**Workforce 3One**

**Transcript of Webinar**

**Peer Learning Exchange: Using Traditional and Real-Time Labor Market Information to Support Industry Sector Strategies**

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*Transcript by*

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ERIC BELLINO: So I'll turn things over to Gretchen Sullivan, who is a senior consultant at Maher & Maher. Gretchen?

GRETCHEN SULLIVAN: Thanks, Eric. Good afternoon or good morning, as the case may be for some of you. Thank you so much for joining us this afternoon. We're really looking forward to a great conversation with you today.

I'll introduce myself and say a little bit more about the project here at the beginning. But to get us started, I'm actually going to turn it over to our leadership for this project at ETA, Pam Frugoli and Lauren Fairley, to start us off with some welcoming remarks.

PAM FRUGOLI: Thank you, Gretchen. And thanks to all of you for joining us today for this peer learning experience.

This is just one of several activities that have been conducted as part of the two-year technical assistance project that ETA has led, working with states on ways to use real-time labor market information, in combination with traditional LMI, as a supplement to identify information to support sector strategies, support identification and promotion of career pathways, and to make information on labor market demand actionable for the workforce system and for individual jobseekers.

So over the last two years, our TLMI technical assistance project has produced webinars on the topic, as well as an environmental scan on the use of real-time LMI in combination with traditional LMI. We are wrapping up this TA initiative with today's peer learning exchange.

The project also will produce a second report in the next month or so, and launch a training module on using real-time LMI effectively in combination with traditional LMI.

During the course of this project, 10 states have had the opportunity to receive temporary access to real-time labor market information tools and receive coaching to achieve specific goals identified in their states. So representatives from the labor market information agencies in those states may be participating today and we are happy to provide this additional opportunity for resource sharing and technical assistance among users of these tools.

Today's exchange will allow two knowledgeable presenters to share useful information on leveraging both traditional and real-time LMI together to design and advance strategies for target industry sectors.

Given the significant emphasis upon industry sector strategies that are informed by labor market information in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act – WIOA – this peer learning exchange may also be useful in preparing for implementation of the opportunity act.

So I want to thank you again for joining us today and we look forward to a fruitful dialogue. And with that, I will turn things back over to Gretchen.

MS. SULLIVAN: Great, Pam. Thank you so much. Again, everyone, hi and welcome. This is Gretchen Sullivan. I'm a senior consultant with Maher & Maher. We, in close partnership with Jobs for the Future and the New York City Labor Market Information Service, have been working in a consulting capacity to support ETA on this technical assistance project over the last several years. And it's really exciting to be with you all today.

It's also great to see some familiar names there in our welcome chat. So want to say hi to New Hampshire and Utah and Oregon. And I think we've got a couple of others that we'll keep our eyes out for. Thanks so much to the states that are part of our project that have joined us today.

I'm going to move us forward here pretty quickly. But I just wanted to say – really to emphasize what Pam has said, we think this is a really exciting opportunity, this dialogue with you today, to link a number of different areas of interest that I think a lot of you are already doing a lot of work around.

Obviously, WIOA with its critical focus on industry sector strategies and career pathways and enhancing services both for jobseekers and employers, connected to how labor market information really can help inform those efforts. It's really an exciting opportunity, I think, to knit a lot of different things together.

And I want to say at the outset, we are calling this a peer learning exchange because we really do want it to be an exchange of ideas and information and questions. And we really want this to be as dialogue-based as possible.

We are a relatively small group today and we did that intentionally. We didn't open this up into a very large webinar room because we really wanted people to have the opportunity to share their work, to ask questions, to hear from the experts we have in the session today, as well as from their peers who are doing work in this area.

So throughout I'm going to really encourage you to not be shy and to please be chiming in in that chat area, and also over the phone, when we pause at various points this afternoon for dialogue. We really are hoping to have a conversation with you. And I think it's a great opportunity to learn from our project partners today as well as from one another.

Just in terms of process, I will be sharing a little bit about the agenda here in the morning and introducing our presenters. We will be pausing at a couple points throughout our time together today for questions. But certainly do feel free to enter your comments there, your questions in the chat, and we will do our very best to answer them as we go along.

OK. So in order to get a better sense of what you all are most interested in today, we'd like you there in the chat window to please let us know what you're most hoping to get out of the session today and what you'd like to learn. And we'll keep an eye on that as you all are chiming in. But we really want to understand what brought you here today. What are you looking for some help around? What would you like to learn more about? So that we can be as responsive to you as possible today.

OK. Great. Already seeing some coming in. So, "What are some of the best LMI tools to use?" That's great. Thank you for sharing that, Adam. And we'll keep our eye there on additional feedback that's coming in.

So in terms of our objectives and agenda for today, this is how we've framed the day. And as I said, taking a look at what you're saying you're hoping to hear about, we'll stay as focused on that as we can.

Oh, Stefan (sp), thank you, "Combining traditional and real-time LMI." Excellent. That's excellent feedback and I think we can help you out there.

"What types of questions workforce planners try to answer and what combination of real-time and traditional can help answer those questions?" Thank you very much. That's excellent. I think there's a lot of interest in this area.

So this is how we structured the day. And I'll highlight a couple more of your questions as they come in.

We're going to start out hearing from our partner Lesley Hirsch with the New York City Labor Market Information Service. And she's going to talk with us about strategies for using LMI to identify your focus industry sectors. We'll then pause for some questions and we'll be turning it over to Jeremy Kelley with Jobs for the Future, who's going to be talking specifically around identifying career development opportunities using real-time LMI. So talking a little bit about some strategies for that.

And then where we really want to spend a lot of our time today throughout and toward the end of our session is in conversation with you. So again, this is really an opportunity for you all to ask questions of our experts here to get some on-the-spot technical assistance. And hopefully, ask some questions and learn some more about what you each are doing, what your peers in the field are working on.

So that's how we're going to organize our time together today.

I just wanted to highlight Nick. I'm assuming that's our friend Nick from Oregon. Thank you very much. "Always looking for additional ways to use real-time LMI to help our customers."

And then from Patricia, "Using LMI to predict, in a forward-looking way, what sectors will be growing." Excellent. That is terrific feedback.

Before I move forward I should have said, in terms of using your phone today – and Eric might have said this to you before our session got started – to unmute your phone line, just press \*6. Again, we are hoping when we're pausing for questions that you all will feel free to chime in over the phone. So that's how you do that. And as I said, we'll continue to take a look at your comments in the chat and be as responsive to those as we can and take your questions there as well.

So we're very pleased, as I said, to have our two expert presenters here with us today, Lesley with the New York City Labor Market Information Service, and Jeremy with Jobs for the Future, who, as I mentioned, they have been critical partners throughout this entire process of working on the TA project with ETA. And their organizations have been serving in coaching capacities with the states that we have been able to work with from the outset. So, really glad to have the opportunity to hear from them today.

And with that, I am going to turn it over to Lesley for the first part of our conversation, talking about using LMI to identify sectors of focus.

LESLEY HIRSCH: So good morning to those of you on the West Coast. And good afternoon to those of you on the East Coast and in the middle. Thank you very much to DOL and Maher & Maher for inviting me to speak with you all today. And welcome to all the participants of today's session.

Before we begin, just a few words about my organization. I'm from the New York City Labor Market Information Service and we are housed at the City University of New York – or CUNY, we call it – Graduate Center in Midtown Manhattan. And I'm only mentioning that not because we're the center of the world, like a lot of New Yorkers like to say; I'm saying it in case you hear ambulances or fire trucks in the background while I'm speaking. I don't want you to get alarmed.

CUNY serves more than 500,000 degree and non-degree students a year in 24 colleges across New York City. So it's a pretty major player in our local workforce development system.

We were formed in 2008 to provide research tools and capacity-building services to education, workforce and economic development practitioners and policymakers. And I've been with it since its foundation.

So I'd like to – it would be helpful to get a sense of who's in the audience and your level of familiarity with the subject matter. Which one of these statements comes closest to describing you? Can you go ahead and please answer the poll that's right in front of you? (Pause.)

Well, this is great. So for those of you who have a lot of familiarity with it or have been involved in developing them, this is going to help you with some tips and tricks I think for the next time, and for monitoring the sector you're already working in.

And it looks like most of our participants are clicking on "just beginning to think about it," so today's session is definitely going to inform the way you approach sector strategies. And it's good because it's before you begin and will help you assess existing strategies in your areas.

And not to worry, for those of you who aren't that familiar with sector strategies before we even begin. It's a good idea to get a handle on your state, your regional or your local labor market. And you're going to learn how to do that in just a moment.

For those who – there we go. For those of you who are fairly new to sector strategies, these are the major features. First and foremost, it requires a close focus on a single industry. For the LMI people in the audience, the words "sector" and "LMI" just – I'm always mindful of the fact that we always use abbreviations. I'm going to say that from here out, but it stands for "labor market information."

And for those people who are very familiar with LMI, the word "sector" in "sector strategies" doesn't mean what it means to labor economists. It's really about something that's a defined set of industries or firms, like IT hardware or energy efficiency or an industry like hospitals – or general and surgical hospitals. The most important thing is that you can define it and that the firms within it are more similar than they are different. And firms tend to have similar staffing needs and challenges.

It's a dual-demand model, meaning you're working with workers as well as the firms. It's organized generally by a workforce intermediary, somebody who can get people around the table and can get other resources around the table. It's focused on getting relatively entry-level people jobs and helping them advance through an industry. And then the last one is a little bit more controversial. It's not always a feature of sector strategies, but strictly speaking a real benefit of them is that you can improve systems and conditions for industries' workers in the region using sector strategies.

The topic today is about using LMI to design and implement sector strategies. I'll cover the design aspect, selecting the sector; and my colleague Jeremy is discussing LMI during implementation.

This diagram shows that the analysis of LMI is part of and not the entire process. It is part of an iterative process. So you may use it to design – once you've gone ahead and you've designed and implemented your strategy, you want to go back and evaluate it and then analyze data again. The key message here is that you begin by knowing what needs you want to address and what goals you want to accomplish. As you'll see, the data may tell you a lot, but you must have a point of view in order to interpret it.

Some examples of the factors that might be at play for someone in my state or city are here on this slide. Do elected officials have a strategic focus on a particular neighborhood or city? Is there a strong economic development goal? And for the last two about universal pre-K and Medicaid reform, is there a large-scale change underway in your region that might require a whole new workforce?

Some rules. We always should use multiple data sources and be sure that your sources are balanced. All of the LMI I'm about to show you should be validated by other sources, especially talking to people from trade associations and of course the employers themselves.

On the right is the picture of the six blind men with an elephant. For those of you who don't know the parable, I'll tell you at least three of them. One of them is holding the tusk and saying it's a spear. Another one's holding the tail and saying it's a rope. And a third one is holding onto a leg and saying it's a pillar. It's only when they all put it together and they speak with one another that they truly know what they're standing in front of.

The message from the parable, and the importance here, is that it's both the details and the whole picture that are important. We need to provide a complete picture.

And here are the considerations that I'm going to be running through. So these are some of the aspects or considerations around each of the sectors in your own local, regional or state economy. You're going to want to look at size, growth, stability, and you may even – kind of hoping we'll hear later – think of other things that are really important that you want to look at.

I'm going to walk you through a lot of data sources. By necessity I'll need to move somewhat quickly, but you don't need to take notes because DOL is going to make this deck available to you. Plus, there are summary slides at the end that show you all the items and all the data that I used to address the questions that are here.

You don't have to be a whiz kid with LMI to be able to use this material. If you're not that familiar with it, please do go ahead and use this framework as a way to get started and work with someone who does, like your local or regional LMI analyst or your state department of labor. Along the way, if you have questions also, really want to encourage you to put those in your chat box.

So this image I'm going to come back to, but I wanted to give it to you as sort of a frame for what we're going to be talking about. Industries are listed down the left side, one through nine; and the criteria are listed across the top.

So first question, is it big enough? Are there enough jobs? It may sound silly, but too many times workforce strategies have been started on a wing and a prayer. We need to remember that industry demand is a necessary, though maybe not sufficient, criterion for sector selection. In such a case you can look at absolute numbers or you can look at the number of openings. In this case we're looking at absolute numbers of jobs and we're looking at the absolute largest industries in New York City.

I'm using quite a bit of specificity here. We're looking at a – for those of you who do do LMI, this is the industry group level, four-digit, using the North American Taxonomy of Classifying Industries (sic). And that is simply because there is just too much variation within a sector at large.

That's one thing that is a preference that I would encourage other people to follow as well. You can start at the broader level and then begin to drill down; but ultimately, in my view, you really do need to start with some specificity.

Let's say for this particular criterion we want to set a threshold of 100,000 jobs, although that seems kind of high. In that case – and let me see if I can drag down that arrow. Let's see. We'd be looking just at those top few – the top five. We'd be looking at restaurants, elementary schools, hospitals, individual/family services, and colleges and universities.

The second slide here we're looking at, after absolute size, is we want to assess, is this a growing industry? Is it stable? Or is it shrinking? And clearly, stability is a minimum criterion for selecting a sector, just at least having a stable kind of employment.

This chart shows the industries in my region with the most growth in both jobs and wages over the past 10 years. Along the horizontal axis is employment change and along the vertical axis is real wage change – that means inflation-adjusted. So you can see that bubble right at the top – we all know of other financial investments; it's part of investment banking. It's seen equivalent job and wage growth; whereas wage growth has really lagged for – lagged job growth for most of these other industries.

This is something we'll all find to a great extent because it's really been the story of the nation over the past 10 years or more.

After size and growth, you want to look at stability. And stability means a bunch of different things. Does hiring go through seasonal peaks and valleys? Do we see wild fluctuations before, during and after recessions?

So on the left we look at a four-year trend of online advertisements – this is using real-time LMI – in the hotel industry. The red stripes are – they're not red; they're blue stripes, excuse me. The blue stripes are spring and the gray stripes are winter. For the most part, we can see it's a pretty distinct trend that deep winter the demand, as translated into online ad volume, is fairly low. And springtime demand, as it's translated into ad volume, is fairly high.

On the right, we like to call that our spaghetti chart. It's the top five most – top five performing sectors. And now we are operating at a higher level. The gray bars are the recessions of 2001 and 2008 and '9, and we can see that even the highest performing sectors here, like health care and restaurants, lost jobs during the recession.

So it's not about somebody who's going to be recession-resistant, so to speak. What distinguishes these is that they bounce back and move into positive growth quickly after – during the recovery and after the recession.

Distribution. So geography. Location is important. Recall that in that first slide I showed you that our governor was very interested in trying to help revive the economy and stimulate the economy of Buffalo. Buffalo is that arrow all the way on the left, closer to – almost on the border with Canada.

So let's take a look at where the jobs are concentrated. I'm using here something else that – not necessarily sure you'd call it real-time data because it's using data that's backward looking, but it's an online data source called OntheMap. It's from the Census Bureau. And it's not exactly intuitive to use, but it's a really, really valuable resource. You can look at labor sheds – meaning understanding where the jobs are in a particular area – or you can look at residents, workers, employee sheds, so you can then understand who lives in that area.

In this case, we see that concentration of jobs in food manufacturing. And we can see that there's this band that goes right across central New York, from Buffalo on the left all the way over to Albany on the right and then moving down. So we have the highest concentration in Brooklyn. But then we also have Erie County as number two; and that is where Buffalo is, after all.

Now, this one is something I've alluded to already when I mentioned to you before the North American Industry Classification System. This factor is key. Here is how you a breakdown of industries within the accommodation and food services sector. It's made up of hotels, restaurants, catering services, fast food. All of these are slightly different and I think you'll find have somewhat different staffing needs and staffing patterns.

So it's important to understand that when you're defining your sector, you want to make sure that it's homogeneous, as homogenous as possible in terms of the staffing needs. It's also important that it's unique. And I'll show you in just a moment – and basically, this is not really an LMI tool; it's just really looking at the taxonomy system. And it's right there on the Census website.

In this case, I'm looking at something called the staffing pattern matrix. Or some people call it industry/occupation tables. Which basically is telling you within a given industry, what are the occupations that are the most frequently found? And I'm looking at traveler accommodation, like we were looking at before. Those are hotels. And on the right we're looking at lessors of real estate, which is really property managers.

You also might find in this case that there are similarities between sectors that you wouldn't have necessarily known. So we can actually see here that the entry-level jobs in hotels, quite a few of them are the same as they are in property management companies.

Now, not every state has their staffing pattern matrix on the website. You can access your state staffing pattern matrix by calling the state departments of labor. Or, if you have any difficulty doing that, it's perfectly acceptable to go to the Bureau of Labor Statistics and look at their industry occupation matrix for the nation.

Here's where we start getting a little bit tricky. I think I skipped one. OK. Here's where we're starting to get a little bit tricky.

We need to know something about what are the industry staffing needs. So let's say we've talked to employers first and we've talked to trade associations and they're telling us that their workforce is aging out and they're not able to bring in new people. So in this case, we're looking at the American Community Survey, the public use microdata sample, and we see these are the industries in New York City that have the highest proportion of people over the age of 55.

Now, there are a lot of reasons why this might happen. One reason is simply because the industry is not replacing its retirees because it's shrinking. And that's somewhat the case in New York City with manufacturing, for example. Another reason may be that it's highly unionized and there are such great benefits upon retirement that people are hanging on and making sure that they're going to qualify for their retirement benefits. This is where it really, really comes in handy to go back and forth between your data sources and your people and cross-validate and find out what's really going on under the surface.

The fifth – after size, growth, stability and distribution and industry staffing needs – is – I'm sorry. Just a moment.

If you know you're serving a population with high school diplomas at most, for example, clearly you're going to want to be sure that the industry is going to have jobs for them and that they can qualify for.

Similarly, if you're serving people with criminal justice backgrounds or other barriers to the labor market and labor market attachment, you need to be sure that the firms employ them – or will employ them – and that there are no absolute bars to their employment in this industry.

Here we're looking at real-time labor market information, ads over a four-month period for freight forwarding agents. Just a random selection. There are not that many ads here. I think, if you can all see, there are on the last – the total demand over the last four months, as represented by the number of ads, are just 35.

When we try to narrow it down to the jobs that are available to people with high school diplomas or the equivalent, that's what we get on the right. And as you can see, even though there are only 35 jobs, 30 out of the 35 were available to people with a high school diploma.

Here are some more real-time labor market information, which is a really great way to get a first impression of staffing needs. These are the top 25 skills in demand for employers seeking computer-related employees. So that would mean everything from programmers to systems analyst. And we can see tech support is number one and SQL is number two and so forth.

Does your region – the next question that might come up to you once you see this – and of course, as you know, every time you get data you have more questions. Do we have the programs that will equip students with these skills?

And here we're looking at some data that's more about the supply side than really the demand side. We're looking at this as one way to answer that question of whether your region is actually producing enough people with those skills.

The National Center for Education statistics has something called the IPEDS database. The actual source notes are on this slide at the bottom. And they will tell you the number of graduates from any degree or non-degree program that is eligible for federal financial aid.

And this slide drives home the first point that I made about knowing your context, your needs and your goals, and knowing your point of view. So for example, if your concern is to have an impact on places with the highest unemployment rates in your state, you'll want to be sure that jobs are available for people who live in those areas.

In this example, Lewis and Hamilton and Bronx County – and I'll show you where I'm talking about. This is Lewis, this is Hamilton and this is Bronx – have the highest unemployment.

So here's a summary very quickly of what I just ran through in probably record time. These are all the questions that I showed you and the criteria or the considerations that they were actually related to.

On this slide I'm showing you the criteria again, but this time we're actually looking at the measures and the sources of data. And so there are a couple of new ones in here that I didn't show you.

So for the person who I know at the beginning said, this is one of the things we really want to understand is what does the future look like? You're going to want to look at long-term industry projections. You're going to want to look at long-term occupational projections. And you're going to want to compare that with current demand, which would be represented by real-time LMI, and then validate it with employer or trade association conversations.

So this slide really wraps it all up, I hope for you as well as for me. Let's say we just went through the exercise in the past 30 minutes and we went and we analyzed all that data that we just talked about. We set thresholds, for example, and identified the industries that met each threshold and those that didn't.

So let's say the size threshold we said was 100,000; and the employment growth threshold we set was, let's say, about the median for your state, your region or your local area. Similarly, you can say you don't want to see turnover that's higher than the median turnover for the entire labor market. And you want to see a certain number of jobs that are available to people with a certain level of education.

So we'll see, again, the industries are listed one through nine on the left and the criteria along the top. And we can see that industry one is big enough, it's growing; and it's also in the right areas; it's appropriate to the customers we serve. But the wages aren't growing and turnover is too high and it's highly seasonal.

So I'm going to actually just show you what I mean by that. Wage growth, not there. The turnover, too high. And there's too much seasonality. In this case we've got a clear winner, number six. It has yeses all the way across. So I've made it easier for you; it's a clear winner.

But maybe wage growth is the A-number-one criterion for you and you're not really – you're really thinking about a small niche workforce. Then we might actually be considering something like number eight. It's not that large, but we've got the wage growth.

So that concludes my portion. And it looks like we have more than a few minutes for questions and answers.

MS. SULLIVAN: We definitely do, Lesley. Thank you so much. And there are a number of questions and areas of interest that came in that Eric has been collating here for us in the pod that we can see for participant questions.

Let me try and – I know you can see this too, Lesley. Because we've got a lot of great questions here. Maybe we want to start with this one.

We got a question around, "Are there standardized titles for sectors? That is, are sector titles consistent across the country?" And I know you and I have talked about this before.

MS. HIRSCH: Yes. Absolutely. There is something called the North American Industry Classification System and that's used in Canada, Mexico and the U.S. And it is standard across the board. Particularly useful in well-established industries.

However, there are some areas that we think of as industries but aren't necessarily classified as industries, like tech, for example. And that one's caused a lot of pain for people who work with labor market information.

So you would actually have to go through those industries and occupations and kind of pick them out yourself. One way of doing it might be to identify the occupations and then go and look at which industries they work in. Another way would just be look at specifically industries that say "computers" in their title.

Similarly, green is not an industry. It's really something more like construction, property management, utilities. And so I think it's really worthwhile – and one of the first things I did when I started this work was just sit and pour over the census website. If you google "census NAICS 2012," you'll be able to pour over the NAICS structure.

MS. SULLIVAN: Excellent. Thanks. So we got a couple of questions, Lesley. Some of the data that you showed that was the job ads data, a couple folks were wondering what you all in particular use for real-time LMI for that kind of analysis.

And I do want to say to you all on the phone, this is just something that I feel like it's important to say. As we're going to be talking about a little bit more in a few minutes, there are a number of vendors of real-time labor market information, some private, some public. And I just want to be clear, we're not endorsing any particular ones. But I thought it would be helpful, Lesley, if you could speak to where you guys get your data.

MS. HIRSCH: Sure. Absolutely. And actually, it's the same way I feel, that each one of them has their own strengths. And none of them are bad. They're all quite good for different reasons.

I use Help Wanted OnLine, which is provided by the Conference Board, and use as the underlying data that's straight from the web by wanted technologies.

MS. SULLIVAN: OK. Excellent. Thank you. Yeah. And I'm seeing another comment from one of our participants that some folks are also using Help Wanted OnLine. Others are using Labor Insight, which is a product of Burning Glass. And there are some others out there as well.

It sounds like – hold on. I'm just scrolling down through our questions here. One of the questions that came in – and this is really good, I think, in particular as people are thinking about WIOA planning and the requirements to really focus on planning at the regional level.

A question came in that said, "How well do state labor agency LMI data reflect the regions identified as local workforce areas, as those local workforce areas do often cross city and county borders and encompass sometimes multiple cities and counties?"

MS. HIRSCH: Right. It's definitely the case in New York City, I can tell you that. Because we're part of a tri-state region that's really a labor market; that's where people commute from and to within – and it's quite wide. So we like to not just look at New York state data, but we also will often look at metro region area data, which is available through the Bureau of Labor Statistics and sometimes made available at your state LMI.

I can't speak for all of them, but I would say if you are – if you're really talking about a regional workforce strategy, you're going to need to take a look at metro region LMI.

I wanted to jump in here because John (sp) made a really good point. And that is, the classification system for occupations and the classification system for educational programs, that it's kind of difficult to use them. That you have one occupation that spreads across a number of different fields and you might have a field of study that will prepare people for a number of occupations.

And so if you're talking about a nursing program, it's very easy to identify as a one-for-one. Or engineering, like I had done. Or HVAC it might be very easy. For other ones it won't be necessarily all that easy and I think that's a very good point.

None of this – there are definitely lumps in using labor market information. I really don't want anybody to think that I'm trying to get across the point that it's straightforward and easy.

MS. SULLIVAN: OK. Thanks. I think we probably have a couple minutes before we turn to Jeremy here to see if we might be able to get another question. Let me just scroll down here.

I do want to acknowledge – and sorry, folks. I should have said you all are free as well to hit \*6 and pipe in with questions over the phone as well as using the chat.

I did see a question asking about state and local plans. I'm going to put that – I'm going to table that one for now because I think that's really an ETA question. And if we're able to come back to it, we will.

But Lesley, maybe before we move on, one person said that one of their areas of interest is in quantifying the skills gap in local labor markets. I didn't know if you might want to chime in a little bit on your experience with that.

MS. HIRSCH: Sure. I think supply-demand analysis is tricky. There are a couple of different ways that I would suggest. I think one way is using the local data about the number of graduates from programs. Again, it can be incomplete because it's only for programs that are eligible for federal financial aid.

Another way is to have someone take a look at your local census data to understand what occupations people hold and how much education they have. Obviously, the really good way to do it is to go straight to the horse's mouth, but it's really hard to get systematic and non-biased data just by talking to one or two people. And so I think you talk to some employers and then you go and validate it with the data. What is it that they're having a hard time finding?

Real-time LMI, some practitioners like to look at ads that are older and be able to – I guess what they see is that may be a proxy for jobs that are harder to fill. I would be careful of that. I think it's a proxy, but often there are sort of trollers that keep their ads online. Or there are also jobs for which there's just high, high turnover and so there's just constantly online ads. For example, retail sales persons at Macy's are going to constantly have ads. But older ads might be one way of getting yourself in.

I hope that answered the question.

MS. SULLIVAN: Thank you. That's really helpful. All right. Well, in the interest of time I think we're going to keep moving forward here. But please keep those questions coming.

And know that we're going to hear from Jeremy next and have an opportunity to ask some specific questions of him. And then we'll devote the remainder of the session to additional dialogue. And we are definitely keeping track of your questions and comments and areas of interest. So thank you so much for continuing to share those.

And there's Lesley's contact information.

All right. I'm going to turn it over to Jeremy to talk about some strategies for identifying career development opportunities using real-time LMI in particular.

JEREMY KELLEY: Thanks, Gretchen. My name is Jeremy Kelley. I'm a senior program manager at Jobs for the Future. We're a nonprofit organization which has offices in Boston, Oakland and D.C. And has part of our mission to increase economic mobility for underserved youth and adults.

My role at Jobs for the Future is to help workforce development stakeholders implement labor market information into their service delivery models. And I've been working with ETA and with Maher & Maher on this project for helping introduce real-time labor market information at different state offices.

So that's what we're going to talk about today is mostly focusing on some of the real-time labor market information tools. But I do want to just reiterate something that Lesley mentioned, which is that real-time LMI is just one of many important inputs in order to get an understanding of what's going on in your local area.

So in addition to the traditional and real-time LMI, it's important to keep track of what employers may be saying through their own surveys, how students are performing with the complete coursework; and any important local events, like the Medicare reform or the emphasis on building pre-K that Lesley mentioned in New York. So we will be focusing on real-time LMI today, but there are other important sources as well.

And for those of you that may be new to real-time LMI, if you never heard of it before, what it is is it's based on job postings. So this is a job posting here. And what it does is it'll take everything which has something like a software engineer title and give that list either a standard occupational code or an industry code. So that way, you can pull up all of the information about that type of job and see what some of the commonalities in some of the job tasks are.

Job postings also list education requirements and specific skill lists, the name of the employer, and they'll also give you some experience and job-type information, whether it's full-time or part-time.

And I think a lot of the people that are participants on this webinar have done interesting things with different pieces of this job posting information. I do want to give a shout-out to our colleagues in Utah who are – excuse me, in Nevada, who recently published what the breakdown was between some of the full-time and part-time employment in their state, based on job postings data.

But some of the weaknesses of some of the job postings data, as Lesley has touched on, is that there can be some duplication errors. Sometimes an employer – let's say their name is North Star, Incorporated. If there's not a space between "North" and "Star" when it shows up on Craigslist and when it shows up on Indeed, it may count that as two different employers. And a lot of the different software vendors, they do their best to de-duplicate and they're pretty successful with doing that. But sometimes there – it's not always perfectly de-duplicated.

Certain trades are not always showing up online. Construction, manufacturing tend to be areas where traditionally hiring happens via word of mouth. Also, the size of the community can affect that as well, where people tend to know each other and they just ask for a reference. It's also important to note that not every job posting represents an actual vacancy.

And we do want to reiterate that these tools are generally proprietary or they do cost something for a subscription. It is possible to get access to this data through somebody in your area who may already have access to a tool. You may be able to call up your state department of labor or your local workforce investment board who may have a subscription, and ask for some of the data that's there. But these are generally proprietary tools.

And I do want to draw your attention – maybe this is something that we can type into the chat box. But we did compile an overview of what some of the different real-time labor market resources are on ETA's WorkforceOne (sic) website. So if you're just new to this resource, I encourage you to review that.

The main benefits for this – and this is what we're going to focus on today. Specifically for a sector strategy, once you've already identified a key occupation – and Lesley had – or excuse me, a key industry – and Lesley had the checkmarks all the way across for industry number six, which had the size and the employment and the growth and the wages. One thing job postings data can help you do is understand a little bit more about the occupational characteristics within those industries.

The second thing that we're going to focus on is how some of these job postings can help you look at career development in terms of skills advancement instead of just an advancement of certificates and credentials. And what we're going to do today is we're going to look at three examples from sector development efforts in Detroit, Columbus and the state of Kentucky.

So starting with Detroit, here's an example of advanced manufacturing, which was something which was selected as a primary industry there. And one way to understand a little bit more about what's going on in an industry, the standard occupation codes, they do have high level occupation groups. So you can kind of see what the demand is by those occupation groups.

And what we did was we entered in the list of what we thought were the key machining occupations for kind of each one of these different groups. And you can see what the job posting demand is for those major occupations group. So machining had the most number of job ads for the last 12 months when we were looking at this data, followed by maintenance and repair occupations, and logistics and transportation.

And as Lesley mentioned too, you also can look alongside other key indicators such as growth, wages, and how concentrated the industry is in a region compared to the national average.

In addition to the posting duration, that's another – the column all the way over here on the right. This is something which you can use to understand how long it takes to fill these particular jobs. So if someone – (inaudible) – the logistics and transportation occupation, those were open for 37 days, which may indicate that it's kind of harder for employers to fill those types of jobs.

But to get a little bit more into what we mean by some of the skill groups, we're going to look a little bit more at the machining occupation. And what we found were the list of machining occupations in the region. There were some commonly requested skills that showed up in the job postings.

The benefit of identifying what these skills are is you can – these are skills which are generally transferrable across all the different types of machining occupations. So if you're looking for kind of a short list of places to invest, it's helpful to use a list like this or bring to a group of employers and kind of have them – (inaudible) – what the core essential skills may be.

This information can also be helpful for jobseekers, trying to understand what is the most commonly requested and what's the best chance of giving themselves an opportunity to be employable. You can see what the overall top level skills are.

The other thing skill lists can be helpful for is for groups, like industry groups, that don't have a clear definition. So we were just talking about information technology and energy as two industries which are pretty hard to define in terms of an industry code.

But if you do want to do some research as to what the demand is, one thing that real-time labor market information software can do is to see what the demand is by skill. So you could do a search for a job on Oracle and SQL and see what some of the occupations and industries are that are requesting those skills.

But continuing with the machining example, so in addition to the commonly requested skills, you can also get a sense for what the key secondary skills are and what the key baseline skills are. These are for machining, again, in Detroit.

So in addition to the general maintenance and repair tools – or general maintenance and repair skills, the baseline skills – which is troubleshooting, being detailed-oriented and being able to work in a team – that's information which shows up in a job posting which also tends to show up a lot in industry advisory meetings.

And this type of information from the job postings can be helpful for folks that are beginning to put together their training programs. They're trying to understand what are some of the baseline features that they also want to teach, in addition to some of those specialized skills?

The other benefit of using a job postings approach for this, you can see what the occupations are by standard occupation code. Depending on the tool you're using, you can also enter them in via O\*NET code, or you could do it via job title if there's a specific job title you're looking for.

These I believe are O\*NET codes for Detroit. And these are the occupations that the Detroit stakeholders thought were important to be included in the machining group. And you can see the number of job postings by each occupation.

The other thing I mentioned is that it's helpful to be able to present career advancement not just in terms of the advancement of a certification, but in the advancement of a skill. So within the – within kind of the machining area, you can see what the baseline information is for salary and job postings.

And then to become a little bit more of an advanced machinist, we see that there's a little bit more of a demand for being able to use a grinder or a drill press or some welding. And then to be able to advance to a programmer, there are a couple different specific machine programming languages which showed up in the job postings.

So again, just the value of what a particular skill may be and kind of where it may help you fit in along a career advancement ladder.

Another example within the advanced manufacturing group in Detroit was with logistics. So again, we pulled out what the common list of skills were for logistics. And then for the secondary skills, one of the things that this job posting software can do is it can pull out what some of those software skills may be. And you can see that SAP, Oracle and ERP systems were important software skills that showed up for logistics occupations.

And then you see slightly different baseline skills. Whereas for machining it was teamwork and troubleshooting, this is a little bit more about planning and research and project management.

For the occupations, again you can see the job postings by occupation. And the other thing you can do with the job posting is to see what are some of the other industries where these skills have value?

So the benefit is, even if you're focusing on advanced manufacturing, seeing that these logistics occupations also have value in the automotive industry and the professional services industry, that can give you some confidence that you're teaching workers some skills that have transferability across different industries within your region.

And here's an example of a logistics career pathway. The size of the bubble is correlated to the number of job postings that were in Detroit. But different than machinists, one thing that came out was that there were four pretty clearly defined skills tracks even within logistics. Some were based on warehouse and distribution, some were more close to transportation, and others were based on logistics and supply chain.

And as you move from the bottom to the top, you go from an entry-level to a specialist to a management position, which is kind of a little bit broader category than machinists, which are a little bit more focused on programming languages.

So in consulting with employers, there are different ways to understand what the in-demand skills are and what the different progressions may be, depending on what the industry sector is.

Another example from Detroit is with health care. And as you would expect with health care, the nursing and the sub-BA practitioners were the two biggest ones; sub-BA practitioners, those are things like speech therapist and respiratory therapist. Followed by health care support, kind of like the aides. And then administrative and technical non-patient care. And again, it's broken down by postings, growth, wages and then posting duration.

So just what I wanted to show you with this is if you wanted to kind of go a little bit deeper – let's say you're wondering, OK, health care is important and we need to invest in some sort of training across these categories. Something like technical non-patient care, you can zoom in a little bit on what the occupations are.

And you see that in this region, the ones that had the most amount of posting activity were this medical lab technician across the top; that one had 878 postings. And then pharmacy technician was another one; that one had 868 postings. This medical lab technician also had 76 days was the general amount of time that it took for that posting to be filled or removed from the Internet.

So even though technical non-patient care was one of the smaller functional categories in terms of demand, you can still get a sense of kind of where there's some pain points to employers. And again, this can be a helpful thing to verify, to bring to an industry advisory meeting.

So another example that we're going to talk about is from the state (sic) of Columbus. And what they did was they put together a pathway for insurance, one of their key target sectors. And I'm going to zoom in on different aspects of this pathway a little bit.

But I think the value of this example is that you're going to go through a lot of different data. There are a lot of different resources. Like Lesley said, none of this is easy. But it is helpful to be able to present this information in a way which is easy for workforce development stakeholders to digest.

So whether it is putting together kind of a clear chart or whether you're going to be presenting information to them face-to-face in a slide, it's important to combine all of the information from different resources into kind of something which is easy to digest. And I'll give you an example of that from the insurance pathway.

So at the bottom of this list, what they did was they really settled – after looking at a lot of labor market information, talking to a lot of different workforce development stakeholders, they settled on eight important occupations within the insurance industry that was important to the Columbus region.

And on the right side of the screen, you see some of the – for the underwriting assistant, for the claims clerk and for the customer service rep – you see some of the key skills and competencies that they thought were important for these positions. And those were a combination of things that are from the real-time labor market information and from conversations with employers.

They like these occupations because the starting wage was decent and also there were kind of minimal certification requirements. So they were a good way to get jumpstarted.

Moving up to the middle-skill level, the sales agent, the damage appraiser and the claims rep. There's an increase in the wage that was there. For two of the occupations, you were able to be competitive for them with an associate's degree or industry-specific certificate. And again, you can see the list of sales and customer service-related skills, legal and compliance skills as well, which came out of some of the things that were in the job postings and the conversations with employers.

So there's actually a lot of different sources. I think this wage data's from the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The certifications information, some of that came from the job postings; some of that came from the employers' own direct feedback of what they were interested in hiring. And the same thing with the skills and the competencies.

So it's just helpful to conceptualize that all in one place, which can really serve as a starting point for occupational trainers to put their programs together.

And then it goes on to the two high-skill occupations that have higher wages and can still be competitive with a bachelor's degree or a person with an associate's degree. But some of the opportunities that would be presented to folks at the bachelor's level.

So the last example that I'm going to talk about is from a workforce investment board in Louisville. They publish these kind of sector pathways every quarter. And we're going to go a little bit bigger on these too.

But what this is, this is a – it's a big deal. Health care was important for them to develop. And they broke health down into this enterprises and lifelong wellness group, which is basically things that are hospital and then non-hospital jobs.

On the left side of this pathway you can see what the different degree levels are. So the bottom is certificate – or high school, then certificate/associate's, bachelor's, master's, doctoral. And then across the top, those are the three different siloes within the hospitals. So on the left side it's direct patient care, in the middle it's diagnostic and on the right it's administrative or corporate.

And you can read this horizontally or you can read it vertically. So what are the opportunities if I have a certificate degree? And if you can't blow this up and read it, it comes across that there's healthy job posting activity. There are 928 job postings in the direct patient care area for people that just have a certificate, 134 for people in the diagnostic cluster, and then 257 for people in the administrative cluster.

Or you could also just see – if you're looking at it vertically, if I want to be in the diagnostic and therapeutic industry, it also gives you what some of the job posting numbers are for those different levels of education, in addition to the job titles and wages.

So this is a type of document which is – it's (public ?) to the workforce investment board. And in its form now it's probably not going to be able to go directly into the career center or the community college. But what it can do is be a helpful understanding point or a helpful starting point for them to create a little bit more discussion and figure out where they may want to invest some of their training resources.

Let's see. And then one last example from the state of Kentucky. We talked about advanced manufacturing and supply chain management before. And you kind of see across the top – you see something similar to what we were discussing in terms of skill groups.

They have production occupations, process development, quality assurance and maintenance. And for logistics, it's procurement, transportation and warehousing. So it's similar to what was in Detroit, but they needed to kind of phrase it differently based on the way that local stakeholders would understand it.

And I think that's important to understand too is that you'll see a lot of these types of resources that people have already gone through, but you may need to kind of word some of the titles differently in material that you're disseminating to stakeholders, in order for them to understand it.

One of the things that stood out from the job posting data here is that for the associate's level for across both advanced manufacturing and logistics, there really wasn't much activity in terms of job postings. Most of the job postings were the certificate or the high school levels, or at the bachelor's level.

So one question that may cause them to ask or to verify is whether or not – if these are our target sectors, if we're thinking about investing in training, is it more about kind of working with career guidance counselors in high schools to encourage people to go into advanced manufacturing and get that four-year diploma? Or is it worth kind of investing in the short-term two-year training? And this is something which isn't kind of showing up in the job postings.

But either way, just coming up with a way to display information from different resources could be just a helpful starting point in implementing sector development strategies.

And that's pretty much it. Those are the three examples. And this is my contact information.

So Gretchen, I think from here we can do questions and then maybe open it up into a discussion?

MS. SULLIVAN: Yep. Absolutely. Yeah. Jeremy, thank you so much. Actually, we got a number of good questions that came in that I think you're probably seeing here too in our participant question window. Really appreciate that.

One thing – this is the most recent one that came in, in addition to some others. Felicia's (sp) asking, some of the templates that you used, do you have a sense if they are available for us to share, for others to use them for their local areas and industries? Or could we at least point folks to where those live online? Like, I think Louisville posts all that stuff online at least.

MR. KELLEY: Yeah. And there's a lot of – I mean, there's a lot of different resources that are publicly available. The ones that we just went through were; the Louisville stuff is online. I know we're also planning to put together a resource guide for folks.

But I mean, a good place to start for your local information, see what's on your state department of labor website or what's in your state labor market information (chat ?). Some of them just pull the state data from BLS resources. Some of them do their own research and have access to these tools and kind of pull them together.

So there are a lot of different places to start. But I think even just within the ETA, like the WorkforceOne (sic) website; there's a lot of good, good stuff there too about sector strategies.

MS. SULLIVAN: Yeah. All right. Great. Well, let me ask – let me throw this out. This question I think has been kind of popping up in different forms and it's connected to one that we recently got. And this is sort of like – I think this is probably a bigger question than we could handle for today.

But do you, Jeremy – or maybe Lesley, you may want to chime in on this as well – but people are asking – a couple people have been asking, any recommendations on which sources are kind of – both traditional and real-time – should you kind of consider if you're starting out in this work?

And this was an interesting question I'd love to know the answer to. It's related. Is anyone using any software or some other tool that kind of easily helps combine and format traditional LMI with the real-time data?

I don't know if you have any comments on that, Jeremy, either of those.

MR. KELLEY: Yeah. So for the second question, I think – I would encourage, if you're interested in pursuing your own access to a real-time labor market information piece of software, all of the different vendors will allow you to – you can call them up and they'll give you a free demonstration. And they may even give you kind of temporary access so you can explore it for yourself before making a decision.

But they're all trying to make their own products better. And to a certain extent, you can combine traditional and real-time LMI just within those own software tools.

But I think to the extent that it's not already built in as a native function, you can use examples of the way that other people have displayed it, where you can put what the postings are alongside the wage data and the employment data. I think you can use examples which you think are most relevant for your own particular purpose.

And I think that's the other thing too, that each one of these tools do have their own kind of different strengths and different concentrations. One resource to look at for that is the ETA publication about the different real-time labor market information vendors.

But again, if this is something which you're really interested in, you can either talk to your own state department of labor or workforce investment board, who do have access – or who may have access to one of these tools. Or you can schedule a demonstration and ask the vendors directly.

MS. HIRSCH: I would add to what – the first question, which is, what would be the first things to look at? I would say the gold standard of employment data really is the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages.

It's always a lag time on it. So if you want to be able to sort of fill in what's been happening more recently than what you've got from that quarterly census, where you would get – every single LMI shop in the country puts the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages up.

But if you want to look at something more recent and you're not – you don't have real-time LMI available, the monthly report that comes out, the one that we keep hearing – you know, the jobs figures every month. Every state LMI shop has their own and sometimes you get regional. That's the current employment statistics. That was where I got my spaghetti chart from.

So I would say QCEW. I would say current employment statistics. I would say something I did not show but is a wonderful tool, the quarterly workforce indicators online. If you type in "QWI census" when you're googling, you can see this wonderful resource where you can drill down to your WIB area or a county area, and you can take a look at indicators such as how many new hires have there been in the last four years? How much turnover is there? And you can even look at the turnover and new hires by, say, levels of education or gender or age.

So that would be – those would be my four non-real-time LMI, I would say top data.

MS. SULLIVAN: Great. Thank you both. We also got – we're seeing some more questions coming in. Thank you all for keeping it coming. And Eric has also just put up a note. If you all want to chime in with any questions over the phone, again, please feel free; you just need to do \*6 to unmute your line.

This is something, Jeremy, we've talked about and Lesley, we've talked about. But a question came in about what are your thoughts about comparing the BLS projections of job growth relative to real-time demand? So what do you guys find in your work in terms of the difference between projections and then actual postings? And I know we've talked about what you guys see in terms of relationships before. I think this'll be interesting for folks.

MR. KELLEY: Yeah. Well, the two things I say to that is that, one, I don't think you can use real-time labor market information or job postings specifically for projections. It is something which, even though you can get kind of the current job count, it can't give you any predictive feature as to how many jobs will be posted the next day.

And the second thing I say is comparing postings to projections – it's part of a bigger question of how well the job postings reflect what actually goes on in a labor market. And I think there are actually a number of people on this call even that have produced some very interesting studies of that type of work. One of them is Lesley at LMIS who compared job postings to vacancies.

And I know our colleague Mark Nogue (ph) in Utah, who's on the call as well, has done some comparison from what's in Help Wanted OnLine to kind of what's going on in different regions across the state. So either one of you guys can talk to that, and I'm sure others have as well.

MS. FRUGOLI: Yeah. I would also say that the projections – this is Pam Frugoli – the projections don't project a business cycle.

MR. KELLEY: Right.

MS. FRUGOLI: So sometimes the postings online can show you when there's a downturn or what's still happening – who is still hiring for what when there is a downturn.

MS. HIRSCH: Right. I was going to say the same thing, Pam. And I think what you're seeing in terms of ad volume online for real-time data is not just job growth; it's churn as well. There are replacement jobs being advertised. And that's happening during a downturn and not during a downturn. And so I think that there's – it's apples to oranges a little bit.

But I will be really perfectly frank. I think that we see – in terms of the long-term occupational projections, the number of annual openings that we see seem very low to me, compared to what we see online. And so I hope I don't get flak from our state LMI shop, but that could be for any number of reasons.

MS. SULLIVAN: Thank you all. I'm seeing – there's some –

MS. FRUGOLI: Turnover might be one of them.

MS. SULLIVAN: Oh, go ahead. Go ahead, Pam. Sorry.

MS. FRUGOLI: I was just going to say turnover in jobs might be one of the reasons for the difference between those two. There's more hiring because of turnover in certain jobs.

MS. SULLIVAN: Exactly. Exactly.

MS. HIRSCH: I also did just want to make the point. Jeremy has referenced the report that we worked on in the initial phase of this project, which was – it was really kind of a catalogue of real-time labor market information vendors and an exploration of each of their products and sort of the functionalities and capabilities of each, as well as some examples of how state and regional areas are using real-time LMI in a variety of different ways. And both the New York City Labor Market Information Service and Jobs for the Future were heavily involved in that report.

In just a couple slides we'll have a list of resources and the link to that report is there. So I want to just say, for those of you who are interested in particular – learning more about particular tools or products or wanting to get a feel for sort of what's out there in terms of the vendor universe, I think that would be a really useful resource for you and we'll have a link for you here shortly.

MS. SULLIVAN: OK. Any other questions? Anybody want to chime in over the phone? You all are very nimble with your fingers on the keyboard, but want to give folks an opportunity to chime in over the phone with any questions. (Pause.) OK.

Well, we're going to open it up. We've got about 15 minutes left and I'm just thrilled with the kinds of conversation that we've been able to have so far today. We're hoping to hear a little bit more from you before we wrap up our session for 3:30 here Eastern Time. And I do hope that some of you will feel comfortable to chime in over the phone to share a little bit about what you're doing.

But we're real interested in hearing a little bit more about – in terms of where you are on your sector strategy work, what you're exploring, where you might have had some successes. Importantly, where you feel you might need some help that you'd like to get from the folks here, your presenters or others that are participating on the session today.

So we'd love it if you would share a little bit with us, maybe starting off about particular areas that you might be struggling with right now or areas where you're having some success using data to really guide your sector focus. And do feel free to chime in over the phone or in the chat window. (Pause.)

We have a couple of people typing. (Pause.)

All right. Let me ask this. Maybe this helps focus the question a little bit more. A number of you have already raised some areas that you're looking for some help on. What are some areas that you feel like you need additional help on, or that you'd like to hear either from our presenters here today or from your peers, that you might be trying to get your arms around right now? (Pause.)

MS. HIRSCH: Something came up in the chat, Gretchen, that I thought might be helpful. And that is that the various vendors of real-time labor market information have their own ways of estimating the labor market tightness. And so only because of my immediate familiarity, I can discuss. If people are interested, they can contact me afterwards about (Wanted ?). And similarly, my colleagues here at the Labor Market Information Service, Ronnie and Pam, have a lot more familiarity with Burning Glass Labor/Insight and CE (ph) and GS-ALL (ph), the other major vendors.

MS. SULLIVAN: Yep. Absolutely great. That's great, Lesley. Thank you.

Yeah. A great question from Lawrence (sp). Let me toss this out for discussion. And again, Lesley and Jeremy, chime in here. But folks on the phone, we'd love to hear from you as well. They're having an internal discussion around the value of real-time LMI for strategic planning as opposed to more tactical or operational planning. And would you like to weigh in on that? I think that's a terrific question.

MS. HIRSCH: I would love to hear Lawrence. I hate to call you out, Lawrence, but I would love to know when you say real-time LMI for strategic planning, what kind of questions are you using it to answer? If you could do the \*6, that would be great.

MS. HIRSCH: OK. One thing I can say about real-time LMI is that the numbers are in some respects not meaningful in and of themselves. And I don't use the actual numbers. I think what we'd like to look at is more like trends. If you're actually looking at job volume, you would use it to identify some trends. You would identify what kind of industry/occupation mix there is in your region. And I think it has some value to strategic planning in that regard.

MR. KELLEY: Yeah. And I – I'm sorry.

MS. HIRSCH: Go ahead.

MR. KELLEY: Well, and I'm not quite sure how you define the difference between strategic planning and tactical or operational planning. But I do think you saw kind of the progression in today's session, where if you're kind of starting out to figure out what the key industries are and the things that Lesley went through, the job postings data has some value there.

But I do think it is more valuable for things we are not looking for specific or exact job counts as a reflection of what the number of vacancies are. But if you are trying to figure out what the skills are and you're trying to put together programs, you're trying to build relationships with workforce development stakeholders, just in my experience that's where the job postings data can add a little bit more of the value.

MS. HIRSCH: And then maybe less obvious is the fact that you can really see who the high-volume hirers are. And I assume that you already know who they are when you're getting into a sector strategy. But if you don't, you can actually – and even if you do, you can validate that with some real information about who's posting online. And those are people that you're going to want to have around the table because certainly they have a lot of demand and they will be able to tell you what they need.

MS. SULLIVAN: Great. Thanks to you both. David, I don't mean to call you out either, but I think you made a previous comment earlier in the chat. And you've got a comment here around reasonable accommodations in your business services unit. And I think it was you that made a previous comment as well around, have people looked at this from disabled workers perspectives and accommodations that might need to be made on the sector basis?

So I'm wondering if you have any additional comments to help us understand how we can help you with that question there. (Pause.)

Q: I think there's two Davids on the line, so – I just got in from another teleconference. Our business unit works very well with, let's say, entry-level employers. And they do allow for reasonable accommodations. But given the topic and the scope of what you presented the last hour, I am wondering how reasonable accommodations can be built into some of the higher or middle level jobs that you've posted.

I'll go back to mute now. Thanks.

MS. SULLIVAN: Thank you very much for chiming in on that. That's a terrific question. I know, Lesley, you chimed in with one resource that you were familiar with that you shared there in the chat room.

MS. HIRSCH: Right. The Job Accommodation Network – JAN, as many people know – has a lot of resources on its website. And it actually does have a whole website that has resources about accommodation – typical accommodations by occupation and by industry that's very, very useful. I think I have the link right here. It's askjan.org – it's over in the chat – /media/(ocind ?).htm. And they've got a lot of ODEP – Office – ODEP type of resources that are really helpful.

I happen to know the Heldrich Center has done a little bit of work. They're the research center over at Rutgers University in New Jersey. They've done some really interesting work around using labor market information to develop sector strategies for people with disabilities I would highly recommend. And if I can get that link to you, I will come back and put it in the chat.

MS. SULLIVAN: Excellent. Thank you. Any other questions or comments that folks want to share for broader discussion? Things that would be useful to you to discuss today? (Pause.)

One of the things I think we're interested in hearing for work going forward is thinking about what you learned about today. And maybe you've participated in previous webinars or other sessions that we've had. I think we'd love to hear what you feel like you want to learn more about or dig deeper into in this area moving forward.

And that feedback would actually, selfishly, be very timely for us in that we are working on various products right now that, as was said at the beginning, will be out in about a month. And your feedback on what you're hoping for more help on or what you want to know more about, we can weave that in. So we'd be interested in any feedback on your areas of interest, where you want to dig deeper moving forward. (Pause.)

Got a couple people typing here, so I'm going to give it a minute for them to chime in. (Pause.)

OK. So we got a question, what information the state departments can provide their local areas to get going with LMI-based strategic planning? Jeremy or Lesley, you may have a couple quick comments that you can make right now, but great to know that that's an area of interest.

MS. HIRSCH: All of the resources, other than the quarterly workforce indicators – should be available from your state LMI. If you do have a regional analyst in your state LMI, I would certainly get in touch with them first.

So the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages is released at a county level and so that can be helpful. The CES – the current employment statistics – is often – it's based on a survey. So that one is based on generally a little bit larger, so you'll have a city, for example, if not a state. And staffing patterns are generally available at the state level. Unfortunately, we don't have that at the more detailed level.

MR. KELLEY: And I think Julie, too, it depends on what your audience is. There's a question of what information – what specific information should you be providing to people? And I think if you're talking about your board of higher education or your college folks, you may want to give them different information than your chamber of commerce or if there's a specific sector focus of information that people are asking you for.

So for the hiring trends and the QWI data that Lesley's talking about, that may be something which is of a little bit more interest to the employers and the chamber of commerce. And I think you maybe might want to push out some of the – (inaudible) – information, some of the more qualitative things that you're hearing from your relationship with employers to the colleges and the boards of higher education.

MS. SULLIVAN: Great. Thank you. Katrina (sp), I like your comment about your state or regional labor market information bureau or department, contacting them, that they'll likely give you more information than you ever wanted to know. Yes, there's a pile of it out there, right? And it's a lot to navigate through.

I'm also – if I can get to it here quickly before we wrap up – I'm going to post a link to some resources that recently came out of ETA's sector strategies initiative work, which many of you may have been involved in. But there's a lot of nice guidance about leveraging data and information as part of that work. So if I can get my browser to cooperate with me here, I'll try to post that.

But in the interest of getting you all out of here on time, I really, really appreciate all of the comments and the questions and the suggestions that you all have made to one another and information you've shared about what you're doing with each other on this session. And I'm gratified to see a couple of comments that say that folks feel this has been a good discussion. We certainly hope it has been.

And I do want to say, as I know Eric will say as well, we hope you'll stay on after this wraps up to give us some feedback about what we did well and what we could improve. We'd really, really appreciate that moving forward.

I did just want to point you to a couple of additional resources that have come out of this project that we – if you haven't seen, we think you might find of interest.

In April of 2014, we did a webinar; this was closer to the beginning of our two-year project. And it's an overview. It had some state practitioners that were part of the session talking about how they're integrating real-time LMI with their traditional LMI and the kinds of activities they're pursuing. So if you're at the stage where you're looking into real-time LMI and want to use – learn a little bit more about that, we'd encourage you to take a look at that webinar.

The report that has been referenced is one that we did for ETA last year. It is that environmental scan of vendors and their products, as well as state and regional users. Definitely a great piece to look at, I think, if you want a bit of a survey of the market out there and the various tools and their functionalities.

We also did a webinar in February of this year digging deeper into that environmental scan report. So do take a look at that if you haven't seen it before.

Finally, as Pam mentioned at the beginning, the report that we're working on right now, that we expect to be out in roughly a month or so, is really a deeper dive into how various states and regions are using real-time LMI for a number of different activities, everything from expanding their job banks and doing monthly reports, to developing career pathways and integrating real-time LMI and traditional LMI for front-line career coaching for jobseekers and services to employers. So we think that that will provide some real-world examples of how folks are using this and hope you'll find that valuable when it comes out.

We are also working on a tutorial on integrating real-time LMI with traditional LMI that's going to be a self-paced, web-based course, if you will, roughly 30 minutes in length. And that should be out in roughly a month as well.

So stay tuned on Workforce3One for those activities.

But again, I just want to say thanks so much to all of you. Thanks to ETA for their leadership of this project and to all of our state partners and consulting partners. And we do hope it's been a useful session for you. And we're thrilled that you were able to join us today. Thanks so much.

And Eric, I'll turn it over to you. Sorry I went a minute long here.

(END)