

Career Services Meeting Minutes – January 19, 2023

In Attendance: *Carmela Albano, Wayfinders, Farida Bature, WMNEH, Kristin Cole, GCC, Bud Delphin, Mass Hire Holyoke, Shannon Doran, GCC, Jeffrey Hayden, HCC, Rosemarie, Freeland, GCC, Anne Kandilis, Springfield works, Aaron Oster, BCC, Judy Raper, GCC, Cindy Ray, Mass Hire Franklin, Deb Sarlin, BCC, Pamela Schwartz, WMNEH, Mark Watkins, Shine Young Adult Housing program, Pamela Wojtkowski, Mass Hire Berkshire*

This was our first meeting since May, 2022 – we had decided to take a hiatus and reconvene when useful. That time is now, with the passage of the Cliff Effect bill and the onset of the new two-year state Legislative Session.

Our discussion included:

- Congratulations on the passage of the Cliff Effect bill, which was included in the Legislature's final economic development bill adopted in July. It passed after 6 years of advocacy under the leadership of SpringfieldWorks and the Economic Pathways Coalition (amazing work!). The bill is a pilot project for 100 families (statewide) to address the "cliff" that occurs when employment occurs, income rises and public benefits get reduced, leaving the family farther behind. Currently, implementation details are in process. We will all stay tuned.
- In general, SpringfieldWorks is working on developing strategic approaches for better connecting individuals to training programs and quality jobs with the potential for advancement. Partnering with large employers to connect people to their training programs.
- Holyoke Community College reported that it is continuing to obtain new resources to develop new training programs, e.g., phlebotomy, EKG tech and more. Funding also includes support for ancillary needs such as child care and transportation.
- The Franklin County Opioid Task Force received funding for an initiative to serve 40 individuals who are in recovery and in need of employment; GCC is partnering with the Franklin County Dept. of Correction, the North Quabbin Recovery Center and the Task Force itself. GCC will be accepting referrals in the coming weeks.
- Way Finders is continuing with its workforce development programs, working closely with MassHires and the community colleges. They have started a new program to support clients in the post-employment phase. Over the last quarter, Way Finders placed 25 clients in employment and 15 participants reached over 30 days of job retention (and WF continues to provide follow-up support over a 2-year period).

Network Announcements:

Winter Walk: The Winter Walk to raise awareness and funds to end homelessness is happening on Sunday, February 5, at 9:00am –11am in Court Square, Springfield. It is open to all and covers all 4 counties. You do not need to donate to participate. You can use **Network 23** to waive the fee. All can register [HERE](#).

Legislative Session: The next Legislative Session begins on Jan. 20. Stay tuned for Network priorities – e.g., right to counsel in evictions, eviction record sealing, transfer fee for affordable housing – and please ensure you are subscribed to the blog for next action steps regarding legislator co-sponsors. [Sign up here.](#)

Network Annual Event: The Network is holding its 7th annual Network gathering in person (with a zoom option for the program) on Friday, May 12, 10:00am -11:30 am, at HCC Kittredge Center. There will be a resource fair aspect to the event - after the legislative gathering - to afford the opportunity for our key providers to network and be together. See the Save the Date flyer [Here](#)

Meeting schedule: we agreed to return to bi-monthly meetings until the end of the fiscal year (June).

Next Meeting: Thursday, March 16 at 9am