

GEORGIA MOUNTAINS ONE-STOP PARTNERS MEETING

Minutes

The Georgia Mountains One-Stop Partners met on Tuesday, April 30, 2019 at 11:00 a.m. The meeting was held at the One-Stop Center, 1856 Thompson Bridge Rd. Gainesville, GA. The following were present:

Jim Watson, Lanier Technical College
Shelby Ward, North Georgia Technical College
Janet Whitaker, Gateway Domestic Violence Center
Jessica Williams, WorkSource Georgia Mountains
Mark Winters, Georgia Department of Labor
Greg Vitek, Lanier Technical College/Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce
Whitney Williams, WorkSource Georgia Mountains
John Phillips, WorkSource Georgia Mountains
Diane Jackson, WorkSource Georgia Mountains
Pat V. Freeman, Legacy Link
Beth Williams, Vocational Rehabilitation
Heather Feldman Georgia Mountains Regional Commission
Stephanie Ponce, Georgia Department of Labor, BSU
Michael Fisher, Ninth District Opportunity
Benjie Hopkins, Hopkins Associates
Marsha Hopkins, Hopkins Associates

Welcome and Introductions:

Benjie Hopkins, Operator for the Georgia Mountains One-Stop Center, welcomed everyone, and had each person give a brief introduction.

Minutes from the February 26, 2019 meeting were emailed previously. A copy is posted at:

www.onestopworkgamtns.org

Focus Topic: Ninth District Opportunity, Inc.

Marsha Hopkins introduced Michael Fisher, Housing/Planning Manager for Ninth District Opportunity, Inc. Mr. Fisher has a Bachelor's in Education from Palm Beach Atlantic University and a Master's in Education from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He has experience in advising seniors in planning for retirement, and as a health/Medicare specialist. He has worked with Ninth District Opportunity, Inc. for the past two years. He also writes a column for several local newspapers bringing awareness to poverty concerns in the region. Mike has volunteered for the Sautee Nacoochee Community Association and for the Georgia Mountain Soccer Association. He has also performed with some community theatres in this area.

Mike explained that Ninth District Opportunity was founded over 50 years ago as part of the War on Poverty. Services are provided in 27 counties in Georgia. Ninth District served approximately 19,400 families in 2018. The NDO Community Services Division offers Re-housing programs, Energy Assistance, as well as Weatherization Projects. Hotel/motel vouchers are provided to homeless individuals. Arrangements have been made with at least one facility in each county to accept these vouchers to offer emergency housing. A recent NDO project was a PIT (Point in Time) count of homeless people in the counties of Habersham, Hall and White. With support from the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, Ninth District Opportunity has been promoting a Coordinated Entry System to assist with homelessness. In this system, the most vulnerable are assisted with getting housing as quickly as possible. The key steps in this process are: assessment; diversion; prioritization; and referral. A greater emphasis is being made on communications and public relations concerning NDO. This often involves Community Enrichment activities involving staff members volunteering at tournaments, parades, etc. Housing opportunities for the disabled are being sought.

Partner Information

Benjie Hopkins reported that the number of individuals visiting the One-Stop Center for services for the first quarter of 2019 is up 30% from the same period in 2018. This does not include those who attended the overview sessions.

He reminded everyone the One-Stop training room is available for meetings related to workforce development, and to contact him for scheduling. He requested that everyone review the One-Stop website and let him know of any changes needed – <https://onestopworkgamtms.org/>.

Benjie highlighted activities from the websites and/or newsletters of the One-Stop Partners, and Partner representatives offered additional information about their programs.

Lanier Technical College

- A Career Connections Job Board is in place to connect students and potential employers.
- The Motor Sports Vehicle Technology program celebrated a former student being part of a winning team at the Daytona 500
- The Radiologic Technology program was featured recently on the LTC website
- Greg Vitek continues to develop Apprenticeships in the region. New programs are being initiated with the construction industry as well as with the poultry industry to offer training. He reported on a recent successful Career Fair for 7th graders held in collaboration with Lanier Technical College and UNG

North Georgia Technical College

- Regional workforce Tour with 31 businesses and industry leaders was held recently
- Industrial Technology Center has opened on Clarkesville campus – a state-of-the-art facility
- Shelby Ward announced that a new grant for program expansion has been awarded to Adult Education

Athens Technical College

- 130 different degrees/diplomas are currently being offered

Legacy Link, Inc.

- Offers a wide variety of programs and services including: “Living Well,” “Balance,” and “Everyone with Diabetes Counts”
- Pat Freeman noted that getting an accurate count of individuals is very important in seeking funding for programs

Georgia Department of Labor

- Hosted job fair with U.S. Census Bureau
- 80,000 jobs have been added over the last 12 months
- EmployGeorgia.com has over 90,000 jobs posted
- GDOL is assisting with recruitment for the 2020 Census. Jobs are available paying \$20 - \$25 per hour
- Stephanie Ponce announced that Labor Commissioner Butler will be speaking at a Workforce Summit on July 31st at the Forsyth County Campus of Lanier Technical College. Area employers and other interested parties are encouraged to attend.

Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency (GVRA)

- Shawn Ryan is the new Executive Director of GVRA
- Newsletter offers a summary of how key legislation fared in 2019 session
- Beth Williams noted that GVRA has launched a new program on radio and television to promote services offered.

Ninth District Opportunity, Inc.

- Resource Guides are available on topics such as: Mistakes Job Seekers Make; Tips on Saving Money; Tips on Saving Energy; Landscaping; Better Nutrition; and Fair Housing

Goodwill Industries

- Tips on Website such as: Transitioning from College to Workplace; and Green Habits for Earth Week

Gateway Domestic Violence Center

- Janet Whitaker reported that a groundbreaking for a new shelter is planned in the fall
- Increasing from 24 to 46 beds will enable Gateway to provide services to more individuals
- A 2 ½ million-dollar fundraising campaign continues for funding the new shelter

WorkSource Georgia Mountains

- Jessica Williams announced that plans are continuing for development of the Youth Center with expansion next door to the One-Stop Center
- Opportunities for satellite youth centers in other counties are also being planned
- The Youth Program is using a referral log to track services to individuals by name, date, customer requirement, agency referral, and staff initials
- A Summer Youth Conference is planned for June 7th at the new Lanier Technical College in Gainesville. The conference will include sessions on financial planning; a Reality Store; and a motivational speaker
- Whitney Williams reported that business services are growing. Paid internships are being offered for adults.
- A second driver is being hired for the Career Coach
- John Phillips mentioned the layoff of approximately 800 workers by Tenneco in Hartwell. Most of these workers, except for some supervisors, have found employment
- John also announced a Sector Partnership Meeting to be held June 12 – 14 at Lanier Islands. The topic is “How to Build the Economy in Your Area”. There is a \$70 registration fee

Georgia Mountain Regional Commission

- Heather Feldman emphasized the importance of getting a complete count from the Census. Many funding opportunities are based on population
- GMRC provides GIS mapping services assisting in matching boundaries
- New construction is strong in most of the counties in the Georgia Mountains region, but housing options are limited in many areas. This presents a challenge for employers who are recruiting new employees

Date for Next Meeting

The next One-Stop Partners Meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 25, 2019 at 11:00 a.m.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:40 p.m.