

Town of Hempstead/City of Long Beach Workforce Development Board

Board Meeting Minutes

January 31, 2024

I. Welcome and Introductions

The meeting was called to order by the Town of Hempstead/City of Long Beach Workforce Development Board (LWDB) Chairperson Sara Griffith at 9:30 A.M. She asked each of the attendees to introduce themselves.

II. Review of Minutes

Ms. Griffith asked the members to review the minutes from the meeting of June 8, 2023. A motion to approve the minutes was moved by Tania Peterson-Chandler, seconded by Jeffrey Johnson, and approved by the Board.

III. Policy for Youth Job Shadowing

Ms. Griffith indicated that the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) offers various forms of work experiences for youth, including job shadowing, and she invited Elizabeth Ajasin to explain the draft policy before seeking the Board’s approval. Ms. Ajasin outlined the Job Shadowing policy, explaining that it offers youth exposure to a workplace in their areas of interest. The goal of job shadowing is to provide youth with an opportunity to enhance their career awareness, engage and network with professionals in their desired fields, and experience a workplace firsthand. Ideal candidates lack work experience but have skills training and seek career exploration. Each can participate in up to 3 shadows per year, capped at 20 hours per location. Service providers recruit hosts, and employers complete an enrollment form. Youth will receive a handbook and keep a journal to reflect on their experiences and career considerations.

May Wei-Lin asked if there are any incentives for youth who participate in a job shadowing program. Ms. Ajasin responded that while the program is unpaid, participants will gain valuable insight into their desired occupations. Rosa Murciano added that the program can also help youth begin to build their professional network. Lorie Boyd suggested seeking input from youth who have participated in WIOA programs and obtained employment in their desired occupations.

A motion to approve the Job Shadowing policy was moved by Deirdre Duke, seconded by Mr. Johnson, and approved by the Board.

IV. One-Stop Operator Annual Report and Feedback for PY’22

Ms. Griffith said that the Hempstead/Long Beach LWDB Local Plan requires that the One-Stop Operator submit an annual report, whose purpose is to show progress made toward achieving quality standards and organizational goals. Then, based on its review of the report, the Local Board provides feedback to the Operator. She invited Ms. Ajasin to describe both

the annual report and feedback for Program Year 2022 (July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023). The annual report can be accessed [here](#).

Christopher DeRita, a career counselor at HempsteadWorks, shared a success story about a customer who faced challenges reentering the workforce. With the support and guidance of HempsteadWorks, she obtained her Project Management certification from Stony Brook University. Ms. Duke emphasized the importance of building on existing skills to enhance marketability in the workplace, while Mr. DeRita expressed gratitude for the opportunity to assist individuals in their career journeys.

Following the customer success story, Ms. Ajasin elaborated on the Board's feedback process to the One-Stop Operator, which involves identifying trends, addressing concerns, and implementing continuous improvement actions. NYSDOL provides quarterly outcomes data for Primary Indicators of Performance, including Employment Rates 2nd and 4th Quarter after Exit, Median Earnings, Credential Attainment, and Measurable Skills Gains for adults, dislocated workers, and youth. The goal is for each Board to achieve at least 80% of all goals. However, it was noted that the goal for measurable skills gains for dislocated workers was not met. To improve outcomes in this area, the Board recommended the following actions to the One-Stop Operator:

- Ensure follow-up on customers enrolled in occupational skills training and facilitate the supportive services needed for their success. Each month, staff submits a log that lists all their customers enrolled in training and their training outcomes.
- Ensure that if the duration of training surpasses one or more program years, at least one measurable skills gain is entered into OSOS per program year, as per NYSDOL instruction.

V. Island Harvest Presentation

Ms. Griffith invited Maria Arianas to speak about Island Harvest and its partnership with HempsteadWorks. Ms. Arianas explained that Island Harvest's mission is to end hunger and reduce food waste. The program distributes food but also works to target and address the root causes of hunger and poverty with programs and services such as the Nutrition Education Pathways program. Ms. Arianas discussed Island Harvest's Warehousing & Inventory Control program, a one-year program that includes classroom and hands-on training along with individual coaching after graduating from the program. Students earn six credentials in the program and receive wraparound services, including childcare.

Michael Todisco inquired about the age of students and whether transportation assistance is provided. He also asked how Island Harvest finds students. Ms. Arianas responded that the program is for individuals aged 18 and over, and they receive a daily stipend to assist with transportation. Students are recruited through promotional materials and partner sharing, with HempsteadWorks hosting information sessions for the program. Ms. Rose-Craig asked how the program is funded, and Ms. Arianas said they are funded by sponsors such as Bank of America, National Grid, PSEG, New York State, and workforce development affiliates.

Additionally, she mentioned that the classes are held at their Melville location, which consists of two classrooms to accommodate participants, along with a mock warehouse to facilitate training.

VI. In-School and Out-of-School Youth Programs Update

- **In-School Youth Program**

Deputy Commissioner Kurt Rockensies provided an update on Morrison Mentors, the In-School Youth services provider. Currently, Morrison Mentors has faced challenges in youth recruitment; however, efforts are underway in collaboration with Career and Employment Options, Inc. (CEO) and several school districts, as well as radio and digital ads to boost recruitment. Mr. Rockensies emphasized the promotion of Morrison Mentors' activities, including working with drones, 3d printing, and building computers, to attract more youth. Mr. Johnson expressed pride in hearing one of HempsteadWorks commercials.

- **Out-School Youth Program**

Myesha Arvon provided an update on the Out-of-School Youth program. She highlighted the progress of the Women's Opportunity Rehabilitation Center (WORC), the first youth services provider, in meeting its goals. Youth participants have been engaged in various activities, including financial literacy, mentoring, resume and cover letter preparation, job development, Transfr-VR for occupational skills training, and GED preparation classes. Ms. Arvon also mentioned the participation of youth in HempsteadWorks' employer presentations and their awareness of internship and on-the-job training opportunities.

Ms. Arvon's update also addressed challenges with the second provider, MusicBreeds, which has not yet met expectations. Despite extensive training, including one-on-one sessions with both NYSDOL and HempsteadWorks' youth team, challenges persist. Ms. Rose-Craig asked whether MusicBreeds' struggles stem from recruitment difficulties or a lack of understanding of the mission to serve youth. Mr. Rockensies attributed the challenges to a late program start and ongoing workspace construction but expressed hope for improvement.

VII. 2024 Youth Employment Programs

Ms. Arvon indicated that HempsteadWorks received funding for the Youth Employment Program (YEP), similar to the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP), running from January 1, 2024 to June 30, 2024. Eligible youth, aged 16-20 and low-income, will earn \$17 for up to 30 hours a week. Participants must attend orientation, which includes a financial literacy workshop and sexual harassment prevention training. Subsequently, Business Services matches them with a worksite aligned with their career goals and interests. Ms.

Rose-Craig asked about the drug screening's impact on youth, to which Ms. Arvon responded that only a minimal number have not passed.

Afterwards, Ms. Ajasin announced a partnership between HempsteadWorks and the Cradle of Aviation Museum for SYEP 2024. A subgroup of youth will join Cradle's drone certification program where they will learn to pilot drones and sit for the Remote Pilot Certificate issued by the Federal Aviation Administration. The first four weeks will focus on drone flying skills, followed by two weeks gaining work experience in law enforcement and construction settings. Specific worksites are pending determination, and HempsteadWorks plans to collaborate with Cradle to establish any additional participation criteria.

VIII. New York Systems Change and Inclusive Opportunities Network – NY SCION Project Updates

Ms. Griffith invited Maria Lombardi, Disability Resource Coordinator (DRC), to provide an update on SCION. Ms. Lombardi indicated that new DRCs are still being onboarded throughout the state, and experienced DRCs have been asked to support them. She added that she continues to offer Ticket to Work information sessions, which have seen increased interest. Additionally, NYSDOL requested that she present best practices to various agencies throughout the state. Ms. Lombardi thanked HempsteadWorks staff and partners for their support of the SCION project.

IX. Old Business/New Business

Several topics were covered:

- Ms. Duke provided information about Northwell Health's EMT Certification program for veterans. The seven-week program pays trainees \$20 an hour for 40 hours a week and will take place in Lake Success, NY. Ms. Arianas asked how many times the program will run. Ms. Duke responded it will be provided once a year, but Northwell is discussing extending the program to at least twice a year.
- Mr. Johnson discussed low enrollment in the Urban League program and urged the Board to assist in establishing communities that better serve senior citizens.
- Commissioner Eric Mallette expressed gratitude to all Board members for their significant contributions to HempsteadWorks, and he commended staff for their hard work. He announced the retirement of four Town of Hempstead Department of Occupational Resources (DOOR) staff: Yvonne Morrissey, Fran Iaquina, Sal Scibetta, and Aurora Berman. He wished them a happy retirement.

X. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was offered by Ms. Duke, seconded by Ms. Rose-Craig, and approved by the Board. The meeting adjourned at 11:40 A.M.