

Greater Raritan One Stop Monthly Leadership Meeting Minutes
1st Floor Conference Room
Tuesday April 29, 2025
10:00AM

1. Attendance

Maria Marnell	WFNJ/ HCESC
Alexis Williams	Program Coordinator, Middle Earth
Isabel Jimenez	WFNJ Tech
Jeanne Page-Soncrant	DOL Regional Coordinator for the Central Territory
Monica Mulligan	One Stop Career Training Services Center
Aminah Reeves	Social Work Supervisor-WFNJ
Paul Grzella	Director GRWDB
Jeanetta Muhammad	Somerville OSCC
Fernandel Almonor	Operator
Ty Springer	Chief Executive Officer, Eagle Training Academy

2. Retail and Hospitality Industry Recruitment Event

- **Date:** June 26, 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM
- **Venue:** [Insert Venue Details]
- **Key Dates:**
 - May 28: Employer confirmation deadline (Minimum 12 employers required)
 - June 2: Flyer and digital pre-registration forms deadline; start of resume collection
 - June 9: Deadline for interview submissions (Clients to submit resumes indicating preferred employers)

3. Employer Feedback and Recruitment Strategy

- Emphasis on securing employers aligned with client interests to boost event participation.
- Recommendations include considering public transportation access, competitive salaries, and diverse job levels (not just entry-level positions).
- Suggestions for employers to offer growth opportunities, bonuses, and referral incentives to enhance appeal.

4. Feedback from Previous Recruitment Event (March 26)

- Sectors: Transportation, Logistics, Manufacturing
- Metrics:
 - 11 employers attended
 - 134 pre-registrations; 60 attendees (36 pre-registered, 24 walk-ins)
 - 132 resumes collected, 27 on-site interviews, 5 immediate job offers
 - Employers noted improved turnout and organization

5. Client Engagement and Recruitment Enhancement

- Strategies to increase one-stop client participation in events:
 - Targeted communication with case managers
 - Consideration of client training programs and career interests

6. System Challenges and Recommendations

- Address barriers such as livable wages and realistic job expectations
- Suggestions for employer incentives, transportation support, and child care assistance
- Emphasis on continuous feedback collection and partner collaboration for improved event outcomes

7. Guest Speaker Presentation

- Ty Springer, Chief Executive Officer, Eagle Training Academy, introduced new training programs offering stipends and career coaching.
- Discussion on partnerships to enhance client career opportunities
- See accompanying attachment for powerpoint presentation.

8. Greater Raritan One-Stop Partner Updates

GRWDB Update

- Additional state awards: \$470,200 for WIOA Youth funding - \$30,200 for supportive services and projects at Middle Earth, and \$440,000 for new RVCC project
- The TANF Innovation Initiative is (tentatively) going to be extended past June 2025. We are awaiting confirmation and the new contract date
- First two OPG info sessions have had 15 community member attendees – the goal is to launch the new cohort by mid-May
- May 29, 2025 Greater Raritan Job Fair – have 42 employers as of April 17 and will continue to promote. Job seeker flyer will be released May 2
- Have applied to Pathways to Recovery grant - \$1M over two years, covering seven county. If successful, we will RFP out all services and supervise (TANF Innovation model)
- Jeanne attended six career fairs and a statewide youth conference; Grzella did two events, including job fair; Grzella also was on a panel for the National SkillUp Conference on April 23
- WDB staff attended first of two regional WIOAPOD trainings/discussions on moderating, policies, budgeting, etc.
- Reminding all vendors that their invoices will be rejected if matching back-up to all charges in not provided
- Tentative PY25 WIOA award received – \$900,000 over last year. Waiting on WFNJ award; these are not final but can be used for planning purposes with understanding they can change a lot

Business Services Update

- Jessica transitioning to Ocean County; Aaron/Karen assigned to fill her role.
- Introduction of new team member Gene, enthusiastic about supporting upcoming initiatives.

Employment Services/One-Stop Office Update

General Update and Successes:

- Increased number of available event/Job Fair representatives from 2 to 3
- OPG's registrations received - 14
- Virtual requests – 252
- Walk-ins – 129
- Event/Fairs attended – 2

Challenges:

- Consistent staffing, losing MSFW representative May 12,

Support Requests:

- NorwesCap and Somerville OSCC mtg, combining efforts to increase service to individual customers and families through State grants such as SNAP and Comcast grants.
- One Stop flyers needed with QR code for Vet resources

Career Training Services Update

General Update and Successes:

- Served 1,992 new customers between 7/1/24 – 3/31/25.
- Sent out information on services and events to 4,210 new UI filers between 7/1/24 – 3/31/25.
- Presented 33 free job seeker workshops to 1,121 residents of Hunterdon County and Somerset County between 7/1/25 and 3/31/25.
- Provided outreach materials for display at the Bridgewater Library as part of County Government Month.
- Somerset County is transitioning from Zoom to Microsoft Teams on 4/26/28.
- Team members attending the following trainings in the last month:
 - 3/27/25 and 3/28/25 Futureworks training (performance outcomes)
 - 3/28/25 Mental Health Awareness (presented by DMHAS)
 - 4/9/25 AI and Algorithmic Discrimination (presented by NJ Division of Civil Rights)
 - 4/10/25 The Science of Resiliency (CCAMC)
 - 4/14/25 SPIRIT Presentation (Empower Somerset - Opioid Use and Prevention)
 - 4/22/25 GSETA Strategic Planning Retreat
- Three team members will be attending the PA Workforce conference 4/30/25 – 5/2/25

Challenges:

- Carryover: Increase in WFNJ referrals has led to an increase in workload for One Stop Career Training Services Center teams members.

Supports Requested:

- None

Upcoming Events:

- 4/25/25 Career Café
- 5/30/25 Career Café
- 6/27/25 Career Café

Department of Vocational Rehabilitation Services Update

General Update and Successes:

- Getting a project search program for Somerset County, host business with Robert Wood Johnson in Somerville.
- Anticipating having 6 students in the first year, starting this September. A flyer will be shared regarding this program and how to apply. Applications will be due in May.

Challenges:

- None at this time.

Support Requests:

- Please share the flyer for Project SEARCH when you receive it.

Upcoming Events:

- None at this time.

Work First New Jersey Update

Updates:

In March, in addition to the regular workshop curriculum, WFNJ Customers heard presentations from:

- RidewiseNJ - Accessing public transportation for job search and employment
- DVR
- Jan Goodman- Business Etiquette and Multigenerational Workplace
- Zufall Health - Nutrition and SNAP benefits
- The founders of Atlantic City Runway Week - Self Employment and Starting a Business
- One Stop Career Center - grant and tuition waiver opportunities

Challenges:

- In March, continued to receive a high volume of referrals, particularly for SNAP clients. Began utilizing text messaging to initiate contact with all referred clients with phone contact information for March referrals
- Continue to make courtesy calls to TANF clients, in addition to text and email, to promote and arrange transportation and childcare support.

Participation Updates:
Somerset County Data as of Mar 31, 2025

CUSTOMER OUTREACH				REPORTED COMPLIANT		TANF CWEP DATA		EMPLOYMENT DATA	
		Contracted LOS				< 3 months	15	OBTAINED EMPLOYMENT	RETAINED EMPLOYMENT
TOTAL	783	133		Face to face	37	> 3 months	25	27	4
TANF	186	88		Virtual	146				
GA/SNAP	95	57		Equitable Access	0				
SNAP only	502	0		Hybrid	0				

Hunterdon County Data as of Mar 31, 2025

CUSTOMER OUTREACH				REPORTED COMPLIANT		TANF CWEP DATA		EMPLOYMENT DATA	
		Contracted LOS				< 3 months	0	OBTAINED EMPLOYMENT	RETAINED EMPLOYMENT
TOTAL	333	82		Face to face	5	> 3 months	0	4	2
TANF	28	50		Virtual	20				
GA/SNAP	176	32		Equitable Access	0				
SNAP only	129	0		Hybrid	0				

Middle Earth WIOA Youth Outreach and Visions Update (One Stop Career training Services runs the YES program)

The program has completed 33 referrals. Staff have continued to engage with school counselors and meet with interested parents and students. They also attended a Community and Resource Fair at North Plainfield HS and a Job/Career Fair at Franklin HS to promote the programs. There have been 2 new enrollments in the Visions program, with both students currently completing the beginning phase. Additionally, 2 students who had been enrolled for a significant period have graduated positively and are now working with the YES program to enroll in other job training programs.

Hunterdon PolyTech WIOA Youth Outreach Update - (One Stop Career training Services runs the YES program)

- Replenished YES brochures to county libraries
- Distributed YES flyers to various township post offices and Hunterdon County Arboretum
- HCVSD had a table to Clinton Township St. Patrick's Day parade where YES flyers were distributed
- Attended student IEP meetings at Hunterdon Central and Voorhees High School

Adult Literacy Update

General Update and Successes:

April was filled with a big learning boost as springtime often brings a boost of energy. We welcome this drive as we get closer to the end of our program year. Many students have built up their skills and confidence and are more keen to take their HSE test or prepare for internal progress testing.

Challenges:

Our greatest challenge at this time of year is attendance rate. Although well needed, spring break often disrupts our routine. Even though we try to coordinate with area schools, often our learners have family obligations that call them from their usual schedule. Additionally, many of our learners have the opportunity to take on extra shifts at their work sacrificing their study schedule.

Upcoming Events:

May will be filled with ESL post testing, as our semester comes to an end. Our HSE instructors are also giving a final push to have our learners sit the GED tests before our scheduled "Graduation Ceremony" in June. We are working on our summer workshop series dates and topics.

Support Requests:

We are well supported by our partner agencies. Any suggestions are welcome for topics in our summer job readiness workshops.

9. Next Steps & Action Items

- Finalize employer list with partner input
- Schedule follow-up meeting post-Karen's return
- Distribute meeting notes and ensure all reports are submitted

Next Meeting: Tuesday, May 27 @ 10am 1st Conference Room