**Workforce 3One**

**Transcript of Webinar**

**ETA 2016 SECTOR STRATEGIES VIRTUAL INSTITUTE**

**When Career Paths and Sector Strategies Collide:**

**The Road Gets Better Workshop**

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OPERATOR: Good afternoon. My name is Benita, and I will be your conference operator today. At this time I would like to welcome everyone to "When Career Paths And Sector Strategies Collide: The Road Gets Better Workshop" hosted by WorkforceGPS. I would now like to turn the call over to Mr. Brian Keating with Maher & Maher.

BRIAN KEATING: Thanks very much, Benita. Appreciate all your help throughout the week – this week, and welcome to everyone. Welcome to another virtual institute workshop. We're going to go ahead and jump right in. Going to go ahead and jump right in, but before we do I just want to encourage everyone.

A couple of things logistically we want to bring your attention to. As always feel free to introduce yourself in that welcome chat. We are going to be playing a video shortly, and the audio for that video is going to be streaming through your computer speakers. So please make sure that you've got your computer speakers turned on and turned up to a good volume so that you can listen to that video. Also we are not streaming the audio during the majority of today's workshop.

So we want to encourage you to make a note of that teleconference information and make sure that you're – make sure you're dialed in to that. Last but not least, want to encourage you. We're going to be going to an interactive breakout session. So we'll be giving you more detail about that when we – in a few minutes when we're ready to actually break into that session.

OK. Great. So I'm going to kick things right off so we have as much time for content as possible. Welcome, everyone. Today's workshop is called when career pathways and sector strategies collide: the road gets better. So welcome, everyone, to the workshop, and to kick things off and go over objectives and set some context – once again just want to quickly remind you, if you haven't already done so, introduce yourself in that chat window on your screen.

But without any further ado, I'm going to turn things over to Jen Troke. Jen, take it away.

JEN TROKE: Thanks, Brian, and welcome, everybody. I'm so glad that you're here with us this afternoon. So we're going to try to accomplish just a few things this afternoon. We really want to share how we believe career pathways and sector strategies align and complement one another. We're going to take you on a little bit of a journey.

We're going to tell you sort of where we've been and where we're going. We're going to get a lot of inspiration from Deb who's going to tell the Minnesota story, their own career pathway journey. And then we're going to do a little bit of an infomercial. I'm going to talk about the new career pathways toolkit, and then I'm going to tease you a little bit and talk about an upcoming companion tool, basically a workbook. So with that I think I'm going to keep rolling here.

So that's me, Jen Troke. I am with the Division of Youth Services here at the Department of Labor, and I really have the pleasure of serving on a larger federal interagency work group dedicated solely to career pathways. That group has been meeting for many, many years, and that work and my engagement with career pathways really led me to our excellent presenters that we have with us here today.

So it's my pleasure to welcome Judy Mortrude. If you've been in the career pathways space, you've probably heard Judy and Deb's name. Judy is the director for the Alliance of Quality Career Pathways at CLASP. So welcome, Judy. And she's joined by Debra Hsu from Minnesota where she's the associate system director for CTE at the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities or MINSCU. So welcome, Deb.

I want to kick off today's webinar with a brief video really highlighting how we're thinking about and aligning our work here around career pathways, sector strategies, and registered apprenticeship. I think this video illustrates sort of the tools and where they are, but it also reminds us how important our work is and sort of why we do the work. So let's take a moment to meet Sally.

MR. KEATING: All right. And just want to again reminder about the video. Please make sure your computer speakers are unmuted so that you can hear the audio for the video. And, presenters, please make sure your speakers are muted. So here's the video, and this is about two minutes. We'll go ahead and play that for you now.

(video)

All right. Thanks, everybody. Hope you enjoyed that video. The link to watch it again, if you missed it or want to review it, is right there on your screen. These slides are available in the file share. Back to you, Jen.

MS. TROKE: Thanks, Brian. I hope everybody enjoyed that video. We had a lot of fun creating that video. We thought it could be used broadly by anybody who works in career pathways, sector strategies, or registered apprenticeship to promote and connect people to their resources. I'm just curious if people could take a moment to type into the chat how many of you have used either the career pathways toolkit, the sector strategies toolkit, or the apprenticeship toolkit. If people just take a moment and I'm not going to take too much time there but I'd just love to see if – how people – if people have used these resources. OK. Let me keep rolling while people do that.

So I love this particular graphic. It's actually in the current career pathways toolkit, and it's completely stolen from our friends Garrett Gross and Lindsey Woolsey, and we love it because it really shows how career pathways and sector strategies really fit together. And so no matter what you call it, they're still working in partnership.

Career pathways really support the education and training of workers, as you know, while the sector strategy is providing the skilled workers to businesses. And both of these really foundational workforce concepts really rely heavily on key partnerships with industry, educators, and you can really see the flow between the two concepts in this graphic.

The other really cool graphic I think that we put in the toolkit when we sort of WIOA-sized it – so we've been very excited about how WIOA has really codified career pathways and sector strategies in the law, and that's been very exciting for us. The toolkit itself is designed for state teams and local teams so they can figure out how they work together and sort of take their work to the next level.

You'll see several complementary features that make these two pieces fit together. For instance, you'll see the crossover around skills. So we know competency models really outline the knowledge, skills, and abilities for workers, and those knowledge, skills, and abilities are actually validated and determined by industry. You'll also see there's a real need for labor market information, so understanding what industries we should train workers for locally and where the need is with business. And then finally, another key area that overlaps is this credential attainment and recognition, really understanding what business needs and which credentials are essential.

The last graphic I'm going to share and then I really want to get the stage over to Judy and Deb, the stars of today's event, is really our career pathways six key elements. This is really the foundation of the work. The six key elements were reviewed by lots of different people. We've been working in close partnership with national organizations and states to do this WIOA-sizing of the original toolkit. The original toolkit was actually published back in 2011, and we just did the second version in 2015.

So we asked states to weigh in on these six key elements, and we wanted to know are they still the right elements to get the job done. And really the states said, yeah. They're absolutely the right elements that we need to form our teams, and not only that. They said – and this is a little bit of the teaser portion, but they gave us some great feedback about the toolkit. And they said, what we need are actual tools that we can use to support our teambuilding either among our state team or local teams.

So this is the teaser about the workbook. The workbook is being developed currently. It will contain worksheets that really operationalize career pathways, and for example, let me give you an example.

In element one – so the first element is building cross-agency partnerships and clarifying roles. The workbook, the companion worksheets that are affiliated with this element, there is a pre-partnership checklist. There's an MOU template. There's a roles and responsibilities checklist and even an existing partnership. So you can sort of figure out who's already on the team with you and who might be missing. So we've gotten a lot of great feedback, and we're ready to pilot the workbook. And we can't wait to get it in your hands in coming months. So stay tuned for that, and you're already on WorkforceGPS. And all of our career pathways materials are housed on this site.

So with that, that was the infomercial. It's over. I'm going to pass it over to Judy.

JUDY MORTRUDE: Thanks, Jen. So I'm going to move us to another graphic that shows up in the new toolkit which got its start with some of the Alliance for Quality Career Pathways work and our framework. The career pathway conversation often gets stuck right at the beginning as partners struggle to define what it means when we say the words career pathways.

After all, people will say, haven't we all traveled some path to our own career that resulted in us somehow being where we are today? So the first work for partners is really to come to this common understanding, a common comprehensive definition for the term "career pathways."

The alliance is a network of practitioners from across the country, 10 states and major metropolitan areas that are convened by class whose work led to this consensus framework that includes this career pathway definition you see illustrated here in this slide, elements of quality that really mirror those six key criteria that Jen just showed, and a menu of career pathway metrics.

At the core career pathways are all about intentional alignment, not random chance. And first and foremost is alignment with the skill needs of industries in a state, in a region, and this means employers are partners with educators across secondary education, adult education, and postsecondary education and partners with workforce development and human service providers.

A career pathway exists when there are well-connected and easily identifiable education and training programs that include industry-valued credentials and a range of supportive services that are differentiated by individual need to make sure that access leads to success. There need to be entry points for all the populations in your region, including those who may be academically underprepared or have other barriers to employment. And there need to be exit points that lead to both quality employment and the ability to build onto the next level of skill competency and credentialing.

Philanthropic federal initiatives, things like the Health Profession Opportunity grants, the HPO grants, and the large TAACCCT grants, the Trade Adjustment Act Community College Career Training grants have really been incenting this idea of partnership and alignment. But it's not easy work. Our systems had developed separately, yes, with shared goals of individual and community prosperity but often with terminal ends like getting a high school diploma, getting a license or certificate, getting an associate degree.

And it's really our responsibility in the public systems to break down these separations and focus on that tradition – that transition space. No student should leave high school without the ability to transition to further education. No adult education learner should get a high school equivalency without gaining employability schools and college readiness skills.

No apprentice should complete a training program without the skills and knowledge to move ahead. No college student should complete an award that doesn't build onto the next level of credential and higher levels of employment. In other words, we really need to stop managing programs and start leveraging systems.

So shortly after the alliance framework was released, WIOA was signed, and the alliance members were thrilled because WIOA really does, as Jen said, call out and codify much of the career pathway innovation that's been happening across the country.

So the real opportunity in WIOA with this first federal definition of career pathway as a combination of rigorous and high-quality education, training, and other services that aligns with the skill needs of the state, local, and regional economy that includes secondary and postsecondary success, that includes education and career counseling, offers foundational skill building, is really to move sector strategies and career pathways together to be part of the work and to create together a career pathway system.

So that graphic in the middle or any of the graphics that try to illustrate a career pathway as this intentional connection of programs, this graphic really shows that in order to scale and sustain those kind of pathways, you need to build the career pathway system. And that's what WIOA can help do. WIOA has many mays. The state may do this, or local boards may do that. But it also has a couple of shalls including that local boards shall convene their employer partners for developing and implementing industry sector strategies and that local boards shall convene their education partners to design and implement career pathways.

So this is all about system building, about the local board doing – going beyond brokering services to build a regional career pathway system by being a real catalyst for systems change. So a career pathway system involves this comprehensive set of policies and practices, partnerships, data, and shared measures that really support the building, the delivery, the dynamic sustainability of career pathways in local regions, at the state, and federally. And the call for this kind of work just keeps getting louder.

As Jen said, in 2012 there was a joint letter from the Departments of Labor, Education, and Health and Human Services encouraging more state and local partnerships for career pathway building. And just the other day we got an updated joint letter came out from the federal skills working group that includes 13 federal agencies and the White House National Economic Council and the Office of Management and Budget. And the skills working group is really promoting the need for alignment and partnership to produce better education and employment outcomes for individuals and to meet employer demands for a skilled workforce.

So now, I'm going to turn it over to Debra from Minnesota, and she can tell us how states are taking on this career pathway leadership role. Debra.

DEBRA HSU: Thanks, Judy. Hi, everybody. Delighted to be here with all of you today and I'm going to give you a little bit of an explanation of how one state has been implementing the six elements of a career pathway.

In Minnesota we were part of the advancing CTE in career pathways technical assistance project that was led by the U.S. Department of Education, and we did this for about three years. And we focused on the six elements and particularly on three elements, the cross-agency partnerships, the industry sectors, and then measuring system change and performance. At the end of that three years we then moved on into implementation of the system that Judy was referring to that we were trying to pull together.

Instead of all of our unilateral efforts at building career pathways, during that three years we brought together all of the people that – people from all of the agencies that you see on this slide. We truly believe that in order for there to be a state career pathways system, we all need to be at the table together.

And I will say that those three years it wasn't always easy. As Judy said, it can be a challenge because we're not maybe used to collaborating on all of these things, but it is critical that we do pull everyone together, including secondary and postsecondary and our Department of Employment and Economic Development, our Department of Human Services, our workforce centers, non-profits – United Way Minnesota was part of it – and career technical and adult basic education were – these were all critical partners we believed.

And at the end of that three years our state created through our Minnesota Governor's Workforce Development Board a career pathways partnership group, and we are a committee of the Governor's Workforce Development Board. And we proposed that the career pathways toolkit be our official foundational document for the development of career pathways in the state of Minnesota and it was pushed up to our Governor's Workforce Development Board and they voted.

They totally agreed that this toolkit was going to be the foundation for the work moving forward for the development of career pathways. And our career pathways group is working on implementing statewide professional development that will be collaborative, and we have been involved with and are looking forward to the workbook that Jen was talking about as well.

What I showed you earlier was what was happening at the state level and what continues to happen at the state level. We are also pushing this down to the local level, and I here have an example of one of our 26-person consortia. And we've been trying to implement this idea of bringing together all the partners in each one of these consortia in particular career sectors that show the greatest promise for highway careers that are in high demand as well.

So Rochester is a good example for us. You can see the state map here, and Rochester's down on the southeast area. They have the advantage of having the Mayo Clinic in their area, and the Mayo Clinic is a wonderful partner to all the education and all of the other agencies.

And this group in Rochester has been meeting for probably about six or seven years with all the partners that you see there on the list, the workforce centers, the chamber of commerce hugely involved with them, Mayo Clinic and other businesses, adult basic education, secondary and postsecondary, and the city government got involved.

They imposed a one-cent sales tax and they used the funds that were generated to create a new CTE high school that's connected to the two-year college. And everyone was involved. Everyone was at the table helping to make this high school possible, including business and industry.

So for us that is a success story. We are totally embracing the career pathways toolkit and the workbook and really looking forward to moving forward in developing career sectors and career pathways in Minnesota. I want to point out the resources for you here. As you can see, information about CLASP. You can go to these websites, Minnesota career pathways, and the career pathways community of practice. All excellent resources.

And with that I'm passing it back to Jen, I believe.

MS. TROKE: Thanks, Deb and Judy. Great job. And, Brian, are you going to do a quick intro as we go into our breakout rooms?

MR. KEATING: I am. Absolutely.

MS. TROKE: OK. Fabulous.

MR. KEATING: So yeah. Absolutely. So all right. Now, everybody, we're going to actually go into our breakout portion of today's workshop. So you see some breakout questions on your screen right now. These are – this is what we're actually going to be asking you when we spend about 25 minutes in a breakout session. So we'd like to know, do you have a state career pathways team, and who's on it? Do you have an agreed upon definition of career pathways? And last but not least, do you serve targeted populations using career pathways?

So those are the questions. Those will be posted in your breakout room. So you don't have to write anything down or memorize anything. For breakout room one, those of you who go to the first breakout room, you're going to be with Debra Hsu, associate director of career and technical education in Minnesota. And breakout room two is going to be facilitated by Judy Mortrude, director, Alliance for Quality Career Pathways, Center for Law and Social Policy or CLASP.

One thing I do want to mention is we are going to be unmuting you when we move to the breakout sessions. So please take a moment right now and mute your phone line. If you don't think you're going to jump right in, just use your own mute button, or you can press \*6. Your phone line is going to be muted, though. So while we encourage you to chime right in over the phone, I want to encourage you to mute yourself, if you think there might be background noise.

All right. We're going to be with you throughout today. We'll again spend about 25 minutes in the breakouts. We're going to go ahead and move there now. So, Benita, if you are listening, let's go ahead and start the breakout session.

OPERATOR: And please hold for your breakout session.

(breakout session)

MR. KEATING: All right.

OPERATOR: And you're back in your main conference.

MR. KEATING: Great. Great. Thanks, Benita. All right. Welcome back, everybody. Hope everybody had a great conversation. We certainly did in breakout room one. For those of you who were in the other breakout room, we're going to go ahead and give you – give us a couple of minutes here to just kind of debrief. So want to encourage – I think we're going to turn it over to Jen and Deb to kind of give us – Debra to give us an overview of what we discussed in breakout room one. So I think we're going to start with you, Jen Troke, if you could –

MS. TROKE: Sure.

MR. KEATING: – use these notes to give us a quick overview.

MS. TROKE: Sure. Yeah. It was very exciting. I've never done this virtual conference format. So thanks, everybody, for jumping in. We definitely put a few people on the spot. So thanks for playing along with us. But the first question was around state career pathways teams and who's on the team. And so some people weren't sure if they had a team, and so we talked a little bit about how and where they might connect.

We got a lot of good ideas from different states around this. You'll see Oregon and it was – who had the sector navigators? I'm trying to look at these notes and my own. But anyway, we had a whole slew of great ideas around sort of different states and what they're doing. The one that I'll point out was Oklahoma at the bottom here had this new term that I just loved called "career options exposure."

It's a little bit broader than career pathways, and it's a way to basically incorporate employers into the career pathway mix by offering internships, externships, work-based learning, a whole slew of things. So I thought that was super cool. So thanks, Oklahoma. Here's some ideas for how you can sort of connect to a state team, if you don't know if you have one.

A lot of conversation about the definition of career pathways and sort of what works and what doesn't work. And one of my states definitely, they did not. I think it was maybe L.A. or – maybe L.A. they worked that through, and WIOA's helping to shape the definition. And then serving targeted populations with career pathways, we got some super cool ideas around homeless shelters and also how we can sort of serve court-involved youth and others. So I want to just thank the group. It was a really robust conversation. So thank you so much.

MR. KEATING: All right. Great. Thank you, Jen. And then I think we're going to spend a couple of minutes talking about what happened in breakout room two. So we'll turn it back to the breakout room two team, and I think that was Judy; right, Judy?

MS. MORTRUDE: That's me. Thanks.

MR. KEATING: All right. Great.

MS. MORTRUDE: Yeah. I think one of the interesting things you can see in our notes there thanks to Carolyn, thanks to Peg from Wisconsin and Oregon who stepped up and described some of their career pathway work, two leading states have been deeply in this work. And I would argue their work really helped shape that definition that we now have in WIOA over the last decade.

But it's interesting that both of those voices, one from the technical college system, one from a community college, educators often find themselves in the lead role in these conversations. And I think that's great. I think it's just that we need to make sure we can get our workforce partners engaged in this conversation with us because there's so much possibility for partnership and bringing those employer sector strategies together with the great work that's happening around career pathways.

We had a good conversation about navigators, about career pathways. Someone says, you could do this under CEDA and JTPA and WIA, and it's all true. I think WIOA does build in some more levers, calling for more shared accountability, more shared assessment. We're all aiming for the same target now maybe in a little clearer way than we were under past legislation, but essentially it's about partnership development and relationship development.

And not terrible rocket science to know that we need to build much clearer, more transparent navigation systems, and we need – everything that we ask individuals to do on their way to getting these industry-valued credentials and this employment to keep counting and let people keep moving forward.

I would say California – one of the things we didn't surface in our conversation, but California is a state that's really doing a lot of state investment in career pathway right now, the community college system doing what matters for jobs and the economy. They've had a linked learning postsecondary ed. There's a lot to learn about the challenges and the opportunities in the career pathways sector strategies space from what's happening in California.

We talked a little bit about population. Definitely called out that having strategies for target populations is a hallmark of career pathways to make sure that there are onramps and ways in for all the populations looking for access and success in a career pathway education and career pathway employment. That's about it for us, I think. I hope that sums it up.

MR. KEATING: All right. Great.

MS. TROKE: That's great. We also had some California issues come up in our room, Judy. So we talked about the incredible trust that they have going and some of the cool work that they're doing.

MS. MORTRUDE: Yeah.

MS. TROKE: And I'd love if we could just point back to the resources slide, Brian, as we close out here. I was pointedly asking people if they were aware of the toolkit, and so I want to make sure that everybody knows where to go to find our toolkit, CLASP toolkit, and all of Deb's great Minnesota resources as well. And then I just would say in my breakout room we committed to getting some examples of how career pathways are being used for targeted populations. So I will be happy to share with everybody who was on today's webinar.

And then you have a friend in all three of us. We were all champions of career pathways, and so just back to that last slide, you have our e-mails there. I would just encourage you, as you have questions or thoughts, feel free to reach out to us. And I would just again say thank you. Thank you. And with a clapper – so I'm clapping for you. Deb and Judy, you all were amazing, and I want to clap for all the participants for being with us today. And with that, I'll turn it back to you, Brian. Thank you so much.

MR. KEATING: All right. You're very welcome. Thank you. Thanks, everybody, for participating today. Before we wrap it up, we do want to go ahead and get you to give you some feedback. If you could go ahead and give us your thoughts, we've got a couple of polling questions up for you. If you could let us know what you would rate some of these polls, that would be great, and then open-ended feedback is welcome as well.

So go ahead and type into these windows here. Follow the prompts. And we're going to go ahead and leave it there, but we hope to see you on some other sessions that we have the rest of this week, not to mention the closing plenary on Friday afternoon. Hope you're signed up for those, and hope to see you on other events this week.

Thanks so much, everybody, and have a great rest of your day.

OPERATOR: And thank you for participating in today's workshop. You may now disconnect. Presenters, please hold the line.

(END)