

Ontario County agency offers multiple avenues for job seekers

By: [Special to the RBJ](#) Michael Sykes August 30, 2021



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It is something that often comes up in conversation with others. It is sometimes how we define ourselves and can become an identity, a measure of our perceived value both to ourselves and to society. Its presence can provide stability and its absence constant struggle and trepidation. It is the topic of countless headlines and the focus of constant debate. What is this concept that holds so much sway over our lives? It is work. Only 4 letters, a single syllable and yet the implications of this small word can be monumental to both the individual and society.

Ontario County sits in the scenic Finger Lakes region of upstate New York. The Ontario County Workforce Development office houses specialists whose purpose is to provide individualized job search assistance and connection to employment resources for job seekers. These services may be especially valuable to those transitioning back into the job market as extended UIB and benefits begin to wind down. Whether a job seeker needs assistance creating a résumé, preparing for an interview, or counseling related to the job search, our professional staff provides the educational opportunities and support services to guide individuals to financial independence through employment. Our on-site Resource Room was recently updated and offers the computers and electronic equipment necessary for a successful job search in a supportive environment where assistance is readily available every step of the way.

Individualized Training Accounts (ITA's) provide funding to job seekers who wish to participate in a certificate-based job skills training program. Upon completion, trainees can quickly find employment in an employment sector that they previously would have been prevented from entering due to the lack of credentials and specific skills. This progressive program is already addressing the educational movement of micro-

credentialing, which provides short-term, focused job skills training that leads directly to employment in specific career fields.

On the Job Training (OJT) and Customized Training (CT) programs are funding sources to assist businesses in need of employees with the knowledge and technical skills to perform increasingly complex job duties. From learning software programs to high tech manufacturing procedures and automated equipment, the trainees that progress through the OJT program possess new transferrable and marketable skillsets that will ensure employment opportunities now and in the future. Businesses who utilize this funding program gain a monetary reimbursement for providing experiential training to new or existing employees that helps to offset production loss resulting from hosting a trainee.

Our year-round and Summer Youth programs offer services and educational opportunities for those 16-to-24 years of age who qualify through income and ability levels. Youth participants have access to training and experiential learning activities that are administered by an experienced Youth Counselor and staff dedicated to meeting the needs of younger clients.

A strong economy is the key to a strong community, and a skilled workforce is necessary for businesses to thrive. Regions offering programs that provide job acquisition skills and access to training establish a fertile labor environment in which businesses may grow and flourish. Workforce Development Services improve employment outcomes by benefitting both job seeker and business and they are not just available to those who lack formalized education. We have reviewed, updated, and created résumés and conducted mock interviews for job seekers ranging from cashiers to production workers to chemical engineers and those with advanced careers, and our skilled counselors can assist any job seeker who walks through our door. Whether you are currently unemployed, looking to change jobs or careers, or are pursuing career advancement, there is something for everyone at Ontario County Workforce Development.

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