



Mercer County Workforce Development Board Annual Report



A proud partner of the
americanjobcenter
network

PY 2022
(July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023)

BRIAN HUGHES ♦ COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Anthony Carabelli, Jr. ♦ Director, Economic Development
Virgen Velez ♦ Acting WDB Director

Special Events, Initiatives & Business Successes

Business Success – The Mercer County One Stop Career Center was approached by a recruiter for an employer who became part of Penn Medicine. They were rapidly expanding in Robbinsville, Lawrenceville, Monroe, Freehold, Yardley and were looking for medical receptionists for their growing offices. The company was willing to provide several weeks of extensive training to new hires. The company offers numerous pathways for advancement and job promotions from within. We worked with the employer to register to the DOL website- NLX. We also matched and shared information with our counselors and community partners. A Virtual Information session was held for the employer in May. We invited the employer to the Mercer County Job Fair. The employer reported 1 hire from the Virtual event and 1 hire from the Job Fair. They are looking forward to a continued partnership with the Mercer One Stop Career Center and scheduling new events for the fall.

Countywide Job Fair was held on October 26, 2022 with 91 employers in attendance. There were approximately 300 jobseekers. Also, a Countywide Job Fair was held on May 24, 2023 with 91 employers in attendance. There were approximately 500 jobseekers.

We continue to receive positive feedback from employers, jobseekers, and staff regarding positive results from job openings, open houses, & recruitments.



Success for One Stop Customers

Deserae Hale first came to HomeFront's Family Campus and Hire Expectations Program through Work First in May 2023, after facing homelessness and economic insecurity in Newark, NJ. Deserae had been employed as a restaurant server, but lost her job due to the pandemic in 2020. Prior to finding HomeFront, Deserae was struggling to find employment and safe housing for herself and her infant son.

Ms. Hale immersed herself in all the opportunities HomeFront offered. She was able to pay off traffic and legal fines to restore her license, connect with an orthodontist and other medical professionals, and enroll in post-secondary education. She has been able to move out of the shelter into safe and stable housing with her son while maintaining her sobriety.

During her time with Hire Expectations, Deserae began participating in a Medical Certification Program, where she received several certificates, including her Certified Nursing Assistant Certificate and obtained a competitive externship at Robert Wood Johnson Barnabas Hospital. Since passing her State Exams, Deserae is optimistic as she searches for employment in her new profession. In the future, she hopes to return to college and become a Nurse Practitioner. When asked what HomeFront has helped her achieve Deserae replied, "I just want to live with me and my baby. Being happy, free, and not depending on anyone. That means a lot to me." Ms. Hale has continued to inspire HomeFront clients and staff. HomeFront has changed her life for the better, and her story is not over yet.

YOUTH SUCCESS

Jaydah Brown came through YCC in March 2023 when our office was fully virtual and the Youth Career Connection was entirely on Zoom. From the beginning, we connected on the awkwardness of the Zoom platform. She came from a family of truck drivers and was interested in getting her CDL and becoming a driver too. Her Reading CASAS scores were exceptional, but her Math scores determined that she was basic skills deficient. She faithfully attended the Zoom workshops and raised her CASAS scores to attend training.

She started training in May 2023 and finally finished in November. Her road to CDL was long with several extensions due to the death of a close family member, quarantines and finally a car accident that totaled her personal transportation to the training school and further delayed her final credential from DMV. Through it all, Jaydah maintained a positive attitude and determination and communicated with her counselor along the way.

She recently accepted a position with Solterra on a recycling truck and started right after the holidays. She was excited that it would allow her to return home each night to her family.

VETERANS SUCCESS

- Army veteran was hired by Shoprite as a Customer Service Representative with a salary of \$18 an hour. Although veteran was hired as a Customer Service Representative with Shoprite, veteran is still seeking employment more suitable to their qualifications.
- Army veteran obtained employment with Rutgers University on May 18, 2023.
- Army veteran obtained employment as Contractor through a staffing agency in June 2023.
- Navy veteran obtained employment with the NJDOL as a Disabled Veteran Outreach Program Specialist (DVOP) in Perth Amboy in April 2023.
- Navy/US Air Force Reservist veteran obtained employment in May 2023.
- Army Reserve veteran, homeless, low income, no driver's license (suspended) seeking

- On February 20, 2023, veteran was hired as a Remote Dispatcher at \$15 per hour. He attributed his success in getting the interview and job to the customizing resumes discussion and other information from the DVOP and thanked her for her assistance.

Customer Flow

14,888

Total Customers Served* - An estimated total of 14,888 customers were served during this program year through June 30, 2023.

*The total number represents customers receiving services listed below. The numbers reflect customers visiting the One Stop on a daily basis, some of whom make multiple visits, i.e. WLL & Resource Room

- ❖ **WIOA** (training orientations, testing, career counseling, Workforce Learning Link)
- ❖ **Labor Exchange** (RESEA orientation, resource room, employability workshops, individual job search assistance)
- ❖ **Veterans Services**
- ❖ **DVR** (Division of Vocational Rehabilitation)
- ❖ **UI** (Unemployment Insurance)
- ❖ **WFNJ TANF & GA** (public assistance employment-directed programs).

*Occupational Training Services

	Served	Employed	Training Related
PY 22	21	6	15
PY 21	26	17	9 not employed
PY 20	10	9	

Common Measures Performance PY 22 (7/1/22- 6/30/23)

Measure	Target	Actual	Numerator	Denominator
Adult				
Employment Q2	51.0%	100% E (196.08%)	4	4
Employment Q4	50.8%	50.00% E (98.43%)	1	2
Credential	66.0%	50% E (75.76%)	1	2
Skill Gains	44.8%	0.00% NM (0.00%)	0	0
Median Earnings		Not Available		

E = Exceeded Target - 3 ♦ M = Met Target (Achieved 90% of Target) - 0 ♦ NM = Target Not Met - 1

Measure	Target	Actual	Numerator	Denominator
Dislocated Worker				
Employment Q2	55.0%	61.54% E (111.89%)	16	26
Employment Q4	52.5%	73.68% E (140.35%)	14	19
Credential	61.0%	63.16% E (103.54%)	12	19
Skill Gains	53.10%	50.00% M (94.16%)	5	10
Median Earnings		Not Available		

E = Exceeded Target - 3 ♦ M = Met Target (Achieved 90% of Target) - 1 ♦ NM = Target Not Met - 0

Measure	Target	Actual	Numerator	Denominator
Wagner Peyser				
Employment Q2	47.9%	51.97% E (108.50%)	1185	2280
Employment Q4	47.4%	52.72% E (111.22%)	1571	2980
Median Earnings		Not Available		

E = Exceeded Target - 2 ♦ M = Met Target (Achieved 90% of Target) - 0 ♦ NM = Target Not Met - 0

WorkFirst NJ Services

WFNJ TANF SERVICES (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families) includes Job Search, Community Work Experience Program (CWEP), Education Directly Related to Employment (EDRTE), Job Skills Training Directly Related to Employment (JSTRTE), Occupational Training, English as a Second Language (ESL), and Onsite Child Care Referral.

PY 21 funded agencies included: Equus, HomeFront, & Child Care Connection.

PY 22 funded agencies included: Arm in Arm, Catalyst Solutions, Equus, Goodwill Industries of Southern NJ & Philadelphia, HomeFront, Latin American Legal Defense & Education Fund (LALDEF), & Child Care Connection.

Mandatory participation was reinstated effective January 1, 2023

LOS = Level of Service (# of customers expected to be served)

Referral = # referrals made by case managers to vendors

Enrollments = # of customers actually enrolled (minimum 10 days)

Employment = # of customers that secured unsubsidized employment

PY 21 Performance = 1/1/22 – 9/30/22

PY 22 Performance = 10/1/22 – 6/30/23

	LOS	Referrals	Enrollments	Employment
PY 21	150	362	280 (77% referrals- 187% LOS)	43 (12% enrollment- 29% LOS)
	LOS	Referrals	Enrollments	Employment
PY 22	482	378	241 (64% of referrals – 50% LOS)	54 (14% enrollment- 11 % LOS)

*Referrals began 1/3/23

WFNJ GA/SNAP SERVICES (General Assistance and Supplemental Nutritional Assistance **Program**)

includes Job Readiness, Supported Work, Adult Basic Education - High School Equivalency - English as a Second Language (ABE-HSE-ESL), and Community Work Experience Program (CWEP).

PY 21 Funded Agencies: Catalyst Solutions, Trenton Area Soup Kitchen (TASK), UIH dba The Father Center of NJ.

PY 22 Funded Agencies: Arbor dba Equus, Catalyst Solutions, Trenton Area Soup Kitchen (TASK), UIH dba The Father Center of NJ

PY 21 Performance = 2/1/22 – 9/30/22

PY 22 Performance = 10/1/22 – 6/30/23

	LOS	Referrals	Enrollments	Employment
PY 21	255	171	141 (82% of referrals - 55% LOS)	14 8% enrollment- 5% LOS)
	LOS	Referrals	Enrollments	Employment
PY 22	307	351	211 (60% of referrals - 69% LOS)	31 9% enrollment- 10% LOS)

Business Services

POSITIVE RECRUITMENTS – There has been a steady improvement in the outcomes from Positive Recruitments. We hosted 8 recruitments, served 3,721 customers and have 35 hires through June 30, 2023. The number of jobseekers attending the recruitments has substantially decreased the average primarily due to a vibrant economy.

	# Recruitments	# Served	Hired
PY 22	8	3,721	35

Youth Services

SUMMER YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM (SYEP)

- 338 Applicants; 1st year in which every municipality was represented – the majority (58) from Trenton
- Our LOS was 110; 131 started & **109** completed the SYEP
- Of those youth with barriers – most of them had an IEP
- 86 were returning to high school; 13 returned to college; A couple were beginning the YCC track
- 3 were hired by their summer internship employer; 2 were extended
- **50 Employer Partners**; Overall great feedback from participating employers
- Biggest barrier this summer was the requirement of Covid-19 vaccinations required by some employers, which limited some offerings
- Top requested positions by youth was for camp aides and daycare workers
- Great weekly presentations during Friday sessions. Special Thanks to WDB members who offered their time and talents.

OUT-OF-SCHOOL (OSY)

The Mercer County Youth Career Connection Initiative (YCC) partners with business and with community and faith-based agencies to prepare young adults between the ages of 18-24 to enter the workforce. Under YCC, youth who are high school graduates are referred for occupational training followed by placement into internships. If youth are not appropriate for training they may be placed directly into the internship after completion of the orientation, assessment and counseling components. Youth who have dropped out of school are referred to Isles, our YCC partner agency.

Orientations for YCC

Virtual orientations are held the 1st & 3rd Monday of each month at 10:00 a.m. and no appointments are necessary.

Mercer County Youth Career Connection Initiative provides

- Program orientation and comprehensive assessments
- Career Counseling
- Occupational training
- Continuous support to the youth (throughout their program participation) and to employers during the internship
- Internship payments of \$15.00 per hour

Community and Faith-Based Agencies provide

- ✓ Attainment of a High School Equivalency (HSE) Credential
- ✓ Life Skills and Job Readiness Skills Training
- ✓ Case Management
- ✓ Stipends to offset expenses

Employer Internship Sites provide

- ✓ Internship opportunities for 20 to 25 hours per week for a period of 4 to 6 months
- ✓ Commitment to providing relevant, valuable work experience and mentoring to the intern to become a proficient and professional employee
- ✓ Conduct periodic performance evaluations
- ✓ Consideration for full-time employment at the end of the internship if a position is available and the youth has performed well and has proven their worth to the organization
- ✓ Letter of recommendation and the opportunity for the youth to utilize them as a reference in their job search if a position is not available

PY 22:

- ✓ **35** YCC enrollments:
 - **1** internship
 - **7** in training- 2 placements
- ✓ OSY Contracted Services:
 - **23** enrollments
 - **13** HSE attainments – 38%
 - **5** Employment/Post-secondary

**Youth Common Measures Performance
PY 22 (7/1/22- 6/30/23)**

Measure	Target	Actual	Numerator	Denominator
Employment/Education Q2	61.4%	100% E (162.87%)	20	20
Employment /Education Q4	58.2%	91.67% E (157.50%)	11	12
Credential Attainment Q4	52.7%	57.14% E (108.43%)	4	7
Skills Gains	57.0%	23.08% NM (40.49%)	3	13
Median Earnings		Not Available		

E = Exceeded Target - 3 ♦ M = Met Target (Achieved 90% of Target) - 0 ♦ NM = Target Not Met – 1



**MERCER COUNTY EXECUTIVE
DAN BENSON**

**MERCER COUNTY BOARD
OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

Kristin L. McLaughlin- Chair

Terrance Stokes - Vice Chair

John A. Cimino - Chair

Samuel T. Frisby

Cathleen M. Lewis

Nina D. Melker

Lucylle R. S. Walter

Virgen Velez, Acting WDB Director

**26 Yard Avenue
Trenton, NJ 08608
Telephone (609) 989-6824**

