



## ***Workforce Solutions Year in Review***

***We would like to share with you some of the many exciting events that have happened in 2019!***

- *Welcomed new board members: Corine Christoff, Kimberlea Whiting, Catherine Bartruff, Buddy Franklin, Leslie Neal and Sarah Hayden*
- *Welcomed our new team member – Aaron Herzing as our Business Engagement Coordinator*
- *Hosted the Keystone Economic Development and Workforce Command Center's listening session for the central region. The intent was to share with the center what barriers job seekers, employers and workforce professional face in our region that they may assist with. We had a great turnout and everyone was happy with the results.*
- *Staff applied for and received Business Education Partnership and Teacher in the Workplace funding to implement programs throughout the region that bring employers, school personnel, and students together. The goals of these programs are to ensure that our schools and students are aware of the career opportunities in our region.*
- *Staff applied for nearly \$1 million in grant funding through Governor Wolf's PA SMART Initiative. The funding if awarded will enable us to collaborate with Economic Development Agencies to continue our Next Gen Industry Partnerships for Manufacturing, Healthcare and Social Assistance, and Building & Construction Industries as well as the implementation of Registered Apprenticeships and Registered Pre Apprenticeships.*

- Staff participated in several conferences including: the Second Annual Registered Apprenticeship Summit, Both of PA Workforce Development Association (PWDA) Conferences, PA Cooperative Education Conference, Appalachian Education and Workforce Network, Integrated Learning Conference, Chmura – The Labor Force Awakens - JobsEq along with several partners from our PA CareerLink® system. Staff served as presenters for several of these events.
- Staff serve on Local Occupation Advisory Committees for all Career and Technical Centers in our region – providing input on programs offered at Career and Technical Education Programs.
- Staff, in collaboration with several other community agencies, held the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual What's So Cool About Manufacturing Video Contest with 17 schools and employers participating! Staff also started planning for the 4th Annual Video Contest and have 12 schools and employers participating. Voting for the Viewer's Choice Award winner will take place March 2-4, 2020 with the Awards Ceremony to be held at the St Marys Area High School on Tuesday, March 11, 2020 from 9:30 am - 2:00 pm.
- Staff prepared over 100 requests for Labor Market Information from a variety of stakeholders including Secondary Schools, Post-Secondary Schools, Regional and County Economic Development Agencies. The Labor Market Information is compiled from sources such as JobsEQ, Chmura Analytics and Center for Workforce Information and Analysis and assists partners with grant writing, presentations and site selection.
- As a team, Workforce Solutions staff applied for and received \$430,970.73 to implement the PA State Local Internship Program (PA Slip) in our region. Eighty-seven employers provided 144 youth aged 16-24 with quality internship experiences.



- Business Education Partnership - Over 5,000 youth from preschool through high school participated in Business and Education Connection Events including but not limited to the following: Workforce Shadowing, Career Mentoring, Career Awareness, Industry Tours, Career Cruises, Businesses in the Classroom, Workforce Readiness Skills and Camp Exploration. A new method of engaging students was introduced this year - Staff are using Breakout EDU. Breakout EDU is a physical game kit and platform where students work together to solve various puzzles to open a locked box, similar to an escape room. In addition, Workforce Solutions purchased and provided several school districts with Breakout EDU kits.

- *Carl the career bear has grown in the last year. He has a few more videos available on his website: [www.carlthecareerbear.com](http://www.carlthecareerbear.com) and is also life sized to allow for increased interactions with students.*

- *Camp Exploration 2019 went so well that we are now planning for 2020 with the option of a second year program for returning students. First year students will follow the same schedule as last year with presenters and hands on activities. Returning students will be introduced to job shadowing, field trips to see procedures and researching of their career of choice within the healthcare and social services.*



- *Through Industry days and Career cruises students receive a first-hand look at careers in our region. They spend time with professionals at the job sites they visit to learn more about the companies and day to day activities that go on there. At Industry days, they are introduced to hands on skills these companies use daily.*
- *Provided assistance and support to our partners in their service to the employees dislocated from LEDVANCE.*
- *Exposed 140 employers to the idea of Registered Apprenticeship*



- *Implemented 4 Registered Apprenticeship programs with 3 different employers – 3 of these programs are the first and only of their kind to be offered in our Region. (Automotive Repair Technician, Certified Nursing Assistant, Licensed Practical Nurse)*
- *Exposed 14 schools to the idea of Registered Pre-Apprenticeship. These schools consisted of high schools, career and technology centers, and post-secondary institutions.*
- *Through in-depth conversations and collaboration with Registered Apprenticeship sponsors, we anticipate that at least 3 secondary schools will implement a*

program. (St. Mary's Area High School, Johnsonburg Area High School, and Ridgway Area High School)

- *Successfully implemented three Next Gen Sector Partnerships:*

**Manufacturing** – To date, we have held 3 meetings and had 26 different employers attend. Key initiatives that this group is working on includes bringing a Dale Carnegie Leadership Training course to our Region and creating a marketing push to promote Manufacturing and our Region.

**Healthcare and Social Assistance** – To date, we have held 4 meetings and had 13 different employers attend. On November 21<sup>st</sup>, we held an Employer and Educator Network Meeting which provided both parties a better understanding of each other's needs related to the workforce. More key initiatives continue to be addressed.

**Building and Construction** – To date, we have held 3 meetings and had 12 different employers attend. On December 5<sup>th</sup>, we held a "Hiring Event and Expo" which was attended by Partnership members and non-Partnership members, helping us to grow the Partnership further. Other initiatives continue to be addressed.



- *After evaluating key aspects of the workforce system, the Workforce Delivery System Committee recommended to the WDB that a full time Operator be hired. The partners agreed to increase their contributions to support this critical need. The role of the Operator was expanded to include all of the duties mandated by WIOA, and following a procurement process, the Workforce Development Board awarded Human Capital Consultants (HC3) the bid for this pivotal position.*
- *An exciting addition to the workforce system this year is the creation of the Workforce Navigator positions. PA CareerLink® Administrators and staff have long identified the lack of a full time staff person in the Career Resource Area as a gap in services and a missing piece in the referral process. Partners in the system again came together and agreed to increase their contribution in order to hire full time Workforce Navigators to fill this gap and thereby strengthen the system. It was decided that the Navigators would be employed by the Operator and that these para-professionals would be skilled, properly trained; and evaluated based on the number of referrals made to all partners.*



- *PA CareerLink® staff requested a region-wide meeting in order to meet and get to know each other better and gain more knowledge of the complex processes in the workforce development system. In response to this request, Workforce Solutions hosted a PA CareerLink® Partner Meeting at the Red Fern on November 22, 2019. Not only were all PA CareerLink® staff invited but all mandated partners and their respective directors were also. The day included an overview of the workforce system, grants, policies, and the MOU. All partners participated with many CareerLink® staff presenting their valuable program information. Feedback from staff was positive with requests to make this a regular event.*



***Workforce Solutions staff had a very busy and exciting 2019 and are looking forward to what 2020 brings! We thank you for your partnership and support!***