

# ANNUAL REPORT 2020 to 2021



**Published March 2022** 

https://www.thegrwdb.org/







Here's a look at how the Greater Raritan
Workforce Development Board and its
system partners continue to transform
how we work to meet the needs of
employers and job seekers in Hunterdon
and Somerset Counties, New Jersey

### **OUR BOARD AND COMMITTEES**

Local workforce development system stakeholders – business, education, labor, economic development, and volunteer community leaders – support the work of the Greater Raritan Workforce Development Board (GRWDB). In collaboration with GRWDB staff and system team members, board analyze workforce conditions, oversee the use of federal and state funds, and set workforce goals and strategy. To ensure that workforce investments in Hunterdon and Somerset counties meet employer needs, the GRWDB is required to have a majority of local business representation. GRWDB members of are appointed by the Board of County Commissioners in Hunterdon and Somerset Counties, New Jersey. The full board of the GRWDB meets quarterly and is supported by an Executive Committee which meets as needed.

The GRWDB also has four committees which each meet at least four times throughout the year to help plan strategy and consider new initiatives in specific areas. These are the Disabilities Committee, the Literacy Committee, the Operations Committee, and the Youth Committee. These committees include members of the full Board as well as community members from various constituencies interested in taking part in the conversation. Upcoming meetings and events can be found here. All are welcomed!

#### **Board Members 2021**

- Chair Violet Kocsis, SVP of Corporate Services and Chief Human Resources Officer, Hunterdon Healthcare System
- Vice Chair Susan Brooks, Senior Director, IEEE Corporate Governance
- . A.D. Amar, Professor of Business, Seton Hall University
- Laura Begg, Senior Director Talent Management, Sapphire Digital
- Jacki Belin, Vice President of Student Affairs, Raritan Valley Community College
- Todd Bonsall, Superintendent, Hunterdon County Vocational School District
- Elizabeth Conte, Representative, NJ Department Vocational Rehabilitation Services Representative
- Ron Douglas, Manager, NJ Department of Labor & Workforce Development Employment Services
- Joanne Hala, Associate Director, United Way of Northern New Jersey
- Chrys Harttraft, Superintendent,
   Somerset County Vocational Technical School
- Maureen Kurdziel, Vice President, American Arbitration Association
- Fran Leddy, Adult Literacy Programs Coordinator,
   Hunterdon County Educational Services Commission

## **2021 Hunterdon County Board of County Commissioners**

Susan Soloway, Commission Director John E. Lanza, Commissioner Deputy DirectorJ. Matthew Holt, Commissioner Zach T. Rich, Commissioner Shaun C. Van Doren, Commissioner

- Howard Matalon, Partner, Employment Practices, OlenderFeldman LLP
- Meagan O'Reilly, Director, Hunterdon County Human Services
- Christopher Phelan, President/CEO, Hunterdon County Chamber of Commerce
- Marc Saluk, Economic Development Director, County of Hunterdon
- Michelle Satanik, Area General Manager, Valor Hospitality
- Daniel J. Sebban, Council Representative, Northeast Council of Carpenters
- Sejal Dave Sharma, Director of Business Development, Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Somerset
- Christina Shockley, Apprenticeship Coordinator
- Tyler Seville, Executive Director, Innovation New Jersey

#### **Ex-Officio Members**

- Christopher Peake, One-Stop Operator, Greater Raritan One-Stop Career Center
- Douglas Singleterry, Commissioner Liaison, County of Somerset, NJ
- Zach Rich, Freeholder Liaison, County of Hunterdon, NJ

## 2021 Somerset County Board of County Commissioners

Shanel Y. Robinson, Commission Director Sara Sooy, Commission Deputy Director Paul Drake, Commissioner Melonie Marano, Commissioner Douglas Singleterry Commissioner

#### Join the GRWDB

Community members are invited to explore the work of the GRWDB by attending board meetings and joining one of the GRWDB's four committees. GRWDB staff are also available to meet with potential board members to expand the conversation.

Learn more about supporting the economic vitality of Hunterdon and Somerset counties and becoming a committee member of the GRWDB by contacting info@thegrwdb.org or calling GRWDB Director Paul Grzella at (908) 203-6044.

# OUR MISSION AND OUR WORK



"Through policy, oversight, and planning, The Greater Raritan Workforce Development Board (GRWDB) ensures that workforce training and education are responsive to and meet the needs of employers and job seekers."

A hybrid model served GRWDB staff and partners well throughout 2021, as new ways of doing business were developed to meet customers when and where they needed us to be. After working remotely during the first half of the year, partners returned to their offices in the summer and fall working with a mix of telephone, email and digital platforms, along with some appointment-based in-person service. Whatever method was used, the work was done with the welcoming and professional mindset all partners use. The lessons learned and the models used this year are helping refine the work and goals in 2022.

#### Here are some notable system accomplishments:

- The GRWDB competed for a Summer Youth Employment Program grant sponsored by the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development. After successfully running a program in 2020, this 2021 grant opportunity gave the GRWDB \$82,500.00 to provide 30 youth from the two counties with summer jobs. By the end of October 2021, 29 youth completed eight-week work experiences with 14 employers in the area.
- The four committees of the GRWDB the Disabilities, Literacy, Operations and Youth committees continued to meet virtually throughout 2021. The committees' work included a yearly update of a Disabilities Resource Guide of Services and a Literacy Resource Guide of Services both can be found on the Board and Committees tab of the website. Special outreach programs for literacy services also were conducted. The Youth Committee increased its membership through an information campaign with service providers and at the end of 2021 began planning an in-person Youth Career Pathways Program which is to be conducted on April 28, 2022 at the Raritan Valley Community College Conference Center this event is focused on options for the workforce-bound student. In addition, in October 2021 the Disabilities Committee hosted an in-person Employment Summit at RVCC conference center which offered information for job seekers and employers. The 2022 meeting dates for all committees and the board can be found on the Events-Meeting Packages tab of the website.
- The Greater Raritan Resume Portal was launched in 2021, providing residents
  templates for resumes and cover letters, along with an Al-powered feature that
  reviews and provides instant feedback on all sections of a resume. This feature also
  can be used on LinkedIn profiles. In addition, the portal provides recommendations
  on resume best practices and interview question preparation for several different
  in-demand occupations.
- The GRWDB's One-Stop Operator, Christopher Peake, provides monthly reports of system activities, which are shared with the board and posted for community to review on on the About - Greater Raritan One-Stop Partners tab of the website.

To see all the programs and events planned in the Greater Raritan area, bookmark the Events - Calendar tab of www.thegrwdb.org.

#### 2021, By the numbers:

SkillUp Greater Raritan had **1,315** new registrants, with **2,407** courses completed by participants throughout the year

Virtual Recruitment Sessions were conducted for **77** employers and were attended by **2,241** job seekers

The mobile text alert system – text onestop to 56512 – attracted **286** new users

The GRWDB Chromebook loaner program for some customers began in April 2021 – the fleet now has **40** Chromebooks available for loan; it was the first program of its type in the state

Job Match emails about 3,481 open positions in Hunterdon and Somerset counties were sent out by the state Business Services Representatives working with other system partners to 1,043,795 job seekers; 1,224 applied for positions

The GRWDB presented **38** webinars and two in-person events attended by **427** employers and job seekers

Community Outreach Specialist/Career Coach Jan Goodman presented **28** webinars attended by **331** job seekers

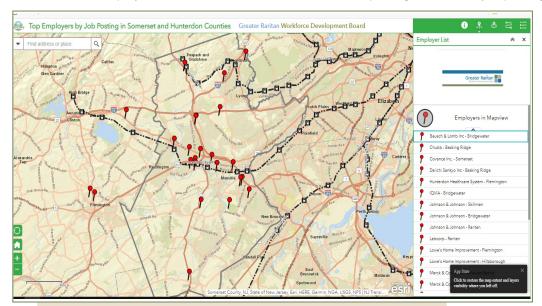
# OUR LABOR MARKET INFORMATION



How many people filed new claims for unemployment assistance in Hunterdon and Somerset Counties between the start of the pandemic in March of 2020 to the end of December 2021? According to the **Greater Raritan Unemployment Tracker**, 96,566 residents in the two counties filed for UI claims.

What are the top 25 employers by their number of job postings in the two counties? And can I use public transportation to get to them? Those answers are available on the Greater Raritan's interactive **Top Employers database**, which includes links to each company and pinpoints the locations along transportation routes.

What skills are employers in Hunterdon and Somerset Counties putting in their new job postings? According to quarterly reports



posted on the Resources - Data page of www.thegrwdb.org, communication skills, teamwork/collaboration, planning, problem solving and organizational skills are highly desired by local companies, as is knowledge of Microsoft Excel and Microsoft Office.

These resources are developed with Labor Mark Information (LMI) data on county, area and state trends provided in real time by the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (NJDOL) Office of Research and Information.

The Greater Raritan **Unemployment Tracker has** been updated weekly since March of 2020, and creates a picture of which sectors, occupations and demographic groups have been most impacted since the pandemic began. The Top Employers platform was launched in the middle of 2021 to assist job seekers with transportation information. And for the past three years, quarterly and annual analysis reports of job postings help provide directional information on job trends that the GRWDB uses to plan strategy and programs.

Additional LMI resources may be found on the state NJDOLWD's digital platform: https://nj.gov/labor/lpa/ LMI index.html.



#### **OUR PERFORMANCE**

Understanding data and outcomes helps the the Greater Raritan Workforce Development Board (GRWDB) plan system strategy and direction. That's why Performance Matters from Futurework is a key resource for the GRWDB.

This web-based intelligence system, utilized nation-wide, tracks, analyzes and compares localized performance Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I and III data for Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth and Wagner-Peyser customers. This data can be compiled into individualized reports which help identify trends, including the impact of the COVID pandemic on customer participation in system programs. Here are Greater Raritan's key performance metrics in employment and credentialing for PY 2020 for the Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth (WIOA) populations served, and the preliminary performance for the first half of PY 2021. Also included is the Wagner-Peyser performance outcomes for the first half of PY 2021.

#### **DEFINITIONS:**

Adult: A person who is age 18 or older.

Credential: Training resulting in industry-recognized credential for career pathways

**Den:** Denominator, total clients in category receiving services

Dislocated Worker (DW): A person who has been

person who has been terminated or laid off, or who has received a notice of termination or layoff, from employment or was selfemployed but is unemployed as a result of general economic conditions in the community

Employment Q2: Is working in unsubsidized employment in second quarter after exiting program

Employment Q4: Is working in unsubsidized employment in fourth quarter after exiting program

**Program Year (PY):** Runs from July 1 to June 30

**LWDB:** Local Workforce Development Board

Median Earnings: The quarterly earnings of participants in unsubsidized employment in second quarter after exiting program

Num: Numerator, total clients who successfully completed program

Wager-Peyser (WP): A

jobseeker utilizing the programs offered by Employment Services in the One-Stop system

Youth: Out-of-school youth not less than 16 and not more than 24 years of age.

PY 2020 WIOA Performance - July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021

	, -,		,
	Actual	LWDB Plan	% LWDB Achieved
Skill Gains Youth	50.0%	42.7%	117.1%
num Employment Q2 Adult	9		
den Employment Q2 Adult	26		
Employment Q2 Adult	34.6%	55.5%	62.4%
num Employment Q4 Adult	13		
den Employment Q4 Adult	32		
Employment Q4 Adult	40.6%	62.6%	64.9%
num Credential Adult	24		
den Credential Adult	30		
Credential Adult	80.0%	59.5%	134.5%
num Skill Gains Adult	4		
den Skill Gains Adult	5		
Skill Gains Adult	80.0%	40.0%	200.0%
num Employment Q2 DW	92		
den Employment Q2 DW	179		
Employment Q2 DW	51.4%	58.7%	87.6%
num Employment Q4 DW	123		
den Employment Q4 DW	203		
Employment Q4 DW	60.6%	57.8%	104.8%
num Credential DW	148		
den Credential DW	181		
Credential DW	81.8%	67.1%	121.9%
num Skill Gains DW	33		
den Skill Gains DW	35		
Skill Gains DW	94.3%	40.0%	235.7%
num Employment Q2 Youth	12		
den Employment Q2 Youth	15		
Employment Q2 Youth	80.0%	52.9%	151.2%
num Employment Q4 Youth	20		
den Employment Q4 Youth	26		
Employment Q4 Youth	76.9%	54.1%	142.2%
num Credential Youth	10		
den Credential Youth	13		
Credential Youth	76.9%	50.0%	153.8%
num Skill Gains Youth	4		
den Skill Gains Youth	8		

PY 2021 WIOA Performance - July 1, 2021 - Dec. 31, 2021

T I ZUZI WIOA I CITOTIII at			% LWDB
	Actual	LWDB Plan	Achieved
Skill Gains Youth	100.0%	42.7%	234.2%
num Employment Q2 Adult	2		
den Employment Q2 Adult	6		
Employment Q2 Adult	33.3%	56.5%	59.0%
num Employment Q4 Adult	5		
den Employment Q4 Adult	11		
Employment Q4 Adult	45.5%	63.6%	71.5%
num Credential Adult	8		
den Credential Adult	10		
Credential Adult	80.0%	60.5%	132.2%
num Skill Gains Adult	5		
den Skill Gains Adult	5		
Skill Gains Adult	100.0%	41.0%	243.9%
num Employment Q2 DW	21		
den Employment Q2 DW	27		
Employment Q2 DW	77.8%	59.7%	130.3%
num Employment Q4 DW	50		
den Employment Q4 DW	90		
Employment Q4 DW	55.6%	57.8%	96.1%
num Credential DW	72		
den Credential DW	84		
Credential DW	85.7%	68.1%	125.9%
num Skill Gains DW	12		
den Skill Gains DW	12		
Skill Gains DW	100.0%	41.0%	243.9%
num Employment Q2 Youth	5		
den Employment Q2 Youth	5		
Employment Q2 Youth	100.0%	53.9%	185.5%
num Employment Q4 Youth	6		
den Employment Q4 Youth	8		
Employment Q4 Youth	75.0%	55.0%	136.4%
num Credential Youth	2		
den Credential Youth	2		
Credential Youth	100.0%	51.0%	196.1%
num Skill Gains Youth	5		
den Skill Gains Youth	5		

#### PY 21 Wagner Peyser Performance Outcomes, July 1, 2020 to Dec. 31, 2021

	Employment Q2 WP	Employment Q4 WP
All Location	71.7%	82.19
Atlantic County WDB	86.8%	77.79
Bergen County WDB	64.1%	76.89
Burlington County WDB	64.5%	88.29
Camden County WDB	69.9%	90.69
Cumberland/Salem/Cape May WDB	71.7%	78.09
Essex County WDB	72.0%	69.99
Gloucester County WDB	66.9%	90.29
Greater Raritan WDB	87.5%	86.99
Hudson County WDB	54.0%	74.79
Jersey City WDB	62.2%	73.79
Mercer County WDB	84.8%	86.5
Middlesex County WDB	63.2%	81.59
Monmouth County WDB	70.5%	89.69
Morris-Sussex-Warren WDB	68.3%	91.09
Newark WDB	44.9%	84.39
NJDOL Trenton Central Office	93.9%	78.39
Ocean County WDB	72.6%	82.99
Passaic County WDB	61.0%	83.19
Union County WDB	61.2%	81.00

LEGEND		
Red	Less than 90% Achieved	
Yellow	90 to 100% Achieved	
Green	Greater than 100% Achieved	

#### **OUR FINANCES**



The federal and state funding provided to the Greater Raritan Workforce Development Board (GRWDB) supports direct services and outreach efforts to job seekers and employers in Hunterdon and Somerset counties. The budgets below reflect what was approved by the GRWDB Board at its June 2021 meeting. All budgets and subsequent updates can be viewed on the **meeting packages link** of the GRWDB site, in the Full GRWDB Meeting Agenda section, and GRWDB staff continue to evolve budget formats and presentations.

Program Year 2021 included the continuation of a first-time venture in which the GRWDB collaborated with the Workforce Development Board of Middlesex County on a COVID-19 training grant opportunity focusing on workers who have become unemployed because the pandemic. In addition, in the late spring of 2021 the GRWDB received, for the second consecutive year, \$82,500 in grant funding for the Summer Youth Employment Program - providing part-time jobs for 30 participants. The funding for this program, completed in October 2021, was part of Program Year 2020.

The charts, shown below, detail how the federal and state funds are spent by category and what additional support programs and resources the funding supports. Throughout the year the board also receives a variety of in-kind support services from its partners.

BUDGET SUMMARY   Budget		Greater Raritan Workforce Development Board	
BUDGET SUMMARY   Budget			
WIOA Adult & Dislocated Worker			17 III COODMI DID III MONDO COMMONDOS
Workforce Partnership Program - DW COVID19			
Workforce Partnership Program - DW COVID19	Twi		1,327,204.80
CARES GRANT - COVID19 DW	-		
WIOA Youth   \$1,884.60	-		
SUMMER YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM (SYEP)   82,500.00			
WFNJ	-		
WILL	SU	MMER YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM (SYEP)	82,500.00
Sub-total PY21 Revenue	WF	NJ	822,074.08
Carry-In PY 20 WIPNJ Funds	WL	L	49,000.00
Carry-In PY 20 WIPNJ Funds		Sub-total PY21 Revenue	2,732,663.48
Total Carrer Services Revenue			
Total Career Services Revenue   Expense			
Expense         Career Salaries (Program 12 Staff)         488,407.57           Career Services Fringe (Program 12 Staff)         251,272.37           WDB Salaries (Program 1 Staff)         13,109.04           WDB Fringe (Program 1 Staff)         6,812.77           Conference & Training         1,500.00           Memberships         2,000.00           Occupancy Somerset         96,993.62           Occupancy Hunterdon         11,576.32           One Stop Operator         25,000.00           Assessment Tool         3,400.00           Travel         600.00           Supplies         5,000.00           Technology         5,000.00           Operating         5,000.00           Contracts         ITA's & incumbent Worker         550,840.00           Supportive Services         5,000.00           Other Training Opportunities         20,000.00           Incumbent Worker Training         104,659.00           Workforce Partnership Program DW - COVID19 Contracts         -           Middlesex County         -           Workforce Partnership Program DW - Supportive Services         -           CARES Grant - Reimbursement COVID19 Expenditures         -           CARES Grant - Reimbursement COVID19 Expenditures         - </td <td></td> <td></td> <td>2 767 663 48</td>			2 767 663 48
Career Services Fringe (Program 12 Staff)   251,272.37   WDB Salaries (Program 1 Staff)   13,109.04   WDB Fringe (Program 1 Staff)   6,812.77   Conference & Training   1,500.00   1,500.00   0   0   0   0   0   0   0   0			-,, -,,,,,,-
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WDB Salaries (Program 1 Staff)			
WDB Fringe (Program 1 Staff)			
Conference & Training			
Memberships			
Occupancy Somerset         96,993.62           Occupancy Hunterdon         11,576.32           One Stop Operator         25,000.00           Assessment Tool         3,400.00           Travel         600.00           Supplies         5,000.00           Technology         5,000.00           Operating         5,000.00           Contracts         ITA's & Incumbent Worker         550,840.00           Supportive Services         5,000.00           Other Training Opportunities         20,000.00           Incumbent Worker Training         104,659.00           Workforce Partnership Program DW - COVID19 Contracts         Middlesex County           Workforce Partnership Program DW - Supportive Services         -           CARES Grant - Reimbursement COVID19 Expenditures         -           TANF Contracts         339,784.51           WFNJ: GA, GA/SNAP, SNAP Contracts         222,584.49           Work Force Learning Link         49,000.00           Youth Ontracts         143,172.00           Youth Other         3,500.00           Youth Other         3,500.00           SYEP         82,500.00           CAVP         -           Work Verfication         -           SmartSt			
Occupancy Hunterdon			
One Stop Operator			
Assessment Tool			
Travel			
Supplies			
Technology			
Operating			
Contracts			
ITA's & Incumbent Worker   550,840.00			5,000.00
Supportive Services	Coi		
Other Training Opportunities         20,000.00           Incumbent Worker Training         104,659.00           Workforce Partnership Program DW - COVID19 Contracts         104,659.00           Middlesex County         -           Workforce Partnership Program DW - ITA's         -           Workforce Partnership Program DW - Supportive Services         -           CARES Grant - Reimbursement COVID19 Expenditures         -           TANF Contracts         339,784.51           WFNJ: GA, GA/SNAP, SNAP Contracts         222,584.49           Work Force Learning Link         49,000.00           Youth Contracts         143,172.00           Youth Work Experience - Visions(20% Youth Program Funds)         90,376.92           Youth ITA's         7,500.00           Youth Other         3,500.00           SYEP         82,500.00           CAVP         -           Work Verification         -           SmartSteps         -           Needs Based: Transportation         -           Other/Operating         233,074.87           Total Career Services PY 20 Budget         2,767,663.48           Career Services PY 20 Revenue         (2,767,663.48	$\perp \perp$		
Incumbent Worker Training	$\perp$		
Workforce Partnership Program DW - COVID19 Contracts   Middlesex County   -			
Middlesex County	$\perp$	Incumbent Worker Training	104,659.00
Workforce Partnership Program DW - ITA's   -     Workforce Partnership Program DW - Supportive Services   -     CARES Grant - Reimbursement COVID19 Expenditures   -     TANF Contracts   339,784.51     WFNJ: GA, GA/SNAP, SNAP Contracts   222,584.49     Work Force Learning Link   49,000.00     Youth Contracts   143,172.00     Youth Work Experience - Visions(20% Youth Program Funds)   90,376.92     Youth ITA's   7,500.00     Youth Other   3,500.00     SYEP   82,500.00     CAVP   -     Work Verfication   -     Work Verfication   -     SmartSteps   -     Needs Based: Transportation   -     Other/Operating   233,074.87     Total Career Services PY 20 Budget   2,767,663.48     Career Services PY 20 Revenue   (2,767,663.48			
Workforce Partnership Program DW - Supportive Services	$\vdash$		-
CARES Grant - Reimbursement COVID19 Expenditures	$\vdash$		-
TANF Contracts   339,784.51	$\vdash$		
WFNJ: GA, GA/SNAP, SNAP Contracts   222,584.49	$\vdash$		220 704 54
Work Force Learning Link	$\vdash$		
Youth Contracts	$\vdash$		
Youth Work Experience - Visions(20% Youth Program Funds)   90,376.92	$\vdash$		
Youth ITA's	$\vdash$		
Youth Other	$\vdash$		
SYEP	+		
CAVP	$\vdash$		
Work Verfication	$\vdash$		02,000.00
SmartSteps	$\vdash$		-
Needs Based: Transportation	$\vdash$		-
Other/Operating         233,074.87           Total Career Services PY 20 Budget         2,767,663.48           Career Services PY 20 Revenue         (2,767,663.48	$\vdash$		
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Career Services PY 20 Revenue (2,767,663.48	$\vdash$		
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	Greater Raritan Workforce Development Board (draft) GRWDB Admin PY 21 (FY 22) Budget July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022		
		Annual PY 21	
	BUDGET SUMMARY	Admin Budget	
	Revenue		
	A Adult & Dislocated Worker	147,467.20	
	A Youth	50,209.40	
	kforce Partnership Program - DW COVID19	-	
	RES Grant -DW COVID19	-	
WFI	·	84,295.92	
	-total PY20 Revenue	281,972.52	
	20 WIOA Funds (PY20 CARRY-IN)	15,000.00	
PY 2	20 WFNJ (PY20 CARRY-IN)		
	Total Revenue	296,972.52	
	Expense		
WD	B Salaries (2 Staff)	130,973.10	
WD	B Fringe (Admin 2 Staff)	68,066.72	
Care	eer Services (1Staff)	48,941.54	
Care	eer Services Fringe (1 Staff)	25,434.92	
Con	ference & Training	1,500.00	
Occ	upancy	12,036.02	
Trav	rel	250.00	
Mar	keting	500.00	
Men	nberships	1,000.00	
Othe	er/Operating	6,270.22	
Sup	plies	1,500.00	
Tec	nnology	500.00	
	Total WDB Admin PY 21 Budget	296,972.52	
	WDB Revenue Admin PY 21	(296,972.52)	
	Variance	(0.00)	

### **OUR SUCCESS STORIES**



Greater Raritan One-Stop Career Center Training Services team members regularly share stories about some of the customers assisted throughout the year. These stories are highlighted on the Resources – Job Seekers page of the GRWDB web site, to show the impact the region's workforce system has on those who live in the two counties. Here's one more.

# A team effort of community members got Kevin moving

Kevin joined Greater Raritan's WorkFirst New Jersey (WFNJ) Job Readiness program in May 2021 and was the program's first inperson customer since the start of COVID. He attended the workshop in person two days a week, completing assignments and job search remotely three days per week.

When he joined, Kevin had very limited technology skills. He had no phone or computer. He was about to lose his apartment because he was out of work and having difficulty job searching due to COVID. He lost his driver's license more than 20 years ago due to fines and surcharges for traffic violations. He had been paying those charges off before he lost his job.

The first goal was to give Kevin some basic computer skills so he could job search online. The Hunterdon County Educational Services Commission (HCESC) WFNJ staff helped him set up a Gmail account and borrow a Chromebook through the GRWDB Chromebook Loaner program at the local Somerset County Library branch.

Staff taught him how to navigate the Chromebook, access his email and the Internet, and set up an Indeed account to apply to jobs. They also helped him obtain a cell phone through the Assurance program. Staff also worked with him to update his resume and cover letter, which he uploaded to Indeed and some other job search sites. With these skills, he began researching and applying for jobs online.

Next, HCESC WFNJ staff worked on interviewing skills such as how to prepare for an interview, common interview questions, how to answer behavioral and situational questions, and interview follow up. Kevin was a great student and very eager to learn whatever he could about a successful job search.

Since Kevin had transportation barriers, staff invited Linda Rapacki from Ridewise, a Somerset County agency that provides public transportation and bicycle safety training, to meet Kevin. She provided instruction on how to use the Somerset County bus and train options, followed by a guided bus tour of large/ popular places of employment along Somerset County routes.

One of the first places Kevin had applied was The Home Depot which was along a bus route. Within a few weeks, they contacted him to arrange an interview. He went on the



interview and aced it! In class the next day, he said that he felt confident and prepared for the interview because of what he learned from the WFNJ staff. In fact, many of the questions asked were ones he had practiced. He said it was like staff was there with him, helping him answer the questions.

A few days later, Kevin received and accepted an offer. He started working right away. Fortunately, he could take the bus to and from work. But there were times when Kevin could not catch the bus, and he made the one-hour walk from his home in Somerville to the Bridgewater location.

During this time, Ridewise rolled out a program called BikeConnect, which matches employed individuals with no personal transportation to donated bicycles. A local shop refurbishes the bicycles and then provides the recipient with a helmet, water bottle and safety gear. Staff submitted a program referral for Kevin, and he was accepted, becoming BikeConnect's first recipient.

Shortly thereafter, he met with the owner of Pop's Bicycle Shop in Somerville, along with Ridewise staff, to accept his bike and pose for a photo and participate in the program's first press release.

Kevin had one more goal: to get his driver's license back. He was saving some money to buy a used car, but needed help with his fines. On his behalf, staff reached out for assistance to NJ Reentry Corp., which works with qualified individuals to get NJMVC fines removed or renegotiated. He began working with the agency, and subsequently got a new full-time with a Hillsborough business.

This is a story of success, supported by connections and partnerships between the HCESC, the Greater Raritan One-Stop Career Training Center, the GRWDB, the Somerset County Library System, Ridewise, and NJ Reentry Corp.

#### **OUR PARTNERS**

The mission and vision of the Greater Raritan Workforce Development Board are built are collaborative partnerships. System partners connect employers and job seekers to the services offered by a variety of local, county and state public and private entities, resulting in a system which is flexible, seamless, robust and proactive. Here are some of our current partners. If you don't see your organization on the list, and want to see how you can become involved, reach out to us.

#### **Business Services Partners**

New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce
Development, including Business Services
Representatives, Employment Services,
Veterans Workforce Program,
the New Jersey Office of Apprenticeship,
and the Industry Partnership Initiative

**New Jersey Business Action Center** 

**New Jersey Economic Development Authority** 

Raritan Valley Community College Workforce Training
Center

Hunterdon County Chamber of Commerce and Hunterdon County Economic Development

**Somerset County Business Partnership** 

RideWise

goHunterdon

#### **Educational Institution Partners**

**Raritan Valley Community College** 

Hunterdon County Educational Services Commission

**Hunterdon County Vocational School District** 

Somerset County Vocational and Technical Schools

#### **Healthcare Partners**

Hunterdon Healthcare
Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Somerset

#### **Special Populations Partners**

NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development –
Senior Services; Division of Vocational
Rehabilitation Services; Unemployment Insurance

Hunterdon County – Division of Senior, Disabilities and Veterans Services, Division of Social Services, Center for Educational Advancement, Prevention Resources, United Way of Hunterdon County, Youth Services Commission

Somerset County – Office on Aging and Disability Services,
Youth Services, Board of Social Services,
Community Development, Alternatives,
EmPoWER Somerset, Healthier Somerset,
Literacy Volunteers of Somerset County, Matheny School,
Middle Earth, Midland School, Prevention Links,.
United Way of Northern New Jersey

#### **Government Partners**

Somerset County, including Board of County Commissioners,
Department of Human Services, and
Office of Planning, Policy and Economic Development

Hunterdon County, including Board of County Commissioners, and Department of Human Services

The Somerset County Library System of New Jersey, the Hunterdon County Library System, Franklin Township Public Library, Bernards Township Library Greater Raritan One-Stop Career Center Training Services New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission (NJ SETC)

Garden State Employment and Training Association (GSETA)

North Jersey Partners

#### **Learn more**

Visit **www.thegrwdb.org**, follow the GRWDB on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn, or contact us directly for more information. We are happy to meet – in person or virtually – with any business, community agency or public body in Hunterdon and Somerset counties to explain how we do work and how this work benefits different stakeholders. Contact:



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