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Antoinette Mancusi, Executive Director Heather Stott, Deputy Director Kyle Olson, Senior Program Manager Lynn Dondis, Program Manager Valerie Odams. Executive Assistant

LETTER FROM

Antoinette Mancusi Executive Director, CCWI

Program Year (PY) 2023 – 2024



The theme this last program year is what could be proverbially described as a "mixed bag". There were certainly high points, but regrettably we could not avoid some negative outcomes. Starting with our high points or some good news...

I am happy to report that this program year ushered in a level of program activity and enrollments not seen since 2019. As some of you might recall, our system was just starting to rebuild itself overcoming the 2017 devastation caused by this state's previous Governor when COVID drew us backwards. Given the complexity of our services, rebuilding programs and rehiring/retraining staff takes ample time. Although it's taken us 5 years – our stalwart approach has driven a 37% increase in WIOA Youth Program enrollments and our Adult Program maintained the higher levels of enrollment achieved last year. We are back to pre-pandemic levels of participation. This has been a very promising and revitalizing outcome.

Sadly, just as we regained this momentum, we were throttled by our new PY 2024-2025 WIOA allocations. Both our Adult and Youth programs declined by approximately 20% each at a time when we are finally seeing encouraging enrollment trends. The consequence is that less WIOA funding means we will inevitably serve less people. This is profoundly disturbing for our system that has worked so hard to rebuild itself, for the job seekers needing our services, and for employers that struggle to find employees.

Throughout PY23-24, both CCWI and WFS worked very diligently on two large grant efforts which regrettably failed to be funded. National competition was extreme and ultimately, despite two very well written proposals, the NOAA - 2023 Inflation Reduction Act (~\$6 million) and the USDOL - Pathway Home Grant for pre-release services (\$4 million), we were not successful. Ultimately for the NOAA grant, there were regions deemed more impacted by global warming and for the Pathway Home Grant, larger metropolitan areas with higher crime rates were predominantly selected.

Despite our not having been selected for these two grants, a highlight this past program year was our being awarded the Green Jobs for ME grant. This is a \$2 million project funded by a USDOL H-1B Job Training Grant to serve 315 clients over a five-year period. The grant

aims to train workers on career pathways in the renewable energy and energy efficiency sectors.

We move into PY24-25 with 9 active grants: WIOA PY23, WIOA PY24, Green Jobs for ME H-1B, Maine Refugee Career Pathway Grant Program, QUEST DWG, ARPA Workers Fund, Employment Recovery DWG, Rural Healthcare H-1B, and Career DWG.

Other positive news includes how close we are to launching a statewide Virtual American Job Center (VAJC). CCWI has been working with MDOL and the two other local workforce boards to oversee the development of this impactful new product, launching in September 2024. The VAJC will be available to job seeker and employer customers 24/7/365.

We bring in the new program year with some re-location news. The lease for the comprehensive one-stop center for the Coastal Counties Region at 190 Lancaster Street in Portland expires on September 30, 2024. After a few weeks of planned closure to establish the new comprehensive one-stop center, Workforce Solutions will be offering services and access to one-stop partner programming at its new location at 56 Northport Drive in Portland. We hope that everyone reading this will plan on visiting this new center in the months to come.

Lastly, this past Spring, we had a big staffing change. Jillian Sample, our Deputy Director for almost six years, decided to leave employment to start a new chapter of life which focused on her growing family. We were saddened to lose Jillian, but we remain forever grateful for all her contributions. As luck would have it, Heather Stott (formerly with Goodwill) was also looking for a new chapter in her life which translated into her acceptance of the Deputy Director role. The stars were in alignment - we were very fortunate. Happily, our small staff is intact as we move into our new program year.

In gratitude,

Autoinette Mancusi
Executive Director

Program Year 2023

(July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024)

6,227

Individuals served with basic career services and resource navigation

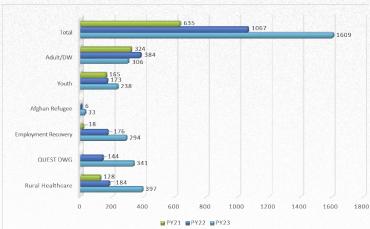
Individuals received WIOAfunded, individualized employment and training services

543

70.66%

Entered employment

Current Grant Enrollments (PY21, PY22, & PY23)







"Maine has been experiencing record job growth, as well as very low unemployment rates. While this has translated into a competitive hiring environment for Maine's employers, it is also creating a variety of employment opportunities for all Mainers. The Maine Department of Labor is collaborating with key partners like Coastal Counties Workforce Inc. (CCWI) to create pathways into high-quality jobs accessible to all Mainers—especially those who have traditionally been under-represented, including people of color, justice-involved individuals, individuals with disabilities, and those in recovery. CCWI consistently demonstrates leadership in connecting individuals to jobs, training, and needed supports. MDOL looks forward to our continued partnership with CCWI to best support Maine's workers and employers."

> Samantha Dina Director of Special Projects Maine Department of Labor



COASTAL COUNTIES REGIONAL WORKFORCE PLANNING

Vision

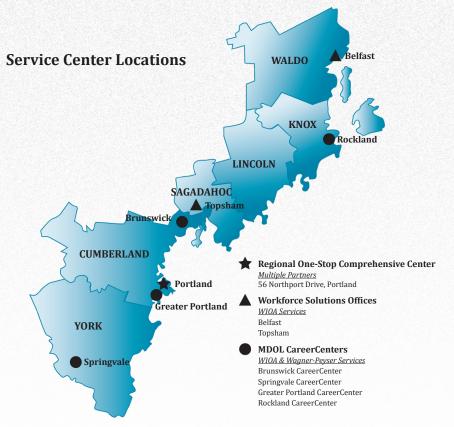
To meet the changing workplace needs of businesses and job seekers by promoting economic opportunities through developing workforce skills in demand. The Coastal Counties Workforce Board (CCWB) supports the regional economy by advancing a range of workforce training services that meet current business needs.

Mission

To accomplish our vision of creating economic opportunities, the Coastal Counties Workforce Board is committed to the effective use of resources to improve workforce skills throughout the region. Existing resources are leveraged and enhanced through strategic partnerships with organizations of similar vision, thereby raising the economic capacity of our regional community, its businesses, and citizenry.

Workforce Board Goals

- Regional workforce system partners align and integrate services and resources to create a "no wrong door" employment and training network easily accessed by workers and employers.
- Employers are actively engaged with a regional workforce development system that understands and appropriately responds to their skilled workforce needs.
- 3. Job seekers and current workers easily access and participate in workforce services relevant and appropriate to their career goals and align with the skilled workforce needs of the local economy.



WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT (WIOA)

WIOA took effect on July 1, 2015, superseding the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998, and amending the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, the Wagner-Peyser Act, and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. It is designed to help job seekers access employment, education, training, and support services to succeed in the labor market and to match employers with the skilled workers they need to compete in the global economy.

WIOA improves connections to employment and training opportunities that lead to economic prosperity for workers and their families. It strengthens existing workforce development and adult education programs in four ways that can benefit adults and youth with barriers to economic success:

- Increases the focus on serving the most vulnerable workers low-income adults and youth who have limited skills, lack work experience, and face other barriers to economic success;
- II. Expands education and training options to help participants access good jobs and advance in their careers;
- III. Helps disadvantaged and unemployed adults and youth earn while they learn through support services and effective employment-based activities; and
- IV. Aligns planning and accountability policies across core programs to support more unified approaches to serving low-income, low-skilled individuals.

Since 2002, Coastal Counties Workforce, Inc. (CCWI) has administered these WIA and subsequently the WIOA employment and training dollars. CCWI is one of three Local Workforce Development Boards in the state, with its region consisting of the six coastal counties of Waldo, Knox, Lincoln, Sagadahoc, Cumberland, and York. CCWI's region is geographically large and diverse. Our Local Area is also the most populous, with approximately half of Maine's residents and business community located within our borders. CCWI, working with the regional WIOA Title I-B service provider, Workforce Solutions (operated by Goodwill Northern New England), supports the regional economy by advancing a range of workforce training programs to meet the changing needs of local businesses and job seekers.

OUTSTANDING SERVICE AWARDEE - TANGIE MURPHY:

Tangie Murphy, Administrative Supervisor at Workforce Solutions, has been a dedicated and hardworking employee of the Workforce Solutions team since 2016. Tangie began her career in workforce development in our system after starting out in the WIOA Youth program as a participant. Believe it or not, Tangie was previously recognized as our Youth Participant of the Year! She currently supports all our Workforce Solutions programs and their teams as the point person from the Quality Assurance (QA) team conducting first-level enrollment training spending and exit reviews and helping to coach employees in the process of this highly technical work. Tangie is highly dedicated to accuracy and completeness of our records and this has paid off enormously for our whole team this past year as it has helped our career advisors have more time spent on providing direct services to clients. Tangie was nominated for taking pride in her work and for being a seasoned and passionate employee who helps create a positive and pleasant atmosphere in the office as well as motivating employees to give it their all. Congratulations Tangie on a job well done! We are so proud of all you are accomplishing!



"Utilizing the services provided by Coastal Counties Workforce, Inc. has been an invaluable resource in our hiring process to recruit skilled workers. This is a wonderful way to find the talented, hardworking, caring employees we're looking for here at The Cedars."

Kelly DiBiase Healthcare Recruitment Specialist The Cedars



Workforce Solutions Employee of the Year

Tangie Murphy



"Workforce Solutions supported me when it felt like everything had fallen apart, and they encouraged me to find work that I really loved – not just the first thing I could get."

Adult Participant of the Year

Helen Forsyth

WIOA ADULTS & DISLOCATED WORKERS

The Adult Program provides employment and training services to eligible individuals ages 18 and older who require assistance and skills upgrading to secure meaningful employment, with priority given to those who are low-income. The Dislocated Worker Program provides services to eligible individuals who have been terminated or laid off, or who have received a notice of termination or layoff from employment, who are eligible for or have exhausted unemployment insurance, or who are displaced homemakers. In Program Year 2023, the two programs served 306 job seekers throughout the region.

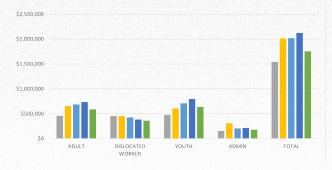
ADULT PARTICIPANT OF THE YEAR - HELEN FORSYTH:

Helen Forsyth was referred to Workforce Solutions by FedCap, looking for supports entering the workforce and exploring her career interests and aptitudes. She is a single mother who had recently returned to Maine, with most of her experience as a homemaker for her family. In initial meetings with her Career Advisor, Kate Owens, Helen was able to complete initial assessments to firm up career interests, as well as better understand her aptitudes. She was pretty sure that she wanted to do something in finance, and the assessment process helped confirm that this was a good match.

With her confidence growing, Helen reached out to an acquaintance who ran a small tax preparation and assistance company, Taxes Plus. The owner/manager was happy to talk to Helen, and while she didn't have any work available immediately she was able to bring Helen in to sit in on some of the tax preparation training that her staff was receiving. Not long after receiving this training, the company owner reached out to Helen to share that she in fact could use her help for the upcoming tax season. Helen joined the team on a temporary basis and successfully helped people prepare their taxes during the busy tax season.

Helen is now being supported by Workforce Solutions in completing a short-term financial certification that will open up opportunities to provide year-round tax supports for individuals. She is really excited to be able to pass on the type of help and sense of security that Workforce Solutions provided to her.

CCWI WIOA Allocations PY20 - PY24



WIOA Services PY21 - PY23





WIOA YOUTH PROGRAM

Youth Services provides employment and training opportunities to young adults between the ages of 14 and 24 who have barriers to employment, with a focus on youth who are out of school and disengaged. Chief among these barriers are factors such as poverty, homelessness, basic skills deficiency, lack of high school diploma or equivalency, pregnancy and/or parenting, involvement in the juvenile justice system, and speaking English as a second language. The Youth Services team works with youth to address these barriers and facilitate a path to employment. In program year 2023, despite the difficulty in recruiting youth participants, the program served 238 youth throughout the region.

Increase in Youth enrollments:

An achievement of note is the increase in WIOA Youth enrollments, both in terms of total served as compared to prior years and the increased rate of enrollments in the second half of Program Year 2023. With 238 total WIOA Youth served in this region during PY23, the provider has increased youth services over PY22 (172) and PY21 (165). This is no small accomplishment in this challenging environment.

WIOA Leveraged Training

(July 2022 - June 2023)

* As a result of the work performed by WIOA staff, \$269,412.90 in leveraged funding was obtained to augment our program resources.



YOUTH PARTICIPANT OF THE YEAR - VICTORIA WINSLOW:

Employed as a dining assistant at Quarry Hill in Camden, Victoria's co-worker saw potential in her and shared that she'd be a great fit in one of their skilled healthcare positions. They discussed the idea of becoming a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) through a local training provider that provides that certification. Interested in the opportunity, Victoria was accepted into Central Lincoln County Adult Education's CNA program. Working through the enrollment process, a staff member recognized that Victoria could use financial assistance for the cost of the training. The staff then recommended connecting with Workforce Solutions to support her training/employment needs.

After the referral was made, Victoria was matched with Career Advisors (CA) Derek Kennedy and Melissa Wells and enrolled in the program. Working with her CAs, she was able to get help with the costs of the CNA training, as well as scrubs, shoes, and a watch. During this time, Victoria disclosed that she had some health issues and was then connected with a Life Navigator, Rachel Turner, to address those needs.

With the support of Workforce Solutions and Adult Education, Victoria completed the CNA training in the spring of 2024. After passing the state exam on her first attempt, Victoria accepted a job at Quarry Hill as a CNA.



"One of the things that I really took away from Workforce Solutions was that even if it felt like I had no one to go to for help...Workforce Solutions was always there."

Youth Participant of the Year
Victoria Winslow



Employer of the Year Shepard Auto Group

"The partnership we have created with the Workforce Solutions team has allowed us to fill some vital positions. The staff have taken great care to provide us good quality candidates. Most of the candidates we have offered a position to, turned into full time staff. We continue to look forward to what this program has to offer."

Susan Shepard, Co-Owner Shepard Auto Group

NATIONAL EMERGENCY GRANTS

GREEN JOBS FOR ME GRANT

September 2023 - September 2028

In September 2023, Coastal Counties Workforce, Inc. was awarded \$2,000,000 through the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration to develop a new sector partnership in renewable energy to prepare target populations for highwage, high-skill careers as Engineers and Construction Managers. Also known as the Building Pathways to Infrastructure (BIG) H-1B grant, this regional partnership will deliver existing education and training programs through On-the-Job Training; Subsidized Training and Work Experience; Pre-apprenticeship and Apprenticeship; Stackable Credits and Certificates; and Incumbent Worker Training.

This grant is designed to be inclusive, serving a diverse range of individuals. It is open to those over 17 years old, authorized to work in the U.S., and unemployed or underemployed. We aim to support individuals from various backgrounds, including women, immigrants, persons of color, out-of-school youth, and older individuals (55+).

The Green Jobs for ME grant will serve a total of 315 individuals over a five-year period, with 31 slots available for entry-level incumbent workers.

QUEST DISLOCATED WORKER GRANT

October 1, 2022 - September 30, 2024

CCWI was awarded \$3,255,000 by the USDOL to serve individuals whose employment has been negatively impacted by the Covid pandemic. The goal of this grant is to promote equitable access to work in safe, well-paying employment, which further builds the participants' and the community's resilience to any continued economic impacts of the pandemic.

This award's eligibility criteria allows us to serve individuals from historically marginalized and underserved populations who have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic. Individuals that can be served include: low-wage earners, women with children, racial and ethnic minorities, immigrants and refugees, individuals with disabilities, discouraged workers, justice-involved or incarcerated individuals soon to be released, individuals in recovery from substance use disorder, and individuals from historically marginalized communities.

This grant, known as the Quality jobs, Equity, Strategy, and Training (QUEST) Dislocated Worker Grant will serve 420 individuals over the two-year period.

AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT (ARPA)

November 1, 2022 - October 30, 2026

In November 2022, Coastal Counties Workforce, Inc. was awarded \$500,000 in funding through the Maine Department of Labor's federal ARPA funds. This grant has allowed us to implement a stipend pilot to incentivize participants' attendance and completion of occupational skills training. Stipends for individuals enrolled in occupational training will address the economic barriers that individuals face that can prevent them from choosing to attend and persist in training. Ten percent of this award will also be utilized toward our area's outreach efforts.

This ARPA grant will serve a total of 132 individuals over a four-year period.



IMMIGRANT SERVICES

Immigrants and refugees are critical to filling the workforce pipeline that is necessary for Maine employers to thrive. To receive services under our WIOA programs, individuals must be U.S. citizens or eligible noncitizens. Eligible noncitizens are those who are authorized to work in the United States. Immigrants or refugees who demonstrate their work authorization are eligible for services that mirror services provided by the WIOA Adult Program. Additionally, immigrant clients may also receive instruction in English language proficiency, work readiness, and workplace culture. Programs may also be able to cover the costs of foreign credential evaluation services to help individuals get back into their career of choice or find a career that aligns with their employment history.

MAINE REFUGEE CAREER PATHWAY PROGRAM

September 30, 2022 - September 29, 2025

CCWI was awarded a \$750,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to oversee the provision of workforce development services to Afghan immigrants who came to the U.S. and Maine on or after July 31, 2021. CCWI created the Maine Refugee Career Pathway Program and partnered with Workforce Solutions and the Maine Office of Adult Education to provide training and education services. Services include skills training, education, and credentials needed to work in their chosen careers or to put them on new career pathways. Career counselors also provide individual career couseling and guidance on writing a resume and interviewing for a job.

Each participant in the Program works with Workforce Solutions and Adult Education to develop a Career Development Plan, which lays out short-term and long-term employment goals and the pathway the participant must follow to achieve them. The Program provides instruction in English language proficiency, work readiness, and workplace culture, as well as direct financial assistance for costs associated with career advancement, such as tuition, credential evaluation services, childcare, education supplies (e.g. textbooks, software), and transportation.

This grant will serve ~50 Afghans over a three-year period.

EMPLOYMENT RECOVERY GRANT - NATIONAL DISLOCATED WORKER COMMUNITY IMPACT GRANT

February 8, 2022 - February 28, 2025

In February of 2022, CCWI was awarded a \$2.3 million Dislocated Worker Community Impact Grant from USDOL. These grants provide assistance to areas where a number of small employer closures or dislocations increase the total number of unemployed individuals. In 2021, over 500 workers were laid off in the Coastal Counties region, which prompted CCWI to apply for this funding to serve these individuals.

The Employment Recovery promotes rapid reemployment support for clients who have been recently laid off and are ready to reconnect to the workforce; for individuals who need more intensive employment and training services, the grant promotes the use of work-based training, particularly on-the-job training modalities.

The Employment Recovery grant will serve a total of 315 Dislocated Workers over a three-year period.



"The expertise of Coastal
Counties Workforce, Inc. in
managing and contributing
workforce services greatly
benefited Women Lead's Spring
2024 Job Readiness cohort.
They enriched our program
by contributing valuable
instruction of resume building
fundamentals and volunteering
for one-on-one mock interviews
with our participants.

The Immigrant Welcome
Center proudly partners
with CCWI and welcomes
future opportunities to work
toward our shared mission of
removing barriers to workforce
integration in Maine to promote
economic growth".

Gabrielle Roxon Women Lead Assistant Director Greater Portland Immigrant Welcome Center



"Goodwill Northern New England, one of the region's largest employers, relies heavily on strong partnerships to fulfill its diverse workforce needs. Coastal Counties Workforce, Inc. (CCWI) plays a crucial role in this by convening workforce system partners and securing essential funding, enabling us to attract and retain highly skilled employees who propel our mission forward to have greater community impact to those we serve in Northern New England. Through CCWI's support, we've upskilled our IT staff under the TechHire H-1B grant, ensuring they can better serve our internal customers. Additionally, we've successfully placed youth clients in foundational first jobs across retail and healthcare and helped skilled adult clients secure positions in finance and payroll. These partnerships are vital to our success and the communities we serve."

Tripp Harrison
President and CEO
Goodwill Northern New England



MAINE RURAL HEALTHCARE PARTNERSHIP

February 1, 2021 - January 31, 2025

Coastal Counties Workforce, Inc. was awarded \$2,500,000 through USDOL to address the healthcare worker shortage in Maine by training workers on career pathways in Nursing and Pharmacy. Strategic partners include the service provider, employer advisors (MaineHealth, Northern Light Healthcare, and CVS), education/training partners (local Adult Education and community college institutes), and workforce partners (Maine Department of Labor and Department of Health and Human Services).

As of June 30th, 2024, the Maine Rural Healthcare Partnership has served 356 individuals, including 41 incumbent workers. Three hundred and seventy (370) of those have enrolled in healthcare training for frontline health careers. The program has enrolled 119 individuals in Medical Assistant training and 185 in Nursing Assistant training. Other occupations trained for are Phlebotomist, Registered Nurse, Pharmacy Technician, Community Health Worker, Licensed Practical Nurse, and Mental Health Social Worker.

The grant will serve 480 individuals over the course of the four-year grant period.

CAREER DISLOCATED WORKER GRANT

December 1, 2021 - September 23, 2024

In December 2021, Coastal Counties Workforce, Inc., collaboratively with MDOL and the two other workforce boards in the State, were awarded \$380,308 from the U.S. Department of Labor for a Comprehensive and Accessible Reemployment Through Equitable Employment Recovery National Dislocated Worker Grant. The goal of the project is to reemploy dislocated workers most affected by the economic fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic. The grant is focused on research, development, and deployment of a multi-faceted virtual American Job Center (AJC) that will expand access to workforce development services for job seekers and employers. The virtual AJC will provide access to career and training services statewide, with special emphasis on ensuring that the platform is accessible to historically marginalized populations, is user friendly, and seamlessly integrates with the state's workforce system.

Achievements on the project this program year include completing the research phase, developing an RFP, reviewing proposals, and conditionally awarding a contract to a consultant.

ONE-STOP OPERATOR

The Coastal Counties Workforce Board contracts with the Catherine E. Cutler Institute at the University of Southern Maine to serve as the Board's One-Stop Operator (OSO). The role of the OSO is to facilitate and lead the WIOA-required partners through the design and implementation of integrated service delivery. The OSO works cooperatively with the partners, and regularly convenes meetings with WIOA Core partners, including Title I - Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Programs; Title II - AEFLA Program; Title III - Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service Program; and Title IV - Vocational Rehabilitation Program.

Achievements of the OSO this program year include facilitating One-Stop Partner quarterly meetings and Coastal Operators Group monthly meetings, assessing business services among One-Stop Partners, presenting to business membership groups, and creating training documents for partner program frontline staff.



2023 REVENUE & EXPENSE REPORT

CCWI Audited Financial Statement Year Ending June 30, 2023

REVENUES

Federal Funds	\$4,462,172
Other Funds	\$2,516
Total Revenues	\$4,464,688

EXPENSES

CCWI Expenses

Payroll	\$441,036
Communication	\$8,828
Conferences & Meetings	\$2,253
Office Expenses	\$55,777
Supplies	\$9,834
Professional Services	\$128,194
	\$645,922
Program & Training Expenses	
Subcontractor	\$3,844,126
Total Expenses	\$4,490,048
Change in Net Assets	(\$25,360)

According to an independent auditor's report, CCWI complied in all material respects with compliance requirements on each of the federal programs operated for the year reviewed (2023). (See www.coastalcounties.org for more information.)

