



SWW Workforce Development Board

Meeting Minutes

of December 14, 2022 Meeting at QUAD, Saratoga Springs NY

thejoblink.org

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Scott Brazie, Dan Dudley, Gary Dake, Doug Ford, Maureen Grabowski, Patricia Klimkewicz, Michael Mastropietro, Tara McCaughey, Mike Munter, Laura Oswald, Dominick Patrignani, Michael Prime, Tracey Riley, Joe Serafini, Wendy Skawinski, Mary Ann Spiezio, Ryan Van Amburgh, John Wheatley. (18)

EXCUSED: Ash Anand, Scot Chamberlain, Kathy LaFond, Elizabeth Miller, Zack Moore, Turina Parker, Tricia Rogers, Matthew Rose, Mark Stratton (9)

GUESTS: Jen McCloskey (*Saratoga County Career Center*), Liza Ochsendorf (*Warren County Career Center*), Roberta Davis (*Washington County Career Center*), Shelley Smith (*LEAP*), Isai Pochtar (*Transfr-VR*), Stacie Agostino for Assemblywoman Walsh, David Ashdown (*WSHWE BOCES*), Pet Bardunias (*Capital Region Chamber*), Kevin Brasser (*QUAD*), Andy Gilpin (Captain), Kate Maynard (*Capital District Regional Planning Commission*), Christine Mc Clear (*Center for Economic Growth*), Assemblyman Matthew Simpson, Matthew MacDonald (*Assembly District 114*), Carrie VanTassel (*WSHWE BOCES*), Mike Wild (*Warren County Board of Supervisors*), Lydia Hoffman for Assemblywoman Carrie Woerner, Rayan Aguam for Senator Tedesco. (18)

STAFF: Gretchen Steffan, Executive Director

Welcome & Introductions of WDB Members, Honored Guests and Staff by Chairman Munter.

1. Approval of October 19th Meeting Minutes - Action Item

Motion to Approve: by Gary Dake **Second:** Doug Ford

Discussion: None; **Vote:** Approved unanimously.

2. Approval of 2023 Meeting Schedule - Action Item

Motion to Approve: by Gary Dake **Second:** Laura Oswald

Discussion: None; **Vote:** Approved unanimously.

- #### 3. Presentation by Isai Pochtar on Transfr-VR.
- Isai demonstrated Transfr-VR's unique workforce development tool and how it can provide career exploration in virtual reality to help students make a more informed decision about their future career choices. The tool also demonstrated how hands-on work-based learning aligns with employer competencies and can provide a unique learning experience for users. Further, Isai demonstrated to the group how this technology can facilitate partnerships to create an ecosystem that will serve regional business and student educational needs for career exploration, pre-screening hiring, employee onboarding and continuing technical education. The tool has 200+ simulations with 23 occupations and learning objectives that can build skills and competencies in the disciplines of manufacturing, construction, skilled trades, hospitality & tourism, automotive, diesel technology, and aviation maintenance. Through career exploration and discovery of career options, Transfr-VR tools and technology can showcase different career paths, and users can experience what it's like to work in different careers such as automotive, hospitality/tourism, manufacturing, public safety, skilled trades and warehousing. Isai reported that there will be Electric Vehicle and Semi-conductor simulations forthcoming.

Our WDB and Career Center System intend to work toward developing a regional ecosystem to access this technology and provide it to students and businesses for career exploration and skill development.



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4. Committee Updates

- a. Mike Munter reported that the **Executive Committee** met with Gretchen on December 7th and discussed Board and Centers Operations, Membership status, Committee progress, Program & Fiscal Monitoring, Virtual Reality Technology, Cell Engagement Technology, Board Effect implementation, status of the One Stop System Operator and our Board meeting agenda.
- b. **Business Needs Committee** report by Gary Dake. Gary provided an update on Truck Rodeo planning for a 2023 event, status of the sub-committee work on Childcare, the upcoming and substantial job creation in the telecommunications industry for broadband development both regionally and nationally, and lastly an update on regional transportation. We will be having Carm Basile of CDTA at our February 3, 2023 WDB meeting, providing a presentation on the Economics of Bus Routes. *The committee met on November 15th.*
- c. **Resource & Development Committee** report by Gretchen Steffan for Ash Anand. The group revisited the purpose of the committee and will endeavor to clarify it and future deliverables. The group will engage in some research on regional collaboration opportunities to support group purpose. Lastly, the committee identified an interest in advocacy and would like a future presentation on this topic. Melinda Mack, NYATEP's Executive Director is scheduled for the February 3rd WDB meeting. *The committee met on November 17th.*
- d. The **Youth Committee** will have it's first meeting on January 18th. Mark Stratton will Chair the committee. Mark is the Superintendent of Schools for Corinth Central Schools, located in Saratoga County.

5. **Center's Operations Report** by Jen McCloskey for the 3 Career Centers. Jen identified that in calendar year 2022, the Greater Capital Region Career Center Leadership Group's career development workshops, reached almost 3,000 residents. These workshops included Transferrable Skills, Resume Development, Interview Preparation, Goal Setting, Completing Job Applications, Social Media, and Overcoming Barriers to Employment. The 3 counties enrolled 128 youth in the Summer Youth Experience Program (SYEP), which provides work and life skills for youth and much needed workforce support for businesses, municipalities and not-for-profits at no cost to them. Some SYEP program participants were hired by their worksites at the end of the summer. There is an increase in demand for our GED services, which demonstrates how the pandemic has affected our youth. We have about 30 youth receiving intensive GED preparation, which is a valuable resource for our communities. On the training front, 87 Adult and Dislocated Workers have been sponsored by the Centers. This training from partners like BOCES, SUNY ADK and HVCC are facilitating skills gains that will result in credentials, certifications and opportunities for career advancement. Wraparound services for childcare, transportation, books, uniforms, tools and gas cards are also provided as needed. Common requests for training include CDL, Machine Tool Technology, CNA, LPN, RN, EMT, Phlebotomy, EKG and Peer Recovery. The Warren County Career Center received ARPA money from Warren County to use for workforce initiatives and they are hiring a Student to Careers Development Specialist to support school districts. Saratoga's Career Center completed a successful EMT PILOT program with 6 Shenendehowa students, whom all completed their training over the summer and then passed the NYS certification exams. **ALL are now NYS licensed EMT's!**



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6. WDB Operations Update

Gretchen Steffan provided the WDB and guests a brief look back at Calendar year 2022, and ahead to 2023... 2022 Action Items were:

- Continue getting our business systems reordered and updated.
- Improve School Partnerships.
- Building Better Business Partnerships with more Businesses and Business Sectors.

Looking Forward to 2023...

- We will continue to work on our 2022 Action Items as some of them are continuous work-in-process items. Continued Partnership-Building is vital in our work.
- WIOA Compliance is always a priority item, and administrative process is required to document what we do to NYSDOL for USDOL.
- We will invest in new technologies that will broaden our reach and ensure that we are investing in our SWW student populations, and helping them with career exploration. We will be doing this with focus on our middle schoolers and 9th and 10th graders. Our new YOUTH Committee will help us with building partnerships and broadening our reach into this area.
- We will continue to serve our Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth populations with all of the services provided by our Career Centers, and will provide our clients with information on regional priority occupations that will facilitate employment security.
- We will continue to reinvent ourselves as we continue to emerge from the pandemic. There is no going back to old ways and patterns of thinking on workforce development and labor force participation. We must adapt, course-correct, and anticipate what's ahead, and then be prepared to help others navigate through it.

7. Additional Opportunity for Board Member Announcements / Comments...

Assemblyman Simpson offered his support to the WDB, and a reminder he is just a phone call away.

8. Adjournment at 10:00 am

Motion to Adjourn: by John Wheatley Second: Mike Prime

Discussion: None; **Vote:** Approved unanimously.

Next SWW WDB Meeting Friday, February 3, 2023 at QUAD in Saratoga from 8–10 am