



County of Mercer Workforce Development Board

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Virgen Velez
Acting Director

Brian M. Hughes
County Executive

Keith Secrest
Chairperson

WDB Youth Investment Council

February 14, 2023 ♦ Zoom Meeting Minutes

In Attendance

Mereides Delgado (Anchor House), **Dave Nash** (MC Technical Schools), **Dawn Paquette** (NJM Insurance Group)
Greg Rapport (Aging Out Angels), **Keith Secrest** (Kinetics Industries, Inc. / WDB Chair), **Taraun Tice-McKnight**
(Governor's Office), **Wanda Webster Stansbury** (The Center for Child and Family Achievement),
Latoya Wilson (WCR Consultancy)

WDB /One Stop Staff: Virgen Velez, Kassia Bukosky, Maribel Duarte

Welcome & Introductions

Keith Secrest hosted the meeting.

Review and Approval of December 13, 2022 Meeting Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes was made by Dave Nash, seconded by Keith Secrest. The motion carried and minutes were approved.

PY 22 Youth Initiatives Update

SYEP 2023 Grant Application - \$380,013

- 115 youth (ages 16-24) will be served;
- \$3,000 maximum stipend over 8 weeks (\$15.00/hr.)
- Notification from NJDOL will be sent in March
- Lottery system will be used if needed; priority will be given to past participants & youth with barriers
- Three counselors will be hired
- A "selection match" job fair will be held with participating employers to interview program youth

OSY Contracted Programs

- Isles
 - HSE (high school equivalency) and job readiness services provided
 - 31 students enrolled to date

- YCC & Internships
 - 6th group (8 youth) for current program year (PY 22)
 - In-house job readiness/career exploration workshops for 2.5 weeks
 - 6 are currently in training from previous groups – mostly CDL, and some in medical related trainings
 - Youth can prepare to go into any occupational training, as long as it's on the ETPL (Eligible Training Provider List) and youth meet HSE/required literacy levels

An announcement was made that NJ government has internships in all state agencies; year-long, that can lead to full-time jobs

Career Awareness Events – Planning

- A virtual and an in-person career awareness fair will be held in late April/early May
- Target population is current high school seniors
- It will tentatively be held at the Cure Arena (4 p.m. – 6 p.m.) to encourage parents to attend
- *MCCC, MCTS, and the Trades will be invited to highlight their offerings*
- Wanda suggested inviting Job Corps. to the event

The shift towards certificate programs was discussed. It was suggested that we reach out to high school juniors.

Marketing materials should be sent to organizations offering HSE instruction to youth.

There should be careers highlighted at the Career Fair that do not require a high school diploma or equivalency.

Entrepreneurship information should be included

- Include financial and law information
- Invite someone from the Small Business Corporation.
- Business mentoring entities can be included.
- Invite the Chambers of Commerce (Latino, African American), NJBIA
- Information on social media “influencer” or jobs related to this field
- Invite young entrepreneurs

A suggestion was made to have a focus group with the youth at Isles to get their feedback on the career fair to make it more enticing to our target population.

An ad-hoc committee will be created for planning the career fair. A meeting notice for volunteers will be sent .

- A *Save the Date* flyer can be dispersed to schools/agencies while planning phase is happening.

Announcements – Agency/Community Events - None

Meeting Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Greg Rapport and seconded by Dave Nash. Meeting adjourned at 1:35 p.m.

Upcoming PY 21 Meeting Dates (2nd Tuesday on bi-monthly basis ♦ 12:30 p.m.):

4/10/23

6/13/23

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