

# The Fulton, Montgomery & Schoharie Counties Workforce Development Board

## Board Meeting

Wednesday, December 4, 2019  
Amsterdam Workforce Career Center

### I. **Opening and Attendance:**

Welcome: Marty Callahan, Chairman of the Board, called the meeting to order at 4:36 p.m. He presented Dave Morrow with a Certificate of Appreciation from the Board. Dave will be retiring from Fulton-Montgomery Community College and the FMS Board at the end of the month. He has been a Board Member with the FMS Workforce Development Board since 2013. All Board Members wished him well on his upcoming retirement and introduced themselves.

Members Present: Wendy Adams, Laurie Bargstedt, Donna Becker, Marty Callahan, Erin Clemons, Roger Cusano, Pamela Goldswier, Arthur Graulich, Melissa Johnston, Amy McCray, Mark Mincher, Dave Morrow, Donna Pesta, Judy Petroski, Amy Rogers, Kenneth Rose, Jeff Stark and Peter Stearns

Excused: Elijah Braemer, Kerry Brunner, Kaleena Castiglione, Dave Fariello, Andrea Fettinger, Kathleen Kilmartin, Karen Miller, Donald Snoop and Jeanette Spaulding

Absent:

Also present: *Mary Hill*, Program Director, FMS Private Industry Council, Inc. and *Joseph Alteri and Christine Peng*, from Metrix Learning/New York Wired for Education.

Staff to Board present: Gail Breen, Beverly Ball, and Kim Skiff

### II. **Presentation:**

***Christine Peng***, Senior Consultant, and ***Joseph Alteri***, Account Executive, NY Wired for Education discussed the online learning platform used for workforce development across 15 states. Metrix Learning is the platform used by NY Wired for Education. Their presentation gave an overview of Metrix Learning features and best practices from other workforce development boards. Christine shared a video about the company and the Metrix Learning Platform. She also shared that Metrix Learning is being used for the Workforce Opportunity and Investment Act (WIOA). There are different features of the Platform that include:

- Career Pathways - 10 Industry Pathways and 200 Occupations targeted to In-demand Occupations. They can also be customized for different areas or needs.
- Industry Certifications - Trainings for over 100 industry recognized credentials, such as; Comp TIA, Microsoft, Oracle or Cisco.
- Integrated Assessments – Employers use the assessment tests for pre-screening candidates for employment, such as Math, Spatial Reasoning or Safety Skills. Over 900 different tests are available and employers use them to help determine different skills. The program is called "Prove It".
- Measurable Skills Gain - Accomplished through Pre and Post testing.

- Community Partners and Employer Engagement - Work with Community and Employers to help them become engaged in the Platform.

Christine discussed the additional virtual career services available, including Virtual Registration, 5000+ Courses, Extensive Reporting Capabilities, and Virtual Labs for IT Certifications and Digital Badges for Skill Tracks.

FMS is working toward Virtual Registration. Job Seekers would go online from anywhere, complete a registration form and be able to immediately have access to the site. This process will help those customers that have transportation issues and cannot make it into the centers to complete the registration. FMS is looking at a launch date on January 1st for the Virtual Registration. It will also still be offered in the Center for those wishing to come in for a Metrix Orientation or assistance.

Christine shared information regarding Best Practices from various states (Orlando Florida, Lancaster PA, Middlesex NJ, Eastern CT WDB and the CA Employment Development Department) currently using the Virtual Registration and Metrix Learning.

Metrix Learning can be used for many different workforce development solutions and can be customized for a particular industry. Some areas that it can be used for are Career Pathways, Partners, K-12, Re-Entry, Youth, Certifications, Public Assistance, Employer Screenings, Business Services, and Career Service Reportables.

Metrix has also shown measurable results. Christine stated that customers perform 15-20% better in entered employment, wage and retention. In NY State, from 2008-2018, 70% of Metrix Customers were employed within the year after receiving services.

Joe Alteri shared that the Platform has World Class Content. The Skillsoft Courses are used by many of the Fortune 500 companies to train their own employees. The Amattrol Content is available for Manufacturing and the MedCom Content is available for the Healthcare Industry. He stated they develop customized curriculum with assessments and work with groups of manufacturers, schools, and community colleges.

Gail and Mary shared that in the FMS Career Centers we use Metrix primarily for Job Seekers. Mary stated that we offer an Orientation that gives an overview of what Metrix is and how to use it. Half of the people that attend an Orientation end up completing courses through Metrix Learning. They are looking for skills and programs that either relate to their previous work experience or a field that they want to enter. They build up their skill level and it goes on their resumes. Mary shared that many have really gotten a lot of skill build up to add to their resumes because of courses they have taken. Some customers are Dislocated Workers that may need to just brush up on some of their skills.

Gail asked if they could discuss how industries have either teamed up with related industries or used it individually to utilize it with employees or job applicants. Joe shared that they have worked with a group of manufacturers in Yates County to help design a curriculum with about 20 courses and 3 assessments. Anyone that completes the coursework and passes the assessments is guaranteed interviews at the companies in that group of manufacturers. They have also met with 5 employers in the Finger Lakes region. A suggested curriculum was developed and sent to them along with a catalog that lists all of the assessments (over 900). Joe stated that whenever you are designing something like this that you have to have the employer buy in. They are also going to take it down to the junior level at high school to build up the awareness of manufacturing.

He also shared that every course you take comes with a Certificate of Completion and that those Certificates of Completions help at job interviews. He stated it is a great opportunity for the unemployed as well as the underemployed.

Laurie asked Joe to name a couple of Certifications that are available. Joe shared a few, such as Microsoft Office, Comp TIA, Oracle, Cisco, Amazon Web Services, Project Management, and Sig Sigma. Laurie shared that she operates the WIOA Corrections Re-Entry program locally and would like to talk more to them about what Metrix Learning has to offer. Joe responded that they are currently working with Albany Corrections and they will be going inside offering courses before inmates are released. The city received a \$1 million grant for the Wrap Around services.

Joe shared that when customers log into the system, they complete a brief self-assessment. Any job, career path or occupation they pick will create a chart showing where the skill gaps are and automatically give a list of courses that would close the skill gap.

Mark asked if the potential employees for Electric Boat all receive the same assessments. Joe said that they are being hired directly for Electric Boat. They have a representative in the Career One Stop Center. Once jobseeker customers pass the assessments, they move onto the hands-on training. Those that don't pass the assessment are given remediation through the Metrix platform. Representatives from Electric Boat, Department of Labor, the Local Workforce Board and the Community Colleges are all working together there. Christine stated that they have 2 tracks; one for design and one for production.

Mary shared that it is also used in coordination with our On-the-Job Training program. If there is an employee that is having some difficulty, the Metrix program can help them brush up their skills or gain the skills, they need to become successful. It then becomes part of their On-the-Job Training program.

### III. Action Items:

- **Resolution BY 2019-03:** Acceptance of the minutes from the September 4, 2019 Board Meeting
  - Motion: Peter Stearns    Seconded by: Roger Cusano
  - Discussion: There was no discussion.
  - Vote: All in favor
  - Motion Carried
  
- **Resolution BY 2019-04:** Acceptance of the minutes from the October 2, 2019 Board Meeting
  - Motion: Laurie Bargstedt    Seconded by: Judy Petroski
  - Discussion: There was no discussion.
  - Vote: All in favor.
  - Motion Carried.
  
- **Resolution BY 2019-05:** Upon the recommendation of the Accountability and Return on Investment Committee: Acceptance of the Single Audit Report for Year Ending 6/30/19
  - Motion: Amy McCray    Seconded by: Laurie Bargstedt
  - Discussion: Kim shared that Eric Unislawski from Philip Beckett office, our CPA and audit firm, presented the results of our Single Audit for PY'18 year-end for the FMS Workforce Development Board. He did a comprehensive review and

comparison of PY'18 year-end to PY'17 year-end. He said that there is a change in language for any not-for-profit regarding donor restrictions but this does not apply to our organization this year as we didn't receive any restricted donations during PY'18. There were no findings.

- Vote: All in favor.
- Motion Carried.

- **Resolution BY 2019-06:** Upon the recommendation of the Accountability and Return on Investment Committee: Acceptance of the Fulton, Montgomery and Schoharie Counties Workforce Development Board, Inc. BY 19-20 Annual Budget Beginning July 1, 2019 and Ending June 30, 2020

- Motion: Jeff Stark Seconded by: Judy Petroski
- Discussion: Kim stated that the PY'19 final budget NOA's were received in November and back dated to October 1, 2019. As anticipated, the funding level that we received projected estimates for back in April did remain nearly level, with an increase in the total budget of \$2,746. Gail shared that while this budget was developed by the Accountability Committee in April, it was developed based upon projected estimates back in April. They now have become formalized. We can now vote on one with confidence that those dollars are there to support the activities that we are proposing in the budget.
- Vote: All in favor.
- Motion Carried.

- **Resolution BY 2019-07:** Upon the recommendation of the Accountability and Return on Investment Committee: Approval of the On-The-Job Training Policy Revisions

- Motion: Peter Stearns Seconded by: Jeff Stark
- Discussion: Gail explained that the On-The-Job Training Policy Revision involved a change of two words in two places. We had to add "Per Participant". It had never been an issue before because when we wrote an On-The-Job Training Contract it was for a single individual. A company came to us a month ago and wanted to do an On-The-Job Training for 5 employees, but on one contract. They felt the one contract would make it easier for them in terms of time and paperwork. By doing that, if the wording of the current policy was taken verbatim, that would reduce the amount that could be spent for each participant from the current \$3,000. By adding the words "per participant" it makes it clearer going forward for another company that wants to place more than one participants on one contract.
- Vote: All in favor.
- Motion Carried.

- **Resolution BY 2019-08:** Upon the recommendation of the Executive Committee and the Accountability and Return on Investment Committee: Acceptance of Salary Increases for all eligible WDB Staff

- Motion: Jeff Stark Seconded by: Melissa Johnston
- Discussion: Marty stated that there was an Executive Committee meeting last week. Although the increases were included in the annual budget, they were written to be retroactive to July 1, 2019 if the WIOA funding did not decrease when the formal budget was passed. Since the funding did not decrease and

- remains as expected, the Executive Committee unanimously recommended that the Board pass a resolution for a salary increase of 3% for all WDB staff.
- Vote: All in favor.
  - Motion Carried.

#### **IV. Information Sharing:**

##### **Accountability and Return on Investment Committee:**

Gail stated that everything had previously been discussed through the Resolutions. The full Committee report is available to Board Members on the website.

*No Meeting in December.*

*Next Meeting: Tuesday, January 28<sup>th</sup> at 4:30 p.m. at the Amsterdam Center.*

##### **Business Services and Employer Engagement Committee:**

Gail shared that Beverly's program report covers how many people come into the center, the types of services they receive, the Business Services outreach, and the Youth Program. She also provides a traffic graph that focuses on front door traffic over the past 12 months. The graph shows us that overall traffic is down slightly. That is not a surprise since Unemployment rates are down. We had a huge bump in July-October. Much of this was because of Mini-Job Fairs and Recruitments, but also the huge recruitment that we did with Dollar General. We expect that we will see things level off again and then bump up again next month as seasonal workers start claiming Unemployment Insurance Benefits. Melissa stated that there has been an increase in claims from paving, pools and other outdoor employees. Many of these employees get called back in the spring. If employees have two seasons with the same business or are union employees they do not get called in for appointments or if they have a return to work date of 4-6 weeks, although services are still offered to them.

Marty stated that there were 13 new Metrix registrations issued and 11 courses passed. We are currently working with Metrix Learning staff to develop Virtual Registration for customers. Gail shared that once customers get their license, they can take their courses anywhere on any computer with an internet connection.

There were 134 FMS Business Contacts in October. A Mini-Job Fair was held at the Amsterdam Center with 11 Businesses and 67 participants in attendance. There was 1 Recruitment in the Gloversville Center for Kasson Keller/Keymark Corporation (7 participants); 2 Recruitments in the Amsterdam Center for Crossroads Services (23) and the US Census (3) and 1 recruitment in the Cobleskill Center for Westaff (4).

Gail said that Chris Larrabee shared that they had a meeting with people being laid off from Westrock, formally Capstone Container. What they found was that many were re-employed so quickly that they didn't even have time to file for Unemployment Insurance.

*The full Committee report is available to Board Members on the website.*

*No Meeting in December.*

*Next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 16<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 a.m. at the Amsterdam Center.*

### **WIOA (MOU) Partners Committee:**

Judy said that the next meeting has been cancelled. She shared that she has had some discussions with Gail about canvassing committee members to see if there are better times, days or months to hold the meetings. Currently the meeting is held quarterly but every other meeting has had to be cancelled. Gail stated that those two meetings currently fall during summer vacations and during the Thanksgiving/Christmas holiday season. It may just need to be moved to a different quarterly schedule.

*Next meeting is currently scheduled for Friday, March 13, 2020 9:00 a.m. in the Amsterdam Career Center.*

### **Workforce Systems Oversight Committee:**

There was no meeting during November due to the holiday.

*No Meeting in December.*

*Next Meeting: Wednesday, January 22<sup>nd</sup> at 8:00 a.m. at the Cobleskill Center.*

## **V. Environmental Scanning:**

Gail shared that many exciting things have been happening at the Cobleskill Center.

It was about a year ago that a Promotional Video was first discussed at a WIOA Partners Meeting. The Partners Meeting consists of mandated partners that receive WIOA funding and other workforce partners who would like to participate in the Committee. This Video would be available for Partners to share with their staff and with their customers about the services we offer. Pam Levy, Catskill Center for Independence, had a connection with SUNY Cobleskill. A student intern in the Communication Department came out with 2 of his Professors. They looked at the Cobleskill Center and developed a plan for how they could put together a YouTube Video that could be given to the Partners. The Videos would explain what goes on in a Career Center. The Cobleskill Video Team came out about a week and a half ago and shot very basic video of what the Center looks like and how to find it from the parking lot. The next step will be talking to several staff members about what it is they do at the Center. They will be short 15 second clips. The student intern from the college will be available until May, when he graduates. If this YouTube video works, we will talk to FMCC to see if they have a Communications Department that can offer a similar video for the Amsterdam and Gloversville Centers.

Congressman Antonio Delgado from the 19th Congressional District, representing all of Columbia, Delaware, Greene, Otsego, Schoharie, Sullivan, and Ulster counties, and parts of Broome, Dutchess, Montgomery, and Rensselaer counties came to the Cobleskill Center for a tour. He wanted to talk first about our Veteran's Programs as he had heard that we had an excellent record of working with Veterans. He talked with staff and customers about our services and within a half hour of the visit he had us on his Twitter feed.

We received a call from Jim Zarroli, NPR (National Public Radio). He was working for his editors on a NYS-focused study on rural unemployment and wanted to know how difficult it was for people in a rural area to reconnect with employment once they are laid off. His editors were specifically interested in talking with male jobseekers. He didn't really want to talk to staff, just the

jobseekers. They were asked to sign off on a Release of Information ahead of time. He interviewed 3-4 gentlemen about what it is like to be on unemployment insurance, what it is like to live in a rural area, and what it is like when your car breaks down or you have other barriers to getting to a job interview or a job. Many of these things can happen in an urban area but they seem to be a bigger issue in rural areas.

## **VI. Board Member Go Round:**

### ***Wendy Adams (Lamont Engineers, P.C.):***

- Hiring their intern who will be graduating from RIT in January.
- Retired employee returning to satellite office in Saugerties on a PT basis.
- Winding down for the year due to weather conditions.

### ***Donna Becker (Schoharie County DSS):***

- We currently have a waiver for the Able-Bodied Adults With Dependents (ABAWD) program and we don't need to require participants of the program to work (or search for work) in order to receive SNAP benefits for more than 3 months in a 36-month period. However, NY State no longer meets the eligibility for the statewide Waiver (due to unemployment rates and other determinants). This means that our waiver may soon go away (a very high probability). USDA just approved a 3 month waiver (as opposed to the requested 12 month waiver) requested by OTDA. That means that Schoharie County is eligible for the ABAWD Waiver through 3/31/2020, but after that date then DSS will need to implement and track all qualifying work or training activities for everyone who applies for SNAP (even those with dependents). This means that we will be referring more people for job search assistance as well as more families will need daycare if they want to continue to receive SNAP benefits.
- Down several staff. Application available online.

### ***Gail Breen (Workforce Development Board):***

- Two new Board Members.
  - \* ***Andrea Scribner - FMCC.*** Currently going through the process.
  - \* ***Elijah Braemer - Dollar General.*** He is already appointed. Today was their first day of shipping and the upper level management team was going to be present for the day. Dollar General spent several months using any available space we had to interview potential employees. Gail reminded members that they presented us with a check for \$5,000 for new computers in our Resource Room as a thank you.

### ***Marty Callahan (Gehring Tricot Corporation):***

- Challenges with recruitment process.
- Currently have 3 openings.

### ***Erin Clemens (BeechNut Nutrition):***

- BeechNut hosted a "Roadshow on Census" with Congressman, Paul Tonko.
- Turnover rate is down from 25% to 18% on the Production/Manufacturing side- Due in part to New Hire Training and Employee Engagement activities they have put into place.

### ***Roger Cusano (Universal Plastics Corporation):***

- Doing fairly well.
- Some new contracts after the first of the year.
- Hiring machine operators, machinist, and CNC programmers.

- Expansion in Finishing is now online.
- Optimistic for a strong new year.

***Pamela Goldswor (Townsend Leather):***

- Phase 2 of construction is ongoing to increase square footage.
- End of the year – Departments engaged in Product and Marketing Understanding.
- Holding One to One meetings with everyone in company for goal setting in 2020.
- National Geographic Filmed Townsend – for a Made in America Series on New Balance Sneakers.

***Arthur Graulich (Argus Acres):***

- Largest milk processor in the United States just filed bankruptcy. A lot of local milk goes into that system, and it is questionable on whether they will get paid or not.
- He has been in business for 70 years.

***Melissa Johnston (NYS DOL):***

- Busier, more claims coming in, although a lot are excused and not mandated.
- Optimistic that they will have Cobleskill position staffed by next meeting.

***Amy McCray (CG Roxane):***

- Gave Global overview of Crystal Geysers. Started in 1954 in Europe.
- 74 locations in England, Spain and France; 9 locations in the United States.
- Celebrating 30 years in the United States with the flagship site in California in 2020.
- Recently opened 10<sup>th</sup> location in San Bernardino California; it is a dedicated recycled PET plant and they are the first U.S. beverage maker to do so.
- Stabilized workforce. Now at 2% turnover.
- Looking to hire 5 new entry level production operators and one additional supervisor.
- Local plan to double in size in the next 2 1/2 years. They own 400 acres.
- Amy oversees 5 of the U.S. locations.

***Mark Mincher (Operating Engineers, Local 158):***

- Construction winding down. Montgomery County has been slow.
- Quarries and Blacktop shutting down.
- A lot of emergency work because of rains in November.
- Met with Farmingdale College about Offshore Wind Farms - Want to train at Farmingdale for the technicians for the Wind Farms going in on Long Island. It will be a hardship to get the people from the city out to Farmingdale.

***David Morrow (Fulton-Montgomery Community College):***

- Transition is going well.
- Director is being promoted to Dave's position as Vice President.
- Greg Truckenmiller is serving as interim President until search is completed.
- Andrea Scribner will be replacing Dave on the Board once her appointment is completed.
- On a personal note, Dave has been a clockmaker for more than 20 years and looks forward to spending more time working on them.

***Donna Pesta (SUNY Cobleskill):***

- Friday, December 13<sup>th</sup> last day of Fall classes.
- Students have 5 weeks off and return to class on January 21, 2020.

***Judy Petroski (ACCES/VR):***



- Down staff- having difficulty filling masters' level positions. Johnstown is down one staff and Utica is down 4.
- Pre-eligible RFP accepted. Focus is for individuals in high school age 14-16 years old to do Career Exploration, Post High school Exploration, and Self-Advocacy Skills. The goal is to help individuals at an earlier age to develop some of those skills necessary to make good choices and to self-advocate. There was no bidder for the FM area RFP, however the contract awardee hopes to expand out after the first year of the contract.
- In their monthly report, they submitted a success story about an individual who went through several aspects of Metrix Learning and; as partly a result of that experience is now successfully employed.

***Amy Rogers (Keymark Corporation):***

- Actively recruiting and attending job fairs.
- Doing some different things with training and starting to do some employee enrichment to entice employees to stay on. Tough to keep employees.
- Still offering the shuttle van for those with transportation issues.

***Kenneth Rose (Montgomery Co. Economic Development & Planning Dept.):***

- Dollar General is hiring and working on their shipping.
- Vita-Blend started construction of their facility in September across the street from Dollar General. They should be operational sometime in June or July.
- Smaller announcement coming shortly followed by a potentially larger one in the spring.

***Jeffrey Stark (IUPAT District Council #9):***

- Albany Business Review- Feature article on Minority Business Enterprises, particularly on Norman Young from DCMC Construction. He is a business owner who came up through the Painters Union as an Apprentice. He decided to go into business as a union employer and in 6 years he has grown to \$5 million in sales and employs 350 people.
- Knights of Columbus in Amsterdam - Facebook page - December 7th from 12-5 p.m. Free Photos and cookies with Santa- last year 800 photos were taken and given out. The photo package is free and worth about \$45-\$50 each. Photos are taken by a professional photographer.

***Peter Stearns (Laborers Local #157):***

- Strong, record year.

**VII. Board Member Feedback?**

**VIII. Adjournment:**

Meeting Adjourned at 5:46 p.m.

***No Board Meeting in January.  
The next Board Meeting will be held on February 5, 2020 at 4:30 p.m.***