

The WorkPlace
Board of Directors Meeting
June 21, 2024

Board Members in Attendance:

Brian Truini, UFCW 371
Clodomiro Falcon, SAMA
Cindy Rafael, BRS
David Morgan, TEAM Inc.
Dennis “DJ” Yaremich, Teamsters Local 1150
Frank Alvarado
Frank Ortega
Jim Lohr, Carpenters Labor Management
Jim Oddo, Executive Search Professionals LLC
John Loeser, CVS Health

Mary Burgard, Vocational Rehab
Mike Proto, Prestige Industrial Finishing
Nicole Russo, Microboard
Pablo Colon, Avangrid
Robert O’Mara, Griffin Hospital
Sabrina Mancini, CT State Department of Education
Thomas Coley, CT Community College
Victor Fuda, CT Department of Labor
Willie McBride, McBride Electric
Yecenia Acosta, CT Dept. of Social Services

Others in Attendance:

Adrienne Parkmond, The WorkPlace
Al Gopian, The WorkPlace
Alexa Williams, The WorkPlace
Alexandra Langston, The WorkPlace
Alfred Henderson, The WorkPlace
Ana Goncalves, The WorkPlace
Andrea Butler, The WorkPlace
Angela Jackson, The WorkPlace
Angela Thomas Graves
Angie Llanos, The WorkPlace
Anne Leskow, The WorkPlace
Arnold Johnson, The WorkPlace
Ashley Holtkamp, The WorkPlace
Ben Bissell, The WorkPlace
Ben Schuster, The WorkPlace
Brandi Johnson, The WorkPlace
Cal Glazier, The WorkPlace
Carrie McKeithen, The WorkPlace
Cassandra Irby, The WorkPlace
Cathy Patton, The WorkPlace
Chandu Avni, The WorkPlace
Charlene Lee, The WorkPlace
Chaylene Lee, The WorkPlace
Chelby Bragg, The WorkPlace
Chris Davis, CBIA
Claire Duvernay, The WorkPlace
Constanza Benzant, The WorkPlace
Cordelia Gomez, The WorkPlace

Corinne Harris, The WorkPlace
Cristina Alcantara, The WorkPlace
Cameron Dickey, The WorkPlace
Cyndi Garcia, CommuniCare
Daisy Tenor, The WorkPlace
Danielle Chiaraluce
Davonnah Monk, The WorkPlace
Dean Furness, The WorkPlace
Deb Oliver, The WorkPlace
Debbie Venditti, The WorkPlace
Debra Hansen, Valley Regional Adult Education
Dennis Proto, Ansonia Public School
Desiree Brooks, The WorkPlace
Diana Napier, The WorkPlace
Dominique LaCourt, The WorkPlace
Don Robinson, The WorkPlace
Donna Demattia, The WorkPlace
Dorcey Mvumbi, The WorkPlace
Dwayne Miller, The WorkPlace
Elaine Mucherino, The WorkPlace
Elizabeth Aceveda, The WorkPlace
Elra Harris, The WorkPlace
Ericka Christy, The WorkPlace
Estley Alicea, The WorkPlace
Fran Romano, The WorkPlace
Francheska Beato, The WorkPlace
Frank Biancur, The WorkPlace
Gloria Falkowski, The WorkPlace
Gloria Perez, The WorkPlace
Grixalix Rodriguez, The WorkPlace

Hailey Gerena, The WorkPlace
Illissa Torres, The WorkPlace
James Noga
James Shirvell, The WorkPlace
Jane Sikand Edelstein, The WorkPlace
Janet Williams, The WorkPlace
Janice Bruno, the WorkPlace
Jasmin Reyes, The WorkPlace
Jason Galassi, The WorkPlace
Jennifer Colon, The WorkPlace
Jessica Fitts, The WorkPlace
Joanni Rodriguez, The WorkPlace
John Szymanski, The WorkPlace
Jonathan Lee, The WorkPlace
Joseph Carbone, The WorkPlace
Joseph DiBacco, Ansonia Public Schools
Judy Garcia, The WorkPlace
Kapree Tripp, The WorkPlace
Kathryn Tuscany, Stamford Adult & Continuing
Education
Kayla Montanez, The WorkPlace
Kelly Mukisa Chemung, Steuben, Schuyler
Kimberly Hare, The WorkPlace
Kristina Testa-Buzzee, OWS
Krystal DeLeon, The WorkPlace
Lawrence Watkins, The WorkPlace
Leigh Roberts, The WorkPlace
Libby Johnson, The WorkPlace
Lisa Maloney, The WorkPlace
Lorena Perez, The WorkPlace
Lorenzo Brooks, The WorkPlace
Lori Burgos, The WorkPlace
Louie Reyes, The WorkPlace
Lynn Stephens
Maria Bartoli, The WorkPlace
Maria LaRoche, The WorkPlace
Maria Matarazzo, The WorkPlace
Mark Douglas, The WorkPlace
Mark Lazarus, The WorkPlace
Marlon White, The WorkPlace
Marrio Sarro, The WorkPlace
Mary Dunleavy, The WorkPlace
Maurice Douglas, The WorkPlace
Melissa Kaplan-Macey
Michae Morgan, The WorkPlace
Michael Gordon The WorkPlace
Michael Hayden, The WorkPlace
Michael McCarthy, The WorkPlace
Michelle Artis, The WorkPlace
Michelle Cruz, The WorkPlace
Michelle Hudson, Bridgeport Housing Authority
Nancy Hamson

Nancy Knutson., CTDOL
Nea Amaechi, The WorkPlace
Neil Anand
Neville Oberg, The WorkPlace
Nicole Brewster, The WorkPlace
Nygel Wynter, The WorkPlace
Pandora Williams, The WorkPlace
Phillip Foster, The WorkPlace
Priscilla Santiago, The WorkPlace
Randy Troutman, The WorkPlace
Ray Hodge, The WorkPlace
Robert Frost, The WorkPlace
Roberta Cemprola, The WorkPlace
Roxanne Chin
Saicha Griffin, The WorkPlace
Sarah Lopez (Murphy)
Savannah Nicole Villalba
Savoui Graham, The WorkPlace
Sean Fredriksen, The WorkPlace
Shaifali Kansal
Shanice Goffe, The WorkPlace
Shannon Rule, The WorkPlace
Sheila Steffan, The WorkPlace
Sheila Wiggins-Blathers, The WorkPlace
Shirl Watson, The WorkPlace
Stephanie Latha-Magee, The WorkPlace
Stewart Battle, The WorkPlace
Tamieka Butler- Afable, The WorkPlace
Teresa San Roman, The WorkPlace
Terri Williams, The Workplace
Thomas Powell
Tiffany Johnson, The WorkPlace
Tim DeMarco, The WorkPlace
Todd Seitzinger, The WorkPlace
Tom Goldenberg
Tom Long, The WorkPlace
Tracey Sampson, The WorkPlace
Veronica Rodriguez, The WorkPlace
Vianna Frias, The WorkPlace
Victoria Medina, The WorkPlace
Vincent Santilli, Homes for the Brave
Yusuf Hasaan, The WorkPlace
Yvette Garcia, The WorkPlace

Ms. Russo, Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:15am and introduced Vice Chair, David Morgan to moderate the discussion on Workforce Housing.

Mr. Morgan introduced the panelists: Lisa Tepper Bates, President and CEO, United Way of CT; Chris David Vice President, Public Policy, CBIA; and Melissa Kaplan- Macey, Chief Initiative Officer, Center for Housing Opportunity at The Housing Collective.

Our panelists engaged in a robust discussion about the challenge CT faces due to the housing crisis and shared insights on:

- The ALICE Report (Asset, Limited Income, Constrained and Employed) a national project using a data driven methodology to determine what it takes to live comfortably in any given place in America
- Maintaining housing
- Innovation and successes in the Workforce Housing space
- Stabilizing rent costs
- The impact of state and local zoning regulations
- The importance of communities that support Workforce Housing
- Potential economic benefits and investments for communities throughout our state

Mr. Morgan shared his utmost gratitude to the panel for their discussion.

Board Business

Minutes: A motion was made to approve the meeting minutes from March 15, 2024, Board of Directors meeting. The motion was properly seconded and unanimously approved.

Appointment/ Reappointments: A motion was made to approve the appointment and reappointment of individuals to The WorkPlace Board of Directors. The motion was seconded and unanimously approved.

WorkPlace Regional Plan: A motion was made to approve the WorkPlace Regional Plan that will be submitted to the state Office for Workforce Strategies to be included in the states plan. A motion was made and properly seconded to approve The WorkPlace Regional Plan. The motion was unanimously approved.

Presidents Report

Mr. Carbone began by thanking the panel and Mr. Morgan for his leadership in the discussion. He then proceeded to share that Governor Lamont has acknowledged that there is a housing crisis in CT. TWP will continue to do our best to bring the housing issue to another level since the cost of apartments is impacting our economy and the ability to create opportunities for our residents.

Tribute, Al Gopian: Mr. Al Gopian retired after being employed with TWP for nearly 50 years dating back to the original days of CETA. Mr. Gopian was an advocate for Veteran services, a reliable friend and someone who delivered results for the people that he supported. Mr. Carbone wished him well and thanked him for his extraordinary service.

Tribute, Synchrony: Synchrony was recognized by Fortune magazine as one of the '100 Best Companies to Work For.' Our Board member George Anderson is the SVP, Chief Learning Officer with Synchrony.

Synchrony has built a training center in Stamford that is available to the community to provide individuals access to higher education, skills training and financial knowledge.

Tribute, Matt Seebeck: Westfair Business Journal announced that Mr. Seebeck was a winner of the ‘40 under 40’ award. Mr. Seebeck is the Senior General Manager at The SoNo Collection in Norwalk, CT. He is a member of our Board of Directors and a frequent participant at TWP employer roundtables and huge supporter of TWP Project Retail training program.

Obstacles To Sustained Growth:

HOUSING: Connecticut needs 169,400 housing units for low-income residents. The lack of affordable housing makes businesses struggle to attract workers.

CHILDCARE: In 2023 the state reported 1,374 childcare centers, a 13% drop since 2010. Connecticut’s childcare industry has continued to shrink, shutting many parents out of the workforce.

SKILLED LABOR: Connecticut had 90,000 job openings in March 2024. CBIA reports that top executives claim the lack of skilled job applicants is the greatest obstacle to growth.

Our Response: We are experiencing a growing economy against headwinds of structural change in our labor force.

Our response will create opportunity for many individuals, ideas include:

- Identifying ways to access new talent and grow the labor force
- Leverage remote work opportunities to broaden the pool of job candidates
- Ensure that no one is left behind as artificial intelligence rapidly alters the world of work
- Engaging mature workers who can continue to be a part of the labor force through part-time assignments, job sharing, mentoring and retraining
- Focusing on internships and apprenticeship programs to create new opportunities for youth entering the workforce

We must explore the most practical and robust ways to connect people to jobs for the moment we are in.

National Labor Trends: The U.S. economy added 272,000 jobs in May. Employment continued to trend upward in several industries led by healthcare, government, as well as leisure and hospitality, which combined for more than half the job gains last month.

The unemployment rate increased to 4.0%, its highest level in two years. With labor trends reaching 4%, unemployment ended a 27- month streak of unemployment below 4%. This streak matched the longest such run since the late 1960s.

Who Are the Remote Workers in SWCT: 19.3% of workers in southwest CT are working remote in some form (full remote, or hybrid). The top three industries for remote work is: Professional & Business Services 32.3%, Financial Activities 19.6% and Education & Health Services 13.0%. Some statistics on the remote workforce include:

Gender	52.1% Men 47.9% Women
Median Income	61.3% earning \$75,000 or more

Generation	Gen Z 8.7% Millennials 32.3% Gen X 36.7% Boomers 20.4% Silent 1.9%
Education Education (cont'd)	Bachelor's or higher 79.9% Some college/ associate's degree 13.2% High School 4.7% Less than high school 2.3%

Unemployment & Labor: CT has fewer people in the labor force today than we had in February 2020.

	February 2020	April 2024	Variance
National			
Unemployment Rate	3.5%	4.0%	
Labor Force	164,546,000	167,732,000	3,186,000 (1.9%)
Massachusetts			
Unemployment Rate	2.8%	2.9%	
Labor Force	3,793,932	3,769,200	-24,732 (-0.6%)
Rhode Island			
Unemployment Rate	3.7%	4.1%	
Labor Force	574,293	586,200	11,907 (2.1%)
Connecticut			
Unemployment Rate	3.8%	4.4%	
Labor Force	1,937,900	1,911,100	-26,800 (1.4%)
SW CT (not seasonally adjusted)			
Unemployment Rate	4.6%	3.7%	
Labor Force	407,159	406,543	-616 (-0.2%)

SWCT Employment: Below reflects changes in the number of jobs by industry from April 2023- April 2024.

	Apr. 24'	Change vs. Apr. - 23'	% Change vs. Apr. - 23'
Retail	41,800	-400	-0.9%
Education Services	14,500	1,100	8.2%
Health Care & Social Assistance	68,800	2,500	3.8%
Financial Activities	36,300	800	2.3%
Manufacturing	29,100	200	0.7%
Leisure & Hospitality	42,500	700	1.7%
Professional & Business Services	65,300	-300	-0.5%
Construction	14,000	100	0.7%
Information	12,500	-500	-3.8%
Government	43,800	2,100	5.0%

Artificial Intelligence: A new 2024 survey of businesses by Mckinsey showed that businesses have rapidly adopted Artificial Intelligence technology.

Currently, 65% of businesses have integrated AI into some aspect of their business, twice the amount who said they were making use of it in a survey just ten months ago. In addition, a Gallup poll showed that nearly 25% of workers are worried their jobs will become obsolete.

The WorkPlace will be forming a Blue-Ribbon Committee which will convene in Fall 2024 to consider how AI impacts workforce training. This committee will research where and how our local business community is incorporating AI into operations, and document how our existing programs support training in this area.

Roundtable Conversations: Mr. Carbone has been facilitating regular roundtable sessions with workforce stakeholders. This is an opportunity to learn and improve relations with the business community.

During these sessions business leaders across various sectors discuss: Recruitment, training and retention challenges. Sectors include IT, healthcare, manufacturing, skill trades and retail.

Future sessions will cover AI in the workforce and challenges with childcare.

Platform to Employment: For over ten years, this program has placed 2,171 people into work experience with 90% moving on to unsubsidized employment. We have worked with over 2,000 employers throughout CT in over ten different industries.

Platform to Employment Youth: The Dalio Education research indicated that in 2022, there were 119,000 CT youth between the ages of 14 and 26 years who are at risk of dropping out of high school or being disconnected from the school system. This crisis will impact the future workforce in CT.

The CT General Assembly approved \$500,000 for TWP to develop a pilot for youth program modeled after our Platform to Employment (P2E) program. Funding will support training materials, support services, participant stipends, work experiences and evaluation tools.

P2E Youth will strengthen pathways to employment and contribute to the professional development of our future workforce.

Apprenticeship Program: This program has served over 453 participants in high-tech industries and healthcare.

Training offered include:

- Advance Manufacturing Training in CNC, CMM and Solid Works
- Healthcare Training in PCT, CNA, Phlebotomy, Peer Recovery
- Technology Training in CompTIA and A+

EnergyWorks & Renewable Energy: Over 40,000 individuals work in this field of renewable energy.

Through our EnergyWorks program we are focusing on training to support: Utility Line Workers, Solar PV Installers and Energy Efficiency roles.

The first training cohort is planned for September 2024. The curriculum is being developed with partners including: Avangrid, Eversource, CT State, CT Solar & Storage, and the Bridgeport Regional Education Partnership (BREP).

Driven To Serve 1996-2024: The overall growth since June 2023 is + \$16,961,831. There is currently \$37,174,642 in pending grant applications.

Cumulative as of:	March 2024	June 2024
Public Funding	\$330,201,326	\$335,971,210
Partner w/ Business and Foundations	\$13,772,052	\$13,848,331
Fee-For-Service	\$21,173,920	\$21,623,090
Total	\$365,147,298	\$371,442,631

Mr. Carbone thanked all Board Members, Community Partners, Funders, Elected Officials and all staff.

Adjournment: A motion was made to adjourn; the motion was seconded and unanimously approved. The meeting adjourned at 9:23am.

Our next Board of Directors meeting will take place on **Friday September 20, 2024.**

Respectfully submitted by,

Tiffany Johnson, Executive Assistant