

**Connecticut State Apprenticeship Council**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**November 19, 2020**  
**Connecticut Department of Labor**  
**Office of Apprenticeship Training**  
**Virtual MS TEAMS Meeting**

**I. Meeting Call to Order at 1:30 p.m.** There was a quorum.

**Members in Attendance-** Chairman/Commissioner Kurt Westby, Larry Vallieres, Frank DaCato, Paul Costello, Christopher J. Brown, Robert M. Berkmoes, Kelli Vallieres, Richard DuPont, Martin Alvarenga

**Members Not in Attendance** - Robert Berkmoes, Gregory Raucci

**Others Present**

State Apprenticeship Director Todd Berch, Deputy Comr. Daryle Dudzinski , Deputy Comr. Dante Bartolomeo, Paul Femia, Pat Ciarleglio, Alyce Stiles, Pamela Brown, Michael Komaromi, Marcie Addy, Marisa Morello, Charles Daniels, Matthew Sargeant, Eleanor Lennon, Mark Polzella, Karen L Wosczyzna-Birch, Mary Bidwell, Melissa Hickey, Glenn Ford, Jen Jennings, Clifford Thermer, Ron Angelo, Colin Cooper, Eric Brown, Tricia Reynolds

**II. Minutes of Previous Meeting** - November 14, 2019 minutes passed with one abstention from Frank DaCato

**Recorder**

P. DePhillips

**III. Correspondence** - None.

**IV. Public Comment** - Jenn Jennings, representative of Connecticut Heating & Cooling Contracting Association said that one of her members needs to hire more apprentices because licensed journeymen have not been applying for openings in his company even though he has advertised on two platforms. She explained that the pandemic has increased the demand in the HVAC industry. The company wants to apply for ratio relief but knows they do not have enough licensed trades people and they will not be able to get approval. Can an exception be made regarding ratio relief? Commissioner Westby deferred her question to State Apprenticeship Director Todd Berch. Todd informed Jenn that he will discuss this with the three members of the ratio relief subcommittee once they receive the paperwork. Jenn also asked a more general question on behalf of the Association concerning how companies can hire more apprentices. Todd replied that ratios are under the statutory jurisdiction of the Department of Consumer Protection. Jenn wanted to go on record to state that due to the increased need because of the pandemic, it is extremely difficult for companies at this time in history to hire licensed people. Commissioner Westby said that the Council will take this issue under consideration.

**V. Apprenticeship Partner Updates** - Kelli Vallieres of the Governor’s Workforce Council and Pat Ciarleglio Connecticut Technical High School System (CTECS), Apprenticeship Education Consultant & Architecture and Construction Careers (Licensed Trades)

- Pat Ciarleglio, Apprenticeship Education Consultant and Architecture and Construction Careers Licensed Trades, shared a Power Point presentation about CTECS Apprenticeship Related Instruction programming with the Council. Among the topics covered were: CTECS profile, Programs Offered, Delivery Strategy, Synchronous Learning Model, Road Map, Curriculum Input and One School System (7 Locations), Benefits, Student Instructor Onboarding, Resources Sharing. Thirty- one trades are offered to students and there is a 97.2 % graduation rate. Pat explained in detail about distance learning and the increased number of programs now offered remotely due to the Corona virus pandemic. He highlighted the benefits, such as each student having the full Office 365 Enterprise edition software and noted that technical tutoring is available at each CTECS site. CTECS is now a unified system and all classes are offered at seven locations across the state. Adult students can also participate in extension learning in addition to registered apprentices. Commissioner Westby thanked Pat and remarked that staff in workforce development could benefit from emulating the work CTECS has done. Commissioner Westby also said that he believes the synchronous learning model will remain the standard after the pandemic ends.
- Council Member Kelli Vallieres has left her position at Sound Manufacturing and is now the Executive Director of Workforce Development at the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD). She also is Vice Chair of the Governor’s Workforce Council. Council Member Vallieres gave an overview of the Governor’s Workforce Council’s priorities and strategic plan. The Council is developing state-wide career building programs for students and adults. Their initiative is to ensure students in every high school are career ready as well as college ready. Students can earn industry recognized credentials in programs such as the youth manufacturing pipeline that has been implemented in eastern Connecticut. Part of the strategic plan is to launch programs including a state-wide plan to engage students in manufacturing. Ultimately, the model will be expanded to include healthcare and IT using an apprenticeship model. The Council also promotes equity and access for all residents to have the opportunity to participate in apprenticeships.

**VI. Apprenticeship Director Report** - Todd Berch reported that there are currently 1597 Employers and 6,444 apprentices in construction, healthcare and manufacturing participating in the apprenticeship program. 1,140 apprentices have completed their programs. 1,622 apprentices separated without completion of their programs. Todd thanked his staff for doing double duty and assisting other units at the CT Department of Labor during the pandemic.

Todd thanked Deputy Commissioner Bartolomeo for helping him work with CTECS and the Department of Public Health to establish an apprenticeship program for hairdressing. The students can go through a pre-apprentice program and accumulate clinical hours by working in salons.

Commissioner Westby also thanked Todd and his staff for assisting with other units for many months during the pandemic and stated that staff would soon be returned and able to work solely in the Office of Apprenticeship.

**VII. New Business** - Council Member Richard DuPont said that he has been serving as Interim Director at the Manufacturing Alliance Service Corporation (MASC) in Waterbury. He has been developing a new apprenticeship program for plastics that will expand manufacturing apprenticeships. He expects approval within the year.

Marissa Morello, CTDOL's legislative liaison will be forwarding a technical bill from Todd that will change statutorily the wording of apprenticeship to ensure that apprenticeships are done under the CT Department of Labor rather than the State Apprenticeship Council.

**VIII. Old Business**- Discussion- companies have requested the SAC recommend guidance regarding employers not properly registering apprentices. The companies making this request hire apprentices only to become aware previous companies have failed to register individuals as an apprentice. Companies claim it is punitive to the apprentice and new company alike and request exploring policy recommendations- Commissioner Westby- this topic will be discussed at the next meeting February 2021.

**IX. Good and Welfare**

Glenn Ford, President of Phoenix Manufacturing said that CT high school students need more access to machining and manufacturing processes. The technology in manufacturing continues to change and students need to be prepared earlier to be able to succeed in the more advanced courses that will be offered at the community colleges in manufacturing such as robotics etc.

- Colin Cooper commented that he would like to see the number of apprentices in manufacturing increase.
- Clifford E. Thermer, Ed.D. Goodwin University, thanked the Council and Todd for their collaboration in helping to establish and improve the pre-apprentice and apprenticeship programs offered at Goodwin University.
- Melissa Hickey, Ed.D, CT State Department of Education shared with Council members that she and Todd had just completed a year long journey with a national and regional focus on developing pathways in apprenticeship and that a report was completed and sent out on November 17, 2020.
- The meeting was adjourned at 2:42 p.m.

**X. Date of Next Meeting** – Thursday, February 18, 2021 at 1:30 p.m. Location: To be determined