

# CAREER CENTER NEWS

## Empowering Local Students Through Virtual Reality

This Fall, local students had the opportunity to explore different career pathways through virtual reality. The Warren County Department of Workforce Development attended BOCES CTE WORKS! where over 100 students experienced virtual job training and exposure to virtual reality (VR) headsets.

Most recently, local high schools have been getting involved. Lake George and Glens Falls High Schools are taking advantage of the VR headsets at our Career Center. The Lake George High School business class welcomed Workforce Development staff into their class to promote job training and career exposure. Glens Falls High School students visited the Career Center to participate in Metrix Learning trainings and to learn about services provided to local youth. Both schools raved about the virtual reality goggles and the benefits they provide to students exploring different careers.

New York State Department of Labor purchased VR headsets from a company called TransfrVR for Career Centers throughout New York State. According to their website, Transfr’s mission is “to train the future of every industry and open up exciting new opportunities for talent across the globe and at home. We train people for well-paying careers available now in high-demand fields, enabling learners to find job security and upward mobility, facilitated by immersive, hands-on VR training.” TransfrVr offers trainings across industries including: automotive, aviation, construction, diesel, electrical construction, manufacturing, and health sciences.



Photos provided by Lake George Jr./ Sr. High School

### Did You Know?

The New York State minimum wage increased on January 1, 2024 to \$15.00 per hour for Upstate NY. New York City and the counties of Nassau, Suffolk and Westchester are \$16.00 per hour. For more information go to <https://dol.ny.gov/minimum-wage-0>

## In This Issue

Page 01 - Virtual Reality

Page 02 - Businesses & Youth

Page 03 - Networking

Page 04- Success Stories

### Workforce Development Staff

Liza Ochsendorf - Director

Annie McMahon - Fiscal Manager

Gayle Mender - Counselor

JoAnne Finn - Counselor

Andrea Kinderman - Youth Counselor

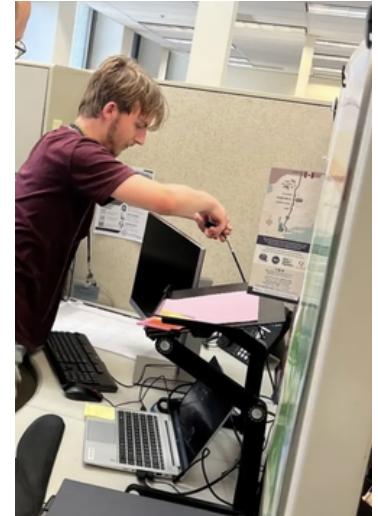
Mike Graney - Student to Careers Development Specialist

Melissa Gibb - Office Specialist

Denise Yannaci - Coordinator

# Business Engagement with Youth

With an aging workforce, it is crucial to equip the next generation with a strong foundation on which to pursue their careers. Seasoned professionals play an integral role in this preparation by connecting with local youth and imparting their knowledge and work values with those who are entering the workforce. The Warren County Career Center is educating businesses and organizations about the multitude of available opportunities to make these connections. By offering a variety of both long-term and short-term work experience opportunities in addition to options that require minimal commitment, the hope is for organizations to be able to find a level of involvement that suits their needs while providing meaningful engagement with youth.



SYEP worker from Warren County IT working on a laptop

Many area businesses are already familiar with the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) held in July and August, placing youth at worksites around the county. Beyond summer, a 6-week Career Mentor program, often combining work experience with an element of job shadow, is offered in the spring and fall in partnership with Big Brothers Big Sisters. While youth enrolled in SYEP can work up to 35 hours per week, the Career Mentor program offers youth 6-8 hours per week due to enrollment occurring during the school year. Both programs have youth wages paid by Warren County.

Beyond serving as a worksite, business leaders have additional options to connect with teens:

- Recruit youth employees (aged 14-18) at high school job fairs
- Be a guest speaker at schools and events
- Allow teachers to arrange student tours of your business
- Sponsor a student for a club or activity

The Career Center has a goal to get 100 businesses interested in participating in one or more of these opportunities. By completing a brief survey at [https://bit.ly/WCYouth\\_Programs](https://bit.ly/WCYouth_Programs), businesses are able to select which programs they would be interested in as well the age range of youth they would be willing and able to work with. The Career Center will use the list and reach out to businesses as selected opportunities become available.

## Did You Know?

Data shows that some of the most common occupations for teens include retail sales, food service, and manual labor. This suggests that the teenage workforce provides an important source of entry-level labor for many industries. In turn, these opportunities can also offer teens their first work experience and valuable income.

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

2024 SYEP applications will be available on March 1st 2024



## What comes to mind when you hear the word “networking”?

Despite the potential discomfort it may evoke, networking is a crucial aspect of life, like seeking restaurant recommendations. Viewing it as an opportunity to connect opens doors to new possibilities, offering a powerful strategy for building relationships, fostering professional growth and sharing opportunities.

Studies consistently highlight networking as the most effective job search strategy. Rather than relying on traditional methods like job boards and staffing agencies, start by sharing your intentions with family, friends and former colleagues.

Employers typically seek new employees in the opposite way from how job seekers search for positions. While job seekers start with job boards, companies prioritize internal referrals before exploring external sources with 80% of jobs consistently remaining unadvertised. Understanding this can help you align your approach with how employers fill positions.

Networking is a two-way street. Continue assisting others, maintain occasional contact and share resources thus avoiding the networking mistake of a self-centered focus on personal promotion, job acquisition, or sales. Networking should persist even after employment. It is a career muscle requiring continuous development.

### Effective strategies:

- Use existing connections: Reach out to past coworkers and alumni, join professional associations and seek introductions through friends.
- Attend job fairs, industry events, and networking gatherings. Engage in conversations by the refreshments table, asking insightful questions about industry entry.
- Strategically use social media by connecting on LinkedIn, sharing relevant articles and participating in industry discussions.
- Diversify opportunities: For unique networking beyond professional environments, join community activities, volunteer, join a sports league or talk with people at your gym. The magic contact may come from unexpected places.

### Tips when connecting:

- Clearly communicate intentions: Explain why you are reaching out and express why the contact is meaningful.
- Respect their time. Ask if it's a suitable time for a conversation or if they want to meet for coffee. Be mindful of the time you take up.
- Briefly describe your skills and how they align with your career goals.

Initially networking may not be easy, but the rewards are worth the effort. Embrace networking as a genuine opportunity to connect, enhance job search prospects and contribute to a robust professional network that supports your career aspirations.

## Did You Know.....

The NYS Pay Transparency Law took effect September 17th 2023. The landmark legislation requires businesses across New York State with four or more employees to include a salary or compensation range in all advertisements for job, promotion, and transfer opportunities. The legislation underscores New York's commitment to addressing wage disparities and promoting transparency in compensation practices across the state building on the Governor's commitment to supporting and empowering workers. For more information visit <https://dol.ny.gov/pay-transparency>.

# SPOTLIGHT on SUCCESS

Donna, a resident of Glens Falls, has been working with the Warren County Career Center since September 2023 and has utilized many services as part of her job search. Donna has been able to participate in virtual workshops and conduct online interviews by using computers available at the Career Center. *“The classes I attended were extremely helpful and they touched on so many different topics. The content was current and I found it really valuable. One important thing I learned was if I apply to jobs using Indeed, I make sure to follow up and confirm they receive my resume and application. I had been applying to jobs using Indeed and was not hearing back. When I called one of the companies to check if they received my resume through Indeed, I was told they hadn’t. I’m still using Indeed to job search but I follow up with businesses and resend my information when necessary. I also learned about O\*Net and I’ve been researching jobs based on skills I currently have and it’s great. My Employment Counselor Gayle has been very helpful and supportive throughout my journey.”*

If you would like more information about services available from the Career Center or to make an appointment with an Employment Counselor, call (518) 743-0925.

## Career Center Hosts CRPA Training



Photo at left:  
Nine graduates of the recent  
CRPA-P training program  
pictured with ASAP-NYCB  
trainer, Katrina Fox

Warren County Department of Workforce Development and Healthy Capital District partnered to offer a Certified Recovery Peer Advocate (CRPA) training in October at the Career Center. Using past experience with substance use and or addiction, in addition to professional training, participants become formally certified to provide non-clinical support services to help those in treatment/recovery. CRPA’s play a vital role as they connect patients to community-based recovery supports consistent with treatment, recovery, and discharge plans. Nine participants graduated from the program in November and have submitted their application for professional certification as a CRPA-P. Congratulations to all of the graduates!

Warren County Career Center  
333 Glen St, Suite 300  
Glens Falls, NY 12801  
Phone 518-743-0925

americanjobcenter  
Warren County, NY

