

# ***Greater Raritan One Stop Monthly Leadership Meeting*** **Minutes**

*Tuesday September 24, 2024*  
*10:00AM*

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## ➤ **Attendance**

### **Present**

Isabel Jimenez, WFNJ

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Maria Marnell, HCESC WFNJ Workshop

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Monica Mulligan, GROSCS

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Jazlis Perez, DVR

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Poo Lin, Chief Field Operations (ES)

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Paul Grzella, GRWDD

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Jeanne Cassano, GRWDB

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Fernandel Almonor, Operator

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### **Absent**

Karen Araujo

Jeannetta Muhammad

Christina Shockley

Maggie Navatto

Aminah Reeves

## ➤ **Operator Update**

- Customer Job Preference Tracking Update
  - The quarterly customer preference dashboard and job title spreadsheet are both due 10/9/24 COB.
  - The data will be used to guide business services quarterly industry focused recruitment events. Data will also be used to guide general business services outreach.
- Rutgers Masters in Social Work Internship Program / WFNJ Partnership
  - GR One-Stop plans to partner with the RU MSW Intern Program.
  - Objective, getting an intern to administer motivation assessment on each WFNJ training class student.

- \* Due date for submitting the internship partnership application is 9/26, awaiting Aminah's review on 9/25.
- \* Employment Pipeline Update
  - \* 2 employer partners have joined the pipeline: Empower Somerset (Nonprofit Org) and Mariott.
  - \* The job descriptions and application details were shared with One-Stop Partner leaderships. Partners were tasked with sharing the opportunity with customers and identifying interested customers.
  - \* Candidates interested in any position must complete the online application instructions for the position. Additionally, the first and last name of each interested candidate must be sent directly to our point of contact to ensure they receive a 1st interview. 1<sup>st</sup> interviews are only guaranteed if the position is still available and not filled.

#### ➤ **GRWDB**

- \* Oct 10<sup>th</sup> Veteran and Wellness event has over 54 pre-registrants. It should be a very powerful event. Relying on One-Stop partners to help spread the word to clients. Major companies and agencies will be represented at the event. It's open to all, not just veterans.
- \* Board is working on the literacy initiative; Jeanne is spearheading the effort.
  - \* Working with HCESC, doing an MOU with them. It won't have to go out as a RFP. There's a lot of money and potential in this initiative. Will be linked to First Steps Initiative and Title II. The proposal for the literacy initiative will establish additional classes in Hunterdon and Somerset, also tied into GED and Family Literacy.
- \* Board is working with NJ Manufacturing Extension Program to apply for an OPG Grant, due in November. Projecting 30 to 40 people to utilize the services (if successfully acquire grant funds).
- \* During GSETA fiscal meeting, discussed audit findings. GRWDB is working on implementing a fiscal monitoring tool. They are now responsible for conducting a deeper fiscal audit of vendors in January.
- \* Paul and Fernandel are requesting Poo and Monica review/ provide vital feedback on the new WIOA Eligibility Document. Feedback should reflect a brief analysis highlighting what directives are currently in place and which are not. The feedback is due by 10/22/24.

- \* Summer Youth Internship Program is wrapping up, 83 enrolled. It was a successful run.
- \* Paul will be out on vacation from October 31st – November 20<sup>th</sup>.

➤ **Business Services Update**

- \* Administered a Rapid Response for 6 affected employers.
- \* Held a manufacturing job fair.

Registered	Attended	Walk in
48	10	5

**Applicants**

Magna-Power	12
Johanna Foods	8
Power Container	2
Trident	4
Cougar Program	3

**Observations:**

One-Stop partners should consider assisting with transportation assistance to the venue, to improve the attendance rate. Business Service Rep will add to the next registration form, if attendee has reliable transportation.

One-Stop partners should consider creating a flyer promoting the backgrounds of job seekers then Business Services would send it to companies by industry. BSR can send an e-blast to the companies in their system, organized by industry, promoting the backgrounds of the candidates. The flyer would include a link for the companies to register if they are interested in participating in the program and gaining access to these candidates.

➤ **Employment Services/One-Stop Office Update**

- \* Jeannetta Muhammad started as the new ES Manager. She's working through scheduling challenges and should be able to attend monthly leadership meetings in the near future.
  - \* She comes from UI. Has been a big help during her 1<sup>st</sup> 2 weeks. She has expert knowledge of UI policies and procedures.
- \* Currently seeking (2) ES Trainees.
- \* An existing staff requested an extend on their medical leave.
- \* Might be losing a Senior Counselor due to a promotion.

- They're active in OPG area. Yosh and Jeannetta have been trained on the ins and outs of the program. They work with 3 vendors: Bar PC, Arch Angel and Param Institute.

## ➤ **Career Training Services Update**

### General Update and Successes

- We have a new Career Navigator starting on 10/7/24. Dorien Quiles comes to us with a master's degree in human Behavior and Organizational Psychology from Kean University and has experience in customer relations in the healthcare industry. Dorien is also fluent in Spanish, which will serve to strengthen the provision of services to our customers.
- NJDOL is coming on-site on Thursday, 9/26/24 for its annual data validation review. We have been asked to pull 30 files for that site visit and are working on doing so.
- We have started to tap into the supportive services funding for our customers who need this support.
- We have served 516 new customers since the start of the program year through 8/31/24.
- Members of the One Stop Career Training Services Center team will attend/attended the following additional free trainings in August/September: 8/21/24 National Apprenticeship Week discussion (Workforce GPS); 9/3/24 Everyone Communicates but Few Connect (HDRQ); 9/12/25 Motor Team Q&A (Job Assistance Network); 9/20/24 Human Trafficking and Children Recognizing and Preventing the Trafficking of Minors (SC Youth Services and Safe + Sound); 9/17/24 Deaf and Hard of Hearing Sebsitivity Training (Ocean County Human Services); 9/25/24 Community Solutions to Problematic Screen Use (SC Human Services Joint Council); 9/27/24 College is Possible for Students with Intellectual Disability (Boggs Center for Human Disability Rutgers).
- Members of the One Stop Career Training Services team attended the Behavioral health and Resource Fair (SC CIACC and Education Partnership) on 9/19/24.
- All One Stop Career Training Services Center team members are scheduled to attend the GSETA conference: Ride the Wave of Innovation Oct 23-24, 2024, Ocean Resorts, Atlantic City, NJ

### Challenges:

- New: We have a team member who will be out on leave from 10/28/24 – 1/20/24. We are working on a plan for coverage during this time period.
- Carryover: We are scheduling new customers for orientation on 10/4/24 (down to three weeks out from four weeks out). Once we have the new Career Navigator on board and trained, we can increase the number of new customers in each session.
- Carryover: AOSOS continues to have many technical issues that complicate things – NJDOL had indicated we should only be utilizing the new version but recently indicated the new version continues to have technical issues and we may need to use the old version as well. Using AOSOS continues to be a cumbersome task.
- Carryover: Increase in WFNJ referrals due to sanctions being put back into place. This has led to an increase in workload for One Stop Career Training Services Center staff.
- Recurring: Training providers continue to report issues with the ETPL.

### Supports Requested:

- Continued connection with partners who interface with businesses to develop relationships that lead to employment opportunities for our customers.

### Upcoming Events:

- Career Café will start back up in the fall with dates in September, October, and November. The September Career Café will be held on 9/27/24 from 2PM – 4PM in Somerville (flyer attached).
- One Stop Career Training Services will host a Holiday Open House at its Flemington location on 12/4/24 from 1PM – 4PM. The flyer is being worked on by Graphics and will be distributed for promotion once it is ready.

### ➤ **Department of Vocational Rehabilitation Services Update**

- A counselor recently went on leave.
- Currently has 4 counselors in the office. They're managing the leave counselor's case load until she returns.
- 2 new Interns onboarded from Rutgers. They're studying to be rehabilitation counselors. They will meet with some clients and provide case management

assistance. They'll need private spaces to maintain client confidentiality. They're paid interns/ part time.

- \* Still looking to fill Head Clerk and Clerk positions. Clerical staff currently understaffed.
- \* 4 Staff going to a conference in October.
- \* Sept 30<sup>th</sup> is end of program year, looking to close cases by new program year Oct. 1<sup>st</sup>. Busy working to complete end of program year tasks.

### ➤ **Work First New Jersey Update**

- \* Aminah returns from vacation 9/25/24
- \* A Case Worker is out for next 2 to 3 weeks.
- \* 95 SNAP referrals for September.
- \* Somerset Training Class stats (this program year to date): 226 Customers outreached. 87 TANF, 30 GA and 195 SNAP.
- \* 40 clients in CWEP program. 5 attained employment.
- \* Hunterdon Training Class stats (this program year to date): 82 outreached. 18 TANF, 32 GA and 37 SNAP. 1 face-to-face and 5 virtual have participated.
- \* Somerset County currently has the highest participation rate in state.
- \* Hunterdon currently has a zero-participation rate. Paul and Fernandel working with Lisa and her supervisor to explore solution strategies.

Challenge:

- \* A need for transportation to get clients to the office for full participation.

### ➤ **Middle Earth YES Update**

- \* WIOA Youth Outreach and Work Based Learning Update
  - \* There are currently 22 students enrolled in the Middle Earth Visions Program, and 3 new students have orientations scheduled for the upcoming week. One problem we have faced recently has been finding local businesses interested in hosting the students for their 20 hour job shadowing placement. We currently have 6 students who have met with the Visions staff members, and established their area of interest and are ready to begin the last phase of the program, but have not had any luck finding somewhere to place them. We have a new staff member starting on October 1st who will be our Internship Coordinator to hopefully get those students placed.

Overall, the students have been meeting the staff with great enthusiasm and have been steadily making progress despite any barriers they may be facing in their personal lives. 9 students are working on completing the employment readiness classes, 5 students are making progress on their credential, and 2 students are preparing for their mock interviews. On average, up to 10 students are coming into the Middle Earth office every week, and we are regularly communicating with the ones who are working independently at home.

### ➤ **Hunterdon PolyTech YES Update**

- \* WIOA Youth Outreach and Work Based Learning Update
  - \* Tri-fold brochure has been updated with current contact information. Outreach to school counselors and community organizations continues. Presented YES information to DVR and McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Youth

### ➤ **Discussion Topics**

- \* Planning for Quarterly Industry Focused Recruitment Events.
  - \* Projected dates: 1/14/25, 3/26/25, 6/26/25 and 9/25/25.
  - \* Both the industry focus and employers invited will be based on data findings from our customer job preference research.
  - \* Logistical Questions to Review
    - Can we work with partners to confirm a minimum number of attendees (preregistration) before confirming the event?
    - Can we coordinate event dates with client training completion dates?
    - We'd also like to discuss strategies for generating interest in our client base for local position openings that are currently unpopular with our client base.
  - \* Establishing a pipeline for low skilled/ low pay work (servers, kitchen work, home care, etc).
    - Receiving a considerable number of requests from these employers.
    - Is it worth it construction pipelines to meet their needs? Can we identify interested customers?
      - ◆ YES
      - ◆ Seniors on fix income
      - ◆ Others interested
    - Can we generate interest?

## Discussion Highlights:

- Business Service Rep organizes the industry focused recruitment events then does a marketing email blast to surrounding counties to promote the event.
- These events are open to everyone (One-Stop clients and general public).
- Business Service Rep should ensure One-Stop marketing materials are shared with pre-registered individuals.
- Strategies for finding candidates for low paying jobs, that don't qualify for gainful employment standards:
  - o Business Service Rep should create a helpful handout for low wage employers that contact the One-Stop.
    - For example, minimum wage/low paying positions should consider:
      - Re-entry/ 2<sup>nd</sup> Chance populations (probation/ parole).
      - Youth between the ages of 16 -18.
      - Seniors on fixed income.
      - Should also provide resources for outreaching these groups and suggest paying a higher salary to attract One-Stop customers seeking gainful employment opportunities.

**Next Meeting: Tuesday, October 22 @ 10am 1<sup>st</sup> Conference Room**