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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Grants for \$277,750 Fund Job Training in Three Central Jersey Counties

Residents in Hunterdon, Middlesex and Somerset counties who are unemployed because of COVID-19 have access to a new training grant program through the counties' workforce development boards.

The Consortium of the Greater Raritan Workforce Development Board (serving Hunterdon and Somerset counties) and the Workforce Development Board of Middlesex County has received \$277,750 in COVID-19 Dislocated Worker Grants from the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development.

This first-time collaboration between the two workforce boards aim to serve at least 50 individuals from the three counties through their One-Stop Career Training Services Centers who have lost their jobs or face significant reduction in hours because of the pandemic. Training opportunities in the new program focuses on four industries that are experiencing post-COVID-19 growth:

- Healthcare
- Transportation, logistics and distribution
- Warehousing
- Selected retail sectors (food stores and home centers).

Each workforce board through their One-Stop Career Training Services Center already offers individual training grant programs for the unemployed and underemployed. This new Consortium program expands the number of residents that can be assisted and covers the program's applicants now through August 2021.

"We know that more than 214,000 individuals in the three counties have filed for unemployment since mid-March," said Kevin Kurdziel, director of Middlesex County's Office of Career Opportunity and CEO of the county's Workforce Development Board. "While many have gone back to work, many others are still looking for their next opportunity. The goal of the Consortium is to help out-of-work or underemployed residents displaced by the pandemic obtain industry-valued credentials and employment in sustainable wage career pathways."

Eligible participants in this grant opportunity also will have the benefit of earning certificates in SkillUp Middlesex and SkillUp Greater Raritan, a free online learning portal for residents in the three counties.

"Workforce boards focus on ensuring residents have access to programs and information that help them get good-paying jobs," said Paul Grzella, director of the Greater Raritan Workforce Development Board. "Training grants are one component

of what our One-Stop Career Centers do every day, and the staffs regularly guide people to success.”

In addition to the training grants, the Consortium’s partners have other ongoing career-related services, including registered apprenticeship programs, personal assessment tools, career counseling, case management, work-readiness training, resume assistance, interview practice and preparation, job development and job placement and more.

Residents of Hunterdon and Somerset counties can find more information about the Consortium opportunity by emailing onestop@co.somerset.nj.us, or by calling 908-541-5780. For more information on all system services, visit www.thegrwdb.org, and look on the Calendar and Job Seekers tabs.

Residents of Middlesex County can find more information by emailing onestoptraining@co.middlesex.nj.us or by calling 732-745-3601. For more information on all system services, visit the [Middlesex Workforce Development Board](#).

Questions? Contact GRWDB Board Director Paul Grzella at grzella@co.somerset.nj.us, or 908-203-6044.

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