

**GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE COUNCIL**

**October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021, 2:30-5:00pm**

**Virtual Meeting on Zoom**

## **DRAFT MINUTES**

### **Council Members Present:**

Alexis Gevanter, Amy Porter, Andrew Agwunobi, Andrew Bond, George Anderson (for Brian Doubles) Charlene Russell-Tucker, Cindi Bigelow, Dante Bartolomeo, Ed Hawthorn, Erika Smith, Marty Guay (for James Loree), Jeffrey Flaks, Judy Olian, Kelli-Marie Vallieres, Keri Hoehne, Leticia Colon de Mejias, Jack Mahoney (for Maggie Hulce), Mark Argosh, Marna Borgstrom, Michelle James, Molly Kellogg, Monette Ferguson, Governor Ned Lamont, Neil O'Leary, Peter Salovey, Ravi Kumar, Rep. Toni Walker, Sharon Barr, Shellye Davis, Sue Figueredo, Surya Kant

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**Chair Argosh calls the meeting to order at 2:34pm** and provides welcome remarks. Chair Argosh reviews the agenda for the meeting and asks the council to provide resolution to approve the July 15, 2021 minutes. Marna Borgstrom makes a motion to vote, Cindi Bigelow seconds, no comment. Chair Argosh proceeds with roll call and vote: 20 yay, 0 nay, 10 abstention. **Minutes pass, 2:39pm.**

**Chair Argosh moves to the panelist portion of the meeting at 2:46pm.** Panelists will present on labor shortages and allow for Q&A.

- Marin Gjaja, Managing Director & Senior Partner, Boston Consulting Group - *State of the Labor Market*
- Josh Copus, Director, Jobs for the Future – *Job Quality and Employer Best Practices*
- Daniel Culberson, Economist, Indeed Hiring Lab – *Hiring Trends*
- Ravi Kumar, President, Infosys – *Expanding the Talent Pipeline*

Mr. Marin Gjaja discusses (1) the workforce challenge now and the future, (2) what business, government, and education can do, and (3) practical examples of these ideas in action.

Boston Consulting group is seeing major bottlenecks in the supply chain. There are real imbalances in supply and demand for talent. Perpetual DE&I gaps have been exacerbated by the pandemic, especially in current students, and students of color. Emotional, physical, social, and mental support is key to improving the low health of a post-pandemic workforce. The Future of Work needs to be reimagined, industries will be transformed by shifting value pools jobs, and skills, and the potential for technology transportation is huge, but could also leave millions behind.

Mr. Gjaja continues to draw analysis from data on the ages of participants, the future of work, the industries of impact, and the underpinned challenges of government, business, educators, and the individuals. Mr. Gjaja identifies (4) areas to target to reduce the labor market skills mismatch. These four areas will be Supply, Matching, Demand, and Skilling Ecosystem Enablers.

Josh Copus provides remarks on Job Quality and Employer best practices at 3:06pm. Jobs for the Future is founded on how to move with the shifting needs and expectations of workforce and recognizes that it takes educational institutions, employers, workforce boards, government, etc.

Mr. Copus supplies that employees are beginning to question the value of a job, which stem beyond wages. JFF is beginning to look at the importance of job quality and the supporting factors that weigh an employers' decision to stay employed with a particular company. Employers are more than ever authentically engaged to be in tuned with the needs of their worker and their communities.

Mr. Daniel Culberson speaks on hiring trends at 3:12pm. Mr. Culberson reviews various job posting data and changes since pre-pandemic. There are also still other factors impacting the labor force like caution over the pandemic and disruptions to in-person school and daycare, especially for working parents, could continue to complicate a return to the labor market.

Job seeker interest in remote work continues to climb. The trend line closely mirrors that of the pandemic. Job postings containing "remote" also has increased steadily since the pandemic but has experienced a small dip in 2021 as tensions around the pandemic climate had eased. Indeed is seeing solutions that employers are offering to increase recruitment: increase pay and base packages, offer remote work, ignoring a gap in service, and allowing for an uneven recovery period.

Mr. Ravi Kumar discusses the expansion of the pipeline at 3:23pm. Never before has there been such a gap between the jobs that are available and persons available to work. Mr. Kumar cites a recent study that nationally, 10.9 million open positions across all industries and only 8 million people available to work. Mr. Kumar states that the industrial revolution that created the linear workforce development (education to employment) has been disrupted by digital transformation, and further exacerbated by the pandemic. As many jobs move to gig work and work performed by machines, but managed by humans, the landscape of the work will shift.

Mr. Kumar suspects that work will be intertwined with education more closely. Hiring for degrees will make less sense than hiring for skills and hiring for potentials. This transition will disperse the work and will reset the diversity equation. Companies will move to internal micro credentialing. Connecticut has approximately 130,000 job openings and 130,000 individuals available for work. A comprehensive, dedicated reskilling infrastructure initiative could solve this problem and be in a better place than where we were pre-pandemic.

#### **Chair Argosh facilitates a Q&A with the panelists at 3:38pm.**

#### **Chair Argosh invites Vice Chair Vallieres to speak about the Office of Workforce Strategy's flagship reskilling program initiative: CareerConneCT at 3:55pm.**

Vice Chair Vallieres discusses the need to engage the marginalized population and how OWS will focus on a program called CareerConneCT. This program will currently invest \$110M in workforce training programs. CareerConneCT will release applications for eligible institutions to apply for funding. Successful programs should:

- Align to the in-demand industries (e.g., healthcare, manufacturing, IT, construction, etc.)
- Feature core services such as recruiting, supportive services, case management, job placement, etc.
- Focus on serving marginalized communities
- Demonstrate collaboration and minimize duplication across the workforce system
- Leverage the revamped statewide intake portal to augment recruiting efforts
- Demonstrate long-term sustainability measures and matching funding sources

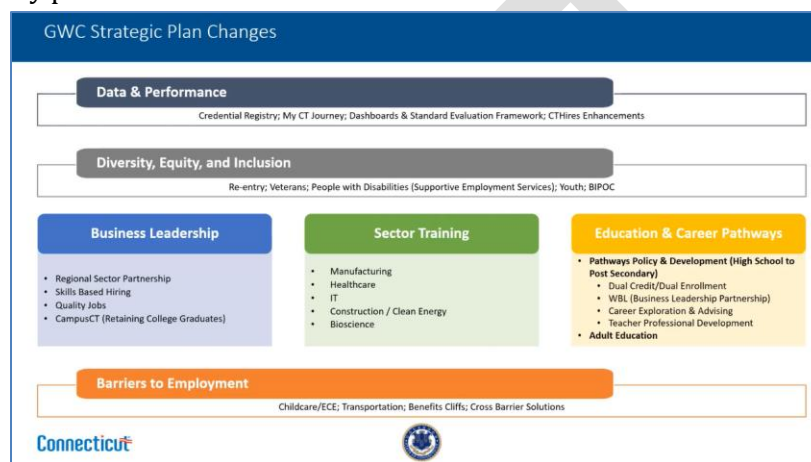
**Vice Chair Vallieres invites Governor Lamont to provide additional remarks at 4:04pm.** Governor Lamont reinforces the desire to keep talent in Connecticut. He continues to address the need for a qualified workforce

and a pipeline for employment. The Labor market is seeing a disconnect in skills and this is what CareerConneCT is all about. Governor Lamont calls upon the help of the participants on the line to continue to support and recruit talent.

CareerConneCT will be a short term training solution to ensure that individuals can get reskilled and employed quickly in the most in-demand sectors; manufacturing, IT, healthcare, etc. This program will also support individuals who have been traditionally left behind.

Governor Lamont proceeds with a brief Q&A.

**Vice Chair Vallieres introduces a proposed structure for the GWC Committees that now include a Diversity Equity and Inclusion Committee at 4:31pm.** In the spirit of continuous improvement, Vice Chair Vallieres explains that we should always be looking at ways to push the work forward in a more meaningful way. Vice Chair Vallieres reviews a reorganization of the initiatives and how to push the various action items forward in the fastest way possible.



Another major improvement has been around Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Vice Chair Vallieres thanks the group for the feedback over the last year that was provided and continues that this difficult conversation is an important one. We have strong leadership and steering committee that will support this work. This group will take a population-focused approach, while still understanding that an individual can fit in more than one category and that a cross-barrier lens would still need to be applied.

**Continuing to other progress on initiatives, Chair Argosh introduces Beth Berwick and Rya Conrad-Bradshaw from Year Up [Grads of Life] to discuss engaging employers in skills-based hiring and inclusive practices, at 4:43pm.**

Ms. Berwick doubles down on the needs for skills-based hiring, as discussed earlier by the employer panelists. 65% of Americans do not have a 4-year degree and the need to open up the hiring pool in an equitable way is imperative. Hiring a degreed candidate does not always lead to a higher performing employee.

Ms. Conrad-Bradshaw acknowledges the appetite by big employers to support skills-based hiring. The work of Grads of Life is largely focused on supporting the employer in making skills-based hiring decisions, practice, and collective impact.

Grads of Life request the help from employers on the line (1) to help be a champion of this initiative [skills-based hiring], (2) identify a community of practice participants, and (3) set up a meeting with the Grads of Life team.

**Chair Argosh welcomes Courtney Hendricson, AdvanceCT, to discuss another key initiative under the GWC to retain college graduates in Connecticut at 4:48pm.** Ms. Hendricson introduces the CampusCT initiative around college retention. CampusCT has been modeled after CampusPhilly, which has seen tremendous success. With this model, CampusCT hopes to increase retention by 5%.

Ms. Hendricson previews the CampusCT application that has a social media feel where CT's young, college residents can connect with events, content, student discount information, and cultural opportunities. Much progress has been made towards this initiative including employer, school, and community/civic leadership participating.

**Chair Argosh invites GWC Councilwoman Erika Smith to provide remarks on key work being done in the Bioscience industry at 4:52pm.** Councilwoman Smith discusses the Bioscience CT Collaborative and the need to focus on Bioscience Careers. The industry leadership for this initiative is working on a branded internship program specifically for CT that will recruit from a diverse population of college and universities. This internship program is intended to be an umbrella program with a common application and a common method for placing students in internship opportunities. The internship program will be supported with resume writing skills, employment skills, and other soft skills to support a student.

**Mr. Niall Dammando speaks about the plans to submit for a federal grant called Good Jobs Challenge that would support Regional Sector Partnerships at 4:58pm.** This grant opportunity is designed to get Americans back to work by establishing or strengthening regional workforce training systems to train workers with in-demand skills through sectoral partnerships.

**Chair Argosh Adjourns the meeting at 5:00pm.**