

# The Fulton, Montgomery & Schoharie Counties Workforce Development Board

## Board Meeting

Wednesday, December 6, 2017  
Amsterdam Workforce Solutions Center

### I. Opening and Attendance:

Welcome: Scott Stevens called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m. He thanked everyone for coming and asked everyone to introduce themselves.

Members Present: Laurie Bargstedt, Marty Callahan, Christopher Darling, David Fariello, Andrea Fettinger, Art Graulich, Larry Kath, James Law, Karen Miller, Michael Peters, Judy Petroski, Kenneth Rose, Brian Seeley, Don Snoop, Jeannette Spaulding, Jeffrey Stark, Peter Stearns, Scott Stevens, and Tina Sweet

Excused: John Almaviva, Delores Caruso, Rita Franko, Keith Gros and Linda Serdy

Absent: Anne Boles and David Morrow

Guest Presenters: *Charmaine Handler and Dennis DiDonato*, ACCES/VR and Berkshire Union Free School District and *Chari Jones*, Director of Employment Services and *Karl Christensen*, Career Navigator, both of the Schenectady Community Action Program

Also present: *Nancy Bell*, Workforce Programs Specialist, New York State Department of Labor; *Mary Hill*, Program Director, Private Industry Council; and *Susan Dufel*, Employment Services Manager I, New York State Department of Labor

Staff to Board present: Gail Breen, Beverly Ball, Kim Skiff, and Bernadette Skotarczak

### II. Presentations:

*Charmaine Handler and Dennis DiDonato*, ACCES/VR and Berkshire Union Free School District discussed the components of the New York State Career Development and Occupational Studies (CDOS) Commencement Credential, a Certificate of Readiness for Entry-Level Employment. Charmaine shared that they cover 14 counties and over 100 schools. By attending networking events and meetings, they found that some employers didn't have an understanding of the CDOS Credential. Employer Benefits of the CDOS credential include that students have a clearer understanding of workplace expectations, have participated in real world work experiences and have practiced and demonstrated basic academic and soft skills necessary for successful entry-level employment. She also shared how businesses can partner with high schools to help them develop the CDOS programs by hosting job shadowing experiences; speaking with students about workplace expectations; providing students with opportunities to practice interviewing skills; offering educational tours of businesses; developing and providing volunteer, work-based learning

and internship experiences; and sponsoring school-based business enterprises. While the students are going through the CDOS Credential they are exposed to *Basic Skills* such as, Reading, Writing, Math, and being able to speak clearly and listen effectively. They work on their *Thinking Skills, Technology, and Design Systems* such as monitoring and correcting performances and understanding how systems perform related to goals, resources, and organizational function. They work on Personal Qualities, Managing Resources and Information and Interpersonal Skills. There is also a large focus on soft skills. Students can earn a CDOS Credential on its own or in conjunction with a Regent's Diploma. The CDOS Credential is available to all students in high school except those going for the Skills and Achievement Credential.

Dennis stated that he is a Work-Based Learning Coordinator at Berkshire High School. The program came about because the State Education Department wanted to make high school students more employable. He promotes students advocating for themselves and encourages school districts to support this effort because teachers and administrators are not with students when they interview for employment. It is important for the students to highlight the meaning of the Certificate to employers. Charmaine shared that if anyone is interested in partnering with a local school to contact her at [Chandler@berkshireufsd.org](mailto:Chandler@berkshireufsd.org) or Dennis at [Ddidonato@berkshireufsd.org](mailto:Ddidonato@berkshireufsd.org).

Art Graulich asked if they could share what schools from Schoharie County are participating. Dennis stated that he believes that all Schoharie County schools are involved and that most schools have a certified Work-Based Coordinator on staff. Teachers are required to obtain a "Work Based Learning Extension" on their teaching certificate which allows teachers to go out into the working world to establish relationships with businesses in order to obtain job shadowing and internship placements for students.

*Chari Jones*, Director of Employment Services and *Karl Christensen*, Career Navigator, both of the Schenectady Community Action Program provided an update on the "Employer Resource Network for Mohawk Valley" (MV-ERN). Chari shared that about a year ago she spoke to the Board at the beginning of the launch of the program and that Gail had asked them to come back and provide an update on how things are going. The Employer Resource Network is an innovative employer-based model that pulls together a consortium of 6-10 businesses. It provides job retention skills, work supports and training opportunities for employees who may be high stressed, under resourced, and may need to access community-based services. Schenectady Community Action Program (SCAP) is the Administrator of the program locally.

Some of their key partners include; Fulmont Community Action Agency, F-M Chamber of Commerce, Fulton and Montgomery County DSS, Workforce Solutions, FMS Workforce Development Board and the key employers. Chari stated that as of December 6th they have 5 employer partners. They are Community Health Center, Lexington ARC, Home Helpers, Richardson Brands and Hillcrest Springs. They are also very close to having an additional 3 contracts signed with local employers.

The purpose of the MV-ERN is to provide low cost benefits to the employee and employers, including:

- allowing employers to help employees in dealing with "life stuff" that gets in the way of the job,
- relieving Human Resources Departments because we know HR is typically overwhelmed with their day job and the last thing they need to deal with is an employee whose car keeps breaking down,

- saving money for the employer in recruiting and training dollars and
- significantly reducing absenteeism.

It is an investment by employees that gives them an optimal chance to succeed. It improves moral, which improves production, which improves the culture of the company while decreasing turnover, discipline, and costs.

This program started service provision in April 2017. As of October, over 351 services have been provided, 241 employees have been served and 31 jobs have been saved. There is a 35% employee utilization across the 5 employers, while the NYS average is 15%. Chari shared how pleased she was that during their first 6 months they doubled the NYS employee utilization average. The average return on investment is 527% among their 5 employers. Across NYS the average is 500%. These numbers are based on the national turnover costs based on accrued at \$3500 per position. One of their employers has an average of over 900%! Chari shared some marketing tools they use that are one-on-one, face to face.

To receive more information contact Chari at Schenectady Community Action Program or by emailing her at [cjones@scapny.org](mailto:cjones@scapny.org) or Karl Christensen at [kchriste@fmcc.edu](mailto:kchriste@fmcc.edu).

### III. Action Items:

- **Resolution BY 2017-04:** Acceptance of the minutes from the September 6, 2017 Board Meeting
  - Motion: Jeffrey Stark Seconded by: Marty Callahan
  - Discussion: None
  - Vote: All were in favor
  - Motion Carried
- **Resolution BY 2017-05:** Upon the recommendation of the Accountability Committee: Acceptance of the Single Audit Report for Year Ending 6/30/17
  - Motion: Jeffrey Stark Seconded by: Michael Peters
  - Discussion: Scott shared a summary from the audit results. He stated that there were no significant deficiencies disclosed during the audit of the financial statements, no instances of inconsistencies material to the financial statements, and no significant deficiencies in internal control over major federal award programs. The final auditor comment was that the Workforce Development Board of Fulton, Montgomery and Schoharie Counties Inc. was found to be low-risk. Scott thanked the Staff to the Board for their hard work.
  - Vote: All were in favor
  - Motion Carried
- **Resolution BY 2017-06:** Upon the recommendation of the Accountability Committee: Follow Up Policy for Adult and Dislocated Workers
  - Motion: Andrea Fettingner Seconded by: Don Snoop

- Discussion: Gail thanked Nancy Bell for sharing the template for this policy. Mary had contacted Nancy Bell to request a template, if one were available. By using this template and customizing it to FMS, we knew that our policy would be acceptable to NYS Department of Labor. It is important that when we pass resolutions on policies that they are accepted by DOL rather than revising policies after the fact to meet NYSDOL standards.
  - Vote: All were in favor
  - Motion Carried
- **Resolution BY 2017-07**: Upon the recommendation of the Accountability Committee: Approval of Cleaning Services for the Amsterdam Center
    - Motion: Michael Peters Seconded by: Jeffrey Stark
    - Discussion: None
    - Vote: All were in favor
    - Motion Carried
- **Resolution BY 2017-08**: Upon the recommendation of the Accountability Committee: Approval of Cleaning Services for the Cobleskill Center
    - Motion: Judy Petroski Seconded by: Peter Stearns
    - Discussion: There was a brief discussion held regarding the difference in cost between the two cleaning contracts. Gail shared that one in Cobleskill is a monthly rate and one in Amsterdam is a weekly rate.
    - Vote: All were in favor
    - Motion Carried

#### IV. Information Sharing:

**Accountability and Return on Investment Committee**: Andrea shared that the committee welcomed Bernadette Skotarczak, our new Program Management Specialist. She stated that Bernie will be a new member of the committee. She asked her to share a few things about herself with the board members. Bernie shared that she lives locally and has worked at just about every local medical facility. For the last twelve years she worked on a Federal Contract with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services through the office of Head Start, where she worked as a Training and Technical Assistant Consultant. She was also a Federal Reviewer. She retired two years ago, but decided that she wanted to return to the workplace.

Andrea shared that the WIOA Services and IFA MOU was also discussed. At this time, we are waiting for a template for the Cost Allocation for Infrastructure Costs.

Kim reviewed the financial report and explained expenditures in some of the lines. Since we are one quarter of the way through our fiscal year, we expect expenditures should be at 33.33%. Current budget expenditures are just under budget. Don requested the last paid maintenance agreement for the three Cisco video conferencing units, and Kim agreed to provide that to him. Don was the lead member of the Ad Hoc Committee that scored proposals for videoconferencing equipment. Kim reviewed the Cumulative Fiscal Reports. Andrea shared that the complete minutes are available and posted on the website for review.

*NO MEETING IN DECEMBER.*

*The next meeting is scheduled for January 23<sup>rd</sup> at 4:30 p.m. in the Amsterdam Center.*

**Business Services and Employer Engagement Committee:** Laurie stated that while no training contracts were written during October, there was one customized recruitment and one Mini Job Fair in the Amsterdam Center in Montgomery County. A total of 44 jobseekers participated. Employers are hiring, but they are concerned about the failure to pass drug tests and the lack of soft skills of applicants.

Chris Larrabee, DOL Business Services Representative said that the Mini Job Fair was extremely popular. Laurie stated that they were preparing for another one the day after the committee meeting. The Centers have also hosted a number of customized recruitments in both the Amsterdam and Cobleskill Centers during November.

Laurie shared that there is a HSE exam being given at HFM BOCES on December 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> and that if you have applicants that you think you would like to hire, but they need a High School Equivalency, have them reach out to her to see if they can help them.

Patti Williams is a committee member representing ACCES-VR. She has attended by conference call in the past. Patti shared that they held a different type of job fair recently. Instead of having the employers being the focus of the presentation, they selected certain job seekers and had them prepare elevator speeches and story boards so that they could pitch themselves to the employers. She felt that it was a very effective way to share the jobseekers with employers. Judy stated that although one of the jobseekers didn't get hired that day, they have subsequently secured employment. Gail shared that the Leadership Team has discussed the possibility of trying this model out in the Cobleskill Center. They will look at some of the jobseekers, their qualifications and contact some businesses that might be interested in hiring someone with those skills. Judy shared that she worked with several jobseekers helping them prepare and that she felt the new approach helped to build self-confidence that many of the hard-to-serve jobseekers need. Laurie shared that all minutes are available for review on the website.

*NO MEETING IN DECEMBER.*

*The next meeting is scheduled for January 23<sup>rd</sup> at 8:00 a.m. in Amsterdam Center.*

**Emerging Worker Committee:** Judy reported that due to a lack of RSVP's the committee meeting was cancelled. Gail and Judy will be meeting to discuss possibilities regarding how to change the format, time, focus and get more interest in the committee. Judy asked the board if they had any suggestions to please let her know. Gail shared that one of the presentations at tonight's meeting was a result of this committee coming up with suggestions for presenters.

*The next meeting date TBD.*

**Workforce Systems Oversight Committee:** Don shared that they welcomed Bernie Skotarczak and Pam Levy the Assistant Director of Catskill Center for Independence. (During this discussion we lost power to our Cisco unit connection to Cobleskill but it was restored within minutes and we were able to reconnect to the Cobleskill Center.) Gail shared that Pam is also a member of the Leadership Team. Don shared the traffic continues to be down, primarily because the UI rates are down as well. The jobseekers coming through the door currently are those that are considered

hard-to-serve, lacking soft skills, interviewing skills, and technical skills. He feels that many of them are in need of some of the services shared by the two presentations.

Nine unique customers completed 45 courses through Metrix Learning this month. Many are Microsoft Office and healthcare courses. He shared that online courses are not easy, required dedication and concentration and in some cases testing at the end. Twenty-one customers have completed a total of 89 courses since July 2017.

Our Local Plan has been completed and was posted for public comment. No comments were received. The Plan has been submitted to NYSDOL for their review. It will be submitted to the FMS Board and all three county legislatures for their review and acceptance following review from DOL. It is planned to come back to the Board for resolution at the February meeting.

Mary Hill said the PIC is fully staffed.

Pam Levy gave an overview of Catskill Center for Independence and the customers they serve. Don shared that it is a very interesting organization and suggested that you either chat with Pam or go online to learn more about it.

All minutes are available online for review.

*NO MEETING IN DECEMBER.*

*The next meeting is scheduled for January 24<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 a.m. in the Cobleskill Center.*

#### **V. Environmental Scanning:**

Gail shared that after January 1st she will be signing up for a Metrix license herself and will be taking an Excel course. Laurie and Judy both suggested that she share her experience with the Metrix system at a future meeting.

She welcomed Bernie to the Workforce Development Board. She shared that we received 12-14 resumes and are very pleased with our final decision. Bernie's background in monitoring programs, providing improvement plans, and technical assistance and training is exactly what we require in the Program Management Specialist position. This person monitors the programs, gives feedback, technical assistance and provides training. Bernie has a background in all of these things and more that she didn't elaborate on; her nursing background and serving in other countries in the military. Bernie shared that she had retired as a Lieutenant Colonel with the New York National Guard after 23 years, and was also previously a small business owner in Fulton County.

Gail shared that we got a head start on the MOU process because in the beginning the indication was that we were going to each have to write our own. Somewhere midstream we were notified that there would be a template to fill in the blanks, making it easier for us to get our MOU completed. During the process we established a strong relationship with our partners and most recently we worked together to develop a Services Brochure and Referral Sheet. In the past, a referral consisted simply of handing a customer the name and phone number of an agency to contact for additional services. With our new system we will be able to track outgoing referrals to other agencies as well as incoming services to FMS Workforce Solutions. Our One-Stop Operator and the Data Base Coordinator from the Private Industry Council have created a spreadsheet that will allow us to track referrals and share them between Partners. December is a "Pilot Month"

with full tracking and reporting starting in January. At this time, we will not be including names of customers because of confidentiality requirements. However, several NYS agencies are working on a common confidentiality release so that we can track services to specific customers going forward. Gail thanked those around the table that were instrumental in developing these forms. We believe that we are one of the first of the LWDBs to institute this Referral Process. At Partner Meetings, we are continuing to have all partners provide a short presentation on their organization so that each partner knows what services everyone provides. The next step is to train individual agency staff.

The Local Plan had been developed and was posted for 2 weeks for comments. We received no comments. It has now been sent to DOL for their review and adjustments. Once it is final with DOL, it will go out to all 3 Chief Elected Officials and then signed by our board. We anticipate the fixes to be relatively easy fixes and are getting on the agenda for all 3 Board of Supervisors for December and January. It will then come back to our February Board meeting as a Resolution. We then will move onto the Regional Plan where we will work with Alice Savino from Herkimer, Madison, and Oneida Counties WDB.

#### **VI. Board Member Go Round:**

**Laurie Bargstedt** shared that HFM BOCES also offers English Language Services to people from other nations moving into the region. If you are finding that language is a barrier to someone you would like to hire, please remember that everything Adult Literacy does is focused on helping people become workforce ready. She would like everyone to consider using BOCES as a partner in their hiring strategies. Also, if someone applies for a position within your company, HFM BOCES can usually be a reference to talk about their attendance, attitude and participation in their program.

**Christopher Darling** shared that Beechnut is still having challenges with hiring and retaining people. He stated he has been working with Gail to get more information about Apprentice programs, especially for maintenance. Gail shared with Chris the contact information for Dan Cullen from the Workforce Development Institute (WDI). Chris stated that he and Dan are working on setting up a conference call to further discuss opportunities. Amber Mooney from the Business Council has also stated that she is available to assist in any way. Gail shared with the Board that WDI will be the speaker for the February Board Meeting. They will be discussing the various Apprenticeship Program and the investment of the employer and WDI.

**David Fariello** said that he will begin working in a different capacity beginning January 1st. He will be working as the Adult Behavioral Health Inpatient Manager in the Mental Health Unit at St. Mary's Hospital. He also shared that St. Mary's recently sponsored a "Live Aid" benefit for those affected by the storms in Puerto Rico. He was pleased to announce that they have raised \$56,000 for the victims. More than 80 families have relocated to this area and they believe many will be without health insurance.

**Arthur Graulich** stated that his workforce is stable and that "if you pay them well they will stay". He shared that they are in an expansion mode and are getting bigger all the time. Gail asked if he uses any immigrants here on visas or primarily local residents. Art stated that he has 5 Guatemalan's – they are very committed and like to work and do a good job. They don't complain about hours and often want more hours.

**Larry Kath** shared that Kintz Plastics continues to have problems with finding good people that want to work and want to stay. They have no problems with door traffic. They seem to interview ok and pass their drug tests, but they receive one paycheck and then don't come back. He stated that these new employees are mostly younger people.

**James Law** brought in two delicious flavors (Fudge Ripple and Butter Pecan) of ice cream to share. These are compliments of Mohawk Cabinet Frozen Parts and Meco Perfect Scoop. Once again, thank you Jim!!!

**Michael Peters** said things are busy and that they continue to work right through the winter. They are working on a large project on Coeymans right now. Gail mentioned that they are up bright and early working on the Solar Farm on Route 30 and it doesn't appear that the weather is an issue.

**Brian Seeley** shared that the conversion from Patriot Federal Bank to Kinderhook Bank took place on November 10<sup>th</sup> and all went well. They have 11 branches.

**Donald Snoop** said that he is concerned that the Cisco unit dropped twice during the meeting. He stated that it is a direct fiber feed and that it should not be dropping. We pay a lot of money monthly for maintenance on the system, and he suggested that our IT person investigate to see what piece of equipment is failing or whether it is a Time Warner connection issue. Either way, it is unacceptable. He stated that it is critical that these unit works when we have these types of meetings scheduled. Don offered any assistance that he could in helping to resolve the issue.

**Scott Stevens** said that AMT has openings for a Quality person and a Mechanical person and that there isn't much meat in the resumes received or the interviews conducted and it has been problematic.

**VII. Board Member Feedback?**

Laurie shared that she felt the Staff to the Board was doing a great job. Gail shared that it was a pleasure to see so many of the Board Members at the meeting. She stated she believes what we do is important, but that we need Board participation to make it happen, and she thanked them for their hard work.

**VIII. Adjournment:**

Motion: Michael Peters Seconded by: Don Snoop

Meeting Adjourned at 5:32 p.m.

***NO MEETING IN JANUARY.***

***The February meeting is scheduled for February 7, 2018 at 4:30 p.m.***