



SWW Workforce Development Board

Meeting Minutes

of March 30, 2022 Online (ZOOM) Meeting

thejoblink.org

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Ash Anand, Michael Bittel, Scott Brazie, Scot Chamberlain, Gary Dake, Dan Dudley, Mark Fish, Doug Ford, Maureen Grabowski, Michael Kelly, Patricia Klimkewicz, , Michael Mastropietro, Mike Munter, Laura Oswald, Turina Parker, Dominick Patrignani, Michael Prime, Caelynn Prylo, Tracey Riley, Matthew Rose, Joe Serafini, Wendy Skawinski, Mary Ann Spiezio, John Wheatley. (24)

EXCUSED: Kathy LaFond, Tara McCaughey, Zack Moore, Ryan Van Amburgh (4)

GUESTS: Jen McCloskey, Liza Ochsendorf, Roberta Davis, Shelley Smith, Jim Siplon

STAFF: Gretchen Steffan, Executive Director

Welcome...

1. Approval of February 9, 2021

Motion to Approve: by Mike Munter **Second:** Gary Dake

Discussion: None; **Vote:** Approved unanimously.

2. Presentation on the Demographic Drought

Jim Siplon, President and CEO of EDC Warren County provided an overview of the EMSI study, “The Demographic Drought,” and what it means for our corner of NYS. The pandemic has been a catalyst for evaluating our workforce and workforce needs. This evaluation had made us realize that we have been ignoring trends and patterns, that have and will continue to dramatically impact the labor market. For example, birth rates, which have been steadily declining. This phenomenon is not exclusive to the US, this trend is being seen in other nations such as Europe and Japan. However, he US has been below replacement birth rate since 1972. This trend could not likely be course-corrected in our lifetime.

A number of years ago, the Baby Boomer generation was the biggest segment of our workforce, and is now declining and being replaced with a smaller generational group of Millennials and Gen-Xers. Over the next 10 years the Baby Boomers will be phasing out of their workforce participation, and it is forecasted that the Millennials and Gen-Xers will not come anywhere close to replacing previous workforce participation levels. One factor is the tremendous wealth accumulated by the Baby Boomers, who will be passing down \$68 trillion of wealth to their children, and this wealth is underpinning choice. The average Baby Boomer household has a net worth of \$1.2 million, and may be a motivational factor in why some people don’t feel like they need to work, because they have income that will sustain them without a job. The pandemic exacerbated this.

Another sobering statistic is that 2.4 million women left the workforce as a result of the pandemic. Further, over the last 40 years the labor force participation rate of prime age men (24-55) dropped from



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94% to 89%, a loss of 2.6 million men. There are many factors that are affecting labor force participation but another of note is the Opioid Crisis, which has taken out 4% of men between 25 and 54 years old, resulting in millions of people not in the workforce.

Jim summarized the study with some sobering facts and actions to take:

FACTS...

- ✚ Birthrates are the lowest they have been in US history and have been below replacement value for 50 years...even if we could raise them, the impact would be 20+ years away.
- ✚ Reviving immigration won't solve this (*although it can be part of a regional or area strategy to increase our capacity*) ...our borders are not fully open and the rest of the world is facing the same population issues.
- ✚ Older workers left the workforce in droves in the pandemic (*10 years of retirements in 2 years*).
- ✚ Women left as well... some of it was the industries affected, some childcare, some choice.
- ✚ Men have been dropping out for 40 years.
- ✚ Oh, and housing is a structural barrier too (*half the density in the same amount of housing due to decades of inactivity*).

ACTIONS...

1. First, we have to acknowledge it's even worse in NY...we are older, losing population due to migration and wealthier per capita.
2. We have moved from an era where we sought to recruit and grow businesses to employ our people, to one where we are chasing people and the companies will follow the workforce.
3. The good news is we live in a place people want to live in...climate refuge, quality of life, costs are all sources for potential.
4. To optimize our current capacity, we need to woo older workers back in, address the structural issues that affected women and step into the issues our male workforce presents.
5. Then we have to create the investments that will create the sustainable community and economy we seek...that will attract "immigrants" both regional and international...things like a welcoming community, an interconnected transport network, adequate and accessible child care and perhaps most importantly housing stock of all type.

Jim encouraged all to attend the EDC Warren County Annual Luncheon on Friday, June 17th, 2022 at The Great Escape, where the EMSI author of "The Demographic Drought" study will be presenting.

3. Presentation on Fiscal Reporting for SWW

Jen McCloskey, Fiscal Agent and Director of the Saratoga County Department of Employment and Training, provided an overview of the SWW WDB fiscal structures, defining the Grant Recipient, Fiscal Agent, Subrecipient, Notice of Obligational Authority, Allocations, Transfer Funding, Carryover Funding, Center's Budgeting, Grant Management and Monitoring and Monthly Reporting with oversight



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by the Fiscal Oversight and Technical Assistance (FOTA) division of the NYS Department of Labor. The Purpose of the presentation was to provide clarity on the flow of money through SWW, and the WDB's reporting requirements by WIOA.

4. Committee Updates

- a. **Executive Committee** report by Joe Serafini. On March 14^h the committee met with Gretchen at length about Board Operations, Board Certification, Committee progress, the Disability Resource Coordinator Pilot, upcoming presentations, Advocacy, and incorporation of our 2022 action items in operational workplans, which she will talk about during her Operations update.
- b. **Business Needs Committee** report by Gary Dake. The committee continued its work on the CDL initiative and will be developing a Truck Rodeo in an effort to garner interest in professional truck driving. Perhaps even attracting retired drivers who may want to reenter the workforce as bus drivers. Michael Kelly and Michael Bittel to become co-chairs of the event. Mike Kelly has agreed to chair the actual running of the rodeo portion. Michael Bittel has taken on the responsibility for the communication-side of the event. Next steps include finding partner companies to participate. Promoting the event to schools through traditional and social media. Volunteers are needed for this endeavor from the WDB and the community. Gary also reported that the committee is discussing and exploring next areas to target. Initial discussions focused on healthcare, trades, childcare and transportation. Doug Ford offered that the Saratoga Builders Association is partnering with the Capital Region Builders and Remodelers Association to host an event at Saratoga National on May 11th. Everybody is welcome!
- c. **Resource & Development Committee** report by Ash Anand. The committee has been focusing on greater school partnerships and the recent Lake George High School Summer Job Fair was a good start. We would like to increase the number of high school job fairs and replicate the model that Liza devised for Lake George. With Center Certification coming soon, we have formed a subcommittee to do a pre-audit of the Centers. The Centers are in the midst of preparing for the SYEP (*Summer Youth Employment Program*) and we discussed development of an RFP for a new Financial Literacy program for the next program year. We are working to develop and coordinate a Guidance Counselor and District Superintendent contact list, and then a subcommittee to outline a strategy for WDB initiative/Center outreach to build relationships, understanding of services we each provide, current initiatives we are involved in, and offer support services through our system to better align our work for career pathway development options. We want to increase the awareness of the services our Centers offer. Finally, Ash reported that he was contacted by the Office of New Americans yesterday, about the workforce training needs of refugees and settlements and potential support, which will require further exploration.

5. Center's Operations Report Jen McCloskey, Liza Ochsendorf and Roberta Davis.

On behalf of the WDB, Chairman Joe Serafini welcomed the new Executive Director of LEAP Shelley Smith, who is the Washington County provider of Career Center Services. Shelley was formerly the Director of Program Support at Open Door Mission in Glens Falls. She has a depth of experience in nonprofit work within the community, and has done program development, strategic planning and community training.



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Shelley has a MS degree in nonprofit management from Northeastern University, and we look forward to working with her.

Jen McCloskey reported that Saratoga Center will be opening next Monday with Security Guards in place and is looking forward to welcome back the community to the Center. SYEP is moving forward as is the EMT collaboration with HVCC and Shenendehowa Central School District. She also reported signing lots of training grants, which is great!

Liza Ochsendorf reported they are going back to appointments in their Center in Glens Falls. They have been seeing clients at the Human Services building in Lake George. Warren County has provided the Center ARPA funding for technology, which is allowing the Center to partner with Crandall Library to loan technology to County residents. The process is being developed. Virtual Workshops in the Warren County jail have been restarted to help inmates as they reenter society. Some continuing professional education from Cornell University is coming up for staff, to be able to expand our reach to underserved populations.

Roberta Davis reported that Washington County is full steam ahead on their SYEP with 6 youth already applying. They also conducted business outreach to 50 organization to inform them of services the Career Center can provide. Their Center is open and people are coming in and utilizing the Resource Room and engaging in job search activities. Roberta noted that they have an incredible number of truck drivers in training right now, funded through ITA's.

6. WDB Operations Update

Gretchen Steffan updated the WDB on the MOU, supporting Committee work, administrative process (*Compliance/WDB Directors/NYS DOL CPE*), Quarterly Monitoring Update 1st and 2nd quarters completed, Centers Certification-R&D Committee pre-audit, Equal Opportunity Reporting, RFP's progress on OSO & Website, NYATEP Advocacy on 6-month income disregard bill, presentation to The Association of Counties on 3/14 in Albany on "**The Role of Workforce Boards in Economic Recovery**" w/other WDB Coalition Directors Gina Papa & Brian Williams, upcoming presentation at CRHRA Annual Conference in May as the Conference Closer with Brian Williams on: "**Workforce Development Innovation Strategies Through WIOA**", Skill America Pilot with NYATEP, speaking at tonight's BOCES Women in Trades in Wilton. (*Liza Ochsendorf, Mike Prime from QUAD, &and Doug Ford from CURTIS will be there too*).

7. Additional Opportunity for Board Member Announcements / Comments

The WDB had a brief conversation about the development of the Cannabis industry in New York and workforce development. At this time since Cannabis is not legal on the Federal level, the WDB and its' Career Centers are not allowed to use our WIOA funding for workforce training for Cannabis-related workforce development.

8. Adjournment Motion: by Caelynn Prylo Second: Dominick Patrignani, 10:00 am