



WORKFORCE CONNECTION NEWSLETTER March 2020

Message from the One-Stop-Operator:

I want to thank everyone for your patience during the recent events that are occurring due to the coronavirus pandemic. As you may or may not be aware there have been a lot of moving parts, and information is constantly changing pertaining to the services we provide.

Recently, we have learned that several PA CareerLink's across Pennsylvania have closed due to the prevalence of the Covid-19 virus. We are diligently working to ensure everyone working with clients are doing their part in handwashing and limiting personal contact by following recommended social distancing protocol. Safety is of utmost concern.

As decisions are made and changes occur, I intend to communicate the information to your manager for sharing with you.

Thank you, and ensure you stay safe!

One-Stop-Operator, PA CareerLink®, Northwest Workforce Area

Benjamin Wilson



NEWS FROM THE PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION

Information received: February 28, 2020

REMINDER TO ALL STAFF

“The Pa Department of Health continues to monitor and prepare for the Coronavirus, or COVID-19. **To date, no one in Pennsylvania has tested positive for the virus.** However, public health officials are advising people to be prepared. Preventing the spread of COVID-19 is similar to the regular flu:

A message from the Pennsylvania Department of Administration: The Pennsylvania Department of Health continues to monitor and prepare for the Coronavirus, or COVID-19.

- Washing your hands
- Avoiding touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands
- Covering coughs and sneezes
- Avoiding sharing eating utensils or having close contact with people who are sick
- Cleaning surfaces
- Staying home if sick

For information and updates on COVID-19, visit the websites of the [PA Department of Health](#) or the [U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#).

In addition, Optum, which operates the State Employee Assistance Program (SEAP), is offering a free emotional support help line at **866-342-6892**. This line is staffed by specially trained mental health specialists to help people manage their stress and anxiety so they can continue to address their everyday needs. Callers can also receive referrals to community resources to help them with specific concerns, including financial and legal matters. The toll-free help line will be open 24 hours a day, seven days a week for as long as necessary. You do not have to be covered by the SEAP program to utilize this service.

Employees with workplace-related questions about COVID-19 should contact their [agency's human resources office](#).”

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

The employee spotlight for the month of March 2020 highlights the Career Advisor position with BWPO in the Erie County area. The Career Advisors at the Erie location are Jason Jaquith, Luis Sepulveda, Tonia Frank, Kerrie DeChurch, and Carole Krouse.

So, what does a Career Advisor do, you ask? Good question! The answer is everything pertaining to the state-related employment programs run through the PA CareerLink®. The Career Advisor's main responsibility is to provide guidance and assistance to customers who qualify for programs such as Trade, RESEA, Employer Services, and Jobseeker Services. Specifically, the Career Advisors provide advice to jobseekers and assist them in receiving the most benefit possible from their employment programs.



Photo - Left to Right: Luis Sepulveda, Carole Krause, Jason Jaquith, Kerrie DeChurch and Tonia Frank

For our employers, Career Advisors reach out and connect to new and existing employers to discuss the opportunities of working with the PA CareerLink®. Also, Career Advisors assist companies with registration into CWDO system, input information pertaining to employer such as their contacts, develop and maintain job posting information to include the companies needs and screen companies to ensure the information is not a SCAM. The Career Advisor then acts as a liaison promoting the hiring of their jobseeker clients within the job postings.

As you notice, the Career Advisor is a multifaceted position that encompasses the whole of PA CareerLink® activity. Luckily, we have tremendously talented individuals serving in this capacity which make a hard job seem easy. The Erie Career Advisors are dedicated and thoughtful in serving their clientele. Additionally, they have developed strong partnerships with Title I and Title II staff to thoroughly serve customers visiting the PA CareerLink® to their fullest extent.

Thank you, Career Advisors, for your professionalism in your workmanship and job well done in providing services with the PA CareerLink® - Erie County.



GECAC

The GECAC Senior Community Services Employment Program (SCSEP) is a paid employment- training program that helps mature workers transition into meaningful employment. SCSEP offers wages for participants while they gain valuable experience with partner community service agencies in supportive, real-work settings. You qualify for the program if you: Are at least 55 years of age, meet the program's income requirements of 125% of poverty which is 15,613 for one person, and are willing to improve your job skills and learn new ones. *Currently GECAC staff are working from home.

RAPID RESPONSE

Rapid Response is quite busy fielding employer calls. Bev Rapp, NWPA Rapid Response Coordinator for our region, has indicated that staff and employers can visit www.pa.gov website for most recent information pertaining to COVID-19. Employers and affected workers can visit www.pa.uc.gov for information pertaining to unemployment.

Additionally, Ms. Rapp is posting updated information on the following two websites for employers: Erie Chamber of Commerce, www.eriepa.com and www.steelvalley.com.

HELLO
SPRING

Adult Education & Career Readiness Graduation

SAVE THE DATE

IU5

July 7, 2020

IU5 Adult Education has been busy planning for our 2020 Graduation to be held at Edinboro University's Pogue Center on July 7, 2020. Save the date and plan to attend this celebration of student success that will be complete with caps and gowns as well as pomp and circumstance. Currently, IU5 is providing on-line platforms so their students learning progression is not hindered. Great job IU5!

STAFF NEWS—Title I

Ms. Carla Gore, Business Solutions Consultant, Title I, recently accepted a position with a top-leading employer in the Erie area. A pot-luck luncheon was held in her honor by fellow staff. Her last day working with the PA CareerLink® in Erie was March 5, 2020. We will miss her big, bright, smile and wish Carla only the best in her next work endeavor!



Photo: Carla Gore



Photo: (Left to Right) Fadhail Ibraheem, Carla Gore, and Carmine Camillo

Ms. Fadhail Ibraheem, Business Solutions Manager, recently accepted a new position in the Tampa, Florida area with another company. She has been an instrumental leader in improving the delivery of Title 1 services within the Northwest Workforce Region. Her continued efforts in working with employers in the area has not gone unnoticed by all PA CareerLink® partners. Fadhail's dedication and commitment served as a vital link with the success of the Title 1 project, PA CareerLink®. Thank you Fadhail for all that you have done. Good luck in your new career.



Photo: Fadhail Ibraheem

PA CAREERLINK® UPDATES



Current information posted on the door for customers in Erie: Out of respect for the Governor's order that all non-essential businesses close, we are no longer accepting face-to-face appointments. We will provide on-line or over-the-phone appointments by calling (814) 853-5254 or (814) 853-5829. Thank you. for your patience.



EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH

Don't forget – next month we announce our first selected "Employee of the Month". If there is an individual within your organization that you would like to see recognized, please complete the electronic form that was sent to you during the month of February. Deadline for nominations for the May newsletter is April 7, 2020.

WORKSHOPS

Title I is continuing to offer workshops on-line. Staff and customers should check CWDS weekly for latest updates on workshops offered. Currently the following on-line workshops are listed in CWDS for customers:

Stress Management for Home and Work

– Learn short-term and long-term techniques to deal with stress, create more peaceful environments, and calm your life.

Steps to A Successful Interview - Walk through the four steps of a successful interview: Preparation, Practice, Presentation, Post-interview.

Resume Do's and Don'ts - Learn the basics of resume writing. This is an information session only.

Mastering the PA CareerLink® Site -

Learn to easily access and understand the most useful parts of the PA CareerLink® site to complete a successful job search.

Title I Talent Development Facilitators are diligently working on developing additional on-line workshops for customers.



A PERSONAL NOTE FROM THE EDITOR:

Over the years, I worked for the following organizations that have faced adversity: PA Department of Corrections and PA CareerLink®. As I sit working from home due to our current situation, I started reflecting about different situations I have encountered throughout my work career that changed processes within the workforce in a positive way. I would like to share the following with you:

March 28, 1979 – There was a partial meltdown of a Reactor at the Three Mile Island nuclear plant in Middletown, PA. I was working in the Central Office for the PA Department of Corrections, Camp Hill, PA. The department divided Central Office staff into two teams that were assigned the task to relocate inmates from Camp Hill Institution to other prisons throughout the state if necessary. Positive Outcome: The task team concept remained in effect for when other emergencies occurred within the department.

1980's – AIDS became very prominent in our society and workforce. People were apprehensive in working around individuals with the disease. Positive Outcome: Today there are guidelines for blood and body fluid spills as well as treatments for AIDS due to a better understanding of the disease.

October 25-27 1989 – I witnessed the initial outbreak and worked 16-hours a day during and after the riot at the State Correctional Institution Camp Hill. The work environment was chaotic to say the least and individuals in position of power were tasked with a horrendous situation. Positive Outcome: The aftermath resulted with the expansion of the prison system (creating more jobs) and the development of an inmate handbook.

September 11, 2001 – (9/11) – On this date, I worked on a housing unit at a state correctional institution. Management decided to lock down the institution for a couple of days for protecting and promoting a safe and healthy environment for everyone. Positive Outcome: This event led to changes in our world that has vastly improved security and safety for all of us.

Today, we face the COVID-19, causing all of us, to be more cognizant of hygiene, hand sanitizers, disinfectant wipes, social distancing and staying home if you have any signs of ill health. Each of us, are finding ways to adapt and adjust to the current work condition. Keep communicating with each other as there is still a lot of uncertainty ahead for us. Remember we have each other to call upon in times such as these. As Lailah Gifty Akita states: "Every adversity brings new experiences and new lessons."

Stay safe, be healthy, and be in touch. Remember, your efforts can make all the difference in the world.