



Workforce Development Board  
County of Middlesex

**Youth Advisory Committee Meeting**  
**Tuesday, November 1, 2016 9:00am**

**Present:** Lisa Alexander, Lauren Balkan, Candace Crane, Victoria Gorman, Charles Hager, Jessica Hubbs, Gabriel Lavigne, Patrick Mien Mombo, Jose Montes, Ushindi Lewis, Dawn Lystad,, Naomi Vliet

**Staff:** Kevin Kurdziel, Julie Piano, Rick DeJesus, Janice Alexander, Nicole Montero, Shamara Gatling-Davila

**I. Welcome and Introductions**

Julie Piano, One Stop Operations Manager, began the meeting with the introduction of all present members and guests.

She welcome and presented Gabriel A. Lavigne as the New Chairperson for the Youth Advisory Committee. He is a Financial Advisor and Portfolio Manager for UBS Financial Services and was recently elected as the Secretary of the Workforce Development Board. He is also involved with Middlesex County Regional Chamber of Commerce.

Ms. Piano informed the Youth Advisory Committee members that Sandra Ciccone the new Supervisor for MCOWD Youth Program, was unable to attend today's YAC meeting due to her attending a conference in Chicago for the Youth Program. Ms. Piano stated that moving forward Ms. Ciccone will be presiding at the YAC meetings.

**II. Approval of Minutes: August 2, 2016 Meeting**

Naomi Vliet motioned to approve the minutes of the February 2, 2016 YAC meeting as distributed previously by email and Victoria Gorman and Charles Hager seconded. The vote was called and the motion passed to approve the minutes as written.

**III. Update on MC Office of Workforce Development Program**  
**Entry Level Internships Training & Employment (E.L.I.T.E)**

➤ **Statistics for the current Program Year**

Ms. Piano reported that for the first quarter of program year 2016 – 2017, the youth program has served 55 participants. She reported from June 30, 2016 to present, we have been informed by the schools that 49 students dropped out of school.

- **Youth Funding**  
Ms. Piano reported that the Youth Program received 17.4% less funding for program year 2016- 2017. Now 20% of the youth funding has to be used for Work Experience.
- **Youth Contracts**  
Ms. Piano informed the YAC members that Middlesex County College was given two HSE contracts for program year 2016 – 2017.
- **Industry Tours**  
The first Industry Tour for program year 2016 – 2017 will be on November 15, 2016 at Rutgers University. The second Industry Tour will be held at the Carpenters Union in Kenilworth on November 29, 2016. And the third Industry Tour will be held at Kinkisharyo.
- **Financial Literacy Training**  
Ms. Piano reported Financial Literacy is one of the fourteen elements which is required with the Youth Program. She reported that due to how important financial literacy is, we are making it a core presentation for all the youth who are entering into the youth program.

#### **IV. Update from Committee Members**

Mr. Kurdziel reported that Middlesex County, along with their region partners, completed the WDB Region Plan and submitted the plan to the State Employment and Training Commission (SETC) on October 3, 2016. He reported that Middlesex, Mercer, Monmouth, and Ocean County are now in the process of working on the WDB Local Plan which has to be submitted to the SETC by December 15, 2016.

Mr. Kurdziel will be meeting with the Warden from the county jail on November 2, 2016 to discuss the possibility of establishing an apprenticeship program in the landscaping field for inmates between the ages of 18 – 24 which will provide the opportunity for inmates to go thru training and have a job waiting for them when they are released from jail with one of several employers.

Mr. Kurdziel announced the retirement of Nina Rios-Rivera, effective September 23, 2016.

Mr. Kurdziel announced that Diane Seavers is the new Deputy Director, she was previously the Deputy Manager of Operations.

Mr. Kurdziel announced that Shamara Gatling-Davila is the new WDB Policy Analyst, she was previously a Career Development Counselor. She was added to the WDB Policy Analyst position due to State Employment Training Commission requiring that each Workforce Development Board have four designated staff members for the WDB.

Ms. Piano reported she will email the Youth Advisory Committee the description of the Youth Advisory Council.

Charles Hager, from MC Family Court asked for an update on his Memorandum of Agreement he submitted to WDB five months ago. Ms. Piano stated she will follow up.

Middlesex County Workforce Development has started using a new text messaging application called "Guide by Cell." Jobseekers, who wants to start receiving information about job recruitments or job fairs, can sign up by texting "workforce" to 56512. The jobseeker will receive a text on recruitments and events on an ongoing basis.

**V. Other Business**

Ms. Piano asked the YAC members if they had any suggestions on how the committee is going to be move forward and for recommendation on issues and topics the committee would like to discuss at the Youth Advisory Committee meetings.

Dawn Lystad, from Middlesex County Vocational and Technical Schools recommended that the Youth Program start highlighting success stories about the Youth Program.

Mr. Kurdziel reported a couple of ideas he has to advertise about the Youth Program would be to start a newsletter that will be mailed out to our regional partners and customers that would highlight participants who successfully completed the Youth Program. There could also be a podcast to interview participants who successfully completed the Youth Program.

Mr. Lavigne asked the YAC members for recommendations for employers to join the Youth Advisory Committee.

Gabriel A. Lavigne adjourned the meeting.

**The next meeting of the Youth Advisory Council is Tuesday, February 7, 2017**