



SWW Workforce Development Board

Meeting Minutes

of Wednesday, May 24, 2023 Meeting at QUAD, Saratoga Springs NY

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BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Scott Brazie, Gary Dake, Dan Dudley, Paige Foote, Doug Ford, Maureen Grabowski, Patricia Klimkewicz, Kathy LaFond, Tara McCaughey, Mike Munter, Laura Oswald, Turina Parker, Dominick Patrignani, Michael Prime, Tracey Riley, Matthew Rose, Joe Serafini, Mary Ann Spiezio, Wendy Skawinski, Mark Stratton (20)

EXCUSED: Ash Anand, Scot Chamberlain, Chris Koval, Elizabeth Miller, Zack Moore, Michael Mastropietro, Tricia Rogers, Ryan Van Amburgh, John Wheatley. (9)

GUESTS: Liza Ochsendorf (*Warren County Career Center*), Roberta Davis (*Washington County Career Center*), Shelley Smith (*LEAP*) (3)

STAFF: Gretchen Steffan, Executive Director

Welcome & Introductions of WDB Members, Honored Guests and Staff by Chairman Munter.

1. Approval of March 29th Meeting Minutes - Action Item

Motion to Approve: by Mark Stratton **Second:** Doug Ford

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

2. Approval of RFP for SWW – Branding, Website & Social Media

Motion to Approve: by Maureen Grabowski **Second:** Doug Ford

Discussion: Some; **Vote:** Approved unanimously.

3. One Stop System Operator Report

Ms. Vandermeulen of Action Collaboration, provided a written summary of meeting activity to date.

4. LWDA Local Plan Modification Discussion

5. LWDA Local Plan Modification Approval for Public Comment if needed

Motion to Approve: by Mary Ann Spiezio **Second:** Turina Parker

Discussion: Some; **Vote:** Approved unanimously.

6. Partner Updates – BOCES / WFD Coalition / Semiconductor...

Dr. Turina Parker the District Superintendent and Chief Executive Officer of WSWHE BOCES, shared their Wellness, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity (W.I.S.E.) framework, progress on their Women in Trades initiative, and speed mentoring program with area businesses to educate and inform students about career opportunities within business sectors. Dr. Parker reported on enrollment updates and the expansion of programs in Animal Science, HVAC-R and Industrial & Performance Machining. Employment & Training for Adults (ETA) continues to support our communities. In November they will be offering CTE Works, a 1-day interactive career exploration event to expose students grades 8-12, to the world of work. Local employers will engage with students on area careers and career pathway options. Dr. Parker reported on the fiscal year 2024 NYS Budget and what that will mean for our regional education programs. Lastly, she invited the WDB to the June 7th Signing



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Day, to celebrate students who are entering the workforce post-graduation. She thanked the WDB and Career Centers for their continued support.

Doug Ford, Vice-President of Sales & Purchasing at Curtis Lumber reported on the Workforce Development Coalition, which is focusing on educating students and related parties about opportunities in the construction trades. The coalition was formed many years ago and has grown to include 40 different partner organizations. Gretchen joined us this year representing SWW WDB. Doug reported that later that day, Curtis was hosting a group of school counselors for a tour around their operation, to understand the logistics and sales sides of their business, and show all the different jobs that are available. Further, to understand the building process from start to finish they will be including the estimating department, design department, and the mechanic shop, which are all different components of what makes up their business. It's important for the counselors to get big picture information, and see through firsthand experience, what kind of opportunities students can have if they come to work for a company like Curtis. The workforce coalition is about to hand out Carhartt tool bags to BOCES graduating seniors in trades career and technical education. The program goes back to Covid when the workforce coalition wanted to do something for kids because they didn't have a good experience during the first year of Covid. Curtis started the tool bag gifting. Now in its 3rd year, the program has expanded greatly and members of the coalition have donated over \$10,000, which has expanded the program and provides 500 tool bags with tools in those bags, for graduating seniors from regional BOCES trade programs.

Some of the other coalition programs include: a toolbox program, which is an opportunity to get in front of some of the younger elementary school students in our communities. The coalition sends in some of their customers and/or builders, and students actually construct these little wooden toolboxes, which they get to keep. Coalition members spend a lot of time with students and regional school districts every single week. Another focus area that we have is really trying to educate parents. One of the initiatives we're working on now is a partnership with Ballston Spa on a birdhouse program. We also do the Showcase of Home project each Fall, and we're going to do a tiny house this year in conjunction with what we did last year, which was a shed-build by women, which was extremely successful. We invited young ladies from six different schools and we partnered them with a female project manager, and built six different sheds which we sold, and the proceeds came back to the coalition. Those proceeds have resulted in a project this year on vertical gardens. We're inviting six different schools for students from six different schools, male and female and we're going to build some vertical gardens. This is about exposing students to the trades. We've gained a lot of traction and I got getting media attention. We will continue to expand our outreach so students and their parents, can understand that the construction trades can provide many career pathways to consider.

Tara McCaughey, Workforce Development Lead at GlobalFoundries (GF) in the Semiconductor Industry, reported they been looking a lot more this year on their workforce approach to attracting talent. It seems kids are only seeing one opportunity in the semiconductor industry versus seeing a whole ecosystem. GF is expanding, Applied Materials is a partner, and Micron Technology is coming to New York State. There are tremendous opportunities in upstate New York in the semiconductor industry, and we're realizing that our approach to recruitment needs to be partner companies coming together to educate and inform about all the career pathways that are available in the semiconductor industry. GF recently partnered with Applied Materials, and held a semiconductor day for students to bring awareness to the industry. We hope to do more of these activities, in addition to some of the things we've already been doing at GF, which include high school tours and job shadowing programs. Recently we brought in seven different high schools for tours with about 20 kids in each group, so 140 kids were reached on targeted career opportunities that were available. We already work with some of our high schools, and at a STEM Leadership Academy in Schenectady on P-tech and CTE programs. We are really trying to find students that would be interested in semiconductor. One of the hard sells about the industry,



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is that people think that it's just for PhD's and Electrical Engineers, which is not the case. We have a whole spectrum of people in Malta. Of the 2,500 people that work in Malta, 1,000 of them are technicians. We have a huge focus on technicians right now. We're working with SUNY Adirondack on a pre-apprenticeship program to help feed the CTE and P-tech programs. We want students to understand that there's a pathway after high school graduation. There are careers in chemical, mechanical, electrical, physics, and industrial engineering. Everything we do is very interdisciplinary. We are also looking at how we can get a bit of semiconductor information or content in the technology classes in schools across the region. Perhaps providing a kit, or a module for Technology Teachers. There are only so many tours and job shadowing events that we can do and to penetrate the area. We have to look at all options for educating and informing. When we had students coming recently for job shadowing, the cohorts experienced career panels, a tour of the facility, some hands-on components, spread over several days. We had 45 students this year over two days. Regarding women in the trades, that is an issue. As most of our students coming in are male, so we need job shadowing for females, probably before they get into those CTE programs because they're not there yet. We're looking at a long-term pipeline; they're either going to come to us after high school, after two years or four years of college, or as a career change. We are currently doing quite a bit, but it just never feels like enough. We have a new fab that's a couple of years out, but we also have the Micron plant coming to the middle of New York State. Our fab will have 1,000 more jobs and 800 of those will be technicians. Looking at our needs and the needs of semiconductor and the semiconductor industry across the state there's a significant number of people that we need to hire. We absolutely don't have the population to support adding 5,000 people that will be needed for the semiconductor industry, plus all the people that will be needed to build the new facilities. Many companies in this industry are now starting their applications for money under the Chips Act and the Science Act, and one of the questions is how are you addressing workforce development, so it's something we have to work on right now. There is a lot of collaboration between companies, and most of us believe that we have to start now, getting into the schools, and getting to students much earlier than we do now. There's also the factor of guidance counselors, who are significant in the schools. Parents are too. There is much work to do.

7. Committee Updates

- a. Mike Munter reported that the **Executive Committee**... We talked with Gretchen on May 3rd on a range of issues, which included: Compliance, Board Membership Status, Grants, Technology, Committee Progress, the Career Centers, and the Board agenda,
- b. The **Youth Committee** report by Mark Stratton, Committee Chair. Our 3rd meeting was May 10th and we added 2 new members, from the Glens Falls Area Youth Center, Carly Merrill and Molly-Congdon-Hunsdon. We discussed the Career Center's Summer Youth Employment program (SYEP), and Spring Job Fairs. The committee talked about curriculum/training outlines for the 5 areas supporting career and personal development for students in regional schools. We explored labor law requirements/limitations for student workers 14 to 18 years old, and how we can expose them to career opportunities in the trades. We also explored how to impact parental outreach and mentoring programs that connect youth with jobs, with youth who are interested in getting a job. Lastly, we discussed potential goals (both short-term & longer-term).
- c. The **Business Needs Committee** report by Gary Dake...meeting on May 9th the members discussed Childcare, which remains a highly complex issue. Mary Ann Spiezio will be chairing this subcommittee and several members have agreed to serve on that subcommittee. We had continuing discussions on Transportation, which included a regional transportation stud soon to be released, the CDTA merger with



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Greater Glens Falls Transit, and our work in gathering business support to bridge the transportation gap between exit 15 and 17. We discussed the Workforce Development Coalition and how we can continue to support their initiatives in educating and informing on careers in the construction trades, as well how we can support career development of machine tool technology sector. Finally, we shared current updates on the expansion of Broadband in NYS and career development within that sector. BOCES is working on creating programming, and we identified local companies that may be able to help us with an array of job classifications and skill inventories for upcoming vacancies.

- d. **Resource & Development Committee** report by Gretchen Steffan for Ash Anand. We met on May 11th, and discussed work-in-process items in Advocacy, Financial Literacy, WDB Benchmarking, and WDB Engagement with Office of New Americans.

8. **Center's Operations Report** by Liza Ochsendorf that highlighted Center Job Fairs, the Summer Youth Employment Programs, and GED Student progress. Saratoga County E&T was recognized by the National Association of Counties for their EMT Career Pathway Program. Washington County is working on a farm/agriculture initiative for milk haulers and farm positions that include CDL certification. Warren County now has Southern Adirondack Independent Living Center (SAIL) at their Center regularly to help clients with disabilities, and A4TD, which serves senior citizens trying to get back into the workforce. Warren County also has 30 laptops purchased with APRA funding for educational training purposes. Warren County is also awaiting their grant funding for in-home childcare. All Centers are enrolling into NYSDOL's Northstar Digital Literacy program, which can result in earning certificates to improve job readiness.

9. **WDB Operations Update** Gretchen Steffan reported on upcoming compliance matters, which included the Local Plan, Regional Plan, Center's Certification, Engage-by-Cell implementation, Transfr-VR, Program & Fiscal Monitoring as we approach the end of our fiscal year, Grant collaborations, and the RFP for Branding, Web Development and Social Media.

10. **Additional Opportunity for Board Member Announcements / Comments...** Gretchen Steffan acknowledged Kathy LaFond's term will be expiring on June 30th, and recognized Kathy for her work, contributions, and commitment to the Board. We have appreciated having Kathy on the Board representing the healthcare sector, and wished Kathy the best in her future endeavors.

11. **Adjournment at 10:00 am**

Next SWW WDB Meeting
Wednesday, June 28, 2023
at QUAD in Saratoga
from 8–10 am