

Connecticut DESPP/DEMHS Region IV  
**Recovery Steering Committee**

**Economic/Natural & Cultural Resources Working Group**

April 20, 2021 - Meeting Notes

**Attendance:**

Hoween Flexer	Amanda Kennedy	Sam Alexander	James Butler
Mickey Morabito	Carly Holzschuh	Tyra Penn	Sheri Cote
Darlene Richards	Hoween Flexer	Wendy Bury	Mike Gantick
	Mickey Morabito	Elsa Nunez	Suki Lagrito
	Justin LaFountain	Nancy Cowser	Mark Oefinger

**Panel Discussion**

- **Workforce Development**
  - Beginning May 9th is International Economic Development Week.
  - Service/hospitality industries such as hotels and restaurants are heavily impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, one main reason being the level of difficulty there is to engage the candidates to apply.
- **Mental Health**
  - Concerns of generational diversity - there is an increase in mental illnesses, resulting in more medications, and learning disability within the younger generation.
  - Due to isolation, students may lose their support systems, which then exacerbates their conditions.

**Identified Unmet Needs Status**

- Foreign language assistance for variety of relief programs, and PPE issues have been moved up to the Emergency Management Communications Committee at the State level.
- CT Farmers have access to apply for assistance with the newly announced federal programs that has been made available for the agricultural supply chains.

**Other Issues/New Unmet Needs**

- In regards to businesses having difficulty in hiring staff, conversation of holding job fairs were mentioned. A large amount of the unemployed aren't willing to forego their unemployment benefits for a lesser weekly wage. With that, discussion of holding job fairs around unemployment benefits discontinuation date arose.
- How can those that are unemployed be encouraged to join the work force sooner?

**Public Comment**

- With increase of COVID-19 vaccinations, the state will begin to loosen the restrictions, and in turn, those that have been in isolation may begin to feel more comfort in rejoining the workforce.
- **Global Resilience Institute (GRI)** - please see attached document for information.

**Next Meeting**

- May 18, 2021 11:00am via ZOOM