

Town of Hempstead/City of Long Beach Local Workforce Development Board Meeting Minutes

HempsteadWorks Career Center

October 12, 2022

I. Welcome and Introductions

The meeting was called to order by the Town of Hempstead/City of Long Beach Local Workforce Development (LWDB) Chairperson Sara Griffith at 9:41 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, 2022. A motion to approve the minutes with this correction was moved by Deirdre Duke, seconded by Lavonne Erskine, and approved by the Board.

III. Customized Training

Ms. Griffith indicated that the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) permits Boards to have a policy on Customized Training. Elizabeth Ajasin explained that HempsteadWorks is updating the Customized Training (CT) policy to expound upon how it is to be implemented. The purpose of CT is to afford businesses the opportunity to train or coordinate the training of their employees to meet their special requirements. It may be conducted by the employer or by a training institution and can include classroom training, lab training with hands-on instruction, electronic or computer-based training, or other training that is customized to meet the employer's specific needs. WIOA can reimburse employers a portion of the cost of training provided that the employer contributes at least 50% of the total cost of training. Total contribution depends on factors such as the size of the company and whether the completed training will result in a wage increase or job advancement for the employees. WIOA requires that the employer commit to hire or maintain permanent full-time employment for all individuals who successfully complete CT.

Ms. Ajasin added that to apply for CT funding, businesses must submit HempsteadWorks' preliminary business application, a responsibility questionnaire, and a CT-specific application. The application requests information on the proposed training, which employees are to train, and the total cost of training. Christopher Fusco asked who is eligible for CT. Ms. Ajasin responded that an individual must be meet WIOA program eligibility and be employed, unemployed, or an incumbent worker with the employer conducting CT.

A motion to approve the Customized Training Policy was moved by Jeffrey Johnson, seconded by Tania Peterson-Chandler, and approved by the Board.

IV. Pre-Vocational Services Policy

Ms. Griffith indicated that WIOA permits local workforce development boards to have a policy on Pre-Vocational services and invited Ms. Ajasin to discuss the policy.

Ms. Ajasin explained that WIOA defines a short-term pre-vocational service as one that prepares individuals for employment or training. She said that we are expanding the policy to include other forms of services critical to customer preparation other than career workshops. Some of the pre-vocational services we will add are:

- Services that develop job search and readiness skills with activities such as resume-building and computer skills and soft skills training;
- Services that develop skills necessary for unsubsidized employment, such as OSHA training and pre-apprenticeship programs. These services may also include skills that are commonly sought by employers in specific occupations and industries;
- Services that develop skills required to enter and complete an occupational skills training program. We can offer intermediary services including additional workshops, tutoring, and Transfr-VR; and
- Services that prepare customers to obtain their high school equivalency and that help them develop their English language proficiency

Ms. Ajasin added that while WIOA can fund pre-vocational services, each service should not exceed six months. Deirdre Duke asked if we will assess customers' literacy level. Ms. Ajasin responded that we are reconsidering issuing a TABE test for customers interested in an occupational skills training program. If the customer scores low on the test, we can suggest that they enroll in tutoring.

A motion to approve the Pre-Vocational Services policy was moved by Ms. Peterson-Chandler, seconded by Ms. Duke, and approved by the Board.

V. PY'22 Summer Youth Employment Program Recap

Ms. Griffith indicated that HempsteadWorks coordinated the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP), and she invited Myesha Arvon, Youth Services Coordinator, to provide a summary of the program.

Ms. Arvon explained that this was HempsteadWorks' first time re-envisioning the summer program, and it was a success. Youth eligible for the program are Town of Hempstead/City of Long Beach residents, ages 16-20, and low-income. This year, 95 youth participated, working 30 hours a week and earning \$16 an hour. During orientation week, youth had a financial literacy workshop presented by New York Community Bank and visits from PSEG LI, NYU Langone, and Nassau Community College. The school's representative spoke to youth about college options and job readiness training. Some of the worksites this year included cpnassau, EOC of Nassau County; Morrison Mentors; Richner Communications; local school districts; and Town of Hempstead departments including the Animal Shelter, Highways, and Deputy Supervisor Dorothy Goosby's Office.

On the last day of the program, HempsteadWorks held a Career Fest event at the Town of Hempstead Dorothy Goosby Plaza. The event is a celebration of the end of the program. We invited businesses to provide engaging activities for youth, such as CVS, Morrison Mentors, and NYS Police. The youth also enjoyed music from a DJ, burgers and hot dogs for lunch, and ice cream. At the end of the event, participants took a picture with Deputy Supervisor Goosby and were given a certificate of completion. Ms. Arvon shared a short video of the program and added that several youth were permanently hired by their worksites.

Ms. Griffith said that in the 20 years she has been involved in the program, this was the best year. She thanked HempsteadWorks staff.

VI. New Initiative – Promoting Apprenticeships as a Post-Secondary Option

Ms. Griffith said that in April 2021, HempsteadWorks contracted with Career and Employment Options, Inc. (CEO) to provide Sector-Based Business Services. Due to nationwide advocacy of apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs, HempsteadWorks expanded CEO's contract to implement the "Promoting Apprenticeship as a Post-Secondary Option" project. She invited Dr. Paul Cavanaugh to explain the initiative.

Dr. Cavanaugh explained that the goal of the initiative is to promote the concept of apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeships to businesses and high school students and faculty. The initiative was prompted because of the United States Department of Labor's (USDOL) push to expand apprenticeships, especially into industries other than construction. He explained the different types of work-based learning (e.g., internships, pre-apprenticeship, youth apprenticeship, and apprenticeship). With these forms of learning, employers can develop and prepare their workforce while participants can obtain paid work experience, receive progressive wage increases, gain skills through on-the-job learning and classroom instruction, and earn a nationally recognized credential.

Dr. Cavanaugh explained that the first phase of the initiative will involve informing students, their families, school staff, and community-based organizations about the viability of apprenticeship programs and encouraging businesses to sponsor and/or engage in them. The goal is to schedule meetings with guidance departments at Town of Hempstead school districts, with an initial focus on Hempstead, Uniondale, Roosevelt, Freeport, Baldwin, West Hempstead, Valley Stream, and Seaford. Then, CEO will participate in high school events, PTA meetings and build relationships with Ignite Long Island and the Manufacturers Association of Central New York (MACNY). In addition, through the Sector-Based Partnership component of the WIOA grant, CEO will host events to inform and educate businesses in various sectors including healthcare, manufacturing, and hospitality about NYS Registered Apprenticeship Programs. In phase two, CEO will facilitate the process of graduating students applying for existing programs, and in phase three, CEO will work with specific districts to develop apprenticeship curricula and establish MOUs between HempsteadWorks and existing programs.

VII. New York Systems Change and Inclusive Opportunities Network Project Updates

Ms. Griffith said that the New York Systems Change and Inclusive Opportunities Network (NY SCION) project continues to serve individuals with disabilities through the HempsteadWorks career center. She invited Maria Lombardi, Disability Resource Coordinator, to provide some updates.

Ms. Lombardi explained that SCION is a statewide program derived from the Disability Employment Initiative (DEI) Round 8 program. She and the DRCs that participated in DEI have been helping to onboard and mentor the 25 new DRCs hired throughout the State. She was also tasked with maintaining the Project Council's quarterly meeting. She added that HempsteadWorks has maintained the mentoring program with Young Adult Institute, which will mentor cohorts of five customers, including adults, with disabilities, for 10 weeks.

VIII. Business Services Update

Ms. Griffith invited Nene Alameda and Mary Drangel to speak about HempsteadWorks' support to local businesses. They reported on the Job Fair that took place at the Freeport Recreation Center on September 15, 2022. Over a thousand jobseekers and seventy employers attended. In a survey, most jobseekers reported that the fair met their expectations and are highly likely to attend future events. Employers were also satisfied with the event and were amazed at the number of jobseekers that attended.

IX. Transfr Virtual Reality Overview

Ms. Griffith indicated that Transfr-VR develops virtual reality software designed to offer its users a near-reality experience of what it is like to work in various occupations. HempsteadWorks intends to use Transfr as a career exploration and training tool for WIOA

youth and adults. She invited Isai Pochtar, Transfr’s Workforce Advisor, to provide a demonstration.

Mr. Pochtar explained that Transfr’s virtual reality programs provide over 200 hands-on simulations that equip learners with the essential skills they need to enter into and advance along a career pathway. Transfr has both a career exploration tool and training facility that has modules in construction, manufacturing, culinary arts, aviation maintenance, health, and life sciences. Ms. Duke observed that Transfr can provide a realistic job preview that is beneficial to students, libraries, and CBOs that serve youth. She asked if the program gives feedback to the user. Mr. Pochtar responded that the programs have a digital coach that provides real-time feedback to the user and helps them through each 10–15-minute simulation. At the end of each module, users are assessed on their learning progress.

Mr. Johnson asked if seniors can use Transfr and the type of hardware the program uses. Mr. Pochtar responded that Transfr is accessible to older users, and the hardware is the Oculus Quest, which is included in the subscription. Kurt Rockensies added that the headsets will be loaned to our out-of-school youth services providers and will be available to adults and dislocated workers in our resource room. Career counselors will encourage customers to use Transfr before committing to a training program, and we intend to bring the headsets with us when visiting school districts. Commissioner Mallette also added that the Town of Hempstead Board is in favor of the Transfr project and thanked the Board for their contributions to changing the lives of the jobseekers we serve.

X. Old Business

No old business was discussed.

XI. New Business

No new business was discussed.

XII. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was offered by Ms. Duke, seconded by Dr. Erskine, and approved by the board. The meeting was adjourned at 11:20 A.M.