

CAREER SOLUTIONS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

YOUTH COUNCIL AGENDA

Tuesday, May 13, 2025 at 3:00 pm

Career Solutions – Guest WiFi: Welcome2CareerSolutions!

Physical Location: CareerForce St. Cloud
1542 Northway Drive, St. Cloud, MN 56303 – Door #2
No parking permit required for this event. Please park in Lot B.

Virtual Meeting: Zoom details are listed within your calendar invite or contact Karen Schlangen (320) 308-5818.

1. Introduction/Roll Call

L. Engel

2. Approve Agenda

ACTION: L. Engel

3. Approve Consent Agenda

ACTION: L. Engel

- A. Meeting Minutes from Brainstorm Session 250114 (Attachment 3.A.)
- B. Approve Application from Kevin Warzecha, Kids Fighting Hunger (Attachment 3.B.)

4. Presenter – Samantha Larson, Pathways for Youth

S. Larson

5. Discussion Items

T. Stark

- A. Open House – April 10, 2025 (65 Job Seekers)
- B. Career Lab – Two new hires
- C. CareerONE Update
- D. Upcoming Events/Recap (Attachment 5.D.)
 - Welding Discovery Day – 05/01//25
 - Reverse Job Fair – 05/07/25
 - CDL Discovery – 06/11/25

6. Information/ Other

L. Engel

- A. Next Youth Council Meeting – CareerONE VIP Day – July 8, 2025
- B. From the Floor
- C. Upcoming Presentation - TBD
- D. Announcements /Other

7. Adjourn

L. Engel

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS: ALL CAREER SOLUTIONS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD/COMMITTEE MEETINGS ARE ACCESSIBLE TO THE HANDICAPPED. ATTEMPTS WILL BE MADE TO ACCOMMODATE ANY OTHER INDIVIDUAL NEED FOR SPECIAL SERVICES. PLEASE CONTACT ADA/AA COORDINATOR TAMMY BIERY AT (320)266-5060 AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE SO NECESSARY ARRANGEMENTS CAN BE MADE. INDIVIDUALS WITH HEARING OR SPEECH DISABILITIES MAY CONTACT US VIA THEIR PREFERRED TELECOMMUNICATIONS RELAY SERVICE. THE WORKFORCE CENTER DOES NOT DISCRIMINATE ON THE BASIS OF RACE, COLOR, CREED, RELIGION, NATIONAL ORIGIN, GENDER, MARITAL STATUS, STATUS WITH REGARD TO PUBLIC ASSISTANCE, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, DISABILITY, OR AGE.

Combined Board Meeting with Friends of Career Solutions, Program Committee, and Youth Council Meeting Minutes

Date Monday, January 13, 2025, at 3:00pm
Location: 1542 Northway Drive, St. Cloud, MN 56303
Present: *David Borgert (Chair), & *Tammy Biery.
Absent: Dominique Hollomon, *Jama Alimad, & Crystal Lahr.
Guests: **Career Solutions Staff:** *Kari Court, Jacob Kaduk, Karen Schlangen, Nour Mohamed, Trisha Welle, Angela Schmitz, & Ann Meline.
Program Committee Members: David Borgert, & Karen Pundsack.
Youth Council Members: Les Engel, Mary Swingle, Gail Cruikshank, Melanie Legatt, Ann Matvick, Christa Martin, Sarah Ware, and Emily Davis.

** = In person attendance.*

Call the meeting to order – Borgert called the meeting to order at 3:03pm. Introduction made.

Brainstorming Outreach for CareerONE 2025

- Biery started the brainstorming portion of the meeting by offering a few ideas to get started. Those ideas included meet with new local mayors, continue to work to find data about what happens after CareerONE, Talk to the Interact High School Group, Connect with Granite Equity Partners, and Connect with Blattner. Going on to say that communication with each of these parties can go a long way both in the way of getting the word out and possible help moving the program forward.
- Biery then brings up CentraCare, saying that they are and have been a sponsor for some time, and have a lot of connections due to their presence in the community. Continuing by saying that there is a possibility that CentraCare could help connect CareerONE to investors for the youth program much like they've done in the past.
- Swingle speaks up next, saying that the Boys & Girls Club has seen an increase in things opening for youth programs. This change has only occurred in the past six weeks, but Swingle is optimistic about the foreseeable future.
- Borgert then speaks, saying that the board should proceed under the assumption that they have the resources in the community to get CareerONE done, whether it be staffing help or outright donations from the community. Continuing by saying that the motivation and wherewithal to put on CareerONE, in the community, is stronger than ever.
- Engel agrees and says that it would just take some time to get everybody in the community the message.
- Cruikshank then brings up a foundation that Brian Meyers is a part of, saying that they have been a big sponsor for EPIC for many years, and getting in contact with them could benefit CareerONE greatly. They have an easy application process and could give up to \$10,000. Borgert then says that the same

foundation has also worked with SCTCC, giving two million dollars in funding for first-generation students, continuing by saying that CareerONE works with the same type of clients; kids who don't have access to learning outside of specific learning environments.

- While CareerONE is put on by grant-funded companies, CareerONE as a program goes above and beyond the normally funded workload. That is to say that there is a bit of a disconnect for potential sponsors when asked if they would be willing to donate. Borgert saying that there is some general confusion as to where Career Solutions begins and ends. CareerONE would only consist of about 40-50 students if it was solely based off public funding. Private funding allows the program to reach more kids covering a wider range in location. So, the focus should be informing the community how CareerONE is different from Career Solutions and operates on its own private budget.
- Biery then says that the goal is to raise about \$250,000. Kaduk mentions that the CareerONE story needs to be shared with potential sponsors and that fundraising in a sense is a form of storytelling. Past fundraising techniques included what is known as a road show, where CentraCare has introduced business vendors/partners to Biery and assists in explaining the story and mission of the program, in hopes to secure funding from companies that agree with the mission.
- Pundsack then offers a few potential investors that might be worth talking to, those being Stearns Electric, Excel, and USDA Rural. EPIC has connections with Xcel, and they have been doing a lot of work to increase their donations in the Saint Cloud area. Data is also being collected on whether students that have gone through EPIC are staying within the Saint Cloud area. This data could also be used to determine the amount of youth at specific schools that could have and/or did attend CareerONE.
- Borgert then goes on to say that referrals come in from the schools, and the CareerONE target demographic is those that are at risk and/or have behavioral/academic issues. Also saying that data could serve as the ultimate bargaining chip going forward. Data has already been collected on the reading and math skills of CareerONE students at the beginning and end of the program. The questions becomes whether the same kids that show improvements are continuing to improve when the next school year comes around.
- Kaduk then says that many of the youth that sign up for CareerONE just recently turned 14, and waiting to see if these at-risk youth are able graduate with any thanks to the program takes some serious time. He does however say that if they could find a way to see how the grades change by the students from one year to next, that has the potential increase support greatly.
- Engel then brings up the point that the parents of the attending youth could be the key to success, in past years he was able to talk with many parents and the stories he heard could go a long way in terms of motivating potential investors.
- Career Solutions conducts surveys and some have been filled out by parents in recent years, but the testimonials heard in person have subsided since covid. An idea is then raised about whether a few of the youth that show the largest leaps in terms of academics or leadership, could be treated to a breakfast with their parents. At these meetings, CareerONE staff would be able tell the parents how

great their child has been throughout the program, but also be able to ask about if their child has shown improvements outside of CareerONE.

- A point is then raised that CareerONE already has access to some of the school records of participating youth and contact with the schools is established. So, future CareerONE applications could include something that gives Career Solutions access to periodically checking the grades of CareerONE youth. Rotary has access to youth funding that pertains to youth at the risk of homelessness. Past CareerONE applications have specifically asked youth if they were homeless at the time of the application, but future applications will ask if youth are at risk of homelessness. Rotary funding could then be used for these individual youth participants.
- Schmitz then brings up the MTSS system, Multi-tier Support System is a group of educators that figures out what to do for kids within their respective schools. MTSS has most likely been a huge help in sending kids to CareerONE and may have connections that can help in collecting data from the schools. This will be the 25th year the Career Solutions has put on CareerONE, and that fact could be potentially used in securing more funding. Not many programs last if CareerONE and with a story spanning 25 years, the mission of helping at-risk youth is an easy one to get behind.
- Borgert then brings up the point that CareerONE, as it stands now, can't scale up in size infinitely. With the size it has gotten to now, the cost of helping additional students has started to compound a bit. He then asks about how staff members are found. Biery answers this by saying that about 50% of staff is retained from year to year and new people in any given year are partnered with returning staff members.
- Engel then says that past supports could serve as a good starting point in terms of funding, they could also be asked about whether they have some connections to talk with in terms of sponsorship. Getting the word out on help needed by any means necessary is paramount when seeking funding.
- Borgert then brings up a point, saying that companies that are hiring continue to convey that new hires don't have the soft-skills necessary for the job. One of CareerONE's major selling points could be that the program offers work readiness, offers these soft skills that companies really need. He then raises the question of if CareerONE should investigate teaming up with SCSU or Saint Ben's survey projects. This could be done to collect more detailed information from both the youth and their parents.
- Another point is raised about maybe collecting some testimonials from companies that say they need new hires that have a certain level of soft skills. This could be used to further sell CareerONE as a starting point in learning some of those soft skills.
- Borgert then asks the question on if there are other types of companies that Career Solutions can reach out to, instead of just focusing on trade-based companies. A good portion of the market is based in the trade jobs that Career Solutions works with, but the need for employees that already have soft skills is universal, and that can be used to help get more supporters on board with the mission. Another part of story could be instilling in youth, the fact that decisions

they make now can have lifelong effects. The program could institute underage consumption awareness that may help in keeping youth in running for positions at certain companies. Underage consumption has the potential to shut youth out of ever being able to work in transportation and/or law enforcement. Really any job that requires a background check could be used to help educate youth on why not to make poor decisions, but discussion of these topics with youth also opens up the possibility of more job fields being interested in donating to CareerONE.

- Ideas discussed today serve as a starting point in terms of what to do next, CareerONE needs will be a continuous discussion in the coming months.

Other

- **Executive Director Updates** – N/A.
- **From the Floor** – N/A.

Adjourn – Borgert adjourned the Friends of Career Solutions Board meeting at 4:14pm.

Application for Nomination to the Career Solutions Workforce Development Board's Youth Council

Name: Kevin Warzecha_____

Home Address:

_____ Street Address/Box Number
Rice _____
City State Zip County

Phone: 551-580-1341_____ Fax: _____ E-Mail: kevin.warzecha@kidsfightinghunger.org

Youth Organization(s) You Are Active With: KFH_____

Address: 11 Industrial Blvd, Sauk Rapids, MN 56379 _____
County

Phone: _____ Fax: _____ E-Mail: kevin.warzecha@kidsfightinghunger.org

Please describe your involvement (participant, staff, board member): Board Member _____

CATEGORY OF REPRESENTATION:

The Youth Council must include representatives from the following:

- _____ Youth Current or Former Participant
- ☒ Parent of Eligible Youth
- _____ Educator
- _____ Employer
- _____ Human Service Agency
- _____ Special Interest Expertise With Youth
- _____ Representing Public Housing Authority
- _____ Representing Youth Service Agencies
- _____ Juvenile Justice
- _____ Foster Parent
- _____ Alternative Education
- _____ Child Protection Services
- _____ United Way

Additional Qualifications:

Please describe your skills, abilities, and experiences that will serve the needs of youth.
30 years of emergency management, training, engagement, and mindfulness.

(Add pages if needed)

Signatures:

The individual being nominated and, if representing a specific organization, the signature of the authorizing representative from that organization must sign below. Nominees acknowledge and agree that information on this form may be shared with the public.

Nominee:

Kevin Warzecha _____
Signature Date

Nominating Organization Representative:

I nominate the above candidate to serve on the Career Solutions Workforce Development Board's Youth Council membership.

Kevin Warzecha _____
Signature Date

Agency

Title

Instructions:

The requested information is necessary to ensure that the Youth Council as part of the larger WorkForce Development Board meets that requirements as set forth in the Workforce Development Act.

Please complete all information.

The “**Categories of Representation**” are areas either required under the law or identified by the Workforce Development Board.

Under “**Additional Qualifications**”, please list any specific skills, abilities and experiences that you bring to assisting young people.

“**Signature/Date**”, please sign and date the application. If you are a representative from a particular organization, please have the authorizing organizational representative, i.e., Director or Board Chair, sign your application.

Thank you for your willingness to be a nominee to the Career Solutions Youth Council.

Return to: Tammy Biery, Executive Director
Career Solutions
CareerForce St. Cloud
1542 Northway Drive
St. Cloud, MN 56303
Tammy.biery@csjobs.org
(320) 308-5702



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Contact Kim:



320-761-1860



Kim.Randall@csjobs.org



REVERSE JOB FAIR

WEDNESDAY, MAY 7TH 2025

9:30 AM - 11:30 AM

at Career Solutions: 1542 Northway
Dr, St. Cloud, Lot B, Door 2

Reverse Job Fair flips the typical career fair design! Job seekers sit at tables with their resumes while employers circulate the booths.

**Ask about our Job Fair Prep
workshop when you register!**

This event is a great opportunity for
both job seekers and employers!



**JOB SEEKERS CONTACT
ANGELA TO REGISTER:**
320-260-4219
angela.schmitz@csjobs.org



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