



# GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE COUNCIL

Governor's Workforce Council Quarterly Meeting: FY23 Q2  
Thursday, June 8, 1pm-3:30pm

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81685634196?pwd=Vzljc0NSeDZZVWoyMzVGakZlSjFldz09>

<b>1:00 PM – 1:10 PM</b>	<b>Welcome and Meeting Agenda</b> Mark Argosh, Chair, GWC and Executive Director, SVP Connecticut
<b>1:10 PM – 1:25 PM</b>	<b>OWS Report</b> Kelli-Marie Vallieres, Chief Workforce Officer, Office of Workforce Strategy
<b>1:25 PM – 1:45 PM</b>	<b>Governor's Workforce Council Strategic Plan</b> Mark Argosh
<b>1:45 PM – 1:55 PM</b>	<b>Governor Ned Lamont</b>
<b>1:55 PM – 2:05 PM</b>	<b>BREAK</b>
<b>2:05 PM – 2:15 PM</b>	<b>Introduction to the Breakouts by Strategic Pillar</b> Kelli-Marie Vallieres
<b>2:15 PM – 3:00 PM</b>	<b>Breakouts by Strategic Pillar</b>
<b>3:00 PM - 3:20 PM</b>	<b>Report Out by Pillar</b>
<b>3:20 PM – 3:30 PM</b>	<b>Final Thoughts and Close</b> Mark Argosh



# GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE COUNCIL

**Governor's Workforce Council  
February 23, 2022**

**Minutes are unapproved**

**Council Members Present:**

Amy Porter, Shawn Coyne on behalf of Andrew Bond, George Anderson for Brian Doubles, Chris DiPentima, Cindi Bigelow, Dante Bartolomeo, Ed Hawthorne, Erika Smith, John Murphy, Joseph R Gianni, Bethany Zemba for Judy Olian, Kelli-Marie Vallieres, Keri Hoehne, Leslie Torres-Rodriguez, Jack Maloney for Maggie Hulce, Mark Argosh, Michelle James, Monette Ferguson, Paul Costello, Peter Nystrom, Peter Salovey, Sal Menzo, Shane Eddy, Shellye Davis, Stephen Sullivan, Alice Pritchard for Terrence Cheng, Tiana Ocasio, Ty Talley-Rushing,

**Council Members Absent:**

Alexandra Daum, Anthony Medici, Charlene Russell-Tucker, Chris O'Connor, Governor Ned Lamont, Jay Williams, Jeffrey Flaks, Kathleen Silard, Leticia Colon de Mejias, Molly Kellogg, Monette Ferguson, Neil O'Leary, Peter Nystrom, Radenka Maric, Ray Pineault, Rohan Freeman, Sal Menzo, Shellye Davis, Suresh Muthaswami, Terrence Cheng

**Chair Argosh calls the meeting to order at 2:32pm and provides opening remarks.**

Welcomes all to the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter council meeting. Welcome to the council members, partners in the community, government, and business community. Mark shares that today there will be a few minor procedural changes. The first 10 minutes of the meeting will be used for General Business (Governor's Workforce Council Members) to conduct attendance and votes, after which the full meeting will commence. Argosh shared that the Governor's Office is reviewing the bylaws and will be administering new letters to all Governor-appointed members with beginning and termination dates. Mark let the members know that re-appointment is possible. Mark let members know that those who are serving on the committee by virtue of their position will not receive a letter and will remain on the committee. Mark also let members know that there are a few members still under review by the Office of the Governor, and as such their names will not be called for vote today.

**Chair Argosh calls the committee to vote at 2:34pm.**

Motion to approve December 8, 2022 minutes made by John Murphy seconded by Tiana Ocasio. No discussion 26 Yea, 0 Nay, 2 Abstain. **Approved.**

**Voting concludes at 2:40pm.**

**Chair Argosh introduced the poll feature that will be used throughout the meeting and introduced the first question.** The first question is "please let us know where you're joining from. I represent...". The results of the poll are included below:



**At 2:43pm, Chair Argosh shared the agenda for today's meeting.** Argosh walked the group through the agenda and discussed the role of the council in better coordinating workforce efforts across the state to promote cross-sector collaboration.

**Kelli Vallieres provided an update on OWS at 2:47pm.** Vallieres opened by welcoming the council and attendees and thanked them for their continued partnership and support over the last three years. Vallieres encouraged participants to use the chat feature to ask questions that arise throughout the meeting, which OWS staff will be happy to address throughout the course of the meeting.

**At 2:48pm, Kelli Vallieres introduced poll question #2 "I am involved in a Regional Sector Partnership (check all that apply)".** As individuals completed the poll, Vallieres introduced Tracy Ariel, who leads the Regional Sector Partnership (RSP) work for OWS and invited those who are not involved in an RSP but would like to be, to contact Ariel.

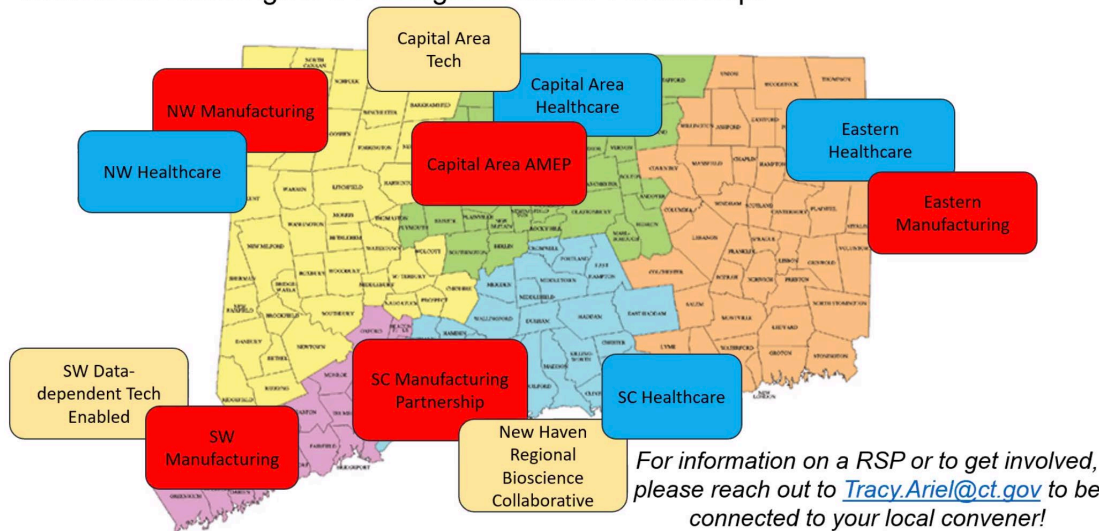




# GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE COUNCIL

- **Regional Sector Partnerships (RSPs):** Vallieres highlighted the RSPs across the state, providing an overview and their locations. Vallieres shared that OWS was awarded \$23.9M through the Good Jobs Challenge Grant, the largest award in the country. Vallieres discussed a recent Good Jobs Challenge convening in DC and the need to build a three-legged stool between workforce, commerce/business, and education to build out the processes necessary to provide the needed talent pool to fill the jobs in our businesses and to focus in a meaningful way on expanding the talent pipeline, reaching out to historically underserved and marginalized populations. Vallieres discussed that, during a recent National Governor's Association convening in DC, she was proud to see and hear that Connecticut is on the cutting edge of convening the workforce system across the state and is excited to continue being a leader in this work through the Good Jobs Challenge and the RSPs.

## Good Jobs Challenge & CT's Regional Sector Partnerships



- **CareerConneCT:** CareerConneCT is a \$70M ARPA funded project that allocated funds to 5 Workforce Investment Boards and 12 Community-Based Organizations to train and place unemployed and underemployed individuals in good jobs. The portal launched in November 2022 and programming began to launch in earnest in January 2023. Vallieres highlighted both Efficiency for All and the Building Trades Institute, who launched their programs first. Vallieres shared that 2,723 individuals have enrolled in the CareerConneCT portal. 1,525 of these individuals have completed their skills assessment and 1,035 participants have been identified and referred to Workforce Boards and/or Community Based Organizations for training. Vallieres shared that ongoing iteration is happening with the skills assessment, to ensure it is responsive. Vallieres discussed CareerConneCT's social media reach through the YOU Media Campaign, launched in January 2023. The social media has reached all genders and ages about equally. The campaign will be expanding to TikTok soon. Based on the geographic reach data, Vallieres shared that targeted outreach will be done to ensure all communities receive the messaging.
- **Bond Portfolio:** Vallieres provided an update on OWS's bond funding and indicated that OWS plans to use bond funding for the following projects: (1) Adult Basic Education for

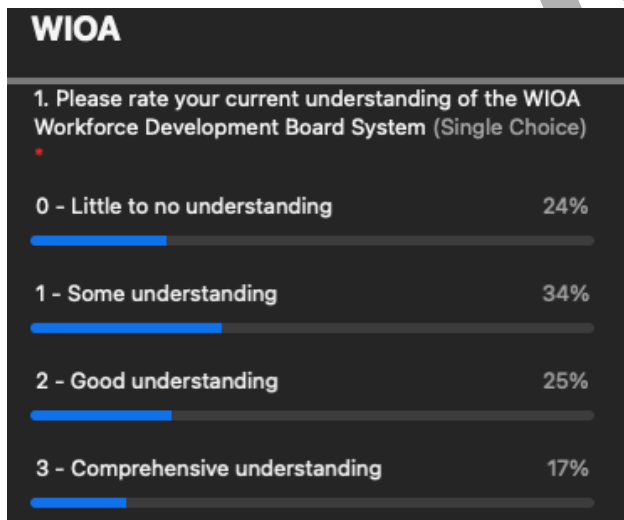


# GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE COUNCIL

adults with a high school diploma who are basic-skills deficient; (2) Transportation for adults post-CareerConneCT training in need of transportation supports for work; (3) Data Systems Capacity Building, to create a single unified reporting system, building upon CTHires and to add necessary features to the CareerConneCT portal; (4) Incumbent Worker Training to support wage gains and career advancements, while encouraging employers to hire CareerConneCT graduates; and (5) Community Outreach to support grantees in broad recruitment of participants through job fairs, community events, etc.

- **Workforce Summit:** Vallieres highlighted the upcoming Workforce Summit planned for Friday, April 21<sup>st</sup> 9am-4pm. This event is sponsored by CBIA, OWS, CSCU, GWC, ReadyCT, SVP, and Wells Fargo and will be focused on cross-sector collaboration, building the three-legged school discussed earlier, and finding opportunities for collaboration amongst the state.
- **Workforce Partnership Initiative:** Vallieres shared that Connecticut was selected by the Business Round Table to lead a chapter of their Workforce Partnership Initiative. The launch meeting occurred last Thursday, February 16<sup>th</sup>, at the Science Center in Hartford. Vallieres shared it was an exciting evening bringing together many partners and is excited for the work to continue. Vallieres shared a video with remarks from Governor Lamont discussing the Workforce Partnership Initiative Launch.

**Kelli Vallieres introduced poll question #3 at 3:13pm.** The question was “Please rate your current understanding of the Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA) Workforce Development Board System”. The results are included below:



**Kelli Vallieres introduces Mark Polzella, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Labor, to discuss WIOA and the Governor’s Workforce Council at 3:13pm.**

- **Mark Polzella** stated that WIOA provides the structure for our state’s workforce system and structure. Polzella indicated that Governor Lamont has developed the Governor’s Workforce Council as the state’s legislatively mandated Workforce Board. Polzella described that WIOA leverages the regional workforce development boards and American Job Centers (AJC) to provide underserved populations with employment, training, and education services that lead to meaningful career opportunities. The AJC Core Partnerships are shared across the Department of Labor, Department of Education, and Department of Aging and Disability Services. The WIOA state plan sets



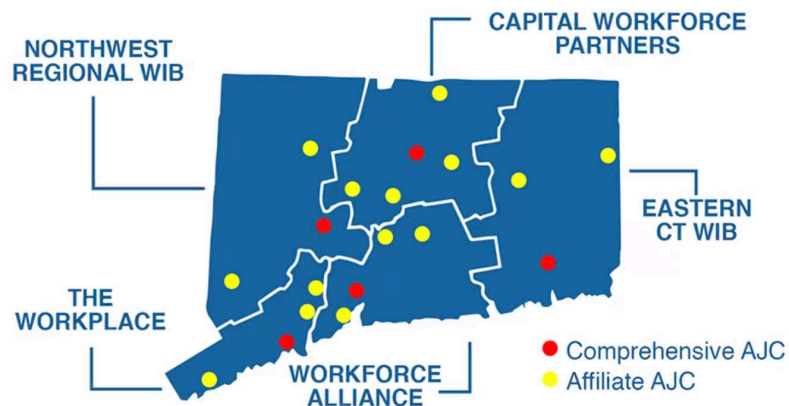
# GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE COUNCIL

out the Governor's vision for workforce and creates a plan for how various state agencies and services can and should provide services to individuals to achieve the Governor's vision. This vision and guidance also directs the local workforce boards to align with the state plan, not verbatim, but in a way that best addresses their local economic conditions. The state workforce board is also tasked with ensuring that state-level policies are followed at the local workforce board level and exists to provide support to ensure policies are understood and followed. Polzella highlighted that none of this work can be done alone or in a vacuum, and it is important that state and local workforce boards collaborate to ensure the best possible outcomes for those served by the workforce system.

**Kelli Vallieres thanked Mark Polzella for his time and description and introduced Bill Villano, President and CEO of Workforce Alliance to discuss Connecticut's Regional Workforce Development System at 3:30pm.**

- **Bill Villano** began by providing an overview of what local workforce boards are — private sector led and chaired entities that exist to help residents acquire skills for current and future employment opportunities and to support businesses in connecting to and hiring employees. There are 5 local workforce boards and 19 AJCs in CT, whose locations are below:

## 5 Local Workforce Boards and 19 AJCs



- Villano highlighted that the following programs exist at all the Workforce Boards: (1) WIOA; (2) Jobs First Employment Service (JFES); and (3) CT Youth Employment Program. A few examples of recent grant-funded programs at workforce boards include: (1) Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act; (2) Apprenticeship CT Initiative; (3) CareerConneCT; (4) Regional Sector Partnerships/Good Jobs Challenge; (5) US HHS Health Profession Opportunity Grants; (6) US DOL TechHire Grants; (7) US DOL STEM On-the-Job Training Grants; (8) US EPA Brownfields Job Training Grants; and (9) Community Project Congressional Direct funded projects. In the last year at the CT local workforce boards, about 48,000 customers were served, about 7,800 customers were trained, about 7,500 customers were placed in employment, about 3,000 youth received paid summer work experience, about 3,000 employers trained workers, posted jobs, or hired workers in partnership with a workforce board, and about 70 businesses served on the Board of Directors. Villano provided an overview of



# GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE COUNCIL

statewide collaboration amongst the workforce system prior to 2020 and from 2020 to present day, highlighting the continued work to build a strong, responsive, statewide workforce system. Villano closed by naming the five local workforce boards in CT and underscored the strong, responsive work they continue to do at the local level and collaboratively state-wide.

**Kelli Vallieres introduces the five CT workforce board leaders to discuss how their respective boards collaborate to ensure broad impact at 3:53pm.** Panelists include: Cathy Awwad, President and CEO, NRWIB; Joe Carbone, President and CEO, The Workplace; Alex Johnson, President and CEO, CWP; Guy Saporito, Chief Financial & Administrative Officer, EWIB; Bill Villano, President and CEO, Workforce Alliance

- **Cathy Awwad:** Awwad highlighted the cross-sector engagement and collaboration in their RSPs, one of which is focused on manufacturing (launched in February 2021) and the other on healthcare (launched in March 2022). Awwad highlighted council-member Molly Kellogg, a strong private-sector advocate on the manufacturing RSP. Awwad highlighted the future work in the RSP's to create youth pipelines into both manufacturing and healthcare career pathways.
- **Alex Johnson:** Johnson highlighted that even though the boards are five organizations, they strive to work as one to leverage one another's talents and efforts and best serve Connecticut residents. Johnson spoke to the collaborative grant application planning process amongst the boards that resulted in CT receiving a \$10M H-1B grant. Johnson noted that as part of their WIOA funding, they have targeted funding for Opportunity Youth, that they are excited to use to support this population with employment training and placement services.
- **Guy Saporito:** Saporito spoke about the Eastern CT Manufacturing Pipeline Initiative, which was launched in 2016 as a demand-driven system to align industry and higher education leaders. This model allows for industry-aligned teaching that prepares students for the jobs waiting for them.
- **Joe Carbone:** Carbone highlighted the Healthcare Career Academy and the need to train individuals to fill healthcare jobs across the state. Carbone shared that 80% of those enrolled in the program were on TANF and had a compressed timeframe to find a job and earn a career. Carbone shared that the data indicates this is a successful program and is excited to continue to expand the program statewide.

**Kelli Vallieres introduces the panel discussion at 4:22pm.** The panel discussion is titled "Advancing Workforce Equity: Promoting an Inclusive and Equitable Environment for All". The discussion is moderated by Anthony Barrett, Chief Diversity Officer, OWS. The panelists include Wes Alexander, Vice President of Workforce Solutions, the Travelers Companies; Mary Ann "Mimi" Haley, Executive Director, National Youth Employment Coalition; and Joann Price, Co-Founder and Managing Partner, Fairview Capital Partners.

- **Wes Alexander:** Described his role at Travelers is to ensure employees have access to safe and brave spaces to discuss their experience at work and any issues they may be facing. Alexander shared that Travelers focuses on creating ways to eliminate bias in hiring, compensation, and other decisions to ensure all individuals are being treated equitably. Alexander also holds time for employees to have courageous conversations to discuss things that are happening in the world, creating time and space to talk about topics including race, gender, religion, and politics in a way that has guardrails and is



## GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE COUNCIL

productive. Alexander is committed to creating these spaces so people can feel like they belong at their place of work.

- **Mary Ann “Mimi” Haley:** Haley started by responding to Wes’s comments, echoing that belonging is so important, particularly for young people. Haley shared that the National Youth Employment Coalition (NYEC) is focusing currently on Opportunity Youth, youth experiencing homelessness, and business engagement. NYEC recently conducted a survey in partnership with the federal Department of Labor to understand youth practitioners’ ability to respond effectively to youth mental health, a very pressing issue. Haley shared that the Youth Subcommittee of the GWC is working on asset mapping the youth employment programs across the state that has been sent to all the workforce boards and looks forward to creating a holistic view of the youth programs available statewide.
- **JoAnn Price:** Price stated that the thesis of building Fairview Capital was to build a fully inclusive investing model. Fairview felt that, to invest in diverse firms across the country, they had to have a diverse firm team. Fairview understands that talent is held broadly. Price shared that when Fairview started, there was only one diverse private equity fund, but since then, the numbers have increased. Price highlighted that Fairview gives their time and their resources deeply to their community in Hartford and across Connecticut and is committed to community engagement.

**Anthony Barrett thanks the panelists and introduces Commissioner Beth Bye, Office of Early Childhood, to discuss the Blue-Ribbon Panel on Early Childhood at 4:51pm.** Bye shared that the Early Childhood Workforce is experiencing an exacerbated worker shortage and the Office of Early Childhood has been working to create workforce pipeline programs and is excited to collaborate with the Office of Workforce Strategy. The Blue-Ribbon Panel will be comprised of about 20 individuals, representative of legislators, workforce, higher ed, human resources professionals, and others. The panel will create a ten-year plan with actionable steps, focused on equity and access to childcare, early childcare workforce, system effectiveness and quality, and the estimated costs of the system and funding alternatives.

**Chair Argosh thanks Beth Bye at 4:56pm.** Chair Argosh thanks everyone for attending the meeting. Chair Argosh looks forward to meeting in person on April 21<sup>st</sup>, 7:30-8:30am at the Aqua Turf, followed by a Workforce Summit 9:00am-4:00pm. Chair Argosh would like to hear any feedback about today’s meeting.

**Meeting concludes at 4:58pm.**