



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Supporting the Development and Retention of a World Class Workforce

Jeffrey S. Swartz, Executive Director

Carl A. Donato Jr., Chair

**YOUTH INVESTMENT COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES**

**WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 24, 2024, 9:00 AM – ZOOM MEETING
1111 MARLKRESS ROAD, SUITE 101, CHERRY HILL, NJ 08003**

COMMITTEE INFORMATION AND ATTENDANCE								
Name	Organization	Trustee Member						
			25-Jan-23	22-Feb-23	26-Apr-23	28-Jun-23	23-Aug-23	25-Oct-23
Verney, Matthew (CHAIR)	Truist Bank	X						
Roth-Gutman, Jill (VICE CHAIR)	Roth-Gutman Law, LLC		X	X	X	X	X	X
Beverett, Erica	Social Responsibility Through Me							
Banks, Evangeline	Juvenile Justice Commission			X		X	X	X
Barbella, Sarah	Camden Probation Division							X
Boucher, Shaneka	City of Camden		X			X		
Boyd, Carl	Center For Family Services Head Start							
Canning, Shannon	Wawa						X	X
Cirii, Frank	Camden County One-Stop	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Davis, Rodney	Turner Construction						X	
Godorov, Lori	The Work Group	X		X	X	X	X	
Gorman, Ginger	Winslow Township High School		X					
Hill, Lauren	Camden County College		X	X	X	X	X	
Jenkins, Marcell	Winslow Township High School							X
Leary, Ashley	Juvenile Justice Hub							X
Ludzaca, Raul	NJDOL		X			X	X	X
Lofton, Vance	Respond, Inc.		X	X	X	X		
Maguire, Laurie	Camden County One-Stop		X	X				
McGough, Jake	YMCA		X	X	X		X	X
O'Neill, Kellianne	Winslow Township High School							
Peterson, Jyi	Camden County One-Stop		X	X	X	X	X	X
Robbins, Matt	Wawa						X	
Rosado, Joeliza	Truist Bank							X
Selby, Andrew	CPAC		X	X	X	X	X	
Sinclair, Nidia	Camden County One-Stop		X	X	X	X		X
Soto, Lillian	Juvenile Justice Hub							X
Velasquez, Gil	Superior Court of New Jersey							
Waller, Darchelle	Winslow Township High School							
Wardlow Hurley, Rhonda	HACC Youth Build		X	X	X	X	X	X
Wemple, Anita	CPAC		X	X				
Swartz, Jeffrey S.	WDB			X		X	X	
Henderson, Bridget	WDB		X	X		X		
Gutbezah, Maayan	WDB							
Levitt, Alex	WDB		X	X	X		X	X
Vaughn, Debra	WDB		X	X	X	X	X	X
Williams, Leslie	WDB							

Welcome

Jill Roth-Gutman, Vice Chair, opened the meeting at 9:03 AM. The meeting started with introductions for all attendees. Jill asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the October 25, 2023 meeting. Motion was made by Carl Boyd, seconded by Lauren Hill. By majority vote to the affirmative, the motion carried and the minutes for October 25, 2023 were approved.

Update On Committee 2024 Goals

• **Volunteer Opportunities**

Debra Vaughn and Maayan Gutbezah compiled a list of volunteer opportunities in Camden County, with a focus on opportunities for youth between the ages of 16-24. This list was disseminated to the rest of the committee before the meeting. Jill asked the committee members if they have questions or additions to make to the list, and discussed where it could be posted and used as a resource. Ginger Gorman said students at Winslow High School and their parents often

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ask where they can volunteer, so this resource list is valuable. Jill would like the information posted online, and for a link to it emailed to the committee once it is posted.

- **Youth Sub-Committee (Focus Group)**

The sub-committee gave an update on the youth voice focus groups.

- Lori Godorov said the sub-committee is waiting on a meeting for the focus group to move forward, and that with the previous WDB Committee Coordinator's transition and other issues, it has taken a while to get the focus group on track.
- It is unclear if the funds that Rosy Arroyo previously offered are still available to facilitate the focus group and to provide a stipend for the participants, as Rosy is no longer working in her previous position, or as a member of the Youth Committee.
- The plan for the focus group is to include youth from various walks of life in the committee's work, and to learn directly from them how best to engage them.
- Previous plans were to give participants a \$125 stipend.
- Shaneka Boucher and Andrew Selby were planning to facilitate the groups, with the Work Group as the site for the focus groups to meet and would like someone to take notes and synthesize all of the findings from the focus groups. This role was previously held by Alex Levitt, the former Committee Coordinator with the WDB before he left.
- Andrew Selby said that CPAC may have some funds to contribute to the focus group and will follow up on this.
- The plan is to include 12-15 participants.
- Lori said that they will need about a month to recruit in-school youth, out-of-school youth, youth on probation, and youth in the foster care system from contacts at various organizations.
- Lori said that she will pay for the dinner when the focus group meets.
- Lori asked if Alex has notes on this. Maayan will search for the notes and follow up.
- Debra created a flyer for the focus group in June, but Lori did not want to post it on social media because she already has an idea for where she wants the participants to come from.
- Gil Velasquez will get two youths on probation, and Lori would like for there to be a page with information or a flyer for those perspective participants. Lori would like to use the flyer that Deb already made, with the dates filled in once those are pinned down.
- Jill wanted to know what the criteria is for the participants in the focus group. Lori says that the ages should be 16-24, and should cover in-school youth, out-of-school youth, youth on probation, and youth in the foster care system from contacts at various organizations.
- Shaneka and Andrew are still willing to facilitate.
- Shaneka mentioned that they had questions written up by Alex, as a survey. Shaneka wants a meeting with the sub-committee to work out the kinks, hopefully no later than March, especially since people will start thinking about summer jobs soon.
- Lori says the survey is part two of the focus group event. After learning new things from the focus group participants, the survey could be tweaked and then sent out to a larger audience. The responses to the survey would provide a better idea of how best to serve youth.

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- The idea, according to Lori, was to have a dinner paid for the participants, and to have someone present to take notes.
- Jill suggested aiming for a sub-committee February meeting, and in March, pick a date for the focus groups, ready before the Youth Committee meeting in April.
- Shaneka stated she will be available to meet on any Thursday afternoon/evening in February and March.
- Marcell Jenkins said that he would like to see a question on the survey that says something along the lines of “Who is supporting you through the process of post-high school?” “Who is your support system?” “Who is your trusted adult guiding your future?”
- **Youth Day of Service**
 - The committee discussed different ideas for how a Youth Day of Service would look. One of the questions that Jill had, was if there is a site in mind to host a lot of people.
 - Gil Velasquez said that this is why the youth voice is so important, because their input would let us know what would interest them the most for a Youth Day of Service and would answer a lot of our questions.
 - Jeff suggested that the committee needs to decide what kind of day of service would be most appropriate. Perhaps it should be on the backburner until the focus group has completed, so the youth there can give insight as to what they would like to participate in as a Day of Service.
 - Shaneka said that there should be different service opportunities available in different locations in order to facilitate positive youth development, and to also take into account the logistics of transportation.
 - Lori suggested that this would also be an opportunity to put together an ad hoc youth group of five or so youths who would run this and teach the committee what it would look like to have a youth-run an activity and how best to work with them.
 - Jill suggested tabling this for a few months until after the summer because of the Summer Youth Employment Program. Jeff suggested doing the Youth Day of Service in the fall, especially after youths join the sub-committee.
 - Shaneka suggested that it should be early fall (October), because college students return to school in August, as do some students in Camden City, and then everyone else starts the school year in September. After the beginning of the year has settled, and before the weather gets too bad, October would be doable. The committee agreed.

WIOA Reporting/One-Stop Update – Jyi Peterson

- There is an orientation on January 29, 2024, with 14 scheduled participants. 8 youths in the past two months have enrolled in occupational training and remain in work experience, starting school next month. Those in Learning Link are raising their literacy levels and basic skills so they can be eligible for occupational training.
- Jyi made a connection with the Board of Social Services to connect youth in need of assistance.
- Gil got a message from a client who was very upset. This individual said that they saw staff walking around with their Bluetooths in, using personal cell phones, and generally



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not helping the public's negative perception of how government-run entities like the One-Stop operates. Gil noted that the public finds this behavior frustrating, as they are waiting in line for services that they are often in desperate need of. Gil said that he would pass the message along, so he brought it up at the meeting.

- Jyi explained that they have a lot of resources in the building, but the resources for youth are not connected to the other services in the building at all. Occasionally, complaints happen because people don't get what they want right away or they don't understand that they must go through a process. Others are already frustrated with the system due to stressors that brought them to the One-Stop in the first place, so they are sensitive to the experience they have when they are on-site. The populations served at the One-Stop are frequently people also dealing with underemployment, homelessness, addiction, etc. It can be difficult to handle all of these situations and keep them happy. The One-Stop takes these frustrations and issues seriously, while also understanding that it's not possible to make everyone happy in every situation.

Committee Updates:

- Jeff talked about the youth job fair/community resource fair planned for May 6, 2024 in Clementon. There will be a collaboration meeting between the committee chairs on January 31, 2024, and the chairs will then share information with their respective committees. The idea is for each committee to be represented at the event.
- The WDB will be applying once again for the Summer Youth Employment Program, which is now called the Summer Youth Work Experience Program. More information on this to come.
- Jeff suggested not meeting in February, and instead meeting in March, after the sub-committee meets for the focus group. This has yet to be decided upon.

Adjournment

Jill asked for a motion to adjourn. Motion was made by Gil and seconded by Lori. By a majority vote to the affirmative, the meeting adjourned at 10:05 am.

Next Meeting

The next Youth Committee meeting is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, February 28, 2024, at 9:00 AM via Zoom.

The upcoming Quarterly Board Meeting will be via Zoom on March 20, 2024, at 9:00 AM.

Submitted by:

Maayan Gutbezahl
Committee Coordinator