

Greater Raritan One-Stop Leadership Meeting Minutes

Date: April 28, 2026

Location: County Building, 27 Warren St., Somerville, NJ

Recorded By: AI Recording Device

1. Introductions

- **Fernandel Almonor** – One-Stop Operator
- **Sally Al Bayati** – Raritan Valley Community College, Manager of Allied Health Department, Workforce Training Center
- **Paul Grzella** – Director, Greater Raritan Workforce Development Board
- **Jeanne Cassano** – Greater Raritan Workforce Development Board
- **Molly Green** – Director of Human Services, Somerset County
- **Monica Mulligan** – Director, One-Stop Career Training Services Center
- **Danielle Kwan** – Manager, DVR Office, Somerset County
- **Barbara Stockton** – Program Planning Development Specialist, DVR Business Outreach Team
- **Isabel Jimenez** – NJDOL
- **Ingrid Macias** – Veterans' Citizens' Representative, NJDOL
- **Karen Araujo** – Business Representative, NJDOL
- **Ike Onyejiake** – Middle Earth
- **Jeanetta Muhammad** – Management, ES Office, Somerville One-Stop Career Center
- **Maria Marnell** – Assistant Program Manager, Workforce NJ, Hunterdon County ESC

2. Greater Raritan Workforce Development Board Update (Paul Grzella)

- Annual meetings with county administrators to align board efforts with county priorities.
- Summer Youth Work Experience Program: 4 WIOA-eligible youth enrolled; funding adjusted to support 45 participants.
- Board policy updates (10–11 policies) with hyperlinks for finance and procurement.
- Audit completed: reduced from 5 findings to 2, emphasizing stricter invoice review and documentation.
- Equipment ownership and policy tightening: any purchases with board funds remain board property.
- Transportation funding challenges: TANF funds depleting faster than anticipated; SNAP participation low.
- ARC-funded First Steps program entering final year; exploring county support for sustainability.

3. Pre-Event Workshop Feedback (April 22, 2026)

- Attendance: 83 participants; 53 stayed 30 minutes past end due to high engagement.
- Positive feedback on Anthony Sharp's presentation: humorous, engaging, reinforced job readiness.
- Resulted in increased applications for the April 30 event.

4. Event & Business Services Updates

- **April 30 Experienced Worker Recruitment Event**
 - 69 registered attendees, 24 applications submitted to employers.
 - Lunch & Learn session with 7 employers yielded new contacts.
 - Walk-ins encouraged; no age or residency restrictions.
- **May 19 Hindu Temple Recruitment Event**
 - 246 applicants registered.
- **Upcoming US Census Bureau Events**
 - Somerville: May 26
 - Flemington: June 11

5. Partner Retreat Feedback (Coach Michael McBride)

- Focused on communication, listening, and leadership skills.
- Engaging activities reinforced key lessons.
- Positive reception; participants appreciated the quality book giveaways.

6. Quarterly Customer Data Outcomes

- Top industries of interest: Other (316), Technology (141), Healthcare (94), Business Administration (80), Hospitality (68), Pharmaceuticals (47).
- Most popular job titles: Stock Clerks/Order Fillers (81), Customer Service (50), Retail (36).
- "Anything" category reflects:
 - Job seekers willing to take any work, often due to long unemployment gaps or career transitions.
 - System focuses on coaching, career assessments, and guiding toward realistic career paths.

7. Discussion: AI Integration & Workforce Development

- **Key Points:**
 - Lack of cohesive, up-to-date data on how AI and robotics will impact occupations.
 - State in-demand occupation list may not accurately reflect near-future job shifts.
 - Career navigators already individualized plans for youth (YES) and adults, but better tools are needed.
 - Consideration of software solutions to show salary projections, job outlooks, and AI impact.
 - Focus on adaptability, soft skills, and continuous learning as future-proof strategies.
- **Action Items:**
 - Partners to email best practices and resource needs to enhance communication with clients.
 - Explore AI-friendly tools, apps, and software for unified career guidance.

8. Closing Notes

- Request for partners to share:
 - Best practices in career coaching and AI communication.
 - Tools or materials to help convey gainful employment and career sustainability.
- Part two of AI integration discussion planned for next meeting.

Adjourned
