

One Stop Partners Meeting  
Meeting Minutes – Zoom Meeting  
June 13, 2022

Those in attendance:

Colleen Casali – Native American Community Services (NACS)  
Luke Kantor – Iroquois Job Corps (IJC)  
Don Jablonski – Niagara County Employment & Training (NCET)  
Monica LaPoyda – Niagara County Community College (NCCC)  
Dennis Martinez – ACCES-VR  
Brian Michel – Niagara County Community College (NCCC)  
Bonnie Rice – Niagara County Workforce Development Board (WDB)  
Susanne Shears – Niagara Community Action Program (NiaCAP)  
Patricia Stovall - PathStone  
Michele Taylor – New York State Department of Labor (NYS DOL)

Guest - Jeannine Brown Miller - JBM HR Consulting, Inc. – WDB Contract Awarded PY22 (Incoming) One-Stop System Operator

Don Jablonski welcomed the Partners to the meeting. He shared that this would be his last meeting. NCET has been growing and diversifying, he is no longer able to devote the time to the OSSO role. The WDB issued an RFP for the position and has contracted JBM HR Consulting to fill the role for the next program year. Don gave an update on NCET programs. Since July 1, 2021 to present, 57 people were hired using WIOA funded OJT training, another 3 or 4 are in que so it is possible that by the end of June (the end of the program year) there will be 60 OJT recipients. 118 people received WIOA scholarships for training in demand occupations, with the potential for a few more by the end of June. WIOA Youth has another all-time high, of 98 youth enrolled. The NYS GVP grant now has 19 youth employed at 6 companies. As a reminder, these are people who live in zip codes selected by NYS that have gun violence issues. They are not people who have participated in gun violence activities or have a history. The goal of the program is 50 and Don is sure the goal will be met by the end of October when the program is anticipated to end. TANF summer youth is at 112 participants which passes last year's 98. Last week NCET held a career fair at Oppenheim Park, 58 employers and 203 job seekers attended. 203 is the most job seekers NCET has had since starting the Oppenheim Park Job Fairs. There will be another outdoor career fair in Lockport at the end of July. The first indoor job fair in over 3 years will be held in Niagara Falls in the fall. Don again thanked the Partners for their support over the last few years.

Dennis Martinez of ACCES-VR shared information about ACCES-VR. The agency works with people with disabilities and impairments. He shared ACCES-VR just had a Diversity Career Fair at the downtown public library in Buffalo. 30 employers and about 150 job seekers attended. They anticipate holding another in the fall. The fair held a steady stream of people and businesses seemed happy with the candidates that attended.

Michele Taylor of NYS DOL, manager of 4 local offices, shared that the offices have slowly reopened and have been seeing people. There is an in-person job fair June 16 at Northland Training Center with 50 businesses planning to attend and a waiting list of businesses should spots become available. Additionally, every month a virtual job fair is held by NYSDOL. Don shared that he has enjoyed working with Michele in a collaborative manner, and looks forward to working more with her team moving forward.

One Stop Partners Meeting  
Meeting Minutes – Zoom Meeting  
June 13, 2022

Brian Michel of NCCC shared that his office (Workforce Development) recently submitted a grant to NYS Department of Education to invest in building a simulation hospital on campus, and to renovate and update the Niagara Falls Culinary Institute. NCCC is also working with the National Science Foundation to submit a grant in October to level up with them. Brian shared that he has been tasked with creating a workforce conference for the area around December or January. He asked Partners to consider attending and/or participating. He shared that the event will be around the time of the reopening of the Industrial Arts Complex. NCCC wants to bring SUNY and the other Higher Ed's to campus with workforce development and make a strong showing locally.

Colleen Casali of NACS shared her program information with the Partners. She shared that NACS submitted a competition grant in May. During the pandemic, NACS started providing services to 17 counties in NYS. NACS has attended two career fairs this month and a college fair at Le Moyne College. The college fair allowed NACS to outreach to a lot of students, organizations and other colleges and was a great opportunity. Currently they have 23 active clients, about 5 are employment clients and the rest are students. One major focus is to get youth into school and get them career focused. They have been working with high school students ages 14 and older to get them into summer youth work programs, to guide them, and to give them the extra attention that seems to be needed. There are 20 pending clients who they are working with to get eligible and take needed steps to be a part of the programs. She shared that they have been also working with the Seneca Nation, who has their own workforce program but has limits to its program, to fill gaps and provide further support for their community members. She shared that they are also doing resume writing, soft skills training, job and career development with both the adults and the youth. Don shared that NCET will be doing Success at Six classes with the Summer Youth for things like how to greet someone, shake hands, be on time, appropriate work manners and more. Don offered to share the curriculum with Colleen. Colleen thanked Don and went on to share other ideas they had planned for the youth. She talked about encouraging them to volunteer and working with grouping certain ages together to determine needs and what to focus on. On June 22, NACS will be presenting with the Health Workforce Collaborative to demonstrate a statewide website geared toward health fields with tracks to education, employment, employer, job developers, etc. Everyone will have space to add their information to share.

Monica LaPoyda of NCCC with Economic Affairs, oversees pre-collegiate initiatives at the College, one of which is the Guided Pathways Projects. Much of the focus is on soft skills and her office is finding that the post-pandemic group of students are not ready for college, and if they aren't ready for college they aren't ready for employment. With grant funding, they have had a faculty member create a series of TikTok videos on transitioning to college. With doing some research, many industries are referring to soft skills as baseline skills. Monica shared that her office oversees the initiative at Trott to offer testing and remediation for individuals going back to work through WIOA funding, things have been slow but steady. This summer, another NCCC employee will be available in the building to offer computer skills and job readiness; if it's positively accepted by the community, then these topics will be continued. In terms of youth, they have been using the Ptech model with Niagara Falls City School District which has been very successful, and funds 25 students per year. Last year NCCC saw 44 students come into the program and still remain in the program. This year 61 students have applied and will all be covered. While the grant only covers 25 students per year, the School District has vowed to cover the other students and will result in free tuition at NCCC in Mechanical Technology. Monica shared that they are always seeking more employers for their Advisory Board; these businesses provide internships, field

One Stop Partners Meeting  
Meeting Minutes – Zoom Meeting  
June 13, 2022

trips, speaker series, etc. Don thanked Monica for the updates and shared that he appreciates NCCC's presence in the Trott Building. Don shared that NCET is trying to expand its partner corridor. Currently, NCCC and Job Corps make up the corridor but are looking to recruit more to create synergy and collaboration. He thank Monica for her continued support.

Patricia Stovall Lane from PathStone Corporation shared that their program year is ending and they are preparing for the start of the 2022-2023 program year. They are on target for their goals and will meet 85% of new enrollments, trainings and placements. They are terminating individuals who are not willing or ready to move forward. She shared they have received a small grant from Rural Risk, which has requested that PathStone provide farm workers or nonagricultural workers, who are rural individuals, with low income or no income, a path into the program and provide necessary job readiness services, paid training and job development assistance. They have also received a grant from Rework America that assists with career coaching skills for staff. Individual staff attended workshops and are now sharing their insights learning materials with other PathStones staff. The workshops have strengthened job readiness and developed new skills for staff to coach clients on looking for a job and how to secure that job. PathStones is also seeking to further serve youth and create job readiness service with PX2, as well as a summer youth work experience for 2-3 youth in the 7 offices they have. The Lockport office has already started with one of the youth and they will be a receptionist. The work experiences will be 4 hours a day, 4 days a week and they will be paid \$15 per hour. Patricia shared this is a creative way to serve youth that are in school, and a way for youth to share with other youth. She said that many farm working youth go to work in the fields, which is not a bad thing, but it does not set them on a career path that will give them opportunities to do something different. Patricia also shared that they have moved into the Bewley Building in Lockport, and are very excited to be there. Don thanked Patricia and thanked her for her passion to serve youth.

Suzanne Shears of Niagara Community Action Program shared they are a county-wide agency and provide many outreach services through offices in various low income areas of the county. Some programs include emergency services for food, clothing, budget counseling, house weatherization, and grants for home repair. NiaCAP also has a childcare resource and referral program, health and safety start up items for those who want to be childcare providers. They offer guidance for those that wish to become licensed or registered childcare providers. They also offer nutrition outreach and education with regard to SNAP benefits. They are a fair housing advocate for Niagara County, and also have grant funding for back rent, mortgage and utility payments for families throughout the county, as well as tenant and landlord resolution advocacy program. Families that come into any outreach office complete a needs assessment; based on needs, they network the families through the programs available through NiaCAP, or out to another community partner. They also receive other complimentary services. Susan shared NiaCAP's web address (<https://niagaracommunityactionprogram.org>) in case partners would like to further review services offered. Susan thanked Bonnie and Don for their support over the years. NiaCAP receives Federal and State aid, they apply for various grants, and funding from various organizations like Oishei, United Way of Greater Niagara and other sources. Susan also shared that NiaCAP, through a grant, has been able to give individuals at 200% poverty level a \$50 gas card to assist them. Don asked if the annual golf tournament will be this year. Susan shared that yes, it would be on August 8<sup>th</sup>. Susan thanked the partners for their support.

One Stop Partners Meeting  
Meeting Minutes – Zoom Meeting  
June 13, 2022

Bonnie shared that NYATEP, the New York Association of Training and Employment Professionals, will be coming to Niagara Falls for a conference on October 3-5. Bonnie shared the website ([nyatep.org](http://nyatep.org)) for partners to learn more about the event and register for the event. She shared that the event will bring in people from across the State including Workforce and Economic Development people. Bonnie shared with the partners that if they need a letter of support for any grants they are applying for, that she and Don are more than happy to assist.

Don introduced Jeannine Brown Miller, who will be taking over as One-Stop System Operator, and asked her to further introduce herself. Jeannine thanked the partners and said she appreciates the opportunity to meet everyone. She shared that she looks forward to working with everyone and enjoyed learning about the various programs and services today. Jeannine shared that she has an extensive background in organizational development, leadership development, coaching and human resources. She has served as the HR person for many small businesses, usually with under 200 employees. She also has experience with group facilitations and governance board work. Jeannine shared that she has well over 30 years' experience, loves what she does and loves working with the community.

Don opened the floor for further announcements. None brought forward.

Don Jablonski thanked the partners for their time. With no further announcements being brought forward, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by Don Jablonski, Director Employment and Training