

**Southern Maryland Workforce Development Board Meeting
Via Microsoft TEAMS Meeting
September 12, 2024**

Minutes

Members Present: Cindy Rauner, Kelly Williams, Kathy Guzman, Laura Askins, Carrie Akins, Marcia Chase, Christy Lombardi, Heidi Lybarger, Mike Scott, Michelle Stewart, Michael Young, Alexis Zoss

Members Absent: Robin Cullers, William “BJ” Hall, III, Stacey Cook, Alan Crawley, Lee Greely, Brian Miller, Christian Sorochty, Tami Radisch, Dr. Yolanda Wilson, Stephanie Witte

Guests: Calvin Dyson, New Start Grant Participant

Staff Present: Ruthy Davis, Melinda Bowling, Belinda Denton, Sandy Faucheux, Patricia Meszaros, Ashley Raley, Tiona Turner

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 9:02 am by Cindy Rauner, Chair.

WELCOME AND ROLL CALL

Cindy Rauner opened the meeting with a warm welcome and introduction of attendees.

MISSION MOMENT

Briana Capuano introduced the Mission Moment featuring Mr. Calvin Dyson, the first participant to complete the New Start Grant program. Mr. Dyson was grateful for the opportunity to launch his lifelong dream of being an entrepreneur, thanks to the New Start Grant. He is currently in the process of establishing his food service business “Blue Bay Crabs” and plans to be located in the Great Mills area.

BUSINESS

- A quorum was established.
- A motion to approve the minutes from the June 13, 2024, Workforce Development Board meeting was made by Kathy Guzman, seconded by Christy Lombardi, and carried.
- A motion to approve the consent agenda documents was made by Laura Askins, seconded by Christy Lombardi, and carried.
- A motion to approve combining the Special Populations Committee and the Youth and Young Adult Advisory Committee into one committee, the Workforce Innovations Committee, and revising the bylaws was made by Michelle Stewart, seconded by Christy Lombardi, and carried.

STAFFING UPDATES

Ruthy Davis shared with the board a current org chart. Currently, there is only 1 vacancy that we are currently recruiting for, the Intake Specialist. The purpose of this position is to triage individuals when they come in, prior to them working with Career Advisors. This makes the job of the Career Advisor more efficient, as the Intake Specialist has already vetted those individuals who need intensive support from Career Advisors on a one-on-one basis. Otherwise, the Intake Specialist can suggest other basic services available for individuals who do not need, are not suitable for, or are not eligible for services from a Career Advisor. There has not been an Intake Specialist for some time now and it has affected the flow of the work. The vacancies that will not be filled at this time are a Career Advisor and a Special Programs Career Advisor.

HIRING EVENT UPDATES

Belinda Denton provided updates on the successful hiring events recently held.

- **Navy Exchange Recruitment** was held on July 31, 2024. 48 individuals were in attendance which resulted in 11 hires.
- **Workforce Rebound Job Fair** geared towards Returning Citizens or Justice Involved citizens, was held on August 14, 2024. 15 Businesses participated, 162 jobseekers were in attendance, 9 same day hires with 16 additional individuals moving through the hiring process.
- **TCCSMD Recruitment** was held on August 23, 2024. 92 individuals applied, 15 interviews were conducted, and 2 candidates were hired as a result.
- **Retail/Hospitality Recruitment** was held on August 29, 2024. 140 jobseekers attended along with 5 businesses.
- **St. Mary's Job Fair** was held September 11 in collaboration with St. Mary's County Economic Development in the SMART (Southern Maryland Autonomous Research and Technology) building at the University System of Maryland Southern Maryland in California, MD. 56 businesses attended along with 6 resource partners and 4 apprenticeships. 318 individuals attended, and 6 individuals were hired on the spot. There are plans to hold this event every year with St. Mary's County Economic Development. 100% of business in attendance said they would participate in the event again.
- **Calvert County Job-Fair** will be held on October 2, 2024, in collaboration with Calvert County Economic Development and the College of Southern Maryland at the Prince Frederick Campus.

EARN GRANT UPDATE

Belinda Denton provided an update on the EARN (Employment Advancement Right Now) grant. The initial meeting was held with interested businesses. \$150,000 was received to train incumbent workers and a few new hires in certain areas in the manufacturing industry. There are 9 different training courses such as IPC, WHMA 620, SOLIDWORKS, Welding, CNC Operator, Press Brake Operation and PCB Design. The grant commenced at the beginning of July 2024. There are currently businesses waiting in the pipeline to receive training for their incumbent employees. The grant period is for 2 years and will provide 80 training opportunities for incumbent employees along with 6-12 new hires. The new hire opportunity training will most likely be in the CNC Operator spaces as that is an entry level position and in demand in the industry.

NEW START GRANT UPATE

Briana Capuano provided more information on the grant. This grant was awarded last December 2023, it is a yearly grant, which we plan to renew due to its success and need in the region. The second cohort with the SBDC will begin in a couple of weeks. The second cohort with the detention center is ending with graduation next week. 8 participants successfully completed this class which included a Shark Tank type competition. Judges for the competition included Maryland State Grant Program Managers. The Grant Program Managers were impressed with the progress of the participants. The third cohort will begin at the beginning of October, after a date is received from the detention center. Participants can continue to work with us during their transition phase, while they go through the process of starting their businesses.

SUMMER YOUTH PROGRAM

Briana Capuano provided information on the program. Overall, we were able to serve 15 summer youth interns from each county. All participants in Calvert and Charles were placed in on site employment. St. Mary's had 10 virtual training opportunities and 5 on site placements. There are a few virtual slots left in St. Mary's that will be utilized. All participants, with the exception of 1 youth participant who dropped out early on, completed the program. Briana anticipates reaching out to the businesses for 2025's Summer Program in February of 2025.

MARYLAND BLUEPRINT UPDATE

Patti Meszaros provided an update on the initiative. The 2nd school year has just commenced, and most school systems are fully staffed. Monica Grove along with coaches and advisors from St. Mary's County recently visited the AV3 facility in St. Mary's. This was well received by all and was a valuable resource for the coaches and advisors. The advisors and coaches came away with a wealth of knowledge to disseminate to their students. Last night Monica Grove with Patti's assistance provided a presentation of the RIASEC (Realistic Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, Conventional) model used in the program to local parents of current students. This presentation helped explain what the Maryland Blueprint initiative is about and how it benefits their children. It was well received by all attendees.

PRINCE FREDERIC AJC CLOSING

Ruthy Davis shared with the board the recent closing of the Prince Frederick AJC. This small office space was shared with the Department of Social Services in the District Court House in Prince Frederick. Foot traffic there was very minimal for workforce development along with traffic for DSS. DSS had the vision of referring their customers to us for their workforce pursuits and that didn't pan out for DSS. Due to budget constraints for both DSS and TCCSMD, we could not have a full-time staff person available. The decision was made to close it as an AJC and DSS will repurpose the space. DSS has offered for us, along with our partners, to utilize the space to hold meetings in the future as needed.

UPDATE FROM "WHERE DO YOU FIT" SESSION FROM JUNE'S BOARD MEETING

Ruthy Davis discussed that workforce law under the US Department of Labor stipulates that 51% or more of workforce development board members have to represent the private sector. The intel is needed from the private sector to best direct our spending and efforts in training up a skilled pipeline. During June's meeting, members provided detailed introductions of themselves, the organizations they represent and where they best fit on the board. Some members were interested in serving on committees. Those interested in continuing to serve or interested in joining committees included:

Committee	Name	Notes
Business Engagement	Christian Sorochty	New member.
Business Engagement	Kathy Guzman	New Member, interested in being Committee Chair.
Quality Assurance	Christy Lombardi	Will continue as member.
Quality Assurance	Robin Cullers	Will continue as member.
Quality Assurance	Stephanie Whitte	Will continue as member.

Special Populations- now the Workforce Innovations Committee	Alexis Zoss	New member.
Special Populations- now the Workforce Innovations Committee	Michelle Stewart	Will continue as member.
Youth and Young Adult Advisory Committee-now the Workforce Innovations Committee	Michelle Stewart	Will continue as member.

We welcome the new members and any others who may wish to join the committees. We are in the process of reengaging and reigniting the work of the committees in the near future. Committee meeting minutes will be made available at each of our quarterly board meetings. Ruthy emphasized that we need input from our board members. Each board member has the ability to guide us and be an advocate for the work we do for the business community and citizens of Southern Maryland. Thank you!

Public Comment & Announcements: None

Adjournment:

A motion to adjourn was made by Kelly Williams, seconded by Laura Askins, and carried. The meeting adjourned at 9:40 am.