

GREATER RARITAN ONE-STOP ~ SERVING HUNTERDON COUNTY AND SOMERSET COUNTY

ONE-STOP OPERATOR DECEMBER REPORT

Program Year 2024/ 2025

Dec. 1 -31

Greater Raritan 
Workforce Development Board
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ANNUAL REPORT 2023 to 2024

Published January 2025



First Steps Basic English ... The Employment Pipeline
Summer Youth Work Experience Program ...
Greater Raritan Job Fair and quarterly Recruitment Events...
TANF Innovation Initiative ... and more....
See how the GRWDB and program partners supported career pathways for individuals and economic vitality for employers in Hunterdon and Somerset Counties, N.J., in the past program year and will build on that success in 2025.



www.thegrwdb.org

OUR MISSION AND OUR WORK



"Through policy, oversight, and planning, The Greater Raritan Workforce Development Board (GRWDB) ensures that workforce training and education are responsive to and meet the needs of employers and job seekers."

Collaboration, flexibility and adaptability are hallmarks of how partners in the GRWDB local workforce development system approach their work. In addition to attending quarterly board and committee meetings, the team leaders of local and state partners meet monthly in lively discussions led by One-Stop Operator Fernandel Almonor. These are opportunities for partners to discuss successes and challenges while sharing best practices that help make services more impactful and effective. The Operator's report and meeting minutes are on the Partners page of www.thegrwdb.org.

Here are some notable 2024 system accomplishments:

- The GRWDB's **Summer Youth Work Experience Program** served **83** youth, up from 69 participants in 2023. The program was funded by a \$297,248 grant from the New Jersey Department of Labor (NJDOLE), along with additional support from Somerset County, which provided **American Rescue Plan (ARP)** funding to assist four youth. The participants completed eight-week work experiences with **30** employers and governmental agencies in the two counties; **four** youth were hired in the fall. The GRWDB has applied to be part of the 2025 program.
- The Commissioner Boards in Somerset County and Hunterdon County allocated additional ARP funding for **scholarships for in-demand training programs at Raritan Valley Community College**. In 2024, **20** individuals were assisted by the program, bringing the total of scholarships awarded to **62** since this program began in the fall of 2022. These individuals, from **20** municipalities in the two counties, have studied in the phlebotomy technician, electrocardiogram (ECG) technician, welding and manufacturing programs in RVCC's Workforce Training Center. In the fall of 2024, the Somerset County Board of Commissioners allocated an additional \$200,000 for scholarship awards in 2025 and 2026.
- Throughout the year, the GRWDB staff supported and helped organize community-wide resource events in the two counties. These included a **Cannabis Town Hall and Job Fair**, the **Somerset County Disability Expo and Job Fair**, and the **Somerset County Veterans Resource, Job and Wellness Fair**. These events attracted more than **325** job seekers. In addition, staff were at many other local resource and school events throughout the year to promote system services. Staff and partners also supported a **Manufacturing Recruitment** at the Hunterdon County Chamber of Commerce in September. Based on that event's success, in 2025 the GRWDB is working with the One-Stop Operator and state partners to promote four quarterly sector-focused recruitment events with multiple employers. The first, on January 14 in Somerville, is a **Healthcare Recruitment event**.
- The **2024-2026 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)**, developed by One-Stop Operator Fernandel Almonor with all Local Area One-Stop Partners and then signed by each, was approved by the NJDOLE this fall. In addition, the GRWDB received its **bi-annual certification from the New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission**. This certification, running through June 2026, signifies that the GRWDB "maintains its high standards of excellence and engages in continuous improvement to better serve the state's workforce and employers."

2024 by the numbers:

*SkillUp Greater Raritan had **1,348** new registrants, and participants completed **more than 6,100** training courses during the year.*

*The mobile text alert system attracted **679** new users; it currently has **1,032** active subscribers. **Text onestop** to **56512** to subscribe. In addition, the mobile web page had **18,183** page views from **3,572** users.*

*www.thegrwdb.org had **13,262** active visitors and **60,862** page views.*

*Greater Raritan Training Center Certified Workforce Development Professional Jan Goodman led **38** workshops for **674** job seekers.*

*In addition to **6** individual business Recruitment Events, the GRWDB's 2024 Job Fair at the Hindu Temple in Bridgewater in June attracted **79** employers and **450** job seekers.*

*The GRWDB funded On-the-Job Training and Incumbent Worker Training for **10** individuals.*

*The state Employment Services team had **489** in-person and **3,336** virtual appointments.*

*The Greater Raritan Training Center provided **159** Individual Training Grants to job seekers in the two counties.*

*The GRWDB's two youth outreach providers referred **96** individuals between the ages of 16 and 24 to intensive program services.*

OUR NEW INITIATIVES AND OUR OUTREACH



Impact of TANF Innovation Grant Amplified with Pipeline Project

In the spring of 2024, the GRWDB was awarded a competitive a \$440,000 TANF Innovation Initiative grant from the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development.

The funding, which runs through June of 2025, aims to assist Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) recipients by providing additional supportive services that will help them complete career-related programming and attain stable employment. The GRWDB's program includes:

- Transportation to and from programming and any career-related appointments.
- Additional childcare services for recipients with small children.
- Assistance with car repairs and license restoration as needed.
- Loaning of Chromebooks with the WiFi enabled to assist in completing required classes and job searches.
- Financial incentives for those who complete a career preparedness program and for those retain employment for 90 days or more.

These services and program participants are being supervised by team members of Hunterdon County Educational Services Commission which was competitively chosen to be the vendor of the program. A second vendor, Creative Marketing Alliance, was chosen to provide outreach and social media services to ensure eligible residents in both clients know about the program. This outreach effort includes **special landing pages on www.thegrwdb.org for clients** who wish to be considered for the program and employers interested in hiring program participants.

This outreach grew out of another new initiative, the Pipeline Project, which was conceived by Fernandel Almonor, the Greater Raritan One-Stop Operator. With this initiative, the Operator is connecting work-ready TANF clients to employers who are looking to fill a current open position. The goal of this project is to fill the positions local employers have vacant right now with the program participants Greater Raritan partners are currently assisting. Employers can use the **link in the flyer at right** to become part of the program.

While this program was developed for TANF clients, in recent months its been expanded to include other local system participants who are looking for work.



Outreach improvements ongoing on GRWDB platforms



The GRWDB is constantly developing collateral to support the promotion of new and existing programs on its website and social media channels. For example, at the end of 2024 new QR codes for state initiatives were added to the English and Spanish call-to-action flyers, left, for the **Greater Raritan One-Stop Career Center**. In the late summer, the flyer for the **Greater Raritan Resume Portal** was updated to reflect new easy-to-use features on the platform. Be sure to bookmark the **Greater Raritan calendar page** which is updated continuously with the latest career events, and the website **home page** for the latest career programs.

DECEMBER 2024 PERFORMANCE REVIEW

New Training Services Customers Served: 199

(Includes Training Grant Orientation, Youth Referrals and WFNJ Referrals)

New DVR Customers Served: 78

New Training Grants Provided: 15

WFNJ Referrals Received: 233

Individual Assessments: 1

Youth Employment Services Referrals: 5

Active Youth Employment Services Clients: 71

SkillUp Registrants: 62

Employment Services Customer Appointments: 247

ADDITIONAL UPCOMING EVENTS

Virtual Workshop Invitation

Mastering the INTERVIEW

Tuesday, January 7, 2025
10 to 11:30 a.m.

Workshop Presenter:
Jan Goodman,
Certified Workforce Development Professional,
Greater Raritan One-Stop Career Training Center

The interview is one of the key elements of the job search process. As with any skill, we can get better at it with preparation and practice. In this virtual workshop, participants will explore how to prepare for an interview and become familiar with the types of questions to expect, as well as the questions they should think about asking. They will learn how to prepare for second interviews, testing, and shadowing, as well as how to follow up on their interview sessions.

Topics Discussed:

- Understanding the interview
- Types of questions
- Preparation
- Stress interviews
- Following up the interview
- Common problems and solutions
- Trick questions
- Sealing the deal

How You Will Benefit:

- Understand the different types of interview questions and how to prepare to answer them.
- Learn the most effective ways to prepare for an interview, including presenting yourself professionally and answering tough questions.
- Know how to ask for feedback following an interview.

Workshop registration is optional but appreciated. To register, email onestop@co.somerset.nj.us. To join the workshop on January 7th, go to <https://zoom.us/j/98614134489>.

This workshop is being presented in conjunction with the **Greater Raritan One-Stop Healthcare Recruitment Event** being conducted from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. Tuesday, January 14, 2025, at 27 Warren St., first-floor conference room, Somerville. For more information on this event, [please click here](#).

Greater Raritan One-Stop Career Center in collaboration with Jewish Family Service of Somerset, Hunterdon and Warren Counties

HOW TO THRIVE DURING TRANSITION AND CHANGE

Thursday, January 9th, 2025
10:30 am – 12:30 pm

Wednesday, January 8th, 2025
7:00 pm - 9:00 pm

SPEAKER:
Jan Goodman
Certified Workforce Development Professional,
Greater Raritan One-Stop Career Training Center

Times of transition hold both challenges and opportunities. What are you really committed to in this moment?
Tony Robbins once said, "Quality questions create a quality life."
• Is your behavior consistent with what you are committed to?
• Are you present and engaged in your own life?
• Are you satisfied with your choices?
• Would you like to make better choices in the future?

Our life is made up of decisions. When we ask the right questions it heightens our awareness and allows us to see more clearly. The strategies and philosophies that will be presented in this workshop provide attendees with tools that self-empower. The workshop is designed to help you achieve your personal best both professionally and personally. It's a point of view that is based on choice. Self-empowerment feeds our unconscious mind to make conscious choices that allow us to be successful.

Please note this is a virtual workshop via Zoom.
To register please contact: **Elise Prezant** at eprezant@jewishfamilysvc.org or call (908) 725-7799 X108 to receive the Zoom link.

This program is in collaboration with Jewish Family Service of Somerset, Hunterdon and Warren Counties.

Conquering Your Fear of Speaking in Public

Thursday, January 9th, 2025
10:30 am – 12:30 pm

Speaker:
Jan Goodman,
Certified Workforce Development Professional,
Greater Raritan One-Stop Career Center Training Services

Do you get nervous when interviewing or making presentations at company meetings?
Do you find it hard to make conversations at gatherings and social events?
Do you freeze up in awkward social situations?
If so this workshop is for you! It is for anybody who wants to improve their speaking skills in both formal and informal situations. Learn important strategies to gain the confidence and the skills to interact with others, to speak in informal situations, and to make presentations in front of small groups.

Learning Objectives
During this workshop you will learn to:

- Speak with more confidence in one-on-one conversations.
- Feel more confident speaking socially or in small meeting groups.
- Practice these skills in a supportive setting.

This is a live workshop at the Watchung Library's temporary location. The address is: 20 Stirling Road, Watchung, NJ 07069
To register please click on the following link:
<https://sclsnj.libnet.info/event/12366864>

This program is in collaboration with the Greater Raritan One-Stop Career Center and the Somerset County Library System (SCLS)

The Art of EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

Monday, March 31st, 2025
10:00am – 12:00pm
PSG of Central NJ

Speaker:
Jan Goodman, CWDP
Certified Workforce Development Professional,
Greater Raritan One-Stop Career Training Services Center

Points of Discussion:

- Self-Assessments
- Looking at different personality types
- Identifying your Myers Briggs Personality Types
- Defining filters
- Encoding, decoding and sending messages
- Culture
- Gender
- Active listening
- Paraphrasing statements
- Nonverbal messages
- Handling Conflict
- Being assertive, not aggressive
- Communication preferences
- Communication models

How You Will Benefit:

- Understand a working definition of communication.
- Review communication models and their key elements.
- Apply Myers Briggs personality assessments to develop effective communication skills.
- Investigate different styles of communicating.
- Learn how tolerance for disagreement affects effective communication.
- Identify common communication filters.
- Learn new tools for effective communication.

Please note this is a virtual workshop via Zoom.
Please register by Friday, January 24th at the PSG website: www.psgnj.biz
There will be a link at the top of the page that says, "Click on Zoom Meeting Registration Link"

"Communication is two-sided – vital and profound communication makes demands on those who are to receive it... demands in the sense of concentration of genuine effort to receive what is being communicated."
— Roger Sessions

Fernandel Almonor
Greater Raritan One-Stop Operator
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