



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, SEPTEMBER 12, 2024 (IN-PERSON)
1111 MARLKRESS RD. STE. 10
CHERRY HILL, NJ 08003**

ATTENDANCE

COMMITTEE INFORMATION AND ATTENDANCE								
Name	Organization	Trustee Member	11-Apr-24	9-May-24	13-Jun-24	July (recess)	August (recess)	12-Sep-24
Alloway, Veronica	American Water							
Donato, Carl, Chair	An Affair To Remember	✓	X	X	X			X
Askie-Rosario, Andrea	CC Commission for the Blind				X			X
Aston, Arthur	Build Jake's Place		X					
Bowan, Jennifer	The Arc of Camden County				X			
Cirii, Frank	Camden County One-Stop	✓	X	X				X
Coleman, Ardella	Cooper University Healthcare							
Deitz, Jeffery	Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services	✓						
Farber, Dan								
Fiore, Daniel								
Forman, Lois	Jewish Family & Children's Service			X				
Freire, Edison	JEVS Human Services							
Fugee, Antoinette	Cooper University Healthcare			X	X			
Galvin, Tim	Cooper University Healthcare							
Gregory, Geralyn	Wawa							
Heaney, Melissa	JFCS w/Project Search							
Hoban, Colette	Lenape Regional High School Dist./Project Search		X					
Kaur, Nimit	Camden County Health Dept.							
Lavarin, Esther	CC Commission for the Blind		X					
Legge, Patti								
Lucas, Angela	JEVS HireAbility							
Lynn, Meghan	ARC of Camden County							X
Marks, Karen	Jewish Family & Children Service of Southern NJ							
McClintock, Monica	Rowan University		X	X				X
Metzger, Frances	Cooper University Healthcare							
Page-Soncrant, Jeanne	NJDOL - Business Rep.		X	X				
Perez, Irene	NJDVRS		X	X				
Quiqley, Kimberly	St. John of God Community Services				X			X
Quinones, Cris	Wawa							
Rizzi, Stephanie	M & T Bank							
Scott, Jessica	The Arc of Camden County							
Spinelli, Allison	Gloucester County							
Starcher, Connie	Wawa							
Storm, Jeanne, Vice Chair	American Water	✓	X					X
Stubbs, Andrea	Gloucester Township							
Thompson, Ryan	Truist Bank	✓						
Tyndell, Maurice	Bestworks Industries		X					
Weinberg, Oriel	Jewish Family & Children's Service			X				X
Wikiera, Erik	Wawa							
Gutbezahl, Maayan	WDB Staff			X	X			
Swartz, Jeffrey S.	WDB Staff		X	X	X			X
Vaughn, Debra	WDB Staff		X	X	X			X

WELCOME

Carl Donato, WDB Chair, greeted the attendees and called the meeting to order at 8:35 AM.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Carl asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the June 13, 2024 meeting. Motion was made by Kim Quigley and seconded by Monica McClintock. With a majority vote to the affirmative, the motion carried and



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the minutes for the meeting held on June 13, 2024 were approved.

COMMITTEE DISCUSSION/Webinar Presentation

Meghan Lynn, ARC of Camden County

In addition to her role at ARC, Meghan is Chair of the Workforce Readiness Committee for the Tri-State Resources Management Association. The webinar is the collaboration of Tri-State HRMA, the Abilities Committee and the ARC of Camden County. It will be held from 9:00 AM to 10:00 AM and there is no cost to attend. The WDB will assist with promotion using lists of companies that have previously attended events hosted by the Abilities Committees.

Meghan offered webinar titles for committee's consideration:

- Hiring Success Strategies for Those with Ability Challenges
- Inclusive Hiring Practices And Strategies For Success
- Inclusive Hiring, Minimal Risk – Big Reward!

Success stories and testimonials from employers will be included in the program. Meghan's brother, who is autistic, has celebrated his 10-year anniversary with his employer and Carl's daughter may answer questions as an individual who has taken advantage of employment opportunities.

Jeff Swartz asked if it was possible to obtain retention numbers from employers to illustrate that disabled employees are reliable and include the information in the webinar presentation. He asked Oriel Weinberg (JFCS) and Carl (WAWA) to assist with promoting the event through their contacts and obtain supportive employment retention numbers if possible.

Monica McClintock, Tri-State HRMA

Monica commented that she will put together a template structure and send it out to the group for feedback, to assist with finalizing the details and complete a flyer to start advertising.

Irene Perez, DVRS

- Irene asked if tax incentives, DVRS services (paid internship, collaboration with apprenticeship, OJT) would be part of the webinar. She offered disability etiquette presentations or flyers for attendees. Meghan will discuss DVR services and their offerings with Irene.

Carl Donato, Abilities Committee Chair

Carl commented that the goal of the webinar is to present details of the benefits of supportive employment to the people in the community and the workforce. He suggested including a resource slide at the end of the presentation and added that there is an opportunity to build off of the webinar and offer a follow-up event for attendees in the coming months. He suggested having a follow-up meeting in a week or so with Meghan and Monica.

Oriel Weinberg, JFCS

Oriel offered to submit a video from a vocational breakfast to include in the presentation and will provide an employer to speak about their experience with inclusive hiring. He commented that DVRS offers an amazing internship program that JFCS is working to be participate in.

Kim Quigley, St. John of God Community Services

Kim stated that St. John of God Community Services has started a new initiative to drum up the excitement for competitive employment in South Jersey called "Being Inspired To Get Hired." In the next year, Kim plans to bring employers to the agency to speak on a quarterly basis. She commented that there are business leaders and representatives with little to no knowledge of internships and the tax credits available to them.

- There will be follow-up with the webinar attendees to offer additional information and assistance with the process of internships and tax credits.



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Jeanne Storm, American Water

Jeanne suggested that employers are very curious about accommodations they need to make and the expense involved, and how to assess what the accommodations would look like. She suggested that responding to those questions could be the subject another webinar to present.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

Meghan Lynn, ARC of Camden County

ARC of Camden County has opened up its benefit counseling services to the entire state. Meghan received a scholarship to attend the Autism Conference, where she will be promoting services and networking with businesses and families. ARC of Camden County has expanded to Salem County for job coaching services. Meghan provided information about upcoming major job and resource events.

- A Camden County Resource Fair will be held at the Scottish Rite Auditorium in Collingswood on October 10th (Meghan will share the information with the committee).
- A Mega Job Fair will be held on October 11th at Rowan/Gloucester County in Sewell.
- On November 2nd, there will be a job fair for the federal government and nonprofit agencies Rowan University's main campus from 10:00AM to 2:00PM.

Kimberly Quigley, St. John of God Community Services

- Over the summer, Kim had the opportunity to do advocacy for individuals with disabilities through Access NJ along with fellow agencies throughout New Jersey.
- The pilot program for the Cherry Hill office for Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) has been going very well. There are currently three pilot agencies in the State program, which is expected to go statewide in October.
- St. John of God has picked up 2 additional Camden County sites and continues to try to expand community-based work evaluations. The organization continues to provide benefits counseling and has expanded services into Burlington County. An open house will be held at the agency.
- There is a waiting list for extended unemployment and a short waiting list for evaluations.

Irene Perez, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS)

Irene continues to promote paid internships, where DVRS pays 100% of the salaries 6 to 8 weeks. She noted the internship program is individualized to serve the client. The purpose of the internships is to assist someone who has been ill, disabled and out of work for an extended period of time with getting back into the workforce. So far, DVRS has two employers that have participated in the program, a non-profit church and a bank. They are working to develop and maintain a list of employers to promote the paid internship and OJT programs to. Irene hopes that the DVRS can use AI to create new promotional videos.

- DVRS will participate in 4 DEAM (Disabilities Awareness Month) events in October. The events will be hosted by the awardees of the grant for employment and expansion.
- Jeanne Page-Soncrant has collaborated with Andrea Askie-Rosario to hold a recruitment event with Cooper in October, which is Disability Awareness Month.

Jeanne Storm

- American Water is expanding its talent acquisition group and now has a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) recruiter.
- Jeanne explained that because the demands of her position and the limitation of her resources, she and her Director at American Water are working to select someone who can be more of a dedicated asset to the committee.



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Monica McClintock

- Tri-State HRMA will hold a dinner meeting on October 10th. The focus of the meeting will be “Table Talk” which combines energy, ideas and networking. The focus of the November 7th meeting will be “Terms of Engagement: Proven People Strategies to Drive Productivity and ROI”.
- In addition to the federal government and nonprofit job fair mentioned, Rowan University will host an all-majors career fair at its main campus on October 10th from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM.
- Rutgers-Camden will host an all-majors job fair on October 8th from 12:00 PM to 3:00 PM on the Camden campus.

Oriel Weinberg

- The JFCS building on Springdale Road has undergone major renovations. The grand opening will be held in November. The updated facility will be similar to “Life Town” in North Jersey, designed to look like a quaint town with shops.
 - Oriel noted that the new facility is the perfect place to host a committee event. There will be a fully equipped training café, market, and hair salon. The facility will be shared with The Aleph Adult Day Center, which is an adult day center that specializes in helping people with Alzheimer's.
 - Based on feedback from DVRS, the Soups and Sweets Culinary Training Program will now be a 10-month program (previously a 6-month program), providing a rotation between the commercial-grade kitchen, cafe and the market to introduce skills such as using a cash register, working as a barista, doing inventory, etc.
 - JFCS has completed its application to provide pre-employment transition services and has partnered with businesses in Burlington, Gloucester and Camden counties for potential internships. The organization is working to collaborate with Saddle Hill Winery for an internship. He commented to Irene Perez that he would be interested in discussing internships with her.
- Due to low attendance for Jefferson-Cherry Hill and Jefferson-Stratford locations for students, Project Search has opened the program to adults. Previously, the program was open to youth in their last year of high school up to age 21 and it will now be available for those who have DDD funding. The current goal is to make the program package amenable for those who have Social Security but do not have DDD or availability through DVRS. The package would include tuition assistance, transportation assistance, and stipends for student uniforms. Project Search is a program for transitioning students into the workforce that involves learning skills in a business setting where they have an opportunity to work in multiple departments. Currently, sites are Jefferson Hospital-Cherry Hill, Jefferson Hospital-Stratford and TD Bank Executive Campus. The program has a very high employment rate, and many of those who graduate end up gainfully employed. At this time, Jefferson Hospital-Stratford may not have enough students to participate in this program year.

Frank Cirii, Camden County One-Stop Career Center

- On October 9th, Camden County will hold its senior health fair at The Forum Wedding & Catering Hall located at 109 North Blackhorse Pike in Blackwood. The event will offer flu and COVID vaccinations, senior activities, live music and box lunches.
- Camden County offers an Abilities Martial Arts Night. Classes will take place on Thursday, September 5th, 12th, 19th and 26th from 6:30 PM to 7:30 PM at the Camden County Environmental Center. These classes are limited to 20 participants.
- The One-Stop will co-sponsor a job fair at the Cherry Hill Mall on Friday, September 13th, from 10 AM to 2 PM. The event will take place in the Nordstrom corridor, with a variety of employers, county and



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state departments attending.

- Camden County Miracle League Baseball plays on Saturday mornings at Boundless Field in Challenge Grove Park in Cherry Hill.
 - Debra Vaughn commented that Miracle League Baseball is for children and adults who have disabilities and the Cire A Forman All 4 Sports Foundation has provided a grant to cover participation fees for anyone who wishes to participate and cannot afford it. The grant will be applied upon request at the time of registration.
- DVRS hosted NJ DOL Deputy Commissioner Julie Diaz about a week ago. On a walk-through of the One-Stop with Jeff Deitz, Ms. Diaz was introduced to staff. She discussed ideas for accessibility, signage in the front of the building, and training with staff. An invitation was extended to her to attend WDB committee and One-Stop partner meetings.

Carl Donato, Chair

- WAWA has now expanded with stores in North Carolina, Alabama and the Florida Panhandle. Ground has been broken to build stores in Ohio, Georgia and West Virginia. The expansion plan has accelerated to build 20-30 stores in all of those areas.
- Carl commented that his DJ business has been busy with charity work this summer, including events for the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, Juvenile Diabetes Association and the National Ovarian Cancer Coalition. He also recently provided his DJ services at an event to support awareness and health for people with addiction.

Jeffrey S. Swartz, Camden County Workforce Development Board

- The WDB currently has two staff assignments to fill and is seeking one candidate with program evaluation and procurement experience and another with administration and committee management experience.
 - Bridget Henderson, Program Evaluator, left on August 16th for a fellowship opportunity with the United States Department of Health and Human services in Washington, DC.
 - Maayan Gutbezah, Receptionist/Committee Coordinator, resigned to pursue other opportunities.
- The quarterly Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 18th at 9:00 via Zoom. Board members were asked to RSVP because a quorum is needed to approve the master budget. The program for the meeting will be an open mic, to give board members and others an opportunity to provide updates on their business activities and inquire how the WDB and the One-Stop can assist them, through the Incumbent Worker Training, paid internships or any of the programs discussed during today's meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Carl asked for a motion to adjourn. Motion was made by Frank Cirii and seconded by Kim Quigley. The motion carried with a majority vote to the affirmative and the meeting was adjourned at 9:30 AM.

NEXT MEETING

The next Abilities Committee meeting will be held Thursday, October 10, 2024 at 8:30 AM on Zoom.

Submitted by,
Debra Vaughn, Assistant to the Executive Director