticeships.



#### IN-DEMAND INDUSTRIES

- Advanced Manufacturing
- Healthcare
- Construction, Utilities, & Energy
- Retail
- Leisure & Hospitality
- Transportation, Distribution & Logistics
- Finance & Insurance
- Technology
- Biopharma & Life Sciences



**UNION COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2026  
FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT OF 2022**

## **PURPOSE OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN**

As the Union County Workforce Development Board, we are pleased to present our strategic plan in response to the requirements set forth by the New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission pursuant to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. This Act mandates that each local workforce development board and recognized region, in partnership with the chief elected official, develop, and submit a comprehensive four-year plan to the Governor. Our plan is aligned with the strategies outlined in the New Jersey Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Combined State Plan, 2022 Modification, and is consistent with the vision, goals, and strategy of the State plan.

The Regional and Local Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act four-year plans will be effective through 2026, with a required modification in two years as mandated by Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Section 108 and Title 20 CFR 679.500. Our plan adheres to all state and local public comment requirements and forms a portion of the North Jersey Regional Plan.

We recognize the importance of meeting the required submission deadlines for our plan. As such, we have carefully reviewed our timeline to ensure that we have allowed sufficient time for approval processes by the Union County Board of County Commissioners, as well as the 30-day Public Comment period, after which our plan will be approved and submitted to the State Employment and Training Commission.

We are committed to the success of our local workforce and believe that our strategic plan will help us to achieve our goals. We thank both the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development and the New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission for their support and guidance throughout this process, and we look forward to working with our partners to implement this plan and make a positive impact on our community.

## **REGIONAL PLAN**

The Northern New Jersey Regional Strategic Plan is incomplete as of the publishing of the Union County Workforce Development Board's Strategic Plan on March 13, 2023. Regional integration will be addressed in the form of an addendum.

## **OVERVIEW AND STRATEGIC PLAN LAYOUT**

The New Jersey State Employment and Training Commissioner provided guidance on how local workforce boards should respond to over 200 questions related to a myriad of topics pertinent to the administration and governance of workforce boards, the oversight and monitoring roles and responsibilities of the Union County American Job Center Operator, the



**UNION COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2026  
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Union County American Job Center Network Partners, and the career services providers. In the following narrative, a very brief explanation of the topics addressed in each section will be outlined.

**Section I—Regional and Local Workforce Strategies, Sub-Section A—Analysis of Labor Market Information**, will provide an overview of the key components of analyzing labor market information and developing local and regional plans based on that data. The narrative will cover the importance of utilizing current data from sources like the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development, as well as the need to align regional and local data analysis. The narrative will discuss the types of data that should be analyzed, including information on industry sectors and occupations, employer skill needs, demographics, labor force employment, labor market trends, and workforce development activities. Additionally, the narrative will address the impact of COVID-19 on the labor market.

The narrative will then delve into the specifics of developing local and regional plans. For local plans, the narrative will highlight the importance of answering the same questions posed for regional plans and aligning with regional plans and analyses. Local plans should offer a description of the local labor market, target populations, sectors, occupations, as well as an overview of the systems and mechanisms in place to collect, analyze, and review Labor Market Information data.

**Section I—Regional and Local Workforce Strategies, Sub-Section B—Strategic Priorities**, outlines the strategic priorities for preparing an educated and skilled workforce at the regional and local level. The strategy aims to expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals with barriers to employment and bring diversity, equity, and inclusion to the workforce. It will also facilitate career pathways, co-enrollment, work-based learning opportunities, and multiple pathways for young people.

The plan also outlines specific strategies and priorities that align with regional strategies, focusing on engagement with targeted populations, including priority populations identified in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and New Jersey's State plan. The plan also demonstrates engagement with local partners and stakeholders.

In **Attachment A**, you will find an **Infographic of the Implementation of the Workforce Innovation Act of 2022**, which outlines the Union County Workforce Development Board's priorities in relation to the vision, goals, strategies, recommendations, and aspirations of Governor Phil Murphy, and the leadership at the New Jersey Department of Labor and

Workforce Development, the New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission, and the rest of the Governor's administration.

**Section II—One-Stop Career Center Operations, Sub-Section A—One-Stop Service Delivery and Flow**, will address the role of partners, programs, and services required by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act in the One Stop Career Center system, including how these partnerships are cultivated and maintained and integrated into service delivery flow. The **Partner-Service Matrix (Attachment B)** is utilized to discuss various partners, programs, and services, such as Title I Adult, Title I Dislocated Worker, Title I Youth, Title II Adult Education, Literacy, Wagner-Peyser, Vocational Rehabilitation, Unemployment Compensation, WorkFirst New Jersey, Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers Program, Trade Adjustment Assistance, Senior Community Service Employment Program, Jobs for Veterans State Grant, Reentry Employment Opportunities, Job Corps, YouthBuild, Career and Technical Education programs, HUD Employment and Training, and Health and Human Services Employment and Training.

The section also addresses the integration and delivery of partners' services at the One Stop centers, including the utilization of state and local staff in compliance with federal and state law. An **Overview of Service Flow** and services provision is included (**Attachment C**), and the description will also cover the plans for services delivered by all the above-mentioned programs in the local plan.

**Section II—One-Stop Career Center Operations, Sub-Section B—Operational Priorities**, will discuss the operations of the workforce development system and the role of the Workforce Development Board in achieving strategic vision and goals, specifically in Union County. It will cover adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities, including the use of training contracts and individual training accounts, priority of service, and policies and practices for providing veterans services. The narrative will also address youth workforce development activities, integration of technology and data, and lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Union County Workforce Development Board is responsible for setting strategies and providing guidance to ensure alignment of operational activities with strategic vision and goals. Priority of service is given to specific groups in accordance with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, and training contracts and individual training accounts are used to support the achievement of industry-valued credentials. Youth workforce development activities are available through different pathways, and integration of technology and data supports seamless intake processes and case management.

The narrative will also discuss the role of the One Stop service delivery and flow in achieving specific strategic priorities, including the roles of the Workforce Development Board, One Stop Operator, and One Stop Career Services providers in supporting operational priorities.

**Section II—One-Stop Career Center Operations, Sub-Section C—Service Expansion and Accessibility in One-Stop Career Centers,** outlines how the Union County Workforce Development Board plans to facilitate access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system, ensuring equity and equal access to services for all individuals. The use of technology, including virtual and adaptive technologies, will be leveraged to support access to services. The physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities will also be ensured, along with the provision of specialized programs and services and materials for individuals with disabilities and those with other barriers. Staff training and support will be provided to address the needs of individuals with disabilities, and assessment services will be used to ensure connection to the best-fit services instead of automatic referrals.

The plan includes an overview of how the Union County Workforce Development Board plans to expand services and supports to ensure that all individuals have access to One Stop Career center services and opportunities. The Union County Workforce Development Board will work to support the development of technical solutions and expansion of facilities, programs, or services. The plan highlights how the Union County Workforce Development Board will integrate local and regional strategies to support greater accessibility. The Union County Workforce Development Board will also work to integrate innovative ideas and approaches to barrier resolution, including digital equity and education, to ensure that all individuals have access to the services they need to succeed.

**Section II—One-Stop Career Center Operations, Sub-Section D—Detailed Partnership and Service Integration,** addresses the detailed partnership and service integration aspect of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. The narrative includes an overview of how services, costs, and customers are shared across key partners highlighted in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. It identifies specific goals for strengthening integrated service models, cross-training of staff, technical assistance, use and sharing of information, and other coordination efforts utilized to support service integration across required One-Stop partners.

The narrative highlights particular attention to relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities, supportive service partners, state employment services, Title II Adult education and literacy providers, statewide Rapid Response activities, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services and the New Jersey Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired in serving individuals with disabilities, and Disabled Veteran Outreach Program staff and Local Veterans Employment Representatives in supporting veterans with defined significant barriers to employment. It also mentions any

mental or emotional health programs to assist people in coping and excelling in a work environment.

**Section II—One-Stop Career Center Operations, Sub-Section E—Employer Engagement,** describes how the Union County Workforce Development Board is committed to effectively serving employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations. To achieve this, the board has developed a set of strategies and services designed to facilitate employer engagement, including small employers and those in in-demand industries. The board seeks to create a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the region and aligns resources at the state, regional, and local level to offer dual benefits for jobseekers and workers in New Jersey.

The board will better coordinate workforce development programs and economic development, including promoting entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services. It will create a linkage during program delivery between individual customers and employers, expanding work-based learning opportunities such as Incumbent Worker Training, On-the-Job Training, Transitional Jobs, Pre-Apprenticeship, and Registered Apprenticeship opportunities. Additionally, the board will leverage local career pathway initiatives, business intermediaries, economic development organizations, and other local industry and sector strategies.

This section also provides an overview of the Union County’s employer engagement strategies. The roles of the Union County Workforce Development Board, One Stop Operator, and One Stop Career Services providers will clearly describe strategies to engage and work with employers.

**Section III—Local Workforce Development Board Structure and Functions, Sub-Section A—Local Workforce Development Area Structure,** will describe the governance entities and structure of the Union County Workforce Development Board. The section will also discuss the standing committees of the Workforce Development Board and their specific responsibilities. Additionally, the Fiscal Agent responsible for disbursing and overseeing grant funds will be identified, along with information about the hired staff supporting the Workforce Development Board and their roles and responsibilities.

This section of the Strategic Plan will provide an overview of how the Union County Board of County Commissioners, the Union County Workforce Development Board, and the Fiscal Agent work together in relation to the operations of One Stop Career Centers. This section will highlight the reporting relationships between the Union County Board of County Commissioners, the Union County Workforce Development Board, the staff of the Union County Workforce Development Board, and the Fiscal Agent.



**Section III—Local Workforce Development Board Structure and Functions, Sub-Section B—Procurement of Operator and Services**, discusses the process of engaging in competitive procurement procedures that align with Union County Workforce Development Board strategies and priorities and support the competitive selection of Title I sub-recipients, such as One Stop Operators, One Stop Career Service Providers, and Youth Service Providers. It also covers Union County Workforce Development Board’s processes for implementing competitive procurements, including the roles of Union County Workforce Development Board, and how Request for Proposals incorporate scopes of service that align with local strategies and priorities. Additionally, it describes efforts undertaken by Union County Workforce Development Board to ensure that no conflict of interest is present in the process and how appropriate firewalls have been established.

**Section III—Local Workforce Development Board Structure and Functions, Sub-Section C—Oversight and Monitoring**, addresses the oversight and monitoring conducted by the Union County Workforce Development Board. The Union County Workforce Development Board is responsible for monitoring and ensuring accountability for various aspects of local workforce service delivery systems, including One Stop Career Centers, budgets of procured providers, participation, and outcomes of procured providers, training contracts, work-based learning contracts, and systems supporting business practices.

This narrative describes how the Union County Workforce Development Board monitors and oversees these aspects of local workforce service delivery systems, drawing on both quantitative and qualitative data to ensure accountability and support continuous improvement of services for One Stop customers. The narrative also provides details about the structure and staffing of monitoring and compliance activities, including the roles and responsibilities of the Union County Workforce Development Board.

**Section III—Local Workforce Development Board Structure and Functions, Sub-Section D—Performance Measures and Accountability**, relates to the Performance Measures and Accountability and outlines how the Union County Workforce Development Board will utilize local levels of performance negotiated with the Governor and chief elected official to track and measure performance across the One Stop Delivery System, One Stop Operator, One Stop Career Services providers, and youth providers. The Union County Workforce Development Board addresses processes utilized to track and measure local levels of performance, including the utilization of data from America’s One Stop Operating System, FutureWork, and other data systems. How information about performance is shared with various system partners and stakeholders is addressed. The Union County

**UNION COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2026  
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Workforce Development Board will publish the Workforce Register on a quarterly basis, which will document all action taken by the Union County Workforce Development Board and its committees. **Attachment D** provides a sampling of the Timelines of Board and Committee Meetings for calendar years 2022, 2021, and 2020 which are included in the Workforce Register.

Finally, in **Attachment E**, the **Annual Reports** provide the performance data and goals for program years 2017, 2018, 2019, and 2020 as requested by the New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission.

**Section III—Local Workforce Development Board Structure and Functions, Sub-Section E—Training and Development**, addresses the training and development priorities for supporting the implementation of regional and local plans that are aligned with State priorities and plans. Union County Workforce Development Board’s plans and timelines for supporting various stakeholders including Chief Elected Officials and County Leadership and Staff, Fiscal Agents, LWDB Members, Workforce Development Board Staff, One Stop Operator Staff, One Stop Career Services Staff, One Stop Youth Services Staff, and other system stakeholders and partners are described.

**Section III—Local Workforce Development Board Structure and Functions, Sub-Section F—Regional and Local Plan Development**, outlines the process for creating regional and local plans, including assurances that it was an open and transparent process. To ensure transparency, the Union County Workforce Development Board held meetings of workgroups, taskforces, or similar efforts and maintained documentation of these meetings, including minutes and attendees. Participants in these meetings included representatives of the Union County Workforce Development Board and staff, local elected officials, local public entities, regional and local economic development partners, employers and employer organizations, One Stop service providers, Adult Education and Literacy providers, community colleges, New Jersey Industry Partnerships, and other entities with a stake in the local workforce system and plan.

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## **STATE EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING COMMISSION QUESTIONS**

Analysis of Labor Market Information: Please draw on current data from NJDOL, as well as other Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) data. Please ensure alignment of regional data analysis included in your area's regional plan with local area data analysis included in your local plan. Please cite sources, timelines, and validity for any data used. Data should include an extensive analysis of local and regional economic conditions including:

1. Existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations
2. The employment and skill needs of employers in those industry sectors and occupations
3. Alignment between key industry pipelines
4. Information on demographics and target populations
5. Current labor force employment (including underemployment and unemployment) data
6. Information on labor market trends and the education/skill levels of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment
7. Workforce development activities in the region, including an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of such services, the capacity to provide such services, and the connection of services to the One Stop system to address identified education and skill needs of the workforce and the employment needs of employers in the region
8. Impact of Covid on the labor market – economic impacts, skills impacts, as well as service and support impacts

### **Local Plan**

- Local plans should answer the same questions as those posed for regional plans at the Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) level and align with regional plans and analyses.
- Please make sure to offer a description of your local labor market and the specific target populations and sectors/occupations your plan is targeting based on labor market information (LMI).
- Please ensure your local plan provides an overview of the systems and mechanisms your local area has in place to continually collect, analyze, and review LMI data with local stakeholders, and specify the partners and resources that you are utilizing to support the ongoing integration of LMI into the work of your local workforce system.



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**Regional Plan**

- Please provide a description of your regional labor market and share specific labor market information (LMI) data from your region.
- Please use these data to identify specific target populations and target sectors and occupations for your plan.
  - How will your region work jointly towards meeting the demands and needs of existing/emerging sectors and occupations?
  - How will your region work jointly to target jobseekers and workers to meet these industry needs and support skill development and barrier removal for these individuals? Who are the specific populations that are a priority for service based on the data?
- Please provide an overview of how your region engages in ongoing analysis and review of LMI data to track changes and adjust strategies.
  - How does the region work collectively to gather and disseminate LMI information?
  - How does the region work together to build capacity in utilizing LMI?
  - How does this information drive collective regional efforts to support employers, jobseekers, workers, and other workforce stakeholders?
  - What types of staffing and/or resources are shared regionally to drive this work?
  - How are they funded?

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## EXISTING IN-DEMAND INDUSTRY SECTORS AND OCCUPATIONS

Union County, located in the northeastern region of New Jersey, is a diverse and dynamic area with a population of over 572,000. The county is home to a wide range of industries, including healthcare, retail, manufacturing, and hospitality, which contribute significantly to the local and regional economy. In Figure 1, demonstrates the United States Census labor force categories, which shows 310,370 residents participating in the labor force.

**FIGURE 1**  
**UNION COUNTY LABOR FORCE MAKEUP<sup>1</sup>**

| Employment Status            | Estimate | Percent |
|------------------------------|----------|---------|
| Population 16 years and over | 451,954  | 451,954 |
| In labor force               | 310,370  | 68.7%   |
| Civilian labor force         | 310,185  | 68.6%   |
| Employed                     | 290,568  | 64.3%   |
| Unemployed                   | 19,617   | 4.3%    |
| Armed Forces                 | 185      | 0.0%    |
| Not in labor force           | 141,584  | 31.3%   |
| Civilian labor force         | 310,185  | 310,185 |
| Unemployment Rate            | (X)      | 6.3%    |

In figure 2, the top five in-demand industry sectors in Union County are (1) Health care/social assistance, (2) Retail trade, (3) Manufacturing, (4) administrative and waste services and (5) professional and technical services.

**FIGURE 2**  
**EXISTING IN-DEMAND INDUSTRY SECTORS<sup>2</sup>**

| Industry Sector                              | Units | Average Annual Employment | Average Annual Wages |
|--|-------|---------------------------|----------------------|
| Health care and social assistance            | 5,380 | 57,572                    | \$58,970             |
| Retail trade                                 | 3,556 | 47,928                    | \$40,921             |
| Manufacturing                                | 1,303 | 35,459                    | \$86,334             |
| Administrative and waste services            | 1,711 | 28,343                    | \$44,744             |
| Professional and technical services          | 2,536 | 22,648                    | \$171,465            |
| Accommodation and food services              | 2,160 | 22,410                    | \$27,065             |
| Wholesale trade                              | 1,506 | 19,540                    | \$83,261             |
| Transportation and warehousing               | 1,259 | 19,170                    | \$78,731             |
| Construction                                 | 2,612 | 17,127                    | \$79,472             |
| Other services, except public administration | 2,804 | 14,623                    | \$40,562             |

## **HEALTHCARE AND SOCIAL ASSISTANCE**

The county has several large hospitals, including Trinitas Regional Medical Center/RWJ Barnabas Health in Elizabeth, Overlook Medical Center in Summit, and RWJ University Hospital in Rahway. The healthcare sector is also supported by a range of medical offices, clinics, and nursing homes. In-demand occupations in the healthcare sector include physicians, nurses, medical assistants, and home health aides. Employers in this industry seek workers with a range of skills, including clinical, customer service, and computer skills. In addition, they are looking for workers with a strong work ethic, the ability to work in a fast-paced environment, and the ability to work collaboratively with others.

## **RETAIL TRADE**

This industry is the second-largest employer in Union County and includes a range of businesses, from small independent retailers to large chain stores. There are several large shopping malls, including The Mills at Jersey Gardens in Elizabeth and The Mall at Short Hills in Millburn. In-demand occupations in the retail sector include sales associates, cashiers, and store managers. Employers in this industry are seeking workers with strong customer service skills, the ability to work well in a team, and the ability to work in a fast-paced environment. They are also looking for workers who are knowledgeable about their products and services and who can help customers make informed purchasing decisions.

## **MANUFACTURING**

The county has a range of manufacturing companies, including those in the food processing, chemical, and pharmaceutical industries. In-demand occupations in the manufacturing sector include machine operators, assemblers, and quality control technicians. Employers in this industry are looking for workers with technical skills, such as experience operating machinery and working with production software. They are also seeking workers who are detail-oriented, reliable, and able to work well in a team.

## **HOSPITALITY**

The accommodation and food services industry are a significant employer in Union County, particularly in the area around Newark Liberty International Airport. Employers in this industry are seeking workers with strong customer service skills, the ability to work well in a team, and the ability to work in a fast-paced environment. They are also looking for workers who are knowledgeable about their products and services and can help guests have a positive experience.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE AND WASTE SERVICES**

Administrative and Waste Services include businesses that provide support services to other businesses and organizations, such as office administration, hiring and placing personnel, document preparation, and specialized cleaning services. In Union County,

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companies such as Seqirus, Waste Management, Clean Harbor and Environmental Services, and Affiliated Monitoring are looking for job seekers to fill roles requiring customer service, plant operations, and forklift skills.

### **PROFESSIONAL, SCIENTIFIC, AND TECHNICAL SERVICES**

Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services include a wide range of occupations and businesses, such as management consulting firms, engineering services, software development companies, and scientific research and development firms. Union County is home to several large companies in the professional and technical services sector, such as Cognizant North America, BTI Solutions, and Carevet. Many of these companies seek professionals with skills that can fill such roles as Quality Assurance Test Analyst, Full Stack Developer, and Veterinary Technical Assistant.

In figure 3, the top five occupations are (1) Retail Salespersons, (2) Laborers and Material Movers, (3) Registered Nurses, (4) Cashiers, and (5) Janitors and cleaners. Union County's major retail presence continues to support the need for retail salespersons and cashiers. Laborers, freight, stock, material movers and stockers, and order fillers support the increase in supplying warehouses such as the Amazon Fulfillment center, which is in Linden, New Jersey, with laborers. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic and an aging population that needs more medical services, Registered Nurses continue to be an in-demand occupation with an average salary of \$92,000.

**FIGURE 3  
EXISTING IN-DEMAND OCCUPATIONS<sup>2</sup>**

| <b>UNION COUNTY</b>                              | <b>EMPLOYMENT</b> | <b>AVERAGE SALARY</b> |
|--|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Retail Salespersons                              | 25,410            | \$35,450              |
| Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers | 22,230            | \$38,380              |
| Registered Nurses                                | 21,430            | \$92,270              |
| Cashiers   | 21,170            | \$29,630              |
| Janitors and Cleaners,                           | 19,060            | \$36,320              |
| Stockers and Order Fillers                       | 18,250            | \$34,550              |
| Customer Service Representatives                 | 17,740            | \$44,550              |
| Home Health and Personal Care Aides              | 17,090            | \$32,250              |
| Office Clerks, General                           | 16,850            | \$42,820              |
| Secretaries and Administrative Assistants,       | 15,580            | \$46,560              |

### **EMERGING IN-DEMAND INDUSTRY SECTORS AND OCCUPATIONS**

Union County, NJ, has a diverse economy that includes a mix of traditional and emerging industries. The healthcare, manufacturing and retail sectors are well-established and provide a range of in-demand occupations. Meanwhile, the technology, construction,

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finance and insurance, energy, and utilities sectors are emerging industries offering new growth and job creation opportunities which can be seen in figure 4.

As the economy of Union County continues to evolve, it will be important for workers and businesses to stay informed about the latest trends and developments in these industries to ensure long-term success. On a regional level, the need to ensure the workforce adapts to a lifelong learning model that will guarantee that job seekers have the digital, literacy, technical, and soft skills needed to meet the demands of a fast-paced, ever-changing workforce. For a detailed analysis of each in-demand industry sector can be found in **Section I—Regional and Local Workforce Strategies, Sub-Section B—Strategic Priorities**.

**FIGURE 4**  
**IN-DEMAND INDUSTRY SECTOR PROJECTIONS<sup>2</sup>**

| Industry   | 2020 Actual | 2030 Projected | Increase | Percentage Change |
|--|-------------|----------------|----------|-------------------|
| Total All Industries   | 238,150     | 262,500        | 24,350   | 10.2%             |
| Health Care and Social Assistance  | 31,500      | 34,750         | 3,250    | 10.3%             |
| Accommodation and Food Services  | 11,400      | 14,450         | 3,050    | 26.8%             |
| Other Services (except Government)                                       | 10,400      | 13,400         | 3,000    | 28.8%             |
| Transportation and Warehousing   | 15,750      | 18,400         | 2,650    | 16.8%             |
| Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services | 18,350      | 20,800         | 2,450    | 13.4%             |
| Educational Services   | 20,850      | 23,100         | 2,250    | 10.8%             |
| Wholesale Trade  | 12,000      | 13,900         | 1,900    | 15.8%             |
| Construction   | 9,300       | 10,700         | 1,400    | 15.1%             |
| Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation                                      | 1,850       | 3,200          | 1,350    | 73.0%             |
| Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services                         | 17,400      | 18,600         | 1,200    | 6.9%              |
| Manufacturing  | 18,600      | 19,250         | 650      | 3.5%              |

As stated in the review of the existing in-demand occupations, the Covid-19 pandemic has significantly impacted the need for workers in industry sectors such as healthcare, retail, transportation, and warehousing. The data in figure 5 In-Demand Industry Occupations Projections continue to support the need for more laborers and material movers with a projected increase of 14.8% between 2020 and 2030. Additionally, with the rise in personal care services, there is a 35.4% increase in the projected jobs for hairdressers, hairstylists, and cosmetologists. According to the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, about 93,800 openings for barbers, hairstylists, and cosmetologists are projected each year, on average, over the decade. Many of those openings are expected to result from replacing workers who transfer to different occupations or exiting the labor force, such as retiring.



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**FIGURE 5  
IN-DEMAND INDUSTRY OCCUPATIONS PROJECTIONS<sup>2</sup>**

| Occupation  | 2020<br>Actual | 2030<br>Projected | Increase | Percentage<br>Change |
|---|----------------|-------------------|----------|----------------------|
| Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers                        | 7,750          | 8,900             | 1,150    | 14.8%                |
| Hairdressers, Hairstylists, and Cosmetologists                          | 2,400          | 3,250             | 850      | 35.4%                |
| Home Health and Personal Care Aides                                     | 3,550          | 4,350             | 800      | 22.5%                |
| Software Developers and Software Quality Assurance Analysts and Testers | 3,300          | 4,050             | 750      | 22.7%                |
| Fast Food and Counter Workers   | 3,000          | 3,600             | 600      | 20.0%                |
| Waiters and Waitresses  | 2,150          | 2,700             | 550      | 25.6%                |
| Passenger Vehicle Drivers, Except Bus Drivers, Transit and Intercity    | 1,450          | 1,950             | 500      | 34.5%                |
| Packers and Packagers,  | 3,950          | 4,350             | 400      | 10.1%                |
| Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers                                 | 3,500          | 3,900             | 400      | 11.4%                |
| Construction Laborers   | 2,000          | 2,350             | 350      | 17.5%                |

### EMPLOYMENT AND SKILL NEEDS

To succeed in this economy, workers need to continuously develop and upgrade their skills to meet the evolving needs of employers. This can be accomplished through a variety of means, including traditional education, vocational training, and on-the-job training. Additionally, employers and workforce development organizations can work together to identify and address skill gaps in the labor market and to promote opportunities for workers to gain new skills and advance their careers.

By focusing on employers' employment and skill needs in various industry sectors and occupations, Union County can continue to grow and thrive, providing economic opportunities for its residents and contributing to the broader regional economy. The following three charts offer insight into the skills employers most often list on job postings. In addition to job-related technical skills, Figure 6, demonstrates the baseline ('Soft') skills, software skills, and specialized' Skills that are in high demand and provide an opportunity for continuous professional development.

**FIGURE 6**  
**BASELINE SOFT SKILLS, SOFTWARE SKILLS, SPECIALIZED SKILLED MOST REQUESTED<sup>3</sup>**

| Baseline ('Soft') Skills Most Requested: |              | Software Skills Most Requested |              | Specialized Skills Most Requested |              |
|--|--------------|--------------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------------|--------------|
| Skills (Baseline)                        | Job Postings | Software Skills                | Job Postings | Skills (Specialized)              | Job Postings |
| Communication Skills                     | 41.0%        | Microsoft Office Suite         | 46.9%        | Customer Service                  | 19.0%        |
| Teamwork / Collaboration                 | 25.8%        | SQL                            | 3.5%         | Scheduling                        | 15.1%        |
| Planning                                 | 19.9%        | Python                         | 2.8%         | Sales                             | 10.7%        |
| Organizational Skills                    | 19.1%        | SAP                            | 2.6%         | Project Management                | 8.9%         |
| Problem Solving                          | 16.3%        | Java                           | 2.5%         | Retail Industry Knowledge         | 8.0%         |
| Detail-Oriented                          | 15.3%        | Software Development           | 2.4%         | Customer Contact                  | 7.7%         |
| Microsoft Excel                          | 15.2%        | Software Engineering           | 2.2%         | Budgeting                         | 7.6%         |
| Microsoft Office                         | 14.1%        | Oracle                         | 1.8%         | Quality Assurance and Control     | 6.6%         |
| Physical Abilities                       | 12.6%        | JavaScript                     | 1.5%         | Cleaning                          | 6.5%         |
| Computer Literacy                        | 12.2%        | Scrum                          | 1.5%         | Repair                            | 6.3%         |

Employers in Union County have diverse employment and skill needs depending on the industry sector and occupation. In general, employers are looking for workers with a range of skills and qualifications, including technical skills, digital skills, communication skills, and problem-solving skills.

### **ALIGNMENT BETWEEN KEY INDUSTRY PIPELINES**

The alignment between key industry pipelines in Union County, NJ, refers to the connection between the thriving and growing industries and the skills and education required for individuals to work in those industries. The alignment represents the fit between the demands of the local job market and the skills and education of the workforce in Union County.

For example, if there is a growing demand for workers with skills in healthcare, then the local educational institutions, training programs, and workforce development initiatives in Union County will focus on providing education and training in healthcare fields. This would create a pipeline of skilled workers who can meet the needs of the local healthcare industry, resulting in an alignment between the industry and the workforce.

This alignment can benefit both the local economy and the workforce. By providing education and training that aligns with the needs of the local job market, individuals can develop skills that are in high demand and increase their employment prospects. At the

same time, industries can benefit from a steady supply of skilled workers who can help them grow and thrive.

### TARGET POPULATIONS

According to the United States Census Bureau, as of the 2021 Census, Union County, New Jersey, had an estimated population of 572,114 people. From 2010 to 2021, Union County depicts a population increase of 6.6%, the third most population percent change of all other counties in the greater Union County region. Figure 7 demonstrates the demographic breakdown of Union County based on Race and Hispanic Origin:

**FIGURE 7**  
**UNION COUNTY DEMOGRAPHICS<sup>4</sup>**

| Race and Hispanic Origin                                     | Percent |
|--|---------|
| White alone, percent   | 66.80%  |
| Black or African American alone, percent(a)                  | 23.80%  |
| American Indian and Alaska Native alone, percent(a)          | 0.90%   |
| Asian alone, percent(a)                                      | 6.00%   |
| Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone, percent(a) | 0.10%   |
| Two or More Races, percent                                   | 2.30%   |
| Hispanic or Latino, percent(b)                               | 33.60%  |
| White alone, not Hispanic or Latino, percent                 | 38.30%  |

According to the 2021 United States Census Bureau, the population's median age in Union County is 39.2 years old, Figure 8 and the gender breakdown is equal, with females making up slightly more of the population at 51%. The largest city in Union County is Elizabeth, which has a population of approximately 135,000 people. Although the median household income for Union County is \$87,369, nine percent of families fall below the poverty level. The Economic Policy Institute Cost of Living Annual Cost Chart notes that a family of four in Union County requires \$102,475 to be economically secure. Furthermore, the 2020 Comprehensive Community Needs Assessment for Union-County-New-Jersey noted that affordable housing, services for youth, transportation, and accessing resources were issues raised – in every community and for every group.

**FIGURE 8**  
**POPULATION BY AGE IN UNION COUNTY<sup>4</sup>**

| Resident Population by Age | Number  | Percent |
|----------------------------|---------|---------|
| Total population           | 572,114 | 100.0%  |
| Less than 25               | 180,998 | 31.6%   |
| 25 to 34                   | 70,814  | 12.4%   |
| 35 to 44                   | 80,414  | 14.1%   |
| 45 to 54                   | 78,647  | 13.7%   |
| 55 To 64                   | 76,061  | 13.3%   |
| 65 to 74                   | 50,165  | 8.8%    |
| 75 to 84                   | 24,497  | 4.3%    |
| 85 and over                | 10,518  | 1.8%    |

### **PRIORITY OF SERVICES**

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act provides priority of service to certain individuals seeking employment, training, and related services through the American Job Center system. With such a diverse mix of individuals who make up the fabric of the various communities, the Union County Workforce Development Board gives priority to individuals who are classified as Veterans, and their eligible spouses, low-income individuals, individuals who are basic skills deficient, individuals who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, and individuals with a disability. Priority of service allows individuals to have access to training and career services that can improve employment outcomes by providing them with the support and services they need to find and maintain employment.

Priority of service can help eligible individuals acquire the skills and competencies needed to succeed in high-demand occupations, leading to long-term career success and increasing economic stability. The goal of the Union County Workforce Development Board is to reduce unemployment by providing eligible individuals with the resources and support they need to secure employment, which can have a positive impact on the overall economy, especially on those communities that have been marginalized.

### **VETERANS**

Veterans are entitled to a full range of employment, training, and placement services provided under title one of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and are eligible for individualized career services through the American Job center. According to the US Census Bureau, over thirteen thousand Veterans in Union County are eligible to receive services through the One-Stop system.<sup>4</sup> With the assistance of the New Jersey Department of Labor Veterans Business Services representative and the Union County Office for Veterans Affairs, the Union County Workforce Development Board is confident the one-

stop system will assist Veterans and their spouses in gaining the skills and knowledge necessary to succeed in the workforce and to connect them with employers who are looking for qualified workers.

### **LOW-INCOME INDIVIDUALS AND UNDEREMPLOYMENT**

On October 25, 2016, the New Jersey Department of Labor issued a Workforce Innovation Notice 10-16(A), which provided guidance to the local area on defining underemployment which are individuals employed less than full-time who are seeking full-time employment, individuals who are employed in a position that is inadequate with respect to their skills and training, individuals who are employed who meet the definition of a low-income individual in Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Section 3(6) or individuals who are employed but whose current employment earnings are 80% or less than their previous position. The notice defines low-income individuals as the following:

1. Individuals who receive, or, in the past six months received, or are a member of a family that is receiving or in the past six months has received, assistance through one or more of the following: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program; Temporary Assistance for Needy Families; Supplemental Security Income; State or local income-based public assistance.
2. Is in a family with total family income that does not exceed the higher of— The poverty line; or 70 percent of the lower living standard income level;
3. Is a homeless individual as defined in the Violence against Women Act of 1994, or a homeless child or youth (as defined in the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act)
4. Receives or is eligible to receive a free or reduced-price lunch under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act;
5. Is a foster child on behalf of whom State or local government payments are made; or
6. Is an individual with a disability whose own income meets the income requirement of clause (2), but who is a member of a family whose income does not meet this requirement.

### **LOW INCOME**

The Union County Workforce Development Board understands that addressing barriers and providing support and resources can help to reduce poverty and promote economic stability. The US Census notes that Union County's poverty rate is 9.3%. Furthermore, as of February 1, 2023, the Division of Social Service in Union County reports an increase in Union County residents enrolling in Temporary Assistance for Needy Families and Medicaid programs but a reduction in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and General



Assistance programs. The information below is the most current data for individuals enrolled in a public assistance program in Union County.

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program 34,418 participants
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families 1812 participants
- General Assistance 560 participants
- Medicaid 61,874 participants

The Union County Workforce Development Board has identified several barriers facing Low-income individuals, which include:

- Limited access to education, training, and social service resources.
- Lack of affordable housing leads to struggles in finding affordable and safe housing, which can impact their ability to maintain stable employment.
- Limited access to healthcare impacts overall health and emotional and mental well-being.
- Limited access to transportation.
- Lack of social support networks make it difficult for individuals to access resources and navigate challenges.
- Limited access to financial services and financial literacy leads to limited access to banking services and credit, which makes it difficult for them to save money, build credit, and access loans.

Furthermore, the Union County Workforce Development Board has developed a series of strategies that are detailed in **Section I—Regional and Local Workforce Strategies, Sub-Section B—Strategic Priorities**, which includes on-the-job training program, supportive services, a career pathway strategy, workforce preparation activities, and integrated education and training.

## **UNDEREMPLOYMENT**

The Union County Workforce Development Board believes outreach and support can be provided to low-income individuals who are classified as underemployed. Underemployed individuals refer to a situation where a person is employed, but the employment is insufficient or inadequate in terms of hours worked, pay, skill level, or job satisfaction. In other words, the person needs to fully utilize their skills, education, and experience and earn more to meet their financial needs or personal goals.

Example of underemployment follows: A highly skilled and experienced professional who is working in a job that does not require their level of expertise, such as an engineer working as a cashier. This is a common concern among English Language learners who come to the United States with professional experience and credentials from their country of origin.

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Underemployment can significantly affect individuals and their families, including financial stress, low morale, and reduced job satisfaction. It can also have broader economic implications, such as reduced productivity and lower economic growth.

### **BASIC SKILLS DEFICIENT AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS**

Educational attainment for individuals over the age of 25 has improved since 2016, but the rate of individuals without college degrees is still alarming. Currently, more than 55% of individuals have less than an Associate's degree, and 13% of those have no high school diploma, as depicted in Figure 10. The Union County Workforce Development Board understands that improving educational attainment rates requires a multifaceted approach. Individuals facing challenges (such as poverty, housing insecurity, or family issues) are more likely to drop out of school. Providing support such as tutoring, counseling, and mentoring can help these students stay on track and complete their education. In addition, working with local employers to create job training and internship programs can help individuals gain practical skills and experience that will improve their job prospects. This can help incentivize individuals to continue their education, knowing there are employment opportunities in their field.

**FIGURE 10**  
**EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT<sup>4</sup>**

| <b>Resident Population by Educational Attainment</b> | <b>Number</b> | <b>Percent</b> |
|--|---------------|----------------|
| Population 25 years and over                         | 391,116       | 100.0%         |
| Less than 9th grade                                  | 28,922        | 7.4%           |
| 9th to 12th grade, no diploma                        | 21,824        | 5.6%           |
| High school graduate (includes equivalency)          | 105,774       | 27.0%          |
| Some college, no degree                              | 58,685        | 15.0%          |
| Associate's degree                                   | 26,421        | 6.8%           |
| Bachelor's degree                                    | 91,672        | 23.4%          |
| Graduate or professional degree                      | 57,818        | 14.8%          |

In Figure 11, over 46% of individuals over the age of five speak a language other than English at home in Union County. This includes Spanish, Indo-European languages, Asian, and Arabic languages. English language learners in Union County face several challenges, such as cultural differences, inability to communicate effectively, and limited access to resources. To address these challenges, the Union County Workforce Development Board has been committed to implementing a co-enrollment strategy between Title I and Title II programs. This collaboration allows English Language Learners to access resources and support, such as language assistance services, culturally responsive teaching, and

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programs promoting inclusivity and diversity. Additionally, The Union County Workforce Development Board believes it is essential to address any biases that may impact English Language Learner’s experiences in schools and communities.

**FIGURE 11**  
**LANGUAGE SPOKEN AT HOME<sup>1</sup>**

| <b>Age by Language Spoken at Home for the Population<br/>5 Years and Over</b> | <b>New Jersey</b> | <b>Union County</b> |
|---|-------------------|---------------------|
|   | Value             | Value               |
| Total:  | 100.00%           | 100.00%             |
| 5 to 17 years:  | 17.19%            | 18.43%              |
| Speak only English  | 12.16%            | 10.53%              |
| Speak Spanish   | 2.94%             | 5.47%               |
| Speak other languages   | 2.09%             | 2.44%               |
| 18 to 64 years:   | 64.94%            | 65.71%              |
| Speak only English  | 42.58%            | 32.69%              |
| Speak Spanish   | 11.38%            | 20.29%              |
| Speak other languages   | 10.98%            | 12.74%              |
| 65 years and over:  | 17.87%            | 15.85%              |
| Speak only English  | 13.57%            | 10.45%              |
| Speak Spanish   | 1.78%             | 2.95%               |
| Speak other languages   | 2.52%             | 2.46%               |

### INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

The Union County Workforce Development Board will be working with partners on implementing the guidance provided in the Federal Joint Communication to State and Local Governments, which aims to increase competitive integrated employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities by improving resource leveraging and service coordination between federal, state, and local agencies. Details on initiatives to ensure services to Individuals with Disabilities have been presented in Section II C. Service Expansion and Accessibility in One-Stop Career Centers. The Union County Workforce Development Board agrees that there is a need for collaboration between partner agencies and self-advocates to maximize resources and improve service delivery. The goal is to target the individuals (listed in Figure 12) who are aging out of the school system and looking to gain educational and employment skills to become self-sufficient.

**FIGURE 12**  
**DISABILITIES DATA<sup>5</sup>**

| Disability Statistics             | Population Estimate |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------|
| Total Population with Disability  | 50,088              |
| Female Population with Disability | 28,626              |
| Male Population with Disability   | 21,462              |
| Age Under 18 Population           | 4,030               |
| Age 18-64 Population              | 23,639              |
| Age Over 65 Population            | 22,419              |

| Population with Disability by Type | Population Estimate |
|------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Ambulatory Difficulty              | 25,392              |
| Hearing Difficulty                 | 11,949              |
| Cognitive Difficulty               | 17,283              |
| Vision Difficulty                  | 10,369              |
| Independent Living Disability      | 18,592              |
| Self-Care Difficulty               | 10,893              |

### COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The COVID-19 pandemic caused a significant economic downturn, leading to widespread job losses, pay cuts, and reduced working hours. Many businesses, including the American Job Centers, were forced to close their doors, resulting in millions of people losing their jobs. According to the January 25, 2021, report released by the International Labour Organization, the pandemic has led to a global loss of 255 million full-time jobs in 2020, equivalent to 9% of working hours worldwide. The economic impacts of the pandemic have been particularly severe for low-skilled and low-wage workers and those in the informal economy.

The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly impacted the labor market in Union County, New Jersey. Union County is one of the most populous counties in New Jersey, with a diverse economy that includes healthcare, education, retail, and manufacturing industries. COVID-19 caused widespread job losses, increased unemployment rates, and disrupted the way people work.

The pandemic caused a considerable number of job losses in Union County, particularly in the retail and hospitality sectors. In Figure 13, Union County's unemployment rate rose from 4.2% in January 2020 to 15.6% in May 2020, gradually declining to 8.1% in January

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2021. Many businesses were forced to close their doors temporarily, and some were unable to reopen, leading to permanent job losses.

**FIGURE 13**  
**2018-2022 UNEMPLOYMENT RATE IN UNION COUNTY<sup>6</sup>**

| Year         | Union County<br>Unemployment Rate | New Jersey Unemployment Rate | US Unemployment<br>Rate |
|--------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| January 2018 | 4.9%                              | 4.4%                         | 4%                      |
| January 2019 | 4.4%                              | 3.5%                         | 4%                      |
| January 2020 | 4.2%                              | 3.5%                         | 3.5%                    |
| May 2020     | 15.6%                             | 15.8%                        | 13.2%                   |
| January 2021 | 8.1%                              | 7.3%                         | 6.3%                    |
| January 2022 | 5.3%                              | 5.1%                         | 4%                      |

The pandemic has also significantly had an impact on the skills required in the labor market. The shift towards remote work has increased the demand for digital skills, such as video conferencing, online collaboration, and cloud computing. Many workers had to rapidly adapt to modern technologies and tools to continue working remotely. However, not all workers have been able to acquire the necessary skills to adapt to the changing job market. As a result, there has been an increase in skill gaps and mismatches, which could lead to long-term unemployment and lower wages for those who need help to keep up with the changing demands of the labor market.

The pandemic impacted the service and support sectors of the labor market. Jobs in these sectors, such as healthcare, social assistance, and retail, were deemed essential during the pandemic, but many workers in these jobs have been at risk of contracting the virus due to the nature of their work. Support service programs that were offered through One Stop were closed to the public, which cause a disruption to their service delivery process. Many workers in these sectors have also had to face increased job demands and stress levels, as they have been required to work longer hours and take on additional responsibilities. In a county where healthcare is an in-demand industry sector, this causes a major disruption to the workforce, still affecting the local area industry. Many hospitals, clinics, and medical offices have yet to be able to recruit, hire, and retain healthcare professionals.

### **INTEGRATION OF LABOR MARKET INFORMATION**

The Union County Workforce Development Board will continually collect, analyze, and review statistical and labor market information data provided by the New Jersey Department of Labor, FutureWorks, Division of Social Services, and Bureau of Labor Statistics to share with stakeholders by following a few key steps:

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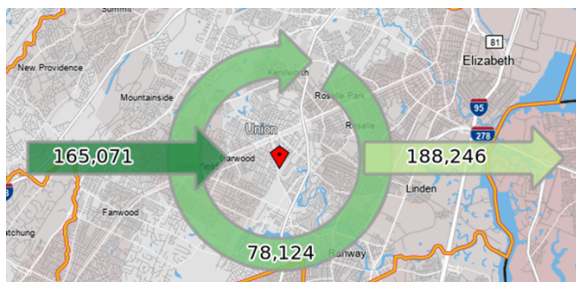
1. Establish a Data Collection Process: The Union County Workforce Development Board will use the information that is collected and shared by the New Jersey Department of Labor Division of Economic and Demographic Research Bureau of Labor Market Information and Future Work to share with American Job Center Network Partners.
2. Analyze the Data: Once the data is collected, it will be analyzed to identify trends and patterns.
3. Review and Update Labor Market Information Reports: The Union County Workforce Development Board will regularly review and update labor market information reports to ensure they are accurate and up to date. These reports will be uploaded to the committee partner resource Google Drive folder on a quarterly basis.
4. Share labor market information and performance data with committee members: The Union County Workforce Development Board will share labor market information data with committee members by creating reports, presenting data at committee meetings, and sharing data on the committee partner resource Google Drive folder. All committee members have access to the Google Drive folder.

### COMMUTING PATTERNS

As a North Jersey Partners region member, the Union County Workforce Development understands the need for a strong regional economy that supports commuting residents. According to the 2019 US Census Bureau Inflow/Outflow Analysis in Figure 14, more than 188,000 Union County residents work in surrounding areas, such as Essex, Hudson, and Bergen Counties, and spend approximately 30 minutes commuting to work. Conversely, over 165,000 individuals commute into the county from surrounding areas such as Middlesex, Essex, and Somerset Counties. Over 78,000 county residents live and work within the county, bringing the total number of individuals working in the county to over 243,000.

**FIGURE 14**

#### INFLOW AND OUTFLOW ANALYSIS OF COMMUTING PATTERNS





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1. United States Census Bureau (6/30/22), Union County, New Jersey, Economy.
2. Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development, December 2022.
3. Labor Insight (Burning Glass Technologies), New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development, February 2023.
4. United States Census Bureau (2021), American Community Survey 1-year estimates.
5. United States Census 2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.
6. YCharts, Union County Unemployment Data.

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## **STATE EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING COMMISSION QUESTIONS**

Strategic Priorities: Taking into account LMI analyses described above, describe the strategic vision, goals, and priorities for preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including youth and individuals with barriers to employment) at the regional and local level. The LWDA's strategy should include specific expectations related to:

- Expanding access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment
- Expanding and ensuring access to workforce development services that serve to bring diversity, equity, and inclusion to the workforce
- Facilitating the development of career pathways and co-enrollment across WIOA and partner programs
- Increasing access through partners and programs to a variety of individualized career and training services, including career coaching, work readiness activities, as well as training programs that result in industry-valued credentials
- Increasing work-based learning opportunities in partnership with postsecondary, employer, and workforce partners, including through On- the-Job Training, Transitional Jobs, and Apprenticeship, as well as for youth through Youth Work Experiences
- Supporting multiple pathways for young people aged 16-24 through One-Stop Career Center services, and additional youth program models
- For LWDA's with significant Migrant Seasonal Farmworker (MSFW) programs: conducting vigorous outreach to communicate a full range of services to a population that may be unable to be reached with normal intake activities

### **Local Plan**

- Local plans must outline specific strategies and priorities related to the above-mentioned bulleted list. Furthermore, these strategies must align with strategies developed at the regional level.
- Please demonstrate how these strategies will support engagement with targeted populations, including priority populations identified in WIOA and New Jersey's State plan. Consider strategies around outreach, service delivery, and follow-up support.
- Please demonstrate how these strategies will support engagement with local partners and stakeholders at the LWDB and One Stop levels, including specifically the engagement of service, youth, postsecondary, and employer partners.

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**Regional Plan**

- Please identify the specific areas where regional partners will target regional approaches to support local strategies through shared capacity and/or joint initiatives.
  - What opportunities exist for shared programs or service delivery at the regional level that support local area implementation?
  - How might the region set a common vision, goals, and/or specific strategies related to:
    - Industry pipelines and career pathways
    - Service delivery, including around ITAs, virtual learning, full range of work-based learning opportunities, supportive services, and job assistance and placement
- Please describe how the region will track progress and manage implementation of activities related to common goals and/or specific strategies. Please include details regarding specific partners/stakeholders that will contribute to these efforts, as well as specific in-kind or financial contributions that partners will offer.
- Please describe specific plans for leading and supporting the development of career pathways and industry pipelines at the regional level.
  - What industry sectors or occupations is the region targeting or prioritizing and why?
  - How are career pathways strategies aligned with serving identified target populations and priority populations identified in WIOA and New Jersey's state plan (including disadvantaged adults, dislocated workers, youth, and other underserved populations)?
  - What stakeholders from across local areas are part of these efforts?
  - How will regional partners engage in and continue this work?

## **STRATEGIC VISION, GOALS, AND PRIORITIES OF THE UNION COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD**

The Union County Board of County Commissioners has charged the Union County Workforce Development Board with the responsibility of developing a comprehensive workforce and economic development plan which aligns with the requirements of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, synchronizes with the Governor’s vision for a “stronger and fairer New Jersey”, and supports the workforce development principles outlined in **State Employment and Training Commission—New Jersey Combined State Plan, 2022-2026**.

Primarily, it is important to lay the foundation stone with respect to understanding the directive of the Union County Board of County Commissioners to the Union County Workforce Development Board. That is, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, specifically Section 102 indicates that, “a State plan shall include strategic planning elements consisting of a strategic vision and goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce”. In New Jersey, Governor Phil Murphy has clearly communicated the vision for the State of New Jersey in his statement:

*“to reestablish New Jersey as an economic and innovation leader, as a place where diverse talent, companies, and ideas flourish, where real pathways exist to the middle class, where all residents can prosper, and where environmental stewardship, fiscal prudence, and high labor standards are promoted and encouraged....[t]o unlock long-term, resilient economic growth, we must create a New Jersey economy that is both stronger and fairer.”*

The vision statement above was outlined in ***The State of Innovation: Building a Stronger and Fairer Economy in New Jersey*** and reiterated in the **State Employment and Training Commission—New Jersey Combined State Plan, 2022-2026**, as the focal point for local workforce areas to direct their attention as relates to regional and local strategic planning, resource allocation, and employer engagement.

In addition to lending a vision to the citizens, Governor Phil Murphy established two primary goals to achieve the state’s economic vision, as referenced in the **State Employment and Training Commission—New Jersey Combined State Plan**, “*With regard to the state’s workforce development system, a stronger and fairer New Jersey means achieving two mutually supporting goals:*

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1. *Ensure all career-seeking New Jerseyans have the education and training necessary to access high-quality employment.*
2. *Ensure businesses and employers that are offering high-quality employment in New Jersey can quickly and efficiently fill their talent needs.”*

Finally, the **State Employment and Training Commission—New Jersey Combined State Plan** outlines the shared vision for the State of New Jersey, and the two goals to achieve it, but the plan further delineates the three strategies the New Jersey workforce and economic development ecosystems should target to achieve the two goals. The three strategies were developed through the Jobs and Economic Opportunity Council and include:

***“STRATEGY 1: EXPAND ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITY***

*Increase educational attainment among underrepresented minorities and other target populations and ensure equal access to opportunities in all regions of the state.*

***STRATEGY 2: TRAIN INDIVIDUAL FOR IN-DEMAND JOBS***

*Connect education and training programs to industry needs and lead the region in programs that prepare adults for high-quality jobs throughout their entire careers.*

***STRATEGY 3: MATCH TALENT TO JOBS***

*Ensure access to up-to-date job information, celebrate employers that provide high-quality jobs, and create a dedicated team to craft individualized solutions to complex access-to-labor problems.”*

In short, the Union County Board of County Commissioners, and the Union County Workforce Development Board share Governor Murphy’s perspective and shall direct Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act resources to help bring to fruition the vision for New Jersey, *with particular emphasis on Union County*, to become an economic and innovation leader, where diverse talent and ideas thrive and where all residents can prosper. The two goals to achieve this vision are to ensure all career-seeking residents have access to education and training to access high-quality employment, and to ensure businesses can fill their talent needs efficiently. The three strategies to achieve these goals are to expand access to opportunity, train individuals for in-demand jobs, and match talent to jobs.

In furtherance of the vision, goals, and strategies discussed, Governor Phil Murphy established **The Future of Work Task Force**, which created a policy roadmap to prepare



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New Jersey for the future of work by evaluating the impact of technology on the state's economy and workforce. While the roadmap highlights 19 recommendations to invest in policies, platforms, and programs that promote worker rights, safety, and lifelong learning, the **State Employment and Training Commission—New Jersey Combined State Plan** focuses its attention on guiding the public workforce ecosystem on one of the core areas, *“Investing in Workers: Support lifelong learning and skill building to make workers resilient to the changes technology will bring”* and its corresponding set of aspirations or recommendations:

- a. *“Create Lifelong Learning Accounts for all New Jerseyans and fund the accounts of low-wage workers and encourage and provide mechanisms for employers to match funds for lifelong learning.*
- b. *Further develop the State’s Training Explorer to help workers make informed decisions about lifelong learning and training.*
- c. *Encourage all employers to invest in worker training, lifelong learning, and reemployment and create financial incentives for small and medium-sized employers.*
- d. *Support innovation and skills collaboratives and other ongoing initiatives to align New Jersey’s education and workforce systems and align individuals’ education with their desired career pathways.*
- e. *Continue to expand low-cost opportunities to access degree programs (including access to community colleges), career and technical education, and training, apprenticeships, and pre-apprenticeships.”*

The **COMMUNITY COLLEGE OPPORTUNITY GRANT** is a vital component to making Governor Phil Murphy’s vision of creating a “stronger and fairer New Jersey.” The idea of the Community College Opportunity Grant was born when the Governor released *“Where Opportunity Meets Innovation: A Student-Center Vision for New Jersey Higher Education.”* The Community College Opportunity Grant in New Jersey, which is available through the Higher Education Student Assistance Authority, offers financial assistance to cover tuition and approved educational fees for state residents with an annual adjusted gross income between \$0 and \$65,000. Residents with AGIs between \$65,001 and \$80,000 receive reduced tuition costs. To be eligible, students must be a New Jersey resident with AGI between \$0-\$80,000, complete the FAFSA or NJ Alternative Financial Aid Application, enroll in at least 6 credits per semester, not have earned a college degree, and maintain satisfactory academic progress.

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Taken together—the Governor’s vision, goals, strategies, recommendations, and budgetary follow-through—is the leadership the Union County Board of County Commissioners and the Union County Workforce Development Board will continue to use as a launching point for workforce and economic development planning and action.

In Union County, our open strategic planning and economic development discussions involved working with regional and local partners to identify economic development needs and opportunities and to develop and implement strategies to meet those needs and opportunities. This included convening regional stakeholder groups, developing, and implementing regional workforce strategies, and engaging in economic development planning and implementation activities. The goal of these activities is to align workforce development services with economic development goals and to promote economic growth in a region.

Guidance on regional and local policy and planning synchronism can be traced back to the State Employment and Training Commission’s *“Pathways and Partnerships – New Jersey’s Blueprint for Talent Development”* report, which pushed for increasing the number of industry-valued credentials or degrees and shared the blueprint with five strategic intents: regional framework, results-driven high-quality partnerships, career pathways, community alliances, and system integrity.

**STRATEGIES FOR IMPLEMENTING THE WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT OF 2022**

The Union County American Job Center Network Partners’ role in delivering on the promise to effectively implement federal, state, and local policies, procedures, and regulatory guidance is paramount. To that end, the Union County Workforce Development Board, under the guidance of the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development, the State Employment and Training Commission, and the Union County Board of County Commissioners, provides continued support by helping to focus the network on the vision for the One Stop Career Center under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, as discussed in the section on a *“Vision for the Comprehensive One-Stop Career Centers.”* As a complex ecosystem designed to positively change the lives of our residents, it is key to connect the federal, statewide, regional, and local vision, goals, strategies, and recommendations to the action on the ground through the American Job Center Network Partners.

The Union County Workforce Development Board recognizes the importance of Governor Phil Murphy’s vision and goals for creating a skilled and competitive workforce. To support stakeholder engagement in Union County, the Union County Workforce Development Board is committed to developing policy guidance that aligns with the Governor’s vision,

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goals, strategies, aspirations, recommendations, and strategic intentions. The Union County Workforce Development Board will work with the American Job Center Operator and the Network Partners to optimize operational service delivery, to measure performance using qualitative and quantitative instruments, with the goal of improving the lives of residents living in Union County. The key to effective delivery of the goals and objectives is to have a common definition of the term execution. The Union County Workforce Development Board has borrowed the definition of the word “execution” found in the book, *“Execution—the Discipline of Getting Things Done”* by Bossidy and Charam (2002), as it can easily be applied to our collective responsibility in ensuring a workforce ecosystem that evolves around continuous improvement and accountability.

*“Ex-e-cu-tion (ek si kyoo shun), n. 1. The missing link. 2. The main reason companies fall short of their promises. 3. The gap between what a company’s leaders want to achieve and the ability of their organizations to deliver it. 4. Not simply tactics, but a system of getting things done through questioning, analysis, and follow-through. A discipline for meshing strategy with reality, aligning people with goals, and achieving the results promised. 5. A central part of a company’s strategy and its goals and the major job of any leader in business. 6. A discipline requiring a comprehensive understanding of a business, its people, and its environment. 7. The way to link the three core processes of any business—the people process, the strategy, and the operating plan—together to get things done on time.”*

The Union County Workforce Development Board has several committees, and each committee has objectives to help bring the federal, state, and local priorities to reality. Under the regulatory guidance of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, the Youth Committee aims to increase the youth voice and input in the design, development, implementation, and delivery of services. The American Job Center Partners Committee seeks to provide accessible and inclusive services to all clients, streamline the referral process, and develop business partnerships to create job opportunities. The Literacy Partners Committee aims to increase access and participation in Title II adult education and literacy programs for eligible participants by addressing enrollment barriers and improving program coordination. The purpose of the Disabilities Committee is to ensure that individuals with disabilities have access to employment, training, and supportive services that enable them to achieve their career and employment goals. The Disabilities Committee also provides input on how to improve the accessibility and effectiveness of workforce development programs, and it advises on the development of policies and practices that promote the full inclusion and integration of individuals with disabilities into the workforce. Finally, the Disabilities Committee is also responsible for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of workforce development programs for individuals with

disabilities. This includes identifying areas where programs can be improved and making recommendations for changes that will better meet the needs of individuals with disabilities.

### **OVERVIEW OF THE STRATEGIES FOR THE PROVISION OF PARTICIPANT SERVICES**

The Union County Workforce Development Board is committed to supporting the development and implementation of comprehensive workforce development systems that prioritize the needs of individuals with barriers to employment, including individuals with disabilities, low-income individuals, youth, and veterans. To achieve this goal, Union County Workforce Development Board will provide a range of services and activities, including On-the-Job Training and Integrated Education and Training, which enable individuals to obtain industry-valued credentials and advance along career pathways. Braided funding is endorsed for program participants, including youth, wishing to co-enroll in multiple American Job Center Network Partners' training should said engagement advance the participant's career pathway. The Union County Workforce Development Board also recognizes that providing Supportive Services, such as transportation and childcare, can help individuals overcome barriers to employment and succeed in the workforce. To ensure that services are provided to those with the greatest need, the Union County Workforce Development Board, as guided by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, prioritizes the delivery of services to veterans, eligible low-income individuals, and other individuals who are most in need of assistance. Our Workforce Preparation Activities are designed to equip individuals with the skills and knowledge needed to succeed in the workforce, and our Career Pathway model ensures that individuals have access to education and training opportunities that lead to high-quality jobs. The Union County Workforce Development Board's comprehensive approach to workforce development is designed to ensure that all individuals, including those facing barriers to employment, have the tools and support they need to succeed in the 21st-century economy.

### **ON-THE-JOB TRAINING**

Under the Union County Workforce Development Board's On-The-Job Training policy, the American Job Center's business representatives conduct regular outreach to employers, pre-screen employers, and coordinate with case managers to utilize Individual Employment Plans to guide participants. The policy focuses on high-priority occupations in selected industry clusters in demand, and employers must demonstrate that the position is on a career pathway toward a higher level and/or higher-paying job. The policy also includes a maximum funding cap of \$10,000 over six months. An Individual Employment Plan is developed that outlines the skill requirements for the on-the-job training position, the specific skill needs of the trainee, and the training resources that will be dedicated to supporting the on-the-job training participant. Regular communication with the employer

is necessary to assess training progress, deter discontinuation of employment after the contract, and identify additional areas where supplemental Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Title I services can support participant success.

### **SUPPORTIVE SERVICES**

Union County Workforce Development Board's supportive services policy is designed to help individuals overcome barriers that may prevent them from successfully participating in education, training, or employment programs. These services may include transportation, childcare, housing assistance, medical and dental care, and other types of assistance. Supportive services are intended to help individuals achieve their education and employment goals and promote their long-term self-sufficiency. Eligibility for supportive services is determined based on an individual's needs and can vary depending on the specific program or service. The goal of supportive services is to provide the necessary assistance for an individual to successfully participate in a training or employment program and achieve self-sufficiency. Supportive services under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act services can include a wide range of options, such as:

- Childcare assistance: Help with childcare expenses while the participant is in training or employed.
- Transportation assistance: Help with transportation expenses to and from the training or job site.
- Housing assistance: Help with housing expenses, including rent, utilities, and security deposits.
- Job search and placement assistance: Help with finding job openings, preparing resumes, and practicing interview skills.
- Supportive services for individuals with disabilities: Assistance to help individuals with disabilities overcome barriers to employment, such as adaptive equipment or assistive technology.
- Financial counseling: Help with budgeting, credit repair, and debt management.
- Substance abuse treatment: Help with drug or alcohol treatment.
- Legal services: Help with legal issues that may impact employment, such as criminal record expungement or child support modifications.

### **VETERANS**

Under Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, veterans have priority for all employment, training, and placement services provided by the U.S. Department of Labor

or any covered person or entity. They are also entitled to the full range of employment, training, and placement services provided under Title I of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and are eligible for individualized career services through American Job Centers. Veterans may be eligible for additional services, including counseling, job search assistance, and other supportive services such as childcare and transportation. They are also eligible for priority of service in all Department of Labor-funded job training programs.

The Veterans policy under Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act provides additional support and resources to veterans, including disabled veterans, to help them secure meaningful employment. The policy requires that priority of service be given to veterans for all job training programs and related services, meaning that veterans are given preference for receiving these services over non-veterans.

The policy also includes specific provisions for disabled veterans, who may require additional support and accommodations to successfully enter or re-enter the workforce. For example, the policy requires that reasonable accommodations be made for disabled veterans in job training programs, and that these programs be designed to meet the unique needs of disabled veterans.

In addition, the policy requires that eligible veterans have access to a range of supportive services, such as career counseling, job search assistance, and referrals to other community resources. These services are intended to help veterans overcome barriers to employment and ensure their success in the workforce.

Finally, the policy establishes several reporting and accountability requirements for programs serving veterans under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. These requirements are intended to ensure that programs are effectively meeting the needs of veterans and that resources are being used efficiently and effectively.

## **BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT**

Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, barriers to employment refer to obstacles that prevent an individual from obtaining and maintaining employment. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act seeks to address these barriers by providing access to a comprehensive range of employment and training services, as well as supportive services that can help individuals overcome these barriers.

The policy identifies several specific barriers to employment, including lack of education or work experience, limited English proficiency, disabilities, and criminal records. To address these barriers, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act requires local workforce



development boards to develop programs and services that are tailored to meet the needs of individuals facing these challenges.

For example, workforce development boards may provide adult education and literacy services to individuals with limited education or English proficiency. They may also provide job coaching and mentoring to individuals who lack work experience or offer assistive technology and job accommodations to individuals with disabilities. Additionally, boards may offer job training and support services to individuals with criminal records to help them successfully re-enter the workforce.

Overall, the goal of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act's barriers to employment policy is to ensure that all individuals, regardless of their background or circumstances, have access to the resources and support they need to secure and maintain good jobs.

The policy recognizes that there are various barriers to employment that individuals may face, which can include lack of education or skills, criminal records, disabilities, limited English proficiency, and other challenges. To help individuals overcome these barriers, the policy aims to provide a range of services and resources.

The policy requires that each participant in Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act programs receive an individualized assessment that identifies any barriers to employment, as well as their skills, interests, and needs. Based on this assessment, participants can then be referred to appropriate services and resources to help them overcome their barriers and achieve their employment goals.

Services and resources that may be provided to address barriers to employment can include education and training programs, job search assistance, transportation assistance, childcare services, assistive technology, and other supportive services. In addition, the policy recognizes the importance of working with community partners and service providers to ensure that a comprehensive network of resources is available to participants.

Overall, the goal of the barriers to employment policy under Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act is to help individuals overcome any obstacles they may face in securing and maintaining employment, so that they can achieve economic self-sufficiency and improve their overall quality of life.

## **PRIORITY OF SERVICE**

Priority of service under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act means that certain groups of individuals are given priority for employment, training, and related services over other individuals. These priority groups include veterans and their eligible spouses, low-

income individuals, individuals who are basic skills deficient, individuals who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, and individuals with a disability.

When resources are limited, priority of service must be given to these groups first. This means that eligible individuals in these priority groups must be given access to Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act services before individuals who do not fall into these priority groups. However, it is important to note that everyone who is eligible for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act services has a right to receive them, regardless of priority status.

Priority of service also applies to the receipt of intensive and training services, as well as to the receipt of other employment-related services. Service providers must ensure that they give priority to eligible individuals in the priority groups for all services covered under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

### **CAREER PATHWAY**

Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, a career pathway is a combination of education, training, and support services that enable individuals to secure industry-recognized credentials and obtain employment in a high-demand, middle- to high-skilled occupation. Career pathways help individuals progress along a clear and connected path to a family-sustaining wage and long-term success in the labor market. They typically include a sequence of education, training, and credentials aligned with the skill needs of an industry or occupational sector, along with support services to help individuals overcome barriers to employment. Career pathways can also provide employers with a pipeline of skilled workers and support economic development in communities.

*Career Pathway Definition: a combination of rigorous and high-quality education, training and other services that (A) aligns with the skill needs of industries in the economy of the State or regional economy involved; (B) prepares an individual to be successful in any of a full range of secondary or postsecondary education options, including apprenticeships...; (C) includes counseling to support an individual in achieving the individual's education and career goals; (D) includes, as appropriate, education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster; (E) organizes education, training, and other services to meet the particular needs of an individual in a manner that accelerates the educational and career advancement of the individual to the extent practicable; (F) enables an individual to attain a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and at least 1 recognized*

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*postsecondary credential; and (G) helps an individual enter or advance within a specific occupation or occupational cluster.” Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Sec. 3(7)*

By following the career pathway policy strategy, individuals can progress along a clear and connected path to family-sustaining wages and long-term success in the labor market. At the same time, employers can benefit from a pipeline of skilled workers and support economic development in communities. The career pathway principles and policy strategies developed by the Union County Workforce Development Board and employed by the American Job Center Network Partners includes:

- Identify high-demand, middle-to high-skilled occupations in the state or regional economy, and the associated skills, education, and credentials needed for these occupations.
- Develop partnerships with local employers and industry associations to align education and training programs with the skill needs of these occupations, and to create work-based learning opportunities (such as internships or apprenticeships) for individuals to gain practical experience.
- Offer counseling and support services to help individuals navigate their career pathway, set goals, and overcome barriers to employment, such as childcare or transportation.
- Develop and implement education and training programs that are rigorous and high-quality, and that align with the skill needs of industries and occupations. These programs should also provide opportunities for individuals to attain recognized postsecondary credentials, such as certificates or degrees.
- Offer education and training programs concurrently with workforce preparation activities, such as job search skills and interview preparation, to help individuals successfully transition into employment.
- Customize education, training, and other services to meet the needs of individuals, including those with disabilities, limited English proficiency, or other challenges.
- Provide ongoing support and career advancement opportunities for individuals to help them achieve long-term success in the labor market and to meet the evolving skill needs of industries and occupations.

## WORKFORCE PREPARATION ACTIVITIES

Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, workforce preparation activities refer to a set of activities designed to prepare individuals for employment or training. These activities may include, but are not limited to, job readiness training, individual career planning, job search and placement assistance, workplace skills development, and entrepreneurial skills training. The aim of these activities is to help job seekers acquire the necessary skills and knowledge to find and retain employment or to participate in training programs that lead to career advancement. Workforce preparation activities may be provided by a variety of organizations, including community-based organizations, educational institutions, and workforce development boards.

## INTEGRATED EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Integrated Education and Training is an approach to adult education that provides basic academic and career training simultaneously in a single program. IET programs are designed to provide a comprehensive set of services to individuals with significant barriers to employment. This approach blends a variety of adult education services and job training activities to help students achieve their goals for employment and long-term career success. The idea is to offer contextualized learning, where students learn foundational skills in the context of real-life work situations, leading to better educational outcomes and employment prospects. By offering IET, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act aims to increase the employability and earning potential of individuals by integrating education and training services, as well as providing access to support services such as career counseling, mentoring, and job placement assistance.

*Integrated Education and Training Definition: a service approach that provides adult education and literacy activities concurrently and contextually with workforce preparation activities and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster for the purpose of educational and career advancement. Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Sec. 203(11)*

## CO-ENROLLMENT STRATEGIES

Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, co-enrollment is encouraged to promote coordination and alignment among programs serving individuals with multiple barriers to employment. The policy statement on co-enrollment under Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act emphasizes the importance of collaboration between workforce and education partners to provide integrated services and streamlined access to training, education, and supportive services for individuals. It states that co-enrollment policies and procedures should be developed to ensure that multiple programs work together effectively to meet the needs of participants and maximize resources.

Additionally, the policy emphasizes that co-enrollment should prioritize the needs of individuals and families and support their goals of long-term economic self-sufficiency. The Union County Workforce Development Board prioritizes, encourages, and supports the American Job Center Operator, and the Network Partners, implementing the following strategies to facilitate co-enrollment among adults, dislocated workers, in-school youth, out-of-school youth, Work First New Jersey, and Workforce Learning participants:

- **DEVELOP PARTNERSHIPS:**  
Establish partnerships between WIOA service providers and other agencies that provide complementary services, such as housing, transportation, or childcare.
- **ALIGN SERVICES:**  
Develop a coordinated service delivery system that aligns services and resources across programs to meet the needs of participants and avoid duplication of services.
- **CO-LOCATION:**  
Co-locate service providers in shared facilities or spaces to enhance collaboration, coordination, and information sharing among service providers and participants.
- **INTEGRATED CASE MANAGEMENT:**  
Use integrated case management to support co-enrollment, in which participants are served by multiple programs with a single case manager who coordinates services.
- **SHARED DATA AND PERFORMANCE METRICS:**  
Develop and share common data and performance metrics among partner programs to promote collaboration and accountability.
- **STAFF TRAINING AND CROSS-TRAINING:**  
Provide cross-training opportunities to staff from partner programs to enhance their understanding of each other's program and services, and develop common language, approaches, and tools.
- **OUTREACH AND RECRUITMENT:**  
Conduct joint outreach and recruitment activities among partner programs to increase awareness and reach of services among target populations.
- **CROSS-REFERRAL AND FOLLOW-UP:**

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Establish mechanisms for cross-referral and follow-up among partner programs to ensure that participants receive appropriate and timely services, and to prevent duplication of services.

**SOFT SKILLS, DIGITAL LITERACY, INDUSTRY-VALUED CREDENTIALS AND LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS**

The Union County Workforce Development, under the leadership of the Union County Board of County Commissioners, recognizes the critical importance of equipping learners with the necessary skills and credentials to succeed in an increasingly digital and virtual world. This includes developing both technical competencies and soft skills such as communication, collaboration, problem-solving, and critical thinking, which are essential for success in the workplace. To achieve this, the Union County Workforce Development prioritizes soft skills and digital literacy instruction coupled with training leading to industry-valued credentials. The American Job Center Operator, Network Partners, and Affiliates shall provide the facilities to assist participants to access Learning Management System, including the provision of supportive services to cover the examination fees leading to certifications and credentials.

**STRENGTHENING SOFT SKILLS DEVELOPMENT**

The Union County Workforce Development will work to embed, and encourage, the development of soft skills across all levels of education, post-secondary, and workforce development programs. This includes providing training and professional development for workforce programs to enhance their ability to effectively teach and assess soft skills.

**INCREASING ACCESS TO DIGITAL LITERACY**

The Union County Workforce Development will prioritize the development of digital literacy skills in learners, including but not limited to, computer basics, coding, cybersecurity, and data analysis. We will work with stakeholders to provide access to affordable and high-quality digital literacy resources, including online and virtual resources.

**ALIGNING INDUSTRY-VALUED CREDENTIALS**

The Union County Workforce Development will work with industry stakeholders to identify and to promote industry-valued credentials that are necessary for career success. We will prioritize the development of credentials that are aligned with industry-recognized standards and credentials that are portable and stackable, allowing learners to build on their skills and experience over time.



## **SUPPORTING THE TRANSITION TO LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS AND CERTIFICATIONS**

The Union County Workforce Development will prioritize the development of policies and strategies that support the transition to virtual learning and certification, including expanding access to virtual learning and certification programs, increasing access to technology and broadband connectivity, and promoting best practices for virtual teaching and assessment.

By prioritizing the development of soft skills, digital literacy, industry-valued credentials, and supporting the transition to Learning Management System and Certifications, the Union County Workforce Development will help to ensure that learners have the necessary skills and the credentials to succeed in the rapidly changing world of work.

### **SOFT SKILLS CURRICULUM**

The soft skills curriculum is designed to equip jobseekers with the essential skills and techniques needed to succeed in today's competitive job market. Throughout the course, jobseekers learn how to effectively communicate with others, manage their time and prioritize tasks, work collaboratively in a team, adapt to change, and build your personal and professional brand. By the end of the course, participants will have a comprehensive toolkit of skills and techniques to obtain and retain employment, and to achieve success in a career. Below is a sample of the soft skills curriculum designed and built by the Union County Workforce Development Board in 2015 after strategy discussions held by the New Jersey Business and Industry Association and the New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission, forming the Employability Skills Task Force. The New Jersey Business and Industry Association conducted a survey related to employers' perceptions of the soft skills of new entry-level employees. The survey findings were used to highlight the need for a coordinated solution to address this issue and informed us that soft skills were a priority to hiring jobseekers. Consequently, the Union County Workforce Development Board designed and built the soft skill curriculum.

### **COMMUNICATION SKILLS**

- Verbal communication
- Nonverbal communication
- Listening skills
- Written communication

### **TEAMWORK AND COLLABORATION**

- Understanding team dynamics
- Collaborating with different personality types
- Resolving conflicts

- Sharing feedback

#### **TIME MANAGEMENT**

- Setting goals
- Prioritizing tasks
- Managing distractions
- Delegating tasks

#### **ADAPTABILITY AND FLEXIBILITY**

- Dealing with change
- Being open to new ideas
- Being comfortable with ambiguity
- Being resilient in the face of setbacks

#### **PROBLEM-SOLVING**

- Identifying and defining problems
- Developing solutions
- Implementing solutions
- Evaluating the effectiveness of solutions

#### **LEADERSHIP**

- Developing leadership skills
- Motivating others
- Managing others
- Leading by example

#### **EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE**

- Self-awareness
- Self-regulation
- Empathy
- Social skills

#### **NETWORKING AND PROFESSIONALISM**

- Building professional relationships
- Navigating workplace politics
- Maintaining professional etiquette
- Leveraging social media for professional growth

Each of referenced items can be broken down into specific skills and techniques. Here are a few examples:

- Verbal Communication: active listening, clear enunciation, using appropriate language and tone.
- Understanding Team Dynamics: recognizing and valuing distinct roles, fostering diversity, building trust, leveraging individual strengths
- Time Management: setting SMART goals, using the Eisenhower Matrix, minimizing interruptions, scheduling breaks.
- Dealing with Change: reframing perspectives, embracing uncertainty, seeking opportunities for growth, being open to feedback
- Problem-Solving: brainstorming, mind-mapping, root cause analysis, SWOT analysis
- Developing Leadership Skills: delegation, effective communication, recognizing and developing individual strengths, leading by example
- Self-Awareness: recognizing and regulating emotions, identifying personal biases, understanding strengths and weaknesses, seeking feedback
- Building Professional Relationships: networking, leveraging informational interviews, building a personal brand, following up after meetings

## **DIGITAL LITERACY CURRICULUM**

The Digital Literacy Curriculum is designed to provide jobseekers with the essential skills and knowledge needed to effectively navigate and utilize digital technologies in the workplace. This curriculum covers a range of topics, from basic computer skills to more advanced software applications and online tools. By completing this curriculum, participants will gain the confidence and competence required to succeed in today's digital job market. Below is a sample of the soft skills curriculum being designed and built by the Union County Workforce Development Board as part of its strategy to help transition the workforce to the skills in demands in the current economy, which includes a hybrid work environment.

### **INTRODUCTION TO DIGITAL LITERACY:**

- Introduction to computers, the internet, and basic terminology
- Understanding the importance of digital literacy in the workplace

### **BASIC COMPUTER SKILLS:**

- Understanding the hardware and software components of a computer
- Basic computer operations, such as using a mouse and keyboard, file management, and installing and uninstalling software.

### **INTERNET AND WEB BROWSING:**

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- Understanding the basics of the internet, including how to connect and navigate websites.
- Identifying safe and unsafe websites and practicing online safety measures

**EMAIL AND COMMUNICATION:**

- Creating and managing an email account
- Understanding email etiquette and best practices for communication in the workplace

**WORD PROCESSING AND DOCUMENT CREATION:**

- Introduction to word processing software, such as Microsoft Word or Google Docs
- Creating, formatting, and saving documents for professional use

**SPREADSHEETS AND DATA MANAGEMENT:**

- Introduction to spreadsheets, such as Microsoft Excel or Google Sheets
- Understanding and organizing data, creating charts and graphs, and using formulas and functions

**PRESENTATIONS:**

- Creating effective presentations using Microsoft PowerPoint or Google Slides
- Understanding design principles and best practices for creating engaging and informative presentations

**SOCIAL MEDIA:**

- Understanding different social media platforms and their uses in the workplace
- Creating and managing a professional online presence, including online networking and job search strategies

**CYBERSECURITY AND ONLINE SAFETY:**

- Understanding cybersecurity threats, including malware, and phishing scams
- Best practices for protecting personal and professional information online.

**DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP AND ETHICS:**

- Understanding the importance of digital citizenship and ethical online behavior
- Identifying and avoiding online bullying and harassment, as well as illegal online activities

**INTERNET AND COMPUTING CORE CERTIFICATION**

The Union County Workforce Development Board, in collaboration with the Union County Board of County Commissioners, provides funding for Internet and Computing Core

Certification. Internet and Computing Core Certification is a certification program that assesses a candidate's foundational skills in basic computer and internet use. The program covers three key areas: computing fundamentals, key applications, and living online, and includes topics such as computer hardware and software, word processing, spreadsheets, email, web browsing, and internet safety. The certification is designed to help individuals acquire the digital literacy skills they need for academic, personal, and professional success. The specific curriculum design for the Internet and Computing Core Certification includes:

### **COMPUTING FUNDAMENTALS**

- Introduction to computers and their components
- Operating systems and basic troubleshooting
- Using the internet and the World Wide Web

### **KEY APPLICATIONS**

- Word processing with Microsoft Word or Google Docs
- Spreadsheet creation and management with Microsoft Excel or Google Sheets
- Presentation creation with Microsoft PowerPoint or Google Slides

### **LIVING ONLINE**

- Internet and email safety and security
- Social media and digital communication
- Online research and evaluation of sources

### **CAREER PLANNING**

- Exploring career options and requirements
- Job search strategies and tools
- Preparing resumes, cover letters, and job applications

### **INDUSTRY-VALUED CREDENTIALS**

Industry-valued credentials are certifications or credentials that are recognized by employers and industry associations as being important for obtaining employment and advancing in a particular field. These credentials can demonstrate an individual's skills and knowledge in a specific area and increase their employability. Individuals who earn an industry-valued credential may be more attractive to employers and may have greater earning potential than those without a credential. In some cases, earning a credential may also be a requirement for certain jobs or promotions.

In New Jersey, industry-valued credentials are used as part of the state's workforce development initiatives to help individuals obtain the skills and knowledge needed to succeed in high-demand industries. The New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development maintains a list of industry-valued credentials that are eligible for state-funded training programs. It is a strategic priority of the Union County Workforce Development Board to continue to support investments in participants' training and credential attainment by allocating funding for training and supportive services that leading to industry-valued credentials. The growth industries identified by Governor Phil Murphy, the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development, and the New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission are briefly outlined below, including corresponding their corresponding industry-valued credentials.

### **ADVANCED MANUFACTURING**

The Advanced Manufacturing industry sector is a broad category that includes companies engaged in the development and production of technologically advanced goods or processes. This can include a wide range of industries, such as aerospace, automotive, biotechnology, electronics, and many others, and typically involves the use of innovative technologies and materials to create innovative products or services. The Advanced Manufacturing industry sector is often seen as a critical driver of economic growth and innovation, as it can help to create new industries, drive productivity gains, and spur job creation.

### **INDUSTRY-VALUED CREDENTIALS**

- Certified Manufacturing Technologist (CMfgT) - offered by the Society of Manufacturing Engineers (SME), this certification demonstrates a foundational understanding of manufacturing processes and principles.
- Certified Production Technician (CPT) - offered by the Manufacturing Skills Standards Council (MSSC), this certification covers foundational technical skills in production.
- Siemens Mechatronic Systems Certification Program - offered by Siemens, this certification covers skills in mechanical, electrical, and software engineering, as well as automation and robotics.
- Certified Automation Professional (CAP) - offered by the International Society of Automation (ISA), this certification covers skills in automation and control systems engineering.

- Additive Manufacturing Fundamentals Certification - offered by the Additive Manufacturing Users Group (AMUG), this certification covers skills in 3D printing and additive manufacturing.

## **HEALTHCARE**

The Healthcare industry sector encompasses a wide range of businesses and organizations that provide medical and health-related services. This can include hospitals, clinics, pharmacies, medical device manufacturers, pharmaceutical companies, health insurance providers, and many other types of organizations. The healthcare industry is critical to the health and well-being of individuals and communities and is a major driver of economic growth and job creation. The sector is characterized by rapid innovation and advances in medical technology, as well as a growing focus on preventative care and population health management.

### **INDUSTRY-VALUED CREDENTIALS**

- Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA): A credential that is required in many states to work as a nursing assistant in a long-term care facility or hospital.
- Certified Medical Assistant (CMA): A credential that demonstrates knowledge and skills in medical office administration, including clinical and administrative tasks.
- Registered Nurse (RN): A credential that demonstrates advanced knowledge and skills in nursing and is required to work in many roles in hospitals, clinics, and other healthcare settings.
- Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN): A credential that is required in many states to work as a practical nurse in a variety of healthcare settings.
- Medical Billing and Coding Certification: A credential that demonstrates proficiency in the complex coding and billing systems used in healthcare.
- Emergency Medical Technician (EMT): A credential that demonstrates knowledge and skills in emergency medical care and is required to work in many roles in emergency medical services.

## **CONSTRUCTION, UTILITIES AND ENERGY**

The Construction, Utilities and Energy industry sector encompasses a range of activities related to the construction, maintenance, and operation of buildings, infrastructure, and energy facilities. This sector includes industries such as construction, electrical utilities, natural gas distribution, water and sewage treatment, and renewable energy generation. Workers in this sector may include construction laborers, electricians, plumbers, pipefitters, and power plant operators, among others. The sector plays a critical role in the



economy by providing essential services and infrastructure to communities and supporting economic development through the construction and maintenance of buildings and infrastructure.

### **INDUSTRY-VALUED CREDENTIALS**

- Certified Energy Manager (CEM) - This credential is offered by the Association of Energy Engineers and is designed for professionals who work in the energy management field. It requires passing a certification exam and meeting education and experience requirements.
- Certified Safety Professional (CSP) - This credential is offered by the Board of Certified Safety Professionals and is designed for safety professionals who work in the construction, utilities, and energy industries. It requires passing a certification exam and meeting education and experience requirements.
- National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER) - This organization offers a range of credentials related to construction trades, including certifications in areas such as carpentry, plumbing, electrical work, and welding.
- Certified Welder (CW) - This credential is offered by the American Welding Society and is designed for individuals who work in welding and related fields. It requires passing a certification exam and meeting education and experience requirements.
- North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners (NABCEP) - This organization offers a range of credentials related to renewable energy and energy efficiency, including certifications for solar photovoltaic and solar heating professionals.
- OSHA 10-hour and 30-hour training courses for general industry or construction
- Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response (HAZWOPER) training
- OSHA Outreach Training Program courses in specific industries, such as maritime or disaster site work
- Certified Safety and Health Official (CSHO) designation through the OSHA Training Institute Education Center
- Certified Occupational Safety Specialist (COSS) credential through the Council on Certification of Health, Environmental and Safety Technologists (CCHST)

### **RETAIL**

The retail industry is a sector of the economy that includes businesses involved in the sale of consumer goods and services to the public, typically through physical or online storefronts. This includes a wide range of businesses, from small independent shops to large chain stores, and covers a broad range of products and services, such as clothing,

food, electronics, and household items. The retail industry is a significant contributor to the global economy, with millions of people employed in the sector worldwide.

#### **INDUSTRY-VALUED CREDENTIALS**

- National Professional Certification in Customer Service from the National Retail Federation (NRF)
- Certified Store Manager from the Retail Industry Leaders Association (RILA)
- Retail Management Certificate from the Western Association of Food Chains (WAFC)
- Retail Sales Associate Certification from the NRF Foundation
- Certified Retail Sales Professional from the American Retail Federation (ARF)

#### **LEISURE AND HOSPITALITY**

The Leisure and Hospitality industry sector includes establishments that provide customers with lodging, entertainment, and/or recreational services. This sector includes a wide range of businesses such as hotels, restaurants, bars, amusement parks, casinos, and other tourism-related businesses. The leisure and hospitality industry plays a significant role in the economy and is an important source of employment, particularly for young people and part-time workers.

#### **INDUSTRY-VALUED CREDENTIALS**

- Certified Hospitality Supervisor (CHS)
- Certified Lodging Security Director (CLSD)
- Certified Lodging Manager (CLM)
- Certified Pool/Spa Operator (CPO)
- Certified Restaurant Manager (CRM)
- Foodservice Management Professional (FMP)
- ServSafe Certification
- Wine and Spirit Education Trust (WSET) Level 1, 2, and 3
- American Hotel & Lodging Educational Institute (AHLEI) Certification Programs
- Council on Hotel, Restaurant, and Institutional Education (CHRIE) Certification Programs

#### **TRANSPORTATION, DISTRIBUTION AND LOGISTICS**

Transportation Distribution and Logistics (TDL) is an industry sector that involves the movement of goods and people from one location to another. It includes various modes of transportation, such as air, land, and sea, as well as the infrastructure that supports

transportation, such as ports, highways, and railroads. TDL also includes logistics and supply chain management, which involves the planning, coordination, and management of the movement of goods from one place to another, including the storage, handling, and distribution of those goods. This sector is essential for businesses that need to transport goods and services, as well as for the overall functioning of the economy.

#### **INDUSTRY-VALUED CREDENTIALS**

- Commercial Driver's License (CDL)
- Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) Certification
- Certified Logistics Technician (CLT)
- Certified Supply Chain Professional (CSCP)
- Global Logistics Associate (GLA)
- Global Logistics Technician (GLT)
- Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC)

#### **FINANCE AND INSURANCE**

The Finance and Insurance industry sector comprises establishments primarily engaged in financial transactions, such as facilitating the flow of funds, investing, and managing risk. This sector includes entities such as banks, credit unions, securities and commodities exchanges, insurance carriers, and investment firms. The Finance and Insurance sector is a vital part of the economy, providing a range of financial services and products to businesses and individuals alike, including banking services, insurance products, investment advice, and financial planning service.

#### **INDUSTRY-VALUED CREDENTIALS**

- Certified Financial Planner (CFP)
- Certified Public Accountant (CPA)
- Certified Internal Auditor (CIA)
- Chartered Property Casualty Underwriter (CPCU)
- Certified Risk Manager (CRM)
- Chartered Life Underwriter (CLU)
- Associate in Risk Management (ARM)
- Certified Fraud Examiner (CFE)
- Certified Government Financial Manager (CGFM)

#### **TECHNOLOGY**

The technology industry, also known as the tech industry, refers to a range of companies that develop and manufacture technology products, services, and software. This includes companies involved in computer hardware, software development, electronics, telecommunications, artificial intelligence, and other related fields. The tech industry is known for its innovation and disruption, with companies frequently introducing new products and services that transform the way people live and work.

#### **INDUSTRY-VALUED CREDENTIALS**

- CompTIA A+ certification for entry-level IT professionals
- Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP) for cybersecurity professionals
- Salesforce Certified Administrator for professionals working with Salesforce customer relationship management (CRM) software.
- Certified Scrum Master for project managers in the software development industry
- Microsoft Certified Solutions Expert (MCSE) for IT professionals who specialize in Microsoft technologies.
- Certified Ethical Hacker (CEH) for information security professionals who specialize in ethical hacking and penetration testing.
- AWS Certified Solutions Architect for professionals working with Amazon Web Services (AWS) cloud computing services.

#### **BIOPHARMA & LIFE SCIENCES**

The Biopharma & Life Sciences industry is a sector that encompasses companies involved in the research, development, manufacturing, and distribution of biopharmaceuticals, drugs, medical devices, and other products used in the diagnosis and treatment of diseases. This industry includes biotechnology companies, pharmaceutical manufacturers, medical device manufacturers, and contract research organizations, among others. The biopharma and life sciences industry plays a crucial role in improving the health and well-being of individuals, as well as advancing medical knowledge and technology.

#### **INDUSTRY-VALUED CREDENTIALS**

- Certified Pharmaceutical GMP Professional (CPGP)
- Certified Clinical Research Professional (CCRP)
- Medical Laboratory Technician Certification (MLT)
- Medical Laboratory Scientist Certification (MLS)
- Certified Biotech Manufacturing Specialist (CBMS)
- Certified Quality Auditor (CQA)

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- Certified Quality Technician (CQT)
- Certified Quality Engineer (CQE)
- Certified Regulatory Affairs Professional (RAC)
- Good Clinical Practice (GCP) Certification

### **LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS**

The Union County Workforce Development Board is committed to providing high-quality training and education services to Union County residents in accordance with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, particularly in support of informed customer choice in the post-COVID era. To achieve this objective, the Union County Workforce Development Board prioritizes the use of effective Learning Management Systems (LMS) to enhance the learning experience for Union County participants and to improve job placement and retention outcomes.

As part of our commitment to excellence, we will ensure that available Learning Management Systems meet the requirements set forth by Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, including providing access to training and educational materials, tracking individual progress, and maintaining accurate records of completion. The Union County Workforce Development Board will regularly evaluate and update the list of available Learning Management Systems to ensure that they continue to meet the needs of Union County residents and to align with our quality standards.

To support training outcomes, the Union County Workforce Development Board will prioritize the following strategies related to available Learning Management Systems:

- Provide supportive service funding to cover the expenses for books and examination fees, as determined appropriate by the American Job Center Operator.
- Provide ongoing training and support for staff and clients on how to effectively use the Learning Management Systems, including troubleshooting, reporting issues, and optimizing their learning experience.
- Regularly assess and improve the functionality and effectiveness of the Learning Management Systems, including through client feedback, usage data, and performance metrics.
- Collaborate with relevant stakeholders, including Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act program administrators, education and training providers, and other community partners, to ensure that our Learning Management Systems meets industry standards and best practices.

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- Ensure that our Learning Management Systems is accessible and user-friendly for clients with diverse learning needs and abilities, including those with disabilities, non-native speakers of English, and those with limited access to technology.
- Use data and feedback to continuously improve our Learning Management Systems, adapt to emerging trends, and best practices in the education and training field.

The Union County Workforce Development Board is committed to providing our clients with the tools and resources they need to succeed in their training and education goals. By prioritizing our Learning Management System and implementing these strategies, we will help our clients achieve greater success and meet the demands of the 21st century workforce.

### **AMAZON WEB SERVICE TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION**

Amazon Web Services offers a comprehensive training and certification program designed to help individuals and organizations develop and validate their cloud computing skills and expertise. The program includes courses, hands-on labs, and exams across diverse topics, including cloud architecture, development, operations, security, big data, and machine learning. The Amazon Web Services training and certification program consists of several levels, starting with foundational level courses and certifications and progressing to more advanced and specialized certifications. The certifications are globally recognized and demonstrate that individuals possess the skills and knowledge needed to design, deploy, and operate applications and infrastructure on Amazon Web Services.

### **CODECADEMY**

Codecademy is an online learning platform that provides interactive coding lessons for beginners and intermediate learners. It offers courses on various programming languages, including Python, JavaScript, Ruby, and SQL, as well as web development, data science, and machine learning. Codecademy courses include coding challenges, projects, and quizzes to help learners gain practical coding skills. The platform also provides a free plan and a paid plan with additional features, such as live support and certificates upon completion of courses.

### **COURSERA**

Coursera is an online learning platform that offers a wide range of courses and degree programs from top universities and organizations worldwide. It partners with over 200 leading universities and companies to offer courses in a variety of subject areas, including business, computer science, data science, language learning, and more. Coursera offers both free and paid courses, and learners can earn certificates and degrees upon

completion of certain programs. The platform also offers features such as interactive quizzes, peer assessments, and discussion forums to enhance the learning experience.

### **GETSETUP**

The New Jersey Department of Human Services, through the Division of Aging Services, has secured the services of GetSetUp, which provides live, interactive classes, and workshops on a variety of topics, including technology, health and wellness, art, and more. The classes are designed to be small and personal, with a maximum of 25 participants, and are led by experienced instructors who are experts in their fields. The platform also offers a social component, allowing participants to connect with one another and build a community around shared interest. GetSetUp is designed to be easy to use, with no special software or equipment required. Participants can join from a computer, tablet, or smartphone with internet access.

### **GOOGLE CAREER CERTIFICATION**

Google Career Certificates are online training programs designed to prepare learners for entry-level roles in high-growth, high-demand fields, such as IT support, data analytics, project management, and user experience design. The programs are developed and taught by Google employees and other industry experts and are intended to teach practical, job-ready skills that can be applied directly in the workplace. Google offers scholarships for some of these programs, and successful completion of the courses can lead to professional certifications that are recognized by employers in the relevant industries.

### **IBM SKILLSBUILD**

IBM SkillsBuild is a free digital learning platform that offers training and personalized learning journeys for learners of all levels, from entry-level to advanced. It offers a variety of courses, including tech and professional skills, and is designed to help learners develop the knowledge and skills needed to pursue new careers or advance in their current roles. The platform offers access to industry-recognized certifications, and learners can connect with mentors and peers to build their professional network. IBM SkillsBuild is available worldwide and is designed to be accessible to anyone with an internet connection.

### **LINKEDIN LEARNING**

LinkedIn Learning is an online learning platform offering a wide range of video courses on several topics, including business, technology, creative skills, and more. LinkedIn Learning provides access to courses on a subscription basis and allows users to learn at their own pace, with the ability to pause, rewind, and repeat course content as needed. The platform also offers personalized course recommendations based on the user's interests and career goals. Additionally, users can earn certificates of completion to highlight their newly acquired skills on their LinkedIn profiles.



## **METRIX LEARNING**

Metrix Learning has partnered with the New Jersey Department of Labor, the Union County Board of County Commissioners, and the Union County Workforce Development Board to provide a wide range of courses and learning opportunities for individuals looking to upskill or reskill. The platform offers courses and certification programs across various domains, including information technology, healthcare, and business management. The courses are designed to help learners acquire the knowledge, skills, and competencies required to succeed in their chosen field. Metrix Learning also provides assessment tools to help learners identify their strengths and weaknesses and create customized learning plans based on their career goals. The platform is often used by workforce development agencies, educational institutions, and employers to provide career training and professional development opportunities to their clients and employees.

## **SKILLSOFT**

Skillsoft is an eLearning platform that provides online training and professional development solutions for individuals and organizations. Skillsoft offers a variety of courses and resources in areas such as leadership development, business skills, technology and developer training, compliance, and certification prep. Its learning solutions are delivered through a variety of modalities including video-based courses, virtual instructor-led training, books, audiobooks, and other multimedia formats. Skillsoft is used by companies of all sizes, from small businesses to large enterprises, and its content is designed to help individuals enhance their skills and knowledge in various areas of interest.

## **SKILLSTORM**

SkillStorm is a consulting and outsourcing company that provides technology and digital services, including software development, cybersecurity, data management, and cloud computing. They offer training and workforce development services to businesses and organizations to help them build their talent pipelines and address skill gaps in their workforce. SkillStorm's workforce development programs include on-the-job training, apprenticeships, and bootcamps that provide hands-on experience and industry-recognized credentials.

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## **STATE EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING COMMISSION QUESTIONS**

A. One-Stop Service Delivery and Flow: Please provide an overview of the role that partners, programs, and services required by WIOA play in your One Stop Career Center system regionally and locally, as well as specific details regarding the cultivation and maintenance of these partnerships and the integration of supports into service delivery flow. Please utilize the Partner-Service matrix found on page 23 of this document. Partners, programs, and services include:

- Title I Adult
- Title I Dislocated Worker
- Title I Youth
- Title II Adult Education/Literacy
- Title III Wagner-Peyser
- Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation
- Title III Unemployment Compensation
- WorkFirst New Jersey
- Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers Program
- Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Program
- Senior Community Service Employment Program
- Jobs for Veterans State Grant
- Reentry Employment Opportunities
- Title I Job Corps
- Title I YouthBuild
- Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs
- HUD Employment and Training
- HHS Employment and Training

### **Local Plan**

- Please provide an overview of how the full range of partners services are integrated and delivered at the One Stop centers, including a discussion of the utilization of state and local staff, in compliance with federal and state law. A diagram of customer flow and services provision may be included. The LWDA should include in this description plans for services delivered by all of the above-mentioned programs.
- Please reflect on the questions included in the regional plan section. At the local level, how will the LWDB help to support the development and integration of One Stop partners, programs, and services at the local level?
- Please describe how client voice is and will be included in local efforts.

### **Regional Plan**

- Please explain how the region will help support the integration of partners, programs, and services across all One Stop centers in the region.
  - What partner and program relationships can be developed at the regional level to support integration of services across One Stop Career Centers?
  - What common models or recommendations for operational efforts related to One Stop delivery and flow might be established at the regional level?
  - What mechanisms or resources can be organized regionally to support partner and service integration and coordinated service delivery in an ongoing way?
  - What other regional partnerships can be leveraged to support partnership and service delivery across the regions One Stop Career centers?
  - Please describe how the region will integrate the voice of those who are served into program development, design, and operation. Regional Youth Voice efforts must be described.
  - Please describe any efforts at the regional level to engage and outreach to new and existing partners to enhance service delivery across the region's One Stop Career Centers.
    - How might partnerships at the regional level enhance and support service delivery related to:
      - Supportive services: mental health, substance abuse, housing, transportation, childcare services
      - Employer engagement: Business/trade organizations, Economic development
      - Specific target populations: Youth services, LGBTQIA organizations, organizations promoting DEI

## **TITLE I ADULT**

The Union County American Job Center plays a critical role in providing career services as authorized under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. Specifically, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Adult formula program provides career and training services to job seekers aged 18 and older through the American Job Center network, with a priority for serving low-income individuals, recipients of public assistance, and those with basic skills deficiencies. The Union County American Job Center delivers individualized career services and is responsible for combined career planning and alignment of service delivery with other core programs.

The Union County Workforce Development Board has provided policy guidance on deploying transitional jobs as a form of work-experience as a tool to assist adult populations. Transitional jobs are short-term, wage-paid work experience opportunities that are subsidized up to 100% and are only available for individuals with barriers to employment who are chronically unemployed or have an inconsistent work history. These jobs take place within an employee-employer relationship and provide an opportunity for individuals to develop workplace skills. Transitional jobs are best fit to assist long-term unemployed individuals, ex-offenders, and individuals who have exhausted benefits derived from the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families program, in accordance with the Work First New Jersey guidelines.

## **TITLE I DISLOCATED WORKER**

The Union County American Job Center offers Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Dislocated Worker programs which provide career and training services to job seekers who meet the definition of a dislocated worker, including separating military service members transitioning to civilian careers. The program's goal is to help individuals return to the workforce with the skills they need to obtain quality employment in in-demand industries, as identified through labor market data provide by the United States Department of Labor, the New Jersey Department of Labor, and the Union County Workforce Development Board.

The Union County American Job Center offers the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Dislocated Worker Program through which it provides career and training services to help individuals who have been laid off or lost their jobs due to no fault of their own. The program is designed to assist dislocated workers in finding new employment as quickly as possible, and to provide the skills and training they need to be successful in in-demand industries. The services provided through the Dislocated Worker Program are delivered through the Union County American Job Center network and are tailored to the individual needs of each participant. The program is identified as a core program under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and works in partnership with other core and

one-stop partner programs to provide a comprehensive and integrated system of education and training services. The goal of the Dislocated Worker Program is to help individuals return to the workforce with the skills they need to obtain quality employment in high-demand industries.

## **TITLE I YOUTH**

The Union County American Job Center, through its Youth Forward, coordinates with core programs partners the delivery of career training to support young adults in education and in the workforce, specifically. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Adult program is offered to individuals aged 18-24 who may be eligible for both programs and may be co-enrolled within the two programs simultaneously.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Youth program, as managed by the Youth Forward Program in Union County, provides education and career services to young adults aged 14 to 24 who face significant barriers to employment. The program aims to help young adults obtain the skills and credentials they need to succeed in the labor market and offers a range of services, including employment opportunities, skills training, mentoring, counseling, financial literacy education, and post-secondary education and training. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Youth program is delivered through the one-stop delivery system at the Union County American Job Centers and works in partnership with other core programs under Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act to provide integrated services to eligible youth.

Specifically, the Union County Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act youth program, as administered by Youth Forward, offers the following 14 program elements to youth aged 14-24, pursuant to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Section 129:

- Year-round and summer youth employment opportunities
- Occupational skills training
- Leadership development and civic engagement opportunities
- Supportive services
- Adult mentoring
- Follow-up services
- Comprehensive guidance and counseling
- Financial literacy education
- Entrepreneurial skills training
- Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education and training
- Registered apprenticeships

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- Post-secondary education and training
- High school equivalency programs
- Programs and activities that support education and career success for youth with disabilities.

According to the National Youth Employment Coalition report titled, *Opportunity Youth and Employer Engagement* October 2022, five million 16–24-year-olds are neither in school nor employed, according to research by Measure of America. These **Opportunity Youth** represent a missed new pool of talent for the U.S. economy and employers. The COVID-19 pandemic has made the task of connecting youth to work more urgent. The COVID-19 pandemic, as with any economic downturn, makes for a particularly challenging time for young people, especially Opportunity Youth.

Many Community-Based Organizations apply a career pathway framework to encourage career exploration, while also preparing young people to enter jobs in one or more industry sectors. For Opportunity Youth, a pathway model can provide what more privileged young people often take for granted: a way to identify a promising field, gain the necessary competencies to prepare for a family-sustaining, long-term career, and then secure employment in that field. Pathways models usually include:

- Career exploration opportunities (interest inventories, introductions to workers and workplaces).
- The basic skills needed to succeed in postsecondary education or training that leads to jobs in those sectors.
- Internships and initial work experience in those jobs and sectors.
- Continued training opportunities to advance while working; and
- Supportive services throughout.

## **YOUTH FORWARD**

Under the Department of Human Services, Youth Forward concentrates on facilitating the acquisition of life skills, education, work experience, and exposure necessary for the youth to have successful careers, become responsible citizens, and family members. Youth Forward's interactive office at 1143-1145 East Jersey Street, Elizabeth, NJ, and at the Union County American Job Center in Plainfield, NJ to ensure optimal service delivery. Division Youth Services will be a vital partner that will connect various stakeholders such as the Union County Workforce Development Board, American Job Center, Department of Human Services, Juvenile Detention, Probation, Department of Education, Department of



Child Protection, and Permanency to promote collaboration and enhance successful outcomes for the youth served by the center.

Youth Forward aims to provide Workforce and Innovation Opportunity Act services to In-School Youth and Out of School Youth in Elizabeth, Hillside, and Plainfield by collaborating with the superintendents of the respective schools. The program plans to establish a network of district superintendents, school principals, and school guidance counselors to help optimize program resources and increase the likelihood of positive outcomes. School guidance counselors will play a critical role in identifying eligible youth who stand to benefit from Workforce and Innovation Opportunity Act services and marketing the services to them.

### **SIMON YOUTH ACADEMY**

The Union County Vocational-Technical School District manages the Simon Youth Academy located at the Mills at Jersey Gardens in Elizabeth, NJ. The Simon Youth Academy will serve out-of-school youth, between the ages of 16 and 24, by providing them with the resources and opportunity to earn a high school diploma by meeting the requirements set forth by the New Jersey Department of Education.

The Simon Youth Academy students are recruited from around Union County's 21 municipalities and offered a blended learning and flexible scheduling model will be utilized where students will complete academic. Students who attend the Simon Youth Academy will work towards earning their high school diploma as per the requirements, while at the same time being exposed to career explorations, experiences, and opportunities as part of the 14 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act elements. Additional information on the Simon Youth Academy can be found in Section III. Regional and Local Plan Development under Focus Group 5: Out of School Youth Simon Youth Academy Participant

The U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory report on *Protecting Youth Mental Health* highlights the need to prioritize the mental health of children and adolescents. The report provides data on the prevalence of mental health issues among young people, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on their mental health, and the disparities in accessing mental health care. It also offers strategies to address these challenges, such as increasing awareness and reducing stigma, promoting prevention and early intervention, and improving access to evidence-based treatments. The report emphasizes the importance of collaboration among families, educators, health care providers, policymakers, and communities to ensure that young people receive the support they need to thrive. Below are key highlights from the report that the Union County Workforce Development Board recommends:

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- Implement evidence-based programs that promote healthy development, support children, youth, and their families, and increase their resilience. Examples include youth enrichment programs (e.g., mentoring, after-school programs), skill-based parenting and family relationship approaches, and other efforts that address social determinants of youth health such as poverty, exposure to trauma, and lack of access to education and health care.
- Address the unique mental health needs of at-risk youth, such as racial and ethnic minorities, LGBTQ+ youth, and youth with disabilities. For example, actively recruit and engage populations who have historically been prevented from equal access to opportunities and may benefit the most from services.
- Educate the public about the importance of mental health, and reduce negative stereotypes, bias, and stigma around mental illness. Community groups can play a key role in fostering open dialogue about mental health at the local level and correcting misconceptions and biases. For example, community groups can partner with trusted messengers such as faith leaders and health care professionals to speak to community members about youth mental health needs.

Due to the rise in mental health concerns both Youth Forward and the Simon Youth Academy have invested in enhancing their supportive services related to mental health and substance abuse concerns, which they believe are closely connected. Both programs have obtained services from licensed mental health professionals, social workers, and community mentors such as the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity.

## **TITLE II ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY**

Union College of Union County is community college and has been selected to lead a consortium of American Job Center network community partners to provide Adult Education and Literacy Act services—as authorized under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Title II—provides funding and support for adult education and literacy programs. The goal of the program is to help low-skilled adults obtain the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in the workforce and improve their quality of life. Title II of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act funds a range of activities, including basic literacy and English as a Second Language instruction, work-based learning opportunities, and digital literacy training, among others. The program is designed to provide individualized services that are tailored to the needs of each learner, and to offer a range of supportive services that help students overcome barriers to success.

Section II. One Stop Career Center Operations, Sub-Section D—Detailed Partnership and Service Integration contains detailed information on partnership and service integration.

### **TITLE III WAGNER-PEYSER**

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service is a national employment service established under the Wagner-Peyser Act. It is designed to provide a range of employment and job placement services to job seekers, including job search assistance, resume development, job matching and referral, and labor market information. The Employment Service is delivered through a network of state-administered employment service offices, known as American Job Centers and One-Stop Career Centers. The Wagner-Peyser Act requires states to provide these services without charge to job seekers and employers. The goal of Employment Service, as authorized through the Wagner-Peyser Act, is to connect job seekers with job openings and to help employers find the skilled workers they need to meet their business needs. Employment Service is an important component of the larger Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Out-of-School Youth stem of education and training programs and is a key partner in the delivery of comprehensive services to job seekers and employers.

At the Union County American Job Center, the primary services provided by Employment Service staff are called labor exchange services and fall under the category of basic career services outlined in Section 4 of the Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 19-16. All basic career services are offered by Employment Service staff in collaboration with other American Job Center Network Partners. Employment Service staff also provide individualized career services, particularly for individuals with employment barriers such as the long-term unemployed, as defined by Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act section 3(24).

Employment Service staff members have specific duties when serving unemployment insurance claimants and implementing components of the state's UI program. These duties include:

- Coordination of basic career services, especially labor exchange services.
- Targeting UI claimants for job search assistance and employment referrals.
- Implementing state UI work test requirements, including obtaining/documenting information for eligibility assessments, and providing job search assistance and employment referrals
- Referring UI claimants to and helping with applying for training and education resources and programs, such as Pell Grants, GI Bill, Veterans Educational

Assistance, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, higher education assistance, and Vocational Rehabilitation

- Outreach, intake (including identifying Unemployment Insurance claimants likely to exhaust benefits through the state's Worker Profiling and Reemployment Services system), and orientation to information and services available through the American Job Center network.
- Providing information and assistance with filing Unemployment Insurance claims, including meaningful assistance to individuals with language or access barriers - meaningful assistance includes helping in the American Job Center.

Section II. One Stop Career Center Operations, Sub-Section D—Detailed Partnership and Service Integration, contains detailed information on partnership and service integration.

#### **TITLE IV VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION**

The Vocational Rehabilitation Program—as authorized under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Title IV—is a federal-state program designed to help individuals with disabilities achieve their employment goals. The program provides a range of services, including assessment, counseling, job training, and support services, to help individuals with disabilities prepare for, obtain, and maintain employment. Eligibility for VR services is determined on a case-by-case basis and is based on the individual's ability to benefit from the services offered. VR services are provided through a network of state-administered rehabilitation agencies. The goal of the VR program is to help individuals with disabilities reach their maximum level of employment and independence, and to support their integration into the workforce and the community. The VR program is funded through a combination of federal and state dollars and is authorized under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

Section II. One Stop Career Center Operations, Sub-Section C—Service Expansion and Accessibility in the One Stop Career Centers contains detailed information on partnership and service integration.

#### **TITLE III UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION**

Title III of the Social Security Act, also known as the Unemployment Compensation program, provides financial assistance to eligible individuals who have lost their jobs through no fault of their own. The program is administered by the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development Board and is funded through a federal tax on employers. Eligible individuals may receive Unemployment Compensation benefits for a limited period while they search for new employment. The benefits received are based on

the individual's prior earnings and may vary from state to state. In addition to financial assistance, many states offer job search and job training services to Unemployment Compensation recipients to help them find new employment. The goal of the Unemployment Compensation program is to provide temporary financial assistance to eligible individuals who have lost their jobs and to support their efforts to find new employment.

### **WORK FIRST NEW JERSEY**

Work First New Jersey is a welfare-to-work program in the State of New Jersey. The program is designed to provide temporary financial assistance and support services to low-income families who are in need. The main goal of Work First New Jersey is to help families become self-sufficient by providing job training, education, and work opportunities. The program provides cash assistance to eligible families and requires recipients to participate in work-related activities such as job search, education, and training. The duration of assistance is limited, and recipients are expected to find employment and become self-sufficient within a certain period. Work First New Jersey is funded by the state and federal government and is administered by the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development. The program is designed to help families break the cycle of poverty and achieve long-term economic stability.

### **MIGRANT AND SEASONAL FARMWORKERS PROGRAM**

The Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers Program is a federal program that provides employment and training services to migrant and seasonal farmworkers in the United States. The program aims to help these workers, who often face significant barriers to employment, to improve their job skills and access better job opportunities to achieve self-sufficiency. Services provided by the program may include job training, career counseling, job placement assistance, and other support services. While the Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers Program is an important opportunity for individuals within impacted by economic fluctuations in the agricultural industry, the County of Union's labor force is not impacted by same.

### **TRADE ADJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

The Trade Adjustment Assistance Program is a federal program designed to aid workers who have lost their jobs due to foreign trade. The program provides a range of services to help eligible workers return to suitable employment, including training, job search allowances, and relocation allowances. The Trade Adjustment Assistance Program also provides income support in the form of Trade Readjustment Allowances for workers who are enrolled in full-time training programs. The Trade Adjustment Assistance Program is administered by the Department of Labor and is funded through the Trade Adjustment Assistance Reauthorization Act of 2015. The program provides support to workers who

have been impacted by the effects of globalization, including outsourcing and the growth of international trade.

### **SENIOR COMMUNITY SERVICE EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM**

The Senior Community Service Employment Program is a federal program that provides part-time, community service job opportunities to low-income persons aged 55 and older, while allowing them to build job skills and gain work experience. The program's goal is to assist participants in finding unsubsidized employment and help them transition to private sector employment. The Senior Community Service Employment Program is administered by the U.S. Department of Labor and is supported by a network of local, non-profit organizations and state governments.

### **JOBS FOR VETERANS STATE GRANT**

The Jobs for Veterans State Grant is a federal grant program aimed at helping veterans, including disabled veterans, find employment. It provides funding for job training, job search assistance, and other employment-related services to eligible veterans. The grant is administered by the Department of Labor and aims to support and enhance state employment services for veterans, providing them with the skills and resources needed to successfully transition into the civilian workforce.

Section II. One Stop Career Center Operations, Sub-Section D—Detailed Partnership and Service Integration, contains detailed information on partnership and service integration.

### **REENTRY EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

The Reentry Employment Opportunities program was created under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act is designed to assist individuals who have been involved in the criminal justice system in reintegrating into the labor market and finding stable employment. The program provides a range of services including job training, job placement, and support services to help individuals overcome barriers to employment and successfully transition back into the workforce. The Reentry Employment Opportunities program may be offered through various organizations, such as government agencies or non-profit organizations, and may target specific populations, such as returning veterans or individuals with disabilities.

Since 2011, the Urban League of Union County has been operating the Reconnections program as a prisoner re-entry initiative. Over 1,500 previously incarcerated men and women, who were released on parole, probation, or maxed out, have received wraparound services to meet their various needs in the Union County community. The program is located at the Elizabeth and Plainfield American Job Centers and assists former

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inmates in accessing services and resources to develop productive skills and ensure their successful reintegration into the community. Its primary goal is to lead individuals to self-sufficiency and reduce the recidivism rate in Union County.

Upon entering the Reconnections program, an experienced case manager assesses each client in social services, education, and employment. The case manager works with each client to develop a clear goal action plan tailored to their specific needs, empowering them to set goals that they desire to meet. The program uses a supportive team approach and coordinates with staff from government, community, faith-based organizations, and peers to meet the client's needs.

The Reconnections program aids in employment, education, social services, legal matters, housing, healthcare, drug, and mental health, mentoring, life skills, peer support, identification, and transportation. Career planning assistance is provided by the Urban League staff and/or American Job Center or NJ Division of Vocational Rehabilitation staff, and academic resources are offered to provide guidance in enrolling in basic skills, GED, vocational training classes, certificate programs, or higher education. The returning citizens are referred to Union County Division of Social Services, New Jersey Department of Labor and Community Resources, Mental Health Counseling, and Substance Abuse Counseling based on their needs.

The program also includes mentoring support provided in group sessions and individually, incorporating a mentoring component and partnering with Fountain Baptist Church in Summit and First Baptist Church in Hillside.

The program was developed through a partnership between Urban League of Union County, United Way of Greater Union County, and the County of Union County Department of Human Services, along with other affiliates, such as New Jersey Department of Parole, Union County Vicinage of Probation, N.J. Department of Corrections, and Union County Division of Social Services, Neighborhood Healthcare Services, Legal Services of New Jersey, Trinitas RWJ Barnabas Health, Union County Re-entry Task Force, Community, and Faith-Based Organizations.

In 2022, the Reconnections Program enrolled 183 clients and generated 1294 service referrals. Notably, 65 clients obtained full-time employment, 75 completed employment-based workshops, 57 completed mentoring-based workshops, and 60 completed life-skills workshops. The clients also participated in various events, such as the Black Business Expo, financial literacy seminars, Linked-In Session, and Urban League of Union County Equal Opportunity Day.



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Moving forward, the Urban League of Union County aims to continue gaining new funding to expand its program services, serve more clients, and stay true to its mission of empowering communities and changing lives.

### **TITLE I JOB CORPS**

Title I Job Corps is a comprehensive and intensive education and training program for low-income young people ages 16-24. The program provides education, vocational training, job placement, and support services to help participants attain the skills and credentials needed to succeed in the workforce. Participants live and receive training at Job Corps centers across the country. The goal of the Job Corps program is to help participants improve their economic self-sufficiency and achieve long-term success in the workforce.

Representatives from Job Corps are available every week to meet with interested youths through scheduled appointments, conducting an intake, assessment, and orientation before providing follow-up support.

### **TITLE I YOUTHBUILD**

The Title I YouthBuild program is a federal program under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act that provides education and job training services to young adults, with a focus on those who are considered at-risk and in poverty. The goal of YouthBuild is to help these young people develop the skills and education they need to succeed in the workforce and achieve their career goals. The program provides a range of services including vocational training, educational opportunities, counseling and support services, and leadership development. The program is designed to help participants overcome barriers to success and achieve self-sufficiency.

According to the National Youth Employment Coalition report titled, Opportunity Youth and Employer Engagement October 2022, youth often miss opportunities to explore different careers, develop soft skills, gain social capital, or set long-term goals. The report notes YouthBuild USA, the technical assistance provider and convener of program seeks to address these challenges by shifting more YouthBuild sites to focus on work-based learning. By deeply integrating more kinds of education and work experiences into YouthBuild programs, leaders hope to increase career exploration and social capital-building opportunities.

The Housing Authority of the City of Elizabeth received a YouthBuild grant of \$1.5 million over a 40-month period to support 84 young adults aged 16-24. The program started in September 2022 and serves both high school dropouts and graduates with low basic skills. The program aims to assist youth in obtaining their high school equivalency diploma via the General Education Development exam or increasing their skill level in math and

reading. Youth receiving national certifications will work as paid apprentices in the industry they are certified in. All youth will engage in community service and construction projects, and the program will help youth acquire national certifications in areas such as the National Center for Construction Education and Research and Certified Nursing Assistant. The Housing Authority of the City of Elizabeth owns and operates eight properties, administers 1500 Section 8 vouchers, and aims to improve the economic outlook of Elizabeth residents.

### **CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

Career and Technical Education programs are educational programs that focus on providing students with the skills, knowledge, and experience necessary for a specific trade, industry, or technical career. These programs typically provide hands-on training and technical instruction in areas such as manufacturing, construction, information technology, healthcare, and more. The goal of Career and Technical Education programs is to prepare students for in-demand careers, while also providing them with a foundation of academic and employability skills. These programs are typically offered in high schools, vocational schools, and community colleges, and may be funded by state or federal agencies.

Career and Technical Education offers learners the chance to earn valuable industry credentials, college credit, and practical workplace experience by combining a rigorous academic core with a high-level technical curriculum. In Elizabeth, NJ, the Career Technical Education program includes Graphic Design, Auto Tech, Commercial Foods, Computer Networking, Computer Programming, and other programs that align with industry standards. The Career and Technical Education program aims to equip students with the skills necessary to pursue careers in high-skill, high-wage, or in-demand industries, and we fund initiatives such as industry-recognized certification exams (e.g., ASE, AutoCAD, Cisco Networking, and Adobe), transportation costs to industry partners, instructional supplies, and software.

To increase the number of work-based learning opportunities for the students, the Career and Technical Education program in Elizabeth is expanding their partnerships with business and industry leaders to develop a model that works for everyone involved. Their efforts also include expanding professional development opportunities for teachers to become Work Based Learning advisors. They are funding initiatives to prepare our students for these experiences by providing salaries for Work Based Learning Advisors, instructional supplies, and equipment for Career and Technical Education programs. By developing more work-based learning opportunities, we aim to provide our students with valuable hands-on experience that will help them excel in their careers.

### **HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING**

The Housing and Urban Development Employment and Training program is a program under the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development that provides employment and training services to eligible individuals to help them attain self-sufficiency and improve their quality of life. The program is designed to serve individuals who face barriers to employment and who need job training, placement, and other supportive services. The services provided under the HUD Employment and Training program may include job readiness training, job search assistance, skills training, and on-the-job training. The program is typically administered by local public housing authorities and community-based organizations and is designed to help eligible individuals obtain the skills and experience they need to obtain and retain employment.

### **HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING**

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Employment and Training programs aim to provide education, job training and employment services to individuals in need of assistance in entering the workforce or improving their current employment status. These programs may be designed for specific populations, such as low-income families, individuals with disabilities, or those who are experiencing homelessness. They may provide services such as job search assistance, job training, skills development, and support services to help individuals achieve and maintain employment. The goal of HHS Employment and Training programs is to help individuals increase their income and improve their overall economic stability.

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## **STATE EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING COMMISSION QUESTIONS**

Operational Priorities: Describe the operations of the workforce development system, including the integration of core WIOA partners to achieve strategic vision and goals, and the role of the LWDB in helping to set strategies and provide guidance that ensures alignment of operational activities. This description should include specific details related to:

- Adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities that reflect a diversity of service pathways and support customer choice
- Use of training contracts and individual training accounts that support achievement of industry-valued credentials, as well as policies and procedures for including assessment of training provider performance in conjunction with the ETPL in contracting decisions and customer choice
- Ensuring priority of service for adult career and training services will be given to recipients of public assistance, other low- income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient in accordance with WIOA, as well as any additional priorities of service that your LWDA seeks to establish based on analysis of data and local policy
- Policies and practices for providing Veterans services and prioritizing services for veterans as defined in TEGL 10-09 and NJ WINS #11-16
- Youth workforce development activities in the LWDA's, including details about different pathways available to youth and provision of the 14 program elements through One-Stop Career Center activities, procured youth programming and activities, as well as youth programs and services that are leveraged through co-enrollment and/or other non-WIOA funded partnerships. Include details about how your LWDA will satisfy the requirement that 75% of funds be use for Out-of-School Youth and 20% of total youth funds be used for work experience.
- Integration of technology and data to support seamless intake processes and case management, track trends and progress related to programs and participants locally; include how technology will be utilized to support engagement of participants and delivery of services.
- Lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic, actions taken and how/whether they will be maintained

### **Local Plan**

- Please provide an overview of how the One Stop service delivery and flow will help to achieve specific strategic priorities identified in your plan, specifically as it relates to the bulleted elements highlighted above.

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- Please provide a clear description of the roles that the Local Workforce Development Board, One Stop Operator, and One Stop Career Services provider will play in supporting and implementing operational priorities.
- Please highlight how the LWDB will integrate region- and LWDB-led strategies to strengthen operations and service delivery.

**Regional Plan**

- Please describe any region-wide operations/service priorities that should inform and guide operations/services across local areas.
- Please describe the supports that the region will offer in supporting regional operations/service priorities and/or common local priorities.
  - Will the implementation of specific program or services occur at the regional level?
  - Will the region offer specific funding to support these service priorities?
  - Will the region offer specific training to support the implementation of these priorities?
  - Will the region support data collection?
- Please describe any role that the region may play in supporting operations at the local level by coordinating activities related to:
  - Outreach/recruitment
  - Service delivery related to, e.g., ITAs, work-based learning, and/or supportive services
  - Follow-up supports and achievement of successful outcomes for participants
- Please describe opportunities for the region to support programs and/or services related to specific target populations highlighted in the bullets above.

## **THE UNION COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES AS COMPREHENSIVE ONE-STOP OPERATOR**

The Union County Department of Human Services is the One-Stop Operator for the Union County Workforce Development Area and the Operator has management oversight of the provision of career services offered through the comprehensive American Job Center for adults, dislocated workers, and youth, pursuant to the procurement requirements of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and of Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, also known as Uniform Guidance. In addition to managing the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act PROGRAMS, the Union County Department of Human Services has the supervisory responsibility of the Division of Social Services, which provides services to Work First New Jersey participants, including individuals approved to receive Temporary Assistance to Needy Families, General Assistance, and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program funding.

## **OVERVIEW OF THE UNION COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**

The Union County Department of Human Services has a mission to empower all Union County individuals, families, and communities to reach their maximum level of self-sufficiency and quality of life through a comprehensive, accessible, and inclusive approach to service delivery and care. The vision of the department is to have a coordinated system of services that work together to improve the lives of Union County residents and build stronger communities. The department values and operates with principles such as respecting and valuing clients, engaging with the community, promoting innovation, being responsive, supporting employee excellence, being accountable, being transparent, communicating effectively, and promoting trust.

## **DIVISION OF AGING**

The Union County Division on Aging is a designated Area Agency on Aging that is responsible for connecting the State, County, and local government communities, and residents. It leads the charge in providing information, referral, and assistance to older adults, their caregivers, and others in need of services and support in Union County. The mission of the Division on Aging is to improve the quality of life for older adults in the county through promoting awareness of services, addressing changing needs and concerns, maximizing resources, and planning for demographic changes. Some of the services offered by the Division on Aging include information on housing, home care and chore services, legal services referrals, information on benefits, transportation assistance, caregiver support, nutrition support, and social and recreational programs.



### **DIVISION OF INDIVIDUAL AND FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES**

The Division of Individual & Family Support Services aims to provide an array of county-wide human services programs through effective use of funding from county, state, and federal resources. It either provides direct services or funds community organizations to deliver services. The Division manages grants and oversees 4 subdivisions/units: Office on the Homeless and Housing Continuum of Care, Office on Behavioral Health and Substance Abuse, Rape Crisis Center, and Office for Persons with Disabilities & Special Needs. It also staffs advisory boards appointed by the Commissioner to provide guidance for grant-funded service delivery systems in each program area.

### **DIVISION OF OUTREACH AND ADVOCACY**

The Division of Outreach and Advocacy aims to increase awareness of Union County government programs and services, advocate for unmet human service needs, and provide access to effective resources and services. The division works with government agencies, community organizations, and private entities to offer outreach, advocacy, information, and referral services.

### **DIVISION OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

The Division of Social Services helps individuals in need in Union County by offering a range of programs, including free childhood vaccinations, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, General Assistance, Food Stamps, Emergency Assistance, Family Care, Nursing Home Care, Medical Assistance, Pharmaceutical Assistance to the Aged and Disabled, and Child Support Services.

### **UNION COUNTY DIVISION OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH SERVICES**

The Division of Children and Youth Services in Union County aims to provide youth, young adults, and families with effective and accessible programs and services to help them reach their full potential. The Division works in collaboration with other government agencies, nonprofits, and private sector supporters to improve communication between parents and youth, enhance school performance, and reduce the risk of delinquency and harmful behaviors. The Division offers various programs for individuals to develop critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, decision-making, and life skills, thereby improving overall family well-being. Some of the programs offered include Youth Services Commission, Family Crisis Intervention Unit, Community Service, Anger Management Group Session, Youth Board, and Parents in Action.

### **CORNERSTONE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH HOSPITAL**

The Cornerstone Behavioral Health Hospital is a psychiatric hospital that provides inpatient rehabilitation services for adults. The hospital has 44 beds and is staffed by a team of psychiatrists, psychiatric social workers, psychologists, clinical nurse practitioners, physical

therapists, occupational therapists, and activities therapists. The treatment programs offered by the hospital include individual, group, and family therapies. The focus of the hospital is to prepare patients for a smooth transition back into the community, which is done in collaboration with their families and the resources available in the community.

Finally, the Union County Department of Human Services plays a key role in supporting individuals and families in the community by providing them with the resources and services they need to lead healthy and fulfilling lives. Union County Department of Human Services operates the American Job Center in a manner that is consistent with the vision of the One-Stop Career Centers as expressed in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014, and detailed in Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 4-15, dated August 13, 2015, as summarized in the following section.

### **GEOGRAPHIC SOLUTIONS AND THE VIRTUAL ONE-STOP CAREER CENTER**

The Workforce Development Board in 2016 identified the impact of technology on the workplace and included a goal of *Broadened Use of Technology in Operation & Customer-Facing Processes* in its strategic plan. In 2019, the Union County Workforce Development authorized procurement of data management software which was chosen through a competitive procurement process. The selected software was from Geographic Solutions, a cloud-based, Software-as-a-Service, platform providing individuals, employers, and American Job Center Network Partners with access to employment, training, and case management services. The platform includes case management services for both staff managing individuals and employers, a Customer Relationship Management for streamlining interactions, a survey module for gathering information, and job-seeker services such as job searching and career development. The Virtual One Stop component allows case managers to record client information and provides a common intake feature to prevent duplication of effort. The system is user-friendly and provides access to job search tools, resume creation services, and training information.

**UNION COUNTY WORKS**, which is the name of the cloud based Virtual One Stop Center initiative, provides a single point of access for employment, training, and case management services. The platform, which is authorized and funded by the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development, offers core services for staff managing individuals and employers, as well as a Customer Relationship Management module to streamline interactions with employers and automate outreach and recruitment support. The platform also includes a survey module to gather feedback from job seekers, employers, and staff.

For job seekers, Union County Works offers job search tools and career development resources, such as resume building, job search support, and career counseling. The

platform's Common Intake component allows for efficient recording of client information for eligibility determination and service matching.

The Virtual One-Stop provides easy-to-use job search options with advanced resume creation tools, and links job seekers to relevant training and education programs based on their job search skills matches. The system is user-friendly and can be accessed from a desktop computer, mobile device, or dedicated mobile application. Labor market information is also available through the platform.

### **FUTUREWORK SYSTEMS**

FutureWork Systems is a comprehensive, cloud-based, Software-as-a-Service Business Intelligence application designed and developed specifically for the Workforce Development System. It makes data related to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act program and policy decisions easy to access, explore and report on. The platform offers a range of services such as data transformation, warehousing, Business Intelligence application delivery, training, and technical support, along with data validation with FutureWork Verify, access to featured data views, and ongoing upgrades and enhancements. Additionally, FutureWork Systems provides users with access to the FutureWork Systems Academy, Predictive Rosters Web application, and national Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act data for analysis.

### **VISION FOR COMPREHENSIVE ONE-STOP CENTERS OR AMERICAN JOB CENTERS**

The Union County One-Stop Centers under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act aim to provide a comprehensive, accessible, and high-quality workforce development system that meets the needs of the regional economy and that of Union County employers. The vision for the one-stop centers, as stated in Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 4-15, is to increase access to employment, education, training, and support services, particularly for those with barriers to employment. The one-stop centers bring together a range of partner programs and entities that are jointly responsible for workforce and economic development, educational, and other human resource programs, to provide a seamless and customer-focused service delivery system. The one-stop centers help job seekers acquire the skills and credentials necessary to secure and advance in employment, provide businesses and employers with access to skilled workers, and participate in evaluations to continuously improve the system. The management of the one-stop delivery system is shared among states, local boards, elected officials, and core Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act partners, among others.

The characteristics of a high-quality One-Stop Center are categorized into three functional areas: customer service, innovation and service design, and systems integration and high-quality staffing. The goal is to provide excellent customer service to job seekers, workers,

and businesses. High-quality one-stop centers have a welcoming environment, helpful and responsive staff, quality business services that support employers, skills training and career development opportunities, access to labor market information, and career services to motivate, support and empower customers to reach their personal employment and education goals. The centers value skill development by assessing and improving individual skills and use performance measures to continually improve services.

One-Stop Centers reflect innovative and effective service design, where high-quality one-stop centers use an integrated and expert intake process for all customers, including those with disabilities, with front-line staff familiar with the programs and able to make knowledgeable referrals. They engage with industry sectors and use economic and labor market information, career pathways, and competency models to drive skill-based initiatives. The service design balances traditional labor exchange services with strategic talent development in the regional economy. One-stop centers provide meaningful access to all customers, with physical and programmatic access and the use of assistive technology and flexible business hours. Both virtual and center-based service delivery is offered to job seekers, workers, and employers, with innovative and evidence-based delivery models aimed at improving the integration of education and training, creating career pathways, and using technology to accelerate learning.

One-Stop Centers are effective service design hubs with integrated management systems and high-quality staffing. These centers establish robust partnerships and integrate services by function, resulting in a seamless customer experience. They use integrated case management systems and technology to achieve integration and expanded services and have common performance indicators for accountability. The staff are trained and equipped with the knowledge and skills to provide superior service to job seekers and businesses in a regionally focused framework of service delivery. The staff is cross-trained, and highly trained career counselors are available to provide job seekers with options, advice on local labor market dynamics, and skills for employment success.

### **ROLE OF ONE-STOP CAREER CENTER OPERATOR**

The New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development, in the *State Employment and Training Commission New Jersey Combined State Plan for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act 2022-2023 Modification*, “envision[s] the One-Stop Operator as the entity who promotes an integrated, customer-focused delivery system that maximizes each partner’s strength and reduces redundancies”, and outlines the roles of the One-Stop Operator as:

- “To provide an integrated delivery system.
- To ensure hardest to serve populations are prioritized.

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- *To coordinate service delivery among partners.*
- *To coordinate service delivery among physical and electronic sites; and*
- *To coordinate services across the local workforce area.”*

The One-Stop Operator responsibilities, the *State Employment and Training Commission New Jersey Combined State Plan for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act 2022-2023 Modification* continues to frame the responsibilities of the One-Stop Operator:

- *“Maintain a common intake system among core partners.*
- *Manage hours of operation at all sites.*
- *Manage technological resources such as websites, case management information, business networking software, on-line testing sites.*
- *Manage daily operations through coordination with Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Fiscal Agent for lease, utilities, and other invoice remittance.*
- *Manage partner responsibilities as defined in MOU.*
- *Manage services for individuals.*
- *Manage services for business.*
- *Provide basic services such as orientations, information on careers and labor markets, and resource rooms.*
- *Submit annual staffing plans and operational budgets.*
- *Following federal and state regulations pertaining to handling of EEO responsibilities, customer complaints, and physical and programmatic accessibility.*
- *Implement board policies; and*
- *Report to the Board on operations, performance accountability, and continuous improvements.”*

## **CAREER SERVICES IN PERSPECTIVE**

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, in section 134(c)(2) and in the Code of Federal Regulations, in 20 CFR 678.340, defines career services under three categories: (1) basic career services, (2) individualized career services, and (3) follow-up services. Further federal technical assistance on career services through Training and Employment Guidance Letters No. 16-16, dated January 18, 2017, No. 19-16, dated March 1, 2017. The Union County Workforce Development Board, with the consent and approval of the Union County Board of County Commissioners, provides strategic guidance and funding for the provision of the full spectrum of career services to individual participants and to employers, pursuant to the regulatory guidance and technical direction provided by the United States Department of Labor and the New Jersey Department of Labor and

Workforce Development. All the services are delivered through the integrated and collaborative efforts of the Union County American Job Network Partners.

### **TRAINING SERVICES IN PERSPECTIVE**

The Union County Workforce Development Board places a priority to training services offered through the Union County American Job Center, as training services for adults and dislocated workers are critical to achieving employment success. The rules for training services are outlined in sections 20 CFR 680.200 through 680.230 and 20 CFR 680.300 through 680.350. Union County American Job Center staff determine the need for training services for an individual, regardless of their prior involvement in basic or individualized career services, and there is no specific sequence of service required.

Training services are provided once the American Job Center staff determines, after conducting an interview, evaluation or assessment, and career planning, that the individual is unable or unlikely to obtain or retain employment leading to economic self-sufficiency through career services alone, needs training services to achieve this goal, is qualified to participate in the training program, is unable to obtain funding from other sources, and has selected a program of training services that is linked to employment opportunities in Union County or within commuting distance.

In general, training services are provided by an eligible training provider through either an Individual Training Account or a training contract. The Union County American Job Center staff ensure that the training provider is listed on the New Jersey Eligible Training Provider List. The New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development ensures that training providers meet the quality standards, accountability, and provide relevant training programs within the Union County and regional economy. The selection of training services is determined based on the customer's choice, data on in-demand occupations, performance of relevant training providers, and coordination with other sources of assistance such as Pell Grants.

### **INFORMED CUSTOMER CHOICE AND QUALITY ASSURANCE TRAINING PROVIDER SCORECARD**

Pursuant to 20 CFR Part 680.340(a), *“Training services, whether under ITAs [Individual Training Accounts] or under contract, must be provided in a manner that maximizes informed consumer choice in selecting an eligible provider.”* The Union County Workforce Development Board is encouraged by, and fully supports, the policy of the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development to implement a **Quality Assurance Training Provider Scorecard** for all providers enlisted on the Eligible Training Providers List, wherein five metrics will be deployed to measure and rate the efficacy of the training providers, as follows:



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1. *“Labor Market Demand,*
2. *Employment and Wage Outcomes,*
3. *Education Outcomes,*
4. *Financial Impact, and*
5. *Equity for training programs included on the ETPL that result in direct employment and wage outcomes.”*

The Union County Workforce Development Board believes that the **Quality Assurance Training Provider Scorecard** is the best methodology to create transparency, focus the training providers’ attention on measurable outcomes, and is the most effective approach to prioritizing informed customer choice within the context of in-demand occupational opportunities leading to employment.

To facilitate the transition to the **Quality Assurance Training Provider Scorecard** model, and play an important role in measuring quality assurance, the Union County Workforce Development Board will work with the American Job Center Operator and the Network Partners to facilitate the partners’ development of operational strategies to further enhance informed customer choice, core program alignment, service integration, with a strategic emphasis on:

- Building strong partnerships between One-Stop Career Center staff, training providers, and employers.
- Providing individuals with clear and comprehensive information on their education and employment options, including career counseling and skills assessments.
- Encouraging active engagement and self-advocacy by customers in the service delivery process.
- Delivering customer-centered services through a collaborative and integrated approach across all One-Stop Career Center partners.
- Developing a customer-centered culture through continuous training, coaching, and mentoring of One-Stop Career Center staff.
- Building robust data systems to collect, analyze and use customer feedback to continuously improve services and track customer outcomes.
- Leveraging technology to provide customers with access to comprehensive information and resources in a user-friendly format.



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- Evaluating the effectiveness of informed customer choice strategies and adjusting them as needed to ensure they are meeting the needs of customers and delivering desired outcomes.

### **CAREER ASSESSMENT AND WORKBASED TRAINING OPTIONS**

American Job Center Network Partners utilize common intake forms and objective assessments to minimize repetitive evaluations and to improve coordination among partner programs. This process simplifies the process, reduces the workload on individuals, and increases access to programs based on participants' needs. Individual Employment Plan are used to document training services to help a participant reach their employment and training. The Union County American Job Center makes available the following training opportunities, as authorized by the Union County Workforce Development Board and the Union County Board of County Commissioners, pursuant to operational procedures set forth in Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 19-16:

- (a) "Occupational skills training, including training for nontraditional employment.*
- (b) On-the-job training*
- (c) Incumbent worker training*
- (d) Programs that combine workplace training with related instruction, which may include cooperative education programs.*
- (e) Training programs operated by the private sector.*
- (f) Skill upgrading and retraining.*
- (g) Entrepreneurial training*
- (h) Job readiness training provided in combination with the training services described in any of clauses (a) through (g) or transitional jobs.*
- (i) Adult education and literacy activities, including activities of English Language acquisition and integrated education and training programs, provided concurrently or in combination with services provided in any of clauses (a) through (g); and*
- (j) Customized training conducted with a commitment by an employer or group of employers to employ an individual upon successful completion of the training."*

### **CAREER SERVICES, THE ONE STOP PARTNERS' ROLES, THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTAND AND THE INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING AGREEMENT**

The New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development, in the form of policy guidance through New Jersey Workforce Innovation Notice No. 13-16(A), dated December 15, 2016, has reinforced federal technical assistance with respect to the expected career services as well as the roles and responsibilities of the required and optional One-Stop

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Career Center Partners, as outlined in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Sec. 121 (b) and 20 CFR 361.400. New Jersey Workforce Innovation Notice No. 13-16(A) has been replaced by New Jersey Workforce Innovation Notice No. WD-PY22-3, dated November 9, 2022.

The latter point referenced above, parenthetically, requires the Union County Workforce Development Board to memorialize the roles and responsibilities of the required and optional partner in the form of a Memorandum of Understanding and Infrastructure Funding Agreement, as outlined in New Jersey Workforce Innovation Notice No. 2-15, dated September 11, 2015, to same to be executed by all the required and optional partners, pursuant to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Sec.121 (a) (1). The Memorandum of Understanding and Infrastructure Funding Agreement, as of the writing of this strategic plan, expires on December 31, 2023, and is compliant with the guidance set forth by the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development in the form of New Jersey Workforce Innovation Notice No. 7-17(A) dated October 25, 2017.

More recently, the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development updated its guidance related to One Stop Career Center Partners through New Jersey Workforce Innovation Notice No. WD-PY22-3, dated November 9, 2022, which clearly defined the roles and responsibilities of the partners.

*“As a partner in the One Stop Career Center, each partner agrees to:*

- 1. Provide access to its programs or activities through the One Stop delivery system, in addition to any other appropriate locations.*
- 2. Use a portion of funds made available to the partner’s program, to the extent consistent with the Federal law authorizing the partner’s program and with Federal cost principles—pursuant to 2 CFR parts 200 and 2 CFR Part 3474 which requires that costs are allowable, reasonable, necessary, and allocable--to*
  - (a) Provide applicable career services in local One Stop Career Centers*
  - (b) Work collaboratively with the State and Local Boards to establish and maintain the One Stop delivery system. This includes jointly funding the One Stop infrastructure through partner contributions that are based upon:*
    - A reasonable cost allocation methodology by which infrastructure costs are charged to each partner in proportion to the relative benefits.*
    - Federal cost principles; and*
    - Any local administrative cost requirements in the Federal law authorizing the partner’s program—pursuant to 20 CFR 361.700.*

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3. *Enter an MOU with the Local Board relating to the operation of the One Stop system.*
4. *Participate in the operation of the One Stop system consistent with the terms of the MOU, requirements of authorizing laws, the Federal cost principles, and all other applicable legal requirements, and*
5. *Provide representation on the State and Local Workforce Development Boards as required and participate in Board committees as needed—pursuant to 20 CFR 361.420.”*

Finally, as it relates to the role of the One Stop Career Center Partners, the Memorandum of Understanding, and the Infrastructure Funding Agreement, the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development provided forward guidance through New Jersey Workforce Innovation Notice No. WD-PY22-4.1, dated November 9, 2022. The Union County Workforce Development Board, in collaboration with the Union County Board of County Commissioners, will deliver on meeting the requirements established by the New Jersey Department of Labor as the new agreement is drafted, approved, and executed.

### **BASIC CAREER SERVICES**

Returning to the former point addressed above, Basic Career Services are services offered by the Union County American Job Center to all job seekers. They encompass informational and labor exchange services, including:

- Determinations of eligibility for assistance from adult, dislocated worker, or youth programs
- Outreach, intake, and orientation to information and services available through the one-stop delivery system
- Initial assessment of skills, aptitudes, abilities, and support service needs
- Labor Exchange services, including job search and placement assistance, career counseling, and recruitment and business services for employers in the local area.
- Referrals and coordination with other programs and services
- Provision of workforce and labor market employment statistics
- Performance information and program cost information for education, training, and workforce services
- Information on local area performance, supportive services, and transportation
- Assistance with filing claims for unemployment compensation and financial aid for training and education programs
- Meaningful assistance with filing claims for unemployment compensation

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- Assistance with establishing eligibility for financial aid programs for training and education not provided under Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

### **INDIVIDUALIZED CAREER SERVICES**

In addition to basic career services, the Union County American Job Center offers Individualized Career Services and are made available if deemed necessary for an individual to secure or maintain employment. Priority for these services is given to public assistance recipients, low-income individuals, and those lacking basic skills. These services, consistent with Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act requirements and federal cost principles found under Uniform Guidance, or 2 CFR 200, include:

1. Comprehensive and specialized assessments of the skills and service needs of adults and dislocated workers, including diagnostic testing and in-depth interviews to identify employment barriers and goals.
2. Development of an individual employment plan to outline employment goals, objectives, and services needed to achieve those goals, including a list of eligible training providers.
3. Group and individual counseling, career planning, and short-term prevocational services to prepare individuals for unsubsidized employment or training.
4. Internships, work experiences linked to careers, workforce preparation activities, and financial literacy services.
5. Out-of-area job search and relocation assistance, and English language acquisition and integrated education and training programs.

### **FOLLOW-UP SERVICES**

Follow-up services are provided to adult and dislocated worker program participants who have secured unsubsidized employment, and they are offered for a minimum period of 12 months after the start of employment. The services include counseling on workplace issues and are available to those participating in workforce investment activities authorized under the subtitle. The provision of these services is subject to the appropriateness of the individual case, and they are available for a minimum of 12 months after the first day of the participant's unsubsidized employment.

### **SEQUENCING OF CAREER SERVICES**

The New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development outlined the policies and procedures regarding the “(1) sequencing individualized career services related to job placement, (2) exit, and (3) follow-up support and services for Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth participants in Title I programs”, through New Jersey Workforce Innovation

Notice No. WD-PY21-5. This policy guidance has been endorsed for action by the Union County Workforce Development Board and it is followed by the Union County American Job Center Network Partners. In short, the policy aims to support the successful employment and education outcomes of Title I participants by being flexible to meet their needs. The distinction between levels of services is not meant to indicate a specific sequence, except that Follow-up Services must follow exit. Different services can align with employment goals and be sequenced accordingly during distinct phases of a participant's engagement, such as training connection, completion, and job placement. Once the service plan is completed, the participant exits the program and follow-up services begin. The ideal sequence of engagement is the provision of career and training services that support successful employment during active enrollment and follow-up services at the point of exit, coinciding with successful employment placement.

### **CASE MANAGEMENT**

The purpose of case management under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act is to provide comprehensive and individualized support to help individuals achieve their employment goals and to overcome any barriers that may be preventing them from finding and retaining employment. To that end, the Union County Workforce Development Board recommends that the American Job Center Operator and the Network Partners reinforce the operational practices, procedures and strategies deployed under case management in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, including: The case management responsibilities under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act can be broadly categorized into the following five key areas:

- **Basic Career Services:** Case managers are responsible for conducting initial assessments of participants' skills and needs and helping them identify their career goals. This may involve exploring their employment history, education, and training, and matching their interests and abilities to potential job opportunities.
- **Individualized Career Services:** Based on the assessment results, case managers develop an individualized career plan for each participant. This plan outlines the steps the participant will take to achieve their employment goals, such as obtaining training, gaining experience, and securing a job. Case managers provide support and guidance to help participants implement their career plan.
- **Training:** Case managers help participants access training programs that match their career goals and skill sets. This may involve providing information about available

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training programs, helping participants enroll in classes, and helping with tuition and other training-related expenses.

- **Follow-Up:** Case managers maintain regular contact with participants during their training and employment journey, monitoring their progress and addressing any obstacles or challenges that arise. They also provide ongoing support and guidance to help participants achieve their goals.
- **Supportive Services:** Case managers help participants access supportive services, such as childcare and transportation, that may be needed to participate in training and employment programs. They also help participants overcome any other barriers to their success, such as health problems or financial difficulties.

In terms of data management and reporting, case managers are responsible for maintaining accurate and up-to-date records of participant activities and progress. They may also be required to provide regular reports to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act program administrators or other stakeholders to demonstrate program performance and outcomes. Confidentiality is an important aspect of case management, and case managers are responsible for ensuring that participants' personal information is protected and only used for program-related purposes.

In closing, the Union County Workforce Development Board understands that case management is a critical aspect of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and plays a vital role in helping individuals access the resources and services they need to achieve their employment goals. Staff training includes reviewing case management best practices, strategies, and procedures should be followed to ensure that individuals receive comprehensive and individualized support to help them overcome barriers and achieve their career goals.

### **OUT OF SCHOOL YOUTH ALLOCATION**

The Union County Workforce Development Board is committed to providing services to Out of School youth at a minimum of 75%. The Union County Workforce Development Board has established a procurement and service plan that targets higher levels of Out of School programming, and all youth contracts will include performance benchmarks with minimum Out of School Youth enrollment levels.

Monthly, Out of School Youth encumbrance totals and enrollments will be tracked and reported, and the Out of School Youth expenditure rate for local area funds will be

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calculated after subtracting administrative costs. Union County has released a request for proposal to solicit providers to deliver comprehensive services to meet their 75% Out of School Youth and 20% Work Experience Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act requirements, with all 14 elements.

Youth providers within the American Job Center Network should focus efforts on engaging Youth in high-risk categories, such as those who have dropped out of high school, have not attended school for at least one calendar quarter, or are subject to the juvenile or adult justice systems, do not have to prove low-income status to receive services. This also includes homeless individuals, runaways, current or former foster care youth, and individuals who are pregnant or parenting. Youth who hold a secondary credential and are either basic skills deficient or an English language learner must be “low-income.”

The Union County Workforce Development Board encourages the following strategies that can be employed to re-engage out of school youth. These strategies include:

- Information sharing between schools: Schools can share information about re-engagement programs and resources with each other to reach Out of School youth who may not be aware of these services.
- Electronic media campaigns: Electronic media campaigns, such as social media or online advertising, can be used to reach Out of School youth and inform them about available services.
- Hosting expos and re-engagement fairs: School districts can host expos and fairs where Out of School youth can learn about re-engagement programs, meet with program representatives, and receive assistance in enrolling in these programs.
- Partnership with school districts: Local workforce boards can partner with school districts to identify and reach Out of School youth who are not currently attending school or who have dropped out. This partnership may involve collaboration on outreach efforts, as well as sharing of data and resources.
- Selection of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families participants: Given the increased age eligibility for the WIOA youth program, local areas can partner with TANF agencies to identify TANF participants who may be eligible for the WIOA youth program.
- Partnership with community organizations: Local workforce boards can also partner with community organizations, such as non-profits or faith-based organizations, to identify and reach Out of School youth who may benefit from re-engagement services. These partnerships can involve collaboration on outreach efforts, as well as sharing of resources and expertise.



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## **STATE EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING COMMISSION QUESTIONS**

Service Expansion and Accessibility in One Stop Career Centers: Describe how the local board will facilitate access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system, including for example, individuals in remote areas, for individuals with disabilities (compliance with Act 188), and for foreign-language speakers; include a description of how equity and equal access to services are achieved for services provided through the One-Stop system. This includes:

- Use of technology, including virtual and adaptive technologies to support access
- Physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities
- Specialized programs and services,
- Materials for individuals with disabilities and those with other barriers
- Staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities
- Provision of assessment services to ensure connection to best fit services (opposed to automatic referrals)

### **Local Plan**

- Please provide an overview of how the LWDB plans to expand services and supports to ensure that all individuals have access to One Stop Career center services and opportunities.
- Please reflect on the questions included in the regional plan section. At the local level, how will the LWDB help to support the development of technical solutions and expansion of facilities, programs, or services.
- Please highlight how the LWDB will integrate region- and LWDB-led strategies to support greater accessibility.
- Please indicate how the local area will work to integrate new ideas and approaches to barrier resolution including, but not limited to, digital equity and education.

### **Regional Plan**

- Please describe the role of the region in the development/implementation of any technical solutions designed to expand the reach of services provided by local areas.
  - How might the region support joint development to ensure consistency across area?
  - How might the region support joint training of staff or training with staff in individual local areas?
- Please describe any role the region would take in physically or programmatically expanding the access to facilities, programs, or services.

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- How would the region ensure support/participation for individuals with disabilities and ensure that any expansion considers diversity, equity, and inclusion?
- How would the region include joint training for regional partner/stakeholder training? Please provide insight on efforts to make expansion and any associated materials and training tools accessible for individuals with disabilities?
- Please describe the process the region would use in taking a lead role in any form of expansion and how it would work with and inform its individual members and respective LWDBs.
- Please indicate what considerations the region shall make to ensure that service expansion considers innovative approaches/strategies for potential resolution. This should include, but not be limited to, digital equity and education considerations.

## **ONE-STOP CENTER ACCESSIBILITY**

As stated in the Training and Employment Guidance Letter 4-15, issued on August 13, 2015, the vision for the One Stop career center under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act is to provide job seekers and employers with quality-focused, employer-driven, customer-centered, and tailored services to meet the needs of regional economies. The guidance letter emphasizes the importance of providing equal access and opportunities to individuals with disabilities and highlights the importance of making reasonable accommodations to support their employment and training goals.

The Training and Employment Guidance Letter 4-15 also emphasizes the importance of collaboration among different agencies and organizations to improve services for individuals with disabilities. It encourages state workforce agencies and American Job Centers to partner with disability organizations, employers, and other stakeholders to develop strategies for improving employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities which include:

- Reflect a welcoming environment to all customer groups who are served by the one-stop center.
- Develop, offer, and deliver quality business services.
- Improve the skills of job seekers and worker customers.
- Create opportunities for individuals at all skill levels and levels of experience.
- Provide career services that motivate, support, and empower customers
- Value skill development.”

The New Jersey Department of Labor released the Workforce Innovation Notice 3-15 on September 14, 2015, to emphasize the importance of providing services to individuals with disabilities as part of the workforce development system throughout all counties. The notice states that the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act requires the workforce development system to be inclusive and accessible to all individuals, including those with disabilities.

The Workforce Innovation Notice 3-15 further explains that the workforce development system must provide equal access to employment and training services, including accommodations and assistive technology, to individuals with disabilities. This includes ensuring that the one-stop centers and other service providers are physically accessible and that staff members are trained to provide services to individuals with disabilities. Additionally, the notice highlights the importance of providing specialized services to individuals with disabilities, such as customized employment, job coaching, and other individualized supports. The notice also emphasizes the need to collaborate with disability organizations and other partners to ensure that the workforce development system is responsive to the needs of individuals with disabilities.

The Union County Workforce Development Board believes that equity and equal access to services can be achieved through intentional efforts to eliminate barriers. In Addition, the Union County Workforce Development Board ensures that all individuals have the same opportunities to access and benefit from the one-stop delivery system. This can include continuous assessments and evaluation of the One Stop system to identify any areas of inequality and implement strategies to address those areas. The Union County Workforce Development Board can also provide training and resources to partners within the American Job Center Network to ensure they are equipped to provide services equitably and inclusively.

### **DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION**

In the August 17, 2022, article What is diversity, equity, and inclusion? by McKinsey & Company, diversity, equity, and inclusion is defined as a set of principles and practices aimed at creating a work environment where all individuals are treated with fairness and respect, regardless of their race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or other personal characteristics. Diversity refers to the range of differences among employees, equity refers to the fairness of treatment and access to opportunities, and inclusion refers to the sense of belonging and being valued as a member of the organization. The article stressed the need for a comprehensive and sustained effort to achieve Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion involving leadership commitment, data-driven strategies, and ongoing assessment and adjustment.

The Union County Workforce Development Board understands the need for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion because it helps to create a more equitable and just workforce by ensuring that all individuals have an equal opportunity to access job training, career advancement, and other workforce development resources. This can help to reduce systemic barriers and discrimination that have historically prevented marginalized groups from achieving their full potential. To expand and support individuals with disabilities or those individuals who are underrepresented, the Union County Workforce Development Board has been focused on ensuring that program materials are available in multiple languages and have considered the unique needs of different communities.

Additionally, the Union County Workforce Development Board has renewed its partnerships with diverse organizations such as Make the Road NJ, Inroads to Opportunity, and Urban League, which serve diverse communities and can help to promote Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. The Union County Workforce Development Board will continue to foster partnerships with organizations that serve LGBTQ+ communities or other underrepresented groups.

### **CONDUCTING AMERICAN DISABILITIES ACT ACCESSIBILITY EVALUATION**

As required by the State Employment and Training Commission resolution #2016-14 OSCC Certification Process and Checklist Verification of Meeting Disability/Accessibility Standards, One-stop centers must be physically and programmatically accessible to all customers, including individuals with disabilities. To ensure accessibility, one-stop centers should use universal design principles listed in the Training and Employment Guidance letter 31-10, which focus on “Principles and Guidelines for Universal Design,” which were developed by the Center for Universal Design at North Carolina State University:

- Equitable Use - The design is useful and marketable to people with diverse abilities;
- Flexibility in Use - The design accommodates a wide range of individual preferences and abilities;
- Simple and Intuitive - The design is easy to understand, regardless of the user’s experience, knowledge, language skills, or current concentration levels;
- Perceptible Information - The design communicates necessary information effectively to the user, regardless of ambient conditions or the user’s sensory abilities;
- Tolerance for Error - The design minimizes hazards and the adverse consequences of accidental or unintended actions;
- Low Physical Effort - The design can be used efficiently and comfortably, with a minimum of fatigue; and
- Size and Space for Approach and Use - Appropriate size and spaces are provided for approach, reach, manipulation, and use regardless of the user’s body size, posture, or mobility.

The Americans with Disabilities Act is a federal law that prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in all aspects of life, including employment. The law requires public facilities and services, such as the One-Stop Career Centers, to be accessible to individuals with disabilities. The accessibility evaluation assesses whether the facility meets the accessibility standards set forth in the American Disabilities Act, such as providing accessible entrances and exits, parking, and restrooms and ensuring that technology and communications are accessible to individuals with disabilities.

The Union County Workforce Development Board is committed to ensuring accessibility of physical locations and materials and providing accommodations and assistive technology for individuals with disabilities. By completing an American Disabilities Act Accessibility Evaluation, the Union County Workforce Development Board can identify any areas where the One-Stop Career Center may not be fully accessible and take steps to address these issues. This can help ensure that individuals with disabilities have equal access to the

services and resources provided by the One-Stop Career Center, which can improve their employment outcomes and overall quality of life.

In conjunction with the Union County Bureau of American Disabilities Act Compliance Department, WT Group conducted an accessibility evaluation of the American Job Centers in 2019 and 2020 as part of the One Stop Certification. With the support of the Union County Workforce Development Board, the Bureau of American Disabilities Act Compliance will continue to monitor and assist the implementation of the County American Disabilities Act Transition Plan in ensuring full programmatic and communication accessibility to persons with disabilities. The Bureau also monitors the County Employees' Access and Inclusion Solution Process procedure for disability complaints and recommends system enhancements. One notable enhancement is working with an American Disabilities Act -compliant hearing loop induction company to install infrared hearing links to transmit assistive listening audio signals into the handicap-accessible pods located in the Division of Social Services facility.

### **DISABILITIES COMMITTEE**

The Union County Workforce Development Board understands the need for a strong committee where members are actively engaged and committed to identifying challenges and opportunities many individuals with disabilities face. In 2021 the Union County Workforce Development Board reengaged state representatives, members of community-based organizations, educational providers, self-advocates, and their family members to participate in the Union County Workforce Development Board Disabilities Committee. The Disability Committee helps to ensure that workforce development programs and services are accessible and inclusive, that employers are aware of the benefits of hiring individuals with disabilities, and that job seekers with disabilities have the resources and support they need to be successful. A review of Labor Market Information, partners' initiatives, and strategic plan action steps are standing agenda items. Committee meetings are held every quarter and focused on creating and implementing strategies to address workforce development needs in Union County. Sub Committee meetings are held with members concentrating on tackling specific sub-strategies or action steps.

### **CAPTURING CUSTOMER VOICE**

The Union County Workforce Development Board has been committed to collecting and incorporating customer voice into the service delivery process. The Union County Workforce Development Board along with American Job Center Network Partners gather information from a variety of sources, such as surveys, focus groups, and interviews with self-advocates, as well as data on demographics, employment trends, and available resources. In 2020 the Department of Human Services released the Union County Needs Assessment to identify the specific needs of target populations in Union County. The Needs



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Assessment is used as a basis for understanding the challenges and opportunities in Union County. Based on the feedback received from surveys, focus groups and interviews with self-advocates and an analysis of resources gathered, the Union County Workforce Development Board along with the American Job Center Partners can make recommendations for system enhancements to better meet the needs of the target population. These enhancements come in the form of creating specialized programs and services such as:

- Inclusion hiring event
- Resume and interview workshops for individuals with disabilities
- Soft skills training for individuals with disabilities and English Language Learners

**EXPANSION AND COORDINATION OF AMERICAN JOB CENTER NETWORK PARTNERSHIPS**

On August 3, 2022, the Department of Education, the Department of Labor, the Social Security Administration, and the Administration for Community Living issued a Federal Joint Communication to State and Local Governments. This communication aimed to increase competitive integrated employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities by improving resources, leveraging funding, and developing service coordination between federal, state, and local agencies. The communication emphasizes the importance of implementing evidence-based practices and leveraging existing resources to provide comprehensive support services for individuals with disabilities to ensure success in competitive integrated employment. The communication also highlights the need for collaboration between agencies and stakeholders to maximize resources, improve service delivery, and encourages states to use data to measure progress and outcomes. The communication aims to promote greater economic self-sufficiency and social inclusion for individuals with disabilities. The Federal Joint Communication emphasizes the importance of braiding, blending, and sequencing funding to increase competitive integrated employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

Since 2020 the Union County Workforce Development Board has focused on establishing and expanding partnerships with community organizations, faith-based organizations, state workforce entities, and educational providers to increase outreach to underserved populations, such as individuals in remote areas, individuals with disabilities, and foreign-language speakers. Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, there has been a resurgence of partnerships fostered due to the challenges many organizations could not face alone. Collaborative efforts among the partners in the form of wrap-around services allowed for enhanced service delivery to job seekers. Over the past three years, more than 45 partners have participated in committee meetings. Two newly established partnerships that are on track to support initiatives for those individuals with disabilities are with the Union County

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Office for People with Disabilities and Special Needs and the Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired.

### **UNION COUNTY OFFICE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES AND SPECIAL NEEDS**

The Union County Office for People with Disabilities and Special Needs under the Division of Individual & Family Support Services Department of Human Services provides services and support to individuals with disabilities and special needs. Some of the services and programs offered include:

- Assistance with accessing disability-related services and resources
- Information and referral services to help individuals and families connect with local programs and services
- Advocacy services to help individuals with disabilities access their rights and resources
- Training and education programs to help individuals with disabilities and their families better understand their rights and responsibilities
- Support groups and peer counseling services for individuals with disabilities and their families
- Special events and recreational activities for individuals with disabilities and their families

Most notably, with the support of the Union County Board of County Commissioners, the Union County Office for People with Disabilities and Special Needs worked with the American Job Center to organize the first-ever Union County Inclusive Hiring Event for Persons with Disabilities and Special Needs, hosted interview workshops and conducted a webinar educating employers on ways to ensure website compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Web Content Accessibility Guidelines.

### **COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED**

The Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired in Newark, NJ is a state agency that provides a wide range of services to individuals who are blind or visually impaired. Some of the services that the Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired offers include:

- Vocational rehabilitation
- Independent living skills training
- Orientation and mobility training
- Low vision services
- Counseling and support services

As part of the memorandum of understanding and to enhance the services offered at the American Job Centers, the Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired will perform

technology assessments to incorporate items such as screen readers and print magnification software to assist individuals with visual impairments.

The Union County Workforce Development Board supports the assessment conducted by Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired and requests all American Job Center Network Partners follow the guidance provided in 29 CFR § 38.4 to determine the use of additional Auxiliary aids or services, which include but not limited to:

- Qualified interpreters on-site or through video remote interpreting services;
- real-time computer-aided transcription services;
- telephone handset amplifiers;
- closed caption decoders;
- open and closed captioning, including real-time captioning;
- voice, text, and video-based telecommunications products and systems, including text telephones, videophones, and captioned telephones, or equally effective telecommunications devices;
- Brailled materials and displays;
- Secondary auditory programs;
- Large print materials.

## **LANGUAGE SERVICES**

Offering language services to non-English speakers is important for promoting inclusivity, effective communication, positive customer service experience, and compliance. As stated in various committee meetings offering language services to non-English speakers helps ensure that everyone, regardless of their language proficiency, has equal access to services and information. It promotes inclusivity and helps to break down language barriers that can lead to social exclusion and inequality. It also provides connection and representation for those populations that have been marginalized or underrepresented.

The Department of Human Services understood this need and introduced Voyce language interpreters. Armed with iPads, social workers, case managers, and intake staff can connect in less than 20 seconds to live interpreters. The Voyce language interpreters give access to over 240 languages and dialects, including American Sign Language. Offering language services can improve customer service and satisfaction, especially where non-English speakers are common.

## **TECHNOLOGY AND VIRTUAL ACCESS**

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Union County Workforce Development Board and the Department of Human Services invested in technology to ensure services to job seekers and employers were uninterrupted. Laptops, Wi-Fi, and virtual meeting software made it possible for many partners within the American Job Center Network to offer virtual

services to protect the health and safety of their staff and clients. This accessibility provided anyone with an internet connection, regardless of their location or physical ability, to access the services they need from the comfort of their own homes or offices. With the introduction of Geographic Solutions, the Virtual One Stop software named Union County Works, job seekers, and employers had access to one-stop services at a convenient time. This was especially beneficial for individuals who work odd hours, had other obligations that prevent them from attending in-person services during regular business hours, and had transportation or mobility barriers. The cost savings effect virtual services offered was an additional benefit to the customers as it reduced travel, parking, and childcare expenses. At the height of the pandemic, job seekers and employers were offered the opportunity to attend virtual job fairs and workshops, which allowed participants to connect with each other and learn about job opportunities in real time.

The Union County Workforce Development Board understands the need to continue to offer remote or virtual access to services through online portals or phone services to increase accessibility for individuals who may not be able to access physical locations. Offering participants, the option of receiving services virtually or telephonically to increase their participation will be a common best practice for all job seekers and employers. The American Job Center Network Partners should increase outreach and develop marketing strategies for virtual services to those homebound populations who need access to technology or the technical skills to access services. This outreach effort will ensure that job seekers understand the options available to them when accessing One-Stop services.

### **TACKLING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE AND DIGITAL LITERACY**

During the Covid-19 Pandemic, many programs offered through the American Job Center Network reported seeing gaps in access to technology and digital resources between diverse groups of clients. The September 15, 2021, article from the National Skills Coalition highlighted that the "digital divide" was not only about access to devices and the internet but also about access to digital skills. People who lack digital skills are at a disadvantage in terms of education, employment, and other aspects of daily life. The report emphasizes the need for programs that provide access to technology and promote digital literacy and skill-building, particularly for underrepresented groups. Such efforts can help bridge the digital divide and promote greater equity and opportunity in the digital age. The Union County Workforce Development Board felt it was crucial to bridge the digital divide by providing training and resources to help individuals acquire the skills needed to succeed in the digital economy. This support included a digital literacy program designed to provide job seekers with the essential skills and knowledge needed to effectively navigate and utilize digital technologies in the workplace. In addition, the partnership between the Division of Social Services and Title II literacy provider Workforce Advantage offered WorkFirst New Jersey participants looking to enroll in a training program a laptop and

access to Wi-Fi through the laptop loaner program. By addressing the digital divide, the Union County Workforce Development Board believes it can help individuals gain the skills and resources they need to succeed in the 21st-century workforce and build stronger, more resilient communities.

### **INTEGRATION OF THE ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT**

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Training and Employment Guidance Letter 23-15, "Integration of the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act into the Workforce System and Its Programs and Services," provides guidance on the integration of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Title II adult education and literacy programs with the one-stop delivery system established under Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Title I. In addition, the Training and Employment Guidance Letter provides guidance to state and local workforce development boards, adult education providers, and other stakeholders on the requirements and opportunities for integrating adult education and literacy services into the one-stop delivery system. It emphasizes the importance of collaboration and coordination between Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Title II providers and Title I providers to better serve individuals with low skills, limited English proficiency, and other barriers to employment. The guidance letter offers specific requirements such as:

- Overview of the integration of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Title II into the one-stop system
- Requirements for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Title II providers to participate in the one-stop system
- Strategies for coordination and collaboration among one-stop partners
- Use of technology to support integration and service delivery
- Data collection and reporting requirements for integrated programs and services
- Resources and technical assistance to support integration efforts.

The Union County Workforce Development Board understands the need to partner with community organizations and educational institutions to gain insights into the latest ideas and approaches to barrier resolution, including digital equity and education. These partnerships can facilitate the sharing of resources, information, and best practices that are offered by partners such as Union College, Workforce Advantage, and Literacy of New Jersey, which are part of the Union County Literacy Consortium.

Together with members of the Adult Education and Literacy Committee, the Union County Workforce Development Board collects data, reviews academic literature, conducts surveys, and interviews, and conducts research and analysis to understand the education barriers and trends facing English language learners who have low literacy. Through these partnerships, the Union County Workforce Development Board has supported the creation of programs such as soft skills training and Internet and Computing Core Certification.

## **EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT**

Engaging with employers and industry experts has been the focus of many committee meetings. The Union County Workforce Development Board is driven to understand the skills and competencies in demand in the labor market and identify the barriers preventing individuals from accessing those jobs. Employer engagement is the central approach to barrier resolution and can help ensure its initiatives align with the local economy's needs. These initiatives aim to create a more inclusive workplace culture and remove employment barriers that people with disabilities often face. Committee members have agreed on a series of objectives that will support employers' workforce needs and provide meaningful integrated work opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

Employer engagement and disability initiatives can benefit both employers and employees. By creating a more inclusive workplace culture and removing barriers to employment, employers can tap into a diverse pool of talent, improve employee morale and productivity, and enhance their reputation as inclusive employers. For employees with disabilities, these initiatives can provide opportunities for career advancement, increased independence, and a greater sense of belonging in the workplace. Below is a snapshot of employer initiatives. Committee Members felt most pressed in working with employers.

- Create an information packet on trial work experience for job sites, including a fact sheet on liability concerns, suggested job tasks, and assurances.
- Introduce an Employer interest/info-seeking Survey to understand employers' experiences, concerns, and interests in working with Individuals with Disabilities.
- Create a Frequently Asked Questions flyer addressing employers' concerns, needs, and questions.
- Reconsider Traditional Job Interviews and Offer Reasonable Interview Accommodations

## **STAFF TRAINING**

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Title I, Section 121(d) and (e) states that One-Stop Career Center staff receive training to effectively provide services to job seekers and employers, and states provide ongoing professional development to One-Stop Career Center staff to ensure they stay up to date with the latest labor market trends and changes in workforce development policy. Training must cover topics such as career counseling and job search assistance. The Union County Workforce Development Board is committed to helping One-Stop Career Centers by implementing a staff training initiative to ensure the skills of American Job Center Network staff meet the demands of an evolving workforce. By providing access to training such as:

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- Workforce180 is a workforce development company that provides resources and solutions to help workforce professionals improve and enhance their organizational effectiveness by offering the latest case management, business services, and work-based learning training.
- New Jersey Department of Labor training initiative with EDSI on work-based learning programs
- New Jersey Department of Labor Learning Management System program, which gives staff access to over 10 training modules that include Assessment, Individual Employment Plan, and Supportive Services
- Metrix Learning/Skill Up a virtual self-paced platform that has access to over 5000 training modules covering topics such as soft skills, Microsoft Office, and Project Management certification
- WorkforceGPS is an online technical assistance website created to help build the capacity of America's public workforce investment system. Sponsored by the Employment and Training Administration of the U.S. Department of Labor, WorkforceGPS was developed specifically for workforce professionals, educators, and business leaders.

Through the Union County Workforce Development Board committee meetings, American Job Center Network Partners have identified other training resources that focus on youth engagement and mental health training. The Union County Workforce Development Board encourages leveraging partner training resources that focus on the implementation of software, customer service skills, and other topics that will help staff better serve job seekers and employers. In addition, American Job Center Partners are urged to attend webinars, workshops, and conferences offered through workforce entities:

- The Garden State Employment and Training Association
- The State Employment and Training Commission
- Geographic Solutions
- The National Youth Employment Coalition
- National Technical Assistance Center on Transition: The Collaborative
- North Jersey Partners

American Job Center Network Partners are asked to provide feedback, best practices, training materials, and resources to identify new strategies for improving staff training and overall service delivery.

### **STAFF TRAINING ON WORKING WITH INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES**

During the Disabilities Committee meetings, committee members identified the need to offer American Job Center Network Partners training opportunities to ensure all partners



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develop effective ways to work with individuals with disabilities. Committee members identified the need to improve communication with individuals with disabilities. This training will help partners effectively communicate with individuals who have communication barriers or differences. In addition to communication, committee members want to ensure partners have a better understanding of disability-related issues, the types of disabilities, the challenges that individuals with disabilities may face, and the accommodations that can help to mitigate those challenges. This understanding can help staff be more effective in providing services and support to individuals with disabilities.

After the evaluation and assessment with Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired is completed, the committee members suggested training is conducted on how to modify existing services to make them more accessible, as well as training on how to identify and implement new services or adaptive devices that are specifically designed to meet the needs of individuals with disabilities.

The Union County Workforce Development Board believes staff training is a valuable tool for American Job Center Network Partners to better serve individuals with disabilities. It can help staff better understand disability-related issues, improve communication, create more inclusive and accessible services, and increase their confidence in working with individuals with disabilities.

### **EXPANSION OF SERVICES**

The Union County Workforce Development Board and the American Job Center Network Partners are committed to expanding services and supports and ensuring all individuals have access to One-Stop Career center services and opportunities. The Union County Workforce Development Board will continue to partner with community-based organizations and expand outreach to faith-based organizations that serve specific populations, such as veterans, individuals with disabilities, Individuals who are on Public Assistance, Ex-Offenders, and those with limited English proficiency, to ensure that these groups have access to One-Stop Career center services.

In addition, the Union County Workforce Development Board continues to coordinate with the North Jersey Partners on implementing regional strategies, such as add regional items, to ensure that their clients have access to One-Stop Career center services and opportunities. Along with the American Job Center Network Partners, the Union County Workforce Development Board will increase and enhance its outreach and marketing efforts to ensure that all individuals in the Union County area are aware of the services and resources available at One-Stop Career centers.

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The Union County Workforce Development Board will continue to expand services to underserved areas as it committed to in the 2016 Strategic plan by establishing satellite offices or mobile units in underserved areas. Using Labor Market Information and resources from the Future of Work Task Force, the Union County Workforce Development Board will offer specialized training programs that are tailored to the needs of specific populations, such as youth, older workers, or individuals with criminal records, to ensure that they have access to the skills and training needed to succeed in the job market.

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## **STATE EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING COMMISSION QUESTIONS**

Detailed Partnership and Service Integration: Reflect on current Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs), Infrastructure Funding Agreements (IFAs), and ongoing practice to describe how services, costs, and customers are shared across key partners highlighted in WIOA. Identify specific goals for strengthening integrated service models for cross-training of staff, technical assistance, use and sharing of information, and other coordination efforts utilized to support service integration across required One-Stop partners, with particular attention to:

- Relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of services.
- Supportive service partners, including public transportation, and other appropriate supportive services such as child care and public housing
- State employment service under the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.) around services provided in the LWDA through the one-stop delivery system, to improve service delivery and avoid duplication of services.
- Title II Adult education and literacy providers in the LWDA, including coordination of testing and services across One-Stop Career Centers and adult education providers; as well as literacy services provided through the Workforce Learning Link, WFNJ and any other WIOA services
- Statewide Rapid Response activities
- The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services and the New Jersey Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired in serving individuals with disabilities
- Disabled Veteran Outreach Program (DVOP) staff and Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVERs) known as Veterans Business Representatives in supporting veterans with defined significant barriers to employment
- Any mental or emotional health programs to assist people cope and excel in a work environment
- The steps the Board will undertake to ensure that these and any other appropriate area agreements are in place to ensure that clients may receive the assistance required to be a vital part of the economy.

### **Local Plan**

- Local plans must outline specific goals for service integration and highlight specific partners, as described above.
- Please reflect on the questions included in the regional plan section. At the local level, how will the LWDB and One Stop Operator work together and differentiate roles in working with key partners and building capacity for service integration.
- Please highlight how the LWDB will integrate region- and LWDB-led strategies to support stronger service integration

### **Regional Plan**

- Please describe how regional efforts may assist local areas in building relationships and coordinating with key partners – those articulated in WIOA as required partners, as well as any critical regional partners unique to your area – to move beyond referrals/handoffs to integrated service models for participants and co-enrollment opportunities.
  - What role has and/or will your region play in leading discussion with specific partners/stakeholders who must be included in local Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) or include in an Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFAs)?
  - What role has and/or will your region play in helping to negotiate with specific partners/stakeholders to establish agreements with partners/stakeholders, particularly those that have a regional footprint?
- Please describe how regional efforts may help to build the capacity for service integration in local One Stop Career Centers through cross-training of staff, provision of technical assistance, sharing of information, etc., and other supports.

## **SECONDARY AND POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

In August 2022, the United States Government Accountability Office released a report on Workforce Automation and Its Impact on Workers' Skills and Training Programs. The report aimed to examine how workforce automation is changing the demand for skills and how training programs are adapting to meet the needs of impacted workers.

The Government Accountability Office found that while workforce automation is changing the nature of work, it is not necessarily leading to widespread job displacement. However, some workers are at a higher risk of displacement than others, particularly those in routine, manual, or repetitive jobs. Workers in these roles often lack the skills needed for higher-paying jobs that are less likely to be automated.

Individuals who complete secondary and postsecondary education programs typically earn higher salaries than those who do not. This increased earning potential can help individuals achieve financial stability and independence and will lead to better job opportunities. Educational programs can help individuals advance in their chosen career paths by providing them with the necessary knowledge, skills, and credentials to take on more challenging roles.

Furthermore, the report recommends that policymakers and training providers focus on skills development and career advancement opportunities for impacted workers. This includes expanding access to training programs, promoting employer engagement in training, and enhancing partnerships between education and training providers. The report suggests that workforce automation presents both challenges and opportunities for workers and policymakers. By investing in skills development and training programs, the United States can help workers adapt to the changing nature of work and ensure that they are prepared for the jobs of the future.

The Union County Workforce Development Board recognizes the importance of higher education and providing job seekers with better career opportunities to achieve this goal. The Union County Workforce Development Board has established collaborative partnerships with Union College and Kean University. By working together, the Union County Workforce Development Board, and Union College and Kean University can provide jobseekers with access to resources and programs that will help them, acquire the necessary skills and knowledge to succeed in their chosen field through this partnership. In addition, members of both Union College and Kean University sit on the Union County Workforce Development Board. This collaboration makes it feasible to support the career aspirations of not only jobseekers, youth, and employers. This collaboration will ensure that the local workforce is equipped with the education and training necessary to meet the needs of the local job market.

## **UNION COLLEGE OF UNION COUNTY**

Union College is a public community college located in Cranford, New Jersey. It was founded in 1933 and has grown into one of the largest community colleges in the state. Union College offers over 70 degree and certificate programs in a wide range of fields, including business, healthcare, liberal arts, Science Technology Engineering and Math. The college has several campus locations throughout Union County, including Cranford, Elizabeth, Plainfield, and Scotch Plains.

Union College has a diverse student population, with students from over 40 countries and a student body that is over 50% minority. The college is known for its dedicated support services for students, including academic advising, career counseling, tutoring, and more. Union College offers the Community College Opportunity Grant which pays for the cost of tuition and approved educational fees that other grants do not cover at Union College. Union College has several partnerships with four-year colleges including Kean University, allowing students to transfer seamlessly to a bachelor's degree program after completing their associate degree.

## **KEAN UNIVERSITY**

Kean University is a public university located in Union, NJ. It was founded in 1855 as the Newark Normal School, a teacher's training school in Newark, NJ. Kean University has a diverse student body with over 16,000 undergraduate and graduate students from various cultural and ethnic backgrounds. The university also boasts a highly qualified faculty with over 70% holding doctoral or terminal degrees in their respected fields. Kean continues to provide students with quality education preparing them for success in their chosen careers for a life of meaningful contributions to their community and society.

## **STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION**

The Union County Workforce Development Board has been working through its committees to implement strategies to better meet the needs of job seekers and employers. A common theme among all the committees is the need to share data, provide training and technical assistance to partners within the American Job Center Network and Monitor the coordination efforts. The Union County Workforce Development Board has encouraged the sharing of data among partners to ensure that they have access to the same information and can make informed decisions. Data sharing can also help partners identify common issues and opportunities for collaboration. This data sharing effort is seen using Union County Works, the American Job Center Virtual One Stop system.

The Union County Workforce Development Board has provided training and technical assistance to partners to build their capacity to coordinate services effectively. Using



Workforce180, Union College has been given the tools needed to support a changing workforce. In addition, the Union County Workforce Development Board will expand its training opportunities to include data management, and continuous quality improvement. The Union County Workforce Development Board will monitor and evaluate the coordination efforts to ensure that they are meeting the needs of the local workforce development system. Through the various committees the Union County Workforce Development Board will have standing agenda items that focus on client referral and assessments, performance tracking, and employer engagement.

### **SUPPORTIVE SERVICE PARTNERS: TRANSPORTATION, CHILDCARE, AND PUBLIC HOUSING**

The Union County Workforce Development Board can leverage its coordination efforts to support service integration across supportive service partners by developing a comprehensive plan, establishing partnerships, integrating services, and evaluating and adjusting the plan as needed. Through its various committees the Union County Workforce Development Board is working on conducting a supportive service inventory. This inventory will be a partner snapshot that will identify the roles and responsibilities of each partner and establish clear communication channels for effective collaboration.

In the 2020 Comprehensive Community Needs Assessment for Union County, New Jersey, it provides detailed information and analysis about various aspects of the community, including transportation, childcare, and public housing concerns. Here are some key findings related to these topics:

#### **Transportation:**

- Many residents in Union County rely on public transportation, particularly buses and trains, to get to work and other destinations.
- While some areas of the county have good access to public transportation, there are gaps in service in other areas, particularly in more rural parts of the county.
- Traffic congestion is a major issue in some parts of the county, particularly along major highways like Route 22 and the Garden State Parkway.
- Many residents would like to see improvements in bike and pedestrian infrastructure, including more bike lanes and safer sidewalks.

Transportation barriers can make it difficult for individuals to access education, employment, healthcare, and other essential services. Overall, overcoming transportation barriers requires a multi-faceted approach that involves a combination of transportation options, community outreach, and employer support. However, Union County offers financial assistance for transportation through TANF funding. Additionally, eligible individuals can obtain bus passes, car repair reimbursement and parking passes to help ease the burden of transportation costs through supportive services.

**Childcare:**

- Affordable, high-quality childcare is a significant need for many families in Union County.
- Some areas of the county have a shortage of licensed childcare providers, particularly for infants and toddlers.
- Many families struggle to afford the prohibitive cost of childcare, which can be a significant barrier to employment and economic stability.
- There is a need for more public investment in early childhood education and care to ensure that all children in the county have access to quality care and education.

The Union County Workforce Development Board can help to overcome childcare barriers by conducting a supportive service inventory on childcare programs, develop and strengthen partnerships with organizations such as Community Coordinated Child Care of Union County and provide resources to ensure those programs are linked to eligible participants within the American Job Center Network.

**Public Housing Barriers:**

- Many residents in Union County face barriers to accessing affordable housing, particularly those with low incomes or who are experiencing homelessness.
- The county has a shortage of affordable housing units, particularly for families with children.
- Housing discrimination and restrictive zoning practices can further limit access to affordable housing for some residents.
- There is a need for increased public investment in affordable housing and policies to promote fair housing and address systemic barriers to housing access.

The Union County Workforce Development Board has begun to establish partnerships with supportive service providers such as the Jobs Plus program that is offered through the Housing Authority of the City of Elizabeth. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development awarded Housing Authority of the City of Elizabeth with funding to implement its Jobs Plus University Program. This program allows residents to work and earn more money without an increase in rent. By partnering with this program, the Union County Workforce Development Board and the American Job Center Network Partners can learn some of the best practices that have made impacts to residence receiving housing supplements.

The Workforce Development Board understands the need to integrate services into the One-Stop system into their operations. This can include adding resources for childcare and transportation to their service offerings and ensuring that job seekers are aware of these

services. The Union County Workforce Development Board understands the need for an effective outreach and communication strategy. The Union County Workforce Development Board will establish a communication strategy to keep American Job Center Network partners and supportive service providers informed of updates and changes in service offerings through committee meetings, website updates, and other communication tools such as the Workforce Register, which includes a timeline of public action taken by the Union County Workforce Development Board.

## **EMPLOYMENT SERVICE**

The Union County Workforce Development Board continues to have a solid partnership with Employment Services and looks forward to continuing having their team members participate in committee and Workforce Development Board meetings. These meetings can be used to identify gaps and overlaps in service delivery, and to develop strategies to address them. This was apparent during the Covid-19 pandemic when the One Stop Center was closed and all departments within the building needed to establish a new virtual service delivery process. As a core partner within the American Job Center Network, Employment Services can offer many strengths, which include:

- Access to job opportunities: Employment services can provide job seekers with access to a wide range of job opportunities that may not be available through other channels. This can include access to job listings, job fairs, and connections with employers.
- Resume and interview support: Employment services can provide job seekers with support in creating resumes, preparing for interviews, and other job search-related activities. This can help job seekers present themselves in the best possible light to potential employers.
- Networking opportunities: Employment services can provide job seekers with opportunities to network with other job seekers, employers, and industry professionals. This can help job seekers build their professional networks and increase their chances of finding employment.
- Access to resources: Employment services may offer access to resources such as computers, printers, and other equipment that job seekers may not have access to otherwise. This can help job seekers with their job search activities, such as researching potential employers and submitting job applications.
- Individualized support: Employment services may provide individualized support to job seekers, such as career counseling and job coaching. This can help job seekers identify their strengths and weaknesses, develop realistic career goals, and create a plan to achieve those goals.

The Union County Workforce Development Board looks forward to continuing to foster a culture of collaboration among the American Job Center Network partners by encouraging regular communication, sharing of resources, and joint planning and implementation of services. This can help to ensure that all partners are working towards the same goals, and that customers receive high-quality, integrated services.

## **TITLE II ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY PROGRAMS**

In May 2022, the Heldrich Center at Rutgers University published a report titled, A Process Evaluation of the Integration of Title I (Workforce Development) and Title II (Adult Literacy) Services Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act in New Jersey. The report presented a process evaluation of the integration of Title I workforce development and Title II adult literacy services under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act in New Jersey. The authors analyze the implementation of the integrated services model and assess the effectiveness of integration in improving outcomes for adult learners. The study finds that the integration of services has promising strategies in creating a more comprehensive and coordinated approach to adult education and workforce development. However, there are still challenges in fully integrating the two programs and ensuring that all learners have access to the services they need. The authors conclude by offering recommendations for improving the integration of Title I and Title II services in New Jersey and other states. The report provides several findings and recommendations, but here are the top three findings and recommendations:

### **Top Three findings:**

- The integration of Title I and Title II services has resulted in increased coordination, collaboration, and communication among providers, which has helped to create a more seamless and efficient system for adult learners.
- The integrated services model has helped to address the needs of low-skilled and underemployed workers by providing a more comprehensive approach to education and workforce development.
- The integrated services model has improved the quality of services and increased the capacity of providers to serve more learners.

### **Top Three recommendations:**

- The New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development should examine the quantitative data to search for evidence of workforce-related outcomes that resulted in local areas utilizing integrated services and for tracking participants through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act system.
- The New Jersey Department of Labor should invest in the professional development of staff for vital skill sets, including service delivery in virtual settings and strategic planning.

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- Statewide, more emphasis and effort should be directed toward increasing engagement of business/industry to obtain their input into programming for both adult literacy education and workforce development to ensure that relevant skills are being developed and training programs are being funneled into workplace opportunities.

### **UNION COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY COMMITTEE**

From 2021 the Union County Workforce Development Board Adult Education and Literacy committee meets on a quarterly basis to evaluate secondary and post-secondary educational programs with regards to literacy. Its primary objective is to appraise, suggest, guarantee execution, and supervise literacy plans and services. Most recently it has met to work on significant workforce strategies that focus on the integration of Title I and Title II programs. A complete list of discussion items from committee meetings can be found in section III- Local Workforce Development Board Structure and Functions Sub Section F- Regional and Local Plan Development, General Discussion Items at Literacy Committee Meetings organized by action items. When the Heldrich report was published it was immediately reviewed at the Adult Education and Literacy Committee and reinforced the committee members that the workforce strategies that have been worked on were aligned with the recommendations offered by the Heldrich report. Based on the recommendations, committee members committed to implementing the following strategies:

- Develop and implement a cross-training program for One-Stop Career Center staff and Title II Adult education and literacy providers to enhance their knowledge and understanding of each other's services and to promote seamless service delivery to clients.
- Develop a shared database system that enables One-Stop Career Centers and Title II Adult education and literacy providers to track client progress and outcomes across the system.
- Establish a referral system between One-Stop Career Centers and Title II Adult education and literacy providers to ensure that clients receive the appropriate services and support to achieve their career goals.

Some of the major actions steps that have progressed since 2021 include but are not limited to:

- Expanding cross training on operational functions for Title I and Title II career counselors, instructors and support staff.

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- Development of multilanguage orientation and outreach procedures. Title II participants are provided information on the benefits of Title I services offered through the American Job Center.
- Enhancement of career exploration for Title II clients which include an exchange of career/interest assessments and incorporating IEP/ISS for Title II participants.
- Training for Title II staff on the use of UCWORKS, the American Job Center virtual One Stop database, that is used for intake/eligibility, assessments, and job search.

**UNION COUNTY ADULT BASIC AND LITERACY EDUCATION PLUS TITLE II CONSORTIUM**

The Adult Basic and Literacy Education Plus will deliver free Adult Basic Skills, High School Equivalency preparation, English as a Second Language and English as a Second Language Civics programs that support the development of adults:

- To become literate and to obtain the critical knowledge and skills necessary for employment and self-sufficiency
- To become full partners in the emotional and educational development of their children
- To complete secondary school education, and to obtain the Basic English language skills needed for Civics and Community Involvement.

With funding under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Title II program, Adult Basic and Literacy Education Plus will work as a partner with the Union County Workforce Development Board and the American Job Center Network Partners to prepare additional eligible individuals for the High School Equivalency exam, occupational training, and post-secondary education. Additionally, the Consortium continues to develop and implement transitioning services and career pathways that provide Adult Basic and Literacy Education Plus participants clear connections to post-secondary education, occupational training, and employment. As seen in section III Local Workforce Development Board Structure and Functions Sub Section F Regional and Local Plan Development under General Discussion Items at Literacy Committee Meetings organized by action items, Union County Workforce Development Board along with partners within the American Job Center are committed to addressing the needs of individuals to obtain the knowledge and attain the skills necessary to become literate, obtain and maintain employment and become self-sufficient.

The Consortium for Adult Basic and Literacy Education Plus consists of the Union County One-Stop System/Workforce Development Board, four core service-providing partners, and a network of supportive service-providers who will contribute referrals, outreach, and support for special populations in addition to other needed support services such as childcare and transportation. The Adult Basic and Literacy Education Plus Consortium core service-providers are:

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- Union County College (Lead Applicant and Fiscal Agent)
- Urban Workforce Advantage
- Elizabeth Board of Education
- Literacy NJ Union County Program

The Consortium provides literacy and numeracy instruction as well as English as a Second language in five locations throughout the County. The four Consortium partners will implement educational activities at locations throughout the County of Union, including sites in Elizabeth, Plainfield, and one public library through an array of schedules. With such an extensive network of locations and variety of schedules, access will be assured for each in need of these educational services. In addition, the Adult Basic and Literacy Education Plus Consortium has solidified its assessment and referral processes with the Union County American Job Center in both Plainfield and Elizabeth to ensure residents throughout the County will be provided High School Equivalency preparation services.

Union College continues to be a full partner of the Workforce Innovation Business Center, and as American Job Center Network Partners, Union College, and the Consortium continue to benefit from the long history of collaboration with the American Job Center Network. Participants close to being ready to take their High School Equivalency test can be recruited from the Workforce Learning Links, from the partners and local community-based and faith-based organizations. An American Job Center representative has been assigned to attend all grant development meetings and all Consortium quarterly meetings to maintain the strong linkage and collaboration between the American Job Center, Workforce Development Board and Consortium partners. The programs provide a wide range of self-paced learning opportunities in English as a Second Language, basic skills, pre-General Educational Development, and General Educational Development literacy, life, and workplace skills. The Workforce Learning Link is open to anyone who needs to improve their skills.

Customers are referred to the American Job Center with a complete Individualized Employment and Education Plan noting their career and education goals and continue to work with their counselor when they have accomplished their goals.

The referral and recruitment process for each partner has been instrumental in informing the community of Consortium and the American Job Center but shall be memorialized through a Memorandum of Understanding. Partners continually reach out to churches, community agencies and community-based organizations and disseminate information on the program to them. This leads to the enormous popularity of the program, and an extensive waiting list has existed for more than 15 years. To meet this demand and meet



the needs of all residents, all Consortium Partners implement convenient schedules at multiple locations throughout the County.

The American Job Center continues to be a supportive partner and source of guidance and resources in the development of viable career pathways for participating students. All clients referred to American Job Center are offered orientation, either through a virtual platform or in person, that will provide a menu of resources and services which will enhance TITLE II services and activities. The American Job Center Career Counselors and intake personnel prescreen individuals for eligibility for and make referrals to appropriate services including those provided under Title II. Additionally, the Union County Workforce Development Board and the American Job Center support the continued development and implementation of Career Pathways, Integrated Education and Training programs through dual and co-enrollment of participants in both educational, IET and occupational activities.

The Union College Center for Economic and Workforce Development remains the lead applicant and fiscal agent for the Consortium. In that role College Center for Economic and Workforce Development will continue to:

- Coordinate all planning for the delivery of programs and services across the consortium
- Maintain mutual accountability
- Collect data from Consortium Partners, analyze the data, and report to the State agency all fiscal and program data across the Consortium according to the schedule and timelines determined by the State
- Provide any additional leadership and management support as necessary and requested by the Partner agencies
- Involve all Partners in project activities, meetings, and discussions
- Coordinate any professional development activities as required by the State
- Develop articulation agreements with consortium members which outline all partner responsibilities
- Coordinate activities for partners to deliver job search and family literacy activities (i.e., job fairs, school trips, financial aid workshops, publish job opportunities weekly)
- Monitor and support the development of student transitional activities among the partners
- Serve as a single point of contact for the New Jersey Department of Labor
- Participate in State-sponsored activities as requested by the State agency which includes monthly meetings of all grantees
- Review all LACES generated information and provide support for training in LACES.

In addition to the priority of service for Veterans, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act requires that priority for career and training services be given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient. The Consortium works with Multiple barriers to employment which may include criminal history, disability (both physical and intellectual), drug and alcohol addiction, homelessness, long-term welfare dependence, lack of marketable skills, poor job search/interview skills, lack of basic computer skills. Union College and the Center for Economic and Workforce Development are experienced working with individuals facing multiple of these barriers.

Public Assistance recipients have priority status for services. According to the Department of Human Services, Division of Social Services, (February 2023), there are 1812 families in Union County receiving *Temporary Assistance for Needy Families* benefits, 560 “employable” individuals receiving General Assistance, 35,418 receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits and 61,874 receiving Medicaid benefits. The Consortium partners work with clients to identify the resources available and provide referrals to the organization that can best provide the services if they cannot do so directly. The College and partners work closely with the American Job Center partners to ensure client’s needs are met as the client seek educational and training opportunities.

### **RAPID RESPONSE ACTIVITIES**

The New Jersey Department of Labor Rapid Response Program is a state-level program that provides support to businesses and workers during layoffs or plant closings. The program aims to provide timely and effective services to help affected workers transition to new employment as quickly as possible. According to the New Jersey Department of Labor Website Rapid Response assists both employers and workers involved in a closing or permanent mass layoff. Rapid response services include:

- Explanation of Unemployment Insurance benefits and eligibility requirements
- Assistance filing Unemployment Insurance claims
- Reemployment services, including referrals to available jobs, One-Stop Career Center registration, Labor Market Information, referrals to Jersey Job Clubs, and resume development assistance
- Training assistance, including an introduction to state and federal retraining programs available through New Jersey Community Colleges
- Help with job solicitation campaigns
- Targeted Job Fair assistance
- Registration forms completion assistance
- Help deciphering federal/state plant closing requirements

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The Union County Workforce Development Board will continue to collaborate with the Rapid Response Program and strongly encourage its collaboration with all American Job Center Network Partners to support Union County employers and jobseekers during their most challenging times. By collaborating with the Rapid Response, The Union County Workforce Development Board can help ensure that businesses and workers in Union County have access to a comprehensive set of services to help them navigate layoffs and plant closings and transition to new employment opportunities. Here are some ways in which the Union County Workforce Development Board can work with the New Jersey Department of Labor Rapid Response Program:

- **Coordinate efforts:** The Union County Workforce Development Board can coordinate efforts with the Rapid Response Program to ensure that services provided by both programs are complementary and not duplicative.
- **Provide additional services:** The Union County Workforce Development Board can provide additional services to Rapid Response participants, such as career counseling, job search assistance, and training opportunities. The UCWDB can also provide services to Rapid Response participants who are not eligible for WIOA Title III rapid response, such as older workers or those with limited English proficiency.
- **Timely Sharing of data:** The Union County Workforce Development Board requests the timely sharing of data from the Rapid Response Program to ensure that both programs have access to the information they need to provide effective services. This could include sharing information with all American Job Center Network Partners on layoffs and worker demographics upon notification of impending layoff.
- **Participate in coordinated outreach and marketing to meet the needs of the population:** The Union County Workforce Development Board can help with the outreach and marketing efforts to ensure that businesses and workers are aware of the services available and how to access them and it is inclusive of all populations.

**DIVISION OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES AND THE NEW JERSEY COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED IN SERVING INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES**

The Union County Workforce Development Board can play a critical role in facilitating service integration across required American Job Center Network Partners with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Title IV Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services and the New Jersey Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired to better serve individuals with disabilities. For more details on how the Union County Workforce Development Board coordination efforts can be utilized to support service integration please see section III. Local Workforce Development Board Structure and Functions sub section F. Regional and Local Plan Development under Disabilities Committee. By leveraging the strategies set forth by the Disabilities Committee, The Union County Workforce Development Board can help One-Stop partners, Division of Vocational

Rehabilitation Services and the New Jersey Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired better collaborate and coordinate their efforts to serve individuals with disabilities. This can lead to improved outcomes for individuals with disabilities, including increased employment, earnings, and independence.

### **DISABLED VETERAN OUTREACH PROGRAM BUSINESS REPRESENTATIVES IN SUPPORTING VETERANS**

Disabled Veteran Outreach Program along with the Veterans Business Services Representative are responsible for providing employment services to veterans with disabilities, including job placement, job development, and case management. In addition, there has been an effort by the New Jersey Department of Labor to conduct outreach services to employers and provide them with information on the opportunities available to working with Veterans in Union County. For example, the New Jersey Department of Labor has recently hosted “Lunch and Learn” sessions with employers on Veteran Recruiting which focused on services and programs related to interviewing and hiring veteran candidates, as well as other veteran-focused state and federal programs available.

Furthermore, the Union County Workforce Development Board determined it can coordinate efforts to support service integration with the Disabled Veteran Outreach Program and the Veterans Business Representatives in several ways to support veterans. Here are some strategies:

1. Conduct joint training sessions: Along with the **Office of Veteran’s Services for Union County New Jersey**, the Union County Workforce Development Board can organize joint training sessions for American Job Center Network Partners, to provide a better understanding of the services available to veterans. The training can cover the different programs available, eligibility criteria, and the referral process to ensure a seamless service experience for veterans.
2. Establish a referral network: The Union County Workforce Development Board can facilitate in developing a referral network among the American Job Center Network partners, Disabled Veteran Outreach Program and Veterans Business Services Representative to enable them to refer veterans to each other based on their needs. This would help to ensure that veterans receive comprehensive support and services.
3. Conduct outreach events: Along with the American Job Center Network Partners, the Union County Workforce Development Board can organize outreach events such as information sessions, resource fairs and hiring events, to raise awareness about the services available to veterans. Disabled Veteran Outreach Program and Veterans Business Services Representative and can provide an opportunity for

veterans to learn about the different programs available and connect with service providers.

The Union County Workforce Development Board can play a critical role in coordinating efforts to support service integration across required partners in supporting veterans. By facilitating communication, sharing information, and developing partnerships, the Union County Workforce Development Board can help to ensure that veterans receive the support they need to succeed.

## **MENTAL HEALTH AND WORKFORCE**

On October 10, 2022, the U.S. Surgeon General released *Framework for Workplace Mental Health and Well-Being*, a comprehensive guide that provides strategies and recommendations for employers to promote mental health and well-being in the workplace. Additionally, the report stresses the importance of taking a comprehensive and comprehensive approach to promoting mental health and well-being in the workplace, recognizing that a healthy and supportive workplace can have a positive impact on both employees and organizations. The framework consists of five key essentials:

### **1. Protection from Harm**

- Prioritize workplace physical and psychological safety
- Enable adequate rest
- Normalize and support mental health
- Operationalize DEIA\* norms, policies, and programs

### **2. Work-Life Harmony**

- Provide more autonomy over how work is done
- Make schedules as flexible and predictable as possible
- Increase access to paid leave
- Respect boundaries between work and non-work time

### **3. Matter at Work**

- Provide a living wage
- Engage workers in workplace decisions
- Build a culture of gratitude and recognition
- Connect individual work with organizational mission

### **4. Connection & Community**

- Create cultures of inclusion and belonging
- Cultivate trusted relationships
- Foster collaboration and teamwork

## **5. Opportunity for Growth**

- Offer quality training, education, and mentoring
- Foster clear, equitable pathways for career advancement
- Ensure relevant, reciprocal feedback

The Union County Workforce Development Board understands the concerns facing many Union County residents and has committed to implementing the following strategies that speak to the spirit of the Essential 5: Opportunity for Growth. In this section, the report provides strategies that the Union County Workforce Development Boards can incorporate to create opportunities for career growth and advancement for individuals in the workforce. Some career and business strategies include:

- Survey Employers on their recruitment, hiring and training needs.
- Partner with employers to identify career advancement opportunities and create career pathways that align with the needs of the local labor market.
- Provide access to education and training programs that enable workers to acquire new skills and credentials needed for career advancement. This can be with the use of On-the-Job Training grants or Incumbent Worker Training opportunities.
- Offer career coaching and mentoring to help workers set and achieve career goals through the American Job Center.
- Collaborate with apprenticeship programs that provide on-the-job training and career advancement opportunities.
- Encourage employers to offer livable wages, flexible work arrangements, and other benefits that support work-life balance, which can help employees focus on their career growth. Furthermore, employers are encouraged to create feedback loops with their employees to understand the companies strengths and growth opportunities.

To implement these strategies, The Union County Workforce Development Board will convene employers, educators, community organizations, and other stakeholders to identify local workforce needs and create a plan to address them. The Union County Workforce Development Board could also leverage funding opportunities to support the development and implementation of programs that promote career advancement and provide support to workers throughout their career journey.

### **UNION COUNTY "STEPPING UP TO MENTAL HEALTH"**

In a February 2023 press release by the Union County Board of Commissioner, Chairman Sergio Granados' discussed, "Stepping Up to Mental Health," initiative. The article noted that mental health concerns continue to rise, and it is critical that everyone work together to tackle the issue head-on. Mental health can impact anyone, and it is a topic that should never be stigmatized or shrouded in shame. The Board of Commissioners goal is to raise awareness and let residents know that they are not alone, and that there are resources available to help them. Through "Stepping Up to Mental Health," Union County is offering suicide prevention training, as well as programs that connect individuals living with a substance abuse disorder to treatment and recovery.

Union County will be providing community resources for those seeking treatment, and information for concerned friends and family who want to learn more about supportive services. By working together and breaking down barriers to mental health care, Union County can create a healthier and more resilient community.

Collaboration with Mental or Emotional Health Programs provides integrated services to individuals with mental or emotional health needs. For example, the Union County Workforce Development Board will partner with mental or health programs to provide job readiness and training services, as well as mental or emotional health support services, to individuals with mental or emotional health needs but also the staff who assist them. As part of the Union County mental health initiative the following partners will be available to provide support to Union County residents:

- Hillside Health & Wellness Speaker Series
- Someone's Daughter
- Neighborhood Health Services Corporation
- Visions & Pathways-Independent Living Skills
- United Way of Greater Union County
- YWCA of Eastern Union County

The Union County Workforce Development Board can also support service integration across mental or emotional health programs. Below are some ways in which the American Job Center Network Partner coordination efforts can be utilized to support service integration:

1. Collaborating with partners can help mental health organizations and groups reach a broader audience and have a greater impact on the community. By working together, they can promote mental health awareness, reduce stigma, and provide education and resources to individuals, families, and community groups. A most



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recent example of partner collaboration was seen when the Housing Authority of the City of Elizabeth was hosting a Trauma Informed Care Training and invited American Job Center committee members to participate. This sharing of training resources allows for more service providers to be armed with the tools needed to support individuals with mental and emotional problems.

2. Strengthened Community Support: Collaboration among mental health organizations and community partners can help build a stronger, more supportive community for individuals and families affected by mental health challenges. By working together and offering wrap around services, they can create a culture of understanding, support, and empathy for those with mental health needs.

Mental health issues are complex and require a multidisciplinary approach. By collaborating with partners, mental health organizations can improve coordination of care for individuals with mental health challenges. This can lead to better outcomes for those in need and reduce the likelihood of gaps in care.

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## **STATE EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING COMMISSION QUESTIONS**

Employer Engagement: Describe the strategies and services that will be used to effectively serve employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations. Specifically, highlight how your strategy seeks to:

- Facilitate engagement of employers, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations, in workforce development programs.
- Support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the region and LWDA.
- Better coordinate workforce development programs and economic development, including coordination of local workforce investment with regional economic development activities, and the promotion of entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services
- Create linkage during program delivery between individual customers and employers.
- Align resources at the state, regional, and local level to create a system of services, supports, and solutions for employers that offer dual benefits for jobseekers and workers in NJ
- Expand implementation of a variety of work-based learning opportunities and programs, including Incumbent Worker Training, On-the-Job Training, Transitional Jobs, Pre-Apprenticeship and Registered Apprenticeship opportunities
- Leverage local career pathway initiatives, business intermediaries, economic development organizations, and other local industry and sector strategies
- Leverage additional state programs and grants through the NJDOL's Business Services, Apprenticeship, and Industry Partnership units

### **Local Plan**

- Please provide an overview of the local area's employer engagement strategies and expected implementation activities, including elements highlighted in the bulleted list above.
- Please reflect on the questions included in the regional plan section. At the local level, how will the LWDB help to develop and implement employer engagement strategies.
- Please provide a clear description of the roles that the Local Workforce Development Board, One Stop Operator, and One Stop Career Services provider will play in engaging and working with employers.

### **Regional Plan**

- Please describe the role the region will play in the Employer Engagement efforts.

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- How will the region conduct outreach to, as well as develop and maintain relationships with, employers?
- What services or programs, if any, will be delivered regionally?
- What shared costs and capacity will support these regional efforts?
- Please describe how the region's efforts will coordinate with local efforts and those of other partners/stakeholders working with employers in the region, including state Business Services activities.
  - What will be the roles and responsibilities of state partners, the region, LWDBs, and other entities in building coordinated employer engagement strategies and a system of services and supports?
  - What will the flow of employer engagement and services look like? Where will different partners support this flow?
- Please describe how the region might help build employer engagement capacity across and within local areas.
  - Will the region offer specific funding to support employer engagement activities?
  - Will the region offer specific training or technical assistance to support the implementation of these priorities?
  - Will the region support coordinated data collection?

## **UNION COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

The Union County Workforce Development Board is administratively housed within the Union County Department of Economic Development. Combining economic development and workforce development is important because these two fields are closely related and have a significant impact on each other. Economic development is focused on creating and sustaining economic growth and stability in the county by attracting new businesses, promoting the expansion of existing businesses, and developing new industries. However, economic growth will not be sustainable without a talented and skilled workforce.

Workforce development is focused on improving the skills and employability of the local workforce to meet the needs of businesses and industries. This involves providing training and education opportunities to help individuals gain the skills and knowledge needed for in-demand jobs, as well as connecting them with employment opportunities.

When economic development and workforce development are combined, the result is a more dynamic and resilient economy. By investing in workforce development, businesses and communities can ensure that they have a ready supply of skilled workers to support their growth and development. On the other hand, by focusing on economic development, communities can create new employment opportunities and support the growth of businesses, which in turn will create a demand for skilled workers. In short, combining economic development and workforce development helps to create a virtuous cycle where businesses and communities can grow and prosper together.

The Union County Department of Economic Development, in collaboration with the Union County Workforce Development Board, works to improve the economic conditions of Union County and for the benefit of Union County residents. The collaboration works to create jobs, to stimulate investment, to promote regional economic growth, to reduce poverty and inequality, to expand access to financial services, to promote entrepreneurship, and to foster innovation. Through this collaborative effort, the team helps to ensure that people in the county have access to the tools they need to build a better future. Finally, the Union County Department of Economic Development, in cooperation with the Union County Workforce Development Board and other stakeholders, spearheads the Union County Means Business Initiative. This initiative is an annual series of business roundtables and workshops designed to foster local and regional economic and workforce development.

## **UNION COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD**

The Union County Workforce Development Board oversees and manages employment and training programs for Union County. The Union County Workforce Development Board is responsible for developing and implementing workforce development strategies that meet

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the needs of Union County businesses and job seekers. This typically involves coordinating with local employers, community-based organizations, education institutions, and government agencies to identify workforce needs, develop training programs, and provide job placement services through the American Job Centers and Affiliates. The goal of a Union County Workforce Development Board is to help local communities address the challenges of a changing economy and promote economic growth by connecting employers with a skilled and prepared workforce. The following is a brief overview of the myriad of divisions within the Department of Economic Development and are all briefed and interconnected to the Union County Workforce Development Board, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act benefits for business, and the career services, training, and supportive services available through the Union County American Job Center.

### **BUREAU OF ADA COMPLIANCE**

The Bureau of ADA Compliance shall ensure compliance with federal and state disability rights laws by the County and will assist municipalities and school districts within the County with training and guidance. The Bureau monitors and assists the implementation of the County ADA Transition Plan to ensure full programmatic and communication accessibility to persons with disabilities. The Bureau also monitors the County Employees Access and Inclusion Solution Process procedure for disability complaints.

### **OFFICE OF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT**

The Office of Business Development is dedicated to promoting and supporting the growth of local businesses. Office of Business Development focuses on business retention and expansion, business attraction and creation, entrepreneurial support, and access to capital. The Office of Business Development can connect entrepreneurs with a variety of services such as business counseling, training, technical assistance, and networking opportunities, to help businesses achieve success and contribute to economic development.

### **WE ARE ONE NEW JERSEY**

The We Are One New Jersey provides legal services to Legal Permanent Residents and immigrants residing in Union County who qualify to apply for U.S. Citizenship or the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals. The legal services will be provided in an accessible, culturally competent, responsive, and trust-worthy environment. Client interviews are conducted in private, safe spaces, at hours convenient to participants, and in the participant's own language. A case management approach is used to actively connect program participants to other services on-site. New participants will receive a one-on-one assessment from our accredited immigration practitioner and an Action Plan will be tailored for each client. Training for Citizenship Test Preparation and English as a Second



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Language are provided. All the staff members are fully bilingual in Spanish and English, and other languages.

### **BUREAU OF HOUSING**

The Bureau of Housing role includes developing and implementing housing policies and programs, managing, and maintaining public housing stock, reviewing housing codes and regulations, and providing support and assistance to residents and communities in need of affordable housing. The Bureau of Housing also works to promote and encourage the development of new housing units and initiatives.

### **BUREAU OF TRANSPORTATION PLANNING**

The Bureau of Transportation Planning is responsible for planning, managing, and coordinating the transportation planning within Union County. Its main objectives include developing transportation plans, analyzing transportation trends and data, and evaluating the transportation needs of Union County to prioritize funding, make policy recommendations, and improve transportation infrastructure and services. The bureau is focused on ensuring a safe, efficient, and effective transportation system for all users, which includes vehicular, pedestrian, and public transportation options. The goal of the Bureau of Transportation Planning is to create a well-connected and integrated transportation network that supports economic growth and mobility, while also protecting the environment and enhancing quality of life.

### **BUREAU OF PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

The Bureau of Planning and Economic Development is responsible for coordinating and implementing plans and programs related to county and regional planning and economic development. This bureau develops and implements land use plans, transportation plans, and housing policies.

### **OFFICE OF VETERANS**

The Office of Veterans provides support to veterans, and their families, as they navigate the complications of accessing Veterans Administration services, including health care, disability compensation, veterans' benefits, and survivor benefits. The Office of Veterans also provides referrals designed to assist veterans in finding employment, education, and housing opportunities.

### **DIVISION OF COMMUNITY SERVICES**

Partners with communities and non-profit agencies to reduce the causes of poverty, increase job opportunities, economic security for individuals/families and revitalize communities. Our social service and community development programs work in a variety of ways to improve the lives of Union County residents.

### **OFFICE OF LGBTQ AFFAIRS**

The Office of LGBTQ Affairs is focused on addressing the needs, concerns, and issues of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer community. Its objective is to promote equality, inclusion, and equal rights for LGBTQ individuals and communities, and to provide support and resources to help improve the quality of life for LGBTQ people. Some of the key responsibilities of the office include providing education and outreach, promoting non-discrimination and anti-bullying initiatives, and working to address health disparities and other challenges facing the LGBTQ community.

### **OFFICE ON WOMEN**

The Office on Women is responsible for promoting the rights and welfare of women in Union County. Its main objective is to ensure that women have equal opportunities and equal treatment. The Office on Women is tasked with addressing issues that affect women, such as violence against women, health and reproductive rights, economic and political empowerment, and discrimination in the workplace.

### **OFFICE OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND DIVERSITY**

The Office of Community Engagement and Diversity is dedicated to promoting and fostering diversity and inclusivity. This office works to engage with communities, foster positive relationships, and promote understanding and acceptance among diverse groups. The objective of the Office of Community Engagement and Diversity is to create a more inclusive and equitable society by promoting diversity, increasing access to opportunities, and reducing disparities. This involves initiatives aimed at educating the public, promoting cultural awareness and appreciation, and advocating for equal treatment and representation for marginalized communities.

### **UNION COUNTY MEANS BUSINESS INITIATIVE**

The **Union County Means Business Initiative** is an effort to promote and support small businesses in Union County, New Jersey. Through this initiative, the Union County Board of County Commissioners seeks to provide the resources, support, and guidance necessary to help small businesses grow and thrive in Union County. By providing access to resources, networking and other support, the initiative aims to create a strong business environment and support a vibrant local economy that benefits all Union County residents. The following are but some of the examples born through this initiative.

**UNION COUNTY WOMEN MEAN BUSINESS** was established in 2020 with the goal of supporting and empowering women in business in the county. The initiative aims to create a supportive and inclusive environment for female entrepreneurs, offering access to the resources they need for success, and fostering a collaborative and mutually successful

culture. The objective is to help women entrepreneurs reach their full potential and contribute to a more diverse and equitable business landscape in Union County. The initiative's activities include mentorship, networking events, and educational opportunities, advocacy for policies that benefit women-owned businesses, and promoting the stories of female entrepreneurs in the community. The belief is that the success of women benefits the entire community.

**UNION COUNTY FORECLOSURE TASK FORCE** was created to assist individuals at risk of foreclosure and, in 2021 its role was amended to include tenants at risk of eviction. The goal of a Foreclosure Task Force is to work collaboratively to find solutions to the challenges posed by foreclosures, such as declining property values, decreased economic activity, and social and community impacts. The task force may be made up of representatives from government agencies, housing organizations, financial institutions, and community groups, and may focus on strategies such as loan modification and mediation, homeowner counseling, and community stabilization. The goal of a Foreclosure Task Force is to reduce the number of foreclosures and promote stability in the community. The risk of eviction function of the Foreclosure Task Force includes the following objectives:

- Providing financial assistance and resources to help tenants pay their rent and avoid eviction.
- Advocating for policy changes to increase tenant protections and reduce evictions.
- Educating tenants, property owners, and the community on their rights and responsibilities regarding eviction.
- Connecting tenants and property owners with legal assistance, mediation services, and other resources to help resolve disputes.
- Collaborating with government agencies and community organizations to address the root causes of eviction, such as poverty, unemployment, and lack of affordable housing.
- Monitoring and tracking eviction trends and data to inform policy and program decisions.

The **OFFICE OF LGBTQ AFFAIRS** worked with the National, NJ LGBT Chambers of Commerce, and the Union County American Job Center to develop a virtual jobs fair with accepting businesses that value LGBTQ diversity in the workplace. The Office of LGBTQ Affairs supports and advocates for the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer community, including initiatives to address disparities and discrimination, promote equality and inclusivity, and provide resources and support for LGBTQ individuals and organizations. The

**Office of LGBTQ Affairs** may engage in public policy advocacy, community outreach and education, and partnerships with LGBTQ-serving organizations and businesses.

**OPEN FOR BUSINESS – OPEN FOR EVERYONE: DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION SYMPOSIUM** for business owners, managers, and entrepreneurs. Upon completion of the LGBTQ+ diversity and inclusion training program, businesses signed the “Open for Business – Open for Everyone” pledge and receive a window decal or sticker to post at their establishment. The Open for Business – Open for Everyone: Diversity and Inclusion Symposium is an event aimed at promoting diversity and inclusion in the business community. The symposium is an opportunity for businesses and organizations to learn about best practices and strategies for creating a more inclusive work environment and supporting diverse populations, including underrepresented groups such as LGBTQ individuals. The event typically features keynote speakers, panel discussions, and networking opportunities, and may also provide resources and information about programs and initiatives related to diversity and inclusion in the business sector.

#### **BUSINESS SERVICES UNDER THE WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT**

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act mandates the delivery of business services through the American Job Centers, aimed at establishing a local workforce development system that caters to the needs of businesses in the local area (as per 20 CFR 678.435, 34 CFR 361.435, and 34 CFR 463.435). American Job Centers and its one-stop partners aim to provide quality business services that can help businesses and various industry sectors address challenges such as recruiting, retaining, and developing talented workers for the regional economy. To achieve this, Pursuant to Training Education and Guidance Letter No. 16-16, dated January 18, 2017, American Job Center staff, including staff from designated partner programs, must:

- *“Have a clear understanding of industry skill needs.*
- *Identify appropriate strategies for assisting employers, and coordinate business services activities across American Job Center partner programs, as appropriate; and*
- *Incorporate an integrated and aligned business services strategy among American Job Center partners to present a unified voice for the American Job Center in its communications with employers.*

The Union County Workforce Development Board, with the consent and approval of the Union County Board of County Commissioners, provides support to businesses for career services through budget allocation, policies, procedures, guidance, and technical assistance. This support is made available to the Union County American Job Center

Operator, the Union County American Job Center, and the American Job Center Network Partners. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act funds the variety of services offered to assist businesses in recruiting, training, and retaining their employees. These services are tailored to meet the unique needs of businesses and to help them build a skilled workforce that contributes to economic growth and stability. The following are some of the business services supported by the Union County Workforce Development Board and the Union County American Job Center Network Partners:

- **WORKFORCE INFORMATION AND DATA ANALYSIS** refers to the collection, analysis, and dissemination of data and information related to the workforce system. The goal of this area is to provide information to support the effective planning and operation of workforce development programs and activities, as well as to inform policy and investment decisions related to workforce development. This information may include data on labor market trends, employment and training program outcomes, and other relevant metrics that help to understand the current state of the workforce and inform future strategies and investments.
- **EMPLOYER INFORMATION AND SUPPORT SERVICES** refers to the services provided to employers to assist them in finding and retaining employees, and to provide information on training and employment opportunities for their employees. These services may include job placement, recruitment and retention services, training and retraining programs, and other support services to meet the specific needs of employers.
- **RECRUITMENT ASSISTANCE** refers to services provided by the local workforce development boards to support employers in recruiting and hiring job seekers, especially those who are disadvantaged, unemployed, or underemployed. These services may include job fairs, referrals to job seekers, advertising of job vacancies, and assistance with screening and interviewing job candidates. The aim is to match job seekers with appropriate job opportunities and to help employers find the talent they need to grow their businesses.
- **TRAINING SERVICES** refer to education and training programs funded under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. These services are designed to help individuals acquire the skills and knowledge needed to succeed in the modern workforce, and may include training in industries such as healthcare, technology, and manufacturing. Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Training Services can also support the development of career pathways and provide support for workers who are transitioning to new careers. The goal of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Training Services is to provide individuals with the resources

they need to enter or re-enter the workforce and to support the development of a skilled and competitive workforce.

- **INCUMBENT WORKER TRAINING SERVICES** refers to a type of job training program under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. This program provides training for current employees of an organization to upgrade their skills and improve their job performance. The goal of Incumbent Worker Training Services is to help businesses retain their current workforce and remain competitive in the market by providing workers with the skills and knowledge they need to perform their jobs more effectively. These services can include classroom training, on-the-job training, and apprenticeships, and are typically funded by a combination of state and federal funds.
- **RAPID RESPONSE BUSINESS ASSISTANCE** is a program under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act that aids businesses and workers affected by layoffs or plant closures. The program is designed to help workers quickly re-enter the workforce and minimize the impact of job loss on both the individual and the community. Rapid Response/ Business Downsizing Assistance services may include career counseling, job search assistance, and training programs. The goal of the program is to help businesses and workers recover quickly and effectively from downsizing events and support economic growth in the affected communities.
- **PLANNING LAYOFF RESPONSE** refers to the preparation and coordination of services for individuals who are facing job loss because of a business downsizing, closure, or other restructuring. Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Rapid Response/Business Downsizing Assistance is a program that provides support to individuals and businesses during times of workforce disruption. This can include providing information on available services and resources, assisting with transition planning, and connecting individuals with job training and placement services to help them find new employment opportunities. The goal of Rapid Response/Business Downsizing Assistance is to minimize the impact of workforce disruption and help affected workers transition to new jobs as quickly and efficiently as possible.
- **ON-THE-JOB TRAINING** is a program under Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act is a training program that provides funding for job training for eligible individuals. The OJT program allows eligible individuals to gain work experience and training in a job setting while being paid by the employer. This program helps to provide the individual with the necessary skills to be successful in the job and provides support to the employer by helping to reduce the cost of training new

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employees. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act OJT program is designed to be a win-win situation for both the individual and the employer.

- **TRANSITIONAL JOBS** refer to short-term, paid job opportunities provided to individuals facing multiple barriers to employment, such as a lack of job skills, work experience, and stable income, with the goal of helping them progress to unsubsidized employment. These jobs are typically offered by non-profit organizations or public agencies and are designed to provide work experience, job training, and support services to participants to help them build the skills and confidence needed to obtain unsubsidized employment in the future.
- **CUSTOMIZED TRAINING** refers to job training services that are designed and delivered to meet the specific needs and requirements of an employer. It is typically provided to incumbent workers or new hires and can be tailored to the needs of a particular industry or job function. The goal of Customized Training is to help employers increase the skills and productivity of their workforce, and to ensure that workers are equipped with the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in today's competitive job market.

The goal of these business services under Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act is to support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the local area, helping them to overcome the challenges of recruiting, retaining, and developing talent for the regional economy. These services are designed to be flexible and responsive to the changing needs of businesses and can be adapted to meet the specific needs of each business and local area.

#### **UNION COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**

In addition to the economic development activities taking place within the Department of Economic Development, the Union County Board of County Commissioners endorses, funds, and collaborates with the Union County Economic Development Corporation. The Union County Board of County Commissioners has, pursuant to the requirements of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, appointed a representative from the Union County Economic Development Corporation to a seat on the Union County Workforce Development Board. The services offered by the Union County Economic Development Corporation include:

- **VIP VIRTUAL INCUBATOR PROGRAM**  
This program was limited to minority and under-served populations, is a business incubation initiative that provides support and resources to start-ups and early-stage companies, typically through an online platform or virtual environment. It may



offer services such as mentorship, networking opportunities, training, access to funding, and other business development resources to help entrepreneurs grow their businesses and succeed in the market. The main objective of a virtual incubator program is to support the development and growth of new businesses, particularly those operating in the technology or innovation sector, without the need for a physical office or location.

- **ENTREPRENEURSHIP AS A SECOND CHANCE**

This program focused on training to assist individuals to explore business ownership. Specifically, starting a business can be a path to personal and financial renewal for individuals who have faced challenges such as unemployment, bankruptcy, or other setbacks. This approach to entrepreneurship recognizes that everyone deserves a second chance to succeed and leverages the spirit of entrepreneurship to create new opportunities for those who have faced challenges. The goal of entrepreneurship as a second chance program is to provide support, resources, and education to help individuals start and grow successful businesses, and in the process, rebuild their confidence, income, and overall well-being.

- **OPEN FOR BUSINESS INITIATIVE**

This program was designed to help underserved small businesses stay open and save jobs. The Open for Business Initiative is a program aimed at promoting and supporting entrepreneurship and small business growth, typically by providing resources and support to entrepreneurs. The specific focus and offerings of the initiative may vary, but it seeks to assist individuals in starting and growing their own businesses. This can include access to funding, mentorship and training programs, networking opportunities, and more. The goal of the Open for Business Initiative is to create a supportive ecosystem for entrepreneurs and help foster economic growth in each region or community.

- **BUSINESS BASICS WORKSHOP**

The Business Basics Workshop offers the fundamental concepts and principles of starting, running, and managing a business. It covers a range of topics, including marketing, finance, operations, human resources, and strategy, and provides a foundational understanding of what is required to successfully run a business. The purpose of Business Basics is to equip individuals with the skills and knowledge necessary to start and grow a successful enterprise.

- **ENTREPRENEURIAL TRAINING**

This intensive six-week course for start-ups and established businesses entrepreneurial training is designed to help aspiring entrepreneurs or small

business owners gain the skills, knowledge, and resources necessary to start and run a successful business. This can include coursework in business planning, marketing, finance, and management, as well as access to mentorship and networking opportunities. The goal of entrepreneurial training is to help entrepreneurs improve their chances of success and increase their overall impact in the community.

- **BUSINESS MENTORING**

Loan clients and Entrepreneurial Training graduates receive free individualized business counseling. Business mentoring is a relationship between a more experienced entrepreneur or business professional (the mentor) and a less experienced individual (the mentee). The mentor provides guidance, advice, and support to the mentee in areas such as starting and growing a business, developing a business plan, navigating business challenges, and more. The goal of business mentoring is to help the mentee develop the skills, knowledge, and confidence they need to succeed in business.

## **KEAN UNIVERSITY**

Kean University is a public university located in Union, New Jersey, United States. It was founded in 1855 as the Newark Normal School, a teacher training school in Newark, New Jersey. In 1937, the school moved to its current location in Union, New Jersey, and was renamed Kean College of New Jersey in 1973 in honor of its benefactor, Senator Robert Kean.

In 1997, Kean College of New Jersey was granted university status by the New Jersey Commission on Higher Education and became Kean University. Over the years, the university has expanded its academic programs and facilities, offering undergraduate and graduate degree programs in a wide range of fields, including education, business, liberal arts, and sciences, among others.

Kean University has a diverse student body, with over 16,000 undergraduate and graduate students from various cultural and ethnic backgrounds. The university also boasts a highly qualified faculty, with over 70% holding doctoral or terminal degrees in their respective fields.

In addition to its academic programs, Kean University is also known for its commitment to community service and social responsibility. The university is home to several centers and institutes, including the Kean University Human Rights Institute, which is dedicated to promoting and protecting human rights through education, research, and advocacy.

Today, Kean University continues to provide students with a quality education, preparing them for success in their chosen careers and for a life of meaningful contribution to their communities and society. Moreover, Kean University and the Union County Board of County Commissioner have a strong collaborative partnership that benefits both the university and Union County residents.

#### **NEW JERSEY SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION AT KEAN UNIVERSITY**

The Union County Board of County Commissioners, the Union County Department of Economic Development, and Union County Workforce Development Board collaborate with the New Jersey Small Business Development Center at Kean University to outreach to regional and local employers and to provide them with the educational awareness, technical assistance, and guidance needed to reinforce existing solid business practices and to amplify their expansion endeavors. The New Jersey Small Business Development Center provides a range of services to help small businesses start, grow, and succeed. The NJSBDC network is made up of experts who provide one-on-one confidential business counseling and training services at no cost to entrepreneurs and small business owners. The services provided by the New Jersey Small Business Development Center include:

- **Business Planning:** NJSBDC consultants help small businesses create business plans, cash flow projections, and feasibility studies.
- **Access to Capital:** The NJSBDC helps small business owners explore financing options and connect with lending sources.
- **Market Research:** The NJSBDC provides market research and demographic data to help small business owners make informed decisions about their target market.
- **Marketing and Sales Assistance:** The NJSBDC provides guidance on marketing strategies, advertising, and sales techniques to help small business owners reach new customers and increase sales.
- **Government Procurement:** The NJSBDC helps small business owners understand the procurement process and navigate the bidding process to win government contracts.
- **International Trade:** The NJSBDC aids with exporting, importing, and foreign market research to help small business owners expand globally.
- **Technology Commercialization:** The NJSBDC helps small business owners understand the technology commercialization process and connect with resources to bring new products and services to market.
- **Disaster Recovery:** The NJSBDC provides guidance and resources to help small business owners recover from natural disasters and other emergencies.

## **TOGETHER NORTH JERSEY**

The Union County Board of County Commissioners, the Union County Department of Economic Development, and Union County Workforce Development Board have played a key role in development of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy within the Together North Jersey planning and transportation sphere. Together North Jersey is a regional planning initiative that seeks to promote collaboration, innovation, and integration across North Jersey in areas such as transportation, land use, economic development, and environmental protection. The County of Union, the Union County Department of Economic Development, and the Union County Workforce Development Board have all been involved in the planning process initiated through Together North Jersey, particularly with respect to the development of the regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. The objectives of Together North Jersey include:

- **Improve Regional Transportation:** To create a more integrated and efficient transportation system that provides better access to jobs, housing, education, and services for all residents.
- **Foster Sustainable Economic Development:** To create a thriving and resilient economy by fostering the growth of new and existing businesses, promoting innovation, and encouraging sustainable development practices.
- **Strengthen Regional Resilience:** To enhance the region's ability to prepare for, respond to, and recover from natural and man-made disasters by improving coordination and collaboration among government, business, and community organizations.
- **Promote Sustainable Land Use:** To ensure that new development is designed in a manner that preserves and protects the region's natural resources and enhances quality of life for all residents.
- **Encourage Environmental Stewardship:** To promote environmentally responsible practices and protect the region's natural resources for future generations.
- **Enhance Quality of Life:** To create vibrant, livable communities that offer a high quality of life for all residents, including access to quality education, healthcare, and recreational opportunities.
- **Encourage Collaboration and Coordination:** To foster collaboration and coordination among government, business, and community organizations to achieve regional goals and maximize resources.
- These objectives are aimed at creating a more integrated, sustainable, and resilient North Jersey region that provides a high quality of life for all residents.

- The North Jersey Economic Development Plan proposes several strategies in four focus areas. The focus areas are regional innovation clusters, enhancing north jersey's innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem, building on the region's infrastructure assets, and aligning workforce training with industry needs. The plan highlights the strengths of the region, such as its transportation network and access to lifestyle amenities, and the weaknesses, including weight limits on rail lines and the perception that state redevelopment incentives are focused on urban areas. The plan presents opportunities for promoting regional collaboration, developing new transportation options, and creating more national destinations. The threats to the plan include the rigid dedication to the suburban lifestyle and ongoing political controversies that harm the state's perceived business climate.

A Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy is a regional development plan that identifies the economic assets, strengths, and challenges of a region and outlines a strategic vision for economic growth and competitiveness. It is a multi-jurisdictional and multi-sectoral approach to regional economic development planning that brings together various stakeholders, including businesses, government agencies, and community organizations, to collaborate and align their efforts to support regional economic growth. The objectives of a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy include increasing job creation and economic opportunities, attracting and retaining businesses and investment, diversifying the regional economy, and promoting sustainable and equitable growth. The CEDS process involves the collection and analysis of data, the development of a regional economic profile, the identification of key industries and sectors, and the development of strategic initiatives and action plans to support regional economic development. An update to the North Jersey Economic Development Plan or the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy is in order.

### **PORT AUTHORITY OF NEW YORK AND NEW JERSEY**

The **Port Authority of New York and New Jersey** is a bi-state government agency responsible for the transportation and infrastructure in the New York and New Jersey metropolitan region. The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey operates transportation infrastructure, including airports, seaports, tunnels, bridges, and bus terminals in the New York-New Jersey metropolitan area. Its mission is to enhance regional economic growth, foster international commerce, and support sustainable development. The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey also provides funding and support for various transportation-related projects and initiatives, and it operates the PATH (Port Authority Trans-Hudson) rapid transit system. A representative of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey was appointed to the Union County Workforce Development Board by the Union County Board of County Commissioners. The Port Authority of New

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York and New Jersey's membership to the Workforce Development Board brings to the forefront regional policymaking expertise related to the objectives of the Port Authority, including:

- To promote economic growth and job creation in the region by managing and developing the ports, airports, and transportation systems.
- To provide safe, secure, and efficient transportation systems for passengers and goods, including airports, tunnels, bridges, ports, and transit systems.
- To promote international trade and commerce through the management of the region's ports, airports, and other transportation systems.
- To facilitate economic development in the region through the creation of new transportation systems and the redevelopment of existing transportation assets.
- To support regional planning efforts by working closely with regional, state, and local governments, as well as private sector partners, to ensure that transportation infrastructure is aligned with regional growth and development plans.
- To promote regional cooperation and coordination by working with regional, state, and local government agencies to ensure that transportation systems are designed, constructed, and operated in a manner that supports regional interests.
- To ensure the financial stability and viability of the Port Authority by managing its finances, investing in new transportation systems, and implementing cost-saving measures where possible.

The County of Union and the Union County Workforce Development Board recognize the importance of Maritime TLD workers in driving the growth and success of the Port of New York and New Jersey. In collaboration with the Council on Port Performance, a multi-faceted approach has been planned for 2023 to attract top area talent to TLD careers and broaden programming to include maritime construction. These efforts are aimed at strengthening port businesses, ensuring port fluidity, and promoting smooth operation amidst record-breaking growth.

In 2022, the Port of New York and New Jersey achieved second place nationally for total container volume processed, and the rapid growth of container volume can be attributed to the foundational role of TLD workers in facilitating the efficient movement of goods from ships to the land side and beyond. In the transportation sector, there was a 4.4% increase in the total number of jobs in 2022 compared to a 3.7% increase across all jobs, with transportation jobs accounting for 21.5% of all jobs in New Jersey. The sector also offers strong wages and pathways for career development for a range of skill levels, with

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various job titles like Railroad Conductors and Yardmasters earning an average of over \$70,000 annually, and First-Line Supervisors of Transportation and Material Moving Workers earning an average annual wage of close to \$65,000.

The Union County Workforce Development Board observed the high demand for jobs in this sector firsthand at the October 2022 Job Fair, which saw a total of 488 participants representing over 90 zip codes across the region. With the increasing demand for skilled workers in transportation and logistics, the collaboration between the County of Union, the Union County Workforce Development Board, the Union County American Job Center, and the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey is essential to connecting jobseekers with employers and emerging job growth. All the partners are committed to providing training and job placement services to prepare job seekers for TLD careers and support the growth of the port and related industries in Northern New Jersey.



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## STATE EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING COMMISSION QUESTIONS

Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) Structure: Describe the structure of your LWDA and governance entities, including identifying:

- Local Workforce Development Board (Workforce Development Board) Membership. Include a list of members and indicate alignment with SETC policy #2015-01 and Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. Include description of how membership aligns with New Jersey key industries and LWDA priorities. Discuss recruitment plans to address any deficiencies.
- Local Workforce Development Board standing committees and their specific responsibilities
- Fiscal Agent responsible for the disbursement and oversight of grant funds, as determined by the chief elected official or the Governor.
- Hired staff supporting the Local Workforce Development Board, including specific information about roles and responsibilities

### Local Plan

- Please provide an overview of how the CEO, Local Workforce Development Board (including members, staff, and committees), and fiscal agent work vis-à-vis one another, as well as vis-à-vis the operations of One Stop Career Centers.
- Please provide information about the roles and responsibilities of these various entities.
- Please provide a table or chart indicating the relationships among these various entities and specifically highlighting the reporting relationships between the Chief Elected Official, the Local Workforce Development Board, the staff of the Local Workforce Development Board, and the Fiscal Agent.
- Please describe the relationship of governance bodies (CEO, Local Workforce Development Board, Fiscal Agent) to operations bodies, including the One Stop Operator, One Stop Career Services provider, and Youth Services provider.
- Please describe and include information about any/all firewalls or presumed, potential or actual conflicts of interest and what actions have been/will be taken to remediate.
- Please highlight how the Local Workforce Development Board will integrate region- and Local Workforce Development Board-led efforts around building and developing local governance capacities.

### Regional Plan

- Please describe any role the region will play in support the capacity and development of Local Workforce Development Boards and/or fiscal agents.
  - Does the region have any formal role in identifying potential Board members for its local colleagues?
  - Does the region have any joint committees to discuss shared matters? How are committees structured and how is business conducted?
  - Does the region provide any training or technical assistance to support Local Workforce Development Board capacity-building (e.g., agreement development, designation of fiscal agents, committee development)?

## WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREA STRUCTURE

A Memorandum of Understanding defines the roles and responsibilities of the Union County Workforce Development Board and the Union County Board of County Commissioners, as the Chief Elected Officials, in alignment with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, as well as policies, procedures, and regulatory guidance established by the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development and the New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission.

The Union County Workforce Development Board is responsible for electing members as Chairperson of the board of directors, establishing the local Workforce Development Board's governance structure, processes and policies, developing a budget, disbursing funds for workforce investment activities, developing the Strategic Plan, recommending grants or contracts for program activities, coordinating workforce investment activities with economic development strategies and other employer linkages, conducting oversight of the American Job Center Network partners, and conducting all business in an open manner.

The Union County Board of County Commissioners appoints Workforce Development Board Members, serves as the local grant recipient of workforce funds, must designate the fiscal agent, approves Memorandum of Understanding between Workforce Development Board and Chief Elected Officials, approves the Workforce Development Board budget, approves multi-year strategic plan and modifications thereto, approves designation or certification of the American Job Centers and/or termination of American Job Centers Operator for cause, awards grants and contracts, and conducts oversight of the local American Job Center Network Partners, including all adult, dislocated worker and youth activities, jointly with the Workforce Development Board.

The Union County Workforce Development Board's Executive Committee functions on behalf of the Workforce Development Board on key issues that arise between meetings and oversees the development of the Workforce Development Area Budget. It is also responsible for establishing local Workforce Development Board By-Laws, taking the lead in developing a Memorandum of Understanding that defines Workforce Development Board and Chief Elected Officials roles and responsibilities, budgeting process and process for approval and removal of Workforce Development Board members, reviewing budget reports, reviewing and assessing performance and activities of the local workforce system, preparing an Annual Report, and attending local and State meetings that support the work of the Board and enhance the leadership of the Workforce Development Board.

Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, the Union County Workforce Development Board has several key roles and responsibilities. One of these roles is to

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determine its staffing needs and hire staff to fulfill those needs. Additionally, the Board is responsible for developing the Workforce Development Area Budget, which involves establishing priorities based on local workforce system needs and creating an annual budget that includes all funds under the Board's authority.

Another important responsibility of the Workforce Development Board is business and industry development. This includes developing an overall business plan and working with state, regional, and local economic development agencies to provide workforce services for new and expanding businesses. The Board convenes and facilitates the design of sector strategies for specific industries, in collaboration with state priorities and strategies. In addition, the Board establishes process standards for business outreach, design and executes a local business-centric engagement process and establishes employer-based standards and processes for providing American Job Centers system of services.

The Union County Board of County Commissioners also has a key role, under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, to approve the Workforce Development Area Budget. The Chief Elected Officials' fiscal agent supports the development of the budget, and the budget and annual workforce development contract must be signed off on by the Chief Elected Officials. The Board must also review quarterly performance and fiscal reports submitted by the Workforce Development Board.

In addition, the Union County Workforce Development Board plays a crucial role in developing and implementing workforce development strategies in the local area. By staffing the Board, developing the budget, and working directly with business and industry, the Board helps ensure that the local workforce is equipped with the skills and resources needed to thrive in the changing job market.

Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, the Union County Workforce Development Board is responsible for overseeing the American Job Centers Operations and Procurement Standards. In terms of American Job Centers Operations, the Workforce Development Board is responsible for the oversight, evaluation, and monitoring of the programs and services, including the local American Job Center Network Partners.

To fulfill its responsibilities, the Workforce Development Board designates or certifies the American Job Centers' Operator, with the consensus of the Chief Elected Officials. An American Job Centers Oversight Committee, chaired by a Workforce Development Board member, is also required by New Jersey law. This committee is comprised of members who are "disinterested" parties and is responsible for establishing and monitoring standards of performance for the local American Job Center Network Partners. The American Job

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Centers' Operator prepares and submits reports to the Workforce Development Board and its American Job Centers Committee.

Additionally, the Workforce Development Board is responsible for establishing standards for the performance of the American Job Center Network Partners, incorporating these standards into the Memorandum of Understanding between the Workforce Development Board, the American Job Centers, and American Job Centers Partners. The Board also establishes annual program enrollment projections and conducts an annual evaluation of its local American Job Center Network Partners, either system-wide or focusing on one or more programs and/or services delivered by the American Job Center Network Partners.

In terms of performance, oversight, and monitoring, the Workforce Development Board is responsible for monitoring the local American Job Center Network Partners' performance through established common measures and/or other State Employment and Training Commission and New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development designated performance metrics. The Board reviews performance at least quarterly and conducts "risk assessments" during the year and at year-end to review the performance of all training providers. The Workforce Development Board is also responsible for monitoring all contracts for services to ensure services provided as per contract, performance requirements are met, and contracts are in accordance with federal, state, and local laws and regulations. To carry out this responsibility, staff are assigned for this monitoring role and report directly to the Workforce Development Board Director.

Regarding Procurement Standards, the Workforce Development Board established standards for the procurement of services and ensures that the standards have been incorporated into the procurement process. The Board established outcome measures for key elements that are required for services, including performance and skill levels to be achieved, in alignment with priorities established by the Workforce Development Board for programs and services. They must also ensure that standards are incorporated into the process of procuring training providers and program contractors to provide career services. The Board oversees the evaluation process to ensure that review and selection of contractors is based on the local plan and meets Workforce Development Board standards. The Board also ensures that there is no conflict of interest in the development, review, selection, and/or ratification of contractors and that all federal, state, and local regulations are followed.

#### **ROLE OF FISCAL AGENT**

Under the direction of the Union County Board of County Commissioners, the Union County Department of Finance serves as the Fiscal Agent responsible for disbursing grant funds for local workforce investment activities. The Union County Workforce Development

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Board of Directors, authorized by the Union County Board of County Commissioners, executes fiduciary responsibilities for the development of the local budget plan. The Office of the Director for the Union County Workforce Development Board of Directors performs administrative duties and coordinates fiscal management procedures through the Fiscal Agent. The Union County Department of Finance, as the Fiscal Agent, approves the disbursement of grant funds for local workforce investment activities under the direction of the Union County Workforce Development Board, following policies and procedures in compliance with federal regulations.

Under the direction of the Fiscal Agent, the Union County Workforce Development Board's office is responsible for assisting in the administration of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act grant funds, receiving, accounting, and reporting on all funds related to Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act program operations, ensuring efficient disbursement of funds, and maintaining internal control procedures for program oversight and compliance with regulations. The office also produces monthly financial reports, communicates with the Union County Workforce Development Board of Directors, the Union County Department of Finance, and the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development regarding budget amendments and reconciliation processes. Additionally, the office is responsible for monitoring the fiscal activities of sub-recipients, vendors, and contractors under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act program. The following itemization includes other responsibilities executed by and/or through the Union County Department of Finance, as the fiscal agent:

- Receive and manage all formula Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act funds for the County of Union, including Work First New Jersey, and Workforce Learning Link.
- Have preliminary approval of the disbursement of grant funds for local workforce investment activities through Union County's Department of Finance, following the policies and procedures of the same, and under the direction of the Union County Workforce Development Board.
- Assist in the administration of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act grant funds under the direction of the Union County Workforce Development Board of Directors.
- Be responsible for the receipt, accounting, and reporting of all funds related to Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act program operations, including collection and disposition of program income generated by Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act program activities pursuant to federal regulations.

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- Ensure processes are in place to minimize the time elapsing between receipt of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act funds and disbursement to maintain cash balance.
- Maintain adequate systems of internal control over cash to ensure compliance with rules and regulations set forth in 2 CFR Part 200, Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, Final Rule.
- Maintain internal control procedures for processing vouchers for payment, designed to ensure accurate program oversight, effective program management, compliance with directives of funding sources, and fiscal integrity of the same.
- Be responsible for the timely submission of monthly financial reporting of all transactions in accordance with Employment and Training Administration's 9130 Financial Report and Instructions, in accordance with TEGP No. 2-16, and amendment thereto, including financial data regarding cash receipts, cash disbursements, cash on hand, accrued expenditures, administrative expenditures, obligated funds, un-obligated balances, non-federal expended funds, and program income.
- Amend budgets, where necessary, and communicate amendments with the Union County Workforce Development Board of Directors, the Union County Department of Finance, and the Office of Internal Audit at the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development.
- Record financial activity, generating and reporting financial statements, cash draws, and participant information.
- Produce, manage, and update the Union County Workforce Development Board Cost Allocation Plan, which is the method by which costs are assigned to the proper funding sources and program and cost classification/reporting areas/centers and encompasses all activities under authority of the Union County Workforce Development Board.
- Responsible for the reconciliation and correction of financial data related to budgets, draws, net zero vouchers, expenditures, and ceiling excess and effort reporting.



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- Responsible for the production and maintenance of written policies and procedures for documenting the reconciliation process, which includes reconciling expenditures, receipts, accruals, and obligations between sub-areas.
- Complete the reconciliation process each quarter, review, and update, if necessary, the reconciliation process on an annual basis.
- Ensure that the combined disbursements, receipts, accruals, obligations, and cash balance of sub-areas match those reported to the New Jersey Department of Labor, Office of Internal Audit.
- Responsible for overseeing and monitoring the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act fiscal activities of the sub-recipients, vendors, and contractors.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act establishes a comprehensive framework for workforce development programs and services in the United States. One key component of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act system is the fiscal and administrative management of local workforce development activities. This responsibility is typically fulfilled by a designated fiscal agent who is responsible for managing the financial and administrative functions of the local workforce development system.

The Union County Workforce Development Board coordinates its oversight and grants management responsibilities by coordinating with the Union County Finance Department as the fiscal agent. The following key elements are integrated into the management procedures:

- **Financial Management:** The fiscal agent is responsible for managing the financial resources of the local workforce development system in accordance with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act regulations and guidelines. This includes developing and implementing a budget, managing cash flow, and ensuring compliance with all applicable federal, state, and local financial reporting requirements.
- **Sub-Recipient Monitoring:** The fiscal agent is responsible for monitoring the financial and administrative activities of sub-recipients (i.e., service providers, training providers, and other partners) to ensure compliance with all applicable regulations and guidelines. This includes conducting periodic financial and programmatic audits, reviewing sub-recipient reports, and providing technical assistance as needed.

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- **Procurement and Contract Management:** The fiscal agent is responsible for managing the procurement and contracting process for all workforce development activities. This includes developing and issuing requests for proposals, negotiating contracts, and ensuring that all contracts follow federal, state, and local regulations.
- **Record-Keeping and Reporting:** The fiscal agent is responsible for maintaining accurate and complete records of all financial and administrative activities related to the local workforce development system. This includes developing and maintaining a system for tracking programmatic outcomes and producing regular reports on program performance.
- **Compliance Monitoring:** The fiscal agent is responsible for ensuring that all financial and administrative activities related to the local workforce development system follow all applicable federal, state, and local regulations. This includes conducting periodic compliance reviews, identifying and addressing any compliance issues, and implementing corrective action plans as needed.

#### OVERVIEW OF ROLE OF ONE-STOP OPERATOR

The role of the One-Stop Career Center Operator was thoroughly addressed in Section II—One-Stop Career Center Operations, Sub-Section B—Operational Priorities. In general, under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, the one-stop operator is the critical player in the management of overall comprehensive career services among the American Job Center Network Partners. The one-stop operator is responsible for coordinating the activities of the one-stop partners, ensuring that services are delivered efficiently and effectively, and maintaining the one-stop system's performance accountability standards. Here are some of the key roles and responsibilities of the one-stop operator under Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act:

- **Coordinate the delivery of services:** The one-stop operator is responsible for ensuring that the services offered by the various one-stop partners are integrated and coordinated to meet the needs of job seekers and employers. This involves coordinating referrals between partners, facilitating communication among partners, and resolving any conflicts that may arise.
- **Oversee the day-to-day operation of the one-stop center:** The one-stop operator is responsible for managing the physical space of the one-stop center, including managing the reception area, scheduling appointments, and ensuring that the center is staffed appropriately.

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- Develop and implement the local one-stop plan: The one-stop operator works with the one-stop partners to develop and implement the local one-stop plan, which outlines how services will be delivered in the local area.
- Ensure compliance with Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act performance accountability standards: The one-stop operator is responsible for ensuring that the American Job Center Network Partners meet the performance accountability standards set forth in Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. This includes monitoring the performance of the one-stop partners, reporting performance data to the state, and working with partners to improve performance as needed.
- Promote the one-stop delivery system: The one-stop operator is responsible for promoting the services offered by the American Job Center Network Partners to job seekers, employers, and other stakeholders in the local community. This includes developing marketing materials, conducting outreach, and building relationships with local employers and community organizations.

Finally, the one-stop operator plays a critical role in ensuring that the American Job Center Network Partners operate effectively and efficiently, and that services are delivered in a coordinated and integrated manner to meet the needs of job seekers and employers.

#### STRATEGIC PLANNING AND THE OVERALL ROLE OF STANDING COMMITTEES

The purpose of developing a strategic plan under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act is to provide a comprehensive roadmap for the workforce development system at the state and county levels. The strategic plan is intended to guide the delivery of services and resources to job seekers, workers, and employers, with the goal of increasing employment, job retention, earnings, and career advancement for individuals in the workforce.

Specifically, the strategic plan developed under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act is implemented through the standing committees of the Union County Workforce Development Board and are said strategies are designed to:

- Provide a framework for coordinating and aligning the various programs and services offered through the workforce development system, including job training, career counseling, and support services.
- Identify and address the workforce needs of employers and industry sectors in the state or region, with the aim of building a skilled and competitive workforce.

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- Increase access to high-quality education and training programs that lead to industry-recognized credentials and employment opportunities in high-growth, high-demand occupations.
- Foster collaboration among the various organizations and agencies involved in the workforce development system, including community-based organizations, educational institutions, and economic development agencies.
- Promote the use of labor market data and other relevant information to inform decision-making and ensure that workforce development activities are aligned with the needs of the regional economy.

The strategic plan developed under Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act is intended to promote a more coordinated, effective, and responsive workforce development system that can help individuals achieve their employment goals and meet the needs of employers in the state or region.

#### **ROLE OF THE AMERICAN JOB CENTER NETWORK PARTNERS COMMITTEE**

Under Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, the American Job Center Network Partners Committee is responsible for carrying out strategies to support addressing stakeholder needs. The committee is tasked with identifying and engaging partners in the American Job Center network to provide employment and training services to job seekers, including individuals with disabilities, veterans, and other targeted populations. The committee is also responsible for coordinating with other workforce development and economic development programs to ensure alignment and maximize resources. Additionally, the committee works to establish common performance measures and provide feedback to the local Workforce Development Board on the effectiveness of American Job Center services.

The American Job Center Network Partners Committee is responsible for carrying out the county planning activities of the network partners. This committee is made up of representatives from partner organizations within the American Job Center Network, such as community-based organizations, education and training providers, and other workforce-related organizations.

The committee works with the Workforce Development Board to identify strategies for carrying out American Job Center Network Partners activities in support of addressing stakeholder needs. These activities can include coordinating services and resources to ensure a comprehensive and seamless delivery of services to job seekers and employers in the region.

Additionally, the American Job Center Network Partners Committee provides input and recommendations to the Workforce Development Board on policies, procedures, and strategies related to workforce development in the region. This feedback helps to ensure that the workforce development system is meeting the needs of job seekers, employers, and the community.

Finally, the American Job Center Network Partners Committee plays a significant role in promoting collaboration and coordination among partner organizations within the American Job Center Network and ensuring that workforce development services are effective and efficient in meeting the needs of job seekers and employers in the county.

#### **ROLE OF THE ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY COMMITTEE**

Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act the role of the Adult Education and Literacy Committee is to advise the local Workforce Development Board on matters related to adult education and literacy activities in the local area. The Adult Education and Literacy Committee provides recommendations and advice to the Workforce Development Board on how to effectively deliver adult education and literacy services, improve service coordination, and better align workforce and education systems.

Specifically, the Adult Education and Literacy Committee's responsibilities include:

- Developing and recommending strategies to the local Workforce Development Board for aligning adult education and literacy activities with other programs and services in the local area.
- Recommending ways to increase the participation of eligible individuals in adult education and literacy activities, particularly those with barriers to employment.
- Providing advice to the local Workforce Development Board on how to better coordinate and integrate adult education and literacy services with other workforce development activities, such as job training and career services.
- Developing and recommending strategies for improving the quality of adult education and literacy services provided in the local area.
- Providing recommendations and advice on how to allocate adult education and literacy funds in the local area, based on identified needs and priorities.

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- Overall, the Adult Education and Literacy Committee plays a key role in helping to ensure that adult education and literacy activities are effectively integrated into the broader workforce development system and that eligible individuals have access to high-quality education and training services that can help them to succeed in the workforce.

#### ROLE OF THE YOUTH COMMITTEE

Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, the role of the youth committee is to provide policy guidance and recommendations to the local workforce development board on matters relating to the delivery of youth services. The committee is responsible for ensuring that the workforce development system meets the needs of young people in the local area.

The youth committee is also responsible for overseeing the development and implementation of the 14 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act youth program elements, which include:

- Tutoring, study skills training, and instruction leading to completion of secondary school, including dropout prevention strategies.
- Alternative secondary school services.
- Summer employment opportunities, and other employment opportunities are available throughout the year.
- Paid and unpaid work experiences, including internships and job shadowing.
- Occupational skills training.
- Leadership development opportunities.
- Supportive services.
- Adult mentoring.
- Follow-up services.
- Comprehensive guidance and counseling.
- Financial literacy education.
- Entrepreneurial skills training.
- Postsecondary preparation and transition activities.
- Support services for disconnected youth.

To provide policy guidance on these elements, the youth committee reviews data on the local area's youth population, including demographics, education and employment outcomes, and workforce needs. The committee also engages with youth-serving organizations, employers, educators, and other stakeholders to gather feedback and input on how to improve services and better meet the needs of young people. Based on this information, the committee provides policy guidance and recommendations to the local

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workforce development board to improve the delivery of youth services and implement the 14 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act youth program elements effectively.

#### ROLE OF THE DISABILITIES COMMITTEE

Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, the Disabilities Committee is responsible for providing policy guidance on the inclusion of individuals with disabilities in the workforce system. The committee ensures that all workforce development programs and services are accessible to individuals with disabilities and that their needs are met.

The committee is responsible for:

- Providing policy guidance to the local Workforce Development Board on the provision of services to individuals with disabilities.
- Developing and recommending strategies for improving the coordination and integration of workforce development activities that serve individuals with disabilities.
- Ensuring that individuals with disabilities have access to information about available services and programs.
- Identifying and addressing any barriers that prevent individuals with disabilities from accessing workforce development services.
- Providing input on the development of policies and procedures related to the delivery of workforce development services to individuals with disabilities.
- Developing and recommending strategies for increasing the participation of individuals with disabilities in the workforce.
- Identifying and recommending strategies for improving the quality of services provided to individuals with disabilities.
- Developing and recommending strategies for increasing the capacity of the workforce system to serve individuals with disabilities.
- Reviewing and providing feedback on the performance of the workforce system in serving individuals with disabilities.



In summary, the Disabilities Committee plays a crucial role in ensuring that individuals with disabilities have equal access to workforce development services and programs, and that their needs are fully met.

#### CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND FIREWALLS

The Union County Workforce Development Board is committed to maintaining the highest standards of ethical conduct and integrity in all aspects of our operations. We recognize that conflicts of interest can compromise these standards and undermine the public's trust in our organization. Therefore, we have established the following policies and procedures to prevent conflicts of interest, including the use of firewalls:

- Disclosure of potential conflicts of interest: All individuals and organizations involved in the workforce development system are required to disclose any potential conflicts of interest. This includes financial or personal relationships that could influence their decision-making. Such disclosures should be made in writing to the appropriate authority.
- Recusal policies: Any individual with a potential conflict of interest is required to recuse themselves from decision-making processes in which they have a personal or financial interest. They will not participate in discussions, deliberations, or decisions that could affect their personal or financial interests.
- Code of ethics: The Union County Workforce Development Board has established a code of ethics that outlines the expectations for ethical behavior and the consequences for violating those standards. The code of ethics has been communicated to all individuals and organizations involved in the workforce development system.
- Training and education: All individuals involved in the workforce development system will receive training and education on the importance of avoiding conflicts of interest, how to identify potential conflicts of interest, and the consequences of violating conflict of interest policies.
- Separation of duties: Decision-making authority will be separated among different individuals or entities to prevent conflicts of interest. For example, one individual or organization will be responsible for administering contracts while another oversees the selection process. Additionally, we will establish firewalls that prevent individuals with potential conflicts of interest from accessing sensitive information, such as financial data, procurement processes, and other decision-making processes.

We believe that these policies and procedures, including the use of firewalls, will help prevent conflicts of interest and ensure that the workforce development system operates with integrity and accountability.

Furthermore, the Union County Workforce Development Board is committed to upholding the highest ethical standards in all aspects of our operations. We recognize that transparency, integrity, and accountability are critical to maintaining the trust of our stakeholders and the public. To that end, we are dedicated to complying with all applicable laws and regulations, including the New Jersey Statutes Title 40A:9-22.1 et seq. Local Government Ethics Law.

The Local Government Ethics Law establishes a code of ethics for local government officials and employees in the state of New Jersey. We fully support the principles and requirements set forth in this law, and we are committed to following them in all our activities. Specifically, employees and board members are required, when applicable, to:

- **Disclose financial interests:** All board members, staff, and contractors involved in the workforce development system will disclose their financial interests in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Ethics Law. This includes disclosing any outside employment, investments, or other financial interests that could potentially create conflicts of interest.
- **Avoid conflicts of interest:** We will take steps to avoid conflicts of interest, including recusal from decision-making processes in which an individual has a personal or financial interest. Additionally, we will implement appropriate firewalls to prevent any potential conflicts of interest from influencing our decision-making.
- **Receive ethics training:** All board members, staff, and contractors involved in the workforce development system will receive ethics training in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Ethics Law. This training will cover the principles of ethical behavior, the importance of avoiding conflicts of interest, and the consequences of violating the code of ethics.
- **Enforce ethical behavior:** We will enforce ethical behavior through appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment or contracts, for any individuals found to have violated the code of ethics or engaged in unethical behavior.

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We believe that compliance with the Local Government Ethics Law is essential to maintaining the trust of our stakeholders and ensuring that we operate with integrity and accountability. We will continue to monitor developments in this area and update our policies and procedures as necessary to ensure that we remain in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations.

Anyone involved in reviewing of Request for Proposals is required to sign a certification based on Local Government Ethics Law and states:

- a. “No local government officer or employee or member of his immediate family shall have an interest in a business organization or engage in any business, transaction, or professional activity, which is in substantial conflict with the proper discharge of his duties in the public interest;*
- b. No local government officer or employee shall use or attempt to use his official position to secure unwarranted privileges or advantages for himself or others;*
- c. No local government officer or employee shall act in his official capacity in any matter where he, a member of his immediate family, or a business organization in which he has an interest, has a direct or indirect financial or personal involvement that might reasonably be expected to impair his objectivity or independence of judgment;*
- d. No local government officer or employee shall undertake any employment or service, whether compensated or not, which might be reasonably be expected to prejudice his independence of judgment in the exercise of his official duties;*
- e. No local government officer or employee, member of his immediate family, or business organization in which he has an interest, shall solicit or accept any gift, favor, loan, political contribution, service, promise of future employment, or other thing of value based upon an understanding that the gift, favor, loan, contribution service, promise, or other thing of value was given or offered for the purpose of influencing him, directly or indirectly, in the discharge of his official duties. This provision shall not apply to the solicitation or acceptance contributions to the campaign of an announced candidate for elective public office, if the local government officer has no knowledge of reason to believe*

*that the campaign contribution, if accepted, was given with the intent to influence the local government officer in the discharge of his official duties;*

- f. No local government officer or employee shall use, or allow to be used, his public office or employment, or any information, not generally available to the members of the public, which he receives or acquires in the course of and by reason of his office or employment, for the purpose of securing financial gain for himself, any member of his immediate family, or any business organization with which he is associated;*
- g. No local government officer or employee or business organization in which he has an interest shall represent any person or party other than the local government in connection with any cause, proceeding, application or other matter pending before any agency in the local government in which he serves;*
- h. This provision shall not be deemed to prohibit one local government employee from representing another local government employee where the local government agency is the employer, and the representation is within the context of official labor union or similar representational responsibilities;*
- i. No local government officer shall be deemed in conflict with these provisions if, by reason of his participation in the enactment of any ordinance, resolution or other matter required to be voted upon or which is subject to executive approval or veto, no material or monetary gain accrues to him as a member of any business, profession, occupation or group, to any greater extent than any gain could reasonably be expected to accrue to any other member of such business, profession, occupation or group;*
- j. No elected local government officer shall be prohibited from making an inquiry for information on behalf of a constituent, if no fee, reward, or other thing of value is promised to, given to, or accepted by the office or a member of his immediate family, whether directly or indirectly, in return therefore; and*
- k. Nothing shall prohibit any local government officer or employee, or members of his immediate family, from representing himself, or themselves, in negotiations or proceedings concerning his, or their, own interests.*

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1. I have assessed my own affiliations and financial interest and those of my family's that relate to my duties as someone evaluating a proposal to ensure we do not have a conflict of interest.
2. I hereby certify that I have reviewed the conflict-of-interest standards in the Local Government Ethics Law, as appropriate, and that I do not have a conflict of interest with respect to the evaluation of this proposal. I further certify that I am not engaged in any negotiations or arrangements for prospective employment or association with any of those submitting proposals or their parent or subsidiary organization.
3. I hereby certify that the foregoing statements made by me are true. I am aware that if any of the foregoing statements made by me are willfully false, I am subject to punishment."

#### **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD**

The Union County Workforce Development Board executes a myriad of roles and responsibilities pursuant to requirements of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, also known as Uniform Guidance. In addition to the obligations outlined by federal statutes, the Union County Workforce Development Board studies, analyzes, reviews, and makes every effort to meet the high demands of all the federal and state policies, procedures, and regulatory guidance. Federal guidance comes in the form of Training and Employment Guidance Letters, Training and Employment Notices, among others. State guidance comes in the form of policies and procedures from the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development and the New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission, vis-à-vis New Jersey Workforce Innovation Notices.

Below is a detailed summary of the roles and responsibilities executed daily by the team at the Union County Workforce Development Board and include, but are not limited to, board governance, strategic planning, regional planning, economic development, employer engagement, stakeholder engagement, auditee, performance review, grant management, monitoring, procurement, and regulatory compliance.

#### **BOARD GOVERNANCE ROLE**

The board governance role includes setting policies and procedures that govern the administration of workforce development programs, providing oversight to ensure that

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programs are delivered effectively and efficiently, and monitoring compliance with all federal and state regulations. Board members work collaboratively with program staff, policymakers, and other stakeholders to ensure that workforce development programs and activities are responsive to the needs of job seekers and employers.

In addition to overseeing the administration of workforce development programs and activities, board members are responsible for monitoring program performance and adjusting as necessary to ensure that programs are meeting established goals and objectives. They are also responsible for ensuring that programs are delivered in accordance with Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act requirements, that data is accurate and complete, and that required reports and documentation are submitted in a timely manner.

Board members must have a thorough understanding of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act regulations and guidelines related to board governance, and they monitor changes in federal and state regulations to ensure compliance with all requirements. They work closely with the Executive Director of the Workforce Development Board and other stakeholders to provide governance and oversight that promotes the effective administration of workforce development programs and activities.

#### **STRATEGIC PLANNING ROLE**

The strategic planning role includes analyzing workforce development data, identifying trends and areas for improvement, and working collaboratively with stakeholders to develop a strategic plan that outlines goals, objectives, and strategies for achieving desired outcomes. Strategic planners work closely with program staff, the Workforce Development Board, and other stakeholders to ensure that the strategic plan is aligned with Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act requirements and that it addresses the needs of job seekers and employers.

In addition to developing the strategic plan, strategic planners are responsible for monitoring progress toward meeting established goals and objectives, and for adjusting as necessary to ensure that the plan remains relevant and effective. They work collaboratively with program staff and other stakeholders to identify performance metrics and to develop strategies for measuring progress and evaluating the effectiveness of workforce development programs and activities.

#### **POLICYMAKING ROLE**

The policymaking role includes reviewing and analyzing workforce development data, identifying areas for improvement, and making recommendations for policy changes to the Workforce Development Board and other stakeholders. Policymakers work collaboratively

with program staff and other stakeholders to develop policies and procedures that promote the delivery of high-quality services and programs that meet the needs of job seekers and employers.

In addition to developing policies and procedures, policymakers are responsible for monitoring compliance with all federal and state regulations related to workforce development programs. This includes ensuring that programs and services meet established performance goals, that data is accurate and complete, and that required reports and documentation are submitted in a timely manner.

#### REGIONAL PLANNING ROLE

The regional planning role includes assessing the needs of the region, identifying opportunities for growth and development, and developing strategies to address workforce development needs as required under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. Regional planners work collaboratively with local governments, community-based organizations, educational institutions, employers, and other stakeholders to develop regional workforce development plans.

In addition to developing regional workforce development plans, Workforce Development Boards regional planners are responsible for implementing and monitoring the effectiveness of regional plans. Workforce Development Boards work closely with program regional stakeholders to ensure that workforce development programs and activities are aligned with the goals and objectives of the regional plan. Regional planning entities include:

- Workforce Development Boards of the Northern New Jersey
- Garden State Employment and Training Commission
- Together North Jersey
- Port Authority of New York and New Jersey
- New Jersey Small Business Development Centers
- Kean University

#### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ROLE

The economic development role includes developing partnerships with employers, industry groups, economic development organizations, and other stakeholders to identify emerging industry sectors and workforce development needs. Economic developers work collaboratively with program staff to develop and implement workforce development programs that are tailored to the needs of employers and job seekers.

In addition to developing partnerships with employers and other stakeholders, economic developers are responsible for monitoring economic trends and workforce development



data to identify opportunities for growth and development. They work closely with the Director of the Workforce Development Board and other stakeholders to develop workforce development programs and activities that promote economic growth and development.

#### **EMPLOYER OUTREACH ROLE**

The employer outreach role includes developing partnerships with employers, industry groups, and business organizations to identify their workforce development needs and promote the use of workforce development programs and services. Employer outreach staff work collaboratively with program staff to develop and implement customized hiring and training strategies that meet the needs of employers and job seekers.

In addition to developing partnerships with employers, employer outreach staff are responsible for developing and implementing outreach strategies that target employers in high-growth industries and sectors. They work closely with program staff to develop marketing materials and communication strategies that effectively promote workforce development programs and services to employers.

#### **STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT ROLE**

Stakeholder engagement staff work collaboratively with program staff, community organizations, labor groups, education and training providers, and other stakeholders to identify workforce development needs and opportunities in the region. They lead the development and implementation of outreach strategies that engage stakeholders in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of workforce development programs and services.

In addition to engaging with external stakeholders, the stakeholder engagement role includes coordinating and facilitating meetings of the Workforce Development Board and its committees to ensure that all stakeholders are involved in the decision-making process. They provide staff support to the WDB and its committees and coordinate activities related to the development of the local workforce development plan.

#### **AUDITEE ROLE**

The auditee role involves ensuring compliance with all Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, federal and state regulations and guidelines related to the use of funds. Auditees are responsible for maintaining accurate and complete records of all financial transactions related to Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act funds, including the source and use of funds, and ensuring that all expenditures are allowable under Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act regulations.

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In addition to financial record-keeping, auditees must also ensure compliance with Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act regulations related to programmatic performance, including participant eligibility, program outcomes, and quality assurance. Auditees are subject to periodic programmatic reviews and monitoring by the United States Department of Labor, the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development, the New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission, Independent Auditors, or other entities to ensure compliance with all regulations.

#### **PERFORMANCE REVIEW ROLE**

The performance review role includes analyzing workforce development data, identifying trends and areas for improvement, and evaluating the effectiveness of programs and activities in meeting established performance goals. Performance reviewers work collaboratively with program staff, policymakers, and other stakeholders to develop performance metrics and to evaluate the effectiveness of workforce development programs and activities.

In addition to evaluating program performance, performance reviewers are responsible for providing feedback to program staff and other stakeholders to identify areas for improvement and to make recommendations for program adjustments. They work closely with program staff to identify strategies for improving program outcomes and for meeting established performance goals.

Performance reviewers must have a thorough understanding of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act regulations and guidelines related to performance review, and they monitor changes in federal and state regulations to ensure compliance with all requirements. They work closely with the Director of the Workforce Development Board and other stakeholders to provide feedback and recommendations that promote the effective administration of workforce development programs and activities.

#### **GRANT MANAGEMENT ROLE**

Grant management includes developing and maintaining a comprehensive grant management system, reviewing grant opportunities, and identifying appropriate funding sources for the Workforce Development Board. The grant manager is responsible for developing grant proposals, including budgets, timelines, and project plans, in collaboration with program staff and other stakeholders.

The grant manager also ensures compliance with grant requirements, including monitoring grant expenditures and maintaining accurate financial records. They work with program staff to ensure that grant objectives are met, and program deliverables are achieved on time and within budget. Additionally, the grant manager provides training and technical

assistance to staff and partners on grant management best practices and compliance requirements.

Another key responsibility of the grant manager is managing relationships with grantors and ensuring timely submission of required reports and documentation. They also collaborate with program staff to identify areas for program improvement and make recommendations for changes to grant applications and program plans.

#### **CONTRACT MANAGEMENT ROLE**

Contract management includes developing and maintaining a comprehensive procurement system, reviewing procurement opportunities, and identifying appropriate vendors and contractors for the Workforce Development Board. The contract manager is responsible for developing procurement documents, including requests for proposals, requests for qualifications, and requests for information, in collaboration with program staff and other stakeholders.

The contract manager also ensures compliance with procurement requirements, including monitoring contract performance and maintaining accurate records. They work with program staff to ensure that contracted services and products are delivered on time, within budget, and meet quality standards. Additionally, the contract manager provides training and technical assistance to staff and partners on procurement best practices and compliance requirements.

Another key responsibility of the contract manager is managing relationships with vendors and contractors and ensuring timely submission of required reports and documentation. They also collaborate with program staff to identify areas for program improvement and make recommendations for changes to procurement documents and program plans.

#### **MONITORING ROLE**

The monitor works closely with program staff and other stakeholders to ensure that programs and services are delivered in a manner that is consistent with Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act requirements and that they meet established performance goals. The monitor is responsible for reviewing program performance data, identifying areas for improvement, and making recommendations for changes to program plans.

The monitor also provides technical assistance and training to program staff and partners on program performance standards and compliance requirements. They work collaboratively with program staff and other stakeholders to develop and implement corrective action plans as needed.

In addition to monitoring program performance, the monitor also ensures compliance with program reporting requirements. This includes monitoring the timely submission of required reports and documentation and ensuring that data is accurate and complete.

#### **PROCUREMENT ROLE**

The procurement role includes identifying procurement needs, preparing procurement documents such as requests for proposals, requests for qualifications, and requests for information, and managing the procurement process. Procurement staff work with program staff to determine the appropriate procurement method and to identify potential vendors.

In addition to managing the procurement process, procurement staff are responsible for ensuring compliance with all federal and state regulations related to procurement. This includes ensuring that vendors meet all necessary qualifications, that procurement documents are complete and accurate, and that contracts are executed in accordance with Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act requirements.

The procurement staff work closely with program staff and other stakeholders to ensure that goods and services are procured in a timely manner, within budget, and that they meet quality standards. They are also responsible for monitoring the performance of vendors and contractors and ensuring that all necessary reports and documentation are submitted in a timely manner.

#### **REGULATORY COMPLIANCE ROLE**

The regulatory compliance role of the Union County Workforce Development Board is a requirement under the Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and under the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, also known as Uniform Guidance. In addition to the stated federal statutes, the Workforce Development Board is charged with ensuring compliances with federal and state regulations, policies, procedures, and guidance. The Workforce Development Board is required to ensure that all activities and services provided by the local workforce development system follow applicable laws, regulations, and guidance issued by the federal government.

The Workforce Development Board is responsible for overseeing and monitoring the use of federal funds by all partners in the local workforce development system, including one-stop operators, service providers, and eligible training providers. This includes ensuring that all financial and programmatic reporting requirements are met, and that all

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subrecipients of federal funds comply with federal regulations, such as the Uniform Guidance.

The Workforce Development Board must also ensure that all participants in the local workforce development system are provided with equal access to services and that all services are delivered in compliance with applicable non-discrimination and equal opportunity laws, such as Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and Section 188 of WIOA.

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## **STATE EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING COMMISSION QUESTIONS**

**Procurement of Operator and Services:** Describe the process for engaging in competitive procurement processes that align with LWDA strategies and priorities and support the competitive selection of Title I sub-recipients, including:

- One Stop Operators - Serves as the One Stop system-builder, supporting coordination of services across required and other partners
- One Stop Career Service Providers - Support provision of the full range of career services highlighted under WIOA in the local One Stop system, including provision of work-based learning, supportive services, and career coaching
- Youth Service Providers - Provide services supporting program elements that fall outside of the expertise and services being provided by One Stop Career Center staff

### **Local Plan**

- Please include details about the LWDB's processes for implementing competitive procurements. What is the role of the LWDB? What other partner agencies participate in procurement and what roles do they play? How do LWDBs ensure that Request for Proposals incorporate scopes of service that align with local strategies and priorities?
- Please describe efforts that are undertaken to ensure that no conflict of interest is present in the process. What steps are taken to ensure that that no presumed, potential, or actual conflicts of interest take place? How does the LWDB ensure appropriate firewalls have been established?
- Please highlight how the LWDB will integrate regional supports into LWDA procurement activities.

### **Regional Plan**

- Please describe any role the region has or intends to have in assisting its members in the procurement of a One Stop Operator, One Stop Career Services provider, or Youth Services providers, e.g., supporting procurement procedures, sharing procurement materials, managing lists of potential vendors, and/or supporting the development of scopes of service.



## **COMPETITIVE PROCUREMENT PROCESSES**

The Union County Workforce Development Board follows both federal and state guidelines when engaging in competitive procurement opportunities related to Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act funding. In general, competitive procurement using federal funding, the Union County Workforce Development Board issues a request for proposals or a request for quotes that outlines the scope of work, the goods or services required, and the evaluation criteria. The public is then invited to submit a proposal or a quote that meets the requirements outlined in the request.

Proposals or quotes are evaluated based on objective criteria outlined in the request for proposals or a request for quotes, such as price, technical capabilities, and past performance. The Union County Workforce Development Board then selects the proposal or quote that offers the best value for the Union County Workforce Development Board.

The Union County Workforce Development Board follows federal and state procurement processes as they establish regulations and guidelines that are designed to ensure fairness, transparency, and accountability in the contracting process. The Federal Acquisition Regulation, for example, acts as the primary regulatory framework for federal procurement in the United States. The Federal Acquisition Regulation provides guidance on a wide range of procurement matters, including:

- Acquisition planning and strategy
- Contract types and selection
- Solicitation and proposal procedures
- Evaluation and award of contracts
- Contract administration and management
- Contract modifications and options
- Termination and closeout of contracts
- Ethics and conflicts of interest
- Intellectual property rights
- Cost accounting and cost principles
- Disputes and protests

The Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, also known as Uniform Guidance, specifically Subpart D—Post Federal Award Requirements, establishes the standards for procurement by non-federal entities that receive federal funding, including state and local governments, non-profit organizations, and universities.

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The Uniform Guidance, pursuant to Title II, Part 200, Sub-Part D, sets forth five primary standards for procurement by non-federal entities:

1. The entity must maintain written procurement procedures that are consistent with the requirements of the Uniform Guidance.
2. Procurements must be conducted in a manner that provides full and open competition, except as otherwise provided by law or regulation.
3. The entity must have a method for conducting technical evaluations of bids or proposals, and for selecting suppliers or contractors.
4. The entity must maintain records sufficient to document the procurement process, including the rationale for the method of procurement and the selection of the contractor.
5. The entity must ensure that all procurement transactions are conducted in a manner that provides for the maximum competition practicable.

In Union County, the Workforce Development Board follows the guidance “Best Practices for Awarding Service Contracts” published by the State of New Jersey Office of the Comptroller, which outlines the principles to be followed as for securing service contracts, which includes:

1. “The pool of contractors solicited should be as expansive as possible;
2. Statements of work should be drafted in clear and unambiguous terms;
3. Proposals should be judged based on predetermined, merit-based evaluative criteria, made known to vendors before proposals are submitted;
4. The evaluative criteria should be judged by a qualified evaluation committee;
5. The evaluation process should be explainable to evaluators and competing vendors, and capable of withstanding scrutiny under a protest challenge; and
6. The scoring process and award recommendations should be well-documented and retained.”

The Union County Workforce Development Board abides by the federal procurement principles outlined in the Federal Acquisition Regulation, Uniform Guidance, the “Best Practices for Awarding Service Contracts,” and the Local Public Contracts Law and Regulation, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:11-1 et seq. and N.J.A.C. 5:34.

### **ROLE OF THE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD**

The Union County Workforce Development Board’s Executive Committee, comprised of private-sector members, will manage the procurement of the (1) One Stop Career Center Operator, (2) the Comprehensive One Stop Career Center Provider(s) for adult and

dislocated funding, and (3) the Comprehensive One Stop Career Center Provider(s) for Youth funding under Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

The services of outside conflict counsel will be secured by the Union County Workforce Development to guide the Executive Committee of the Union County Workforce Development Board during the procurement process. Conflict counsel will ensure that there are no issues to compromise the integrity of the procurement process and will secure the firewall for all involved.

In Section III—Local Workforce Development Board Structure and Functions, Sub-Section A—Local Workforce Development Area Structure, under the header “CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND FIREWALLS” efforts to prevent conflicts of interest, including the use of firewalls, were thoroughly addressed.

#### **ALIGNMENT OF PROCUREMENT WITH STRATEGIES, PRIORITIES AND SCOPE OF WORK**

The procurement of the One Stop Career Center Operator, the One Stop Career Service Providers, and the Youth Service Providers shall be conducted by the Union County Workforce Development Board in a manner consistent with federal and state statutes, regulations, regulatory and policy guidance, including but not limited to, the competitive procurement principles outlined herein.

Furthermore, request for proposals issued shall require proposers to align their responses to the Union County Workforce Development Board’s 2022-2026 Strategic Plan, including but not limited to Section I—Regional and Local Workforce Strategies, Sub-Section B—Strategic Priorities:

- Governor Phil Murphy’s vision and goals for a “stronger and fairer New Jersey”
- *a stronger and fairer New Jersey means achieving two mutually supporting goals:*
  - *Ensure all career-seeking New Jerseyans have the education and training necessary to access high-quality employment.*
  - *Ensure businesses and employers that are offering high-quality employment in New Jersey can quickly and efficiently fill their talent needs.”*
- Strategies outlined by the Jobs and Economic Opportunity Council
  - Strategy 1: Expand Access to Opportunity
  - Strategy 2: Train Individual for In-Demand Jobs
  - Strategy 3: Match Talent to Jobs
- Recommendation of the Future of Work Task Force

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- *“Create Lifelong Learning Accounts for all New Jerseyans and fund the accounts of low-wage workers and encourage and provide mechanisms for employers to match funds for lifelong learning.*
- *Further develop the State’s Training Explorer to help workers make informed decisions about lifelong learning and training.*
- *Encourage all employers to invest in worker training, lifelong learning, and reemployment and create financial incentives for small and medium-sized employers.*
- *Support innovation and skills collaboratives and other ongoing initiatives to align New Jersey’s education and workforce systems and align individuals’ education with their desired career pathways.*
- *Continue to expand low-cost opportunities to access degree programs (including access to community colleges), career and technical education, and training, apprenticeships, and pre-apprenticeships.”*
- How would the proposers operationalize and implement the strategies for the provision of participant services, including:
  - The needs of individuals with barriers to employment, such as individuals with disabilities, low-income individuals, youth, and veterans
  - Services and activities provided include On-the-Job Training, Integrated Education and Training, and braided funding for program participants wishing to co-enroll in multiple American Job Center Network Partners’ training to advance along career pathways
  - Supportive services, such as transportation and childcare, are recognized as critical to overcoming barriers to employment and succeeding in the workforce
  - Services are prioritized for veterans, eligible low-income individuals, and those most in need of assistance, as guided by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act
  - Workforce Preparation Activities are designed to equip individuals with the skills and knowledge needed to succeed in the workforce
  - Career Pathway model ensures access to education and training opportunities leading to high-quality jobs

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In addition, all request for proposals issued shall require proposers to align their responses to Section II—One-Stop Career Center Operations, Sub-Section B—Operational Priorities, including but not limited to, the commitment to implementing the fulfilling the roles and responsibilities of the One-Stop Operator, the qualifications and strategies to coordinate with and to collaborate with the American job Center Network Partners.

Finally, all requests for proposals issued shall require proposers to align their responses to address how they would implement the Scope of Work outlined under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, which will be provided in detail to the proposers. In general, the scope of work for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Title I Adult and Dislocated Workers program includes a range of services and activities aimed at improving employment outcomes for adults and dislocated workers. Some of the key elements of the scope of work include:

- Comprehensive assessment: Individuals seeking WIOA Title I services must undergo a comprehensive assessment to identify their strengths, skills, abilities, and support needs.
- Individualized career planning and counseling: Based on the results of the assessment, individuals receive individualized career planning and counseling to develop a career pathway that aligns with their skills, interests, and employment goals.
- Job search and placement assistance: Provide job search and placement assistance, including job search workshops, job postings, job fairs, and referrals to job openings.
- Training services: Provide training services to individuals who require additional education or training to secure employment. Training can be provided on-the-job or through classroom instruction, and may include vocational education, skills training, and apprenticeships.
- Supportive services: Provide supportive services to help individuals overcome barriers to employment, including transportation assistance, childcare, and other support services.
- Rapid Response services: Provide Rapid Response services to businesses and workers affected by layoffs and plant closings.
- Eligibility determination and case management: WIOA Title I staff are responsible for determining eligibility for services and providing case management to ensure

that individuals receive the appropriate services and support to achieve their employment goals.

The scope of work for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Title I for in-school and out-of-school youth program includes a range of services and activities aimed at improving employment and education outcomes for youth, ages 14-24, who face barriers to employment and/or education. All 14 program elements will be integrated in the procurement process, including:

Tutoring, study skills training, instruction and dropout prevention strategies that lead to completion of a high school diploma includes services such as providing academic support, helping a youth identify areas of academic concern, assisting with overcoming learning obstacles, or providing tools and resources to develop learning strategies. Dropout prevention strategies intended to lead to a high school diploma include activities that keep a young person in-school and engaged in a formal learning and/or training setting.

Alternative secondary school services assist youth who have struggled in traditional secondary education. Dropout recovery services are those that assist youth who have dropped out of school. Both types of services help youth to re-engage in education that leads to the completion of a recognized high school equivalent. Examples of activities under this program element include:

- Basic education skills training
- Individualized academic instruction
- English as a Second Language training
- Credit recovery
- Counseling and educational plan development

Paid and unpaid work experience is a planned, structured learning experience that takes place in a workplace and provides youth with opportunities for career exploration and skill development. Work experience may take place in the private for-profit section, the non-profit sector, or the public sector. Work experience for youth: summer employment and other employment opportunities available throughout the school year, pre-apprenticeship programs, internships and job shadowing, and on-the-job training.

Occupational skills training is an organized program of study that provides specific vocational skills that lead to proficiency in performing actual tasks and technical functions required by certain occupational fields at entry, intermediate, or advanced levels. Occupational skills training:

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- is outcome-oriented and focused on an occupational goal specified in the individual service strategy for the youth;
- is of sufficient duration to impart the skills needed to meet the occupational goal; and
- leads to the attainment of a recognized postsecondary credential

Education offered concurrently with workforce preparation and training for a specific occupation element reflects an integrated education and training model and describes how workforce preparation activities, basic academic skills, and hands-on occupational skills training are to be taught within the same period and connected to training in a specific occupation, occupational cluster, or career pathway.

Leadership development opportunities encourage responsibility, confidence, employability, self-determination, and other positive social behaviors. Leadership development includes:

- Exposure to postsecondary educational possibilities
- Community and service-learning projects
- Peer-centered activities, including peer mentoring and tutoring
- Organizational and teamwork training, including team leadership training
- Training in decision-making, including determining priorities and problem solving
- Citizenship training, including life skills training such as parenting and work behavior training
- Civic engagement activities which promote the quality of life in a community
- Other leadership activities that place youth in a leadership role, such as serving on youth leadership committees

Supportive services enable an individual to participate in WIOA activities. These services enable an individual to participate in WIOA activities (such as, but not limited to, assistance with transportation, childcare, housing, health care, educational testing, and work-related tools).

Adult mentoring is a formal relationship between a youth participant and an adult mentor that includes structured activities where the mentor offers guidance, support, and encouragement to develop the competence and character of the mentee. Mentors should be someone other than a case manager.

Follow-up services are critical services provided following a youth's exit from the program. The goal of follow-up services is to help ensure that youth are successful in employment and/or postsecondary education and training. Follow-up services may include regular



contact with a youth participant's employer, including assistance in addressing work-related problems that arise.

Comprehensive guidance and counseling provide individualized counseling to participants. This program element also includes substance and alcohol abuse counseling, mental health counseling, and referral to partner programs.

Financial literacy education provides youth with the knowledge and skills that they need to achieve long-term financial stability. Financial literacy education encompasses information and activities on a range of topics, such as creating budgets; setting up checking and saving accounts; managing spending, credit, and debt; understanding credit reports and credit scores; and protecting against identify theft.

Entrepreneurial skills training provides the basics of starting and operating a small business. This training helps youth develop the skills associated with entrepreneurship, such as the ability to take initiative, creatively seek out and identify business opportunities, develop budgets, and forecast resource needs, understand options for acquiring capital and the trade-offs associated with each option, and communicate effectively and market oneself and one's ideas. Examples of approaches to teaching youth entrepreneurial skills include:

- Entrepreneurship education introducing to the values and basics of starting and running a business, such as developing a business plan and simulations of business start-up and operation.
- Enterprise development, which provides supports, and services that incubate and help youth develop their own businesses, such as helping youth access small loans or grants and providing more individualized attention to the development of viable business ideas.
- Experiential programs that provide youth with experience in the day-to-day operation of a business

Services that provide labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the local area and includes career awareness, career counseling, and career exploration services. Labor market information also identifies employment opportunities, and provides knowledge of job market expectations, including education and skill requirements and potential earnings. Numerous tools and applications are available that are user-friendly and can be used to provide labor market and career information to youth. These tools can be used to help youth make appropriate decisions about education and careers.

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Postsecondary preparation and transition activities help youth prepare for and transition to postsecondary education and training. These services include helping youth explore postsecondary education options, including technical training schools, community colleges, 4-year colleges and universities, and Registered Apprenticeship programs. Examples of other postsecondary preparation and transition activities include:

- Assisting youth to prepare for SAT/ACT testing
- Assisting with college admission applications
- Searching and applying for scholarships and grants
- Filling out the proper Financial Aid applications and adhering to changing guidelines
- Connecting youth to postsecondary education programs

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## **STATE EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING COMMISSION QUESTIONS**

Oversight and Monitoring: Please describe how the LWDB monitors and oversees the local workforce strategies, priorities, and systems identified in regional and local plans and aligned with local policies and guidance for purposes of continuous improvement and accountability. Areas of monitoring and oversight include:

- The operations of One Stop Career Centers, specifically American Job Center certification, as outlined by SETC Policy #2016-14
- Budgets of procured providers
- Participation, service delivery, and outcomes of procured providers
- Training (ITA) contracts
- Work-based learning contracts and agreements (OJT, IWT, Transitional Jobs, Youth Work Experience)
- Systems supporting business practices – e.g., employer engagement, accessibility of services

### **Local Plan**

- Please include details about processes for monitoring all the above-bulleted aspects of local workforce service delivery systems.
  - How does the LWDB draw on quantitative and qualitative data to ensure accountability and support the continuous improvement of services for WIOA/One Stop customers – including both jobseekers/workers and employers?
  - Specifically, how is monitoring information utilized in procurement processes and decisions?
- Please describe the structure and staffing of monitoring and compliance activities in your LWDA, including specific details about the roles and responsibilities of LWDB members, LWDB staff, and/or other entities.
- Please include specifics on how monitoring is built into annual processes of the LWDB.
  - How does the LWDB plan to use the ETPL and Quality Assurance frameworks?
  - How does the LWDB plan to use data from AOSOS, Futurework, and/or other data systems?
  - How does the LWDB engage in qualitative data collection and visits?
  - What other information and/or data collection is part of your LWDB's monitoring processes?
- Please ensure your plan provides specific details on the LWDB's process to complete American Job Center (AJC)/One Stop Certification.

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- Please provide details on how monitoring results will be reported and shared across various system partners and stakeholders.

**Regional Plan**

- Please describe any role or support the region will play in oversight and monitoring of programs/services within the region, e.g., monitoring of shared providers, facilitating sharing of results, or supporting shared analysis of individual LWDB monitoring reports
- Please describe how oversight and monitoring efforts that are conducted or culled at the regional level are shared with LWDB members and staff.

### **WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD MONITORING AND OVERSIGHT**

The Union County Workforce Development Board is committed to continuous improvement and accountability in all areas of the operations by the Union County American Job Center Network Partners as required under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. The Union County Workforce Development Board believes that continuous improvement and accountability are essential to achieving our mission of developing and sustaining a skilled workforce in Union County. To this end, the Union County Workforce Development Board is committed to the following:

- Regular evaluation of our programs and services to ensure they meet the needs of job seekers and employers in Union County.
- Ongoing training and professional development opportunities for our staff to enhance their skills and knowledge in workforce development.
- Collaboration with community partners to identify emerging workforce needs and develop innovative solutions to address them.
- Implementation of best practices and evidence-based strategies in workforce development to ensure we are providing the highest quality services to our customers.
- Regular reporting on our performance to the Union County Workforce Development Board, to its committees, and to other stakeholders as required by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.
- Use of data and metrics to measure progress towards achieving goals and to identify areas for improvement.
- Ensuring that all programs and services are delivered in a manner that is fair, impartial, and non-discriminatory, and in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations.
- Engaging in open and transparent communication with our stakeholders, including job seekers, employers, community partners, and funders, to ensure that they are informed about our programs and services and can provide feedback.

By embracing continuous improvement and accountability, the Union County Workforce Development Board is committed to delivering high-quality programs and services that

meet the needs of job seekers and employers in Union County and contribute to the economic vitality of the Union County community.

### **QUANTITATIVE EVALUATION METHODOLOGIES**

The Union County Workforce Development Board collects, reviews, and analyzes quantitative data gathered through different platforms and mechanisms. In general, quantitative program evaluation tools are used to gather and analyze numerical data, such as statistics, percentages, and counts. Some of the most effective quantitative evaluation program evaluation tools employed by the Union County Workforce Development Board include:

- **Surveys:** Surveys are a common tool used in program evaluation to collect numerical data. Closed-ended survey questions are designed to elicit a specific response, such as yes or no, or a rating on a scale. Surveys can be administered to many program participants or stakeholders and can provide a comprehensive view of program outcomes.
- **Pre- and post-test measures:** pre-and post-test measures involve administering a test or assessment to program participants before and after program participation. Comparing the scores on the pre- and post-tests can provide insight into program effectiveness.
- **Statistical analysis:** Statistical analysis involves using statistical techniques to analyze numerical data. Statistical techniques can help evaluators understand the significance of program outcomes and identify patterns or trends in the data.
- **Program records and administrative data:** Program records and administrative data can provide valuable information about program participation, program outcomes, and other program-related information. Examples of program records and administrative data may include attendance records, program completion rates, and demographic information.
- **Cost-benefit analysis:** Cost-benefit analysis involves comparing the costs of implementing a program to the benefits it provides. Cost-benefit analysis can help evaluators determine the value of a program and identify areas for improvement.

### **QUALITATIVE EVALUATION METHODOLOGIES**

The Union County Workforce Development Board utilizes a variety of qualitative evaluation methodologies that, when taken together, help to form a better understanding of the quality of programs and services being offered. Qualitative program evaluation tools are



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methods used to gather and analyze data through non-numerical means, such as interviews, focus groups, and observation. Some of the most effective qualitative evaluation program evaluation tools include:

- Interviews: Interviews are one-on-one conversations between an evaluator and program participants or stakeholders. They are a useful tool for gathering detailed information about individual experiences, attitudes, and perceptions.
- Focus groups: Focus groups bring together a small group of program participants or stakeholders to discuss specific topics related to the program. They allow for in-depth exploration of a particular issue and provide insight into the perspectives of multiple individuals.
- Observations: Observations involve watching program activities and recording information about what is seen. They can provide valuable information about how a program is functioning in practice and identify areas for improvement.
- Document analysis: Document analysis involves reviewing program documents, such as program plans, reports, and participant materials, to gain insight into program implementation and effectiveness.
- Surveys: While surveys are often considered quantitative evaluation tools, they can also be used to collect qualitative data through open-ended questions that allow participants to share their thoughts and experiences in their own words.

## **BUSINESS OUTREACH**

It is the policy of the Union County Workforce Development Board that all Union County American Job Center Network Partners shall engage in business outreach activities as part of their regular program activities. Business outreach activities may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Developing and maintaining relationships with local employers, industry leaders, and business organizations to identify workforce needs and develop training programs that meet those needs.
- Providing labor market information to local businesses, including data on employment trends, workforce demographics, and other information relevant to their hiring and training needs.

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- Developing sector partnerships with employers, training providers, labor organizations, and other stakeholders to identify workforce needs and develop training programs that meet those needs.
- Providing support to small businesses, including technical assistance, training, and access to funding opportunities.
- Providing access to job candidates who have the skills and training needed for open positions.
- Collaborating with other Union County American Job Center Network partners to ensure that business outreach activities are coordinated and effective.
- Implementation: All Union County American Job Center Network partners shall develop and implement a business outreach plan as part of their regular program activities. The business outreach plan shall be reviewed and updated annually in consultation with the Union County Workforce Development Board.

The Union County Workforce Development Board shall provide technical assistance and support to Union County American Job Center Network partners in developing and implementing their business outreach plans.

#### **PARTICIPANT OUTREACH AND FOLLOW-UP**

It is the policy of the Union County Workforce Development Board that all Union County American Job Center Network partners shall engage in participant outreach and follow-up activities as part of their regular program activities. Participant outreach and follow-up activities may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Conducting outreach to underserved populations, including people with disabilities, veterans, youth, and individuals with limited English proficiency, to connect them with employment and training services.
- Providing pre-employment and job readiness services, including resume development, interview skills training, and job search assistance.
- Providing support services to help job seekers overcome barriers to employment, such as transportation, childcare, and housing.

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- Following up with job seekers to ensure that they have successfully obtained and retained employment.
- Collaborating with other Union County American Job Center Network partners to ensure that participant outreach and follow-up activities are coordinated and effective.

All Union County American Job Center Network Partners shall develop and implement a participant outreach and follow-up plan as part of their regular program activities. The participant outreach and follow-up plan shall be reviewed and updated annually in consultation with the Union County Workforce Development Board.

The Union County Workforce Development Board shall provide technical assistance and support to Union County American Job Center Network partners in developing and implementing their participant outreach and follow-up plans.

#### **AMERICAN JOB CENTER NETWORK STAKEHOLDER EVALUATION**

It is the policy of the Union County Workforce Development Board that all Union County American Job Center Network Partners conduct regular evaluations of the American Job Center Network Partner stakeholders. That is, stakeholders evaluate themselves and one another to gauge opportunities for systems progress and continuous improvement. Evaluations include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Evaluations of the effectiveness of partner relationships and collaboration, including communication, cooperation, and coordination.
- Evaluations of the quality of partner programs and services, including relevance, responsiveness, and outcomes.
- Evaluations of the satisfaction of partner stakeholders, including job seekers, employers, training providers, and other community organizations.
- Analysis and reporting of evaluation data to inform program improvements and system-wide planning.

All Union County American Job Center Network Partners shall continue to develop and implement an evaluation plan as part of their regular program activities. The evaluation plan shall be updated annually and be evaluated by the Union County Workforce Development Board.

### **AMERICAN JOB CENTER CERTIFICATION**

The Union County Workforce Development Board recognizes the importance of certifying Union County One Stop Career Center to meet the performance and quality of service standards set forth by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Section 121. In addition, pursuant to Resolution No. 2016-14 of the New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission dictates a minimum standard for local boards to utilize when certifying local American Job Centers under its auspices. To meet the requirements of the New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission mandate, the Union County Workforce Development Board establishes an Evaluation Committee responsible for reviewing and certifying the Union County American Job Center based on the minimum standards established by the State Employment Commission through the Quality Benchmarking Tool.

The Evaluation Committee evaluates the Union County American Job Center based on the following criteria: leadership, strategic planning, customer and market focus, information and analysis, human resource focus, process management, and business results. Additionally, pursuant to requirements set forth in 20 CFR 678.800, 34 CFR 361.800, and 34 CFR 463.800 under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, the Union County Workforce Development Board established the American Job Center Job Seeker Certification Standard Self-Assessment Tool, through Policy Resolution No. WDB-2018-06, approved on June 27, 2018. This Self-Assessment Tool includes standards for satisfying job seekers, managing job seeker services, delivering quality services to job seekers, managing integrated service delivery, and physical infrastructure and accessibility.

The Union County Workforce Development Board requires that all Union County American Job Centers undergo the certification process and use the Self-Assessment Tool on an annual basis to ensure they are meeting the established standards. The results of the certification and Self-Assessment Tool will be used to inform continuous improvement efforts and ensure that the Union County American Job Center Network Partners is providing high-quality services to job seekers and employers in Union County.

### **INDIVIDUAL TRAINING ACCOUNTS**

The Union County Workforce Development Board directs the allocation of resources for occupational training in the sectors identified by the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development and the New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission as these sectors offer the most employment opportunities. The Union County American Job Center provides Individual Training Accounts and class size training to participants. It is the policy of the Union County Workforce Development Board to focus a sizable portion of the funding on three growth sectors that provide increased employment opportunities specific to Union County: Transportation, Logistics, and Distribution, Retail, and

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Healthcare. Fifty percent of the funding for Individual Training Accounts is targeted at these growth sectors, and the remaining funds are allocated to fulfill customer choice options.

Training providers are required to use existing nationally recognized, industry-based skill standards and occupational certifications applicable to their programs to receive Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act funds from Individual Training Accounts or direct training grants from any partner agency. The Union County Workforce Development Board provides a listing of current nationally recognized, industry-based occupational certification that can be utilized when reporting the attainment of a credential.

Individual Training Accounts are established on behalf of the participants. Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Older Youth (18 or older) participants will use Individual Training Accounts to purchase training services from eligible providers they select in consultation with the case manager or career planner. The use of Individual Training Accounts provides individual enrollees with maximum customer choice and services in high-demand occupations in a changing economy.

Individual Training Account services may be made available to employed and unemployed adults and dislocated workers who have met the eligibility requirements for individualized career services and have been determined to be unable to obtain or retain employment leading to self-sufficiency through such services. Youth are not required to receive individualized career services as a condition for the Individual Training Account.

The Union County Workforce Development Board provides definitions for eligible training provider, program of training services, credential, pre-apprenticeship, program completer, and were exited from the program. The adult and dislocated worker participants must have a completed Individual Employment Plans and youth an Individual Service Strategy indicating the need for training and the necessary skills and qualifications to successfully complete the selected training program. The selection of training services must be conducted in a manner that maximizes customer choice, is linked to in-demand occupations, is informed by the performance of relevant training providers, and is coordinated with other sources of assistance, including Pell Grants.

Training services may be made available to employed and unemployed adults, dislocated workers, and youth (age 18 or older) who are unlikely or unable to obtain or retain employment leading to economic self-sufficiency or wages comparable to or higher than wages from previous employment. They must also need training services to obtain or retain employment leading to economic self-sufficiency or wages comparable to or higher than wages from previous employment and have the skills and qualifications to participate

successfully in training services. Training services must be linked to employment opportunities in the local area or planning region.

### **QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

The Union County American Job Center Network Partners, along with all other sub-recipients, are required to comply with the performance accountability indicators and performance reporting requirements established by section 116 of WIOA to assess the effectiveness of the workforce development system's six core programs, as outlined in Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 10-16. The six core programs are the Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs, authorized under WIOA Title I and administered by the United States Department of Labor; the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act program, authorized under WIOA Title II and administered by United States Department of Education; the Employment Service program authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by WIOA Title III and administered by the United States Department of Labor; and the Vocational Rehabilitation program authorized under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by WIOA Title IV.

The Union County American Job Center Network Partners, along with all other sub-recipients, are mandated to capture, track, analyze, and report career services, individualized career services, training, follow-up services, and program performance data monthly. To ensure that we capture and report the necessary data accurately and efficiently, the following elements are required to be captured for services rendered to Adult, Dislocated Worker & Youth reportable individuals:

- Eligibility Determination
- Outreach, Intake and Orientation
- Job Search Assistance (Self-Directed)
- Providing Information on In-Demand Sectors, Occupations, or Non-Traditional Employment
- Provision of Referrals and Associated Coordination of Activities with Other Programs and Services
- Provision of Workforce and Labor Market Employment Statistics Information
- Provision of Information on Job Skills Necessary to Fill Vacancies
- Provision of Information on Local Demand Occupations, With Earnings, Skill Requirements, And Opportunities for Advancement for Those Jobs
- Provision of Performance and Program Cost Information for Providers of Education and Training
- Provision of Information on Local Performance
- Provision of Information on Availability of Supportive Services or Assistance
- Referral to Supportive Services

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- Any Other Information-Only Related Services

The collection of data for reportable youth individuals, the following additional elements must be captured:

- Eligibility Determination
- Administration of Objective Assessment
- Completion of the Individual Service Strategy

The collection of data for Regarding adult & dislocated worker participant individuals, the following elements must be captured:

- Initial Assessment of Skill levels & Supportive Service Needs
- Job Search Assistance (Staff Assisted)
- Placement Assistance (Includes “Referred to Employment”) (Staff Assisted)
- Career Counseling (Includes “Staff Assisted Career Guidance”)
- Provision of Information and Meaningful Assistance in Filing for Unemployment Insurance
- Program Referrals
- Supportive Service Referrals H. Assistance Establishing Eligibility for Financial Aid
- Comprehensive and Specialized Assessments
- Development of an Individual Employment Plan
- Individual Counseling
- Group Counseling
- Career Planning
- Short-Term Pre-Vocational Services
- Internship And Work Experience (Including Transitional Jobs)
- Workforce Preparation Activities
- Financial Literacy Services
- Out-of-Area Job Search and Relocation Assistance
- English Language Acquisition and Integrated Education and Training Programs
- Training Services Under WIOA Section 134(c)(3)(D)—With the Exception of Section 134(c)(3)(D)(iii) (Incumbent Worker Training)
- Incumbent Worker Training

Training data must be captured for the following key growth sectors for participant individuals:

- Health Care
- Life Sciences



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- Financial Services
- Advanced Manufacturing
- Transportation, Logistics and Distribution
- Technology and Entrepreneurship
- Retail, Hospitality and Tourism
- Construction Industry

For participant youth, the data related to the provision of the 14 program elements, including but not limited to:

- Tutoring, Study Skills Training, Drop Out Prevention
- Alternative Secondary School Services
- Paid and Unpaid Work Experience
- Occupational Skills Training
- Education Offered Concurrently with Workforce Preparation
- Leadership Development G. Supportive Services H. Adult Mentoring I. Follow-Up Services
- Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling
- Financial Literacy Education
- Entrepreneurship Skills Training

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## **STATE EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING COMMISSION QUESTIONS**

Performance Measures and Accountability: Please describe how the LWDB will utilize local levels of performance negotiated with the Governor and chief elected official pursuant to section 116(c) to track and measure performance of:

- The One Stop Delivery System as a whole
- The One Stop Operator
- One Stop Career Services providers
- Youth providers
- The fiscal agent (where appropriate)

### **Local Plan**

- Please include details about the processes the LWDB utilized to track and measure local levels of performance.
  - How does the LWDB utilize data from AOSOS, FutureWork, and/or other data systems to track performance?
  - How is information about performance shared with various system partners and stakeholders?
- Please include an appendix providing the LWDA performance goals for four program years: PY2017, PY2018, PY2019, and PY2020.

### **Regional Plan**

- Please describe any role or support the region will play in helping LWDBs to track and measure local levels of performance, e.g., training, shared tracking, etc.

## **TRACKING AND MEASURING PERFORMANCE**

Pursuant to section 116(c) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, the Union County Workforce Development Board, with the consensus of the Union County Board of County Commissioners, utilizes the negotiated levels of performance to establish both qualitative and quantitative benchmarks. Furthermore, the Union County Workforce Development Board requires that all the partners receiving Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act funding to be held accountable to the same negotiated levels of performance, including the American Job Center Network Partners, the American Job Center Operator, the Comprehensive Career Services Providers for Adults and Dislocated Workers, and the Comprehensive Career Services Providers for Youth.

The Union County Workforce Development Board not only emphasizes equal accountability for performance outcomes across all individuals, but also acknowledges the significance of monitoring and evaluating performance data. This enables the Board to verify that the program is fulfilling the requirements of businesses and meeting the career services objectives of program participants, while also achieving the agreed-upon performance standards. As a result, the Union County Workforce Development Board has established general procedures for tracking and measuring performance, including:

- **Define Goals and Objectives:** The Union County Workforce Development Board uses the clearly define the goals and objectives to measure, based on the services provided under Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, such as job placement, training completion, and job retention.
- **Identify Metrics:** The Union County Workforce Development Board identifies the specific metrics that will help track and measure performance. For example, if the goal is to improve job placement, the Union County Workforce Development Board will measure the number of individuals placed in jobs, the types of jobs, and the wage levels.
- **Collect Data:** The Union County Workforce Development Board collects the data required to measure the goals and objectives through various methods, such as customer surveys, program reports, and participant tracking systems, which will be discussed further in this sub-section of the strategic plan.
- **Analyze Data:** The Union County Workforce Development Board analyzes the data to gain insights and to identify trends. The Union County Workforce Development Board uses data visualization tools, spreadsheets, or business intelligence software to analyze the data, which will be discussed further in this sub-section of the strategic plan.

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- **Monitor Performance:** The Union County Workforce Development Board monitors performance regularly to see if the negotiated performance targets are being achieved.
- **Adjust Strategy:** Based on the insights and trends the Union County Workforce Development Board has identified; there may be a need to adjust the strategy to improve performance. For example, if job placement rates are declining, the American Job Center Network may need to adjust our job search strategies, training programs, or employer outreach efforts.
- **Continuously Improve:** The Union County Workforce Development Board uses data to track and measure performance in an ongoing process. The Union County Workforce Development Board continuously reviews and improves participant services based on the data to ensure the needs of our participants and the employers are being met.

## **ANNUAL REPORTS**

The New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission, pursuant to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, requires the submission of an annual report to provide information on the implementation and performance of workforce development programs funded under the act. The report is intended to provide transparency and accountability to stakeholders, including program participants, employers, policymakers, and the public.

- **Program performance:** The report provides information on the performance of workforce development programs, including employment and earnings outcomes for participants, as well as information on program efficiency and effectiveness.
- **Participant characteristics:** The report includes demographic information on program participants, such as age, gender, race, ethnicity, and education level.
- **Employer engagement:** The report provides information on the engagement of employers in workforce development programs, including their participation in program design and delivery, as well as their satisfaction with program outcomes.
- **Service delivery:** The report includes information on the delivery of workforce development services, such as the types of services provided, the methods used to deliver services, and quality-of-service delivery.

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- Coordination and collaboration: The report provides information on coordination and collaboration among workforce development programs and other service providers, such as education and training providers, economic development agencies, and community-based organizations.
- Financial information: The report includes information on the funding and expenditures of workforce development programs, as well as any changes in funding levels or sources.

### **PUBLIC BOARD AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

Members of the Union County American Job Center Network Partners, the Union County American Job Operator, and the Director of the Union County American Job Center routinely participates and reports at public meetings of the Union County Workforce Development Board and at its committees. The objective of public reporting is to engage with the community and to provide information on workforce development programs, services, and expense reports. At these meetings, the team's aim is to inform the public about the programs and services available to job seekers and employers in the area, as well as to gather feedback from community members on the effectiveness of these programs and any areas for improvement. Additionally, reporting at public meetings is used to build support for workforce development initiatives and to encourage collaboration and coordination among stakeholders.

### **CERTIFICATION OF THE AMERICAN JOB CENTER**

The Union County Workforce Development Board utilizes the certification of the Union County American Job Center to gauge the performance of the center and ensure that it is providing high-quality workforce development services to job seekers, workers, and employers in the community. The certification process is a comprehensive evaluation of the Union County American Job Center's services, accessibility, and coordination with other service providers, which helps the WDB identify areas of strength and areas for improvement.

Once the Union County American Job Center is certified, the Union County Workforce Development Board regularly monitors its performance to ensure that it continues to meet the standards set forth in the certification process. This includes reviewing data on service delivery, customer satisfaction, and other performance indicators to identify any areas where the center may need additional support or resources.

By utilizing the certification of the Union County American Job Center as a tool for performance evaluation, the Union County Workforce Development Board can ensure that the center is meeting the needs of the community and delivering high-quality workforce

development services. This helps to promote economic growth and development in the community, and ensures that job seekers, workers, and employers have access to the resources they need to succeed in the labor market.

### **PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTS**

The Union County Workforce Development Board recognizes the importance of meeting the performance standards established by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act for workforce development programs and services. To ensure that these standards are met, the Union County Workforce Development Board includes Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act negotiated performance levels into all procurement opportunities and agreements related to workforce development programs and services.

This means that when the Union County Workforce Development Board is procuring services from providers or entering into agreements with partners, it includes language that requires the provider or partner to meet the WIOA negotiated performance levels. These performance levels are a set of performance indicators that are used to measure the effectiveness of workforce development programs and services, such as job placement rates, retention rates, and earnings gains for program participants.

By including Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act negotiated performance levels in all procurement opportunities and agreements, the Union County Workforce Development Board further ensures that its partners are held accountable for meeting the highest standards of performance. This promotes the delivery of high-quality workforce development services and programs, which leads to better outcomes for job seekers, workers, and employers in the community.

### **AMERICA'S ONE STOP OPERATING SYSTEM AND FUTUREWORKS**

The Union County Workforce Development Board utilizes America's One Stop Operating System and FutureWorks as an integral part of its comprehensive workforce development system. Through analysis of data from America's One Stop Operating System and FutureWorks, the Union County Workforce Development Board tracks and measures performance across a range of metrics, including the number of individuals served, the types of services provided, and the outcomes achieved.

The data collected is used by the Union County Workforce Development Board to evaluate the effectiveness of its programs and services and to make informed decisions about program design, implementation, and improvement. Specifically, the Union County Workforce Development Board utilizes the data to generate performance reports that are used to monitor and assess the performance of its service providers, to identify areas of



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strength and weakness in the system, and to make data-driven decisions to improve outcomes for job seekers and employers.

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## **STATE EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING COMMISSION QUESTIONS**

**Training and Development:** Please describe training priorities for supporting the implementation of regional and local plans aligned with State priorities and plans. Please include specific plans and timelines for supporting:

- Chief Elected Officials and County Leadership and Staff
- Fiscal Agents
- LWDB Members
- LWDB Staff
- One Stop Operator Staff
- One Stop Career Services Staff
- One Stop Youth Services Staff
- Other System Stakeholders and Partners

### **Local Plan**

- Please reflect on the questions included in the regional plan section. At the local level, how will the LWDB help to develop and implement training and development opportunities.
- Please highlight how the LWDB will integrate region- and LWDB-led efforts around building and developing local governance capacities.

### **Regional Plan**

- Please describe any role that the region will take in training and development.
  - How will the region support staff and partners in developing their practice and aligning capacity with the expectations of state, regional, and local plan priorities (training, technical assistance, conference attendance)?
  - Who will regional trainings and development opportunities target and why?
  - What specific topics will training and development opportunities cover?
  - How will individual LWDBs contribute to training agendas and costs?
- Please describe how the region will identify and secure training and development partners, safeguard against conflicts of interest, and ensure that suitable firewalls are in place.
- Please describe any specific learning platforms and/or online tools and resources that the region will draw on to support training and development.

## **OVERVIEW OF TRAINING PRIORITIES**

The Union County Workforce Development Board understands the importance of professional development for our board members, Chief Elected Officials, County Leadership, the American Job Center Operator, and the American Job Center Network Partners. The Union County Workforce Development Board believes that investing in the professional growth of our team is crucial for the success of our community. To that end, the Union County Workforce Development Board will allocate at least 1% of its annual operating budget to training and professional development opportunities.

The Union County Workforce Development Board supports a variety of professional development opportunities, including mentoring and coaching, conferences and workshops, online learning, professional associations and organizations, and job shadowing and cross-training. The Union County Workforce Development Board will utilize Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act funding to encourage professional development of the entire workforce team in Union County. General strategies include:

- Mentoring and coaching programs pair less experienced professionals with more experienced ones who can offer guidance, advice, and support. This can be an effective way to develop leadership skills and build relationships.
- Attending conferences and workshops can provide professionals with opportunities to learn from experts in their field, network with other professionals, and stay up to date on the latest trends and best practices.
- Online learning, such as webinars, online courses, and other forms of digital learning, can be an effective way to provide flexible, self-paced learning opportunities that can be accessed from anywhere.
- Joining professional associations and organizations can provide professionals with opportunities to network, share knowledge and resources, and stay up to date on developments in their field.
- Job shadowing and cross-training programs involve observing another professional in their work or learning another job or task. These programs can be effective in developing a broader range of skills and understanding of the workplace.

### **NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF LABOR LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

Staff from the Union County Workforce Development Board, the American Job Center Operator, and the American Job Center Network Partners will be encouraged to enroll in the New Jersey Department of Labor's Learning Management System, which is an online training platform. It provides a variety of training courses to support the development of the workforce in New Jersey, including job seekers, employers, and employees. The New Jersey Department of Labor Learning Management System offers both free and paid courses, covering topics such as job search skills, resume writing, interviewing skills, workplace safety, and compliance with state and federal labor laws.

The New Jersey Department of Labor Learning Management System is designed to provide easy access to high-quality training and development resources, with courses available 24/7 from any internet-connected device. Users can track their progress, earn certificates of completion, and use their training to enhance their job skills, advance their careers, and improve their workplace performance. The New Jersey Department of Labor Learning Management System is part of the New Jersey Department of Labor's broader mission to support the economic growth and development of the state by helping workers acquire the skills they need to succeed in today's job market. The New Jersey Department of Labor Learning Management System online training modules include the following courses:

- **NJDOL State Programs: Tuition Waivers**

This course provides an overview of the training and materials delivered by NJDOL in September 2022 on Tuition Waivers. It offers an overview of tuition waivers and the processes for obtaining a tuition waiver for eligible customers. The training includes information about assessment and plan development to identify tuition waivers as the right service, eligibility requirements, approval processes, and data entry in AOSOS. The course includes key forms that counselors must utilize as part of the tuition waiver process.

- **NJDOL WIOA Service Delivery 101: Assessment and Plan Development**

This course provides an overview of how assessment and plan development activities can support the development of individualized service plans for jobseekers through NJ's One Stop Career Center network. Relevant audiences for this training include interviewers and counselors supporting the connection of individuals to career and training services through WIOA-funded programs. The information included in this training may also be relevant to staff in other core partner programs, including Title II, Title IV, and WFNJ programs.

- **NJDOL WIOA Service Delivery 102: Service Engagement**

This course provides an overview of the variety of services and support available to jobseekers through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and New Jersey's One Stop Career Center network. Relevant audiences for this training include interviewers and counselors supporting the engagement of individuals in services that lead to successful career connection and advancement. The information included in this training may also be relevant to staff in other core partner programs, including Title II, Title IV, and WFNJ programs.

- **NJDOL WIOA Service Delivery 103: Outcomes and Follow-up**

This course provides an overview of WIOA measures of success, specifically providing details regarding what experiences count towards Measurable Skill Gain and Credential Attainment. The course also provides information regarding post-training and follow-up services that offer critical support for achieving and sustaining successful outcomes.

- **NJDOL WIOA Targeted Topics: Supportive Services**

This course provides an overview of types of supportive services that can be provided in conjunction or in sequence with career, training, and/or other youth services to reduce barriers to employment and increase the chances of completing training and connecting to employment opportunities. This training seeks to expand how staff integrate supportive services into both Individual Employment Plans and Individualized Service Strategies.

- **NJDOL WIOA Targeted Topics: Youth Program Elements**

This course provides an overview of the 14 youth program elements that must be integrated and incorporated into WIOA youth services, offering a comprehensive and holistic set of services to support the success of youth participants.

- **NJDOL WIOA Targeted Topics: Youth Work Experience**

This video provides an overview of Work Experience in WIOA Youth Programs. Work Experiences offer youth opportunities for gaining exposure and direct experience in occupations and occupational clusters that align with career pathway interests. Work Experience offers youth participants both real world exposure to careers and educational opportunities to learn about specific professions.

- **NJDOL Work-Based Learning 101: Overview**

This course provides an overview of the training and materials delivered by EDSI through the NJDOL/GSETA Training Partnership in April 2022. This course includes information about what work-based learning is, different types of WBL, and how to use WBL to benefit both employers and candidates.

- **NJDOL Work-Based Learning 102: Candidate and Employer Process**  
This course provides an overview of the training and materials delivered by EDSI through the NJDOL/GSETA Training Partnership in April 2022. It offers a comprehensive picture of how the work-based learning process gets started for both candidates and employers. This training includes information about how to assess candidates for eligibility and the step-by-step process for preparing candidates for a successful WBL experience.
- **NJDOL Work-Based Learning 201: Lead Generation, Prospecting, and Getting Past Gatekeepers**  
This course provides an overview of the training and materials delivered by EDSI through the NJDOL/GSETA Training Partnership in May 2022. It provides information about effectively presenting work-based learning solutions to employers and working with gatekeepers to reach decision-makers. This training includes a review of diverse types of WBL and the importance of focusing on the benefits of WBL for both employers and candidates.
- **NJDOL Work-Based Learning 202: The Six Steps of the Sale**  
This course provides an overview of the training and materials delivered by EDSI through the NJDOL/GSETA Training Partnership in May 2022. It offers an overview of a sales framework that local areas can use to effectively present work-based learning solutions. The framework covers six specific steps: Prepare for the Meeting, Build Business Rapport, Probe for Needs, Present Solutions, Handle Objections, and Confirm Next Steps.
- **NJDOL Work-Based Learning 301: Contracting, Invoicing, and Fiscal Trackers**  
This course provides an overview of the training and materials delivered by EDSI through the NJDOL/GSETA Training Partnership in May/June 2022. This training highlights the documentation and communication that allow a work-based learning opportunity to be clear, trackable, and successful for staff, candidates, and employers alike. The training explores master contracts, training plans, invoicing practices, fiscal and performance tracking, and communication with stakeholders.

## **WORKFORCEGPS**

The Union County Workforce Development Board, the Chief Elected Officials, the County Leadership, the American Job Center Operator, and the American Job Center Network Partners are encouraged to register and participate in the free online resources available through WorkforceGPS, which is a professional development and training platform created by the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration. The platform is designed to provide workforce development professionals, including job coaches, career

counselors, and training providers, with access to resources and tools that can help them improve the quality and effectiveness of their services.

WorkforceGPS offers a range of resources, including webinars, training materials, and research articles, on a variety of topics related to workforce development, such as job readiness, career pathways, and apprenticeships. The platform also includes discussion forums and a community of practice, which allows users to connect and share best practices with each other.

### **NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF WORKFORCE BOARDS**

The Union County Workforce Development Board, the Chief Elected Officials, and the County Leadership are encouraged to register and participate in the online resources available through The National Association of Workforce Boards, which is a non-profit organization that represents and serves the nation's network of over 550 Workforce Development Boards and their business, labor, education, and community partners.

The National Association of Workforce Boards provides a range of services and resources to support the development and implementation of workforce policies and programs at the local, state, and federal levels. Some of the services provided by the National Association of Workforce Boards include policy development and advocacy, technical assistance and training, research and analysis, and networking opportunities for workforce professionals.

Through its various initiatives and programs, the National Association of Workforce Boards seeks to promote collaboration among workforce stakeholders, improve the effectiveness of workforce development programs, and ensure that America's workforce remains competitive in the global economy.

### **WORKFORCE180**

Staff from the Union County Workforce Development Board, the American Job Center Operator, and the American Job Center Network Partners enrolled in online learning around important workforce development modules. Workforce180 is a company that provides workforce development solutions to organizations and individuals. They offer a range of services and programs designed to help job seekers improve their skills, find employment, and advance their careers. Workforce180's services include training and coaching, job placement assistance, and online resources to help job seekers and organizations achieve their workforce development goals. The company also provides consulting services to businesses and government agencies to help them develop and implement effective workforce development strategies. Workforce180 is committed to



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helping people build meaningful careers and supporting businesses in creating a skilled and productive workforce. Workforce180's online training modules include:

- Case Management Certification
- Business Services Certification
- Youth Navigator Certification
- Reentry Service Certification
- Racial Equity Certification
- Leadership Development Certification
- Job Search Certification
- Business for Women Certification
- Time Management Certification
- Motivational Interviewing Certification
- Customer Service

#### **GARDEN STATE EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ASSOCIATION**

Garden State Employment and Training Association, in collaboration with the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development, and all the Workforce Development Boards in the State of New Jersey, contracted with Educational Data Systems, Inc. to provide online pre-corded video training modules related to the key aspects of the local governance policy as issued by the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development. Educational Data Systems, Inc. will also provide additional technical assistance to local areas to ensure compliance with the local governance policy. The five mini modules are as followed: (1) Overview of Local Governance Policy, (2) The Local Workforce Development Board, (3) Competitive Procurement I: Making Strong RFPs, (4) Competitive Procurement II: Evaluating Proposals, and (5) Setting Up Clear Agreements.

Educational Data Systems, Inc. is a workforce development company that provides customized workforce solutions to businesses, education and government agencies, and job seekers.

Educational Data Systems, Inc. also partners with employers to develop customized training programs that are tailored to their specific workforce needs. The company's goal is to help individuals gain the skills and knowledge they need to secure and maintain employment, while also helping businesses to build a skilled and productive workforce.

In addition to its workforce development services, Educational Data Systems, Inc. also provides consulting services in the areas of performance management, quality assurance, and business process improvement. The company has worked with clients across a range

of industries, including manufacturing, healthcare, transportation, and information technology.

Attending the annual conference of the Garden State Employment and Training Association can provide a range of benefits for workforce professionals. This conference is a terrific way to gain new knowledge and insights related to employment and training in the state of New Jersey. Attendees can participate in lectures, workshops, and presentations, which can help them stay up to date with the latest trends, technologies, and best practices in the field.

In addition to learning, the Garden State Employment and Training Association conference also provides an opportunity for networking and collaboration. Attendees can connect with other workforce professionals, government officials, and industry experts, which can lead to new collaborations, partnerships, and job opportunities. The Garden State Employment and Training Association conference is also a platform for idea exchange, where attendees can share their experiences and learn from others, which can lead to new insights and solutions to common problems.

Moreover, the Garden State Employment and Training Association conference can be a source of inspiration and motivation for workforce professionals. Attendees can hear from keynote speakers, attend workshops, and engage with other attendees, which can help them stay motivated and energized in their work. The conference can also provide exposure for the work of attendees and their organizations. They can highlight their services, research, and projects, and potentially gain media coverage or attention from potential customers or partners.

### **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

The Union County Workforce Development Board, the Chief Elected Officials, the County Leadership, the American Job Center Operator, and the American Job Center Network Partners, and staff are encouraged to enhance their workforce knowledge through additional policy reports, policy statements, and technical assistance documents available online. While not exhaustive, the list below includes some of the supplemental and important resources available to the leadership, policymakers, and staff of the Union County American Job Center Network Partners and workforce ecosystem:

#### **Training and Employment Guidance Letters**

Training and Employment Guidance Letters are official documents issued by the United States Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration. These letters provide guidance and information to state and local workforce development agencies, as well as to other stakeholders in the workforce development system.

Training and Employment Guidance Letters typically address a range of workforce development topics, including program administration, funding requirements, program evaluation, and reporting requirements. They may also provide information about new initiatives, best practices, and emerging issues in workforce development.

Training and Employment Guidance Letters are designed to help workforce development agencies and other stakeholders understand and comply with federal regulations and guidelines, as well as to improve the effectiveness of workforce development programs and services. They are a valuable tool for ensuring that the workforce development system operates efficiently and effectively, and that job seekers and employers have access to the resources and services they need to succeed in today's rapidly changing labor market.

### **Training and Employment Notices**

Training and Employment Notices are official documents issued by the United States Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration. These notices are used to disseminate information to state and local workforce development agencies, as well as to other stakeholders in the workforce development system.

Training and Employment Notices typically provide information about new policies, procedures, or initiatives related to workforce development programs and services. They may also provide guidance on federal regulations or laws, funding opportunities, or emerging issues in the workforce development system.

Unlike Training and Employment Guidance Letters, which provide guidance and information that must be followed by workforce development agencies, TENs are used to provide information that may be of interest or relevance to stakeholders in the workforce development system. While Training and Employment Notices may contain valuable information, they do not have the same level of regulatory authority as Training and Employment Guidance Letters.

### **New Jersey Workforce Innovation Notices**

The New Jersey Department Labor and Workforce Development utilizes New Jersey Workforce Innovation Notices to communicate essential information regarding Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act policies, procedures, technical assistance, and federal and state guidance to Workforce Development Boards, American Job Center Operators, and American Job Center Service Providers.

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Through these notices, the New Jersey Department of Labor seeks to promote transparency and engage stakeholders in the policymaking process, by providing timely and relevant information on key issues affecting the workforce development system.

New Jersey Department of Labor values the key role that Workforce Development Boards, American Job Center Operators, and American Job Center Service Providers play in the delivery of workforce development services and is committed to working collaboratively with these stakeholders to promote economic growth and prosperity in New Jersey.

### **Workforce Register**

The Union County Workforce Development Board maintains the Workforce Register, a comprehensive record of all the public measures implemented by the board and its committees. This register provides a chronological account of the activities carried out, serving as a valuable educational resource, and promoting transparency and adherence to best practices in governance.

The Workforce Register is organized into quarters, making it easy to reference and track the board's activities over time. The register provides detailed information on the public measures and initiatives implemented by the board, including workforce development programs, job training initiatives, and other relevant activities. The Workforce Register can act as an excellent source for onboard new board members, staff, and the public.

The Union County Workforce Development Board and its committees are committed to promoting economic growth and prosperity in the region, and the Workforce Register plays a key role in supporting this mission. By maintaining a comprehensive record of their activities, the board and committees can demonstrate their commitment to transparency and accountability, while also providing valuable information and resources to stakeholders and the public.

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## **STATE EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING COMMISSION QUESTIONS**

Regional and Local Plan Development: Describe process to create regional and local plans, in respective plans, and provide assurances that it was an open and transparent process, including, the following:

- List and describe any meetings of workgroups, taskforces, or similar efforts. Documentation of these meetings, including minutes and attendees, must be maintained regionally or locally. Include a list of the participants and their organizations. (This should include representatives of LWDBs, LWDB staff, fiscal agent staff, local elected officials, local public entities, regional and local economic development partners, employers and employer organizations, WIOA/One Stop service providers and partners, such as Adult Education and Literacy providers, community colleges, NJ Industry Partnerships, and other entities with a stake in the local workforce system and plan.)
- Describe the process used by the region and the LWDBs to make available copies of the proposed local plan to the public, through electronic and other means such as public hearings and local news media; ensuring that the document was made available in accessible formats.
- Describe the process used to provide an opportunity for public comment, including comment by representatives of businesses, representatives of labor organizations, and representatives of education and input into the development of the local plan, prior to submission of the plan.
- Describe any additional regional and/or local requirements or processes for public comments. Provide a list of stakeholders who were notified of the opportunity for public comments in both regional and local plans. Include as an attachment to the finalized plans any such comments including those that represent disagreement with the plan.
- Plans should be viewed as system-wide/community documents. To that end, it is expected that any resulting document is not the sole work of any individual or a single entity. Please ensure that the plans highlight the ways in which community partners at the regional and local levels were involved in the development of plans and resulting documents. This joint effort should be ongoing and documented and not based solely on a vote of approval prior to submission of a completed document.

## **THE YOUTH VOICE**

The New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission adopted Policy Resolution No. 2022-01, adopted on April 6, 2022, with the purpose of encouraging *“local workforce development areas to develop, effectuate, and include a Youth Voice framework that utilizes the direct input of the target population to be served and that their input be used in the design, development, implementation and delivery of youth services”*. The Union County Workforce Development Board supports this policy as its goal is to raise awareness and to promote the value of the youth population in New Jersey. It calls for local workforce development areas to establish a more formal method for including the input of young people in the design, development, implementation, and delivery of services targeted to their participation. The New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission suggests that the framework for the youth voice should be developed with consideration for diversity, inclusivity, and equity.

The Union County Workforce Development Board’s approach to amplifying the Youth Voice includes, but is not limited to, working with the American Job Center Operator and the Network Partners to facilitate the partners’ development of operational strategies to further integrate youth programs—through co-enrollment and the braided funding—program alignment, service integration, and the develop policies and procedures that facilitate:

- **Employ the Voice:** Provide work experience opportunities to youth to conduct outreach to other youth and to better communicate with other youth.
- **Involvement of youth:** Encourage young people to take an active role in decision-making and planning processes and provide opportunities for their voices to be heard.
- **Collaboration with stakeholders:** Engage with stakeholders who have a personal stake in youth development, such as educators, community organizations, and local government agencies.
- **Clear communication:** Ensure that communication channels are open and accessible, and that young people are informed about the goals and objectives of the youth voice program.
- **Capacity building:** Invest in capacity building for youth leaders and organizations to increase their effectiveness in representing young people and advocating for their needs.
- **Inclusiveness:** Ensure that the youth voice program is inclusive and represents the diversity of the young population, including those from diverse cultural, socioeconomic, educational backgrounds, and the LGBTQIA cohort.

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- Sustainability: Develop a sustainable model for the youth voice program that ensures its continued success and impact over time.
- Data-driven decision making: Use data to inform decisions about the youth voice program and to measure its impact on the well-being of young people.

Locally, the Union County Workforce Development Board and the Union County American Job Center, through the Youth Forward program, have made it a priority to integrate the youth perspectives in the design and development of new youth program opportunities. Youth participants are coached on civic participation and encouraged to attend Workforce Development Board meetings, the Youth Committee Meetings, Youth Focus Groups, and respond to surveys. Specific examples of youth participation include:

- **March 30, 2022:** A youth participant receiving services from the Boxwood Learning Center, participated in the Youth Committee meeting. The out-of-school participant was referred to the Boxwood Learning Center to receive assistance with mentoring, tutoring, GED testing, independent living skills workshops, financial literacy workshops, and was enrolled in an apprenticeship program. Participation in the youth program changed his life. This program is funded by the Union County Board of County Commissioners, the Union County Workforce Development Board, and the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development
- **May 25, 2022:** An Out-of-School Youth enrolled in the Simon Youth Academy—a program managed by the Union County Vocational-Technical Schools, in partnership with the Simon Youth Foundation, and funded by the Union County Board of County Commissioners, the Union County Workforce Development Board, and the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development—participated in the Youth Committee meeting and shared all the wonderful opportunities she received as a result of entering a supportive academic program that resulted in a high school diploma.
- **September 14, 2022:** An Out-of-School Youth participant, who was eventually hired by the Youth Forward program, attended the public meeting of the Union County Workforce Development meeting. The youth shared the myriad of positive experiences he encountered while enrolled in the Youth Forward Program as a participant, thanked the board members for their community work on the board, and assured them that the funding they were allocating to youth training and work experience was having a major impact of the lives of those individuals without a voice.



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- **January 18, 2023:** The Union County Workforce Development Board organized A *Youth Focus Group* with Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act out-of-school enrolled in the Simon Youth Academy, which is managed by the Union County Vocational-Technical Schools. The young people interviewed expressed their experiences in the workforce and their future aspirations. They compared traditional schools to Simon Youth Academy and expressed why they are thriving at the latter. They talked about the benefits of attending a school in the mall, such as finding jobs, but also expressed the challenges they faced such as managing school, work, and personal life. Many students relied on school staff for support and guidance. The students discussed their plans after graduation which included truck driving school, cosmetology, college, finding a job, and studying abroad. They expressed dissatisfaction with traditional schools and suggested having classes that prepare them for the future. The students also talked about their need for staff who care for and motivate them and being inspired by the staff at Simon Youth Academy. The students also discussed their supportive service needs, their dislike for traditional mental health therapy services, and praised the services provided by Dr. S through the school. Some students suggested that schools treat them the same as everyone else but let them know they are in a safe space.
- **January 25, 2023:** The Union County Workforce Development Board organized A *Youth Focus Group* with out-of-school youth enrolled in the Youth Corps program managed by the United Way of Greater Union County. The youth were asked about their experiences in the workforce and future aspirations, as well as the differences between traditional school and Youth Corp. Some students had worked in retail stores, restaurants, and Fed Ex, but many felt working would not allow them to focus on schoolwork. Many students had specific career goals, including nursing, IT, cosmetology, and social work. They did not like traditional schools due to lack of attention from staff, unsafe environments, and uninteresting activities. Students suggested that traditional schools focus on practical life skills and offer incentives such as scholarships, mentoring, and financial literacy. Students talked about their need for transportation and the need for schools to make LGBT students feel protected. They also talked about coping mechanisms for mental health but did not express many concerns in this area.

### **YOUTH COMMITTEE INPUT AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

In addition to receiving input from youth participants, the Union County Workforce Development Board aggregated recommendations from the members of the Youth Committee over the prior two years and have outlined them below. The Union County Workforce Development Board will work with the American Job Center Operator and the Network Partners to operationalize the Youth Committee's recommended action steps.

## **GENERAL DISCUSSION ITEMS AT YOUTH COMMITTEE MEETINGS ORGANIZED BY THEME**

- **TRAINING**
  - Partner/affiliates trained on eligibility process.
  - Need to train BOE school staff.
  - Partner training for better understanding of case management system
  - Offer more mental health training to staff.
  - Demonstration of UCWORKS and how to use website.
- **ELIGIBILITY PROCESS**
  - Use of UCWORKS for eligibility
  - More case management to help youth obtain documentation for eligibility.
  - Identify common eligibility requirements between schools and Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act
  - Identify point person in school who can assist with Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act eligibility.
  - Youth Forward needs to offer more information on services available to partners.
  - Streamline the enrollment process.
- **SUPPORTIVE SERVICES**
  - Youth Forward participants provided supportive services, e.g., transportation and uniforms.
  - Social Services offers loaner laptops for WFNJ clients.
  - Identify supportive services for youth with mental, social, emotional health concerns.
  - Increased social workers to address mental health, financial support, and food insecurity.
- **ALTERNATIVE SCHOOLS**
  - Create a brochure for schools with alternative schools' information, e.g., SYA, Youth Corps, Job Corp
  - Creation of a list of alternative schools for students at risk of not graduating
  - Youth participate in committees, conduct surveys, and focus groups.

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- Identify Board of Education school guidance counselors, workplace learning advisors, social workers, and directors
- CO-ENROLLMENT
  - Certain programs have discussed co-enrollment but have not established formal procedures.
  - Establish direct connection between schools and outside service provider.
  - Establish clarity regarding slots, funding, and programs offered.
  - Identify what the co-enrollment process looks like for youth clients.
  - Produce visuals for the co-enrollment process.
- SOFT SKILLS
  - Develop youth-centered soft skills class.
  - Soft skills training for youth clients
- REFERRAL PROCESS
  - Establish and map out a referral process.
  - Create a connection between training providers and schools.
  - Identify apprenticeships and on-the-job training opportunities for youth.
- EDUCATION AND OCCUPATIONAL TRAINING
  - Address educational deficiencies before sending youth to occupational training.
  - Create procedures for referring youth from school programs to occupational training.
  - Formalize an exit packet for students leaving the school program.
  - Develop meaningful work experiences for Out-of-School Youth between 18–21-year-old.
  - Identify what happens to Out-of-School Youth and Out-of-School Youth ESL students after they exit the ESL program.
- BUSINESS INVOLVEMENT
  - The business team invited to attend youth committee meetings.
  - Business team to collect information on OJT and apprenticeship opportunities.

- TECHNOLOGY AND REMOTE LEARNING
  - Ensure students have reliable WIFI services.
  - Offer in-person and virtual space for reliable WIFI.
  - Offer virtual tours to students interested in college.
  - Highlight the importance of technology in the new normal.
  - Laptop incentive program for enrolling in college.
- MENTAL HEALTH
  - Develop more mental health initiatives.
  - Increased mental health support for students.
  - Difficulties finding in-person experience in the medical field.
  - Mental health will continue to be a focus.
- CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS
  - Struggle to keep students motivated during remote learning.
  - Use former students as mentors.

#### **GENERAL DISCUSSION ITEMS AT YOUTH COMMITTEE MEETINGS ORGANIZED INTO ACTION ITEMS**

- Invite Roselle, Linden, Plainfield, and Elizabeth Boards of Education to participate in Committee - This can be done through formal invitations, emails, or phone calls to schedule a meeting to discuss the committee and its objectives.
- Partner/affiliates training on eligibility process - Organize training sessions for partners and affiliates to educate them on the eligibility process, including the use of UCWORKS and case management techniques.
- Use of UCWORKS for eligibility - Make sure that partners and affiliates are aware of the availability and use of UCWORKS as a tool for determining eligibility. Provide demonstration sessions and training on how to use the website effectively.
- Increase case management to help youth obtain documentation for eligibility - Implement additional case management techniques to assist youth in obtaining the necessary documentation for eligibility, including supporting services such as transportation and uniforms.

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- Establish a co-enrollment procedure - Work with partner programs to establish a formal co-enrollment procedure, including direct connections with outside service providers and mapping out a referral process.
- Provide supportive services for Youth Forward participants - Continue to provide transportation, uniforms, and other supportive services for Youth Forward participants to ensure their success.
- Utilize Plainfield Library as a GED testing site - Promote the use of the Plainfield Library as one of the few available sites for testing for the GED.
- Offer laptops for WFNJ clients through social services - Make sure that WFNJ clients are aware of the availability of laptops through social services and encourage them to take advantage of this resource.
- Develop youth-centered soft skills classes - Offer soft skills classes that are specifically designed for youth clients and focus on their needs and interests.
- Create a brochure for alternative schools - Develop a brochure that outlines the various alternative schools available to students, including SYA, Youth Corp, and Job Corp.
- Address educational deficiencies before sending youth to occupational training - Implement procedures to address any educational deficiencies that youth may have before sending them to occupational training programs.
- Refer youth from school programs to occupational training programs - Develop a clear referral process for youth from school programs to occupational training programs, including exit packets and connections with training providers.
- Identify common eligibility requirements between schools and Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act - Work with schools and Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act to identify common eligibility requirements and make sure that partners and affiliates are aware of these.
- Identify supportive services for students at risk of dropping out - Determine what supportive services students may need for those who are at risk of not graduating and make sure they are aware of these resources.
- Identify point-person in schools for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act eligibility - Appoint a point person in each school who can assist with Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act eligibility and make sure that partners and affiliates are aware of who this person is.

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- Offer more information on services available to partners - Make sure that partners and affiliates are aware of the full range of services available through Youth Forward and how they can access them.
- Develop meaningful work experiences for Out-of-School Youth - Offer meaningful work experiences for Out-of-School Youth between the ages of 18-21, including apprenticeships and on-the-job training opportunities.
- Identify supportive services for mental health and emotional needs - Identify and promote supportive services for mental health and emotional needs, including resources for mental health training for staff.
- Create a list of alternative schools for at-risk students - Develop a list of alternative schools for students who are at risk of not graduating.

### **AMERICAN JOB CENTER PARTNERS COMMITTEE INPUT AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **GENERAL DISCUSSION ITEMS AT AMERICAN JOB CENTER COMMITTEE MEETINGS ORGANIZED BY THEME**

- SKILL UP & DISABILITY ACCESSIBILITY:
  - Ensure that Skill Up platform is disability-friendly with the use of Jaws and Google screen reader.
  - Translate the courses to various languages to make it accessible to all clients.
- SUPPORTIVE SERVICES:
  - Develop a specific sub-strategy for supportive services to meet the diverse needs of clients.
  - Streamline the referral process and inventory of available services.
  - Cross-train AJC Network partners on supportive services to increase awareness.
  - Provide supportive service agencies space at AJC Job Fairs.
  - Leverage partner resources to provide wraparound services to clients.
- BUSINESS PARTNERSHIP & JOB OPPORTUNITIES:
  - Create business partnerships to develop job opportunities and match them to clients.
  - Create an interagency referral mechanism and streamlined referral process.

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- Provide training to all partner staff on new systems, referral process, and database.
  - Establish an MOU/contract/purchase order with new partners.
- **EDUCATION & TRAINING:**
  - Redefine the role of American Job Center to meet the needs of the emerging hybrid workforce environment.
  - Expand cross-training to AJC Network partners on changes to state and federal regulations.
  - Create a baseline educational strategy among all partners.
  - Expand cross-training to partners in innovative technology such as UC Works and Skills Up New Jersey.
- **CLIENT SERVICES:**
  - Conduct surveys to clients to understand their needs, preferences, and preferred methods of service delivery.
  - Provide training to clients to help them navigate various systems.
  - Create an evening resource fair for clients who can't navigate the systems.
  - Make client information (jackets) available to partners.
- **MARKETING & OUTREACH:**
  - Develop a strategy around community awareness and outreach to new organizations.
  - Market training opportunities and career pathways in high-demand occupations.
  - Conduct quarterly targeted employer and job seeker satisfaction surveys.
- **YOUTH EMPLOYMENT:**
  - Summer youth employment to work with partners on placing youth at sites.
  - Leverage adult funding for youth alongside the youth build program.
  - Youth mentorship initiative.
- **EMPLOYEE REQUIREMENTS & PERFORMANCE:**
  - Address the need for employees to have communication skills and soft skills.

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- Monitor and analyze training performance rates and supportive services trends.
  - Financial literacy workshops for youth.
  - Encourage partners to use Skill Up.
- IMMIGRANTS & REFUGEES:
  - Report on the importance of educating immigrants and refugees for the nation's economy and prosperity.
  - Outreach to ensure the community knows about AJC services.
- MISCELLANEOUS:
  - Disability job fair collaboration with the Office for Persons with Disabilities and Special Needs.
  - Encourage active participation in the Strategic planning process through focus groups and surveys.
  - Simplify the enrollment paperwork process.
  - Hire staff and address the challenge of attracting them.
  - Develop a touchpoint system with CWA.
  - Add all partners to the NLX system to receive emails on job opportunities.
  - Encourage the use of UCWORKS.

**GENERAL DISCUSSION ITEMS AT AMERICAN JOB CENTER PARTNERS COMMITTEE MEETINGS ORGANIZED INTO ACTION ITEMS**

- DISABILITY INCLUSIVENESS AND ACCESSIBILITY
  - Skill Up is disability friendly with Jaws and Google screen reader support and course translation capabilities.
  - Ensure the AJC services are accessible to clients with disabilities through collaboration with the Office for Persons with Disabilities and Special Needs
  - Offer interview workshops to clients with disabilities prior to job fairs.
- RESPONDING TO COVID-19 CHALLENGES
  - Address the challenges posed by remote learning, wage expectations, lack of technology, lack of computer skills, COVID19 concerns, and mental health.



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- Address the need for childcare for clients to support their participation in education and training programs.
- **BUSINESS PARTNERSHIPS AND JOB OPPORTUNITIES**
  - Establish business partnerships to create job opportunities for clients.
  - Match clients with job opportunities and provide support through the hiring process.
  - Conduct job fairs and follow up with job seekers and employers.
  - Increase use of UCWORKS to connect clients with job opportunities.
  - Market training opportunities and career pathways in high-demand occupations
- **SUPPORTIVE SERVICES**
  - Develop a specific sub-strategy for supportive services.
  - Update the current supportive services policy (WDB 2017-09)
  - Streamline the referral process for supportive services.
  - Identify partners, services/resources, and the cost for those services.
  - Establish an MOU/contract/purchase order with partners.
  - Provide training to partner staff on new systems, referral process, and database.
  - Create a baseline educational strategy among all partners.
  - Create an interagency referral mechanism and streamlined referral process.
  - Make client information (jackets) available to partners.
  - Provide supportive service agencies space at AJC Job Fairs
  - Leverage partner resources to provide “wraparound” services to help clients overcome barriers to education and training.
  - Develop a strategy for community awareness and outreach to new organizations.
  - Conduct surveys to gather information on client needs, preferences, and preferred methods of service delivery.
- **RETRAINING AND UP-SKILLING THE LABOR FORCE**
  - Address the need to retrain and upskill the labor force.
  - Redefine the role of the American Job Center to meet the needs of the emerging hybrid workforce environment.

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- Expand staff cross training to include all AJC Network partners on innovative technologies, procedures/processes, and resources.
  - Expand cross training to AJC Network partners on changes to state and federal regulations.
  - Increase awareness of supportive services among AJC Network partners
- IMPROVING CLIENT SERVICES
  - Create an evening resource fair for clients who can't navigate the various systems.
  - Expand cross-training to partners on innovative technology such as UC Works, Skills Up New Jersey, etc.
  - Implement quarterly targeted employer and job seeker satisfaction surveys.
  - Create a centralized job seeker/resource database (Google Doc)
  - Leverage resources to provide laptops and Wi-Fi to students.
  - Add all partners to the NLX system to receive emails on job opportunities.
  - Look at training performance rates and supportive services trends.
  - Offer financial literacy workshops for youth.
  - Encourage partners to use Skill Up
  - Simplify the enrollment paperwork.
- IMPROVING YOUTH SERVICES
  - Partner with organizations to place youth in summer employment.
  - Leverage adult funding for youth alongside the youth build program.
  - Develop a touchpoint system with CWA.
  - Report on the importance of educating immigrants.

## **LITERACY COMMITTEE INPUT AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **GENERAL DISCUSSION ITEMS AT LITERACY COMMITTEE MEETINGS ORGANIZED BY THEME**

- ORGANIZED PLAN:
  - Barriers to Enrollment Process:
  - Complex enrollment paperwork
  - Applications and documents not in participant's native language
  - Digital process for intake is a barrier due to digital literacy.
  - Lengthy intake and contract process

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- Need for uniform reporting system.
  - Inconsistent attendance requirements per program
  - Inconsistent funding availability
  - Referral process
- DIGITAL DIVIDE BARRIERS:
  - Lack of equipment
  - Lack of access
  - Lack of digital skills
  - Marketing of available programs and resources
- IMPROVING Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act PROGRAM:
  - Seamless Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act co-enrollment process
  - Title I provider to fast-track Title II clients.
  - Expansion of IC3 program
  - Collaboration with Social Services for laptop loaner program
  - Improved referral system
  - Better assessments and coordination for employment opportunities
  - Seamless integration of two programs (SS-42)
  - Elimination of silos in co-enrollment process
  - Identification of career opportunities for clients
  - Expansion of assessments focusing on career pathways
- ENHANCING AJC SERVICES:
  - Expanding staff cross-training.
  - Accommodating client work/school schedules
  - UCWORKS training for clients and partners
  - Dissemination of AJC orientation in English and Spanish
  - Identification of program liaison for interagency referrals
  - Integration of outcome measure to ensure success.
  - Development of Title II exit procedures
- IMPROVING TITLE II PROGRAM:
  - Expansion of staff cross-training to include Literacy Committee members and instructors.

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- UCWORKS partner training
- Distribution of AJC orientation for Title II partners
- Creation of AJC Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act eligibility kit for partners
- Universal referral mechanism
- Procurement of digital tools for clients
- Enhancement of career exploration for clients
- Quarterly case conferencing to review client progress.
- Wrap-around services/supportive services for eligible clients
- Creation of class size contracts
- Link between AJC clients and employers
- Professional development workshops for staff

**GENERAL DISCUSSION ITEMS AT LITERACY COMMITTEE MEETINGS ORGANIZED BY ACTION ITEMS**

- BARRIERS TO ENROLLMENT:
  - Enrollment process: simplify cover sheet and have uniformity among partners.
  - Expand staff cross-training.
  - Title II evening students could not take part in AJC services due to work schedules.
  - Need eligibility toolkit.
  - Title II identification of eligible Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act participants
  - Focus on collaboration and wrap-around services.
  - Identify digital literacy needs and the language barrier needs.
  - Identify supportive service needs and offer wrap around services.
  - Development of interagency client transfer
  - UCWORKS training
  - Disbursement of English and Spanish AJC orientation for client review
  - Identification of program liaison for interagency referrals
  - Integrate an outcome measure that can identify services needed to ensure success.
  - Develop Title II exit procedures.

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- Consider the expansion of AJC office hours to accommodate client work/school schedules.
- BARRIERS TO DIGITAL DIVIDE:
  - Expand staff cross-training to include Literacy Committee members and instructors.
  - UCWORKS partner training
  - Distribution of AJC orientation for Title II partners
  - Creation of an AJC Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act eligibility kit for partners
  - Identification of common enrollment elements from each Title II partner
  - Development of a universal referral mechanism
  - Identification of program liaison for interagency referrals, creation of referral procedures and training for all AJC partners
  - Procurement of digital tools such as laptops and Wi-Fi for clients to use while in training and job search.
  - Consider the expansion of AJC office hours to accommodate client work/school schedules.
  - Enhancement of career exploration for Title II clients by partner agency
  - Adoption of a quarterly case conferencing to review client progress and needs to facilitate successful outcomes.
  - Develop a process to offer wrap-around services/Supportive Services for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act eligible clients.
  - Integrate an outcome measure that can identify services needed to ensure success.
  - Consider the creation of class size contracts.
  - Create a link between the AJC clients and employers.
  - Professional development workshops to ensure staff understands how to keep the population motivated and engaged.
  - Offer GED prep in Spanish.
  - Clients on waiting list for Title II services should be referred to the AJC WLL
- COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT WITH EMPLOYERS:
  - Need to communicate with employers and understand their needs.
  - UCC developing transition place for Title II

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- Analyze workforce outcomes that utilized integrated services.
- NJDOL should invest in the professional development of staff for vital skill sets, including service delivery in virtual settings and strategic planning.
- Increasing engagement of business/industry to obtain their input into programming for both adult literacy education and workforce development.
- SETC can facilitate the sharing of useful tactics for integrating Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act service delivery, engaging the business community, finding ways to braid funding.
- Development of training on the features and benefits of UCWORKS, the AJC Virtual One-Stop system
- Committee agreed with Heldrich report.

## **DISABILITIES COMMITTEE INPUT & RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **GENERAL DISCUSSION ITEMS AT DISABILITIES COMMITTEE MEETINGS ORGANIZED BY THEME**

- **ENGAGE EMPLOYERS:**
  - Involve employers in meetings and discussions to ensure their engagement in the process.
  - Create a Zoom meeting or open forum with local businesses to answer their questions and address concerns about working with disabled individuals.
  - Cross-train business team members with partners on working with individuals with disabilities.
- **SOFT SKILLS TRAINING:**
  - Provide soft skills training for individuals with disabilities to prepare them for the job market.
  - Collaborate with AJC and Office for Persons with Disabilities & Special Needs to develop soft skills as part of the hiring and retaining employment goals.
  - Develop workshops such as interview skills, resume writing, etc. prior to job fairs for candidates.
- **EMPLOYER OUTREACH:**
  - Collaborate with DVRS, NJDOL, and ARC of NJ on employer outreach efforts.
  - Educate employers on non-traditional interviewing and job settings.

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- Do an employer forum to educate employers on the benefits of hiring individuals with disabilities.
- **STAFF CROSS TRAINING:**
  - Cross-train staff on interviewing, supervising, and retaining individuals with disabilities.
  - Provide managers and supervisors with training on interviewing, supervising, and retaining individuals with disabilities.
- **SUPPORT FOR PARTICIPANTS:**
  - Invite self-advocates and their families to committee meetings.
  - Provide a sharing of resources for the aging population.
  - Ensure accommodation is identified early and support provided.
  - Provide more information about job opportunities prior to job fairs.
- **JOB WORKSHOPS AND FAIRS:**
  - Create a disability hiring fair in October.
  - Create a fact sheet on what employers are scared about hiring someone with a disability and offer suggested job tasks.
  - Create an information packet on trial work experience for job sites, including a fact sheet on liability concerns, suggested job tasks, and assurance.
  - Enhance the interview process and ensure candidates are prepared with proper resume writing skills.
- **MISCELLANEOUS CONCERNS:**
  - Address the need for proper use of social media such as LinkedIn vs. Facebook and safety concerns.
  - Address the concerns raised by employers, such as out-of-reach jobs and a lack of preparedness for job fairs.
  - Address the need for job workshops to be focused and for jobs offered to match the population's abilities and interests.

**GENERAL DISCUSSION ITEMS AT DISABILITIES COMMITTEE MEETINGS ORGANIZED BY ACTION ITEMS**

- Request a presentation from a Commercial Driver's License provider on the topic of working with individuals with disabilities.

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- Request a presentation from Union College on soft skills training for individuals with disabilities.
- Encourage employers to participate in meetings related to hiring individuals with disabilities.
- Develop partnerships with local businesses to promote employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities.
- Create opportunities for employers to engage in the hiring process and retain participants.
- Host a Zoom meeting or open forum for local businesses to answer their questions about working with disabled individuals.
- Provide cross-training to partners on working with individuals with disabilities.
- Offer soft skills training to individuals with disabilities.
- Facilitate collaboration among business team members (DVRS, NJDOL, & ARC of NJ) for employer outreach
- Request a soft skills presentation from other partners.
- Plan and host a disability hiring fair in October.
- Foster collaboration between AJC and Office for Persons with Disabilities & Special Needs
- Emphasize the importance of soft skills in the hiring and retaining employment process.
- Provide training on the proper use of social media platforms (e.g., LinkedIn vs Facebook) and address safety concerns.
- Develop workshops on interview skills, resume writing, etc. for candidates prior to job fairs.
- Educate employers on non-traditional interviewing methods and job settings.
- Host an employer forum to educate employers on hiring individuals with disabilities.
- Provide staff cross-training on working with individuals with disabilities.
- Invite self-advocates and their families to attend committee meetings.
- Share resources for the aging population.
- Provide training to managers and supervisors on interviewing, supervising, and retaining individuals with disabilities.
- Create a fact sheet for employers addressing their concerns about hiring individuals with disabilities and offer suggestions for job tasks.



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- Develop an information packet on trial work experience for job sites, including a fact sheet on liability concerns, suggested job tasks, and assurances.
- Enhance the interview process for hiring individuals with disabilities.
- Ensure accommodation is identified early and support is provided.
- Provide more information about job opportunities prior to events.
- Anticipate and prepare answers to questions that employers may have.
- Help individuals with disabilities in writing their resumes.
- Match job opportunities to the skills and abilities of the target population
- Focus job workshops on relevant and attainable job opportunities.
- Address out-of-reach job opportunities for individuals with disabilities.
- Encourage a larger turnout of employers at events.
- Prepare clients for resources available at events and provide opportunities for them to bring participants who will benefit from these resources.

### **OVERVIEW OF PLANNING PROCESS**

Since 2021, the Union County Workforce Development Board has been working with the American Job Center Network Partners on evaluating the implementation of the 2016 strategic plan. Through committee meetings, focus groups, evaluations, and surveys. The Union County Workforce Development Board has facilitated an ongoing, collaborative, and focused discussions to create the local plan, to ensure that the strategic plan and career service programs are truly reflective of the community's needs and priorities. Over forty-five organizations from the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Title I, Title II, Title III, Title IV, Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education, and community-based organizations, have been active participants in the monitoring of the workforce system and the development of the local plan.

### **UNION COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

Committee meetings provide an opportunity for stakeholders, such as participants, employers, service providers, to be engaged in the work of the board. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic committee meetings have been held through Zoom. However as of January 2023 the American Job Center Partners committee meeting have been held in person. At these committee meetings, members can provide input, feedback, and recommendations on specific issues or topics, which help to ensure that the local strategic plan priorities are aligned with the needs of the community. By strengthening the committees, the Union County Workforce Development Board has reenergized the following four committees which meet quarterly:

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- American Job Center Partners Committee
- Youth Committee
- Adult Education and Literacy Committee
- Disabilities Committee

Committee meetings provide a valuable tool for the Union County Workforce Development Board to manage the monitoring of the workforce system in Union County by engaging stakeholders. Engaging stakeholders in the planning process through committee meetings can increase member's sense of ownership in the resulting strategic plan. This can help ensure that the plan is seen as relevant and useful by all stakeholders and increase the likelihood of successful implementation.

The use of committees helps to ensure that the One Stop system is effective, aligned with the needs of the community, and is responsive to changing circumstances. Committee meetings serve as a vehicle to discuss topics that range from the implementation of the 2016 strategic plan strategies, program opportunities and challenges, and labor market analysis. Committee meetings have been used to manage specific tasks or projects and to facilitate the work of the board in a more efficient manner. Committee meetings also lends itself for collaboration among American Job Center Network Partners. During the height of the COVID 19 pandemic, members from the Division of Social Services and WorkFirst New Jersey provider, Workforce Advantage, worked together to address the complex issue of the digital divide by providing digital tools to those community members who lacked access to a computer and reliable Wi-Fi.

The Union County Workforce Development Board understands the importance of maintaining documentation of meetings to ensure transparency and accountability. Meeting minutes are kept locally and available on the Union County Workforce Development Board website. Furthermore, meeting minutes are shared with committee members for review, and a motion to approve minutes is conducted at the start of each meeting. Moreover, meeting minutes allows for the Union County Development Board to effectively track progress towards achieving the strategic plan's objectives and is used as a foundation of the strategic planning efforts.

## **FOCUS GROUPS**

American Job Center Network Partners, community-based organizations, and members of the Union County Workforce Development Board were invited to participate in focus groups which allowed for the Union County Workforce Development Board to gain insight from stakeholders. The intent for the focus group is to get as much input which will help the Union County Workforce Development Board and American Job Center Network Partners understand the needs and priorities of diverse groups and tailor the strategic plan

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accordingly. The following focus groups were held either in person or as part of the local plan development:

- November 8, 2022, Strategic Plan Kick Off
- November 30, 2022, WorkFirst New Jersey Focus Group
- November 30, 2022, Disabilities Focus Group
- December 14, 2022, Adult Education and Literacy Focus Group
- January 18, 2023, Out of School Youth Participant Focus Group
- January 25, 2023, Youth Partners Focus Group
- January 25, 2023, Out of School Youth Participant Focus Group

Through the focus groups, the Union County Workforce Development Board was able to identify additional gaps in services and resources that had not been identified during committee meetings. In particular, the youth participant focus group allowed for a candid and honest discussion and provided the Union County Workforce Development Board insights to ensure that the resulting strategic plan is relevant, useful, and incorporates youth voice.

The Union County Workforce Development Board understands that by conducting focus groups and seeking input from stakeholders it increases transparency in the planning process and build trust between the Union County Workforce Development Board and American Job Center Network Partners. Focus groups also provide a mechanism for accountability by demonstrating that it has given stakeholders an avenue to express their concerns, and addressed those concerns and needs in the strategic plan. All focus group meetings were recorded and meeting minutes including attendance list are kept on file. The following is a summary of the focus groups that were conducted as part of the strategic planning process.

### **STRATEGIC PLAN KICK OFF**

On November 8, 2022, a meeting was called to order by the Union County Board of Commissioners member, Sergio Granados, who is the liaison for the Union County Workforce Development Board. In attendance were Union County Workforce Development Board members, representatives from Plainfield Public Library, Workforce Advantage, Youth Forward, and American Job Center. A complete list of attendees will be kept on file and posted on the Union County Workforce Development Board website. Commissioner Granados, along with Union County Deputy County Manager, Amy Wagner, wanted to discuss the Union County Workforce Development Board Strategic Plan and the several ways Partners within the American Job Center Network can work together to highlight their organization's successes and explore future opportunities as recipients of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act funding. Specifically, Commissioner Granados

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discussed ways the American Job Center Network Partners can improve their performance, increase collaboration, and establish effective communication to ensure more community members have access to vital community services. Commissioner Granados provided specific guidance which included:

- Notify the County Board of Commissioners, the Union County Workforce Development Board and County Manager's office, through Director Antonio Rivera, of all Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act funded special events, initiatives, or accomplishments to ensure the program is being promoted and services are reaching residences across the county.
- Ensure that the Union County Board of Commissioners branding is visible on all marketing materials. Director Rivera mentioned he would send out logo specifications to all partners. Dr. Hiscano asked for additional guidance to ensure her program complies and is consistent with all marketing requirements.
- Programs should begin to review their services and think of ways on how to manage their available funding, how to expand their services and how to duplicate successful programming. Commissioner Granados offered partners some examples on ways of expanding their funding that can include expanding services to evening hours to assist individuals who are not able to access services during the day.
- Information that will be shared with the County Commissioners office will be published and promoted on all platforms to ensure the greatest exposure.
- Coordinate all efforts through the American Job Center as they are the main hub for all Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act services.

For 2023 the Union County Workforce Development Board is going to be a major focus for the Union County Board of Commissioner and needs all partners to join him in moving the Union County Workforce Development Boards initiatives forward. Commissioner Granados mentioned all partners will be called upon to adhere to contractual obligations to ensure the impact of the programs are maximized. Commissioner Granados added future discussions will continuously be held and he is looking forward to all partners participating in the collaborative efforts. Director Rivera added that he is available to talk to any partner that is interested in learning ways to serve more clients. Deputy Director Amy Wagner asked everyone to put on their creativity hat so that more Union County residents can be reached and provided services. She asked that all programs reevaluate their budgets, programs, and operational systems to ensure everyone is working efficiently and no funding is returned.

Julio Sabater, Workforce Advantage, stated that to work efficiently the Adult Education and Literacy Committee is collaborating with the American Job Center to fast-track intake process to assist individuals who need more intervention. Mellissa Lespinasse Deputy

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Director, Department of Human Services mentioned their departments are working on their outreach strategies to ensure they are meeting clients where they are in the community and offer those clients wrap around services.

Each partner provided feedback on their initiatives and mentioned their commitment to participating in more collaborative efforts. Commissioner Granados thanked everyone for attending and asked for a commitment from partners to engage in creating a stronger workforce system that will help Union County residents. Minutes for the November 8, 2022, meeting can be located on the Union County Workforce Development Board website.

### **FOCUS GROUP 1: WORKFIRST NEW JERSEY**

A virtual WorkFirst New Jersey focus group was held on November 30, 2022, with partners from various organizations that provide services to individuals receiving public assistance. In attendance were representatives from the Division of Social Services, Urban League of Union County, the Housing Authority of the City of Elizabeth, the Gateway Family YMCA, and International Rescue Committee. A complete list of attendees can be found in the meeting minutes located on the Union County Workforce Development Board website. The purpose of the focus group was to discuss the challenges facing the target population which are individuals who are classified as Adults under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and individuals who receive public assistance. Additionally, the Union County Workforce Development Board wished to identify opportunities and strategies to help low-income families overcome their barriers.

Meredith Barracato, Union County Workforce Development Board, asked the focus group a series of questions that were presented in the State Employment and Training Commission Regional and Local, Planning Guidance and Framework letter. In addition to questions Meredith Barracato introduced a series of poll questions designed to spark conversations. The following questions is a snapshot of discussion topics:

Planning Guidance and Framework Questions:

- How can Union County expand access to supportive services for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Adult and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families individuals with barriers to employment?
- How can we ensure we capture client voice in our service delivery model?
- What are the procedures necessary to operationalize the authentic engagement and service retention of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Adult and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families individuals with barriers to employment?

**Poll Questions:**

- Which of the following are your client's barriers to employment?
- Does your organization focus on the development of career pathways for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Adults and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families individuals?
- Has your organization focused efforts on working with employers?

Focus group attendees discussed various strategies, best practices, and operational procedures their organizations follow. Focus group attendees agreed more work was needed on engaging public assistant recipients due to the current WorkFirst New Jersey work activity waivers that have been in place since the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic. Attendees mentioned various outreach strategies which included working with leaders from faith-based organizations who have been known to make deep connections with individuals who are weary of traditional programs.

Many concerns were brought up such as the fact clients were facing challenges meeting their basic needs such as shelter and food. They added that programs such as food drives and additional benefits helped but those have expired or will expire soon leaving many individuals to figure out their next steps. Juanita Vargas from United Way of Union County mentioned her program had to increase their case management and mental health services due to the added stressors their clients faced. Lachelle Thompson from the Housing Authority of the City of Elizabeth added her program offers mental health service on site because the demands were greater than usual.

Julio Sabater from Workforce Advantage mentioned there must be a shift in the way programs work with public service recipients. He added that previously programs were seen as WorkFirst New Jersey compliance enforcers but now they need to educate the participants. Clients need to be presented with the benefits of being part of the program and introduce work activities as work opportunities. All attendees agreed that there was a need to work on developing the client's awareness of the benefits of improving their skills versus being worried about losing their benefits. Minutes for the November 30, 2022, meeting can be found on the Union County Workforce Development Board website.

## **FOCUS GROUP 2: DISABILITIES**

On November 30, 2022, the Union County Workforce Development Board held a virtual focus group with partners within the American Job Center Network who provide services to Individuals with Disabilities. In addition to a family advocate American Job Center Network Partners such as In Roads to Opportunities, Community Access Unlimited, and Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired were present for the meeting. A complete

list of attendees can be found in the meeting minutes on the Union County Workforce Development Board website.

Meredith Barracato began the meeting with information on the strategic plan and the purpose for the focus group. The purpose of the focus group was to collect input from community partners on the challenges facing individuals with disabilities. Additionally, the Union County Workforce Development Board wished to identify opportunities and strategies to help individuals with disabilities lead a more inclusive life.

As with all focus groups Meredith Barracato asked the focus group a series of questions that were presented in the State Employment and Training Commission Regional and Local, Planning Guidance and Framework letter. In addition to questions Meredith Barracato introduced a series of poll questions designed to spark conversations. The following questions is a snapshot of discussion topics:

Planning Guidance and Framework Questions:

- How can the partners facilitate access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system for individuals with disabilities?
- What can the American Job Center (One Stop Center) do to ensure access to staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities?
- How can Union County expand access to supportive services for Individuals with Disabilities?

Poll Questions:

- Which are the following your client's greatest barriers to employment?
- Is there a establish integrated/coordinated service model at the American Job Center?
- Do you think services at the American Job Center are accessible to people with disabilities?

Attendees mentioned the need for programs to work together more because the current services are very siloed and not coordinated. Services to individuals with Disabilities vary from each organization and few organizations know the process for co-enrolling their clients. Attendees mentioned they received questions from families, but they are unsure where to send them. Amanda Gerson from Commission for Blind and Visually Impaired mentioned the goal for their program is to ensure the American Job Centers are accessible and all consumers who walk into the One Stop can receive services that are accommodating. Ed Favor from Division of Rehabilitation Services mentioned the New



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Jersey Department of Labor sends out customer satisfaction surveys to ensure they are capturing client's voice. Cyndy Walsh Rintzler, Inroads to Opportunity mentioned as a statewide initiative they have been doing surveys, but the response rate is exceptionally low, and they are looking into ways to get participants to respond especially for those individuals who have dropped out of the program or are not engaged.

Tina Lopez, Division of Social Services mentioned more outreach is needed for homebound individuals. This is especially important to those individuals who do not have access to technology or do not know how to use it. All Focus Group attendees agreed employer engagement is important and a goal for their organizations. Sandra Lynch, Community Access Unlimited mentioned the need to do outreach to organizations that offer pre-partnership opportunities. Perle Almeida from the American Job Center shared that the business team have been doing outreach to employers to understand their needs and their interest in Work-Base Learning training. Adam Kubler mentioned added that due to the great resignation many of the contacts his organization had with employers left and he is unable to develop that pipeline of employers who want to hire Individuals with Disabilities. He suggested that the American Job Center business team conduct outreach to upper management who can make those decisions. Walter Droz, Salvation Army, mentioned the need for business to also educate other employees who would be working with Individuals with Disabilities.

### **FOCUS GROUP 3: ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY**

On December 14, 2022, the Union County Workforce Development Board held a focus group with members of the Adult Education and Literacy Committee to discuss the strategic plan. Members from the Union County Literacy Consortium and the American Job Center attended a virtual Zoom meeting.

Planning Guidance and Framework Questions:

- What are the most familiar challenges to integrating Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Title I and Title II programs?
- How can we operationalize the coordination of assessment, testing, and services across One-Stop Centers and adult education providers, as well as literacy services provided through the Workforce Learning Link, WFNJ, and other Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act services?
- How are career pathways strategies aligned with serving Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Title I and Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Title II individuals with barriers to employment?

Poll Question:



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- Is there a well-established service coordinated model among Title I and Title II programs?
- What are the greatest supportive service needs for your clients?
- Is priority of service given to low income and basic skills deficient participants?

Attendees discussed their client's barriers to employment which included transportation, childcare, and language barriers and the need for supportive services to overcome those barriers. Dr Mosley mentioned the need for services to be offered after hours due to the fact many of their clients work during the day and they are unable to attend workshops or meetings during the day. Julio Sabater mentioned that barriers to employment are also barriers to training and there needs to be constant need for assessment that checks in with clients throughout their time with the organization.

Julio Sabater mentioned more work needs to be done to integrate Title I and Title II clients. The focus group members mentioned they have been discussing and putting in place some action steps for programmatic changes. Maritza Batista from Union College mentioned they have been having trainings and meetings with the American Job Center on referral process, Union County Works and Integrated Education and Training. Focus group attendees mentioned that Literacy Consortium members have access to Laces which is where all the client information is submitted. Since the American Job Center does not access to LACES, the current practice is to share paper assessments, grades, test scores.

Julio Sabater Workforce Advantage mentioned the need for more bilingual counselors or the need to fund translation services. Lillian Roman American Job Center discussed the Voyce translation system which is used for all clients who are unable to speak English. The focus group attendees mentioned they would like more information on the services to see if they can duplicate this translation service.

Julio Sabater mentioned the need to reinvent outreach to individuals who are hardest to serve. Maritza Batista mentioned Union College does outreach to clients who attend their English as a Second Language course and assess those clients who have degrees from their native country. She mentioned this one-on-one assessment allows them to understand their barriers not only in the beginning but also throughout the course. She said the college has created an individual education and employment plan and that information is shared with the American Job Center as part of their referral process. Julio Sabater mentioned the need to service low income and basic skills deficient individuals and give it urgency. Lillian Roman mentioned the American Job Center is testing clients more and flagging low-income individuals immediately. Julio Sabater mentioned the integration of Title I and Title II has

been slowly taking place, but more work needs to be done. Minutes for the November 30, 2022, meeting can be found on the Union County Workforce Development Board website.

#### **FOCUS GROUP 4: AMERICAN JOB CENTER PARTNERS:**

On January 11, 2023, the Union County Workforce Development Board held a focus group at Warinanco Sport Arena with American Job Center partners, Union County Workforce Development Board Members, and individuals from community-based organizations. Representatives from the New Jersey Department of Labor Employment Services, representatives from local municipalities from Elizabeth, and business and non-profit Union County Workforce Development Board members were in attendance. A complete list of attendees can be found in the meeting minutes located on the Union County Workforce Development Board website. The purpose of the focus group was to discuss the challenges facing the target population which are individuals who are classified as Adults and Dislocated Workers under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and individuals who receive public assistance. Additionally, the Union County Workforce Development Board wished to identify opportunities and strategies to help job seekers overcome their barriers. Meredith Barracato did a short presentation on the various focus groups that have been held and shared with the group common themes which included:

- Streamline Referral Process
- Consistent Cross Training Among All Partners
- Seamless Co-Enrollment
- Accessible Supportive Services
- Employer Engagement Is Vital
- Emphasis on Career Pathways
- Tailored Client Services- Outreach, Case Management and Workshop

Meredith Barracato asked the focus group a series of questions that were presented in the State Employment and Training Commission Regional and Local, Planning Guidance and Framework letter. The following questions is snapshot of discussion topics:

Planning Guidance and Framework Questions:

- How can we facilitate the engagement of employers, including small employers and in-demand industry sector employers, and occupations, in workforce development programs?
- How can we strengthen integrated service models for cross-training staff and technical assistance and use and share information for support service integration across required One-Stop partners?

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- How can we leverage resources across required partners and additional community partners to reduce barriers to employment beyond specific training-related needs?

Cathy Waters from Urban League of Union County mentioned the need to build relationships with employers to let them know the benefits of their program and find out what the Employer's needs are and how Urban League can help fill those needs. Juanito Chiluisa from the New Jersey Department of Labor offers business services online and by appointment only. Employment Services has several tools available to job seekers and employers such as the NLX system and have various lists of jobs specific to populations such as reentry and individuals with disabilities. Veronica Mwaniki from the International Rescue Committee shared that pre-pandemic the International Rescue Committee used to host employer breakfast to bring together employers they have worked with previously and with employers they are trying to recruit. This gathering allows for the new employers to hear testimonials on the current employer's benefit from working with the International Rescue Committee and their clients. Scott Kuchinsky, from Plainfield Public Library mentioned they have been working with employers on upskilling their workforce as part of Incumbent Worker Training program. He added there needs to be a focus on programming that is more accessible for people who are looking to update their skills but not take away from their work. The Employer can offer professional development time.

Juanita Vargas, United Way of Greater Union County, mentioned there is a need for financial stability for long term success. She added there needs to be intentional partnerships and what does that look like because one program can pay rent for a month or two but then what happens afterwards. Financial Empowerment centers are one way to support clients who face hardship. Hawa Bonds, Youth Forward, mentioned their needs to be streamlined marketing campaign with the same messaging through social media, flyers, or even word of mouth. Julio Sabater, Workforce Advantage there needs to be a review of the supply of workers that are available looking for a job because employers might demand specific things but if there is no supply then you are losing opportunities. Need to understand the client profile and target employers who can use those clients that are coming through the American Job Center. Programs need to work on developing their clients Career Path Awareness.

#### **FOCUS GROUP 5: OUT OF SCHOOL YOUTH SIMON YOUTH ACADEMY PARTICIPANT**

January 18, 2023, 10:30am – 12:00pm

6 students participated in the focus group

Jasmin Lee, Supervisor/ Academy Leader

- The youth were asked a series of questions that focused on the following topics:
- Experience in the workforce

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- Future aspirations
- The difference between traditional school versus Simon Youth Academy
- Mental health, LGBTQ, and homeless services

The youth were candid about their experiences and felt comfortable expressing their challenges and desires for their future. With the encouragement of Jasmin Lee, the students were frank about their reasons for leaving a traditional school setting and why they are thriving at Simon Youth Academy.

- Many students have experience working in retail, restaurants, and churches. They have worked as cashiers, restaurant servers, and church office staff.
- Many students expressed the benefits of going to school in the mall which include having easy access to work opportunities and commuting benefits.
- Some students felt overwhelmed due to managing their school requirements along with work schedules and personal lives. They felt overwhelmed with day-to-day obligations and felt they took on too many responsibilities.
- Student said they wanted lessons on careers and workforce opportunities and someone to help navigate them
- Many students said they felt uncomfortable advocating for themselves at work especially when they needed to ask for time off or when they found situations at work difficult. All the students felt comfortable speaking with the school staff regarding work concerns and relied on school staff to guide them or speak to employers on their behalf.
- Many students discussed their plans after graduating, which included going to truck driving school, Union College, finding a permanent job, or studying abroad. All students were positive of their future and expressed continuing their relationship with Simon Youth Academy school staff for guidance even after graduation.
- Students expressed dissatisfaction with traditional schools due to the large class sizes, the need for more one-on-one attention, and the lack of activities that interest them.
- All the students agreed they need staff who will care, motivate, and help them to do things such as getting a driver's license or help them with work/college applications.
- Many of the students are not comfortable with traditional mental health services such as therapy or services offered through Trinitas Hospital. They did like the mental health services that were offered through the school.
- Many students talked about being inspired by the staff at Simon Youth Academy, which has led them to want to help youth in the future.

## **FOCUS GROUP 6: YOUTH PROVIDERS**

On January 25, 2023, the Union County Workforce Development Board held a focus group with members of community-based organizations such as United Way of Greater Union County, Youth Forward, and Board of Education representatives. Meredith Barracato, Union County Workforce Development Board, explained the objective of the focus group is to get as much input as possible to ensure the strategic plan is inclusive.

Meredith Barracato asked the focus group a series of questions that were presented in the State Employment and Training Commission Regional and Local, Planning Guidance and Framework letter. In addition to questions Meredith Barracato introduced a series of poll questions designed to spark conversations. The following questions is snapshot of discussion topics:

### **Planning Guidance and Framework Questions:**

- How might partnerships enhance, and support service delivery related to:
- Supportive services: mental health, substance abuse, housing, transportation, childcare services?
- How can we set up systems to prepare an educated and skilled youth workforce to meet the needs of local employers/industries?
- How can we support multiple pathways for young people aged 16-24 through One-Stop Career Center services?

### **Poll Question:**

- What are the main barriers to employment facing youth?
- Has your organization focused efforts on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion?
- Is your current workforce equipped with the tools to support the current youth population?

Juanita Vargas mentioned the need to overcome transportation barrier has caused her program to hire someone to provide transportation to ensure the participants are able to get to the program every day. It would be great if the county could create transportation for all the programs that service youth so they can have a consistent transportation loop. Cathy Hart, Housing Authority of the City of Elizabeth, mentioned that her program also had to put transportation costs into her budget due to the same concerns. She added that Princeton NJ has a bus line called the Busy Bee that allows city residents to hop on and off for free. The need for a supportive inventory needs to be completed to understand what is available. Susana Mateo, Elizabeth Board of Education, added there are challenges getting clients through social services because they do not have access to the required

documentation. Youth and their families need help gathering information that is required because they are in crisis mode and might not been able to think clearly.

All attendees mentioned mental health is a major priority but there is a challenge with navigating on what is available because many programs work in silos. Dr. McClain, Simon Youth Academy, mentioned that mental health and substance abuse goes hand and hand and require lots of support. One of the ways to reduce these issues is to implement preventative efforts and offer more resources. Everyone agreed mental health services need to be consistent, tailored to the individual, and accessible.

Dr. McClain mentioned it is important to bring opportunities to the clients because it makes it easier for the youth to understand. Youth need to be exposed to different career options available and gravitate to retail jobs. Guest speakers, people coming with applications available for youth to complete, are more effective than asking them to go somewhere. Services need to come to the students. LaChelle Thompson, Housing Authority of the City of Elizabeth, mentioned presents in the youth's desired field helps bring expose. The presenter needs to be detailed and realistic about what the career entails. Juanita Vargas mentioned students need to know what a career pathway is and what that looks like for the different occupations. She added that most of the youth do not understand how to navigate those discussions.

Jasmine Sowah, Youth Forward, mentioned the youth employment program worked for many youths because it aligned with their goals and some employers took their mentorship role seriously. Jasmine Sowah said she would like to educate the employers so they understand how the Employer can work with the youth. For this year Youth Forward is looking for STEM based work experience. Juanita Vargas asked if there were ways for more healthcare field opportunities which is considered an in-demand industry.

#### **FOCUS GROUP 7: OUT OF SCHOOL YOUTH CORP PARTICIPANTS**

January 25, 2023, 1:00pm – 2:30pm

13 students participated in the focus group

Paloma Baez, Academic Coach

The youth were asked a series of questions that focused on the following topics:

- Experience in the workforce
- Future aspirations
- The difference between traditional school versus Youth Corp
- Mental health, LGBTQ, and homeless services

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With the help of Paloma Baez, Youth Corp, who translated for the students who needed to be more comfortable speaking English, many slowly opened up about their experiences in the workforce and educational setting.

- Only a few students had experience working; some jobs consisted of Fed Ex, retail stores, and restaurants.
- Many students stated their main goal was to graduate and felt working would not allow them to focus on schoolwork.
- Many spoke about their future and had specific career options. The following is a list of occupations;
  - Nursing
  - IT
  - Flight Attendant
  - Cosmetology
  - Career in sports
  - Funeral Homeowner
  - Social workers
  - Warehouse
  - Security
- Many students expressed they did not like traditional school due to their inability to express themselves, personal issues, lack of attention from school staff, feeling unsafe due to fighting, and no activities that interested them.
- Many students stated they wished traditional school focused on “real life” situations such as learning how to cook, how to manage money, real estate, how to get a job, and how to take care of children.
- Many students stated they would like to see more incentives offered, which would keep them motivated. Incentives include scholarships, driving lessons, help for their family, swimming classes, and IT lessons.

### **SATISFACTION SURVEYS:**

The Union County Workforce Development Board is committed to capturing the client voice in all services and program delivery. In addition to focus groups the Union County Workforce Development Board believes participant and employer satisfaction surveys can yield input which will lead to changes in service delivery. There are several ways the Union County Workforce Development Board uses surveys for effective programs. The continuous need to assess client needs help the American Job Center Network Partners and the Union County Workforce Development Board help understand the specific needs of clients. This information can be used to tailor programs and services to better meet those needs.



Additionally, surveys can help measure the effectiveness of their programs and services, by collecting feedback from participants and employers and identifying any barriers in service delivery. The Union County Workforce Development Board will then use this information to determine what is working well and what needs improvement. By identifying barriers such as transportation or accessibility, The Union County Workforce Development Board can work to remove them and improve access to services.

Improving customer satisfaction is vital to the Union County Workforce Development Board initiatives. Surveys not only have helped in identifying barriers but can help make changes to better meet the needs and expectations of their clients. By collecting feedback from clients, the Union County Workforce Development Board can make data-driven decisions that improve outcomes for clients and the community.

As part of the local strategic planning process the Union County Workforce Development Board created three surveys that were released electronically via Google forms to program participants, Employers, and partners within the American Job Center Network and Community based organizations. The intent of the survey was to collect as much feedback from the public on their needs, their relationship with the American Job Center, and which career services and training needs were most vital. In addition, the Union County Workforce Development Board obtained reviewed data from the Department of Human Service Community Needs Assessment Survey which captured the employment and educational needs from 287 respondents.

The following are summaries for the based on the American Job Center Partner, Employer, and program participant surveys.

#### **AMERICAN JOB CENTER NETWORK PARTNER SURVEY SUMMARY**

In November 2022, the Union County Workforce Development Board issued a survey to all partners within the American Job Center Network and other community-based organizations that were not actively working within the American Job Center Network but through research, were identified as providers who offered services to individuals with barriers within Union County. The purpose of the survey was to collect feedback from community partners on the clients served within their organization and the collaborative efforts with the American Job Center (One Stop Centers) in Elizabeth and Plainfield. Specifically, the survey results would capture partners perspectives on their client's needs and barriers in addition to the collaboration with the American Job Center.

As of February 28, 2023, forty-eight (48) partners completed the survey and provided feedback on client base information, job seeker information, and collaboration with the



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American Job Center Network Partners located within the Elizabeth and Plainfield, NJ. Most of the partners indicated they provide services to their clients in Elizabeth, Plainfield, Hillside, and Linden. Their client base consisted of Hispanic, African American, and White individuals who are between the ages of 25 to 45. Many of the client they serve are women and the languages typically spoken at home is English, Spanish, Creole, or Arabic. Many of their clients are unemployed or underemployed and their household income comes from a few sources which include wages from work, public assistance, and social security and typically range between \$13,000 to \$60,000.

The survey respondents identified their client base consisting of low-income individuals who are single parents, and English language learners. The survey results indicate their client's greatest barriers to employment are:

- Transportation
- Childcare
- Lack of English Skills
- Low Literacy
- Housing

Their clients top three greatest supportive service needs consist of:

- Assistance with Housing
- Assistance with Childcare
- Assistance with Transportation

Survey results show over 73% of individuals who took the survey believe their clients are not sure or do not know how to access employment, training, education, and supportive services through the American Job Center. They indicated that the top five services that their clients need and are most critical are:

| Need                      | Most Critical             | Highest Priority          |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Career Counseling         | Computer Training         | English Language Services |
| Labor Market Information  | Supportive Services       | Transportation            |
| Entrepreneurship Training | On-the-Job- Training      | On-The Job Training       |
| Follow Up Services        | Mentoring                 | Supportive Services       |
| Partner Referrals         | Work Readiness Assistance | Work Experience           |

The survey results demonstrated that the most collaboration takes place with providers that offer training services as well as with the Division of Social Services and most respondents have a direct contact when looking for training services, social services, and New Jersey Department of Labor. More than 85% of respondents would recommend

services offered through the American Job Center but noted the following improvements needed:

- “The application process is duplicative, and services are not successfully secured by our program participants.”
- “One Stop should be open during after work hours and/or Saturdays for those clients who are currently employed but seeking better employment”
- “I think the one stop center is a good resource, however our clients face challenges from the initial stages of access and therefore are not able to utilize the resource.”

Based on the information from the partner’s survey the Union County Workforce Development Board will continue to encourage true integration and collaboration of services among the American Job Center Network Partners. All partners within the American Job Center Network are called upon to incorporate the voice of the participant and employers to ensure services are designed to meet the needs of the job seekers and businesses.

### **EMPLOYER SURVEY SUMMARY**

In January 2023, the Department of Economic Development release the Union County Workforce Development Board employer survey to businesses within Union County. The purpose of the survey was to collect feedback from businesses which is vital in helping the Union County Workforce Development Board understand how the American Job Center Network can better assist employers in meeting their recruitment, hiring, and training needs. By providing information about employers' current and future workforce requirements, the Union County Workforce Development Board can better align services to meet employers' needs and help businesses find the right employees for their company. Survey responses help identify the training and skills needed to meet the employer and industry demands, which will directly contribute to developing effective and efficient workforce development systems in Union County.

As of February 28, 2023, the Union County Workforce Development Board received 40 survey responses from businesses in the following industries (Top Four Results):

- Retail,
- Food Service
- Transportation and Logistic
- Consulting

Many of the respondents noted their company size consisted of one to fifty employees and were in Union, New Providence, Cranford, and Elizabeth municipalities. Many respondents

noted their employee base consisted of low-income, older individuals, English Language Learners, and single parents.

Over 69% of respondents noted their company has faced challenges in finding qualified candidates over the past 12 months and more than 77% believe they expect challenges in recruiting qualified candidates in the future. The most difficult jobs to fill are general laborers, sales associates, Administrative Assistances, and Technicians. Due to these staffing challenges over 35% of respondents noted an increase in their annual budget for recruiting, hiring, and training. The top three recruitment challenges companies expect are:

- Attracting the right candidate
- Engaging qualified candidates
- Ensuring a suitable candidate experience

Over 42% stated they were interested in improving their new hire and existing employee training and noted most of their current training occurs in-house or through mentoring from more senior staff. The survey listed the top skills required are customer service, sales, and administrative/clerical.

The survey results indicated that more than 50% of companies did not know how to access career and business services through the American Job Center. The companies that have used services from the American Job Center were overall satisfied with the services and would recommend the business services to others.

The Union County Workforce Development Board believes surveys have helped identify the needs and concerns of program participants, partners, and employers. This information has been used to design strategies to help coordinate the program and services that meet the specific needs of the community. In addition, surveys have helped assess the impact of the current programs and services for job seekers and employers. The Union County Workforce Development Board will continue to release surveys which can provide valuable information for the strategic plan. The feedback gathered can inform the development or modification of the strategic plan goals and objectives and help to align programs and services with the needs of the community.

The survey results received will have demonstrated a need for improved employer engagement. Conducting business surveys will give the Union County Workforce Development Board insights into the challenges that employers face when hiring and retaining employees. The Union County Workforce Development Board will continue to work with the partners within the American Job Center Network to ensure a collaborative

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effort in employer engagement and develop more effective strategies for engaging with employers and meeting their workforce needs.

**AMERICAN JOB CENTER PROGRAM PARTICIPANT SURVEY:**

The Union County Workforce Development Board released a participant survey on January 10, 2023, to individuals who received training services from the American Job Center between 2018 and 2022. Over 800 participants were emailed the Google Forms document with a series of questions that captured their experience working with the American Job Center Network Partners. The intent of the survey was to capture participants' perspectives on their overall satisfaction with the American Job Center (One Stop Center), understand their needs, and identify barriers. The information received would be used to support the strategic plan objectives, which include increasing participant satisfaction, enhancing customer services, and developing successful strategies for job seekers.

As of February 28, 2023, twenty-seven (27) participants responded to the survey. Many of the respondents identified as African American and Hispanic between the ages of 25-45 who primarily speak English. Over 60% of respondents had completed high school or obtained the General Equivalency Degree and some college or trade school experience. Over 55% of the respondents were unemployed and household income was noted to be between \$13,000 and \$60,000. In addition, over 55% of respondents noted living with others because they could not afford a place on their own. Many of the respondents were from Elizabeth and Hillside, NJ.

The survey respondents noted their barriers to employment include transportation, lack of job search skills, childcare and age and they noted they would consider themselves being low Income Individuals, long term unemployed and single parents and their greatest supportive services needs are:

- Payment for employment and trainings related applications
- Assistance with housing
- Assistance with transportation
- Assistance with books fees and school supplies

The respondents identified the following as being the most critical and highest priority career service.

| Highest Priority        | Most Critical           |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Career Workshops        | Career Workshops        |
| Supportive Services     | Job Search Assistance   |
| On-The-Job-Training     | Training Grants         |
| Job Fairs/Hiring Events | Job Fairs/Hiring Events |

Respondents were overall satisfied with the services they received from the partners within the American Job Center Network. Many noted feeling neutral over the individual career services they received but highlighted their satisfaction with the Soft Skills training offered by Union College. Many noted they would recommend services from the American Job Center Network Partners and left a few comments on ways to improve customer satisfaction:

- “I would prefer (prefer) to speak to someone and then get training if provided instruction.”
- “I really appreciate my social worker I had, she would above and beyond her job to help me get in the program.”
- “I would recommend Union County residents that are presently employed and seek to improve their knowledge and abilities to participate in the grant process. The overall process of enrolling in training is too long for a person collecting unemployment or about to exhaust their benefits.”

Although the response rate was low the Union County Workforce Development Board has made a commitment to ensure clients understand there is a mechanism for them to express their satisfaction and concerns through surveys, focus group and by participating in committee meetings. All American Job Center Network Partners will be required to encourage their clients to participate in surveys to ensure the client’s voice is captured in all services.

#### **DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICE COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY**

In September 2022, the Union County Department of Human Services released a Community Needs Assessment Survey, a county wide initiative that is part of a larger needs assessment process used to develop an effective strategic plan that can build upon current programs and services offered by the county. In addition to the Education and Employment survey questions, respondents are asked about:

- Social and Recreational Services
- Health Related Services
- Financial Related Services
- Safety and Quality of Life Related Services

The education and employment section of the survey is divided into three sections: education and employment need, know, and importance. Below is a review of the data based on the three categories.

Survey respondents noted they need the following top five services:

- GED classes/High School Diploma
- English as a Second Language Classes
- Adult Basic Education/Literacy
- Workforce Readiness Skills Development
- Services to Support Child's Attendance at School

Survey Respondents noted they know how to access the following top five services:

- Support to Help teen parents stay in/return to school
- Money for tuition (College, Trade, Vocational School)
- Transportation for Work or Training
- Career Counseling
- Services to Support Child's Attendance at School

Survey Respondents noted the following top five services are most important to them:

- Money for tuition (College, Trade, Vocational School)
- Job Skills Training
- GED classes/High School Diploma
- Computer Skills Training
- School Supplies for children

Overall, the survey conducted by the Department of Human Services offers insight into the educational and employment needs of Union County residents. Like focus groups and survey results conducted with program participants and American Job Center Partners, Union County residents need training programs that will give them the skills needed to obtain employment and become self-sufficient. It is also important to note respondent's need for services that will support their children's participation in school in terms of attendance and supplies. The Union County Workforce Development Board will continue to work with the Department of Human Services to analyze this ongoing survey.

## **EVALUATIONS**

As part of the Union County Workforce Development Board certification, the State Employment and Training Commission issued guidance on November 19, 2020, regarding, Workforce Development Board Certification: Guidance on Local Workforce Development Board Evaluation Capacity Building process. Specifically, the guidance suggested that local areas should evaluate how effective each program is in meeting relevant performance standards, including standards regarding the cost and quality of training and the characteristics of participants. As a result, the Union County Workforce Development

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Board has conducted evaluations that focused on WorkFirst New Jersey services, the effectiveness of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act partnerships, and American Job Center customer satisfaction procedures.

For Program year 2021 the Union County Workforce Development Board conducted an evaluation of the American Job Center Network Partner's progress in implementing the Union County 2016 strategic plan objectives. The Union County Workforce Development Board recognizes that evaluations help to identify areas of improvement, highlight best practices, and guarantee that the American Job Center Network Partners are meeting the needs of their participants. Furthermore, evaluations help to ensure that the American Job Center Network Partners are providing quality services and are meeting the objectives outlined in the 2016 Union County Workforce Development Board Strategic Plan. In addition, evaluations allow the Union County Workforce Development Board to develop a plan to provide technical assistance and support for the American Job Center Network Partners to comply with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act regulations.

#### **OPEN AND TRANSPARENT STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS**

The Union County Workforce Development Board follows a specific process to make available copies of the proposed local plan to the public. The process used to provide an opportunity for public comment and input into the development of the local plan is transparent, inclusive, and provide a 30-day period for community members, employers, and American Job Center Network Partners to review the plan and provide meaningful feedback. The involvement of representatives from businesses, labor organizations, community-based organizations and educational entity is important to ensure that the plan is relevant and responsive to the needs of the community. The process includes the following steps:

1. Public notice: The Union County Workforce Development Board issues a public notice that is posted on the Union County website indicating that the proposed local plan is available for review and feedback for a 30-day period. The public notice provides information about how to access the plan, the timeline for comments and feedback, and contact information for the Union County Workforce Development Board staff. The Union County Workforce Development Board ensures that the proposed plan is available in electronic and other accessible formats. Aside from having the plan posted on the Workforce Development Board website, it may be provided in printed format, upon request.
2. Distribution to local news media: The Union County Workforce Development Board distributes copies of the proposed local plan to local news media via New Jersey Advance Media to increase awareness and encourage public participation. New

**UNION COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2026  
FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT OF 2022**

Jersey Advance Media will publish in the Star Ledger and appear on nj.com under Legal Notices for 30 days.

3. Outreach to Stakeholders: The Union County Workforce Development Board will also engage in targeted outreach efforts to solicit input and feedback from stakeholders, including representatives of businesses, labor organizations, community-based organization, American Job Center Network Partners, and educational entities.
4. Feedback and revisions: The Union County Workforce Development Board considers all feedback and comments received from the public and revises the proposed local plan, as necessary.

Once the Union County Workforce Development Board has incorporated feedback and finalized the local plan, the plan will be presented to the Union County Workforce Development Board for a motion to approve. The approved plan will then be submitted to the New Jersey State and Employment and Training Commission for final approval. Once approved, the plan is implemented, and progress is monitored and evaluated regularly at committee meetings, through the Workforce Certification process, customer satisfaction surveys and qualitative and quantitative analysis of performance data.



ATTACHMENT A

# UNION COUNTY

## WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

### STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2026

INFOGRAPHIC OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE  
WORKFORCE INNOVATION & OPPORTUNITY ACT OF 2022

#### GOVERNOR PHIL MURPHY'S VISION

"to reestablish New Jersey as an economic and innovation leader, as a place where diverse talent, companies, and ideas flourish, where real pathways exist to the middle class, where all residents can prosper, and where environmental stewardship, fiscal prudence, and high labor standards are promoted and encouraged....[t]o unlock long-term, resilient economic growth, we must create a New Jersey economy that is both stronger and fairer."

*Phil Murphy*



#### JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

##### STRATEGY 1

Expand access to opportunity

##### STRATEGY 2

Train individual for in-demand jobs

##### STRATEGY 3

Match talent to jobs



#### BLUEPRINT FOR TALENT DEVELOPMENT

##### STRATEGIC INTENT 1

Regional framework

##### STRATEGIC INTENT 2

Results-driven high-quality partnerships

##### STRATEGIC INTENT 3

Career pathways

##### STRATEGIC INTENT 4

Community alliances

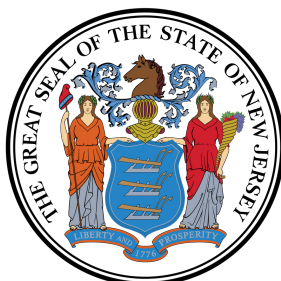
##### STRATEGIC INTENT 5

System integrity



#### STRATEGIC PRIORITIES WIOA IMPLEMENTATION

- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act policies, procedures, and guidance
- Support State vision, goals, strategies, recommendations, policies, and operational guidance
- Procurement of American Job Center operator, and career services providers
- Employer incentives, participant training, and supportive services
- Budget management
- Comprehensive economic development
- Soft Skills, digital literacy, virtual learning, industry-valued credentials, co-enrollment, and career pathway
- Participant and youth voice
- Quality assurance monitoring
- Measuring performance
- Board governance, MOU, IFA
- Local and Regional planning



#### SUPPORTING GOALS

##### GOAL 1

Ensure all career-seeking New Jerseyans have the education and training necessary to access high-quality employment.

##### GOAL 2

Ensure businesses and employers that are offering high-quality employment in New Jersey can quickly and efficiently fill their talent needs.



#### FUTURE OF WORK TASK FORCE POLICY ROADMAP

##### RECOMMENDATION 1

Create Lifelong Learning Accounts for all New Jerseyans and fund the accounts of low-wage workers and encourage and provide mechanisms for employers to match funds for lifelong learning.

##### RECOMMENDATION 2

Further develop the State's Training Explorer to help workers make informed decisions about lifelong learning and training.

##### RECOMMENDATION 3

Encourage all employers to invest in worker training, lifelong learning, and reemployment and create financial incentives for small and medium-sized employers.

##### RECOMMENDATION 4

Support innovation and skills collaboratives and other ongoing initiatives to align New Jersey's education and workforce systems and align individuals' education with their desired career pathways.

##### RECOMMENDATION 5

Continue to expand low-cost opportunities to access degree programs (including access to community colleges), career and technical education, and training, apprenticeships, and pre-apprenticeships.



#### IN-DEMAND INDUSTRIES

- Advanced Manufacturing
- Healthcare
- Construction, Utilities, & Energy
- Retail
- Leisure & Hospitality
- Transportation, Distribution & Logistics
- Finance & Insurance
- Technology
- Biopharma & Life Sciences



ATTACHMENT B

**Union County Workforce Development Board Strategic Plan 2022-2026 for the Implementation of WIOA**  
**Partner-Service Matrix**

Please use the matrix below to identify key areas in which individual partners will contribute to service integration. The regional and local plan must offer an overarching strategy for how different partners can and will contribute to operations and service delivery in your local One Stop Career Centers. The specifics of these agreements will be determined through the subsequent development of Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) and Infrastructure Funding Agreements (IFA). This matrix serves as tool in linking plan development and MOU/IFA processes as your LWDA engages required and additional partners in building a system of services and supports for jobseekers, workers, and employers.

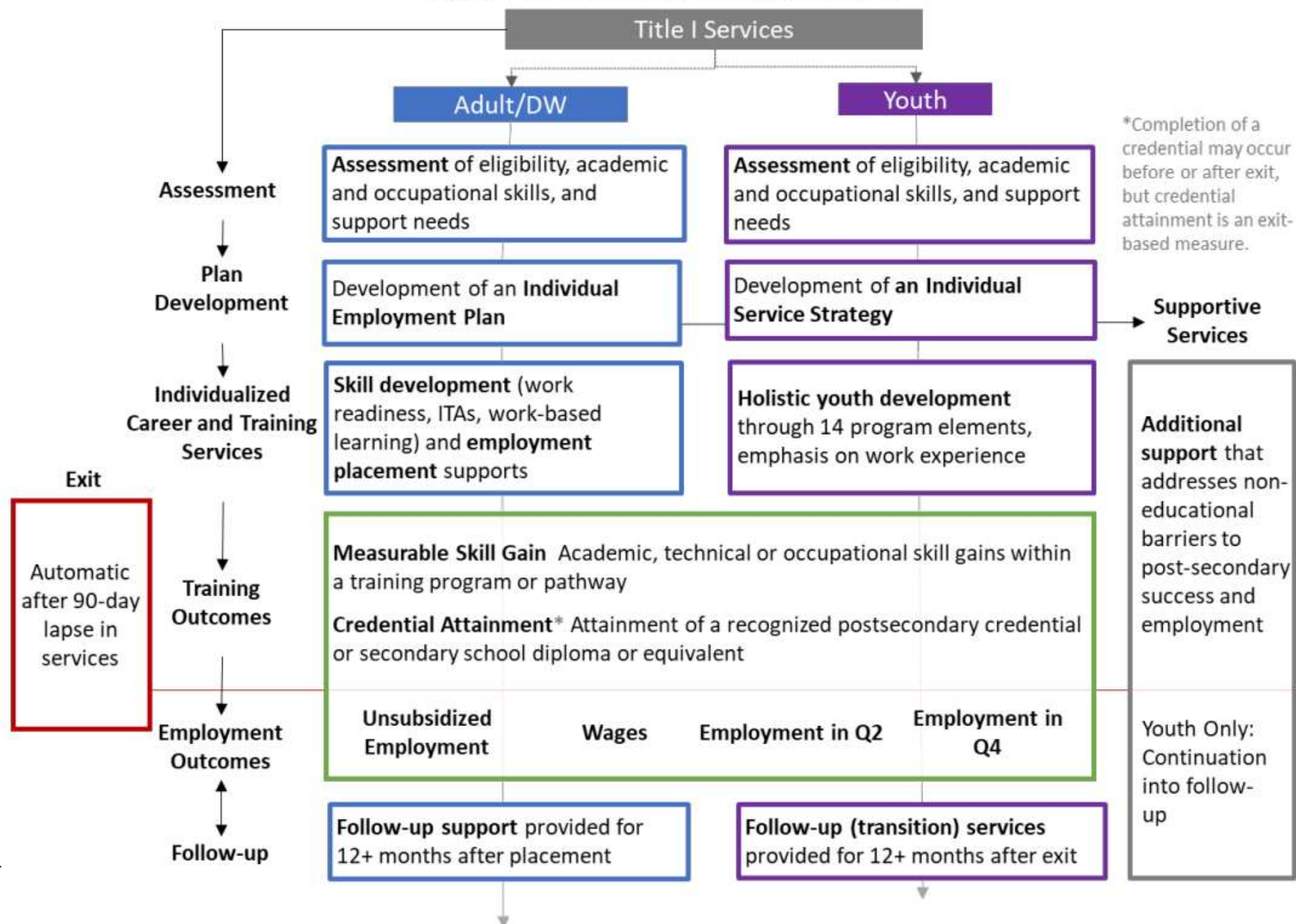
Please assess the anticipated involvement of each individual partner in contributing to each service and support area listed (1=Minimal Involvement, 2=Some Involvement, 3=Extensive Involvement). SETC and NJDOL encourage prioritizing specific service areas that match partner service strengths and assets.

| One Stop Partners*                            | Participant Outreach/ Recruitment | Assessment/Plan Development/ Career Counseling | Job Preparation, Search, and Placement | Ongoing Case Management | Classroom Training | Work-Based Learning | Supportive Services | Employer Engagement | Staff Cross-Training | Other Services/ Supports (Please Specify) |
|---|-----------------------------------|--|--|-------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|----------------------|---|
| Title I Adult                                 | 3                                 | 3  | 3                                      | 3                       | 3                  | 3                   | 3                   | 3                   | 3                    |   |
| Title I Dislocated Worker                     | 3                                 | 3  | 3                                      | 3                       | 3                  | 3                   | 3                   | 3                   | 3                    |   |
| Title I Youth                                 | 3                                 | 3  | 3                                      | 3                       | 2                  | 3                   | 3                   | 3                   | 3                    |   |
| Title II Adult Education/Literacy             | 3                                 | 3  | 2                                      | 2                       | 3                  | 2                   | 2                   | 1                   | 3                    |   |
| Title III Wagner-Peyser                       | 2                                 | 3  | 3                                      | 3                       | 1                  | 3                   | 2                   | 3                   | 3                    |   |
| Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation            | 2                                 | 3  | 3                                      | 3                       | 1                  | 3                   | 3                   | 3                   | 3                    |   |
| Title III Unemployment Compensation           | 1                                 | 1  | 1                                      | 1                       | 1                  | 1                   | 1                   | 1                   | 1                    |   |
| WorkFirst New Jersey                          | 3                                 | 3  | 2                                      | 3                       | 1                  | 1                   | 3                   | 2                   | 3                    |   |
| Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers Program      | NA                                | NA   | NA                                     | NA                      | NA                 | NA                  | NA                  | NA                  | NA                   |   |
| Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Program     | 1                                 | 1  | 1                                      | 1                       | 1                  | 1                   | 1                   | 1                   | 1                    |   |
| Senior Community Service Employment Program   | 3                                 | 2  | 3                                      | 2                       | 1                  | 2                   | 2                   | 3                   | 3                    |   |
| Jobs for Veterans State Grant                 | 3                                 | 3  | 3                                      | 3                       | 1                  | 3                   | 2                   | 3                   | 3                    |   |
| Reentry Employment Opportunities              | 3                                 | 3  | 2                                      | 3                       | 1                  | 3                   | 2                   | 3                   | 3                    |   |
| Title I Job Corps                             | 3                                 | 2  | 2                                      | 3                       | 3                  | 3                   | 2                   | 3                   | 3                    |   |
| Title I YouthBuild                            | 3                                 | 2  | 2                                      | 2                       | 1                  | 3                   | 2                   | 3                   | 3                    |   |
| Career and Technical Education (CTE) Programs | 3                                 | 2  | 3                                      | 2                       | 3                  | 3                   | 2                   | 3                   | 3                    |   |
| HUD Employment and Training                   | 3                                 | 3  | 2                                      | 2                       | 1                  | 3                   | 2                   | 2                   | 3                    |   |
| HHS Employment and Training                   | 3                                 | 2  | 2                                      | 2                       | 1                  | 3                   | 2                   | 2                   | 3                    |   |
|   |                                   |  |  |                         |                    |                     |                     |                     |                      |   |
|   |                                   |  |  |                         |                    |                     |                     |                     |                      |   |
|   |                                   |  |  |                         |                    |                     |                     |                     |                      |   |

\*Please include additional local, state, and federal workforce partners, as relevant.

ATTACHMENT C

# Overview of Service Flow

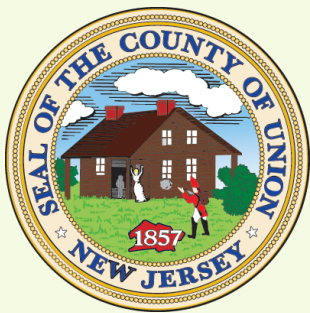


ATTACHMENT D



# UNION COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

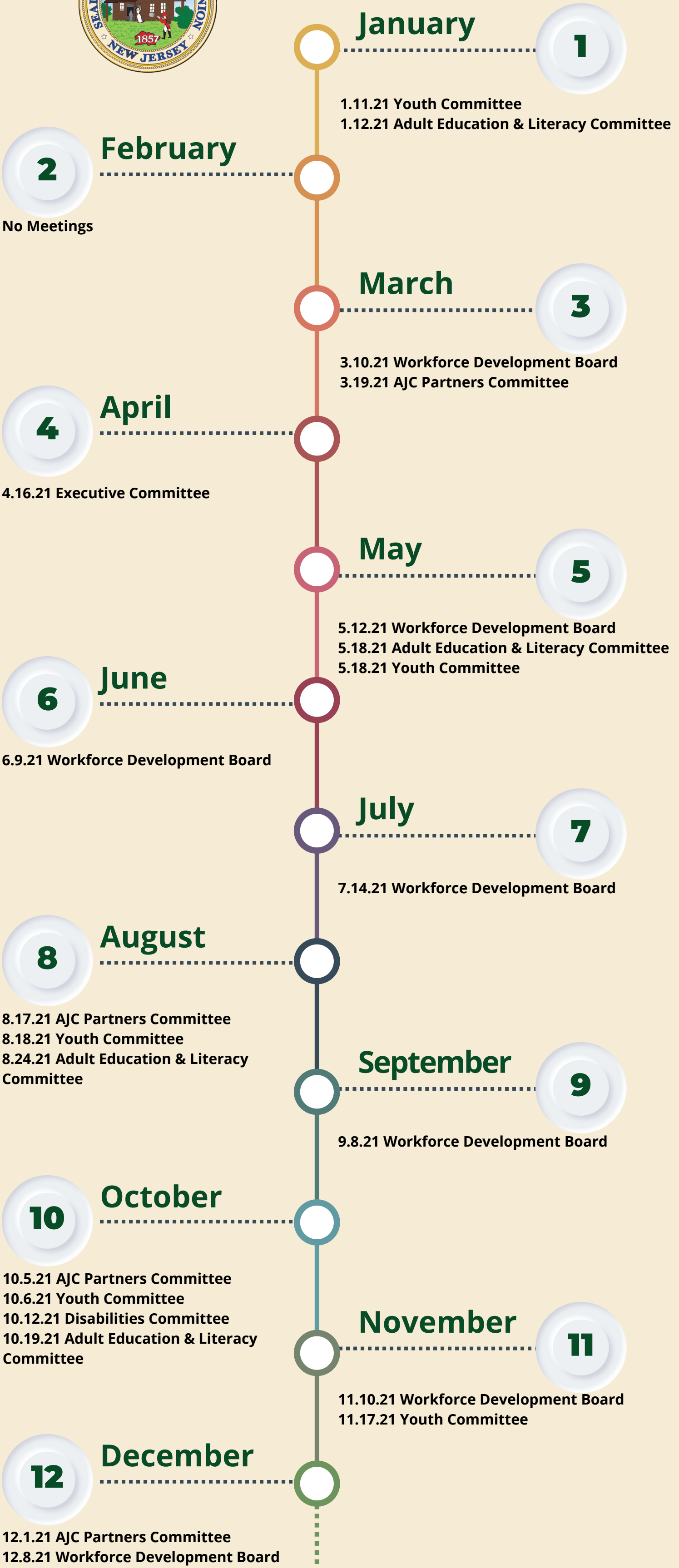
## TIMELINE OF BOARD , COMMITTEE MEETINGS & FOCUS GROUPS IN 2022





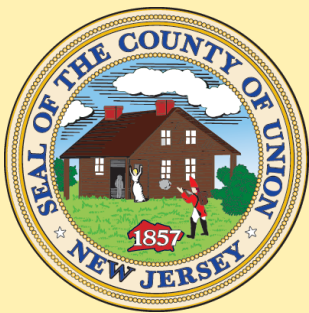
# UNION COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

## TIMELINE OF BOARD & COMMITTEE MEETINGS IN 2021



# UNION COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

## TIMELINE OF BOARD & COMMITTEE MEETINGS IN 2020



ATTACHMENT E

# PROGRAM YEAR 2020-2021 ANNUAL REPORT

Union County Workforce Development Board

*"Do the best you can until you know better. Then  
when you know better, do better."*

Maya Angelou





**BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
STRATEGIC PLAN VISION  
CORE VALUES  
PROGRAM YEAR 2020 OPERATING BUDGET  
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE DATA  
INITIAL UNEMPLOYMENT CLAIMS DATA  
AMERICAN JOB CENTER PERFORMANCE**

**CONTENT**





|                    |                                |   |   |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|---|---|
| James R. Kamran    | Brady, Chairman                | Vice President and General Manager            | The Savor Group, LLC                              |
| Krystal Mark       | Tasharofi, M.D., Vice Chairman | President/Owner                               | Union County Health Care Associates               |
| Ricahrd Donna      | Canady, Secretary              | CEO   | Gateway Family YMCA                               |
| Juan Carlos        | Bocchieri                      | Director External Affairs                     | Verizon New Jersey                                |
| Gloria Tina        | Capac                          | Director                                      | Leaf Group, LLC                                   |
| Salvador Edwin     | Dedinsky                       | Manager, Associate Relations                  | Wakefern Food Corporation                         |
| Glenn Stan         | Dominguez                      | Vice President                                | JJJ Distributors                                  |
| Richard Erich      | Durham                         | CEO   | Qunnections Management Group                      |
| Paul Teresa        | Earley                         | Manager, Government & Community Affairs       | Elizabethtown Gas                                 |
| Teresa Margaret    | Garcia                         | Principal                                     | MAS Development Group                             |
| Matthew Glenn      | Gomez                          | Owner   | Barcode   |
| Juanito Stan       | Nacion                         | Vice President Human Resources                | Trinitas Regional Medical Center                  |
| Edward Erich       | Robinson, Jr.                  | Owner   | SHR Marketing, LLC                                |
| Debbie-Ann Richard | Peter                          | Director of Training and Technical Assistance | Union County Economic Development Corporation     |
| Gwen Paul          | Malcolm                        | Business Agent                                | Ironworkers, Local No.11                          |
| Roshan Teresa      | Belardo                        | Council Rep                                   | KML Carpenters                                    |
|                    | Soto-Vega                      | Executive Director                            | PROCEED, Inc.                                     |
|                    | McMenamin, Ph. D.              | President                                     | Union County College                              |
|                    | Caruso                         | Director                                      | Kean University                                   |
|                    | Chiluisa                       | Manager                                       | Employment Service / Wagner-Peyser Representative |
|                    | Faver                          | Manager                                       | DVRS Representative                               |
|                    | Anderson                       | Director                                      | Division of Human Services                        |
|                    | Ryan                           | Superintendent                                | County Vocational-Technical Schools               |
|                    | White                          | Business Manager                              | UA Local 24 Plumbers                              |

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS



The Workforce System sees itself as both an effective catalyst for economic development and a major resource for employment and training.

Toward greater economic development, it must help make critical business connections and serve as a bridge between businesses, the County and the State.

Toward better training and employment, it must help residents overcome unemployment, underemployment, and economic struggles and guide them along a path of successful professional growth.

Such a dual vision establishes the ultimate direction and tone for the Union County Workforce System.

**STRATEGIC PLAN VISION**



**"My definition of success:  
When your core values  
and self-concept are in  
harmony with your daily  
actions and behaviors."  
John Spence**

The Union County Workforce Investment Board shall align its workforce development strategy to mirror the core values outlined within New Jersey's Unified Workforce Investment Plan. The **Local 2016-2020 Strategic Plan** identifies Six Key Values aimed to drive our Workforce Development Activities.

1. Increased Emphasis on Career Pathways and Industry-Credential Attainment.
2. Expanded One-Stop Integration of Service Delivery
3. Broadened Use of Technology in Operation & Customer-Facing Processes.
4. Expanded Access to Service Levels.
5. Enhanced Employer Engagement.
6. Expanded Use of Evaluation Metrics Beyond National Performance Standards/ Systematic Oversight.



**CORE VALUES**





|  | WIOA Adult | WIOA ISY | WIOA OSY | WIOA Dislocated Worker | Workforce Learning Link | WFNJ TANF | CAVP   | WFNJ<br>GA/SNAP | Total     |
|--|------------|----------|----------|------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|--------|-----------------|-----------|
| <b>PY 2020 Allocation</b>                    | 956,527    | 221,800  | 665,399  | 1,203,600              | 42,000                  | 1,077,305 | 31,815 | 697,207         | 4,895,653 |
| <b>ADMINISTRATION</b>                        |            |          |          |                        |                         |           |        |                 |           |
| Wages  | 44,098     | 10,225   | 30,676   | 55,488                 | 1,936                   | 75,804    |        | 45,548          | 263,776   |
| Fringe Benefits                              | 22,381     | 5,190    | 15,569   | 28,162                 | 983                     | 38,473    |        | 23,117          | 133,874   |
| Other (OE)                                   | 29,174     | 6,765    | 20,295   | 36,710                 | 21                      | 15,000    |        | 15,000          | 122,965   |
| <b>Total Administration</b>                  | 95,653     | 22,180   | 66,540   | 120,360                | 2,940                   | 129,277   | 0      | 83,665          | 520,614   |
| <b>OPERATIONS</b>                            |            |          |          |                        |                         |           |        |                 |           |
| Wages  | 17,878     | 4,146    | 12,437   | 22,496                 | 0                       | 20,920    |        | 13,031          | 90,907    |
| Fringe Benefits                              | 9,074      | 2,104    | 6,312    | 11,417                 | 0                       | 10,618    |        | 6,614           | 46,138    |
| Rent, Buildings & Grounds                    | 35,913     | 8,327    | 24,982   | 45,189                 | 0                       | 40,447    |        | 26,177          | 181,035   |
| Fiscal Monitoring                            | 14,983     | 3,333    | 6,700    | 14,984                 | 0                       | 0         |        | 0               | 40,000    |
| Legal Expense                                | 3,333      | 833      | 2,412    | 3,422                  | 0                       | 0         |        | 0               | 10,000    |
| Information Technology Services              | 8,850      | 2,052    | 6,156    | 11,136                 | 389                     | 9,967     |        | 6,451           | 45,000    |
| Other Expense                                | 15,997     | 19,862   | 4,583    | 11,834                 | 128                     | 82,282    | 31,815 | 70,035          | 236,536   |
| <b>Total Operations</b>                      | 106,027    | 40,657   | 63,582   | 120,478                | 517                     | 164,234   | 31,815 | 122,306         | 649,616   |
| <b>PY 2020 Sub-Recipient Contract</b>        |            |          |          |                        |                         |           |        |                 |           |
| <b>American Job Center Operator Services</b> |            |          |          |                        |                         |           |        |                 |           |
| Wages  | 178,154    | 41,310   | 123,931  | 224,171                | 25,899                  | 200,649   |        | 129,855         | 923,968   |
| Fringe Benefits                              | 65,359     | 15,155   | 45,466   | 82,241                 | 9,047                   | 73,612    |        | 47,640          | 338,520   |
| Pension                                      | 17,735     | 2,065    | 6,584    | 21,886                 | 3,022                   | 9,041     |        | 10,202          | 70,535    |
| Life Insurance                               | 3,600      | 432      | 1,296    | 4,464                  | 576                     | 493       |        | 3,539           | 14,400    |
| <b>Total Fringe Benefits</b>                 | 86,694     | 17,652   | 53,346   | 108,591                | 12,645                  | 83,146    | 0      | 61,381          | 423,455   |
| <b>Total AJC</b>                             | 264,847    | 58,963   | 177,277  | 332,762                | 38,543                  | 283,794   | 0      | 191,236         | 1,347,423 |
| <b>Comprehensive Career Services</b>         | 350,000    | 100,000  | 25,000   | 500,000                | 0                       | 100,000   |        | 100,000         | 1,175,000 |
| <b>WIOA Out-of-School Youth Academy</b>      |            |          | 333,000  |                        |                         |           |        |                 | 333,000   |
| <b>WIOA/WFNJ Contracts</b>                   | 140,000    |          |          | 130,000                |                         | 400,000   |        | 200,000         | 870,000   |
| <b>Total Contracts</b>                       | 754,847    | 158,963  | 535,277  | 962,762                | 38,543                  | 783,794   | 0      | 491,236         | 3,725,423 |
| <b>Total Projected Expenditures</b>          | 956,527    | 221,800  | 665,399  | 1,203,600              | 42,000                  | 1,077,305 | 31,815 | 697,207         | 4,895,653 |



PROGRAM YEAR 2020 OPERATING BUDGET



## PROGRAM YEAR 2020 BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

- ✓ **\$1,175,000 BUDGETED FOR COMPREHENSIVE CAREER SERVICES OPPORTUNITIES FOR CLIENTS**
- ✓ **\$333,000 BUDGETED FOR WIOA OUT-OF-SCHOOL ACADEMY**
- ✓ **\$870,000 BUDGETED FOR WORKFIRST NEW JERSEY TO-WORK ACTIVITIES**
- ✓ **\$1,347,423 BUDGET FOR AMERICAN JOB CENTER STAFF SALARIES AND FRINGE BENEFITS**

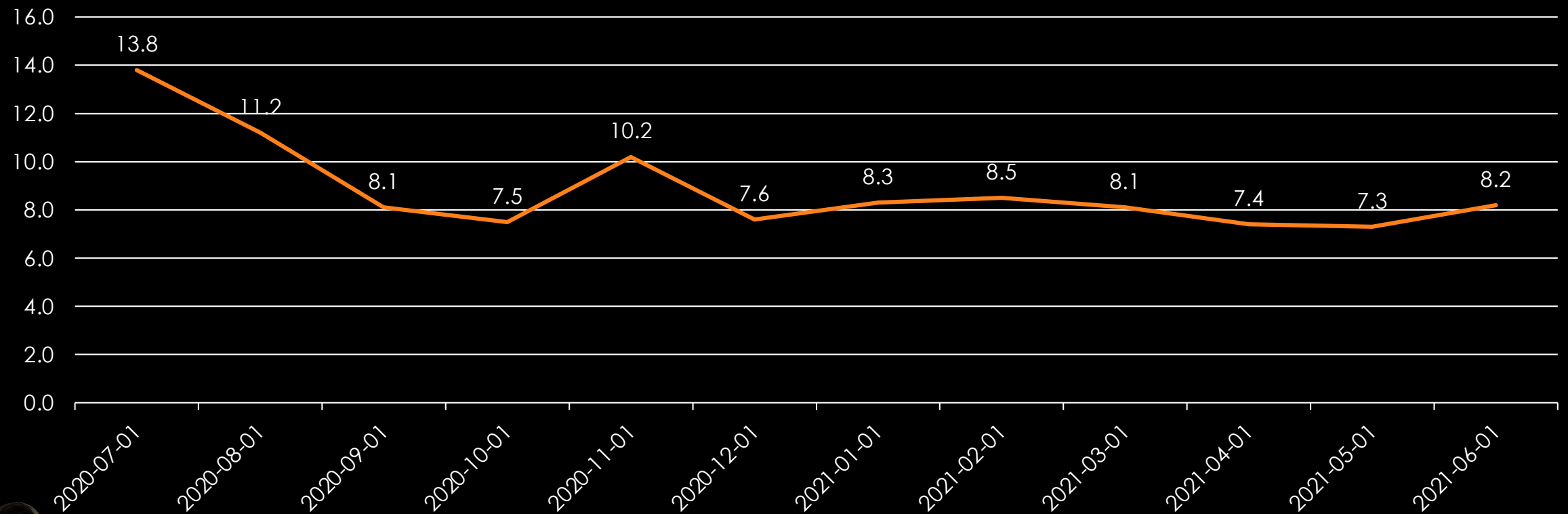
## COMPREHENSIVE CAREER SERVICES TO AVAILABLE TO UNION COUNTY RESIDENTS

- ❖ **ORIENTATION WORKSHOPS**
- ❖ **ASSESSMENT (CASAS)**
- ❖ **WORK EXPERIENCE (PAID)**
- ❖ **ON THE JOB TRAINING (PAID)**
- ❖ **APPRENTICESHIPS**
- ❖ **JOB PLACEMENT ASSISTANCE**
- ❖ **INCUMBENT WORKER TRAINING**
- ❖ **JOB & RECRUITMENT FAIRS**
- ❖ **SOFT SKILLS WORKSHOPS**
- ❖ **JOB READINESS WORKSHOPS**
- ❖ **JOB SEARCH WORKSHOPS**
- ❖ **UNSUBSIDIZED JOB PLACEMENTS**
- ❖ **CREDENTIAL ATTAINMENT**
- ❖ **INDIVIDUAL TRAINING ACCOUNTS**
- ❖ **SUPPORTIVE SERVICES**

# PROGRAM YEAR 2020 OPERATING BUDGET



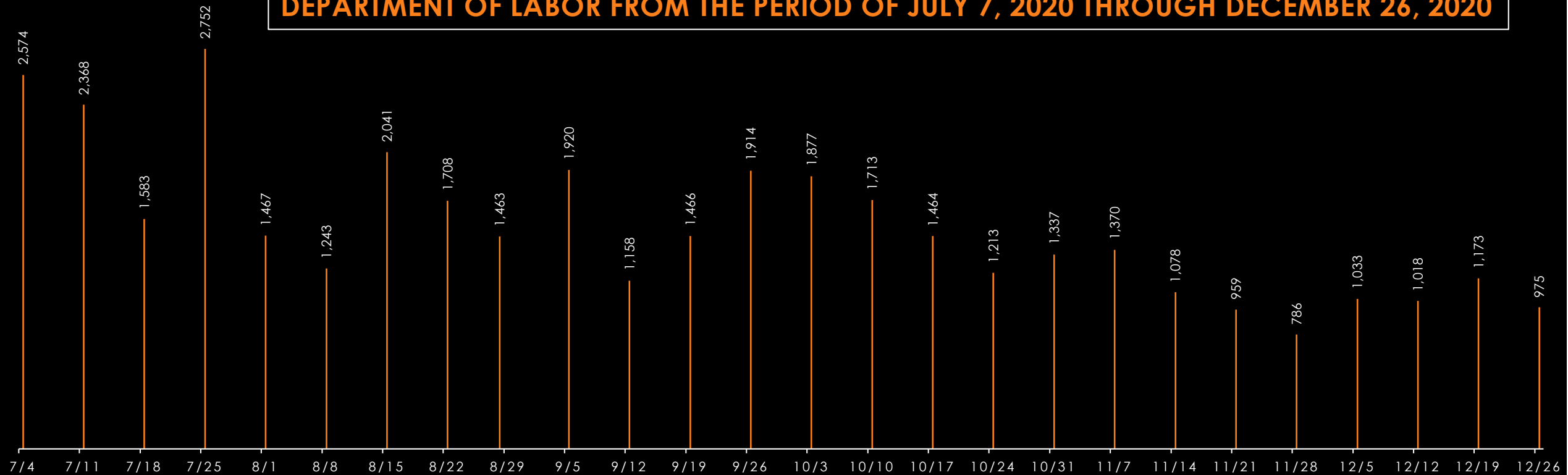
## UNION COUNTY UNEMPLOYMENT RATE DURING PROGRAM YEAR 2020



UNEMPLOYMENT RATE DATA



**DUE TO THE IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC 39,653 UNION COUNTY RESIDENTS FILED AN INITIAL UNEMPLOYMENT CLAIMS APPLICATION WITH THE NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF LABOR FROM THE PERIOD OF JULY 7, 2020 THROUGH DECEMBER 26, 2020**

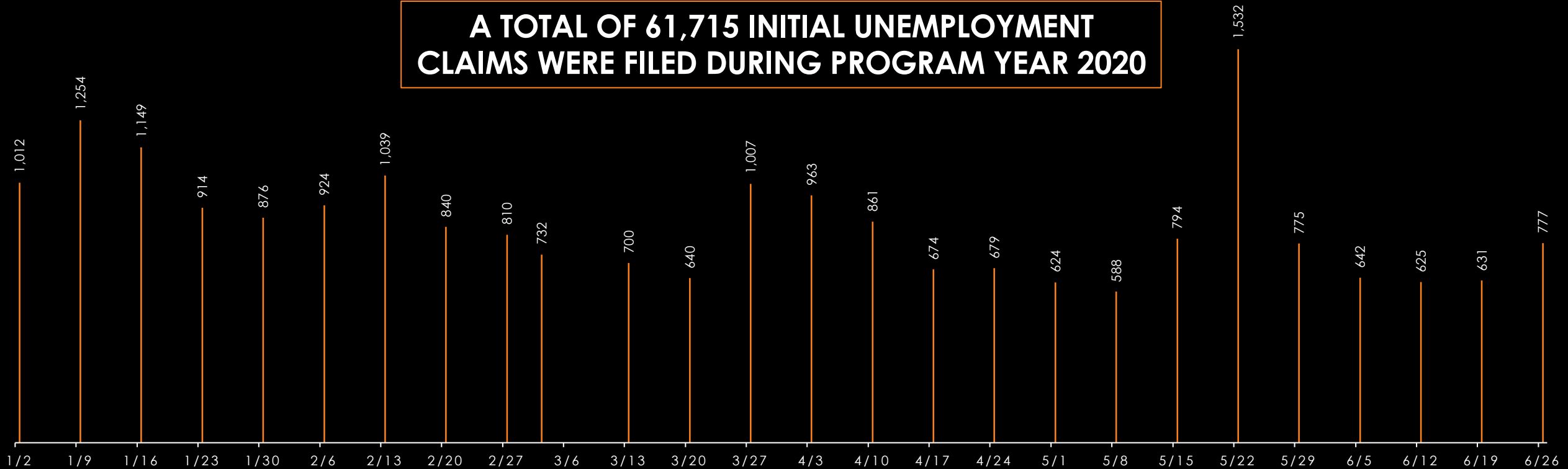


**INITIAL UNEMPLOYMENT CLAIMS DATA**



22,062 UNION COUNTY RESIDENTS FILED AN INITIAL UNEMPLOYMENT CLAIMS APPLICATION WITH THE NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF LABOR FROM THE PERIOD OF JANUARY 2, 2021 TO JUNE 26, 2021

A TOTAL OF 61,715 INITIAL UNEMPLOYMENT CLAIMS WERE FILED DURING PROGRAM YEAR 2020



INITIAL UNEMPLOYMENT CLAIMS DATA





## ADULT

| Indicator       | Actual     | LWDB Plan  | % Achieved | Num | Den |
|-----------------|------------|------------|------------|-----|-----|
| Employment Q2   | 72.97%     | 73.20%     | 99.69%     | 27  | 37  |
| Employment Q4   | 69.8 %     | 77.10%     | 90.49%     | 60  | 86  |
| Credential      | 81.7 %     | 59.50%     | 137.25%    | 49  | 60  |
| Skill Gains     | 63.64 %    | 40%        | 159%       | 7   | 11  |
| Median Earnings | \$6,246.00 | \$6,204.00 | 100.68%    | 27  | 0   |

## YOUTH

| Indicator       | Actual     | LWDB Plan  | % Achieved | Num | Den |
|-----------------|------------|------------|------------|-----|-----|
| Employment Q2   | 93.8 %     | 66.20%     | 141.62%    | 60  | 64  |
| Employment Q4   | 79.6 %     | 60.10%     | 132.36%    | 70  | 88  |
| Credential      | 93.5 %     | 50%        | 186.96%    | 43  | 46  |
| Skill Gains     | 75.00 %    | 43%        | 176%       | 9   | 12  |
| Median Earnings | \$3,060.00 | \$2,306.00 | 132.69%    | 59  | 0   |

## DISLOCATED WORKER

| Indicator       | Actual     | LWDB Plan  | % Achieved | Num | Den |
|-----------------|------------|------------|------------|-----|-----|
| Employment Q2   | 65.8 %     | 69.30%     | 94.97%     | 154 | 234 |
| Employment Q4   | 68.9 %     | 74.40%     | 92.54%     | 221 | 321 |
| Credential      | 88.1 %     | 67.10%     | 131.33%    | 141 | 160 |
| Skill Gains     | 85.7 %     | 40%        | 214%       | 60  | 70  |
| Median Earnings | \$6,423.00 | \$8,225.00 | 78.09%     | 154 | 0   |

## WAGNER PEYSER

| Indicator       | Actual     | LWDB Plan  | % Achieved | Num  | Den  |
|-----------------|------------|------------|------------|------|------|
| Employment Q2   | 45.96 %    | 53.10%     | 86.56%     | 1321 | 2874 |
| Employment Q4   | 50.31 %    | 53.20%     | 94.56%     | 1887 | 3751 |
| Credential      | 0.0 %      | 0%         | 0.00%      | 0    | 0    |
| Skill Gains     | 0.00 %     | 0%         | 0%         | 0    | 0    |
| Median Earnings | \$5,525.00 | \$6,412.00 | 86.16%     | 1321 | 0    |

## AMERICAN JOB CENTER PERFORMANCE



## CHARACTERISTICS OF PY20 ADULT PARTICIPANTS

| PY 2020 ADULT                   | Employment<br>Q2 | Employment<br>Q2 | Employment<br>Q4 | Employment<br>Q4 | Credential | Credential | Skill Gains | Skill Gains |
|---------------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------|------------|-------------|-------------|
| 16-18                           | 0                | 0.00%            | 0                | 0.00%            | 0          | 0.00%      | 0           | 0.00%       |
| 19-24                           | 2                | 50.00%           | 8                | 75.00%           | 6          | 100.00%    | 0           | 0.00%       |
| 25-44                           | 19               | 78.95%           | 45               | 68.89%           | 30         | 73.33%     | 7           | 71.43%      |
| 45-54                           | 10               | 90.00%           | 19               | 84.21%           | 14         | 85.71%     | 2           | 100.00%     |
| 55-59                           | 3                | 66.67%           | 8                | 62.50%           | 7          | 85.71%     | 1           | 0.00%       |
| 60+                             | 3                | 0.00%            | 6                | 33.33%           | 3          | 100.00%    | 1           | 0.00%       |
| Male                            | 10               | 70.00%           | 26               | 65.38%           | 20         | 75.00%     | 6           | 100.00%     |
| Female                          | 26               | 76.92%           | 58               | 70.69%           | 38         | 84.21%     | 5           | 20.00%      |
| Did Not Self Identify           | 1                | 0.00%            | 2                | 100.00%          | 2          | 100.00%    | 0           | 0.00%       |
| Limited English                 | 5                | 60.00%           | 5                | 60.00%           | 3          | 100.00%    | 2           | 50.00%      |
| Not Limited English             | 32               | 75.00%           | 81               | 70.37%           | 57         | 80.70%     | 9           | 66.67%      |
| No Disability                   | 34               | 79.41%           | 77               | 67.53%           | 53         | 81.13%     | 8           | 62.50%      |
| Disabled                        | 0                | 0.00%            | 1                | 100.00%          | 1          | 100.00%    | 0           | 0.00%       |
| Participant did not<br>disclose | 3                | 0.00%            | 8                | 87.50%           | 6          | 83.33%     | 3           | 66.67%      |
| Low Income                      | 13               | 76.92%           | 34               | 64.71%           | 22         | 81.82%     | 2           | 0.00%       |
| Not Low Income                  | 24               | 70.83%           | 52               | 73.08%           | 38         | 81.58%     | 9           | 77.78%      |
| Not Single Parent               | 31               | 70.97%           | 78               | 73.08%           | 57         | 80.70%     | 9           | 66.67%      |
| Single Parent                   | 6                | 83.33%           | 8                | 37.50%           | 3          | 100.00%    | 2           | 50.00%      |
| Offender                        | 0                | 0.00%            | 3                | 0.00%            | 3          | 33.33%     | 0           | 0.00%       |
| Not an offender                 | 8                | 62.50%           | 11               | 36.36%           | 5          | 100.00%    | 0           | 0.00%       |
| Did Not Disclose                | 29               | 75.86%           | 72               | 77.78%           | 52         | 82.69%     | 11          | 63.64%      |

# AMERICAN JOB CENTER PERFORMANCE





## CHARACTERISTICS OF PY20 DISLOCATED WORKER PARTICIPANTS

| PY 2020<br>DISLOCATED WORKER    | Employment<br>Q2 | Employment Q2 | Employment Q4 | Employment Q4 | Credential | Credential | Skill Gains | Skill Gains |
|---------------------------------|------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|------------|------------|-------------|-------------|
| 16-18                           | 0                | 0.00%         | 0             | 0.00%         | 0          | 0.00%      | 0           | 0.00%       |
| 19-24                           | 10               | 90.00%        | 15            | 73.33%        | 9          | 88.89%     | 1           | 100.00%     |
| 25-44                           | 102              | 65.69%        | 148           | 72.97%        | 78         | 84.62%     | 40          | 85.00%      |
| 45-54                           | 68               | 72.06%        | 93            | 72.04%        | 46         | 91.30%     | 17          | 82.35%      |
| 55-59                           | 32               | 56.25%        | 36            | 61.11%        | 17         | 94.12%     | 10          | 90.00%      |
| 60+                             | 22               | 50.00%        | 29            | 44.83%        | 10         | 90.00%     | 2           | 100.00%     |
| Male                            | 92               | 77.17%        | 145           | 70.34%        | 77         | 87.01%     | 38          | 94.74%      |
| Female                          | 141              | 58.16%        | 173           | 67.63%        | 81         | 88.89%     | 32          | 75.00%      |
| Did Not Self Identify           | 1                | 100.00%       | 3             | 66.67%        | 2          | 100.00%    | 0           | 0.00%       |
| Limited English                 | 11               | 45.45%        | 15            | 46.67%        | 6          | 83.33%     | 7           | 71.43%      |
| Not Limited English             | 223              | 66.82%        | 306           | 69.93%        | 154        | 88.31%     | 63          | 87.30%      |
| No Disability                   | 214              | 65.42%        | 292           | 68.84%        | 141        | 88.65%     | 65          | 84.62%      |
| Disabled                        | 0                | 0.00%         | 0             | 0.00%         | 0          | 0.00%      | 0           | 0.00%       |
| Participant did not<br>disclose | 20               | 70.00%        | 29            | 68.97%        | 19         | 84.21%     | 5           | 100.00%     |
| Low Income                      | 30               | 53.33%        | 34            | 58.82%        | 19         | 84.21%     | 3           | 66.67%      |
| Not Low Income                  | 204              | 67.65%        | 287           | 70.03%        | 141        | 88.65%     | 67          | 86.57%      |
| Not Single Parent               | 199              | 66.83%        | 280           | 70.36%        | 146        | 89.04%     | 64          | 84.38%      |
| Single Parent                   | 35               | 60.00%        | 41            | 58.54%        | 14         | 78.57%     | 6           | 100.00%     |
| Offender                        | 5                | 60.00%        | 3             | 100.00%       | 2          | 0.00%      | 2           | 50.00%      |
| Not an offender                 | 35               | 57.14%        | 47            | 63.83%        | 15         | 93.33%     | 7           | 71.43%      |
| Did Not Disclose                | 194              | 67.53%        | 271           | 69.37%        | 143        | 88.81%     | 61          | 88.52%      |

# AMERICAN JOB CENTER PERFORMANCE



## CHARACTERISTICS OF PY20 YOUTH PARTICIPANTS

| PY 2020 Youth                | Employment Q2 | Employment Q2 | Employment Q4 | Employment Q4 | Credential | Credential | Den Skill Gains | Skill Gains |
|------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|------------|------------|-----------------|-------------|
| 16-18                        | 37            | 89.19%        | 53            | 73.58%        | 39         | 94.87%     | 10              | 90.00%      |
| 19-24                        | 27            | 100.00%       | 34            | 88.24%        | 6          | 100.00%    | 0               | 0.00%       |
| Male                         | 26            | 92.31%        | 40            | 80.00%        | 20         | 95.00%     | 8               | 87.50%      |
| Female                       | 38            | 94.74%        | 47            | 78.72%        | 25         | 96.00%     | 2               | 100.00%     |
| Did Not Self Identify        | 0             | 0.00%         | 0             | 0.00%         | 0          | 0.00%      | 0               | 0.00%       |
| Limited English              | 1             | 100.00%       | 2             | 50.00%        | 1          | 100.00%    | 0               | 0.00%       |
| Not Limited English          | 63            | 93.65%        | 85            | 80.00%        | 44         | 95.45%     | 10              | 90.00%      |
| No Disability                | 61            | 93.44%        | 83            | 79.52%        | 43         | 95.35%     | 10              | 90.00%      |
| Disabled                     | 2             | 100.00%       | 3             | 66.67%        | 2          | 100.00%    | 0               | 0.00%       |
| Participant did not disclose | 1             | 100.00%       | 1             | 100.00%       | 0          | 0.00%      | 0               | 0.00%       |
| Low Income                   | 57            | 92.98%        | 76            | 77.63%        | 41         | 95.12%     | 10              | 90.00%      |
| Not Low Income               | 7             | 100.00%       | 11            | 90.91%        | 4          | 100.00%    | 0               | 0.00%       |
| Not Single Parent            | 59            | 93.22%        | 81            | 77.78%        | 43         | 95.35%     | 10              | 90.00%      |
| Single Parent                | 5             | 100.00%       | 6             | 100.00%       | 2          | 100.00%    | 0               | 0.00%       |
| Offender                     | 0             | 0.00%         | 0             | 0.00%         | 0          | 0.00%      | 0               | 0.00%       |
| Not an offender              | 40            | 90.00%        | 53            | 75.47%        | 27         | 92.59%     | 7               | 100.00%     |
| Did Not Disclose             | 24            | 100.00%       | 34            | 85.29%        | 18         | 100.00%    | 3               | 66.67%      |

# AMERICAN JOB CENTER PERFORMANCE



## CHARACTERISTICS OF PY20 WAGNER PEYSER PARTICIPANTS

| PY 2020 Wagner Peyser        | Employment Q2 | Employment Q2 | Employment Q4 | Employment Q4 | Avg Earnings | Avg Earnings |
|------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|
| 16-18                        | 18            | 72.22 %       | 24            | 58.33 %       | 12           | \$4,801.11   |
| 19-24                        | 234           | 52.99 %       | 295           | 58.98 %       | 121          | \$11,196.09  |
| 25-44                        | 1270          | 47.56 %       | 1669          | 52.91 %       | 560          | \$18,075.41  |
| 45-54                        | 656           | 44.51 %       | 842           | 52.26 %       | 253          | \$23,590.11  |
| 55-59                        | 348           | 43.39 %       | 441           | 45.12 %       | 127          | \$28,359.10  |
| 60+                          | 348           | 39.37 %       | 480           | 36.88 %       | 119          | \$30,252.15  |
| Male                         | 1438          | 44.78 %       | 1867          | 47.72 %       | 583          | \$22,969.78  |
| Female                       | 1418          | 46.83 %       | 1863          | 52.93 %       | 599          | \$18,622.93  |
| Did Not Self Identify        | 18            | 72.22 %       | 21            | 47.62 %       | 10           | \$15,796.25  |
| Limited English              | 447           | 44.74 %       | 472           | 50.64 %       | 164          | \$17,203.35  |
| Not Limited English          | 2427          | 46.19 %       | 3279          | 50.26 %       | 1028         | \$21,287.09  |
| No Disability                | 2541          | 45.81 %       | 3255          | 50.75 %       | 1054         | \$21,573.27  |
| Disabled                     | 90            | 33.33 %       | 111           | 32.43 %       | 27           | \$17,031.20  |
| Participant did not disclose | 243           | 52.26 %       | 385           | 51.69 %       | 111          | \$13,571.30  |
| Low Income                   | 746           | 38.34 %       | 1034          | 40.43 %       | 278          | \$11,221.15  |
| Not Low Income               | 2128          | 48.64 %       | 2717          | 54.07 %       | 914          | \$23,615.97  |
| Not Single Parent            | 2426          | 45.80 %       | 3188          | 50.44 %       | 1014         | \$21,536.05  |
| Single Parent                | 448           | 46.88 %       | 563           | 49.56 %       | 178          | \$16,106.34  |
| Offender                     | 135           | 45.93 %       | 151           | 45.03 %       | 57           | \$12,259.92  |
| Not an offender              | 992           | 43.04 %       | 1220          | 47.46 %       | 389          | \$19,816.40  |
| Did Not Disclose             | 1747          | 47.62 %       | 2380          | 52.10 %       | 746          | \$21,845.95  |

## AMERICAN JOB CENTER PERFORMANCE



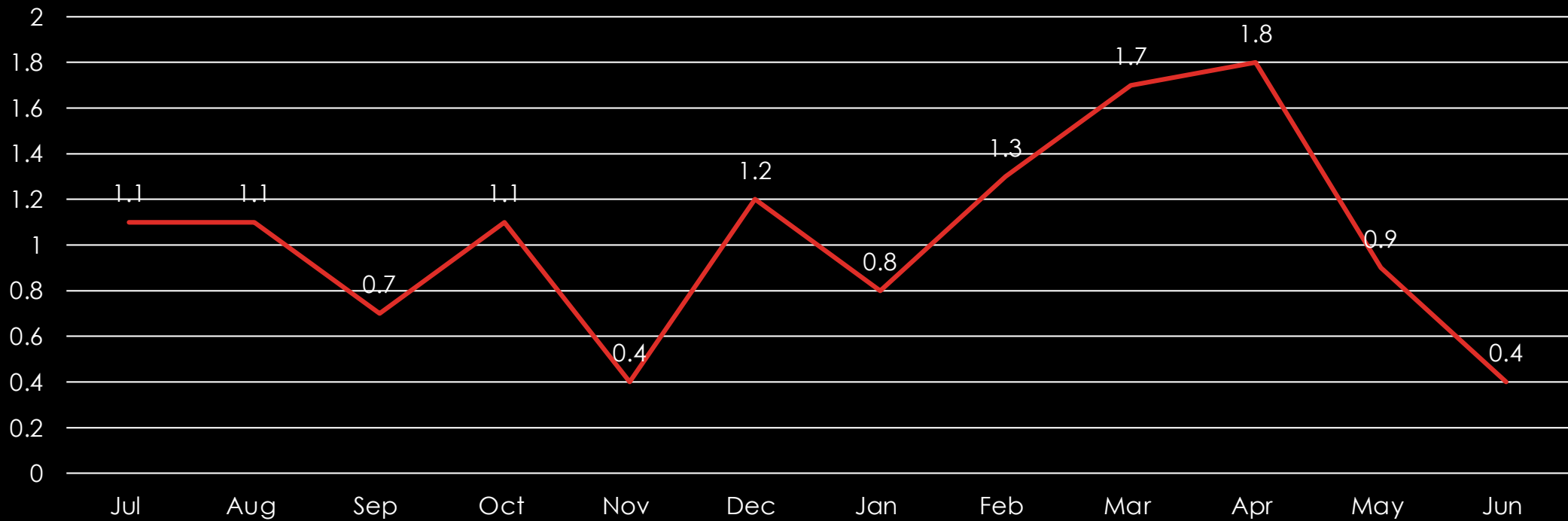
## AMERICAN JOB CENTER CLIENTS SERVED BY MUNICIPALITY

| Union County, NJ City | Served | Enrolled | Employment Q2 | Employment Q4 | Credential | Skill Gains |
|-----------------------|--------|----------|---------------|---------------|------------|-------------|
|                       | 1895   | 1708     | 2589          | 3453          | 88.26%     | 85.19%      |
| BERKELEY HEIGHTS      | 32     | 31       | 16            | 33            | 100.00%    | 0.00%       |
| CLARK                 | 34     | 34       | 28            | 48            | 100.00%    | 0.00%       |
| CRANFORD              | 50     | 50       | 36            | 59            | 80.00%     | 100.00%     |
| ELIZABETH             | 473    | 394      | 786           | 1031          | 88.68%     | 84.62%      |
| ELIZABETHPORT         | 184    | 149      | 227           | 309           | 96.77%     | 77.78%      |
| FANWOOD               | 10     | 10       | 15            | 28            | 0.00%      | 0.00%       |
| GARWOOD               | 7      | 7        | 19            | 21            | 0.00%      | 0.00%       |
| HILLSIDE              | 93     | 83       | 107           | 140           | 100.00%    | 100.00%     |
| KENILWORTH            | 20     | 18       | 15            | 36            | 100.00%    | 0.00%       |
| LINDEN                | 159    | 152      | 240           | 313           | 75.00%     | 100.00%     |
| MOUNTAINSIDE          | 14     | 14       | 14            | 18            | 100.00%    | 0.00%       |
| NEW PROVIDENCE        | 15     | 15       | 17            | 20            | 100.00%    | 0.00%       |
| PLAINFIELD            | 302    | 267      | 380           | 505           | 82.61%     | 100.00%     |
| RAHWAY                | 106    | 103      | 145           | 188           | 77.78%     | 100.00%     |
| ROSELLE               | 88     | 81       | 164           | 191           | 85.71%     | 80.00%      |
| ROSELLE PARK          | 46     | 45       | 42            | 59            | 100.00%    | 66.67%      |
| SCOTCH PLAINS         | 62     | 62       | 61            | 76            | 100.00%    | 0.00%       |
| SPRINGFIELD           | 9      | 9        | 12            | 18            | 100.00%    | 0.00%       |
| SUMMIT                | 42     | 41       | 22            | 31            | 100.00%    | 50.00%      |
| UNION                 | 132    | 128      | 207           | 278           | 100.00%    | 77.78%      |
| VAUXHALL              | 9      | 9        | 19            | 25            | 75.00%     | 100.00%     |
| WESTFIELD             | 8      | 6        | 17            | 26            | 100.00%    | 0.00%       |

## AMERICAN JOB CENTER PERFORMANCE



## WORK FIRST NEW JERSEY PY 2020 PARTICIPATION RATE

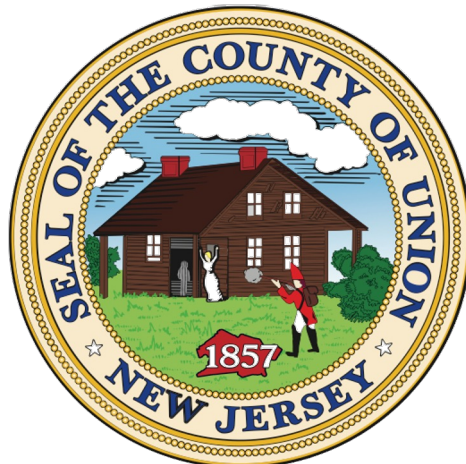


AMERICAN JOB CENTER PERFORMANCE



# UNION COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

## PROGRAM YEAR 2019 – 2020 ANNUAL REPORT





BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
STRATEGIC PLAN VISION  
CORE VALUES  
PROGRAM YEAR 2019 OPERATING BUDGET  
TRAINING FUNDS AWARDED  
INITIAL UNEMPLOYMENT CLAIMS DATA  
AMERICAN JOB CENTER PERFORMANCE







# UNION COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD PROGRAM YEAR 2019-20 ANNUAL REPORT

| <u>First Name</u> | <u>Last Name</u>   | <u>Title</u>                                  | <u>Business/Organization</u>                               |
|-------------------|--------------------|---|--|
| Gloria            | Durham, Chairwoman | CEO   | Qunnections Management Group                               |
| James R.          | Brady, Vice Chair  | Vice President and General Manager            | The Savor Group, LLC                                       |
| Krystal           | Canady, Secretary  | CEO   | Gateway Family YMCA  |
| Donna             | Dedinsky           | Manager, Associate Relations                  | Wakefern Food Corporation                                  |
| Tina              | Earley             | Manager, Government & Community Affairs       | Elizabethtown Gas  |
| Salvador          | Garcia             | Principal                                     | MAS Development Group                                      |
| Edwin             | Gomez              | Owner   | Barcode- Elizabeth   |
| Glenn             | Nacion             | Vice President Human Resources                | Trinitas Regional Medical Center                           |
| Tony              | Patti              | Owner   | Two Tony's Pizzeria, Linden                                |
| Stan              | Robinson, Jr.      | Owner   | SHR Marketing, LLC   |
| Kamran            | Tasharofi, M.D.    | President/Owner                               | Union County Health Care Associates                        |
| Erich             | Peter              | Director of Training and Technical Assistance | Union County Economic Development Corporation              |
| Richard           | Malcolm            | Business Agent                                | Ironworkers, Local #11                                     |
| Paul              | Belardo            | Council Rep                                   | KML Carpenters   |
| Pamela            | Capaci             | Executive Director                            | Prevention Links   |
| Teresa            | Soto-Vega          | Executive Director                            | PROCEED  |
| Margaret          | McMenamin, Ph. D.  | President                                     | Union County College                                       |
| Matthew           | Caruso             | Director                                      | Kean University  |
| Peter             | Capodice           | Superintendent                                | County Vo-Tech School                                      |
| Danny             | Robertozzi         | Superintendent                                | K-12 System Superintendent                                 |
| David             | Moskowitz          | Manager                                       | ES / Wagner-Peyser Representative                          |
| Edward            | Faver              | Manager                                       | DVRS Representative  |
| Debbie-Ann        | Anderson           | Director                                      | Division of Human Services                                 |
| James             | Horne              | CEO   | United Way of Greater Union County                         |
| Sandra            | McLachlan          | HR Business Partner                           | Phillips 66 Bayway Refinery                                |
| Anna              | Belin-Pyles        | Superintendent                                | Plainfield Public Schools                                  |
| Charles           | Gillon             | Division Director                             | Division of Social Services                                |
| John              | Perry              | Executive Director                            | Council for Airport Opportunities                          |
| Juan Carlos       | Dominguez          | Vice President                                | JJJ Distributors   |
| Gary              | Pfarr              | Assistant Business Manager                    | International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local 102 |
| Mark              | Bocchieri          | Director External Affairs                     | Verizon New Jersey   |
| Richard           | Capac              | Director                                      | Leaf Group, LLC  |



*The Workforce System sees itself as both an effective catalyst for economic development and a major resource for employment and training.*

*Toward greater economic development, it must help make critical business connections and serve as a bridge between businesses, the County and the State.*

## PLAN FOR SUCCESS



*Toward better training and employment, it must help residents overcome unemployment, underemployment, and economic struggles and guide them along a path of successful professional growth.*

*Such a dual vision establishes the ultimate direction and tone for the Union County Workforce System.*



The Union County Workforce Investment Board shall align its workforce development strategy to mirror the core values outlined within New Jersey's Unified Workforce Investment Plan. The ***Local 2016-2020 Strategic Plan*** identifies Six Key Values aimed to drive our Workforce Development Activities.



1. Increased Emphasis on Career Pathways and Industry-Credential Attainment.
2. Expanded One-Stop Integration of Service Delivery
3. Broadened Use of Technology in Operation & Customer-Facing Processes.
4. Expanded Access to Service Levels.
5. Enhanced Employer Engagement.
6. Expanded Use of Evaluation Metrics Beyond National Performance Standards/ Systematic Oversight.



# UNION COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD PROGRAM YEAR 2019-20 ANNUAL REPORT

|   | WIOA Adult       | WIOA ISY       | WIOA OSY       | WIOA Dislocated Worker | Workforce Learning Link | WFNJ TANF        | TANF Work Verification | CAVP          | WFNJ GA/SNAP     | Total            |
|---|------------------|----------------|----------------|------------------------|-------------------------|------------------|------------------------|---------------|------------------|------------------|
| <b>PY 2019 Allocation Per Notice of Award</b> | <b>1,119,480</b> | <b>257,649</b> | <b>772,946</b> | <b>1,250,918</b>       | <b>178,000</b>          | <b>1,532,042</b> | <b>42,000</b>          | <b>42,420</b> | <b>1,044,474</b> | <b>6,239,929</b> |
| <b>ADMINISTRATION</b>                         |                  |                |                |                        |                         |                  |                        |               |                  |                  |
| Wages   | 68,420           | 14,827         | 45,918         | 79,484                 | 8,623                   | 117,358          |                        |               | 79,176           | 413,806          |
| Fringe Benefits                               | 35,541           | 7,702          | 23,853         | 41,289                 | 4,479                   | 60,963           |                        |               | 41,129           | 214,955          |
| Other (OE)                                    | 7,986            | 3,236          | 7,524          | 4,320                  | 0                       | 5,524            |                        |               | 5,032            | 33,622           |
| <b>Total Administration</b>                   | <b>111,948</b>   | <b>25,765</b>  | <b>77,295</b>  | <b>125,092</b>         | <b>13,102</b>           | <b>183,845</b>   | <b>0</b>               | <b>0</b>      | <b>125,337</b>   | <b>662,383</b>   |
| <b>OPERATIONS</b>                             |                  |                |                |                        |                         |                  |                        |               |                  |                  |
| Wages   | 50,795           | 8,564          | 11,418         | 19,336                 | 14,995                  |                  |                        |               |                  | 105,107          |
| Fringe Benefits                               | 26,386           | 4,448          | 5,931          | 10,044                 | 7,789                   |                  |                        |               |                  | 54,599           |
| Rent, Buildings & Grounds                     | 44,282           | 10,191         | 30,574         | 49,481                 | 7,041                   | 60,601           |                        |               | 41,315           | 243,485          |
| Group I & I                                   | 18,187           | 4,186          | 12,557         | 20,322                 | 2,892                   | 24,889           |                        |               | 16,968           | 100,000          |
| Suplee Clooney                                | 7,275            | 1,674          | 5,023          | 8,129                  | 1,157                   | 9,956            |                        |               | 6,787            | 40,000           |
| Shane Schaffer, PC                            | 3,092            | 712            | 2,135          | 3,455                  | 492                     | 4,231            |                        |               | 2,885            | 17,000           |
| Future Works                                  | 2,182            | 502            | 1,507          | 2,439                  | 347                     | 2,987            |                        |               | 2,036            | 12,000           |
| Software and Equipment Upgrades               | 10,000           | 5,000          | 10,000         | 10,000                 | 5,000                   | 10,000           |                        |               | 10,000           | 60,000           |
| Other Expense                                 | 20,846           | 21,800         | 17,221         | 29,652                 | 13,623                  | 28,991           | 42,000                 | 42,420        | 58,802           | 275,355          |
| <b>Total Operations</b>                       | <b>183,044</b>   | <b>57,077</b>  | <b>96,366</b>  | <b>152,857</b>         | <b>53,336</b>           | <b>141,654</b>   | <b>42,000</b>          | <b>42,420</b> | <b>138,793</b>   | <b>907,546</b>   |
| <b>PY 2019 Sub-Recipient Contract</b>         |                  |                |                |                        |                         |                  |                        |               |                  |                  |
| American Job Center Operator Services         | 477,488          | 89,807         | 226,286        | 387,969                | 51,562                  | 396,543          |                        |               | 270,344          | 1,900,000        |
| Client Supportive Services                    | 7,000            | 10,000         | 10,000         | 10,000                 | 10,000                  | 10,000           |                        |               | 10,000           | 67,000           |
| Comprehensive Career Services                 | 40,000           | 75,000         | 30,000         | 275,000                | 50,000                  | 50,000           |                        |               | 100,000          | 620,000          |
| Union County College /AJC Affiliate           | 300,000          |                |                | 300,000                |                         |                  |                        |               |                  | 600,000          |
| UCVTS/Simon Youth Academy                     |                  |                | 333,000        |                        |                         |                  |                        |               |                  | 333,000          |
| Workforce Advantage/WFNI                      |                  |                |                |                        |                         | 300,000          |                        |               | 150,000          | 450,000          |
| Union County College/WFNI                     |                  |                |                |                        |                         | 300,000          |                        |               | 150,000          | 450,000          |
| Urban League/WFNI                             |                  |                |                |                        |                         | 100,000          |                        |               | 50,000           | 150,000          |
| Arc of Union County/WFNI                      |                  |                |                |                        |                         | 50,000           |                        |               | 50,000           | 100,000          |
| <b>Total Contracts</b>                        | <b>824,488</b>   | <b>174,807</b> | <b>599,286</b> | <b>972,969</b>         | <b>111,562</b>          | <b>1,206,543</b> | <b>0</b>               | <b>0</b>      | <b>780,344</b>   | <b>4,670,000</b> |
| <b>Total Projected Expenditures</b>           | <b>1,119,480</b> | <b>257,649</b> | <b>772,946</b> | <b>1,250,918</b>       | <b>178,000</b>          | <b>1,532,042</b> | <b>42,000</b>          | <b>42,420</b> | <b>1,044,474</b> | <b>6,239,929</b> |



## PROGRAM YEAR 2019 OPERATING BUDGET





## PROGRAM YEAR 2019 BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

- ❖ **\$160,000 BUDGETED FOR SOFTWARE AND EQUIPMENT UPGRADES**
- ❖ **\$67,000 BUDGETED FOR CLIENT SUPPORTIVE SERVICES**
- ❖ **\$1,900,000 BUDGETED FOR AJC STAFFING SALARIES AND FRINGE**
- ❖ **\$1,005,000 BUDGETED FOR COMPREHENSIVE CAREER SERVICES OPPORTUNITIES FOR CLIENTS**

## COMPREHENSIVE CAREER SERVICES

- |                              |                                |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| ❖ ORIENTATION WORKSHOPS      | ❖ JOB & RECRUITMENT FAIRS      |
| ❖ ASSESSMENT (CASAS)         | ❖ SOFT SKILLS WORKSHOPS        |
| ❖ WORK EXPERIENCE (PAID)     | ❖ JOB READINESS WORKSHOPS      |
| ❖ ON THE JOB TRAINING (PAID) | ❖ JOB SEARCH WORKSHOPS         |
| ❖ APPRENTICESHIPS            | ❖ UNSUBSIDIZED JOB PLACEMENTS  |
| ❖ JOB PLACEMENT ASSISTANCE   | ❖ CREDENTIAL ATTAINMENT        |
| ❖ INCUMBENT WORKER TRAINING  | ❖ INDIVIDUAL TRAINING ACCOUNTS |





## UNION COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD PROGRAM YEAR 2019-20 ANNUAL REPORT

The Union County Workforce Development Board, with the consent and approval of the **Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders**, awarded a contract through open procurement, to the **Union County Department of Human Services** to manage a comprehensive **American Job Center / One Stop Career Center**, in the amount of \$3,000,000.

**Union County College** was awarded a contract for the provision of American Job Center affiliate career services operator for WIOA Adult and Dislocated Workers in the amount of \$135,000.

The **Union County Workforce Development Board**, with the consent and approval of the **Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders**, approved a Memorandum of Understanding and Infrastructure Funding Agreement with the required American Job Center Partners, which including funding for establishing a Virtual One Stop Career Center for utilization by all the partners.

The **Union County Workforce Development Board**, with the consent and approval of the **Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders**, awarded WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth funding in the amount \$250,000 to the **International Rescue Committee** as an **Affiliated American Job Center Operator** for employment and training services to refugees resettled in Union County.

The **Union County Workforce Development Board**, with the consent and approval of the **Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders**, awarded **Plainfield Public Library** \$60,000 in Workforce Learning Link funding to pilot a program to provide basic-to-intermediate digital literacy instruction leading to industry-recognized credentials to unemployed, underemployed, and incumbent employed Union County residents.

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## TRAINING FUNDS AWARDED

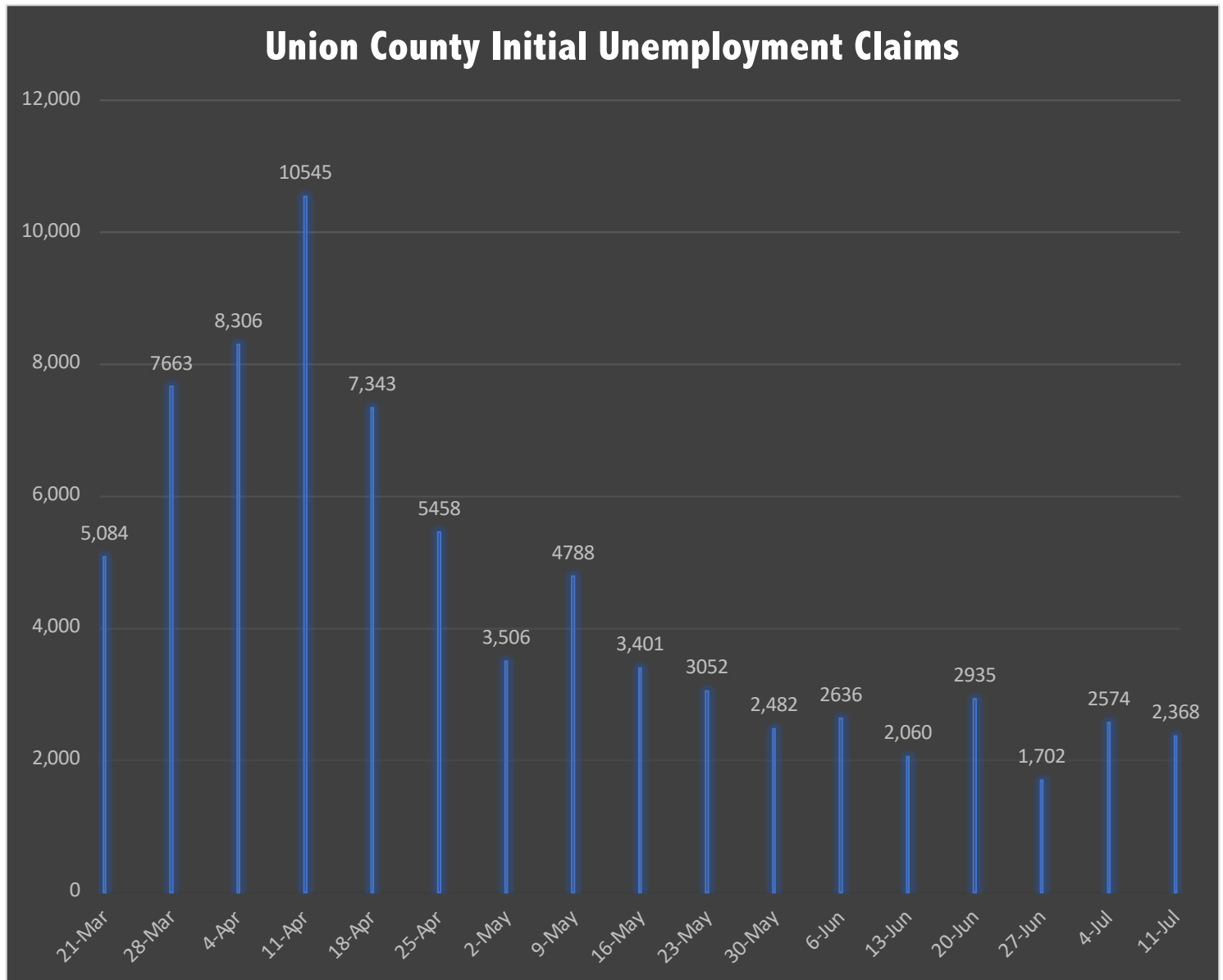


## CHARACTERISTICS OF INITIAL UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE CLAIMS

COUNTY OF UNION - MARCH 21, 2020 – JULY 11, 2020

TOTAL INITIAL UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE CLAIMS: 75,903

SOURCE: NJDOL LABOR MARKET INFORMATION





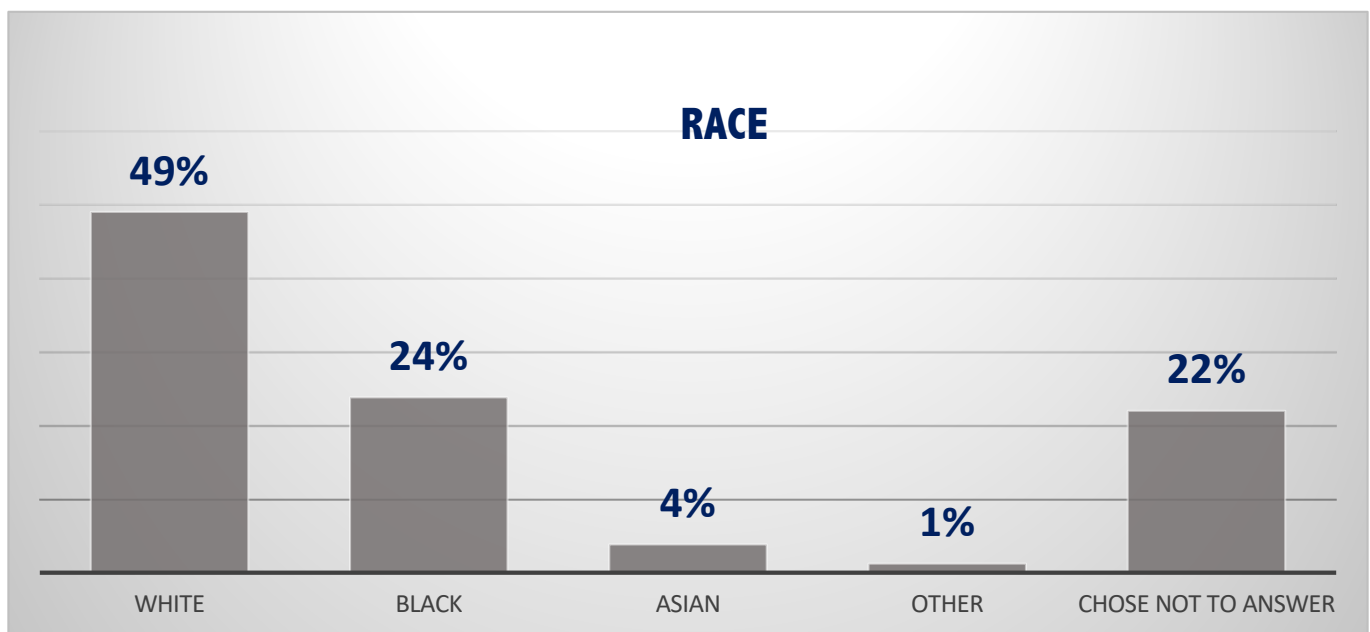
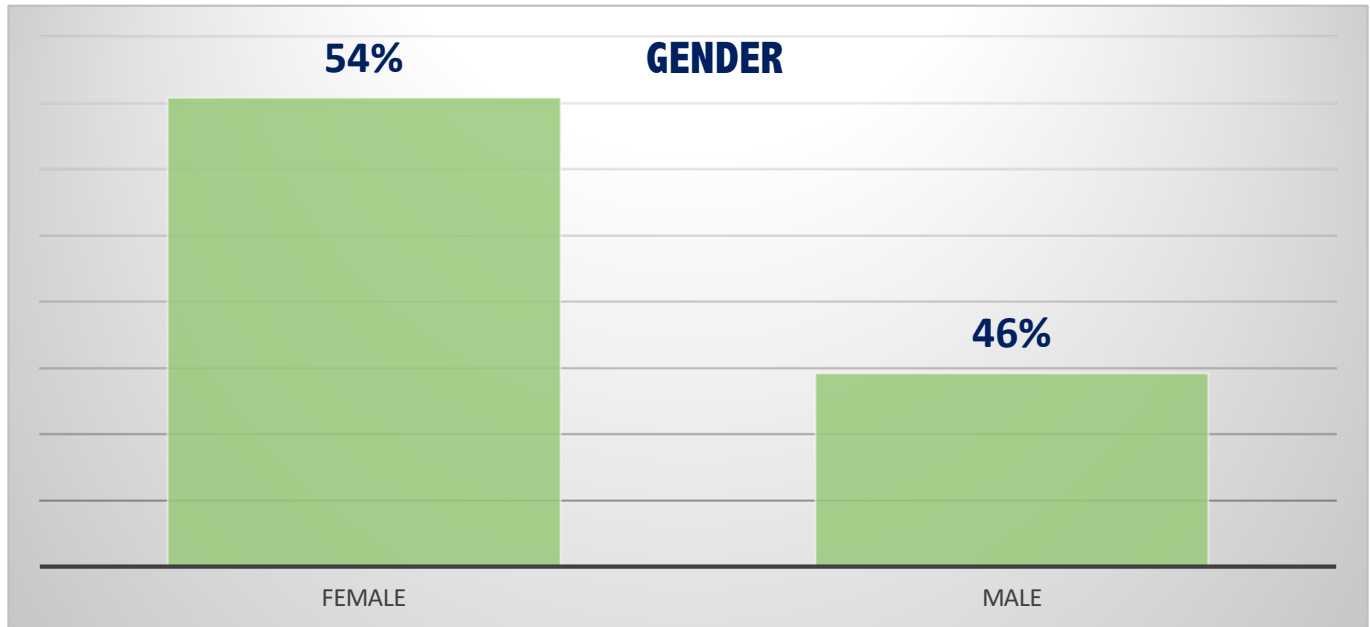


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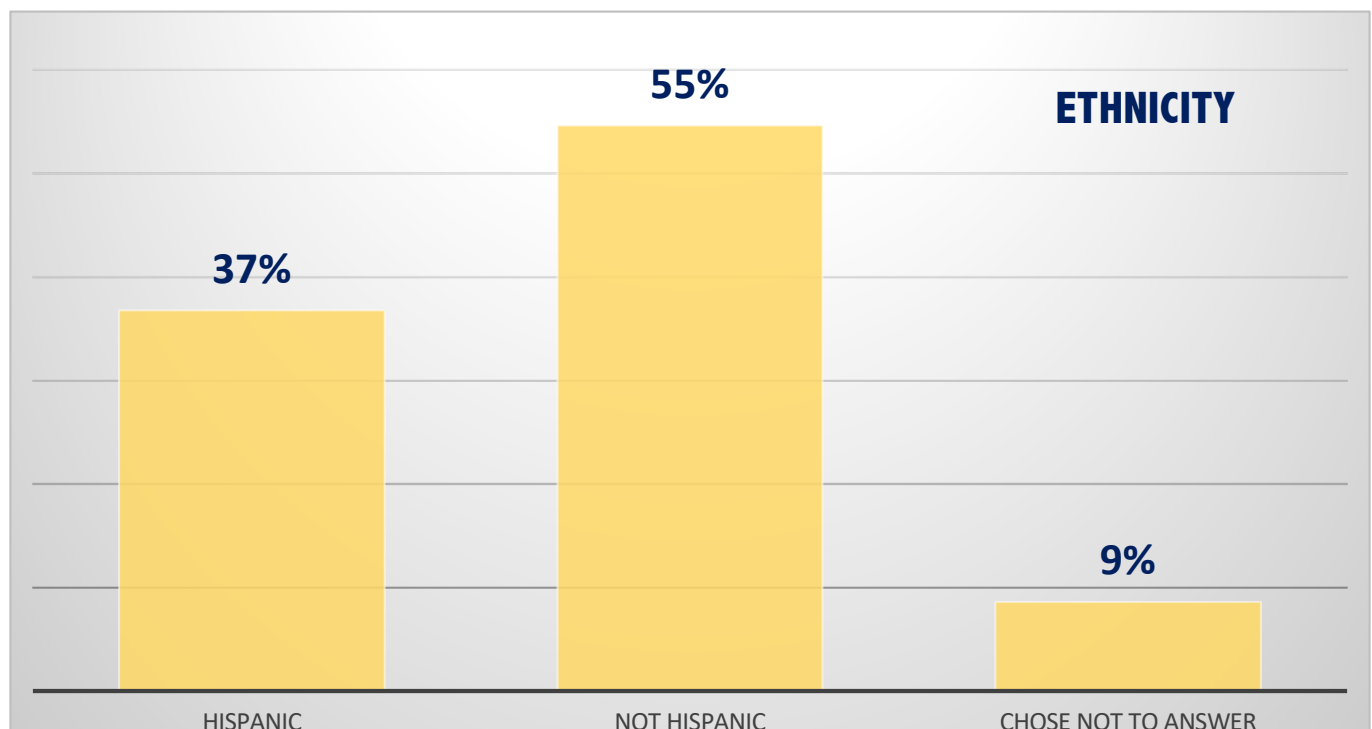
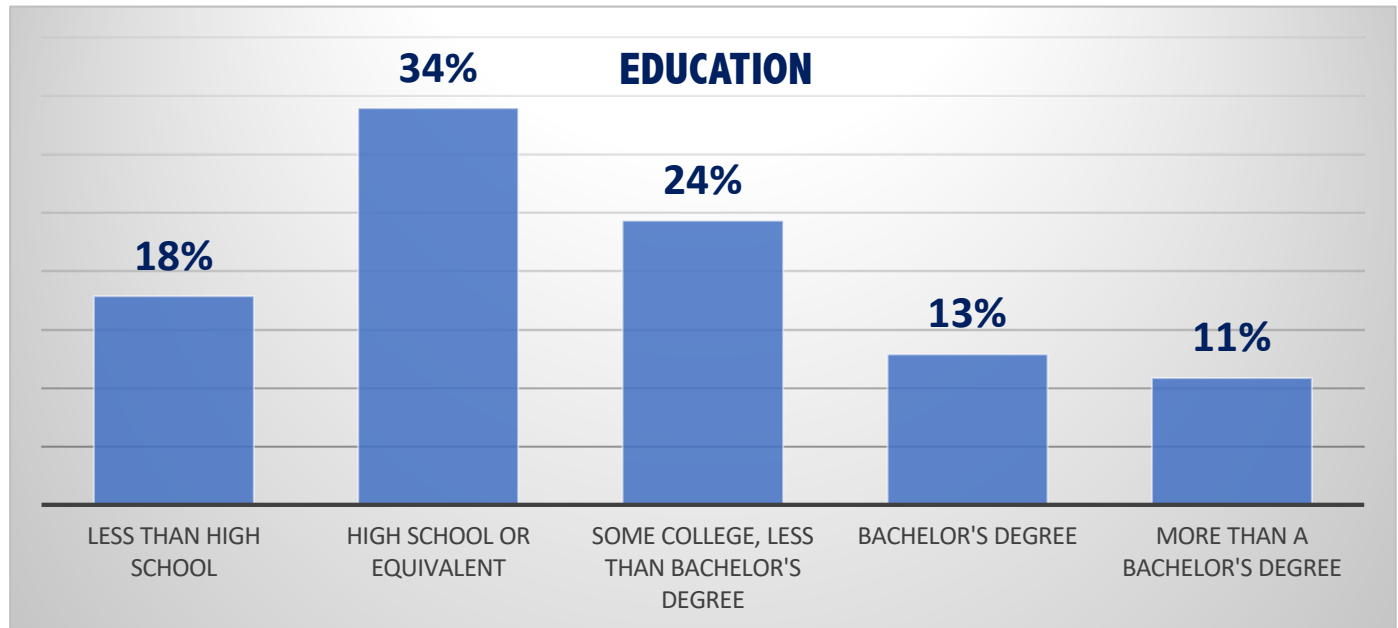


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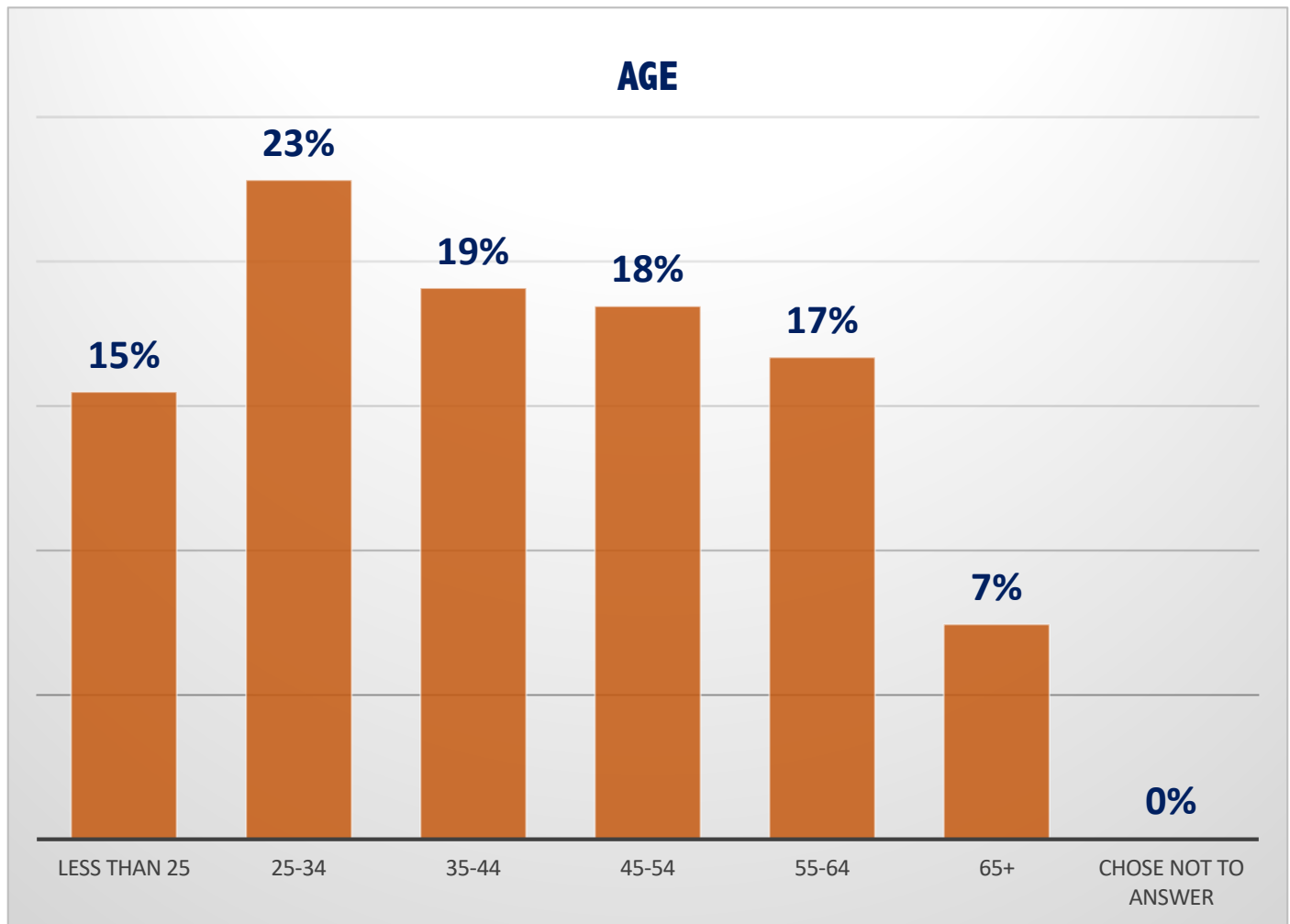


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# INITIAL UNEMPLOYMENT CLAIMS DATA



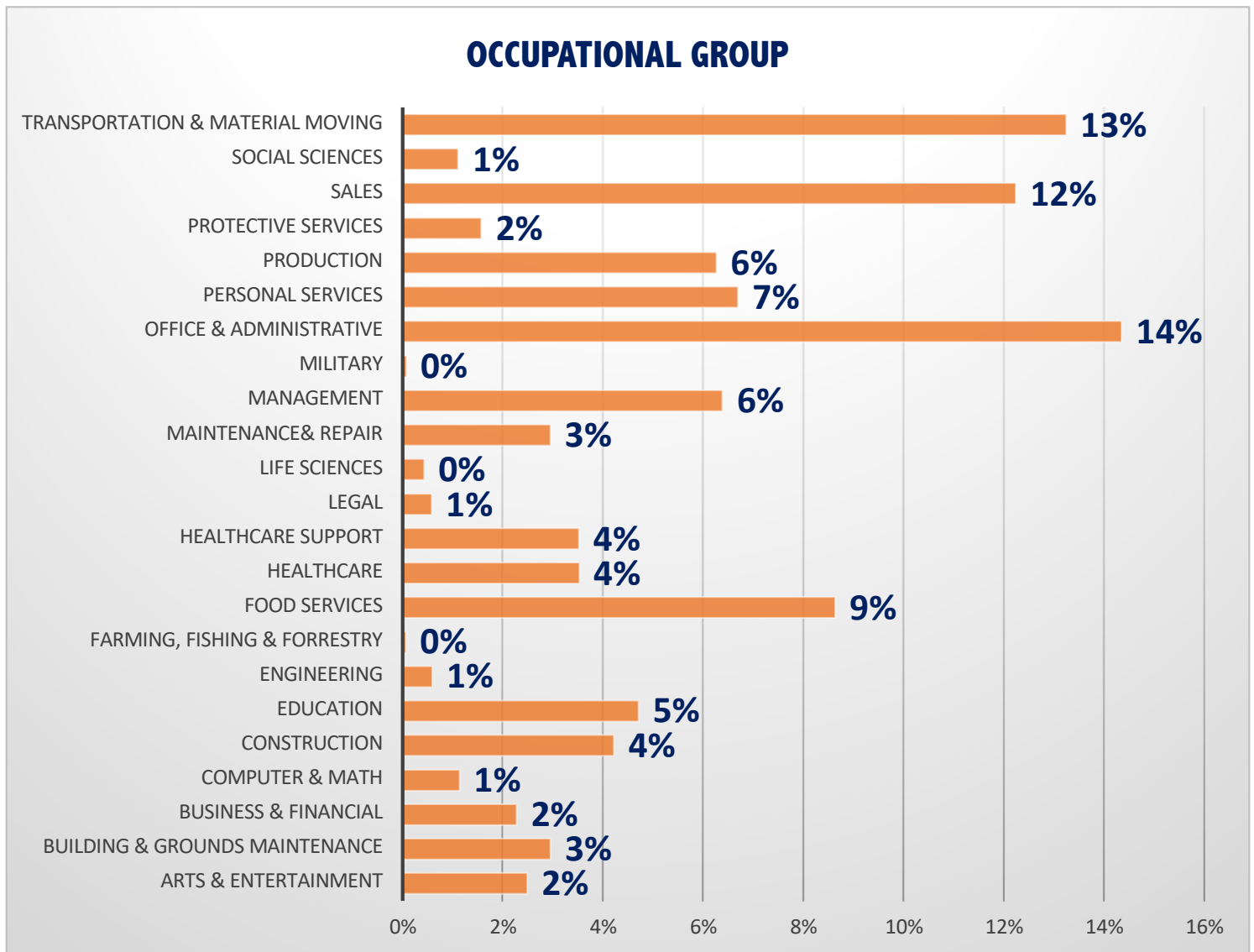
## UNION COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD PROGRAM YEAR 2019-20 ANNUAL REPORT

### CHARACTERISTICS OF INITIAL UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE CLAIMS

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# INITIAL UNEMPLOYMENT CLAIMS DATA



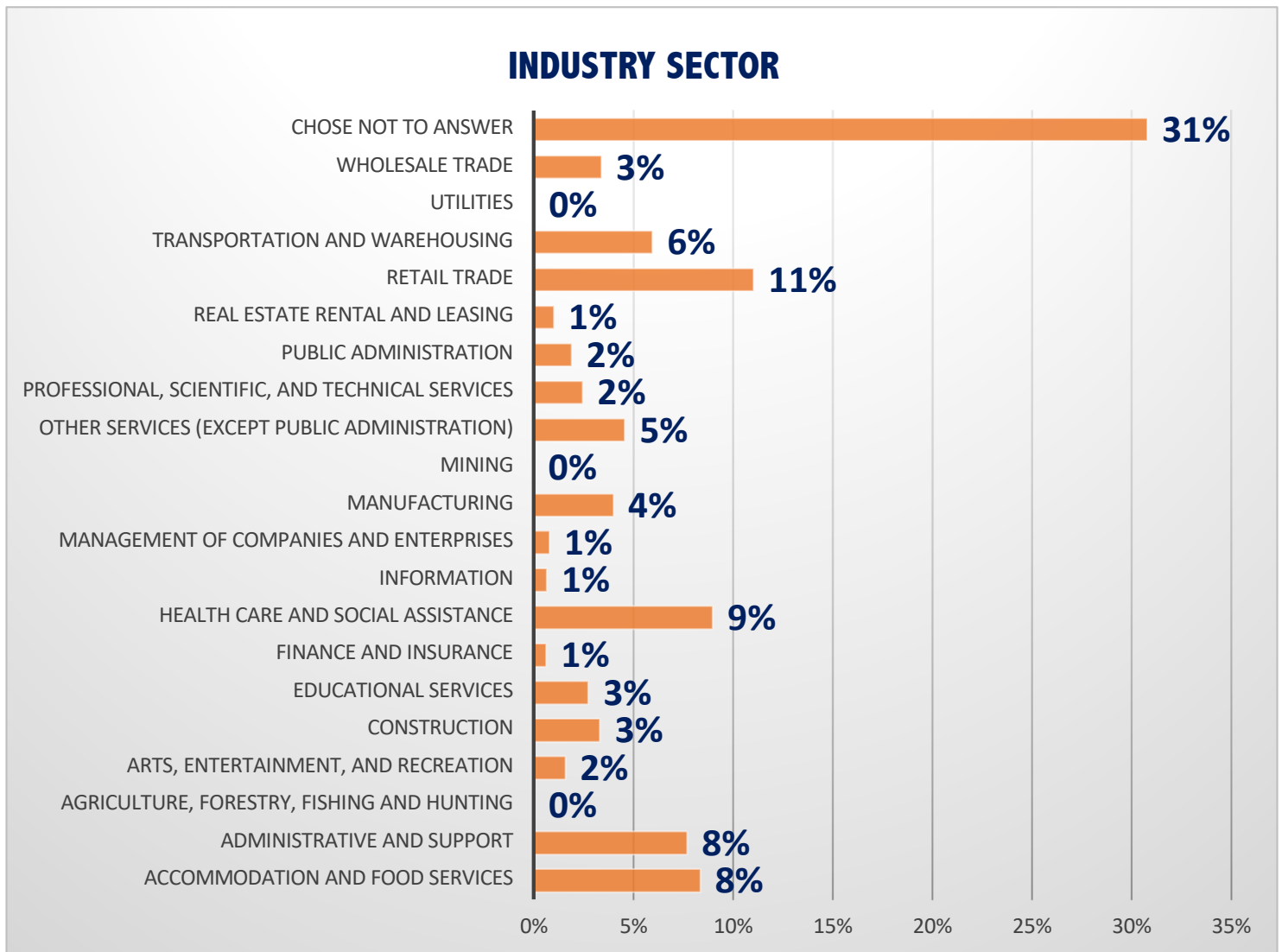
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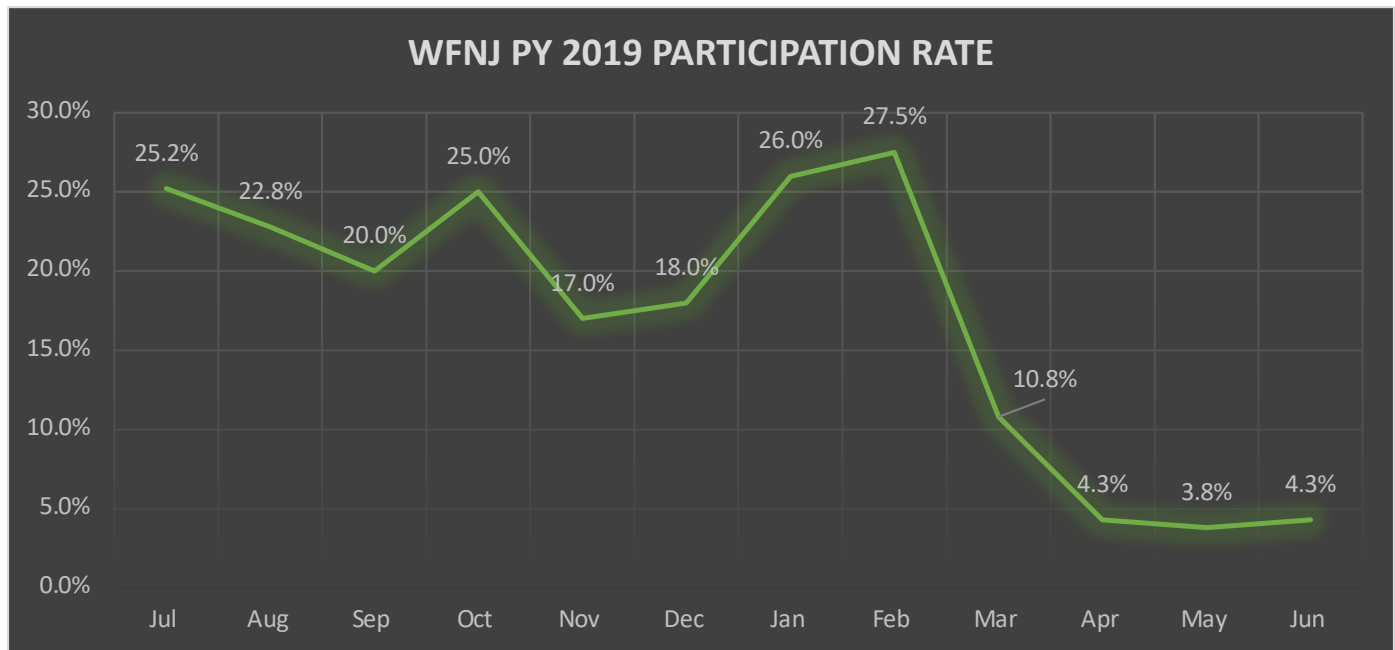
# INITIAL UNEMPLOYMENT CLAIMS DATA



## UNION COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD PROGRAM YEAR 2019-20 ANNUAL REPORT

### CHART BELOW:

The WorkFirst New Jersey (WFNJ) program administered by Union County's Department of Human Services and Union County's American Job Center, and American Job Center Partners. Services are provided to participants enrolled in the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) program.



WorkFirst New Jersey funds programs are designed to provide welfare applicants, recipients, non-custodial parents and non-cash recipients make a connection to the labor market resulting in unsubsidized employment that leads to self-sufficiency. Work experience activities provide an individual with an opportunity to acquire the general skills, training, knowledge and work habits necessary to obtain employment.

Programs are designed to provide services to assist these individuals with job placement, transitional employment and other employment related training and supportive services needed to make the successful progression into long-term, unsubsidized employment. Programs are labor market driven, and consistent with the Union County Workforce Development Board's Strategic Plan.

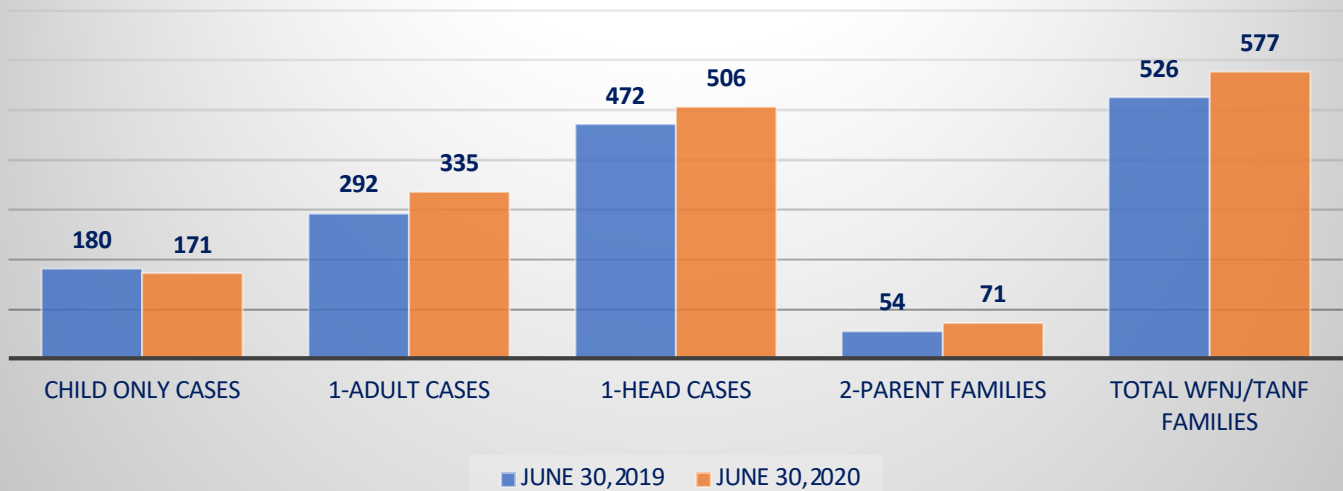
## AMERICAN JOB CENTER PERFORMANCE



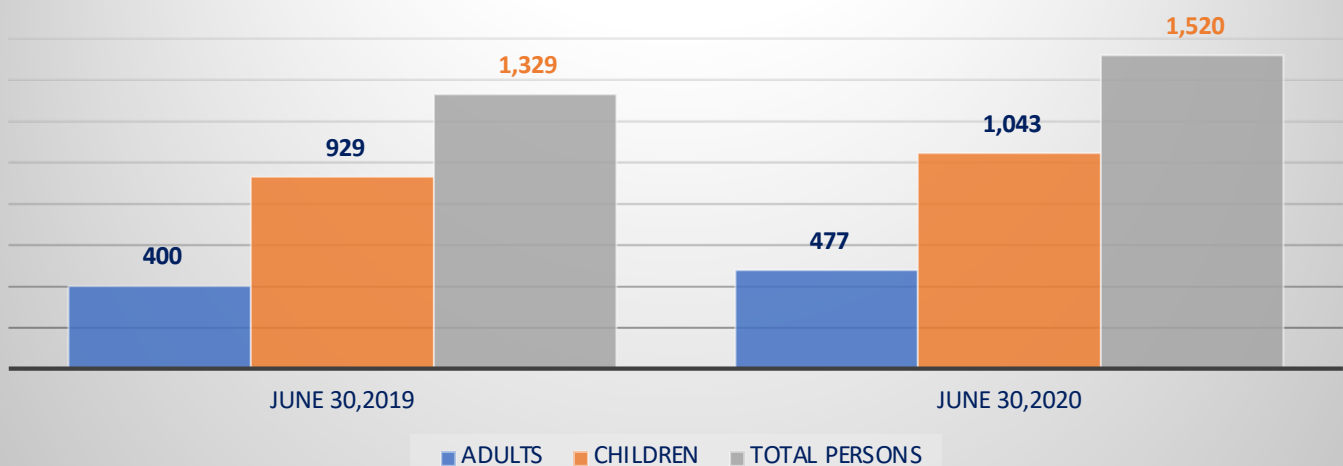
## UNION COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD PROGRAM YEAR 2019-20 ANNUAL REPORT

The WorkFirst New Jersey (WFNJ) program administered by Union County's Department of Human Services and Union County's American Job Center, and American Job Center Partners. Participant characteristics for clients enrolled in the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) program during the 2019 Program Year.

### NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE FAMILIES RECEIVING WFNJ/TANF



### WFNJ/TANF PROGRAM NUMBER OF PARTICIPATING PERSONS, ADULTS, AND CHILDREN



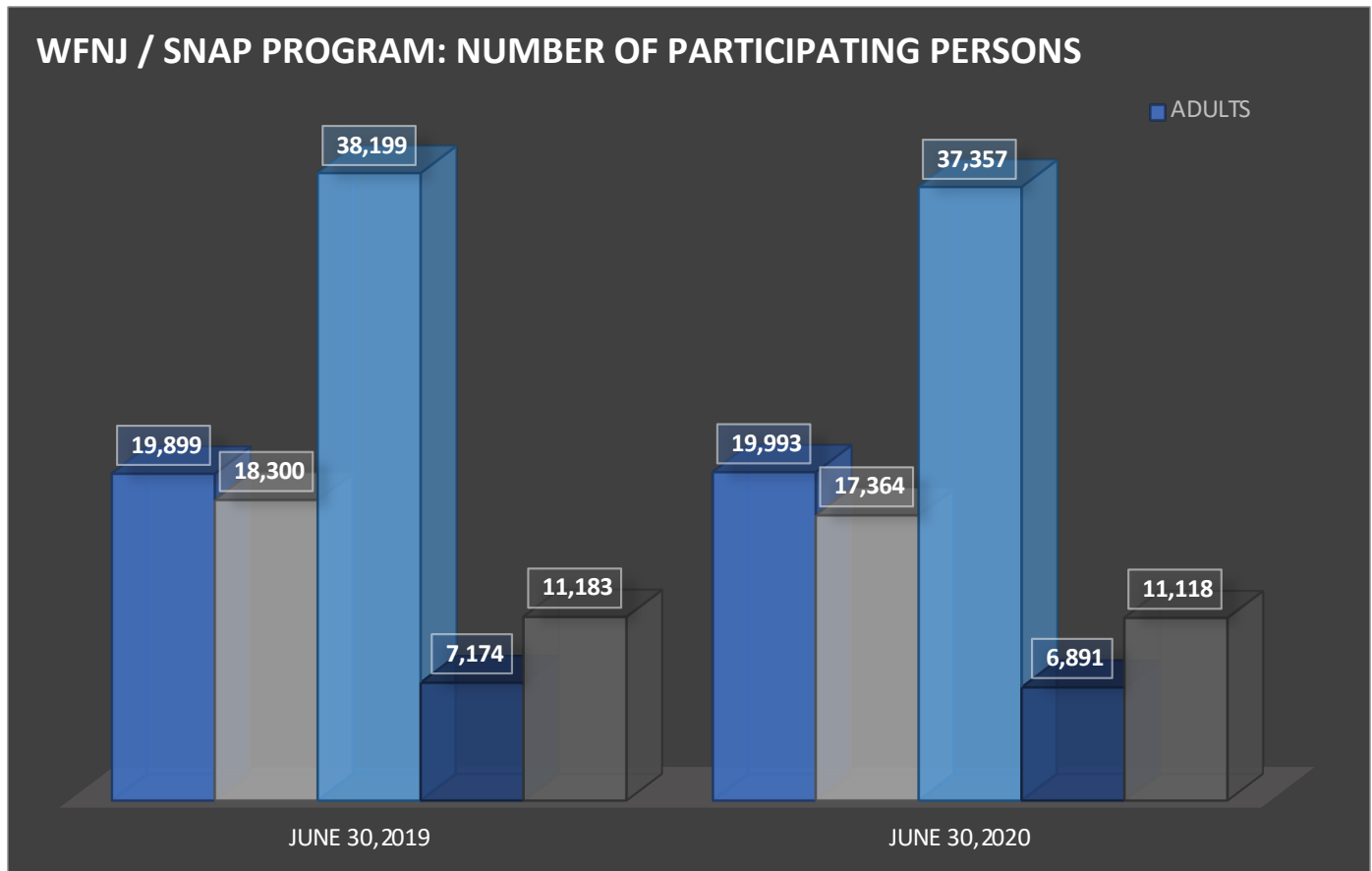
## AMERICAN JOB CENTER PERFORMANCE





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Always have a willing hand to help someone, you might be the only one that does."

Roy T. Bennett



## UNION COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD PROGRAM YEAR 2019-20 ANNUAL REPORT

THE UNION COUNTY AMERICAN JOB CENTER MET OR EXCEEDED THE PERFORMANCE GOALS ESTABLISHED BY THE NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT IN THE PERFORMANCE CATERGORIES MEASURED UNDER THE WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT ADULT, DISLOCATED WORKER, YOUTH, AND WAGNER-PEYSER.

### ADULT

| Indicator       | Actual     | LWDB    |            | Num | Den |
|-----------------|------------|---------|------------|-----|-----|
|                 |            | Plan    | % Achieved |     |     |
| Employment Q2   | 91.0 %     | 81.30%  | 112.10%    | 93  | 102 |
| Employment Q4   | 75.4 %     | 68.30%  | 110.50%    | 86  | 114 |
| Credential      | 78.8 %     | 50.40%  | 156.40%    | 82  | 104 |
| Skill Gains     | 55.56 %    | 0%      | 0%         | 15  | 27  |
| Median Earnings | \$5,613.00 | \$4,713 | 119.09%    | 93  | 0   |

### Dislocated Worker

| Indicator       | Actual     | LWDB    |            | Num | Den |
|-----------------|------------|---------|------------|-----|-----|
|                 |            | Plan    | % Achieved |     |     |
| Employment Q2   | 84.0 %     | 82.20%  | 102.20%    | 189 | 225 |
| Employment Q4   | 80.9 %     | 67.40%  | 120.00%    | 161 | 199 |
| Credential      | 84.4 %     | 54.00%  | 156.30%    | 135 | 160 |
| Skill Gains     | 55.6 %     | 0%      | 0%         | 55  | 99  |
| Median Earnings | \$7,138.00 | \$5,969 | 119.59%    | 189 | 0   |

### Youth

| Indicator       | Actual    | LWDB |            | Num | Den |
|-----------------|-----------|------|------------|-----|-----|
|                 |           | Plan | % Achieved |     |     |
| Employment Q2   | 84.9 %    | 76%  | 111.80%    | 79  | 93  |
| Employment Q4   | 70.5 %    | 49%  | 144.00%    | 79  | 112 |
| Credential      | 82.9 %    | 75%  | 110.00%    | 34  | 41  |
| Skill Gains     | 47.83 %   | 0%   | 0%         | 11  | 23  |
| Median Earnings | 2,714.0 % | 0%   | 0.00%      | 76  | 0   |

### Wagner Peyser

| Indicator       | Actual     | LWDB       |            | Num  | Den  |
|-----------------|------------|------------|------------|------|------|
|                 |            | Plan       | % Achieved |      |      |
| Employment Q2   | 60.30 %    | 60.70%     | 99.90%     | 2082 | 3434 |
| Employment Q4   | 60.26 %    | 61.90%     | 97.40%     | 2035 | 3377 |
| Credential      | 0.0 %      | 0%         | 0.00%      | 0    | 0    |
| Skill Gains     | 0.00 %     | 0%         | 0%         | 0    | 0    |
| Median Earnings | \$5,776.00 | \$4,568.00 | 126.45%    | 2082 | 0    |

# AMERICAN JOB CENTER PERFORMANCE



# UNION COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD PROGRAM YEAR 2019-20 ANNUAL REPORT

| PY 19<br>DISLOCATED<br>WORKER | Den<br>Employment<br>Q2 DW | Employment<br>Q2 DW | Den<br>Employment<br>Q4 DW | Employment<br>Q4 DW | Den<br>Credential<br>DW | Credential<br>DW | Den Skill<br>Gains DW | Skill<br>Gains<br>DW |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| 16-18                         | 0                          | 0.00%               | 1                          | 100.00%             | 1                       | 0.00%            | 0                     | 0.00%                |
| 19-24                         | 10                         | 100.00%             | 9                          | 100.00%             | 9                       | 77.78%           | 6                     | 50.00%               |
| 25-44                         | 104                        | 90.38%              | 78                         | 88.46%              | 63                      | 85.71%           | 46                    | 60.87%               |
| 45-54                         | 77                         | 81.82%              | 71                         | 83.10%              | 61                      | 83.61%           | 24                    | 54.17%               |
| 55-59                         | 14                         | 78.57%              | 17                         | 70.59%              | 12                      | 100.00%          | 12                    | 58.33%               |
| 60+                           | 20                         | 55.00%              | 23                         | 47.83%              | 14                      | 78.57%           | 11                    | 36.36%               |
| Male                          | 96                         | 86.46%              | 91                         | 81.32%              | 78                      | 83.33%           | 44                    | 45.45%               |
| Female                        | 128                        | 82.03%              | 108                        | 80.56%              | 82                      | 85.37%           | 54                    | 64.81%               |
| Did Not Self Identify         | 1                          | 100.00%             | 0                          | 0.00%               | 0                       | 0.00%            | 1                     | 0.00%                |
| Limited English               | 8                          | 87.50%              | 5                          | 60.00%              | 4                       | 100.00%          | 6                     | 50.00%               |
| Not Limited English           | 217                        | 83.87%              | 194                        | 81.44%              | 156                     | 83.97%           | 93                    | 55.91%               |
| No Disability                 | 208                        | 84.13%              | 187                        | 82.89%              | 152                     | 85.53%           | 89                    | 52.81%               |
| Disabled                      | 2                          | 50.00%              | 1                          | 100.00%             | 1                       | 100.00%          | 0                     | 0.00%                |
| Participant did not disclose  | 15                         | 86.67%              | 11                         | 45.45%              | 7                       | 57.14%           | 10                    | 80.00%               |
| Low Income                    | 28                         | 78.57%              | 23                         | 86.96%              | 21                      | 76.19%           | 17                    | 58.82%               |
| Not Low Income                | 197                        | 84.77%              | 176                        | 80.11%              | 139                     | 85.61%           | 82                    | 54.88%               |
| Not Single Parent             | 212                        | 83.96%              | 197                        | 81.22%              | 160                     | 84.38%           | 86                    | 55.81%               |
| Single Parent                 | 13                         | 84.62%              | 2                          | 50.00%              | 0                       | 0.00%            | 13                    | 53.85%               |
| Offender                      | 2                          | 100.00%             | 1                          | 100.00%             | 1                       | 0.00%            | 3                     | 66.67%               |
| Not an offender               | 30                         | 70.00%              | 20                         | 75.00%              | 11                      | 90.91%           | 9                     | 44.44%               |
| Did Not Disclose              | 193                        | 86.01%              | 178                        | 81.46%              | 148                     | 84.46%           | 87                    | 56.32%               |

**CHART ON THE LEFT:**  
CHARACTERISTICS OF  
PROGRAM YEAR 2019  
DISLOCATED WORKER  
PARTICIPANTS FUNDED  
UNDER THE WORKFORCE  
INNOVATION AND  
OPPORTUNITY ACT.

**CHART ON THE RIGHT:**  
CHARACTERISTICS OF  
PROGRAM YEAR 2019  
ADULT PARTICIPANTS  
FUNDED UNDER THE  
WORKFORCE INNOVATION  
AND OPPORTUNITY ACT.

| PY 19 ADULT                  | Den<br>Employment<br>Q2 Adult | Employment<br>Q2 Adult | Den<br>Employment<br>Q4 Adult | Employment<br>Q4 Adult | Den<br>Credential<br>Adult | Credential<br>Adult | Den Skill<br>Gains Adult | Skill<br>Gains<br>Adult |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| 16-18                        | 0                             | 0.00%                  | 0                             | 0.00%                  | 0                          | 0.00%               | 0                        | 0.00%                   |
| 19-24                        | 12                            | 100.00%                | 8                             | 100.00%                | 8                          | 75.00%              | 3                        | 0.00%                   |
| 25-44                        | 58                            | 89.66%                 | 71                            | 71.83%                 | 65                         | 86.15%              | 18                       | 55.56%                  |
| 45-54                        | 20                            | 90.00%                 | 24                            | 83.33%                 | 23                         | 69.57%              | 3                        | 66.67%                  |
| 55-59                        | 6                             | 100.00%                | 6                             | 66.67%                 | 5                          | 40.00%              | 3                        | 100.00%                 |
| 60+                          | 6                             | 83.33%                 | 5                             | 60.00%                 | 3                          | 66.67%              | 0                        | 0.00%                   |
| Male                         | 27                            | 92.59%                 | 29                            | 62.07%                 | 25                         | 80.00%              | 6                        | 33.33%                  |
| Female                       | 72                            | 90.28%                 | 81                            | 80.25%                 | 75                         | 80.00%              | 19                       | 63.16%                  |
| Did Not Self Identify        | 3                             | 100.00%                | 4                             | 75.00%                 | 4                          | 50.00%              | 2                        | 50.00%                  |
| Limited English              | 1                             | 100.00%                | 4                             | 75.00%                 | 4                          | 100.00%             | 5                        | 100.00%                 |
| Not Limited English          | 101                           | 91.09%                 | 110                           | 75.45%                 | 100                        | 78.00%              | 22                       | 45.45%                  |
| No Disability                | 91                            | 91.21%                 | 103                           | 75.73%                 | 93                         | 78.49%              | 23                       | 47.83%                  |
| Disabled                     | 1                             | 100.00%                | 0                             | 0.00%                  | 0                          | 0.00%               | 0                        | 0.00%                   |
| Participant did not disclose | 10                            | 90.00%                 | 11                            | 72.73%                 | 11                         | 81.82%              | 4                        | 100.00%                 |
| Low Income                   | 43                            | 86.05%                 | 49                            | 81.63%                 | 47                         | 80.85%              | 14                       | 64.29%                  |
| Not Low Income               | 59                            | 94.92%                 | 65                            | 70.77%                 | 57                         | 77.19%              | 13                       | 46.15%                  |
| Not Single Parent            | 98                            | 90.82%                 | 111                           | 75.68%                 | 101                        | 78.22%              | 24                       | 54.17%                  |
| Single Parent                | 4                             | 100.00%                | 3                             | 66.67%                 | 3                          | 100.00%             | 3                        | 66.67%                  |
| Offender                     | 0                             | 0.00%                  | 2                             | 50.00%                 | 2                          | 100.00%             | 1                        | 0.00%                   |
| Not an offender              | 11                            | 90.91%                 | 13                            | 84.62%                 | 12                         | 75.00%              | 3                        | 33.33%                  |
| Did Not Disclose             | 91                            | 91.21%                 | 99                            | 74.75%                 | 90                         | 78.89%              | 23                       | 60.87%                  |

| PY 19 Youth                  | Den<br>Employment<br>Q2 Youth | Employment<br>Q2 Youth | Den<br>Employment<br>Q4 Youth | Employment<br>Q4 Youth | Den<br>Credential<br>Youth | Credential<br>Youth | Den Skill<br>Gains Youth | Skill<br>Gains<br>Youth |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| 16-18                        | 54                            | 81.5 %                 | 48                            | 70.8 %                 | 24                         | 79.17%              | 18                       | 44.44%                  |
| 19-24                        | 36                            | 91.7 %                 | 61                            | 70.5 %                 | 14                         | 92.86%              | 3                        | 100.00%                 |
| Male                         | 34                            | 79.4 %                 | 37                            | 73.0 %                 | 9                          | 77.78%              | 7                        | 42.86%                  |
| Female                       | 56                            | 89.3 %                 | 72                            | 69.4 %                 | 29                         | 86.21%              | 14                       | 57.14%                  |
| Did Not Self Identify        | 0                             |                        | 0                             |                        | 0                          | 0.00%               | 0                        |                         |
| Limited English              | 5                             | 60.0 %                 | 7                             | 71.4 %                 | 3                          | 66.67%              | 0                        |                         |
| Not Limited English          | 85                            | 87.1 %                 | 102                           | 70.6 %                 | 35                         | 85.71%              | 21                       | 52.38%                  |
| No Disability                | 86                            | 86.0 %                 | 100                           | 73.0 %                 | 35                         | 82.86%              | 21                       | 52.38%                  |
| Disabled                     | 2                             | 50.0 %                 | 4                             | 25.0 %                 | 1                          | 100.00%             | 0                        |                         |
| Participant did not disclose | 2                             | 100.0 %                | 5                             | 60.0 %                 | 2                          | 100.00%             | 0                        |                         |
| Low Income                   | 68                            | 88.2 %                 | 87                            | 71.3 %                 | 30                         | 80.00%              | 19                       | 47.37%                  |
| Not Low Income               | 22                            | 77.3 %                 | 22                            | 68.2 %                 | 8                          | 100.00%             | 2                        | 100.00%                 |
| Not Single Parent            | 84                            | 84.5 %                 | 98                            | 69.4 %                 | 36                         | 83.33%              | 19                       | 47.37%                  |
| Single Parent                | 6                             | 100.0 %                | 11                            | 81.8 %                 | 2                          | 100.00%             | 2                        | 100.00%                 |
| Offender                     | 2                             | 50.0 %                 | 2                             | 100.0 %                | 0                          | 0.00%               | 0                        |                         |
| Not an offender              | 35                            | 91.4 %                 | 54                            | 74.1 %                 | 19                         | 89.47%              | 11                       | 54.55%                  |
| Did Not Disclose             | 53                            | 83.0 %                 | 53                            | 66.0 %                 | 19                         | 78.95%              | 10                       | 50.00%                  |

**CHART ON THE LEFT:**  
CHARACTERISTICS OF  
PROGRAM YEAR 2019  
YOUTH PARTICIPANTS  
FUNDED UNDER THE  
WORKFORCE INNOVATION  
AND OPPORTUNITY ACT.



**“Open doors and embrace new opportunities.”**  
**Thomas Fuller**

UNION COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD  
PROGRAM YEAR 2018 – 2019  
**ANNUAL REPORT**





BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
STRATEGIC PLAN VISION  
CORE VALUES  
PROGRAM YEAR 2018 OPERATING BUDGET  
POLICY DIRECTIVES  
LOCAL AREA STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE  
TRAINING FUNDS AWARDED  
AMERICAN JOB CENTER PERFORMANCE





# BOARD OF DIRECTORS



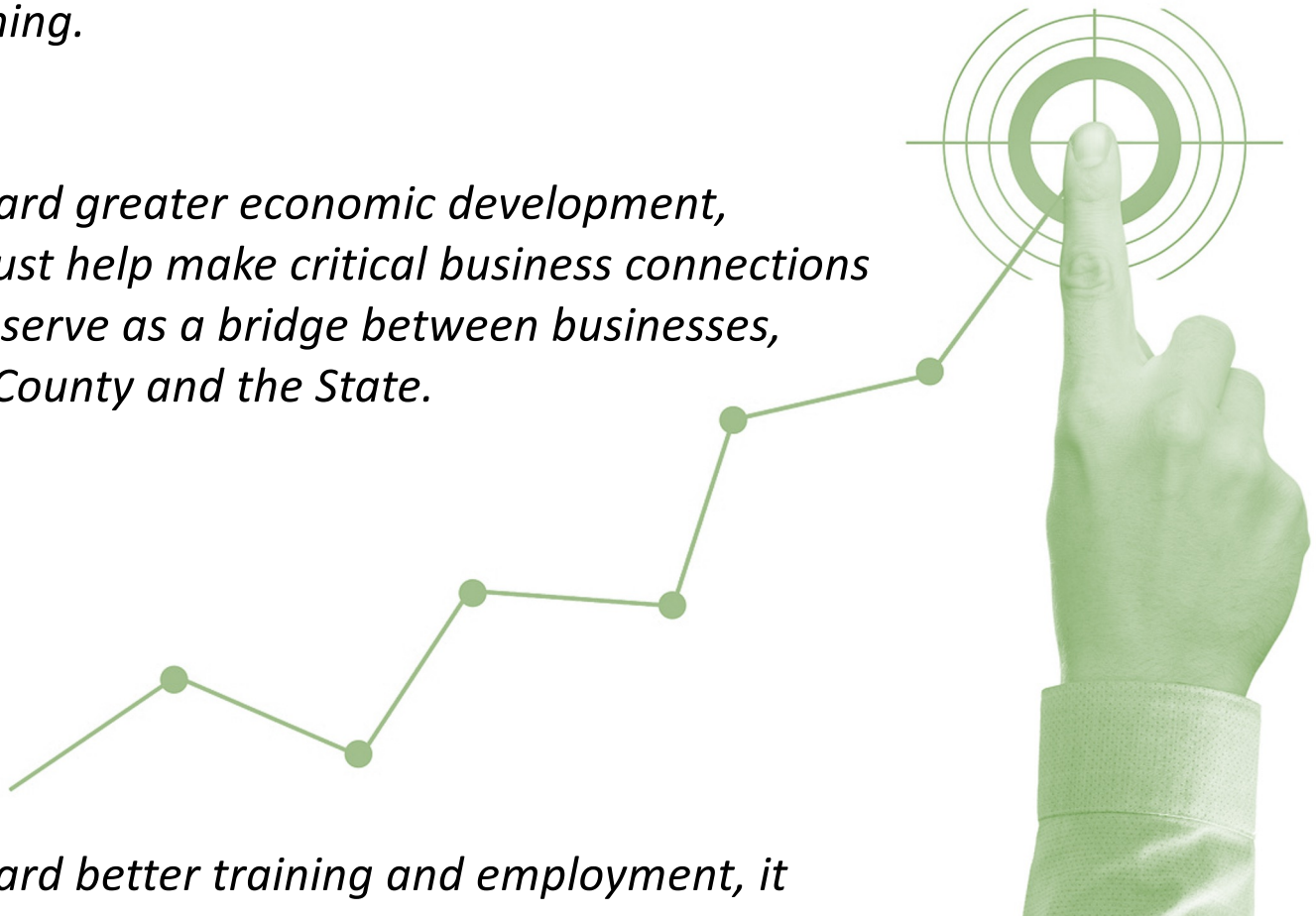
| First Name  | Last Name           | Title   | Business/Organization                                      |
|-------------|---------------------|---|--|
| Juan Carlos | Dominguez, Chairman | Vice President                                | JJJ Distributors   |
| Gloria      | Durham, Vice Chair  | CEO   | Qunnections Management Group                               |
| Gary        | Pfarr, Secretary    | Assistant Business Manager                    | International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local 102 |
| Mark        | Bocchieri           | Director External Affairs                     | Verizon New Jersey   |
| James R.    | Brady               | Vice President and General Manager            | The Savor Group, LLC                                       |
| Richard     | Capac               | Director                                      | Leaf Group, LLC  |
| Donna       | Dedinsky            | Manager, Associate Relations                  | Wakefern Food Corporation                                  |
| Tina        | Earley              | Manager, Government & Community Affairs       | Elizabethtown Gas  |
| Salvador    | Garcia              | Principal                                     | MAS Development Group                                      |
| Edwin       | Gomez               | Owner   | Barcode- Elizabeth   |
| Glenn       | Nacion              | Vice President Human Resources                | Trinitas Regional Medical Center                           |
| Tony        | Patti               | Owner   | Two Tony's Pizzeria, Linden                                |
| Stan        | Robinson, Jr.       | Owner   | SHR Marketing, LLC   |
| Kamran      | Tasharofi, M.D.     | President/Owner                               | Union County Health Care Associates                        |
| Erich       | Peter               | Director of Training and Technical Assistance | Union County Economic Development Corporation              |
| Richard     | Malcolm             | Business Agent                                | Ironworkers, Local #11                                     |
| Paul        | Belardo             | Council Rep                                   | KML Carpenters   |
| Pamela      | Capaci              | Executive Director                            | Prevention Links   |
| Krystal     | Canady              | CEO   | Gateway Family YMCA  |
| Teresa      | Soto-Vega           | Executive Director                            | PROCEED  |
| Margaret    | McMenamin, Ph. D.   | President                                     | Union County College                                       |
| Matthew     | Caruso              | Director                                      | Kean University  |
| Peter       | Capodice            | Superintendent                                | County Vo-Tech School                                      |
| Danny       | Robertozzi          | Superintendent                                | K-12 System Superintendent                                 |
| David       | Moskowitz           | Manager                                       | ES / Wagner-Peyser Representative                          |
| Edward      | Faver               | Manager                                       | DVRS Representative  |
| Debbie-Ann  | Anderson            | Director                                      | Division of Human Services                                 |
| James       | Horne               | CEO   | United Way of Greater Union County                         |
| Sandra      | McLachlan           | HR Business Partner                           | Phillips 66 Bayway Refinery                                |
| Anna        | Belin- Pyles        | Superintendent                                | Plainfield Public Schools                                  |
| Charles     | Gillon              | Division Director                             | Division of Social Services                                |
| John        | Perry               | Executive Director                            | Council for Airport Opportunities                          |

# STRATEGIC PLAN VISION



*The Workforce System sees itself as both an effective catalyst for economic development and a major resource for employment and training.*

*Toward greater economic development, it must help make critical business connections and serve as a bridge between businesses, the County and the State.*



*Toward better training and employment, it must help residents overcome unemployment, underemployment, and economic struggles and guide them along a path of successful professional growth.*

*Such a dual vision establishes the ultimate direction and tone for the Union County Workforce System.*





The Union County Workforce Investment Board shall align its workforce development strategy to mirror the core values outlined within New Jersey's Unified Workforce Investment Plan. The ***Local 2016-2020 Strategic Plan*** identifies Six Key Values aimed to drive our Workforce Development Activities.

1. Increased Emphasis on Career Pathways and Industry-Credential Attainment.
2. Expanded One-Stop Integration of Service Delivery
3. Broadened Use of Technology in Operation & Customer-Facing Processes.
4. Expanded Access to Service Levels.
5. Enhanced Employer Engagement.
6. Expanded Use of Evaluation Metrics Beyond National Performance Standards/ Systematic Oversight.



“Open doors and embrace new opportunities.”

Thomas Fuller

# PROGRAM YEAR 2018 OPERATING BUDGET



|                                     | WIOA Adult         | WIOA ISY         | WIOA OSY         | WIOA<br>Dislocated<br>Worker | Workforce<br>Learning<br>Link | WFNJ TANF          | TANF Work<br>Verification | CAVP            | WFNJ<br>GA/SNAP    | Total              |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|-----------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| <b>PY 2018 Allocation</b>           | <b>\$1,043,120</b> | <b>\$246,712</b> | <b>\$740,135</b> | <b>\$1,270,549</b>           | <b>\$213,000</b>              | <b>\$1,532,042</b> | <b>\$42,000</b>           | <b>\$42,420</b> | <b>\$1,044,474</b> | <b>\$6,174,451</b> |
| <b>ADMINISTRATION</b>               |                    |                  |                  |                              |                               |                    |                           |                 |                    |                    |
| Wages                               | \$66,290           | \$15,130         | \$47,754         | \$82,110                     | \$8,036                       | \$110,263          |                           |                 | \$71,356           | \$400,940          |
| Fringe Benefits                     | \$34,507           | \$7,876          | \$24,858         | \$42,742                     | \$4,183                       | \$57,397           |                           |                 | \$37,144           | \$208,705          |
| Other (OE)                          | \$3,515            | \$1,665          | \$1,402          | \$2,203                      | \$2,691                       | \$16,185           |                           |                 | \$16,837           | \$44,498           |
| Total Administration                | \$104,312          | \$24,671         | \$74,013         | \$127,055                    | \$14,910                      | \$183,845          | \$0                       | \$0             | \$125,337          | \$654,143          |
| % of Allocation                     | 10%                | 10%              | 10%              | 10%                          | 7%                            | 12%                |                           |                 | 12%                |                    |
| <b>PROGRAM</b>                      |                    |                  |                  |                              |                               |                    |                           |                 |                    |                    |
| Wages                               | \$61,009           | \$8,532          | \$0              | \$18,748                     | \$14,540                      |                    |                           |                 | \$0                | \$102,829          |
| Fringe Benefits                     | \$31,757           | \$4,441          | \$0              | \$9,759                      | \$7,569                       |                    |                           |                 | \$0                | \$53,527           |
| Rent, Buildings & Grounds           | \$96,270           | \$0              | \$0              | \$66,899                     | \$17,982                      | \$52,197           |                           |                 | \$10,137           | \$243,485          |
| Travel                              | \$3,500            | \$825            | \$675            | \$2,500                      |                               |                    |                           |                 |                    | \$7,500            |
| Conferences                         | \$3,500            | \$825            | \$675            | \$2,500                      |                               |                    |                           |                 |                    | \$7,500            |
| Equipment - Purchase                | \$3,500            | \$825            | \$675            | \$2,500                      |                               |                    |                           |                 |                    | \$7,500            |
| Equipment- Rental                   | \$2,400            | \$600            | \$1,800          | \$2,400                      |                               |                    |                           |                 |                    | \$7,200            |
| Office Supplies                     | \$3,500            | \$825            | \$675            | \$2,500                      |                               |                    |                           |                 |                    | \$7,500            |
| Memberships & Subscriptions         | \$500              | \$125            | \$375            | \$500                        |                               |                    |                           |                 |                    | \$1,500            |
| Professional Service Costs          | \$500              | \$125            | \$375            | \$500                        |                               |                    |                           |                 |                    | \$1,500            |
| Publication and Printing            | \$500              | \$125            | \$375            | \$500                        |                               |                    |                           |                 |                    | \$1,500            |
| Training & Education                | \$3,500            | \$825            | \$675            | \$2,500                      |                               |                    |                           |                 |                    | \$7,500            |
| Transportation                      | \$500              | \$125            | \$375            | \$500                        |                               |                    |                           |                 |                    | \$1,500            |
| Other (OE)                          | \$112,872          | \$7,342          | \$4,946          | \$10,187                     | \$0                           | \$0                | \$42,000                  | \$42,420        | \$0                | \$219,767          |
| Total Program                       | \$323,808          | \$25,540         | \$11,621         | \$122,494                    | \$40,090                      | \$52,197           | \$42,000                  | \$42,420        | \$10,137           | \$670,308          |
| <b>CONTRACTS</b>                    |                    |                  |                  |                              |                               |                    |                           |                 |                    |                    |
| American Job Center                 |                    |                  |                  |                              |                               |                    |                           |                 |                    |                    |
| Operator Services                   |                    |                  |                  |                              |                               |                    |                           |                 |                    |                    |
| Wages                               | \$109,242          | \$21,689         | \$65,068         | \$290,105                    | \$102,047                     | \$513,819          |                           |                 | \$236,913          | \$1,338,883        |
| Fringe Benefits                     | \$85,820           | \$11,585         | \$34,756         | \$152,266                    | \$50,037                      | \$265,401          |                           |                 | \$107,087          | \$706,953          |
| Office Supplies                     | \$9,000            | \$725            | \$2,176          | \$9,000                      | \$5,916                       | \$10,780           |                           |                 | \$0                | \$37,597           |
| Client Supportive Services          | \$50,000           | \$12,500         | \$37,500         | \$50,000                     | \$0                           | \$6,000            |                           |                 | \$0                | \$156,000          |
| Individual Training Accounts        | \$360,938          | \$0              | \$0              | \$519,629                    | \$0                           | \$0                |                           |                 | \$0                | \$880,567          |
| Total American Job Center Services  | \$615,000          | \$46,500         | \$139,500        | \$1,021,000                  | \$158,000                     | \$796,000          | \$0                       | \$0             | \$344,000          | \$3,120,000        |
| <b>PY 2018 Contract Services</b>    |                    |                  |                  |                              |                               |                    |                           |                 |                    |                    |
| WIOA Youth Consortium               |                    | \$150,000        | \$515,000        |                              |                               |                    |                           |                 |                    | \$665,000          |
| WFNJ-TANF                           |                    |                  |                  |                              |                               | \$500,000          |                           |                 |                    | \$500,000          |
| WFNJ-GA/SNAP                        |                    |                  |                  |                              |                               |                    |                           |                 | \$565,000          | \$565,000          |
| <b>Total Contracts</b>              | <b>\$615,000</b>   | <b>\$196,500</b> | <b>\$654,500</b> | <b>\$1,021,000</b>           | <b>\$158,000</b>              | <b>\$1,296,000</b> | <b>\$0</b>                | <b>\$0</b>      | <b>\$909,000</b>   | <b>\$4,850,000</b> |
| <b>Total Projected Expenditures</b> | <b>\$1,043,120</b> | <b>\$246,712</b> | <b>\$740,135</b> | <b>\$1,270,549</b>           | <b>\$213,000</b>              | <b>\$1,532,042</b> | <b>\$42,000</b>           | <b>\$42,420</b> | <b>\$1,044,474</b> | <b>\$6,174,451</b> |



## **POLICY DIRECTIVES APPROVED BY THE UNION COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD**

### **PARTNER REFERRALS POLICY DIRECTIVE**

The policy directive provides information on the provision of services under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) in comprehensive One-Stop Centers operated in Union County. It establishes policy on participant access to services and required procedures for referral to WIOA One-Stop Partners for additional services.

### **INDIVIDUAL TRAINING ACCOUNTS POLICY DIRECTIVE**

The policy directive is drafted to direct the allocation of resources for occupational training in the seven (7) sectors identified by the State as the areas that offer the most employment opportunities. The County provides Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) to participants to access occupational training which has been the traditional training procurement process.

### **FINANCIAL PROCEDURES POLICY DIRECTIVE**

The policy directive is designed to provide operational, financial guidance and prescribes the uniform accounting procedures for the implementation of the provisions of federal job training programs.

### **INDIVIDUAL SERVICE STRATEGY POLICY DIRECTIVE**

The purpose of this policy directive is to put forward guidance and instruction for the development and completion of the WIOA Youth Program Individual Service Strategy (ISS).

### **JOB SEEKER INITIAL SERVICE STRATEGY POLICY DIRECTIVE**

The purpose of this policy directive is to establish a service delivery policy in which all customers are interviewed, evaluated, or assessed and provided career planning services prior to placing a customer into training.

### **AMERICAN JOB SEEKER CERTIFICATION STANDARDS POLICY DIRECTIVE**

The purpose of this policy directive is to act as a self-evaluation tool in anticipation of a formal certification of the American Job Center, in according to Federal Guidelines. The policy directive provides guidance on standards for satisfying job seekers and as well as services to businesses seeking employees through the American Job Center.



## **POLICY DIRECTIVES APPROVED BY THE UNION COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD**

### **PERFORMANCE DATA RELATED TO REPORTABLE INDIVIDUALS AND PARTICIPANT INDIVIDUALS**

The purpose of this directive is to provide policy direction to the American Job Centers of Union County (One Stop Career Centers) and to all other Sub-Recipients and Contractors as it relates to what program elements and program performance data said Sub- Recipients are required to capture, track, analyze and report.

### **COSTS PRINCIPALS AND ALLOWABLE COSTS**

The purpose of this policy directive is to provide guidance regarding the general cost principles and allowable costs for the administration of Federal subawards awarded to subrecipients of the Union County Workforce Development Board.

### **ACCRURAL FINANCIAL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

The purpose of this policy directive is to provide guidance regarding the accrual financial reporting requirements of Sub-Recipients under 2 CFR 200 Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards; Final Rule.

### **AUDIT REQUIREMENTS**

The purpose of this policy directive is to provide guidance regarding the audit requirements of Sub-Recipients under 2 CFR 200 Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards; Final Rule.

### **BUDGET AND FISCAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

The purpose of this policy directive on budget and fiscal management policies and procedures is to summarize the procedures utilized to develop, review and manage the budget and the fiscal activities of the grants that under the oversight authority of the workforce development board.

### **REQUIRED CERTIFICATIONS, DECLARATIONS, STANDARD ASSURANCES, AND GENERAL PROVISIONS**

The purpose of policy directive is to clearly articulate the federal certification requirements that are to be executed by sub-recipients, sub-sub-recipients and/or sub-awardees of federal funding, as delineated in 2 CFR 200.415.

# LOCAL AREA STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE



The Union County 2016 Local Strategic Plan presented a comprehensive set of 32 action steps aimed at addressing workforce needs and opportunities across the county. Such action steps were identified and approved by the Workforce Development Board following an extensive, independent examination of the Workforce System as a whole.



# LOCAL AREA STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE



## GOAL 1:

### **INCREASED EMPHASIS ON CAREER PATHWAYS AND INDUSTRY—CREDENTIAL ATTAINMENT**

- Continue to identify existing pre-apprenticeship and registered apprenticeship opportunities for our clients and expand the availability of such opportunities that lead to nationally-recognized industry credentials.

## GOAL 2:

### **EXPANDED ONE-STOP INTEGRATION OF SERVICE DELIVERY**

- Continue holding American Job Center partner and AJC staff meetings on a monthly basis.
- Adopt an “Affiliate Partner” status initiative to expand the visibility and reach of the two AJC Centers out into our partner community.

## GOAL 3:

### **BROADENED USE OF TECHNOLOGY IN OPERATION & CUSTOMER-FACING PROCESSES**

- Install new System-Wide Client Management System providing essential training along with a rapid implementation timetable.

## GOAL 4:

### **EXPANDED ACCESS TO SERVICE LEVELS**

- Continue to provide additional guidance to career coaches on options for co-enrollment to stretch funding while offering increased diverse educational and occupational services.

**THE UNION COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD AND THE UNION COUNTY BOARD OF CHOSEN FREEHOLDERS APPROVED A MODIFIED PLAN.**

## GOAL 5

### **ENHANCED EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT**

- Survey availability of existing Registered Apprenticeships and Pre-Apprenticeship Programs accessible to Union County WIOA eligible job seekers. Incorporate these opportunities into our menu of services to our customers.

## GOAL 6

### **EXPANDED USE OF EVALUATION METRICS BEYOND NATIONAL PERFORMANCE STANDARDS/SYSTEMATIC OVERSIGHT**

- Begin to collect data on outcomes accounting for a wider assortment of training strategies over varied job seeker “PRE” intervention situations.





# TRAINING FUNDS AWARDED



**THE UNITED WAY OF GREATER UNION COUNTY** WAS AWARDED A CONTRACT FOR THE PROVISION OF WIOA OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH SERVICES IN EASTERN UNION COUNTY IN THE AMOUNT OF \$235,000.

**THE UNITED WAY OF GREATER UNION COUNTY** WAS AWARDED A CONTRACT FOR THE PROVISION OF WIOA OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH IN WESTERN UNION COUNTY YOUTH IN THE AMOUNT OF \$280,000.

**THE UNITED WAY OF GREATER UNION COUNTY** WAS AWARDED A CONTRACT FOR THE PROVISION OF WIOA IN-SCHOOL YOUTH IN UNION COUNTY IN THE AMOUNT OF \$235,000.

**UNION COUNTY VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL SCHOOLS** WAS AWARDED A CONTRACT FOR THE PROVISION OF SIMON YOUTH ACADEMY OPERATOR FOR WIOA OUT OF SCHOOL YOUTH IN THE AMOUNT OF \$333,000.

**UNION COUNTY COLLEGE** WAS AWARDED A CONTRACT FOR THE PROVISION OF AMERICAN JOB CENTER AFFILIATE CAREER SERVICES OPERATOR FOR WIOA ADULT AND DISLOCATED WORKERS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$600,000.

**UNION COUNTY COLLEGE** WAS AWARDED A CONTRACT FOR THE PROVISION OF WORKFIRST NEW JERSEY PROGRAMS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$450,000.

**WORKFORCE ADVANTAGE** WAS AWARDED A CONTRACT FOR THE PROVISION OF WORKFIRST NEW JERSEY PROGRAMS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$450,000.

**URBAN LEAGUE OF UNION COUNTY** WAS AWARDED A CONTRACT FOR THE PROVISION OF WORKFIRST NEW JERSEY PROGRAMS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$150,000.

**THE ARC OF UNION COUNTY** WAS AWARDED A CONTRACT FOR THE PROVISION OF WORKFIRST NEW JERSEY PROGRAMS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$100,000.



# AMERICAN JOB CENTER PERFORMANCE



THE UNION COUNTY AMERICAN JOB CENTER MET OR EXCEEDED THE PERFORMANCE GOALS ESTABLISHED BY THE NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT IN THE PERFORMANCE CATERGORIES MEASURED UNDER THE WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT ADULT, DISLOCATED WORKER, YOUTH, AND WAGNER-PEYSER.

## ADULT

| Indicator       | Actual     | LWDB    |            | Num | Den |
|-----------------|------------|---------|------------|-----|-----|
|                 |            | Plan    | % Achieved |     |     |
| Employment Q2   | 87.5 %     | 80.60%  | 108.56%    | 63  | 72  |
| Employment Q4   | 87.5 %     | 67.50%  | 130.86%    | 53  | 60  |
| Credential      | 82.7 %     | 50.10%  | 165.05%    | 43  | 52  |
| Skill Gains     | 72.22 %    | 0%      | 0%         | 65  | 90  |
| Median Earnings | \$6,495.00 | \$4,513 | 143.91%    | 111 | 0   |

## Dislocated Worker

| Indicator       | Actual     | LWDB    |            | Num | Den |
|-----------------|------------|---------|------------|-----|-----|
|                 |            | Plan    | % Achieved |     |     |
| Employment Q2   | 79.6 %     | 81.70%  | 97.44%     | 164 | 206 |
| Employment Q4   | 69.7 %     | 66.50%  | 104.74%    | 202 | 290 |
| Credential      | 88.6 %     | 53.50%  | 165.64%    | 109 | 123 |
| Skill Gains     | 88.6 %     | 0%      | 0%         | 136 | 190 |
| Median Earnings | \$8,636.00 | \$5,869 | 147.15%    | 340 | 0   |

## Youth

| Indicator       | Actual  | LWDB |            | Num | Den |
|-----------------|---------|------|------------|-----|-----|
|                 |         | Plan | % Achieved |     |     |
| Employment Q2   | 97.0 %  | 75%  | 129.35%    | 65  | 67  |
| Employment Q4   | 79.3 %  | 40%  | 198.17%    | 65  | 82  |
| Credential      | 100.0 % | 74%  | 135.14%    | 11  | 11  |
| Skill Gains     | 63.64 % | 0%   | 0%         | 7   | 11  |
| Median Earnings | 0.0 %   | 0%   | 0.00%      | 0   | 0   |

## Wagner Peyser

| Indicator       | Actual     | LWDB       |            | Num  | Den  |
|-----------------|------------|------------|------------|------|------|
|                 |            | Plan       | % Achieved |      |      |
| Employment Q2   | 57.46 %    | 55.70%     | 103.16%    | 2261 | 3935 |
| Employment Q4   | 58.25 %    | 60.90%     | 95.65%     | 2552 | 4381 |
| Credential      | 0.0 %      | 0%         | 0.00%      | 0    | 0    |
| Skill Gains     | 0.00 %     | 0%         | 0%         | 0    | 0    |
| Median Earnings | \$5,219.00 | \$4,468.00 | 116.80%    | 4805 | 0    |



# AMERICAN JOB CENTER PERFORMANCE



| PY 18<br>DISLOCATED<br>WORKER | Den<br>Employment<br>Q2 DW | Employment<br>Q2 DW | Den<br>Employment<br>Q4 DW | Employment<br>Q4 DW | Den<br>Credential<br>DW | Credential<br>DW | Den Skill<br>Gains DW | Skill<br>Gains<br>DW |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| 16-18                         | 1                          | 100.00%             | 0                          |                     | 0                       |                  | 0                     |                      |
| 19-24                         | 6                          | 100.00%             | 15                         | 93.33%              | 5                       | 100.00%          | 13                    | 69.23%               |
| 25-44                         | 82                         | 89.02%              | 125                        | 77.60%              | 60                      | 88.33%           | 94                    | 71.28%               |
| 45-54                         | 58                         | 86.21%              | 72                         | 70.83%              | 35                      | 85.71%           | 59                    | 74.58%               |
| 55-59                         | 28                         | 67.86%              | 34                         | 73.53%              | 18                      | 88.89%           | 14                    | 64.29%               |
| 60+                           | 31                         | 48.39%              | 44                         | 34.09%              | 5                       | 100.00%          | 10                    | 70.00%               |
| Male                          | 97                         | 85.57%              | 115                        | 75.65%              | 65                      | 83.08%           | 83                    | 63.86%               |
| Female                        | 108                        | 74.07%              | 172                        | 65.12%              | 56                      | 94.64%           | 105                   | 77.14%               |
| Did Not Self Identify         | 1                          | 100.00%             | 3                          | 100.00%             | 2                       | 100.00%          | 2                     | 100.00%              |
| Limited English               | 2                          | 100.00%             | 1                          | 100.00%             | 1                       | 100.00%          | 6                     | 83.33%               |
| Not Limited English           | 204                        | 79.41%              | 289                        | 69.55%              | 122                     | 88.52%           | 184                   | 71.20%               |
| No Disability                 | 194                        | 80.41%              | 273                        | 70.33%              | 114                     | 87.72%           | 172                   | 71.51%               |
| Disabled                      | 3                          | 33.33%              | 4                          | 50.00%              | 0                       |                  | 2                     | 100.00%              |
| Participant did not disclose  | 9                          | 77.78%              | 13                         | 61.54%              | 9                       | 100.00%          | 16                    | 68.75%               |
| Low Income                    | 19                         | 89.47%              | 24                         | 79.17%              | 15                      | 93.33%           | 28                    | 75.00%               |
| Not Low Income                | 187                        | 78.61%              | 266                        | 68.80%              | 108                     | 87.96%           | 162                   | 70.99%               |
| Not Single Parent             | 205                        | 79.51%              | 288                        | 69.44%              | 122                     | 88.52%           | 181                   | 71.27%               |
| Single Parent                 | 1                          | 100.00%             | 2                          | 100.00%             | 1                       | 100.00%          | 9                     | 77.78%               |
| Offender                      | 0                          |                     | 0                          |                     | 0                       |                  | 1                     | 100.00%              |
| Not an offender               | 7                          | 100.00%             | 7                          | 71.43%              | 4                       | 100.00%          | 17                    | 76.47%               |
| Did Not Disclose              | 199                        | 78.89%              | 283                        | 69.61%              | 119                     | 88.24%           | 172                   |                      |

**CHART ON THE LEFT:**  
CHARACTERISTICS OF  
PROGRAM YEAR 2018  
DISLOCATED WORKER  
PARTICIPANTS FUNDED  
UNDER THE WORKFORCE  
INNOVATION AND  
OPPORTUNITY ACT.

**CHART ON THE RIGHT:**  
CHARACTERISTICS OF  
PROGRAM YEAR 2018  
ADULT PARTICIPANTS  
FUNDED UNDER THE  
WORKFORCE INNOVATION  
AND OPPORTUNITY ACT.

| PY 18 ADULT                  | Den<br>Employment<br>Q2 Adult | Employment<br>Q2 Adult | Den<br>Employment<br>t Q4 Adult | Employment<br>Q4 Adult | Den<br>Credential<br>Adult | Credential<br>Adult | Den Skill<br>Gains Adult | Skill<br>Gains<br>Adult |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| 16-18                        | 0                             |                        | 0                               |                        | 0                          |                     | 0                        |                         |
| 19-24                        | 8                             | 100.00%                | 8                               | 87.50%                 | 7                          | 100.00%             | 11                       | 72.73%                  |
| 25-44                        | 41                            | 90.24%                 | 39                              | 94.87%                 | 34                         | 79.41%              | 41                       | 78.05%                  |
| 45-54                        | 14                            | 78.57%                 | 7                               | 57.14%                 | 6                          | 83.33%              | 23                       | 69.57%                  |
| 55-59                        | 7                             | 71.43%                 | 3                               | 100.00%                | 3                          | 66.67%              | 9                        | 55.56%                  |
| 60+                          | 2                             | 100.00%                | 3                               | 66.67%                 | 2                          | 100.00%             | 6                        | 66.67%                  |
| Male                         | 16                            | 81.25%                 | 18                              | 88.89%                 | 16                         | 75.00%              | 27                       | 62.96%                  |
| Female                       | 53                            | 88.68%                 | 41                              | 87.80%                 | 35                         | 85.71%              | 60                       | 75.00%                  |
| Did Not Self Identify        | 3                             | 100.00%                | 1                               | 100.00%                | 1                          | 100.00%             | 3                        | 100.00%                 |
| Limited English              | 2                             | 100.00%                | 0                               |                        | 0                          |                     | 3                        | 66.67%                  |
| Not Limited English          | 70                            | 87.14%                 | 60                              | 88.33%                 | 52                         | 82.69%              | 87                       | 72.41%                  |
| No Disability                | 62                            | 87.10%                 | 50                              | 90.00%                 | 44                         | 81.82%              | 83                       | 75.90%                  |
| Disabled                     | 0                             |                        | 1                               | 0.00%                  | 0                          |                     | 1                        | 100.00%                 |
| Participant did not disclose | 10                            | 90.00%                 | 9                               | 88.89%                 | 8                          | 87.50%              | 6                        | 16.67%                  |
| Low Income                   | 30                            | 93.33%                 | 19                              | 84.21%                 | 18                         | 83.33%              | 28                       | 82.14%                  |
| Not Low Income               | 42                            | 83.33%                 | 41                              | 90.24%                 | 34                         | 82.35%              | 62                       | 67.74%                  |
| Not Single Parent            | 71                            | 88.73%                 | 59                              | 88.14%                 | 51                         | 82.35%              | 89                       | 71.91%                  |
| Single Parent                | 1                             | 0.00%                  | 1                               | 100.00%                | 1                          | 100.00%             | 1                        | 100.00%                 |
| Offender                     | 0                             |                        | 0                               |                        | 0                          |                     | 1                        | 100.00%                 |
| Not an offender              | 7                             | 85.71%                 | 5                               | 80.00%                 | 5                          | 100.00%             | 9                        | 77.78%                  |
| Did Not Disclose             | 65                            | 87.69%                 | 55                              | 89.09%                 | 47                         | 80.85%              | 80                       | 71.25%                  |

| PY 18 Youth                  | Den<br>Employment<br>Q2 Youth | Employment<br>Q2 Youth | Den<br>Employment<br>Q4 Youth | Employment<br>Q4 Youth | Den<br>Credential<br>Youth | Credential<br>Youth | Den Skill<br>Gains Youth | Skill<br>Gains<br>Youth |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| 16-18                        | 18                            | 94.44%                 | 25                            | 60.00%                 | 3                          | 100.00%             | 5                        | 100.00%                 |
| 19-24                        | 49                            | 97.96%                 | 57                            | 87.72%                 | 8                          | 100.00%             | 6                        | 33.33%                  |
| Male                         | 24                            | 95.83%                 | 30                            | 70.00%                 | 4                          | 100.00%             | 5                        | 60.00%                  |
| Female                       | 39                            | 97.44%                 | 44                            | 81.82%                 | 7                          | 100.00%             | 6                        | 66.67%                  |
| Did Not Self Identify        | 4                             | 100.00%                | 8                             | 100.00%                | 0                          | 0.00%               | 0                        |                         |
| Limited English              | 1                             | 100.00%                | 0                             |                        | 0                          | 0.00%               | 1                        | 100.00%                 |
| Not Limited English          | 66                            | 96.97%                 | 82                            | 79.27%                 | 11                         | 100.00%             | 10                       | 60.00%                  |
| No Disability                | 58                            | 98.28%                 | 74                            | 78.38%                 | 9                          | 100.00%             | 9                        | 66.67%                  |
| Disabled                     | 3                             | 66.67%                 | 4                             | 75.00%                 | 1                          | 100.00%             | 2                        | 50.00%                  |
| Participant did not disclose | 6                             | 100.00%                | 4                             | 100.00%                | 1                          | 100.00%             | 0                        |                         |
| Low Income                   | 56                            | 96.43%                 | 67                            | 76.12%                 | 10                         | 100.00%             | 8                        | 50.00%                  |
| Not Low Income               | 11                            | 100.00%                | 15                            | 93.33%                 | 1                          | 100.00%             | 3                        | 100.00%                 |
| Not Single Parent            | 58                            | 98.28%                 | 78                            | 79.49%                 | 10                         | 100.00%             | 9                        | 66.67%                  |
| Single Parent                | 9                             | 88.89%                 | 4                             | 75.00%                 | 1                          | 100.00%             | 2                        | 50.00%                  |
| Offender                     | 0                             |                        | 0                             |                        | 0                          | 0.00%               | 0                        |                         |
| Not an offender              | 52                            | 96.15%                 | 65                            | 75.38%                 | 10                         | 100.00%             | 6                        | 50.00%                  |
| Did Not Disclose             | 15                            | 100.00%                | 17                            | 94.12%                 | 1                          | 100.00%             | 5                        | 80.00%                  |

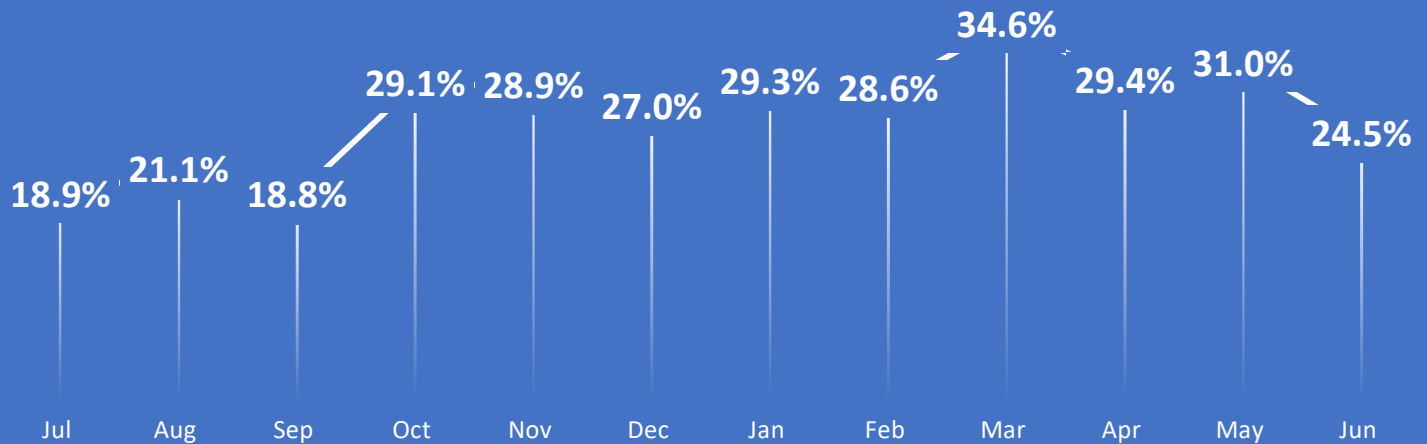
**CHART ON THE LEFT:**  
CHARACTERISTICS OF  
PROGRAM YEAR 2018  
YOUTH PARTICIPANTS  
FUNDED UNDER THE  
WORKFORCE INNOVATION  
AND OPPORTUNITY ACT.

# AMERICAN JOB CENTER PERFORMANCE



CHART BELOW: The WorkFirst New Jersey (WFNJ) program administered by Union County's Department of Human Services and Union County's American Job Center, and American Job Center Partners. Services are provided to participants enrolled in the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) program.

## WFNJ PROGRAM YEAR 2018 PARTICIPATION RATE



WorkFirst New Jersey funds programs are designed to provide welfare applicants, recipients, non-custodial parents and non-cash recipients make a connection to the labor market resulting in unsubsidized employment that leads to self-sufficiency. Work experience activities provide an individual with an opportunity to acquire the general skills, training, knowledge and work habits necessary to obtain employment.

Programs are designed to provide services to assist these individuals with job placement, transitional employment and other employment related training and supportive services needed to make the successful progression into long-term, unsubsidized employment. Programs are labor market driven, and consistent with the Union County Workforce Development Board's Strategic Plan.



# PY17-18 Annual Report

July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2018

UNION COUNTY

## WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD



**UNION COUNTY**  
*We're Connected to You!*  
A Service of the Union County  
Board of Chosen Freeholders



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## I. Strategic Plan Vision

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*The Workforce System sees itself as both an effective catalyst for economic development and a major resource for employment and training.*

*Toward greater economic development, it must help make critical business connections and serve as a bridge between businesses, the County and the State.*

*Toward better training and employment, it must help residents overcome unemployment, underemployment, and economic struggles and guide them along a path of successful professional growth.*

*Such a dual vision establishes the ultimate direction and tone for the Union County Workforce System.*

## II. Core Values

---

The Union County Workforce Investment Board shall align its workforce development strategy to mirror the core values outlined within New Jersey's Unified Workforce Investment Plan. The **Local 2016-2020 Strategic Plan** identifies Six Key Values aimed to drive our Workforce Development Activities.

- ❖ Increased Emphasis on Career Pathways and Industry-Credential Attainment
- ❖ Expanded One-Stop Integration of Service Delivery
- ❖ Broadened Use of Technology in Operation & Customer-Facing Processes
- ❖ Expanded Access to Service Levels
- ❖ Enhanced Employer Engagement
- ❖ Expanded Use of Evaluation Metrics Beyond National Performance Standards/ Systematic Oversight

### III. Workforce Development Board of Directors

#### BOARD OF CHOSEN FREEHOLDERS

Sergio Granados, Supervisor, Health Division, City of Elizabeth

#### BOARD OFFICERS

Chairman

Vice Chairman

Secretary

#### MEMBERS

| First Name  | Last Name        | Title   | Business / Organization            |
|-------------|------------------|---|------------------------------------|
| Glenn       | Nacion           | Vice President Human Resources                | Trinitas Regional Medical Center   |
| James R.    | Brady            | Vice President and General Manager            | The Savor Group, LLC               |
| Mark        | Bocchieri        | Director External Affairs                     | Verizon New Jersey                 |
| Tina        | Earley           | Manager, Govern. & Community Affairs          | Elizabethtown Gas                  |
| Ricahrd     | Capac            | Director                                      | Leaf Group, LLC                    |
| Monica      | Chenault-Kilgore | Senior Human Resources Consultant             | The Chenault Group, Inc.           |
| Donna       | Dedinsky         | Manager, Associate Relations                  | Wakefern Food Corporation          |
| Juan Carlos | Dominiguez       | Vice President                                | JJJ Distributors                   |
| Gloria      | Durham           | CEO   | Genesis Staffing Services          |
| Alberto     | Goncalves        | Managing Partner                              | GS Developers LLC                  |
| Eugenia     | Hamlett          | Residential Broker/Developer                  | Hamlett Management, LLC.           |
| Anadir      | Liranzo          | President                                     | Omega Maintenance Corp             |
| Jerry       | Masin            | President                                     | CompasScale                        |
| Kim         | McConnell        | President                                     | McConnell Leadership Group LLC     |
| Sandy       | McLachlan        | HR Business Partner/Labor Relations           | Phillips66 Bayway Refinery         |
| Christopher | Morreale         | Senior Manager                                | FedEx                              |
| Lenin       | Paredes          | CEO   | Global Insurance Agency, LLC       |
| Stan        | Robinson, Jr.    | Owner   | SHR Marketing, LLC                 |
| Kamran      | Tasharofi, M.D.  | President/Owner                               | Union County Health Care Assoc.    |
| Erick       | Peter            | Director of Training and Technical Assistance | UC Economic Develop. Corp          |
| Noel        | Christmas        | President                                     | Utility Workers, Local 601         |
| Richard     | Malcolm          | Business Agent                                | Ironworkers, Local #11             |
| Gary        | Pfarr            | Assistant Business Manager                    | Electrical Workers, Local 102      |
| James       | Horne            | President & CEO                               | United Way of Union County         |
| Pamela      | Capaci           | Executive Director                            | Prevention Links                   |
| John        | Perry            | Executive Director                            | Council for Airport Opportunities  |
| Josh        | Bornstein        | Executive Director                            | UC Educational Services Comm.      |
| Margaret    | McMenamin Ph.D.  | President-Union County College                | Title II Adult Educat.and Literacy |
| Yoshi       | Manale           | Exec. Assistant, Operations                   | Kean University Higher Ed Entity   |
| Peter       | Capodice         | Superintendent                                | County Vo-Tech School              |
| Hugh        | Caufield         | Elizabeth ES                                  | ES / Wagner-Peyser                 |
| Pat         | Williams         | Supervisor                                    | DVRS Representative                |



## IV. Union County American Job Center

The Union County American Job Centers provide an integrated array of high-quality services so that workers, job seekers, and businesses can conveniently find the help they need under one roof in easy to reach Union County locations.



American Job Centers are designed to help businesses find qualified workers and help job seekers obtain employment and training services to enhance their careers.

These services include assessment of skills, abilities, aptitudes and needs; assistance with Unemployment Insurance; access to employment services such as the states' job board and labor market information; career counseling; job search and job placement assistance; and information on training, education and related supportive services such as day care and transportation

### CENTER PARTNERS

**Department of Human Services**

**Employment Services**

**Division of Vocational  
Rehabilitation**

**Unemployment Services**

**Division of Social Services**

**Union County College**

**Workforce Innovation Business  
Center**



#### General Services

|                 |      |
|-----------------|------|
| Orientations    | 1836 |
| SNAP Activity   | 3846 |
| Tuition Waivers | 1007 |
|                 |      |

#### Youth Services

|           |     |
|-----------|-----|
| Certified | 203 |
| Enrolled  | 127 |

#### Individual Training Contracts

|                   |            |
|-------------------|------------|
| ADULT             | 79         |
| DISLOCATED WORKER | 124        |
|                   | <b>203</b> |

#### Training By Growth Sectors

|  |            |
|--|------------|
| Construction                                   | 7          |
| Financial Services                             | 17         |
| Health Care                                    | 83         |
| Hospitality, Tourism & Retail                  | 14         |
| Life Sciences                                  | 1          |
| Technology & Entrepreneurship                  | 41         |
| Transportation, Logistics, and<br>Distribution | 39         |
| Other  | 1          |
|  | <b>203</b> |

## Welcome Aboard

The Union County Department of Human Services was awarded the WIOA One Stop Operator Contract to Manage the Union County American Job Center.

Debbie-Ann Anderson was appointed Director of the County of Union Department of Human Services in 2017. The Department of Human Services is an essential agency and safety net of County government that touches all our different populations, and in particular, those who need it the most—the elderly, poor, unemployed, underemployed and youth populations.



The Department of Human Services, with 747 full and part-time employees, is County government's largest agency, and contains the following units: the Division of Aging and Disability Resource Connection; the Division of Planning; the Division of Social Services (in Plainfield and Elizabeth); the Division of Youth Services; the Division of Outreach and Advocacy; Paratransit (and Route 22 Shuttle); the Contract Unit; Workforce Development Operations (One-Stop Career Centers, Elizabeth and Plainfield offices) and Cornerstone Behavioral Health Hospital of Union County.

Ms. Anderson has a particular interest in promoting meaningful stakeholder participation in all levels of the human services system in Union County. In addition, she is interested in promoting integration, quality, and efficiency throughout the service system and collaboration among human services and other components of the Union County community.

## AJC Staff Development

### Career Counselor "Customer Service Skills" Workshop - June 13, 2018

Group i&i Consultancy delivered Customer Service Training on June 13, 2018, for the American Job Center Career Counselors as well as Sub-recipient partner counselors, (United Way, Urban League, HomeFirst and PROCEED). Training consisted of FOUR areas of training:



1. A Walk Through Your **Role of Career Counselor** in the American Job Center (WIOA Design),
2. Examination of "WHAT IS" – Build a **Profile of the Current American Job Center Climate** Identifying Strengths and Weaknesses.
3. Exchange **Ideas for Improvement** in Serving Job Seekers.
4. **Customer Service Skills Training** – How do we better serve our Job Seekers in a highly professional "Customer Friendly" manner.

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## Annual Plan PY 17

## V. Workforce Innovation Business Center

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### ABOUT WIB CENTER

This program was established in 2014 by the Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders, the Union County Workforce Development board and Union County College. The Workforce Innovation Business Center builds on the success of Union County's One-Stop Career Centers, and on the Freeholder Board's partnership with Union County Community College. Through this rapidly growing relationship, job seekers can access training and other career services that help match them with prospective employers.

The Workforce Innovation Business Center is a full-service learning center serving the business community and local residents of Union County New Jersey and beyond.

The Workforce Innovation Business Center is a full-service learning center serving the business community and local residents of Union County New Jersey and beyond.



### OUR MISSION

For Job/Career Seekers -The Center provides training and coaching to individuals preparing to enter the workforce and develop a career.

For Businesses - The Center serves as a resource to assist businesses in training, recruiting and hiring qualified employees through job fairs, facility rentals, job postings, job candidate pools, and referral services.

### RESULTS

PY 17 (July 2017 – June 2018)

|  |             |
|--|-------------|
| <b>Soft Skills Classes</b>                       | <b>11</b>   |
| <b>Number Soft Skills Students Enrolled</b>      | <b>144</b>  |
| <b>Number of Recruiting Events</b>               | <b>24</b>   |
| <b>Number of Job Placements</b>                  | <b>209</b>  |
| <b>Number of Residents and Businesses Served</b> | <b>1137</b> |
| <b>Number of On the Job Training Contracts</b>   | <b>3</b>    |

## VI. YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PATHWAYS PROGRAM (YEPP)



**United Way  
of Greater Union, NJ**

United Way of Greater Union County, The Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders and The Union County Workforce Investment Board, in collaboration with key partner agencies in Union County, have united to form a Youth Employment Program (YEP).

The goal of the YEP is to provide support for job readiness, training and employment for youth, ages 14-24 who are economically disadvantaged, preparing them to become financially stable, self-sufficient young adults.

### YOUTH SERVICES

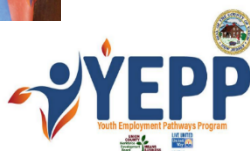
|  | Out-of-School | In-School |
|--|---------------|-----------|
| <b>Completions</b>                           | <b>61</b>     | <b>67</b> |
| <b>Career Counseling</b>                     | <b>61</b>     | <b>61</b> |
| <b>Work Experience</b>                       | <b>49</b>     | <b>58</b> |
| <b>Tutoring</b>                              | <b>-</b>      | <b>17</b> |
| <b>Occupational Training</b>                 | <b>14</b>     | <b>5</b>  |
| <b>Supportive Services</b>                   | <b>38</b>     | <b>-</b>  |
| <b>Post-Secondary / Job Readiness</b>        | <b>28</b>     | <b>35</b> |
| <b>Financial Literacy</b>                    | <b>28</b>     | <b>28</b> |
| <b>Unsub. Placement</b>                      | <b>6</b>      | <b>-</b>  |
| <b>Skills Gain</b>                           | <b>31</b>     | <b>20</b> |
| <b>Leadership Development</b>                | <b>-</b>      | <b>20</b> |
| <b>Certification</b>                         | <b>9</b>      | <b>-</b>  |
| <b>Math/Reading Improvement</b>              | <b>11</b>     | <b>-</b>  |
| <b>Promoted to Next Grade / Graduated HS</b> | <b>-</b>      | <b>61</b> |

### YOUTH CONSORTIUM

The consortium currently includes thirteen organizations, of which five are sub-grantee nonprofit partners: Community Access Unlimited, Urban League of Union County, Inc., Proceed, Inc., HomeFirst, Inc. and Plainfield Action Services.

Agencies provide direct service to eligible participants who are at risk of not graduating high school and/or who are currently not in school or working, to identify and address barriers and work towards obtaining a credential, enter higher education and/or secure employment.

### SUMMER PROGRAM



— YEPP Program —

| Youth | Sector               | Site  |
|-------|----------------------|---|
| 22    | Parks and Recreation | Park Maintenance  |
| 9     | Restaurant / Food    | CAU Café<br>The Lobby<br>City Tavern  |
| 49    | Administrative       | ARC<br>St. Elizabeth Church<br>AJC - Elizabeth<br>Proceed<br>Hudson Tax Offices<br>Board of Social Services |

## VII. LOCAL PERFORMANCE

PY 17 July 2017 – June 2018\*

Of the 18 key Indicators being measured for PY17, Union County Met or Exceeded 15. Union County failed one indicator, Dislocated Worker placing 62.8% of customers. No Data was available for Youth Skill Gain.

\*PY 17 Q4 as of 7/12/2018 - Data was exported from NJPerforms for this report on September 1, 2018.

### ADULT

| Indicator       | Actual    | LWDB Plan | % Achieved | num | den |
|-----------------|-----------|-----------|------------|-----|-----|
| Employment Q2   | 74.06%    | 80.60%    | 91.89%     | 197 | 266 |
| Employment Q4   | 67.61%    | 62.60%    | 108.00%    | 96  | 142 |
| Credential      | 74.47%    | 48.70%    | 152.91%    | 35  | 47  |
| Skill Gains     | 92.00%    | 0%        | 0.00%      | 46  | 50  |
| Median Earnings | \$5217.84 | \$4463    | 116.91%    | 197 | 0   |

### DISLOCATED WORKER

| Indicator       | Actual     | LWDB Plan | % Achieved | num | den |
|-----------------|------------|-----------|------------|-----|-----|
| Employment Q2   | 73.08%     | 78.60%    | 92.97%     | 38  | 52  |
| Employment Q4   | 100.00%    | 40.00%    | 250.00%    | 1   | 1   |
| Credential      | 0%         | 82.80%    | 0%         | 0   | 0   |
| Skill Gains     | 100.00%    | 0%        | 0.00%      | 6   | 6   |
| Median Earnings | \$3412.435 | \$0.00    | 0.00%      | 36  | 0   |

### YOUTH

| Indicator       | Actual   | LWDB Plan | % Achieved | num   | den   |
|-----------------|----------|-----------|------------|-------|-------|
| Employment Q2   | 55.58%   | 54.50%    | 101.98%    | 2,561 | 4,608 |
| Employment Q4   | 56.70%   | 55.10%    | 102.91%    | 1,320 | 2,328 |
| Credential      | 0%       | 0%        | 0.00%      | 0     | 0     |
| Skill Gains     | 0%       | 0%        | 0.00%      | 0     | 0     |
| Median Earnings | \$4842.4 | \$4109    | 117.85%    | 2,561 | 0     |

### WAGNER-PEYSER

| Indicator       | Actual   | LWDB Plan | % Achieved | num   | den   |
|-----------------|----------|-----------|------------|-------|-------|
| Employment Q2   | 55.58%   | 54.50%    | 101.98%    | 2,561 | 4,608 |
| Employment Q4   | 56.70%   | 55.10%    | 102.91%    | 1,320 | 2,328 |
| Credential      | 0%       | 0%        | 0.0%       | 0     | 0     |
| Skill Gains     | 0%       | 0%        | 0%         | 0     | 0     |
| Median Earnings | \$4842.4 | \$4109    | 0.0%       | 2,561 | 0     |

### Annual Plan PY 17

## PY 17 DEEP DIVE

### YOUTH IN-SCHOOL / OUT OF SCHOOL PROPORTION

Age Group: 19-24

|                  | All Participant<br>(#409) | In-school | Out-of-school | % Out of School | % Dropout | Not attending<br>school or<br>H.S. Dropout | Not<br>Attending<br>School;<br>within age of<br>compulsory<br>school | Not attending<br>school; H.S.<br>graduate |
|------------------|---------------------------|-----------|---------------|-----------------|-----------|--|--|---|
| Union County WDB | 555                       | 44        | 511           | 92.1%           | 17.3%     | 85   | 11   | 415                                       |

### PLACEMENT PERFORMANCE BY CUSTOMER ZIP CODE

|                  | Served       | Employed<br>Q2 Post | Earned<br>Credentials |
|------------------|--------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>NJ</b>        | <b>4,700</b> | <b>2,560</b>        | <b>215</b>            |
| <b>UNION</b>     | <b>4,033</b> | <b>2,086</b>        | <b>191</b>            |
| ELIZABETH        | 1,234        | 659                 | 52                    |
| PLAINFIELD       | 594          | 322                 | 33                    |
| ELIZABETHPORT    | 377          | 209                 | 18                    |
| LINDEN           | 317          | 169                 | 20                    |
| UNION            | 295          | 156                 | 13                    |
| ROSELLE          | 236          | 124                 | 12                    |
| RAHWAY           | 224          | 106                 | 10                    |
| HILLSIDE         | 167          | 95                  | 6                     |
| SCOTCH PLAINS    | 88           | 40                  | 2                     |
| CRANFORD         | 76           | 32                  | 5                     |
| ROSELLE PARK     | 75           | 38                  | 3                     |
| CLARK            | 61           | 22                  | 2                     |
| SUMMIT           | 52           | 14                  | 4                     |
| NEW PROVIDENCE   | 40           | 15                  | 1                     |
| <b>ESSEX</b>     | <b>319</b>   | <b>277</b>          | <b>10</b>             |
| NEWARK           | 192          | 170                 | 5                     |
| IRVINGTON        | 47           | 47                  | 3                     |
| EAST ORANGE      | 36           | 31                  |                       |
| BERKELEY HEIGHTS | 39           | 9                   | 1                     |
| WESTFIELD        | 33           | 8                   | 2                     |
| VAUXHALL         | 25           | 19                  |                       |
| FANWOOD          | 24           | 10                  | 1                     |
| KENILWORTH       | 24           | 14                  | 1                     |
| SPRINGFIELD      | 19           | 8                   | 1                     |
| GARWOOD          | 18           | 11                  | 3                     |
| MOUNTAIN SIDE    | 15           | 6                   | 1                     |
| <b>MIDDLESEX</b> | <b>167</b>   | <b>77</b>           | <b>7</b>              |
| SOUTH PLAINFIELD | 87           | 35                  | 3                     |
| EDISON           | 10           | 6                   |                       |
| PISCATAWAY       | 9            | 3                   |                       |
| <b>SOMERSET</b>  | <b>62</b>    | <b>35</b>           | <b>2</b>              |
| <b>HUDSON</b>    | <b>39</b>    | <b>36</b>           |                       |
| <b>MORRIS</b>    | <b>37</b>    | <b>10</b>           | <b>1</b>              |
| <b>MONMOUTH</b>  | <b>10</b>    | <b>7</b>            | <b>1</b>              |

This report presents **place of residence** (according to zip code at registration) information on all customers **served, placed and earned credentials**. You will note that, because WIOA is a federal program, some out of county customers are served as well. For example, 319 customers were served in our AJC system who resided in Essex County.



## PY 17 DEEP DIVE

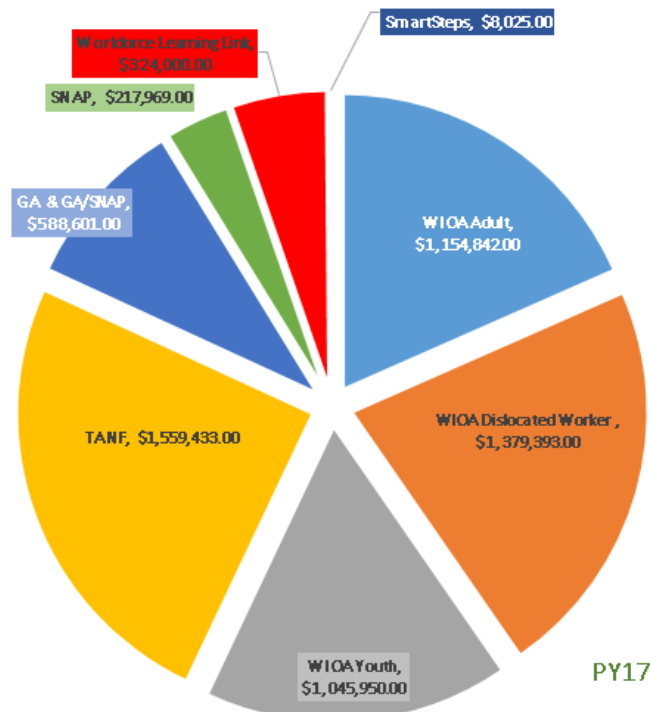
### CUSTOMER CHARACTERISTICS

| <b>ADULT</b>    | den<br>Employment<br>Q2 Adult | Employment<br>Q2 Adult | den<br>Employment<br>Q4 Adult | Employment<br>Q4 Adult | den<br>Credential<br>Adult | Credential<br>Adult | den Skill<br>Gains<br>Adult | Skill Gains<br>Adult |
|-----------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| All Age Groups  | 266                           | 74.1%                  | 142                           | 67.6%                  | 47                         | 74.5%               | 50                          | 92.0%                |
| Male            | 104                           | 67.3%                  | 56                            | 62.5%                  | 18                         | 83.3%               | 13                          | 100.0%               |
| Female          | 158                           | 78.5%                  | 84                            | 72.6%                  | 29                         | 69.0%               | 36                          | 88.9%                |
| Limited English | 1                             | 100.0%                 | 0                             |                        | 0                          |                     | 2                           | 100.0%               |
| Disabled        | 4                             | 100.0%                 | 4                             | 75.0%                  | 0                          |                     | 0                           |                      |
| Low Income      | 107                           | 73.8%                  | 62                            | 72.6%                  | 19                         | 73.7%               | 16                          | 87.5%                |
| Single Parent   | 11                            | 100.0%                 | 3                             | 66.7%                  | 0                          |                     | 1                           | 100.0%               |
| Offender        | 4                             | 50.0%                  | 1                             | 100.0%                 | 0                          |                     | 0                           |                      |

| <b>DISLOCATED<br/>WORKER</b> | den<br>Employment<br>Q2 DW | Employment<br>Q2 DW | den<br>Employment<br>Q4 DW | Employment<br>Q4 DW | den<br>Credential<br>DW | Credential<br>DW | den Skill<br>Gains DW | Skill Gains<br>DW |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| All Age Groups               | 436                        | 62.8%               | 159                        | 66.7%               | 54                      | 77.8%            | 67                    | 89.6%             |
| Male                         | 181                        | 62.4%               | 66                         | 62.1%               | 18                      | 88.9%            | 36                    | 91.7%             |
| Female                       | 253                        | 62.8%               | 93                         | 69.9%               | 36                      | 72.2%            | 31                    | 87.1%             |
| Limited English              | 0                          |                     | 0                          |                     | 0                       |                  | 3                     | 100.0%            |
| Disabled                     | 2                          | 100.0%              | 1                          | 100.0%              | 0                       |                  | 0                     |                   |
| Low Income                   | 69                         | 65.2%               | 32                         | 65.6%               | 6                       | 83.3%            | 8                     | 87.5%             |
| Single Parent                | 8                          | 87.5%               | 5                          | 60.0%               | 0                       |                  | 0                     |                   |
| Offender                     | 3                          | 100.0%              | 2                          | 100.0%              | 0                       |                  | 0                     |                   |

## V. LOCAL RESOURCES

| <b>UNION COUNTY<br/>WORKFORCE FUNDING</b> |                        |
|---|------------------------|
| WIOA Adult                                | \$ 1,154,842.00        |
| WIOA Dislocated Worker                    | \$ 1,379,393.00        |
| WIOA Youth                                | \$ 1,045,950.00        |
| TANF                                      | \$ 1,559,433.00        |
| GA & GA/SNAP                              | \$ 588,601.00          |
| SNAP                                      | \$ 217,969.00          |
| Workforce Learning Link                   | \$ 324,000.00          |
| SmartSteps                                | \$ 8,025.00            |
|   | <b>\$ 6,278,213.00</b> |







# THE UNION COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS



Sergio **GRANADOS**  
*Chairman*



Kimberly **PALMIERI-MOUED**  
*Vice-Chairwoman*



James E. **BAKER, Jr.**



Joseph C. **BODEK**



Dr. Angela R. **GARRETSON**



Bette Jane **KOWALSKI**



Lourdes M. **LEON**



Alexander **MIRABELLA**



Rebecca **WILLIAMS**

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*Edward T. Oatman*  
*County Manager*

*Amy Crisp Wagner*  
*Deputy County Manager*

*James E. Pellettieri*  
*Clerk of the Board*

**UNION COUNTY**  
*We're Connected to You!*



[www.ucnj.org](http://www.ucnj.org)  
   