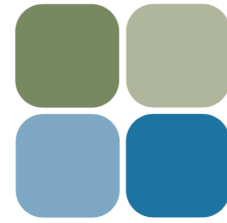


# Greater Raritan

## Workforce Development Board



NEWSLETTER

*Career Resources & News for Employers and Job Seekers in Hunterdon and Somerset Counties*

## Summer Employment Program Returning to Hunterdon, Somerset

A summer employment program for youth in Hunterdon and Somerset counties is looking for interested employers to help provide paid work experiences and internships for 60 young people in the two counties, as well as candidates to fill those positions. Applications are due **Friday, April 22**.

This marks the third consecutive year that the Greater Raritan Workforce Development Board (GRWDB) is sponsoring a Summer Youth Employment Program with funding from the New Jersey Department of Labor. In 2021, 29 youth worked for 13 different employers. Based on that success, the GRWDB has received a state grant of \$135,200 for 40 positions; using American Rescue Plan funding, Somerset County is allocating an additional \$62,000 toward the project, enabling 60 youth in all to get paid work this summer.

The program will run from June 6 to Oct. 14. Youth participants must be between the ages of 16 and 24 and can be in school or out of school. Each participant will work 25 hours per week over any eight-week period. Of that weekly total 21 hours will be for the employers; the other four hours per week will be spent on career readiness training using the SkillUp Greater Raritan

online learning portal and a separate virtual life skills educational platform.

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## Community Job Fair set

The Greater Raritan 2022 Job Fair will be hosted at the Hindu Temple and Cultural Society on Route 202-206 in Bridgewater from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Tuesday, May 24.

Employers based in Hunterdon and Somerset Counties are invited to register now by using the QR code in the flyer or **this link**. Participating employers must have several job openings to fill; these can be full-time, part-time or internship opportunities. As of mid-April, more than 30 employers have already registered and the temple can accommodate 80-plus employer participants. Community members from around the region will be invited to take part in this free event.

Questions? Contact GRWDB Director Paul Grzella at grzella@co.somerset.nj.us or 908-541-5790.

## SYEP

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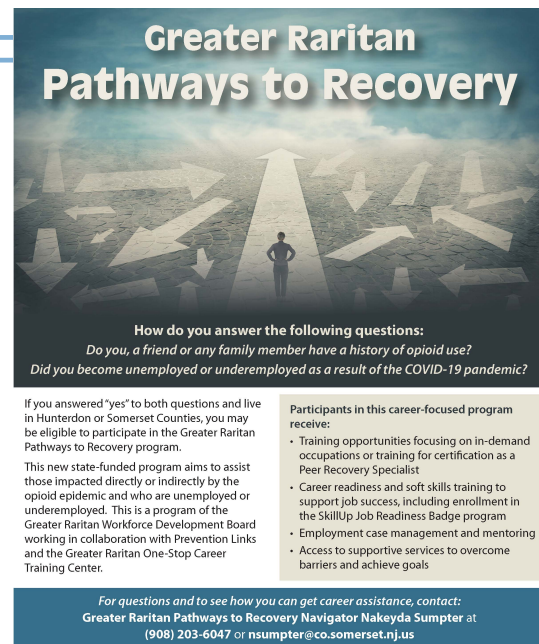
For the GRWDB Summer Youth Employment Program, any private or public employer of any size in Hunterdon and Somerset counties with available part-time positions may apply. These can be outdoor employment opportunities or on-site job work that abides by CDC guidelines. Employer applicants can be from any industry; municipalities looking to fill summer recreational positions are welcomed to apply as are area nonprofits looking for office assistance.

The virtual weekly workforce readiness training will be overseen by Greater Raritan Workforce Development Board staff. The youth participant's stipend will be \$15.00 an hour for 25 hours per week for their eight-week internship/work experience. That means each program participant will earn \$3,000.

"We expect to have staggered start times from mid-June through July for our youth participants, who we will match to our employer participants based upon the applications we receive," said Jeanne Cassano, the GRWDB's job developer and coordinator for the GRWDB summer program. "We want to ensure that our youth participants have a valuable summer work experience that sets them on lifelong career pathways, and that our employer participants get the work assistance they need during the summer months."

The employer Request for Applications (RFAs) for the program, which includes the internship job description form, can be found on Somerset County's Purchasing Division website, at <https://bit.ly/3Lo5P5p>. The deadline for applications is April 22.

As employer applications are coming in, the GRWDB is accepting separate applications from eligible in-school or out-of-school youth who must live in Hunterdon or Somerset counties and be 16 to 24 years old. The program aims to place 60 youth from the two counties who will be matched with the available positions. Visit the **home page** [www.thegrwdb.org](http://www.thegrwdb.org) for an application. The deadline to return material is April 22. Contact Cassano at [jcassano@co.somerset.nj.us](mailto:jcassano@co.somerset.nj.us) or call 908-541-5785.



**Greater Raritan Pathways to Recovery**

How do you answer the following questions:  
Do you, a friend or any family member have a history of opioid use?  
Did you become unemployed or underemployed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?

If you answered "yes" to both questions and live in Hunterdon or Somerset Counties, you may be eligible to participate in the Greater Raritan Pathways to Recovery program.

This new state-funded program aims to assist those impacted directly or indirectly by the opioid epidemic and who are unemployed or underemployed. This is a program of the Greater Raritan Workforce Development Board working in collaboration with Prevention Links and the Greater Raritan One-Stop Career Training Center.

Participants in this career-focused program receive:

- Training opportunities focusing on in-demand occupations or training for certification as a Peer Recovery Specialist
- Career readiness and soft skills training to support job success, including enrollment in the SkillUp Job Readiness Badge program
- Employment case management and mentoring
- Access to supportive services to overcome barriers and achieve goals

For questions and to see how you can get career assistance, contact:  
Greater Raritan Pathways to Recovery Navigator **Nakeyda Sumpter** at  
(908) 203-6047 or [nsumpter@co.somerset.nj.us](mailto:nsumpter@co.somerset.nj.us)



*Click above to download a PDF of this flyer.*

## New program launched

The Greater Raritan Workforce Development Board successfully applied for a competitive New Jersey Department of Labor grant this winter to begin a Pathways to Recovery program in Hunterdon and Somerset Counties.

This \$525,000 program seeks to serve 100 residents through January of 2023, and provides career-related services for those who have been impacted directly or indirectly by the ongoing opioid epidemic and who are unemployed or underemployed because of the COVID-19 epidemic.

Nakeyda Sumpter, the GRWDB's newly hired Pathways to Recovery Navigator, will work with residents of either county interested in being part of the program. She also is responsible for community and agency outreach. Program participants interested in training can either work with our program partner, Prevention Links of Roselle, to take part in a Peer Recovery Specialist certificate and internship program, or participate in a training program through the One-Stop Career Training Services Center. Prevention Links also will provide participant career-readiness programming and supportive services.

To have a presentation about the program to your agency, business or community group, email Sumpter at [nsumpter@co.somerset.nj.us](mailto:nsumpter@co.somerset.nj.us) or call 908-203-6047.



SkillUp Greater Raritan, a free online learning portal for residents of Hunterdon and Somerset counties, is now offering two new exclusive Badge-credentialing programs that can be used by job seekers and employers in Hunterdon and Somerset Counties. Free 15- to 20-hour, self-paced classes utilize a combination of career-related gaming classes and SkillUp's existing online classes to provide focused training in two areas: **Job Readiness** and **New Manager** skills. The two Badge pathways allow participants to master the skills needed to have competency when they are starting or returning to work or when they are in new management roles. Residents and job seekers in both counties can sign up directly for either program. Employers can enroll individual workers or a group of employees. The pilot cohort started in mid-March and more cohorts will launch in the spring. Employers and individuals interested in taking part or learning more should contact Paul Grzella at [grzella@co.somerset.nj.us](mailto:grzella@co.somerset.nj.us) or at 908-541-5790.

## Success Story: DT gets moving

*Throughout the program year, One-Stop partners share individual stories of success that are posted on the **Resources - Job Seekers** page of [www.thegrwdb.org](http://www.thegrwdb.org). Here is one story:*

DT contacted the Greater Raritan One-Stop Career Training Services Center after being released from a decade-long incarceration.

He felt that he no longer possessed any up-to-date marketable skills and was having difficulty obtaining employment that would offer him a career path and self-sufficiency. But his status as an ex-offender, along with his lack of a computer or Internet access, created several barriers that made landing a job very difficult. One-Stop Office Manager Teresa Edwards helped him register with the system and connected DT to a counselor, who identified these barriers and used available resources to overcome each. The client had contacted the Training Services when the office



was physically closed to the public due to COVID so all career-counseling sessions were done over the phone, paperwork was signed and filled out through the mail, and twice a Training Services counselor met with him in front of the Somerville location. The office coordinated with the area's N.J. Department of Labor ex-offender representative and other community resources to ensure DT was put into a position to succeed.

He was placed into CDL training and completed his program three weeks ahead of schedule due to his eagerness and success in school. Within one month of receiving his CDL, he accepted full-time employment with a local trucking company earning a starting wage of \$25 per hour. DT contacted the One-Stop, excited and grateful for these new opportunities that await him.

## Did you know ....

Every Monday, Jessica Johannesen, the area's State Business Services Representative, compiles a list of jobs in Hunterdon and Somerset Counties posted in the National Labor Exchange (NLX). She then shares lists with partners. The lists also are posted as downloadable PDFs at the top of **Resources - Job Seekers** page of [www.thegrwdb.org](http://www.thegrwdb.org).

**Click here to read the monthly One-Stop Operator reports focusing on partner services and performance.**

## Thanks for reading!

Past issues of the GRWDB newsletter can be found on the Events - Stay Informed tab of [www.thegrwdb.org](http://www.thegrwdb.org). Follow the GRWDB on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn, and be sure to bookmark the **Event-Calendar** tab. All board and committee meetings are open to the public; go **here** for the schedule and meeting packages. Community members are welcomed to contact us with their questions and ideas. In addition, we are happy to meet with any business, community agency or public body in Hunterdon and Somerset counties to explain how system services work. Contact Director Paul Grzella to get on a weekly **Resources** email list, and sign up for Greater Raritan's weekly (and very convenient!) text alert service. To contact us:



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