

## WDB Youth Committee zoom meeting April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024 @ 10:00am

Bonnie gave updates on the 3 programs for the Youth:

1. The WIOA Youth Program has 77 youth enrolled. This exceeds the 75 planned enrollments for the year, which runs 7/1/23-6/30/24. The Youth Team continues to meet or exceed the performance measures.
2. The NYS GVP Youth grant ended 3/31/24. The goal was 50 youth hired, and 57 youth were hired. Niagara received an additional \$30,000 in funding to spend in the final three months, and we will be close to fully expended on this grant. There were 24 youth hired using a 90% OJT reimbursement, 33 youth hired in subsidized work experiences. 4 youth received other non-work related services: 2 youth received classroom training, 1 youth was assisted with transportation, and 1 youth was assisted with tools.
3. Niagara is one of 17 areas that have received an expansion of the TANF SYEP (Summer Youth Employment Program) to cover the entire calendar year. The new YEP Grant started 1/1/24, and we already have 31 youth in subsidized work experiences at 6 different work sites.

Dennis gave updates on the Niagara County Career Exploration Fair for students in grades 9-12 with disabilities to explore various careers with local businesses. This event will be held at SUNY Niagara campus on October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2024 with 2 sessions beginning at 9 am. There will be skilled trades participating in live demonstrations and labs, both inside and outside on the college campus. The Youth Committee will be collaborating with the Inclusion Committee on this project.

Dr. Cody Wehlan and Dr. Kyla Wagner from Alla Breve Consulting attended the meeting and incorporated a group chat and engaged us in the following questions for data collecting purposes.

They can be reached at [cody@allabreveconsulting.com](mailto:cody@allabreveconsulting.com)  
[kyla@allabreveconsulting.com](mailto:kyla@allabreveconsulting.com) for any additional input for data purposes.

### Alla Breve Consulting Questions regarding local workforce:

1. If a new business wanted to move into the area, what is the top benefit of being in Niagara County?
  - a. We focus on small businesses and are “welcoming, more personal, we try to focus on each trades specifics, to be able to enhance growth of said specific trade”. Niagara has a fully aligned economic development and

workforce development system and holds monthly Workforce Development Group meetings to ensure all stakeholders are aware of future projects.

2. What is the top priority for the region when it comes to workforce skills gaps?
  - a. Major workforce skills gaps include general work readiness skills and the mismatch between employer needs and candidate skill levels. Work readiness training and on-the-job training as well as classroom training are used to address these gaps.
  - b. Priorities are determined in conjunction with NYS Department of Labor's Labor Market Analyst to ensure we are addressing the needs of our local employers.
3. What work-based learning opportunities are available, such as on-the-job training, youth work-based learning, pre-apprenticeships, apprenticeships, internships, work experience credentialing for graduation for youth?
  - a. Niagara County has several programs that help gear young adults with on the job training skills to be able to get out in the workforce right out of high school. Also discussed were on-the-job training, youth work experiences, pre-apprenticeships and Registered Apprenticeship programs.
4. How do you anticipate and adapt towards emerging market trends and shift public perceptions about the skilled trades?
  - a. Training and ancillary positions will be needed for front line automated support. AI and Robotics will eliminate some entry-level positions. Concerned about how will this impact youth and those with disabilities who are employed in entry-level positions.
  - b. Increase youth and parent/guardian awareness of skilled trades and clean jobs (e.g., CNC Machinists) in the trades.
  - c. Registered Apprenticeships need to be more accessible, less paperwork for employers and apprentices, and not require wet signatures.

We ended the meeting and will reconvene next quarter.