**Workforce 3One**

**Transcript of Webinar**

**H-1B Ready to Work Jumpstart to Technical Assistance Webinar**

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ERIC BELLINO: To kick things off I'm going to turn it over to Megan Baird who will take it away.

MEGAN BAIRD: Thank you, and hi, everyone, and good afternoon. Welcome to today's "Jumpstart to Technical Assistance webinar for the H-1B Ready to Work Grantees." I am Megan Baird with the Department of Labor, Division of Strategic Investments. And again, we are the program office for the Ready to Work grants.

I am joined today by High Impact Partners, the technical assistance or TA provider that was selected to support the H-1B Ready to Work grants. And the purpose of today's webinar is to introduce you to the TA providers that will be supporting your Ready to Work grants on programmatic activities, and this will be in addition to any technical assistance provided to you by your FPO.

And I did want to turn things over quickly, but first I wanted to introduce who High Impact Partners individuals will be on the call today, Susan Shorters, Ayreen Calimquim, and Annette Gantt. And I'm going to turn things over to Susan Shorters quickly to give a brief introduction of High Impact Partners and to talk a little bit about their role in supporting your grant program.

SUSAN SHORTERS: Great. Thank you so much, Megan. This is Susan Shorters, president and CEO of High Impact Partners or HIP as we go by. We are just absolutely thrilled to be the technical assistance providers for the Ready to Work grants. We've been providing technical assistance and training to Department of Labor ETA grants for the past two works in a variety of capacities and on a variety of different grant programs.

We have a very seasoned and experienced team of technical assistance providers or TA coaches, as we call them, and also a pool of subject matter experts that we work with to provide expert information on various topics related to the grant. And our goal, our number one goal is your success, the success of the grantees, the success of the Ready to Work project, and of course the overall success of the Department of Labor ETA program.

So as I said, we are delighted to be here, and I also wanted to point out that impact is -- as I say all the time, is our middle name, literally, High Impact Partners. And we really take that literally, and we also take it seriously in that we really focus on having a positive impact on the people, the projects, and the performance that we work with. So again, we're delighted to be the technical assistance provider for the Ready to Work grant and look forward to working with you over the course of the next several years for this grant.

And with that I will turn it over to Ayreen Calimquim, who is on our team and who is the on-site project lead at the Department of Labor. You will hear a lot from Ayreen going forward starting now. And so, Ayreen, over to you.

AYREEN CALIMQUIM: Great. Thank you so much, Susan. And I just wanted to say hi to everyone here on the call. Really looking forward to looking with you. Today's agenda will actually be -- Megan will actually speak to that in just a second. Thanks.

MS. BAIRD: So kind of set the stage for you all and what you're going to learn today, we did want to give you a quick performance reporting update to make sure you've received materials and know what's coming. The purpose of today's webinar is to not go over performance reporting. That's going to be a several-phase even that that we'll talk about in a couple of minutes.

But the objective of today's call is to really go over the Ready to Work technical assistance plan and to give you a preview of the program support that you'll be receiving throughout the life of your grant. And we also wanted to take advantage of this opportunity to provide technical assistance on some of the key activities that should have occurred during the grant ramp up phase, which is essential to what you've all been doing the last six months since your grants were awarded.

And we're also going to include some brief polls in our presentation today to determine where you all are in the process of your grants, and these polls really help to inform the TA that can be provided to you guys. And lastly, we will also wanted to give you a heads up on what is coming along the horizon for technical assistance, so the big picture today of what you can expect over the next four years.

So some pretty exciting news -- at least we think it's exciting; I hope you all do as well -- is that we did finally receive OMB approval of the performance reporting materials, and OMB is the Office of Management and Budget and that is the government agency that reviews all requests for data collection. And so obviously they had to approve our materials before we could require you to give us standardized information.

And an email went out to all Ready to Work contacts that we had both authorized representatives and program contacts last Friday -- (technical difficulty) -- in this email that talked about the OMB approval. It also provided all of the documents that are part of this required collection. It also included guidance on when the OMB approvals go into effect, which is not this quarter that you are currently reporting on. The OMB reporting requirements that includes submitting participant level data will go into effect for the quarter ending June 30th.

For this very current quarter ending March 31st, of which you probably all are working on your report and it's due no later than May 15th, we are still following the interim reporting guidance. And what that means is you'll continue to do exactly what you did last quarter.

You will upload a narrative report only into the HUB reporting system, and we also ask that you let us know in the additional information section of your narrative report if you have been serving individuals, just general information on that. And thank you to all of the grantees last quarter that let us know that. Some of you had started serving people almost right away. So that was helpful for us to get a sense of what was going on.

So again, while the focus is not on performance reporting, we did want to walk through quickly the OMB approved documents. Hopefully you all will get a chance to really look at them and go through them prior to the rollout of the performance reporting training that I'll talk about in just a minute. These are the key performance reporting documents listed on this screen. They provide detailed performance reporting instruction and guidance on the standardized collection of participant data.

The first document we really call it the performance reporting bible. It is called the Performance Reporting Handbook. This is probably the most useful piece of information you will ever receive from us related to your grant. Everything you need to know is in this handbook. It has official guidance on submitting your quarterly reports. It has reporting definitions. It includes the data elements, and it talks about performance outcomes.

The second document is the data elements and edit checks. These are the data elements that you are required to collect and track as part of the reporting process.

And lastly is the quarterly performance report form. It is also called the ETA 9166. That is the name of the report form, and this is the form that will sum up and aggregate the participant level data that you upload into HUB. The system will generate this QPR ETA 9166 form based on the participant level information you provided to us.

So again, these documents were in the email that went out on Friday, and the resources are also posted in the Ready to Work grantee Community of Practice. The direct link is on the slide on the screen. And there are also links to the documents in the chat function, if you check that out as well.

And I did want to mention also that you are all familiar with the HUB system. You've been submitting reports in it. We are currently finalizing the next portion of HUB that will allow you to submit participant level data files and also aggregate the data into a quarterly progress report form.

We expect that HUB will be fully functional for all of your performance reporting needs for the quarter ending June 30th. Again, that is when these OMB approved reporting requirements go into effect. It's for the QPR ending June 30th. The system will be available by then, and that is when all of the training is going to roll out on performance reporting data elements and how to use the system.

So to support your performance reporting efforts, if you take a look at the screen, here is an overview of some of the technical assistance that will begin starting soon. The very first event will be a performance reporting HUB 2.0 webinar. Obviously the last one that we had was 1.0. And this will come in late May, early June, and it will go over the key reporting definitions for Ready to Work grants.

We're also going to identify, for those of you that are existing H-1B grantees and have either a technical skills training grant or a jobs accelerator, we're also going to point out the key differences. Obviously Ready to Work was built off of those data elements, but there are some slight variances due to the nature of this specific program. So we're going to help point those out, and we'll also go over the key outcomes that will be reported on your QPR 9166 form and explain to you how that form aggregates the data that you submit to the department.

There will also be live HUB how-to webinar series that will go over very specific pieces of the reporting requirements, including participant tracking using the data elements, how to create data files, how to upload data files, and resolving data file errors in the HUB system. And these webinars and tutorials will be recorded for both you and your staff to access at a later date.

I know that some of you may be fully staffed, and some of you may still be in the process of hiring staff. So we always try to record any of our training events. And we'll also be scheduling small groups, and there will be one-on-one coaching calls available called -- we call them HUB office hours -- to really make sure that you all are getting the technical assistance that you need to help submit your very first and future performance reports.

And again, for all the performance reported -- reporting training events, the key staff that should be attending these are program directors and managers, any IT systems and data entry staff, and any service and training providers that are collecting data. So stay tuned for a save-the-date for this event.

And now, we're going to give you a couple of moments to type in some questions in the chat room. We're not going to open it up and address questions live right now because the purpose of today's webinar is really for programmatic technical assistance, but what we wanted to make sure to do is to capture any performance questions you have to make sure that we include those in our upcoming training events.

And a good question that someone has asked and we will address in upcoming trainings is, "What do you do if you've already been serving participants in prior quarters?" And we'll certainly walk through how you upload that information into the HUB system when we roll out our training.

So feel free to continue to type your performance questions in. We're going to track these, and we're going to move on to the main portion of today's webinar. And I'm going to turn things over to Susan.

MS. SHORTERS: Great. Thank you very much, Megan, for that overview and purpose of this call. I wanted to just chat with you for a few minutes on our technical assistance plan from a big-picture perspective before turning it over to Ayreen Calimquim who will walk you through what we have planned for you in the way of technical assistance, certainly beginning now this year and then over the next four years. But let me start by talking to you about our approach and focus as technical assistance providers.

We have a collaborative and relationship-based approach that is really getting to know you, the grantee, your staff, your key staff, the program director, and those that are key to the project and really working with you on the various areas of your grant. As TA providers or technical assistance coaches our role is really to work with you on the various programmatic areas of your grant, and we would like to make it clear that our role is not a monitor.

So we are not working with you as a monitor or on compliance. That is the area for your federal project officer -- your DOL federal project officer. However, we do, both the TA provider, our TA coaches, and the FPO do work again toward your success.

And we approach technical assistance from a phase-based perspective, that is looking at what phase you are in with respect to your grant and customizing the technical assistance to that phase. This diagram that you're looking at really outlines the big-picture phases that grantees go through in the life cycle of their grant.

So starting with phase one, that's start-up and implementation. You have in that the bulleted right under start-up and implementation, the bulleted areas that you are probably doing now; right, conceptualizing your grant program, which I'm sure you've already done, and the organizational development and then partnership development, so working with partners, etc.

And in that phase the types of TA or type of TA that we provide in various delivery methods are helping you with the program implementation, the process and systems, and really identifying and engaging partners. Our TA providers have helped grantees develop MOUs, look over MOUs. Those are some of the things that we've done in the partnership arena, but again we're here to work with you to be a go-to point of contact programmatically.

In grant life cycle phase two is really the operational phase where you're up and running. You're training, and you're doing the job development, the job placement strategies, etc. And in that phase our TA delivery really -- and deployment really works on the delivery of your program. You would have already implemented it in phase one, but now you're delivering it to participants, managing and enhancing partnerships and collaborations, and also a lot of peer-to-peer learning.

And I will say that we will be infusing peer-to-peer learning really throughout our technical assistance delivery. That's key that you learn not only from us but really learn from each other because you all are doing great things and have promising practices that could be shared.

And then in phase three, that's really stability and sustainability, and let me pause there by saying our TA team really has adapted and actually infuses a philosophy that sustainability begins day one. So we recognize that the grants are for four years, but at the same time we encourage our grantees to be looking at sustainability throughout.

And then so in phase three we're looking at strategically positioning the grantee, helping the grantee look at planning and stakeholders and their growth and expansion and replication and sustainability of the program beyond the DOL support. And so in that phase our TA is really moderate to low from the standpoint of really working with the grantee to collect and promote any promising practices, again strategically planning and looking at sustainability planning, and really applying the lessons learned.

And with that I will turn it over to Ayreen and just really end by saying to emphasize that our approach is on flexibility and in really looking at basing the TA on the grant life cycle as well as on the TA needs that we identify with you over the course of working with you through the monthly TA coaching that we'll provide and also from your quarterly performance reports. We will be gleaning your team needs and customizing the TA accordingly. Ayreen will walk you through the TA that we will be providing over the next four years, and we again look forward to working with you. Ayreen?

MS. CALIMQUIM: Great. Thank you so much, Susan. And on this slide here we wanted to provide all of you an overview of the technical assistance topics that we would like to hit and address throughout the four-year grant life cycle. Again, based on what we discussed earlier, these topics are based on what we know about the grant life cycle.

However, we do want to make sure that we take into consideration the purpose and the objectives of the Ready to Work grantees and the three core tracks of the program, which is, one, providing intensive services, two, providing short-term training that leads to jobs, and, three, the accelerated skills training across a variety of career pathways.

So knowing that the focus of the Ready to Work grants, we decided to jump right in and start to address a lot of the participant services that you'll be providing and employment placement services that you'll be providing. That's -- I jumped right into our third quarter and fourth quarter of what you can expect to look out for in these next six months.

Certainly, as you see here, those first two quarters are on grants management and financial management and performance reporting rollout that the Department of Labor has led on -- as part of our grantee technical assistance process. And then throughout every year there are key topics that are repeated every quarter, and those range from the training design, career pathways, employer partnerships, sustainability planning, and also we want to make sure that on a -- every year we hit the performance and outcomes accountability and have that discussion with you on a yearly basis.

And so with this in mind, like Susan discussed earlier, we really want to have the flexibility of implementing the TA plan. We expect to tailor this plan based on the quarterly reports that you submit and any technical assistance activities -- TA needs that you request and that we see as a need across all the grantees.

So the next slide talks about some of our methods for delivering technical assistance. We'll start with providing group coaching activities. These are topic-driven presentations to support you in achieving the Ready to Work grant program goals. This will include live webinars for all grantees to listen in on and participate in.

Then we'll also schedule small group learning events for more detailed discussion on the topic that was addressed in the larger group setting in those webinars. Some of these topics we'll do a deeper dive on any of the target populations that you're serving through the grant, H-1B occupations, the training strategies including strategies on outreach and recruitment and rapid reemployment strategies.

And last we'll facilitate peer mentoring exchanges where we would like to take this opportunity to pair those grantees that have specific needs to those that have exceptional practices that may help resolve those needs.

The next method for delivering technical assistance is a strategy to support long-term unemployed participants. These are subject matter experts that we have brought on board that have experience and research expertise supporting the long-term unemployed. They will provide the latest research trends that long-term unemployed workers experience, including best practices for supportive services, outreach and recruitment, and employment placement strategies.

After each webinar we'll provide you with an opportunity with FaceTime with our subject matter experts in an "Ask the Expert" grantee roundtable. And this is where the month following that webinar you'll have a chance to have that FaceTime with our subject matter expert for the long-term unemployed.

The next slide is our individualized coaching. These are monthly one-on-one calls that you will have with your TA coach. Some of the key things that's going to happen here first is an assessment call in the next couple months -- we'll talk about this later in the slide -- and then monthly calls that we'll schedule on a regular basis. But before we move on to this slide I did want to float this back to Susan to talk about what does coaching mean. Susan?

MS. SHORTERS: Awesome. Thank you so much, Ayreen. When we talk about coaching, these really mean the support of having a go-to person for grantees to interface with on a programmatic basis.

And really that is looking at from your program design to your implementation and operations, all of those areas that were in the grant phase life cycle slide from a few minutes ago, really helping you to work through all those elements and helping you with resources, whether it's information resources through links or webinars or trainings to let you know about, tool kits, and other types of written resources.

And then it's the one-on-one interaction with the technical assistance coach to share ideas or challenges, promising practices. The technical assistance coaches that are on our team really have an average of about 25 years' experience working with grantees and working in the workforce arena and all of the key components there. As I mentioned earlier, we also have subject matter experts that will be available and working with our coaches as well as with the grantees, providing webinars, et cetera.

So the coaching role is really a go-to person on the programmatic side to really work hand in hand with the grantee staff to help the grant program to be successful. And as I said before, your success as a grantee with this program is our number one priority, and we as a technical assistance team work hand in hand with the Department of Labor, who provided us this great opportunity to provide technical assistance to you. So we see it as a win-win-win scenario to really make this entire program a success.

So that is our role, and for the federal project officers that you will be working closely with, of course that will be on the -- again on the compliance and monitoring side. But that's a little bit about our role as technical assistance providers, and of course, if you have any questions about that, we will be entertaining that. Feel free to put that in the chat.

Ayreen, let me turn it back over to you.

MS. CALIMQUIM: Great. Thank you so much for that, Susan. And lastly, just wanted to show you our next other TA activities and resources that we have coming along the pipeline. We do really want to create a dynamic peer-to-peer sharing opportunity. We hope to use the LinkedIn platform.

This would be a private group for all the Ready to Work grantees for you to come on board, share any resources or any links or websites, any questions that you might pose to your colleagues. We think this would be a great place. Another great platform is the Department of Labor's Community of Practice soon to be launched called Workforce DPS. And with that we'll have more information to provide you with these two peer-to-peer sharing platforms.

Next we'll want to make sure that we communicate with you on a quarterly basis through our e-newsletters. This would be any topics that range from what we discussed in previous webinars, links to some of the latest research and trends, and any coaching sort of tips that we could provide you in these newsletters. And we will certainly, throughout the grant life cycle, will be providing you with resource briefs and fact sheets to further clarify any topics that were discussed previously to reiterate that.

MS. BAIRD: And this is Megan. I just wanted to add a lot of you may be thinking in this very moment, I just got started. I don't need any TA. We're kind of showing you today the menu of TA that's going to be available to you, and I like to call it the choose-your-own-adventure to kind of -- it's going to ebb and flow through the life of your grant.

You may have quarters where you've got things figured out and you don't need any assistance. You may be a rock star in a certain field that someone else is struggling with, and we may ask you to help share some of your best practices. So it's really the menu of offerings is always there, and we just always ask that you continue that feedback cycle and let your FPO know.

Certainly fill out that technical assistance section of your narrative report, and let your coach know if there are specific areas that you really want some technical assistance or specific topics for peer networking. And we can really help to facilitate those as well. So a menu of options that you'll have to choose from.

MS. CALIMQUIM: Great. Thank you, Megan. And with this slide, again, please feel free to enter your questions in the chat room as it relates to our technical assistance plan, any comments that you might have to inform that plan. And if we have some time towards the end of the presentation, we'll try and address some of those questions. But let's move into our next section of today's agenda. Susan?

MS. SHORTERS: Great. Thank you, Ayreen. This section really is designed to walk you through the next set of TA offerings, and as Megan so aptly put it, this is a menu of technical assistance that we are presenting to you so you know what's available going forward.

And in this section we really want to provide you with an opportunity to look at your checklist as it relates to your grant to see where you are now and where you are heading and where you need to go in terms of the promising practices that we are aware of in each of these program areas. So this will actually help you to, again, assess where you are and see where you need to go going forward, and we are here to help you with that.

So with that let me turn it over to Ayreen to walk you through each of these key areas in the grant's ramp up phase. Ayreen?

MS. CALIMQUIM: Thank you so much, Susan, and I'd like to take this time to introduce Annette Gantt who is one of our Ready to Work technical assistance coaches, and she will walk through these sections here. Annette?

MS. GANTT: Hello, everyone. Thank you, Ayreen. So part of obviously your ramp up you want to focus in these three key areas, and program implementation you really want to make sure

that one of the key points is making sure that you have -- you're making hiring decisions in a very timely manner because your program implementation is going to be heavily dependent upon your bringing on the right talent and providing a strong on board process to ensure each of those staff members working on the grant understand his or her role.

In terms of strategies for the grant program, you want to kind of make that a habit. And what I mean by that is really establishing regular meetings so that you're discussing your progress, your challenges, and you're really being proactive in terms of resolving any issues that you may have. I think this would be a great opportunity to also, if you're having challenges, to bring that up with your coaches who also might have access to additional resources that you may not be thinking of.

In terms of the --

MS. CALIMQUIM: Annette, sorry to interrupt you, but we're getting some audio interference. I think if you're on speaker phone, I think grantees are having a hard time hearing.

ANNETTE GANTT: OK.

MS. CALIMQUIM: That is much better. Thank you.

MS. GANTT: OK. So in terms of leadership and budget, communication is key. Sharing -- making sure that the leadership of your organization is sharing the vision and outcomes for the grant is important. Demonstrating the excitement around the big picture and the benefits not only to the program participants but also in the benefits to the employers that -- who may be providing job training, internships, and other resources for your organization, it's very important that there's a consistent communication about the big picture of the grant.

In addition to that, the budget and finance staff should be well-versed in the compliance and tracking expenses, ensuring that the budget and budget narrative align, so just making sure that all of those budget processes are set up and everybody who is involved, all the contributors understand clearly what their roles are. Communicate progress challenges and celebrate success. Tell your story. I think that's -- once program implementation sometimes begins, we lose sight of the little successes. So take time out to celebrate and to recognize those who are doing well.

In terms of program partnership management, my experience has been to develop an employment strategy, and this probably takes the most time. But because it requires collaboration and establishing effective relationships with those who can make hiring or training decisions from an employer perspective and should -- in order to keep employer partners engaged, you want to make sure that you have a monthly activity schedule so that everyone is kept abreast of what the successes are and what the progress has been in order to meet your grant outcomes.

Engage other community stakeholders as well to provide types of services that may expand the scope of your organization. Plan to serve and provide resources to your program participants from a holistic perspective so that he or she is more likely to be able to focus on these direct outcomes you have for this grant for him or her. And for example, if there are challenges with transportation or challenges with human service resources that you may not be an expert in providing, make sure that you're collaborating and partnering with other agencies so that you're serving your participant in as holistically as possible.

And in terms of another partnership engagement that is key, which I mentioned a little bit earlier, is employer engagement. In some respects you have to educate the employers on the benefits of hiring the long-term unemployed, and how to do that, how to really establish job descriptions that really speak to them so that if they've been out of employment for a while, it doesn't require them to have current experience, that's just an example.

But part of partnership engagement is educating them, educating them about the target population that you're serving and what the needs are specifically.

So transition the next slide over to Ayreen.

MS. CALIMQUIM: Great. And here we have some quick polls that we want to get through. Just want to see where you are in your grant program's management processes, if you could select one of these options and sort of let us know where you are in your planning process. We'll give it maybe another two seconds to do that. And it looks like the majority of grantees are close to having all talent, processes, and systems in place. So perfect. Thank you so much for sharing that.

And so we'd like to move towards the next couple slides and go through them rather quickly to make sure that we do get to cover the last next steps. Annette.

MS. GANTT: OK. So this slide is very similar to some of the conversation I already had about engaging your partners in a very holistic manner. Collaboration and partnership development is probably very core to the success of your program, and again, as I shared earlier, plan to really serve your participants from a holistic perspective.

And as you can see here from this slide, community resource matrix includes identifying some service providers based on the assessment that you completed on each of your participants and then reaching out to your community to understand who is a provider and an expert around that particular service and creating a vetting -- all partnerships are not created equally.

So it's important that you have a vetting system so that you're not wasting your time, and you're forming collaborative partnerships with those who are ready to act and really have the services that your participants need. It also includes training partners and formalizing your partnerships through an MOU or memo of understanding or agreement as well.

How to engage the stakeholders? What's needed? Relationship building again through the assessment. Let that really be your guide and developing what the gaps are and what services your participants need beyond what you're already providing and begin making phone calls or establishing those relationships.

And you may have those already set up, but with staffing changes and downsizing in those partnership organizations, you may need to make sure that you're always revisiting the partnership and seeing who may have left that organization and a new relationship that you might need to develop. So it takes time to develop those relationships, but think from a holistic and a collaborative relationship.

MS. CALIMQUIM: And then the next slide here -- oh, sorry. Go ahead.

MS. GANTT: I'm sorry. In terms of -- I'm trying to make sure that we don't run out of time here. So early employer engagement is key as well. Understand what your industry market says in terms of the number of jobs available in key occupations, as well as the wages, job duties, educational and skill requirements, job titles, and largest employers.

And focus on your employer -- building your employer engagement and strategy from that perspective. In terms of the skills needed, make sure that you understand what skills the employers are looking for and staffing agencies are seeking, and again, really aligning that information with the assessment that you've already completed on your participants.

Industry growth, understand where the key industry growth is. It could be in hospitality or in the hospital industry, whatever it is, retail industry, whatever that particular job -- where that job growth is. Make sure you clearly understand that so you can then develop and tailor your training programs appropriately.

MS. CALIMQUIM: And then this slide -- and then if you don't mind me jumping in, we do provide some tips here for you for stakeholder engagement. We're not going to go over this slide, but just know we'll develop some sort of resource briefs or make sure to revisit this in your monthly coaching calls.

And with that we'd like to bring up the next slide for our polling question on where you are in your capacity in stakeholder and employer engagement. And the four selections here are, one, we're just getting started; two, we're in the process of establishing our engagement; three, employer and stakeholder engagements are in place; and four, employer and stakeholder goals and commitments are in place.

And thank you so much for entering your selections here. It looks like we are along the lines of in the process of establishing our engagements and also getting employers and stakeholders in place. So this is great feedback for us to know. Certainly those grantees that have those commitments in place, we'll certainly be calling on you as our subject matter experts on that.

The next slide Annette will be talking about our leadership and decision-making strategies. Annette?

MS. GANTT: OK. In terms of your leadership strategies, you want to make sure that you have established a regular strategic planning cycle, and that involves not only just completing a strategic planning process on an annual basis but ten tailoring your annual operations plans accordingly and revisiting them in terms of the progress on a quarterly basis. This is where also stakeholder and partnership engagement is important. I won't repeat what I've already shared in terms of engaging your partners.

Fiscal management is key, making sure that you're always focusing on the budget and expenses and compliance, making sure that everything lines up according to the grant requirements. Data analysis and performance reporting, making sure that you have a data system that is very user friendly and is able to collect valid data, accurate data, and then do some analysis that -- in order to help you meet your performance reporting.

In terms of your management team, your focus should be heavily on the program development and quality side, making sure that implementation processes are clearly outlined for all the staff who will be involved and training them appropriately. Your program service delivery should focus on fidelity and making sure that the services being provided are of a quality nature and really focuses on the outcomes and leads to the employment goals that you have for your grant.

Your talent development really you should make sure that you're taking time to train them properly and manage them and develop their skillsets not only for this grant but overall, especially in dealing with the population that you're serving. And they too should be focusing on collecting valid and reliable data and making -- and understanding how to make sure that is recorded correctly.

And finally, your implementation team is focused on partnership -- partner recruitment and training, which some of these, they're similar responsibilities. Partner recruitment and training but your implementation team more likely has the frontline relationship with the partners you're working with in the community.

Employer recruitment strategy should focus on -- one example should be focus on a referral process, establishing a relationship with a couple of employers who will be willing for your participants to be their kind of referral source. And then finally, your partnership agreements should be very clear, outlining your role as well as their role, and it should be reviewed in terms of progress on a quarterly basis.

MS. CALIMQUIM: Great.

MS. GANTT: And now for the next poll?

MS. CALIMQUIM: Yeah. Thank you so much, Annette. So the last polling question that we have here is we're asking you to assess your capacity in leadership and decision-making strategies.

We have six options here. Please select where you are in that process. One, we're just getting started. Two, we're in the process of finalizing our strategy to serve long-term unemployed. Number three, we have a strategy in place to serve the long-term unemployed. Four, most of our internal stakeholders are aware and trained for our long-term unemployed strategy. And five, most of our external stakeholders are engaged with our LTU strategy, or six, it's a combination of three, four, and five are in place.

Great. It looks like the majority of grantees are in that combination phase, which is great to hear. And a few folks are still just getting started, which is great because these are opportunities where we can provide you with technical assistance.

In the next slide we wanted to show here it's our slide on jumping hoops and ways that you could get through some of the hurdles that we've seen from the grant ramp up process. We won't go in too much detail about these hurdles that you see here, the top five that we've seen, but certainly identify solutions in which you could make sure that these challenges are addressed.

Here is where -- thank you so much, Annette, for that presentation. There are questions here that we'd like to open it up for you to enter your questions into the chat room. And again, we'll address questions towards the back of the -- at the end of the presentation when -- if we have time or, if not, we'll certainly follow up after the webinar.

The next section of our presentation is to talk about what's next in technical assistance and wanted to let you know coming soon, shortly after this webinar, the recording, the PowerPoint presentation, and we'll put together a resource brief based on what was discussed during this webinar to be available next week.

So for you and your staff that was not able to attend this call, they have access to the recording. They have access to the PowerPoint, or if they don't have time for those either reviewing those two items, we will have the one- to two-pager highlights of what was discussed during these calls.

We discussed earlier about the choose your own adventure in technical assistance. We'll be producing a menu of technical assistance activities, which is a resource guide that you will have available. The monthly TA coaching calls, we hope to start those by May 18th. In the next couple of days your coaches will be reaching out to you and your FPOs to identify a set date and time that you can conduct these monthly calls. And coming soon we would like to launch our subject matter expert series on the long-term unemployed, and that will begin at the end of June.

And here we want to introduce you to our technical assistance coaches. Well, you've already heard from Annette, but I would really like for her to talk with you about some of her expertise. She is based in Maryland. So hopefully this will come in handy for the region one grantees that are assigned to her as their coach. Annette, could you tell us a little bit more about yourself?

MS. GANTT: OK. I'll be very brief. I have 20 years in non-profit executive leadership experience. I've spent most of my time upstate New York running a non-profit organization. I have a great deal of partnership development working with the private and public sector. I've focused heavily on workforce development, establishing employment strategies, engage employers, and then translate their needs into the training program that was most beneficial for our participants.

I had an opportunity to implement and develop a program which was the main reason I relocated to Maryland, and I've worked for organizations that were very mission-centered through -- and the way that we accomplished those missions was heavily through collaboration and partnership development.

Part of my experience as well was with the national organization really focusing on 20 -- about 20 -- 183 affiliates across the country in 23 states, focusing on organizational development and capacity building, and board development as well. I currently am a consultant. One of my clients is with the Montgomery County Workforce Investment Board, where I'm really helping them implement a STEM boot camp as we speak. I also teach at the University of Maryland University College. I teach management and organization development.

MS. CALIMQUIM: Great. Thank you so much, Annette. And certainly the STEM boot camp training that you're working on right now could certainly be beneficial to our grantees.

MS. BAIRD: And I do -- this is Megan. I do want to add if you're looking at this slide and you are wondering where you are, the coaches were assigned groups of grantees. So we're going to show you several groups and who the assigned coach is. It mostly aligns with -- when it says region, it's Employment and Training Administration's regions. We have six of them.

Hopefully you know what region you're in, and if you are not aware, ask your FPO. But you're in groups together. So if you don't see yourself on this slide right here to see who your coach is, you'll see it soon, and your coaches will be reaching out to you after today's webinar to again introduce themselves and talk a little bit about their role and how they're going to coordinate a very first call to have a conversation.

MS. CALIMQUIM: Yeah. Absolutely. And here we are for the TA coach for Regions One, Two, and Three along the Atlantic coast. Jen Swidler is based in Florida and has also lived in Puerto Rico. So she'll certainly have some expertise to bring to that. Jen is an employment expert and human resources professional. She's worked with clients in all industries on a variety of career growth and management strategies.

She has a background in managing, recruiting and hiring, compensation, and employee development of public and private organizations. And other areas of expertise include assisting veterans in transitioning from the military to the civilian world, guiding skilled professionals in preparing for career changes, and helping the long-term unemployed individuals build marketable skills.

Our next TA coach is based in the Midwest. He's in Illinois. So we have him supporting the grantees in Regions Four, Five -- I'm sorry -- Three, Four, and Five. And Lyle has more than 20 years of experience in the areas relevant to DOL and ETA programs. He served two governors as a member of the Illinois State Board of Education and later worked for the State of Illinois serving the Department of Employment Security and Unemployment and Compensation and labor exchange programs and also the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity Office. So Lyle is certainly an expert on our public workforce system, and we'll certainly call on him for that level of expertise.

And last is our TA coach, Tressa Dorsey. She is based in Northern California. So we've assigned to her the Ready -- the grantees in the upper Midwest and Pacific Northwest regions of Four, Five, and Six. Tressa brings to our team more than 17 years of experience in workforce development, social services management, and direct services expertise. She has provided training and education to non-profit, county, and tribal organizations in multiple social service disciplines to support displaced and chronically unemployed individuals and those that experience significant barriers to gaining employment through traditional methods.

MS. SHORTERS: And again, you will have, as Ayreen mentioned, all of the expertise of all of our coaches, and we're also going to have additional subject matter expertise. You will have access to all of them. The role of the coach really is the individual assigned to your grant that's really going to be your main technical assistance contact, and they're going to be able to help bring in other subject matter expertises and other coaches on an as-needed basis.

So this person's going to know the most about your project and know when to bring other people in. So you'll have access to everyone, but this will be your primary person to kind of help route that for you.

MS. BAIRD: Great. And please enter any questions that you might have on everything that we discussed during today's presentation. There was a question that was posted in the chat, and our team member here has replied to that in the chat window. It looks like a few folks are entering some questions. So we'll take maybe a minute of our presentation to review what those are and address some of them, if needed.

There was a question on where these resources from the recording will be located. The invitation that you used to register for the webinar, the PowerPoint presentation, the recording, and the transcript to our call today is included in that registration page. We will link that registration page in the Ready to Work Community of Practice, and you will receive an email if you registered that these resources have been posted on the Community of Practice.

And coming soon we will have our technical assistance coaches reaching out to you in the next -- actually these next couple of weeks to determine what time and date might work best for you to begin those calls starting May 18th.

MS. CALIMQUIM: So you all should receive an email from the coach assigned to your grant, and they'll have copied both your FPO and the Ready to Work email address. So be on the lookout for that, and rest assured, if you think you missed it, we promise you that if we don't hear from you because it went AWOL, we'll continue to follow up. So definitely look for that email.

MS. BAIRD: Great. And it looks like there are no other questions. We did get a couple of performance questions, which thank you very much. We are going to make sure that that is included -- some great questions are included in our upcoming performance reporting training. I did want to point out, if you do have a specific policy question around allowability of something under the Ready to Work grant, that we really want to give a written response to that just to make sure it's very clear.

So if you do have a policy question, you can email it to your FPO. You can also copy the Ready to Work email address, and we can make sure to get a written response back. Sometimes policy questions are things that you need to answer -- they're things you need to see in writing so you can kind of keep that, as opposed to discussing it over a webinar. So if you sent one in here or you have one later, to make sure to send it to your FPO and you can copy Ready to Work.

MS. CALIMQUIM: Great. And with that --

MS. BAIRD: And we did want to point out, as you're going through the performance reporting materials in the next couple of weeks reading through them -- obviously you guys are probably working on your report due soon -- please send questions in to Ready to Work and we'll, as best as possible, try to make sure that we incorporate any of those questions you have into our upcoming training.

MS. SHORTERS: And this is the last slide to -- one of the last slides to let you know that this is the front facing page of your Ready to Work Community of Practice, and the last slide is the contacts that you should have for the Department of Labor. Always your federal project officer is the first go-to.

Then the national office at DSI, and your technical assistance provider is always available through the Ready to Work grantee mailbox at RTW@dol.gov. And with that we thank you so much for your time today and your questions, and we are certainly looking forward to these next couple of years and working really closely with you to achieve the goals and objectives of the Ready to Work grant.

And with that thank you so much, everyone. Have a wonderful day.

(END)