



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Supporting the Development and Retention of a World Class Workforce

Jeffrey S. Swartz, Executive Director

Carl A. Donato Jr., Chair

Youth Investment Council Meeting Minutes Wednesday, April 22, 2026 via Zoom

ATTENDANCE

Name	Organization	Trustee Member	4/23/25	6/11/25	8/27/25	10/29/25	12/10/25	2/25/26	4/22/26
Roth-Gutman, Jill (CHAIR)	Roth-Gutman Law, LLC	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
Rosado, Joeliza, Vice Chair	Truist Bank		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Allen, Niquera	Social Responsibility Through Me					X			
Banks, Evangeline	Juvenile Justice Commission								
Boucher, Shaneka	Social Responsibility Through Me								
Boyd, Carl	Community Liaison for the								
Cirii, Frank	Camden County One-Stop	X						X	
Clark, Justin	Office of Adult Literacy (NJDOLE)			X	X			X	
Cooper-Vanderlip, Diana	e-Deuce & Associates, LLC				X				
Davis, Rodney	Turner Construction		X		X	X			X
Floyd, Kwame	Teacher Apprenticeship								
Green Aurella	Camden County College					X		X	
Godorov, Lori	The Work Group	X							X
Gorman, Ginger	Winslow Township High School						X		
Jenkins, Marcell	Winslow Township High School							X	X
Johnson-Williams, Melody	Camden Housing Authority								X
Maguire, Laurie	Camden County One-Stop		X						
Nobles, Shaniqua	CPAC								
Peterson, Jyi	Camden County One-Stop		X				X	X	X
Pilla, Michele	Wholesome Riches				X				
Randall, Angela	Strength in Surviving		X		X	X	X	X	X
Selby, Andrew	CPAC								
Smith, Quaison	Social Responsibility Through Me					X			X
Velasquez, Gil	Superior Court of New Jersey			X	X	X	X		X
Richelle Hardison	WDB				X				
Swartz, Jeffrey S.	WDB		X		X	X	X	X	X
Vaughn, Debra	WDB		X	X		X	X	X	X

WELCOME

Jill Roth-Gutman, Youth Committee Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:35AM and asked for a motion to approve the minutes from February 25, 2026. Motion was made by Joeliza Rosado, seconded by Angela Randall. By a majority vote to the affirmative, the minutes were approved.

YOUTH FOCUS GROUP INITIATIVE - CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS

Current Participation Issues

Angela and Gil, co-chairs of the youth advisory board subcommittee, reported significant challenges in recruiting youth participants:

- Distributed over 40 invitations for the recent Cherry Hill focus group meeting
- Only one young adult attended the session despite extensive outreach efforts
- Multiple outreach methods were attempted, including flyer distribution and attendance at community events
- Gil expressed disappointment about the low turnout given the substantial planning effort invested



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Supporting the Development and Retention of a World Class Workforce

Jeffrey S. Swartz, Executive Director

Carl A. Donato Jr., Chair

Proposed Solutions and Strategies

The committee discussed several approaches to improve youth participation:

- Engage parents and guardians directly to encourage youth involvement
- Address transportation barriers that may prevent youth attendance
- Leverage existing partner networks to reach youth from diverse backgrounds, including those involved with probation services and experiencing homelessness
- Ensure diverse representation across different youth populations

Incentives and Benefits Discussion

Lori raised important questions about participant compensation and support:

- Food: Confirmed that meals will be provided at focus group meetings
- Stipends: Currently not available due to funding constraints
- Alternative Benefits: Leadership training opportunities, reference letters for college/employment applications, and certificates of completion
- Jill suggested that detailed stipend discussions should occur in private meetings to avoid derailing the main agenda

Communication and Distribution

The committee addressed logistical issues with information sharing:

- Established that future communications should be sent to Deb for distribution to the full committee
- Gil committed to adding Lori to the youth focus group distribution list and sending updated flyers
- Angela and Gil will send the complete schedule of upcoming focus group meetings to all committee members

SUMMER YOUTH WORK EXPERIENCE PROGRAM

Program Scope and Funding

Jeffrey provided a comprehensive update on the summer employment initiative:

- Total Positions: 73 slots secured (reduced from the original request of 100)
- Funding Sources:
 - 50 positions funded through Atlantic City Electric grant
 - 23 positions funded by state allocation (reduced due to budget constraints)
- Eligibility: Camden County residents aged 16-24
- Program Management: Aspire Youth hired to handle day-to-day operations, application processing, and site coordination

Program Administration

Key operational details were shared:

- Applications and worksite agreements are available on the program website
- Aspire Youth will manage daily activities to reduce staff workload
- The program aims to streamline the placement process and improve coordination between youth participants and work sites



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Supporting the Development and Retention of a World Class Workforce

Jeffrey S. Swartz, Executive Director

Carl A. Donato Jr., Chair

MATCHMAKING INITIATIVE PROPOSAL

Jill proposed an innovative approach to maximize placement opportunities:

- Create a matchmaking system to connect strong applicants who don't receive funded positions with employers who may have additional openings
- This would help qualified youth find employment even if they aren't selected for the funded program
- Committee feedback was requested on implementing this concept

CAMDEN CITY SUMMER YOUTH PROGRAM

Program Details

The committee discussed a separate municipal program targeting younger participants:

- Target Population: Camden City residents aged 14-17
- Work Hours: Up to 20 hours per week
- Wage Rate: \$15 per hour
- Application Deadline: May 1st

Coordination Efforts

Melody volunteered to serve as the liaison for this program:

- Will reach out to the Camden Mayor's office to confirm program details
- Will share findings with Jill and Deb
- Will circulate comprehensive information to the full committee once received

YOUTH ONE STOP PROGRAM UPDATE

Performance Metrics

Jyi reported impressive progress for the Youth One Stop program:

- Eligibility Completions: Approximately 200 youth since July
- Occupational Training Placements: Over 30 participants
- Credential Attainment: About 75% of participants obtaining credentials
- Active Participants: 17 currently enrolled
- Waiting List: 30 individuals awaiting program entry

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY THROUGH ME - JOB FAIR AND SUPPORT SERVICES

September Job Fair

Quaison presented information about an upcoming employment event:

- Event Type: Work-ready job fair
- Timing: September 11th (date to be confirmed)
- Location: Riletta Camden County Library/Riletta L. Cream/Ferry Avenue Branch
- Purpose: Connect motivated youth with potential employers
- Target Audience: Youth prepared for immediate employment opportunities



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Supporting the Development and Retention of a World Class Workforce

Jeffrey S. Swartz, Executive Director

Carl A. Donato Jr., Chair

Preparation and Support Services

The organization offers ongoing support to prepare youth for employment:

- Mock Interviews: Weekly virtual sessions to practice interview skills
- Resume Support: Assistance with resume development and refinement
- Sign-up Process: Links shared in meeting chat for easy registration
- Accessibility: Virtual format allows broader participation

Committee Involvement Opportunities

Quaison invited committee members to participate in multiple ways:

- Volunteer at the job fair
- Share employer contacts who might be interested in hiring youth
- Promote the event and preparation services through their networks
- Distribute job fair flyers once available

ADDITIONAL COMMUNITY EVENTS

Debra mentioned a potential collaboration opportunity:

- Macedonia AME Church will host a community event in July
- The event information will be shared with Quaison and the full committee once received

COUNTY-WIDE EVENTS

Jeff announced various county-sponsored events:

- Multiple job fairs scheduled throughout the county
- Committee members invited to participate or promote their organizations
- Opportunities to distribute materials and connect with youth

MEETING SCHEDULE ADJUSTMENT

The committee addressed scheduling conflicts quarterly board meeting and made adjustments:

- Original Date: June 24th
- Rescheduled To: July 22nd at 10:30AM
- Reason: Scheduling conflicts with multiple committee members
- Location: Camden County College
- Jeffrey agreed to lead the meeting despite staff being occupied with summer programs

Meeting Agenda Items

The July meeting will include:

- Election of officers
- Review of summer program progress
- Additional business as needed

Communication Updates

Administrative tasks to ensure proper notification:

- The WDB website will be updated with the new meeting date



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Supporting the Development and Retention of a World Class Workforce

Jeffrey S. Swartz, Executive Director

Carl A. Donato Jr., Chair

- The date change will be highlighted in all committee communications

ACTION ITEMS SUMMARY

Communication and Coordination:

- Gil and Angela: Distribute complete focus group meeting schedule to all committee members
- Gil: Add Lori to distribution list and send updated materials
- Quaison: Share job fair flyers and sign-up links when available

Network Promotion:

- All committee members: Promote Summer Youth Work Experience Program through their networks
- All committee members: Share information about youth focus group meetings
- All interested members: Volunteer for or support the September job fair
- All interested members: Share employer contacts for youth employment opportunities

The committee acknowledged several ongoing obstacles:

- Youth Engagement: Difficulty attracting youth to focus group meetings despite extensive outreach
- Funding Limitations: Reduced program capacity (73 vs. 100 positions) and inability to offer stipends for focus group participation
- Transportation Barriers: Access issues preventing youth from attending meetings and programs
- Communication Gaps: Need for improved information distribution systems

Several promising opportunities for growth were identified:

- Parent Engagement: Involving guardians could significantly improve youth participation
- Matchmaking System: Potential to place more youth in employment beyond funded positions
- Partnership Expansion: Growing network of employers and community organizations
- Preparation Services: Mock interviews and resume support to improve youth employment readiness
- Program Coordination: Better alignment between county and municipal youth employment initiatives

Priorities for committee focus:

- Increasing youth participation in focus groups through innovative engagement strategies
- Maximizing employment opportunities for youth through both funded and unfunded placements
- Strengthening partnerships with employers and community organizations
- Improving communication and coordination across all youth-serving programs
- Preparing youth for long-term employment success through skills development and support services

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- May 1st: Application deadline for Camden City summer youth program
- June 17th: Next quarterly board meeting at Camden County College/Blackwood Campus
- September 11th: Job fair at Camden County Library/Riletta L. Cream/Ferry Avenue Branch.



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Supporting the Development and Retention of a World Class Workforce

Jeffrey S. Swartz, Executive Director

Carl A. Donato Jr., Chair

ADJOURNMENT

Motion was adjourn made by Angela Randall, seconded by Jyi Peterson. By majority vote to the affirmative, the meeting adjourned at 11:35AM.

The next Youth Investment Committee Meeting will be held on July 22, 2026 at 10:30AM on ZOOM.

The next quarterly Board of Trustees meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 17th at Camden County College/Blackwood Campus, Roosevelt Hall/Room 102 at 8:30AM. Breakfast will be served.

Respectfully submitted by: Debra Vaughn, Executive Assistant