



Capital Area Workforce Development Board Meeting

September 25, 2025

Zoom Meeting

Submitted: Crystal Waters

Board Members Present:

Kenneth Angeli, NCWorks Career Center-Wake County
Rod Axford, IBEW
Mark Bertoncino, Buhler Aeroglide
Doug Blizzard, Catapult
Michael Haley, Wake County Economic Development
Sue Holaday, Summit Designs and Engineering Services
Courtney Holcomb, Bharat Forge Aluminum USA
Brian Holland, Sectigo
Nicole Jarvis-Miller, Mass General Brigham
Paul Kane, Home Builders Assoc. of Raleigh-Wake County
Tamika Walker Kelly, NCAE
Cameron McNeill, Guild, Inc.
Shawnice Meador, Wolfsped (Former)
Kristina Gates Nix, UNC Medical Center & Chatham Hospital
Dreama Pilson, CTI Systems
Danielle Sardo, Biogen
Melissa Short, Transitions LifeCare
Jordan Thomas, NC Dept. of HHS
Tom White, North Carolina State University

Staff Present:

Pat E. Sturdivant, Executive Director
Barbara Brothers, Business Engagement Director
Jessica Locklear McLeod, One-Stop Director
Thomas Pulickal, Business Manager
Malinda Todd, Assistant Director
Jasmin Volkel, Strategic Initiatives Manager
Crystal Waters, Executive Assistant

Guests Present:

Terrence DeFranco, IotaComm
Kenneth Gathers, Equus Workforce Solutions
Ivette Hughes, EDSI

Item	Discussion	Actions		
		What	When	Who
1. Call to Order	<p>Brian Holland welcomed everyone to the meeting and provided housekeeping rules. Crystal Waters took the roll.</p> <p>Brian announced that Rodney Carson will receive the Governor's Award of Distinction-Bill Ragland Award Outstanding Private Sector Workforce Development, at the NCWorks Partnership Conference in October.</p> <p>Brian notified the board that the Executive Committee approved CAWD Staff to release a Youth CBO RFP for a small grant program (up to 100K) to community -based organizations serving youth 17-24. This program was prompted by available funding due to a large contractor staff turnover and a decrease in the number of youth served over the last few years. Recently, contractor staff has stabilized, and youth enrollments have increased over the last program year. To ensure compliance with new state guidelines, 70% spending in year one and 80% by the second quarter of year two, staff aims to meet these benchmarks while reaching youth in need of services. This is considered a pilot program, and its value will be assessed at the end of the program.</p> <p>Pat Sturdivant clarified that the grants will run for one year, with mid-point reviews.</p> <p>Brian also introduced the CAWD Partnership Award. A new award that will recognize a partner that has gone over and beyond to support CAWD's mission. This award will honor an active organization who has partnered with NCWorks and/or NextGen. Awards are based on Innovation, Collaboration, Customer Experience, and Contribution to CAWD's mission. The award will be presented at the Annual Partner's Breakfast in December.</p>			

2. Action of Minutes	The draft minutes from the June 26, 2025, meeting were approved without corrections or objections.			
3. Board Committees Updates	<p>Advocacy and Outreach Committee</p> <p>Paul Kane, Committee Chair, presented for the Advocacy & Outreach Committee. Their goal is to strengthen CAWD's financial resilience by diversifying funding. The committee plans to increase non-governmental revenue to at least 10% of CAWD's total annual funding through sources such as private, philanthropic, and earned income sources, reducing dependency on WIOA and other federal funds by June 2028.</p> <p>Paul stated that with an average annual budget of \$10 million, this would be \$1 million.</p> <p>The committee strategies are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a targeted fundraising strategy to engage corporate sponsors, private donors, and philanthropic partners. • Establish use of 501(c)(3) to support sustainable revenue generation. • Expand earned income opportunities (consulting, training, employer services). • Pursue strategic partnerships with foundations and investors for multi-year grants. <p>The following questions were asked to the board members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In our ideal world, we would increase outside funding but not take any government funding cuts. If that happened, what would you like to see us invest in? • We are currently in our research phase. What organizations do you recommend that we meet with to learn more? • What are we missing? <p>Shawnice Meador suggested tying donations to specific programs for impact and clarity.</p>			

	<p>Other suggestions were daycare support, professional development and “Backpacks for Briefcases” initiatives.</p> <p>The committee will identify at least one earned-income stream by 2025 and pursue qualified funding leads.</p> <p><u><i>Advocacy-Outreach-Committee-Presentation</i></u></p> <p>Customer Success Committee Sue Holaday, Committee Chair, presented for the Customer Success Committee. Their draft goal is to increase the number of participants served across CAWD’s five-county region by at least 30% by June 30, 2028, with a particular emphasis on expanding outreach and access for priority populations. This will be achieved through a data-informed strategy that enhances both virtual and in-person service delivery, increases the number and variety of community-based access points, and strengthens partnerships with trusted organizations.</p> <p>The committee strategies are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a regional asset and gap analysis • Prioritize 2-3 underserved populations using data. • Expand community-based access by launching at least 5 new outreach sites in partnership with local organizations (libraries, nonprofits, faith center, mobile/virtual units). • Develop and strengthen staff capacity (both internally and external) to deliver services. <p>A poll was shown asking which of the following populations do you believe would benefit most from expanded access to CAWD services across our five-county region?</p> <p>The choices were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth in foster care or transitioning out of foster care 			
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals facing language barriers • College graduates ages 19–24 seeking employment pathways • Individuals with basic skills deficiencies (e.g., scoring below 9th grade level in math or reading) • Individuals experiencing homelessness or housing instability • Other (please specify) <p>The poll results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 40%- Individuals with basic skills deficiencies • 35%- College graduates ages 19–24 seeking employment pathways • 25%- Youth in foster care or transitioning out of foster care • 15%=Individuals experiencing homelessness or housing instability • 10%- Individuals facing language barriers <p><u>Customer-Success-Committee-Presentation.pdf</u></p> <p>Employer Engagement Committee Nicole Miller, Committee Chair, presented for the Employer Engagement Committee. Their goal is to strengthen employer partnerships and industry engagement. They plan to deepen strategic partnerships with employers in high-demand sectors by developing sustainable, industry-driven collaborations by 2028. The Committee aims to define and implement a replicable sector partnership model that produces measurable improvements in talent pipeline growth, employer participation, and job quality.</p> <p>Nicole stated the committee’s goal is largely set for the next three years but will remain flexible as industries and conditions evolve.</p> <p>The committee plans to create a repeatable playbook; rather than one-off toolkits, that can be applied across employers and industries, creating efficiencies and consistency.</p>			
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	<p>The committee strategies are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure: establish data-driven framework for sector partnerships • Relevancy: develop Career Pathways aligned with industry needs. • Impact: build and sustain high-impact sector partnerships. <p>Nicole Miller invited members to share suggestions for relevant data sources and potential sectors to explore.</p> <p><u>Employer-Engagement-Committee-Presentation</u></p>			
4. Director's Report	<p>Pat E. Sturdivant informed the board of Brian Holland's appointment for a 3-year term with the National Association of Workforce Development Boards.</p> <p>She also encouraged members to read the operations report and highlighted the following from the report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive improvements in youth program participation and employment outcomes. • One Stop Career Center received certification from the Department of Workforce Solutions (DWS), meeting all required qualifications. • The youth program missed the credential performance measure, but CAWD met overall performance. <p>Pat Sturdivant introduced new board training videos, each 3–5 minutes, summarizing key workforce board functions. Finance 101 was shown.</p> <p>Pat encouraged members to watch the board training videos playlist, emphasizing the videos' brevity and strong overview of CAWD's work.</p> <p><u>Board Training Videos Playlist</u></p>			

	<p>Pat explained that the Executive Committee asked staff to begin a “department highlight” at every board meeting so members could meet the people behind the work described in the operations reports.</p> <p>The first department highlight featured the Communications Department. Pat noted that the recently shown video was created by this team. A short video spotlighted Brenda Wilkerson (Communications Manager) and Drew Fitzgerald (Outreach Communications Specialist) was shown.</p>			
5. Operational Highlight	<p>Kenneth Gathers, NCWorks Career Center, Operations Director, provided a detailed overview of NCWorks Career Center operations. He explained how funding and staff time are allocated to support CAWD’s mission of connecting job seekers to employment and training.</p> <p><u>NCWorks-Career-Center-Services-Overview</u></p>			
6. Public Participation	<p>There was no public participation.</p>			
7. Other Business	<p>Brian Holland provided an overview of current federal legislation impacting workforce funding. He explained that two competing bills are under consideration: the Senate bill would maintain funding at approximately current levels, while the House bill proposes eliminating funding for WIOA Adult Job Training, a reduction of about ~\$880 million compared to last year. He noted that while this issue is critical to workforce boards, it is only a small part of the overall appropriations process and may not receive much attention in Washington.</p> <p>Brian mentioned federal report, the <i>America’s Talent Strategy: Building the Workforce for the Golden Age</i> report. He acknowledged that members may agree or disagree with their recommendations, but stated that it offers useful insights. The report affirms much of what CAWD already does, while also pointing to areas for improvement.</p> <p>He also referenced the Department of Labor’s workforce dashboard which is intended to</p>			

	<p>demonstrate the effectiveness of WIOA. Brian emphasized that it reflects only a small portion of workforce board activity and can misrepresent actual service delivery. CAWD and other boards have raised these concerns to the Department of Labor.</p> <p>Brian encouraged board members to reach out to congressional representatives and share local success stories that emphasize the value of workforce programs. He stressed that workforce funding should be viewed not as government spending, but as government investment—supporting businesses, developing future taxpayers, and delivering a strong return for the community.</p> <p>Pat stated the link to the reports Brian mentioned will be shared. She also emphasized that to ensure a consistent and effective message, staff will prepare talking points and impact stories that highlight how workforce programs benefit both job seekers and employers.</p> <p><u>Americas-Talent-Strategy:-Building-the-Workforce-for-the-Golden-Age.pdf</u></p> <p><u>https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ETA/Performance/PY2023_WIOA_Local_Board_Annual_Report.html</u></p>			
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