



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Supporting the Development and Retention of a World Class Workforce

Jeffrey S. Swartz, Executive Director

Carl A Donato Jr., Chair

**ABILITIES COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2024 (ZOOM)**

ATTENDANCE

| COMMITTEE INFORMATION AND ATTENDANCE | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|----------------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|-----------|----------|--|
| Name | Organization | Trustee Member | 14-Sep-23 | 12-Oct-23 | 9-Nov-23 | 7-Dec-23 | 11-Jan-24 | 8-Feb-24 | |
| Askie-Rosario, Andrea | CC Commission for the Blind | | | | X | X | X | | |
| Aston, Arthur | Build Jake's Place | | | | | | | | |
| Bowan, Jennifer | The Arc of Camden County | | | | | | X | X | |
| Cirii, Frank | Camden County One-Stop | ✓ | | X | X | | X | X | |
| Deitz, Jeffery | Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services | ✓ | | | | | | | |
| Donato, Carl, Chair | Wawa | ✓ | | X | X | X | X | X | |
| Forman, Lois | Jewish Family & Children's Service | | X | X | X | | X | | |
| Fugee, Antoinette | Cooper University Healthcare | | | X | | | | | |
| Gregory, GERALYN | Wawa | | | | X | | | | |
| Hoban, Colette | Lenape Regional High School Dist./Project Search | | | | | X | | | |
| Kaur, Nimit | Camden County Health Dept. | | | | | | X | | |
| Lucas, Angela | JEVS HireAbility | | | | | X | | | |
| Marks, Karen | Jewish Family & Children Service of Southern NJ | | | | | | | | |
| McClintock, Monica | Rowan University | | X | X | X | | X | X | |
| Page-Soncraunt, Jeanne | NJDOL - Business Rep. | | X | X | X | X | | X | |
| Perez, Irene | NJDVRS | | X | X | X | | X | X | |
| Rizzi, Stephanie | M & T Bank | | | | | X | | X | |
| Scott, Jessica | The Arc of Camden County | | | X | X | | | | |
| Starcher, Connie | Wawa | | | | X | | | | |
| Storm, Jeanne | American Water | | | X | X | X | | X | |
| Stubbs, Andrea | Gloucester Township | | | | X | | | | |
| Thompson, Ryan | Truist Bank | | | | | | | | |
| Tyndell, Maurice | Bestworks Industries | | | | X | | | | |
| Weinberg, Oriel | Jewish Family & Children's Service | | | | X | | | | |
| Wikiera, Erik | Wawa | | | | X | X | | | |
| Gutbezah, Maayan | WDB Staff | | | | | X | X | X | |
| Henderson, Bridget | WDB Staff | | | | | | | | |
| Levitt, Alex | WDB Staff | | X | X | X | | | | |
| Swartz, Jeffrey S. | WDB Staff | | X | X | X | X | X | X | |
| Vaughn, Debra | WDB Staff | | X | X | X | | X | X | |
| Williams, Leslie | WDB Staff | | | | | X | | | |

WELCOME

Carl Donato, Committee Chair, greeted the attendees. The meeting was called to order at 8:36 AM.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Carl asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the January 11, 2024 meeting. Motion was made by Lois Forman, seconded by Monica McClintock. With a majority vote to the affirmative, the motion carried and the minutes for the meeting held on January 11, 2024 were approved.

COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

Carl Donato, Chair

- Carl discussed the January 31, 2024 collaborative meeting between the chairs of the Abilities, BSOT, Literacy, and Youth committees to discuss the resource/youth job fair in Clementon on May 6, 2024. Maayan shared notes from that meeting with the Abilities Committee.
- Carl explained that the Workforce Development Board (WDB) and partners have done events in Clementon in the past, largely due to the efforts of the Literacy Committee and their chair, Marlyn Kalitan, who were able to get the closed Clementon library open again.



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- The Clementon event is intended to bring representatives and the expertise of each committee together to offer various resources and youth job opportunities to the residents of Clementon, Pine Hill, and Lindenwold. The event will take place at the Clementon Fire Hall on May 6th at 3:00 PM-6:00 PM.
- The title of the event is still yet to be determined.

Jeff Swartz, WDB Executive Director

- Jeff emphasized that this event is intended to differ from a standard job fair, with an emphasis also on resources that the community may not be aware of. It has a youth job fair aspect to it because the WDB will have applied at that point for the Summer Youth Work Experience Program, so there may be more resources to help youth find employment.
- Jeff clarified that employers present at the event will likely focus on youth employment, but not exclusively. In addition, the representatives of the various community resources at the event will be open to all.
- There are a number of employers and community service providers lined up for the event. Jeff plans to enlist the help of Heidi Daunoras and others in the local school districts to help market the event. However, the event still needs to be named. Vice Chair of the Youth Committee, Jill Roth-Gutman, came up with some ideas for names at the committee chairs collaborative meeting on January 31st. Once a name is selected, a flyer can be made and distributed.
- There are job fairs at the Camden County Technical School's campuses on March 1st and March 6th, which will target youth, but they should not interfere with the Clementon event, especially given the fact that they will take place two months apart, and there should still be young people looking for summer jobs, and employers still looking to hire in May.
- Jeff suggested to the committee to keep anybody that they know in mind if they are between the ages 16-24 and are looking for work. The Summer Youth Employment grant is open to more people this year, in that participants don't need to be a SNAP or TANF participant. They do need to be a resident of Camden County. The program will run for 8-weeks, and will include a one-week pre-employment learning session to teach the participants skills to contribute to their success, such as financial literacy, how to work well in a team, etc. This year, this aspect of the grant only requires 20 hours of this kind of training. The WDB will ask for 50 participants in the grant. This smaller, focused number tends to yield a high rate of success in terms of placing youth in jobs that are a good fit for the entire 8-week duration.
- The application for the program will be made available after March 1st, when the State lets the WDB know if they will be awarded the grant. The application will be posted on the WDB website and marketed through social media as well.

Monica McClintock, Rowan University

- Monica suggested that the name for the event will be important so that the name hits on all of the things that the event will provide, such as youth, employment, and community resources. She suggested a name such as Resource Fair: Learn Skills and Create Opportunities.
- Frank Ciri reminded the committee that the focus is still on youth, and that this detail will have to be made clear in the name too, in order to attract the right participants. The One-Stop and the WDB just had an adult-focused job fair at the Cherry Hill Mall on January 24th and have two more coming up at

the same location on May 17th and on September 13th, so the emphasis should be on youth for this job fair.

- Jeanne Page-Soncrant mentioned a recent flyer from Hopeworks that touched on having multiple things covered, like resources, jobs, youth, etc. She will forward the flyer to the committee to give an idea of what it could look like for the Clementon event.

Irene Perez, New Jersey Department of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVRS)

- Irene asked about the 16-24 age range that is targeted for the event, and if that means the colleges should be notified as well. Jeff confirmed that if they are in the 16-24 age range, then they certainly would be welcome at the event, college students included.
- Irene would like DVRS to have a table.
- Irene told the committee that DVRS could provide sign language interpreters for the event, if necessary. She just needs to be notified ahead of time. Lois Forman suggested that the school district could identify if there are any students who may need such services and report back to us.

Lois Forman, Jewish Family and Children's Services

- Lois suggested that when the event is being marketed to the school district, that child study teams are also reached. This includes special education students. Jeff said that he will make sure that Heidi Daunoras from the Pine Hill School District will include the child study teams in the marketing of the event to the students.
- Lois asked about parents who may come to the Clementon event with their child and are also looking for employment, and whether there would be any possible employers for them there as well as the youth. Frank Cirii from the One-Stop said that they will have a table at the event as a sort of "catch-all" for these needs. They will have literature there for parents, as well as a scan code that gives access to all their partners and the services they provide.
- Lois suggested that the employers attending the event should also be made aware that there will be adults perhaps in search of employment in attendance, not just youth looking for summer employment.
- Jeff spoke about the last event like this of a similar nature, and that a lot of the parents accompanying their children struggled with English, which is a significant barrier to employment. There are ESL programs available in the county that participants at the event can be made aware of and given access to. Frank said that he will try to get someone from the One-Stop who can speak Spanish to attend the event.
- Lois asked if people outside of the Clementon/Pine Hill/Lindenwold area would be welcome at the event, and Jeff said that they certainly would be, although it would be up to the employers in attendance to decide if they want to hire someone outside of the immediate area.
- Lois suggested various camps in the area could attend as employers. Jeff said they did reach out last time to the Boy Scout camp, and the camp run by the Salvation Army. It was challenging to find kids to work at these places though, because younger aged workers need a supervisor with them at all times, and they are also required to take water safety courses and become certified to work with kids around the water.

Debra Vaughn, Workforce Development Board

- Debra will reach out to the various support agencies to make sure that there is a bilingual representative at the event, especially since last time Hispanic Family Services were in attendance.



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- Debra mentioned that at previous events, everything was donated, such as snacks, water, gift cards, etc.
- Jeff mentioned several years ago, Rita's Water Ice set up a stand outside of the event and they should be contacted to see if they will be available to do again. Jeanne Storm suggested even having a Rita's Water Ice table as an employer for young people during the summer.
- Lois suggested that Produce Junction would possibly be willing to donate produce as a healthy snack for the event. Debra will look into this possibility.

2024 COMMITTEE GOALS

Carl Donato, Chair

- Carl asked the committee to submit their 2024 committee goals directly to him via email, which will be discussed at the next meeting.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

Jeanne Storm, American Water

- American Water is hiring, but the jobs are for engineers and professionals with very particular skill sets.
- American Water presented for interns associated with Project Search at the Jefferson Hospital in Sewell, NJ. The presentation was on résumé building, and it went well.

Lois Forman, Jewish Family and Children's Services

- Jewish Family and Children's Services is having their Stepping Out fundraising event on April 11th at the Congregation Beth El in Voorhees, NJ. Lois will share the flyer for the event when it is available.
- On May 10th, there will be a vocational breakfast for JFCS's supported employment clients who have been successfully employed. The employers and employees will be recognized for their work. Location is TBD. It will be 8:00 AM - 10:00 AM. Lois will send out the flyer for this event as well.
- Lois has been getting a lot of calls from people looking for employment due to transition, being new to the area, getting laid-off, etc. Lois is connecting them with her contacts to help these people find employment.

Jeanne Page-Soncrant, NJDOL

- Jeanne ran three recruitments in January. These are virtual information sessions. She is looking for more employers in order to do more recruitments.

Jennifer Bowen, The Arc of Camden

- The Arc is under audit for the first time since 2020.
- The Arc has hired two new employment specialists, expanding their department.

Monica McClintock, Rowan University/Tri-State HRMA

- On March 7th, there is a Tri-State meeting at the Westin Hotel in Mt. Laurel. There will not be a speaker this time, but it will instead be more of a mixer where people will move around the room and speak on different topics.
- On May 2nd, Tri-State will hold its the annual conference, with the Abilities Committee as a vendor, and BookSmiles as the charity.



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- Rowan University is having their business fair on the main campus on February 29th at 11:00 AM - 3:00 PM.
- Rutgers Camden will be having their job fair on April 4th 12:00 PM - 3:00 PM. Monica will send flyers to Lois and Jeanne Page-Soncraut.

Irene Perez, DVRS

- DVRS is collaborating with the New Jersey Office of Apprenticeship. NAIP, an insurance trainer, was just approved as a new vendor. They have been awarded a new grant from the NJ Office of Apprenticeship and are now accepting referrals.
- There is a targeted hiring event coming up in March, at the Arc of Atlantic County in Egg Harbor. Irene will send a flyer out once it is ready.
- Irene visited Best Works in Pennsauken, which works with the blind and visually impaired. She found them very impressive in the way that they have established a work environment that caters to the employment of the blind and visually impaired.
- DVRS is working with a company called "Inspired Threads," which hires individuals with disabilities. Irene is finding ways to help Best Works and Inspired Threads collaborate, due to their similar functions.
- Irene is hoping to also work with American Water in the near future. Irene wants to get these contractors and possibly others together to have an event that will allow those with disabilities to come to a space where they can apply for really great jobs.

Frank Cirii, One-Stop

- In the 5 months that the One-Stop has offered GED testing, they have administered 203 GED tests. Each month, the average number of people taking the test is on the rise.

ADJOURNMENT

Carl asked for a motion to adjourn. Motion was made by Frank and seconded by Lois. The motion was carried with a majority vote to the affirmative and the meeting was adjourned at 9:40 AM.

NEXT MEETING

The next Abilities Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 14, 2024 at 8:30 AM. The meeting will be conducted via Zoom.

Submitted by,

Maayan Gutbezahl, Committee Coordinator