

Career Services Committee Meeting Minutes - 4/1/25

In attendance: Brunilda Aponte, Way Finders, Iliana Caez, MassHire Springfield, Linda Candage, VA, Megan Donnelly, Berkshire Community College, Phylis Gedeon, MassHire Springfield, Ben Ostiguy, Holyoke Community College, Cindy Ray, MassHire Franklin/Hampshire, Kate Smith, MassHire Holyoke, Elizabeth Veillette, CHD, Mark Watkins, Gandara Center, Pamela Wojtkowski, MassHire Berkshire

Program updates:

- Overall, MassHires are seeing unemployment numbers are up; concerned with cuts to programs resulting in staff lay-offs; anticipating a slight reduction in WIOA funding
- Berkshire County is anticipating big lay-offs in the near future
- for VA, 70 positions are at risk in western MA; lay-offs starting end of April
- Community colleges are awaiting the state's basic needs grants to address rising student need resulting from federal cuts; HCC's housing initiatives are all full

Program Announcements:

- MassHire Springfield offers the Community Buzz twice a month giving local organizations an opportunity to market their services to job seekers. <https://masshirespringfield.org/event/info-session-community-buzz/> anyone interested in reserving a spot, please be sure to connect with our Business Services Department 413-654-1650; Clean Energy/HVAC info here at MassHire Springfield <https://masshirespringfield.org/energy-efficiency-technician/>
- MassHire Franklin/Hampshire: multi-industry job fair on April 3, 2-4 pm at Hampshire Mall; working closely with GCC on manufacturing trainings
- MassHire Berkshire: English language employment classes to supplement ESOL since wait lists are so long; Job Fair at BCC on 4/30

Network budget and policy updates:

- The Network's [FY26 budget priorities](#) and [2025-2026 legislative priorities](#) were introduced at county-based legislative meetings in early March. Read all about them [here](#).
- The Network's annual gathering is happening on Friday, May 30, at HCC. [See the flyer and register here!](#)

Next meeting date: Monday, June 23, 11 am