

OCTOBER 2020 | ISSUE 1



Welcome

At the start of the new decade, no one could have predicted the drastic changes that our world would encounter in just a couple of months. It became quickly and abundantly clear that the services Schenectady County Job Training Agency offers to job seekers and businesses would be essential.

With the doors to our physical space closed, upgrading our virtual presence was crucial to ensure customers had the most up-to-date information and knew how to reach us. This came with the rebranding of our image to create "Schenectady Connects" and ensuring our social media remains up-to-date on a daily basis with business requests, job leads, and our services.

The past seven months have been some of the most uncertain but also the most innovative and defining. We plan to keep you updated on our journey and current employment and training information through our social media and quarterly newsletter.

We look forward to connecting with you!

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The Unemployment Pandemic

Persistence and resilience only come from being given the chance to work through difficult problems.

- Gever Tulley

For the past five years, Schenectady County's unemployment rate has fluctuated from 3.4% to 5.1% until March of 2020 when COVID-19 emerged and caused an economic crisis second only to the health catastrophe the world was facing.

The rapid ascent and peak of coronavirus cases in New York during March and April led to the State dedicating resources to unemployment and the temporary closure of in-person services at all Career Centers. During this time we were diligently gearing up for what we knew would be the greatest employment crisis our generation has encountered.

This period of professional development led to the ability to rethink service provision, how to integrate our programming, and technological innovation that was previously untapped. While New York State was on PAUSE, we diligently honed our skills to ensure we were equipped to be responsive to the public need.

Through the pandemic we have continued to be responsive to customer needs including questions about unemployment, job searching, and building foundational skills. We have also grown our business service connections and offerings to best support the community in reopening and stabilizing the economy.

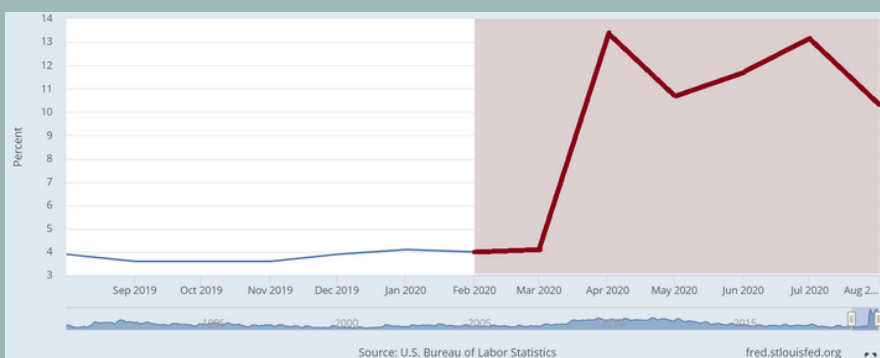
In persistently working through this difficult time we will help Schenectady emerge from the pandemic even stronger than before.



Professional Development:

- Understanding the CARES Act and Unemployment Insurance
- How COVID-19 has (and will continue to) changed the employment landscape
- One Schenectady COVID-19 Response
 - Workforce Development Coalition
 - Food Distribution Coalition
- Employer Resource Network
- Creation of new virtual workshops
- NYATEP: The Future Works podcasts
- Schenectady HPOG Benefits Cliff
- United Way ALICE Data Reports
- Resume Development Bootcamp
- Labor Market Information
 - Healthcare
 - Advanced Manufacturing
 - Information Technology
 - Construction
- SEFCU Financial Well-Being Webinars
- Dept. of Labor's Interview Stream
- Improving our virtual presence through:
 - Facebook, Instagram, & LinkedIn
 - Zoom (meeting and webinar)
 - Metrix Learning
 - LinkedIn (personal and business)
 - Cleartouch Interactive Display
 - Canva for Marketing
 - Mentimeter Interactive Presentation

SCHENECTADY COUNTY UNEMPLOYMENT RATE



U.S. BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS, UNEMPLOYMENT RATE IN SCHENECTADY COUNTY, NY [NYSCHESURN], RETRIEVED FROM FRED, FEDERAL RESERVE BANK OF ST. LOUIS; [HTTPS://FRED.STLOUISFED.ORG/SERIES/NYSCHESURN](https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/NYSCHESURN), OCTOBER 14, 2020.

"One Schenectady" Workforce Development COVID-19 Recovery Coalition

The COVID-19 Pandemic brought with it a tremendous need for stable housing, food security, childcare accommodations, and workforce development. The Schenectady Foundation took the lead on creating an impressive "One Schenectady" coalition to gather networks of providers with the ability to address each of those human service needs.

Schenectady County Job Training Agency was called on to become the hub of the workforce development hotline in partnership with the City Mission - Schenectady Works, Schenectady ARC - Employer Resource Network, Schenectady Community Action Program (SCAP), and SUNY Schenectady.

The Workforce Development Coalition created a flyer to advertise the various job seeker and business services available and to publicize the hotline for assistance: (518) 344-2737. The City Mission generously offered space at their beautiful location on Union Street to house safe, socially distant meetings for in-person workforce development needs.

Understanding that workforce development is an integral piece of what it will take to rebuild the community, the coalition offers:

- Job Seeker Services
 - Career counseling including job search, resume development, and education on foundational skills
 - Tuition and supportive service assistance
 - Online learning opportunities and workshops
- Business Services
 - Recruitment and retention services
 - Human Resources and technical support
 - On the Job Training Opportunities
- Transportation with Tech Valley Shuttle and CDTA
- Success Coaching to support employee retention

We are fortunate to be a part of this innovative plan and appreciate the dedication of Schenectady's providers to the community.



"It's impressive to see what you are accomplishing, and it shows so much promise for how we can continue to improve services to get people in sustainable employment."

*Robert Carreau, Executive Director
The Schenectady Foundation*



Greater Capital Region Career Centers Virtual Workshops

With the temporary closure of New York State's Career Centers, a transition to virtual services was imperative. The Directors of the Greater Capital Region Career Centers convened and determined that by collaborating and offering our workshops to the entire region rather than just our individual localities, we could broaden our program offerings and tap into other areas' expertise.

The pilot was launched in October and in addition to educating the public on the crucial foundational skills of employment, each Center benefitted from interfacing with one another. Schenectady took the lead on creating marketing materials, managing registrations, and facilitating the Interview Preparation and Social Media workshops. We hope to continue this partnership after our Career Centers reopen and truly value the opportunity to collaborate.

Virtual Workshop Topics:

Resume and Cover Letter
Development

Completing Online
Job Applications

Interview Preparation

Social Media

Transferable Skills

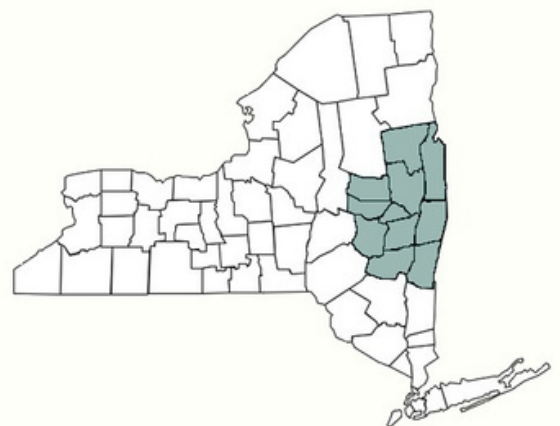
Overcoming Barriers
to Employment

Goal Setting

Metrix Learning

Greater Capital Region Career Centers Virtual Workshops

Ready to improve your skills and start on your ideal career pathway? Join the Greater Capital Region Career Centers for FREE virtual workshops on how to market yourself to get and keep the job of your dreams!



2020 Summer Youth Employment Program



When schools suddenly transitioned to virtual learning in mid-March we knew that if the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) was permitted to operate it would be a crucial experience for Schenectady's youth.

Our program, which traditionally begins with application collection in March, funding in May, and a start date in July was slowed due to the uncertainty of the world. On July 3, just 3 days before our original start date, OTDA announced that in-person SYEPs would be funded as originally anticipated. Logistically, what is typically coordinated over many months, we accomplished in just 2 weeks.

We tapped all available resources to ensure that as many youth as possible had the opportunity to engage in a meaningful work-experience. Ultimately, despite the valid safety concerns that an in-person experience posed, increased safety protocols, the air of uncertainty and frequent regulation changes throughout the State, we ended up with 30 in-person worksites for 115 youth employees.

Due to the fact that we had limited worksite availability we had to expand our horizons. An excellent new partnership with Tech Valley Shuttle provided door-to-door shuttle service for youth and exercised more safety precautions than public transportation was capable of given the numerous riders.

We have always had a broader goal of connecting youth to our agency for lifelong employment and training support - not just a seasonal program - and this year we were finally able to make those connections. We developed six weeks of virtual programming including free online coursework through Metrix Learning in the foundational skills of employment, interactive, Zoom workshops, and offerings from our dedicated partners including SEFCU, NENYCOSH, and the Center for Independence who embraced the transition to virtual training.

Overall this was undeniably one of the most successful summer programs that we have operated. We learned many valuable lessons and pushed our creativity and flexibility to the absolute limits, but the result was incredible. The resilience and dedication shown by the youth employees as well as the passion and support shown by the staff, worksites, and training providers in the face of adversity made this a memorable and valuable summer.



Director's Corner

Welcome,

Throughout 2020 we have encountered changes in the world and the workplace that we could have never expected. This year has challenged our safety and economic security like no other. Many in our field are still grappling to understand the size, scope and scale of the effects of COVID-19 on our economic system.

However, throughout all of these challenges we have been inspired to work smarter and harder than ever before. We have learned to be creative, innovative and resilient. We stand ready to rebuild Schenectady families and businesses stronger than ever before. Our persistence has shown us that nothing can stop us from finding the tools we need at our disposal to assist with the economic recovery of our community.

Jennifer Bargy
Director of Workforce Development
Schenectady County Job Training Agency



OCTOBER

National Disability Employment Awareness Month

Boss's Day on the 16th

NOVEMBER

National Family Literacy Month
Check out Washington Irving Educational Center for academic opportunities

Election Day on the 3rd
Plan your VOTE!

National STEM Day on the 8th

DECEMBER

National Human Rights Month

International Volunteer Day on the 5th

CONTACT INFORMATION



(518) 344-2737



SchenectadySJTA@dfa.state.ny.us



Stay tuned for our Center's re-opening plans and please call us if you'd like to make an appointment to meet with our staff at Schenectady Works



[@SchenectadyCountyConnects](https://www.instagram.com/SchenectadyCountyConnects)