

GEORGIA MOUNTAINS ONE-STOP PARTNERS MEETING

Minutes

The Georgia Mountains One-Stop Partners met on Tuesday June 30, 2020 at 11:00 a.m. via a Zoom conference call. Participants in the call were:

Pat Freeman, Legacy Link, Inc.
John Phillips, WorkSource Georgia Mountains
Diane Jackson, WorkSource Georgia Mountains
Whitney Williams, WorkSource Georgia Mountains
Jessica Williams, WorkSource Georgia Mountains
Beth Williams, GVRA/VR Program
Greg Vitek, Workforce Strategies Group
Tim McDonald, Lanier Technical College
Shannon Cole, Lanier Technical College
Johnny Varner, Goodwill Industries
Valerie Johnson, Goodwill Industries
Tonya White, Ga. Dept. of Community Supervision
Kathy Chamberlin, Division of Child Support Services, Ga. Dept. of Human Services
Cindy Bryant, Gateway Domestic Violence Center
Beth Oropeza, Compass Center, United Way of Hall County
Benjie Hopkins, Hopkins Associates
Marsha Hopkins, Hopkins Associates

Welcome

Benjie Hopkins, Operator for the Georgia Mountains One-Stop Center, welcomed everyone, and reminded the group of the purposes of this bi-monthly meeting – to improve communications between the Partners, to get to know each other better, to learn more about the programs represented, and to encourage referrals in order to improve service delivery.

Minutes - Marsha Hopkins

Minutes from the April 30, 2020 meeting were emailed previously, and these have been posted at: www.onestopworkgamtms.org A request was made for a summary list of key points be emailed from each organization after the meeting to: hopkinsassociates77@gmail.com

Partner Information: Benjie asked each call participant to share information from their respective organizations regarding plans for reopening and for other updates.

Workforce Strategies Group – Greg Vitek

- He and Shelley Davis have been guiding Sector Strategies for the Georgia Mountains region, working closely with staff, with partners in education, and getting important input from area employers. Most of these meetings have been virtual due to Covid-19.
- Several virtual steering committee and employer meetings have been held, and other virtual meeting are being planned
- Will bring back on-site meetings when the customers are ready
- Current focus for Sector Strategies is Advanced Manufacturing, and the next area of expansion will be Health Care
- Purpose of Sector Strategies is to develop the workforce pipeline in ways that support industry, and also serves to prepare target groups as employees

- Area employers are still committed to addressing training and development activities, but because of changes brought on by Covid-19, many of them have had to push out the dates for these to take place

GVRA- Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency - Beth Williams

- Beth is Service Area Manager for the thirteen county region. She oversees three offices: one each in Cleveland, in Gainesville, and in Cumming
 - Some clients are continuing to work, some are on hold until things pick back up, and others have lost their jobs due to the pandemic
 - When we return to work, expecting a flood of applications due to those who lost their jobs.
 - Staff meetings are occurring through Microsoft Teams, Skype, or via phone conference
 - We are continuing to serve clients the best that we can, just in a different way
- <https://gvs.georgia.gov/>

WorkSource Georgia Mountains – John Phillips, Diane Jackson, Whitney Williams, and Jessica Williams

- Staff is still working on a staggered schedule, combining office days and remote workdays.
- The One-Stop office will resume a daily schedule beginning July 6th, but most meetings will continue to be by appointment only
- Office visitors will call from the front door, and a staff member will come to the lobby to meet with them
- Offices will be reopening with appropriate safety precautions, following guidelines as they are updated
- Continuing to do TABE assessments and CDL assessments with social distancing

Lanier Technical College – Tim McDonald, and Shannon Cole

- Summer semester is underway with all classes having a majority online instruction component. The College is hosting several on-campus lab activities with limited number of students in each lab activity
 - The College continues and will continue to follow the health protocols identified by the Governor's Office, Centers for Disease Control, and Georgia Department of Public Health
 - The College is developing plans for Fall Semester which is scheduled to begin August 17, 2020
 - The Adult Education Division continues with the online/distance education delivery model
 - Adult Ed is developing plans to resume GED testing and TABE testing on a limited basis. - Early to mid-July is the target for resuming the testing
 - Jim Watson, Work Experience Coordinator, coordinates internships, short term training opportunities, and outreach for WIOA Out-of-School Youth
 - An internship will begin immediately with Ninth District Opportunity in Dawsonville, and another internship will start with Family Promise on July 6th -- Covid-19 plans have been put in place prior to the internships starting -- Several other internships are pending
- <https://www.laniertech.edu/>

Goodwill Industries of North Georgia – Johnny Varner and Valarie Johnson

- Valarie is currently serving as manager on duty for Oakwood and Cornelia offices
 - Continuing Goodwill's Mission of putting people to work, and partner with many of the agencies involved with the One-Stop Partnership
 - As of June 30, 2020, Goodwill Industries has put an estimated 23,000 people to work during their Fiscal Year
 - Goodwill stores and workforce development career centers reopened in early June with limited hours
 - Using precautions suggested by government to keep clients and staff safe, including a requirement for everyone to wear masks
 - Donations are being accepted, put aside for at least 24 hours, then meticulously cleaned prior to being offering for sale
 - Continuing virtual job searches and monthly virtual job fairs - also virtual workshops
 - WorkSource Georgia Mountains services are described to customers
 - Career Connector program is a valuable tool being used to assist job seekers:
- <https://goodwillng.org/find-a-career/career-connector>

Georgia Dept. of Community Supervision (DCS), Senior Lead Community Coordinator - NE Region - Tonya White

Tonya was introduced as a new participant in the One-Stop Partnership meeting, and she offered the following information about her work:

- Works with probation and parole officers - now known as Community Supervision Officers - to help men and women in Hall and Dawson Counties transition back into their communities following time in prison
- Examples of resources provided: (hygiene bags, housing, employment, medical services, education)
- Have an ongoing partnership with the local Goodwill Career Center, WorkSource Georgia Mountains, and DOL
- Offices are currently open by appointment
- Officers supervise men and women through technology
- Tonya is not allowed to work in office space now, but welcomes contact regarding referrals and coordination of services, especially those regarding workforce training and employment

Tonya M. White

Reentry Services Division

Senior Lead Community Coordinator-Northeastern Region

Georgia Department of Community Supervision

1002 Aviation Blvd

Gainesville, GA 30501

470-728-6940

Email: tonya.white@dcs.ga.gov

<https://dcs.georgia.gov/locations/gainesville>

Compass Center, United Way of Hall County - Beth Oropeza

- During the pandemic, not seeing customers in person, but continuing to help by phone and by text with financial assistance for utilities and for rent and mortgage payments
- Offering translation services for individuals who need assistance for activities such as scheduling medical appointments
- Have four interns from the University of North Georgia -- students in their Human Services Degree Program
- Continuing to give away buckets of cleaning supplies
- For assistance, call the main line at 770 536-1121 or the resources line at 2-1-1

<https://www.unitedwayhallcounty.org/thecompasscenter>

Gateway Domestic Violence Center - Cindy Bryant

- Center has continued to operate during Covid-19, providing housing and services to survivors of domestic abuse at a confidential location
- Cindy coordinates the transitional housing program
- Working a lot by Zoom, but do have masked staff at facility
- Resuming support groups in person in July -- will be outside
- Crisis line is always available at 770 536-5860

<https://www.gatewaydvcenter.org/>

Legacy Link, Inc. - Area Agency on Aging - Pat Freeman

- Legacy Link operates a senior community service project in 120 counties
- GDOL paying for trainees, although they are not currently going to their worksites during the pandemic
- Still waiting for Dept. of Community Health and for State Medicaid office to give permission to do face to face visits
- Working by telephone to provide services until that permission is granted
- All RNs and Social Workers are working from home
- Other staff members alternate coming into offices every 7 days

<https://www.legacylink.org>

Division of Child Support Services, Ga. Dept. of Human Services - Kathy Chamberlin

- Child Support is still teleworking with one day per week in office per person
- Clients can be referred to attorney's offices by appointment
- Using Amazon videos for meetings with clients
- Still taking applications
- Do not have a set schedule yet for returning to offices

<https://dcs.georgia.gov/locations/gainesville>

Benjie mentioned that some Partners were not able to participate in the meeting. However, we are aware that all are continuing to serve the workforce needs of our region.

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Date for Next Meeting

The next One-Stop Partners Meeting is tentatively scheduled for 11:00 a.m. on Tuesday, August 25, 2020. Details will be issued when available.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 11:55 a.m.