

In-school career program forms independent nonprofit to train students for high-demand work

By: *Justin Henry*

September 28, 2020 2:52 pm



Lynda Morris heads the Enola-based Partnership for Career Development, which recently re-established itself as an independent nonprofit. – PHOTO/SUBMITTED

Having established itself earlier this month as an independent nonprofit organization, the Enola-based Partnership for Career Development has appointed board members and CEO Lynda Morris.

The Partnership for Career Development – previously the in-school youth career readiness arm of work training initiative South Central PA Works – has transformed itself to an independent nonprofit organization, dedicated to helping schools align student career interests and abilities with high-priority occupations. The partnership’s programs include county-level consortiums for educators to collaborate, career fairs for high-school students and on-site business tours for educators to share insights with their students.

The partnership is funded, in part, by grants from the state departments of Labor and Industry, Education and Community and Economic Development, and joins 22 south-central school districts for the 2020-21 school year. Morris was named the organization’s executive director in 2015 and led the program when it became South Central PA Works’ college and career readiness arm.

Morris said re-launching as an independent entity in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic will be difficult but all the more necessary as businesses look to hire a qualified workforce and students look for job opportunities in the economic aftermath.

“We recognize that we are undertaking this evolution during an unprecedented time – the intersection of a pandemic, an economic crisis and widespread mobilization for social justice,” Morris said in a statement released by the nonprofit last week. “Likewise, we recognize that the work we do is profoundly critical – because of current conditions and in response to them. Aligning career readiness with the needs of south central Pennsylvania employers is key to achieving a strong recovery in the short-term and ensuring a prosperous future for all in the long-term.”

Morris is a member of the Best Practices in Workforce Development, Economic Development and Education Committee, which is a committee of Gov. Tom Wolf’s Keystone Economic Development and Workforce Command Center. Morris is a member of Pennsylvania’s Next Generation Industry Partnership for Manufacturing, representing in-school youth for the region. She also serves on other committees and advisory boards dedicated to education, workforce development and business partnerships in Pennsylvania.

Morris is joined on the board by other midstate industry leaders, including:

Marissa Bankert, executive director, Central Pennsylvania Independent Electrical Contractors.

Doran Condan, director of Workforce Initiatives, PA Workforce Development Association.

Tiffanie DeVan, higher education access partner, PHEAA.

Shaun Donovan, director of regional workforce partnerships, Harrisburg Regional Chamber & CREDC.

Robin Harmon, site administrator, PA CareerLink Franklin County, Equus Workforce Solutions.

Shelly Matter, director of business development, H.B. McClure Company.

Todd Morris, vice president, Pennoni Engineering, ACEC.

Tom Palisin, executive director, The Manufacturers’ Association.

Andria Saia, executive director, Capital Area Intermediate Unit.

Peter Tartline, CFO, Pennsylvania Health Care Association.

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