**WorkforceGPS**

**Transcript of Webinar**

**Recruiting Women for Nontraditional Apprenticeship & Employment**

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JENNIFER JACOBS: So again, we want to welcome you to today's webinar. I'd now like to turn things over to our moderator today, Felecia Hart, team leader for the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, at the Office of Apprenticeship.

FELECIA HART: Thank you, Jen. Good afternoon and in some places good morning. I'd like to first of all thank you all for joining us on this webinar today. I am Felecia Hart with the Office of Apprenticeship in the Division of Program Quality, Standards, and Policies; and I am the federal project officer for the WANTO grantees, and I will be your moderator for today's webinar.

I've noticed that some of you have already responded with our poll question as to what type of industry stakeholder you are. So at this time I would like to take a few more minutes to give people time to respond, if you have not responded. So Jen, if you could bring that back up, I would appreciate it. (Pause.)

I see we have a variety of different industries; that's really good. I see WIOA and the American Job Centers have the most people joining. And I'd like to thank each and every one of you for taking time out of your busy schedules to join us today.

OK. We will now get started on our webinar. I would like to first do an overview of the Women in Apprenticeship and Nontraditional Occupations Act of 1992 authorized the Department of Labor to award grants to community-based organizations – next slide; I'm sorry – to assist – employers and labor in promoting – Daniel Villao is not in yet, but he will be in. And as soon as he comes in, I will turn it over to him because he had a meeting prior. So next slide, please. Thank you.

The U.S. Department of Labor has funded a total of over $1,998,000 in grants to help women through the WANTO program, and took the initiative for them to recruit, train, and retain women in high-skill occupations in advanced manufacturing, transportation, and energy, construction, information technology, and other industries. We also have partnered with Women's Bureau to fund these grants.

Next slide, please. We have already done this poll, so next slide, please.

OK. So as you can see from the map, the WANTO technical assistance centers are in a variety of areas. They are from the northeast side to the southern side to the midwest and in the western industries. If there has not – not in your area that's in, we will have resources for you to come.

And right now, Daniel Villao, the deputy administrator for the Office of Apprenticeship, has stepped in. So I'm going to turn it over to him so he can do a welcome. (Pause.)

MS. JACOBS: And Daniel, I'm not sure if you're there. You might be on mute. We cannot hear you.

DANIEL VILLAO: Good afternoon. Or yes, I think it's still – it may be morning on the west coast, for those of you that are out there on the west coast enjoying some sunshine. Thank you so much for making time to connect with us, and all of the fabulous work that you've been doing.

As you know, the WANTO Act has been focused on awarding grants to community-based organizations to help assist employers and labor unions in promoting the recruitment and training and retention of women since 1992. We haven't done the best job of that – (audio break, pause).

MS. JACOBS: And Daniel, it sounds like you might be on mute again. (Pause.) And he is dialing back in right now. So again, just a reminder that a recording of today's PowerPoint, as well as a transcript, will be made available on Workforce GPS in about two business days. (Pause.)

And while we wait, if you haven't already, please introduce yourself in that chat. And it looks like Daniel is dialing back in right now, so we will continue this shortly. (Pause.) And Daniel, are you back?

MR. VILLAO: Yes, I'm here. (Chuckles.) Are we good to go now? All right. We apologize for the technical glitch. I'm sure all of you were hanging on a string as I was exposing praises to all of our WANTO participants and the long history that you have in trying to help us address issues with getting access to solid careers.

I want to – before I lose you again, I want to thank and congratulate the three grantees – Oregon Tradeswomen, Inc., of Portland, Oregon; National Nontraditional Employment for Women in New York; and Chicago Women in the Trades of Chicago, Illinois; who we anticipate will develop regional multi-state technical assistance resource centers that continue to support women entering into nontraditional occupations.

We know that we've tasked you with the development and dissemination of online toolkits and best practices to help us improve outreach, education, recruitment, and retention of women. Excuse me.

Our expectation is that you'll develop linkages and connections with pre-apprenticeship programs, that you'll provide orientations on creating a successful environment for women in apprenticeship, and that you'll assist in the form of child care, transportation, support groups, and other efforts to remove barriers for women. And those support service components are so critical to the work in generating access to these valuable careers.

We're very excited about the potential of the work that you're doing, and hopeful. And we are looking forward to seeing the continued valuable outcomes that these types of grants produce. And so I just again would like to congratulate the grantees. I don't want to waste any more precious time just chatting away. But we're looking forward to visiting with each of you along the way.

And now I will hand it back to you.

MS. HART: Thank you, Daniel. OK. We have some great speakers with us today. You will hear from Erik Antokal, workforce development office with the Nontraditional Employment for Women; Morgan Stonefield, the program director for Apprenticeship and Nontraditional Employment for Women; and Linda Hannah, the program director for Chicago Women in Trades.

So today we will start out with Erik. Erik, you are on.

ERIK ANTOKAL: OK. Many thanks for the kind introduction. It's great to be here and thanks for tuning in.

So just to start off here – and let me make sure my – actually, why don't – if someone in the navigator's box can flip to the next slide, that would be great. Thank you.

So I'll just start off with a bit of background about our organization. We've been around for nearly 40 years. We'll be having a big celebration next year in New York with our annual luncheon. So if you're in town, definitely come by. It's in the first week of June.

But since 1978, we've been championing the cause of women in the blue-collar industry, most specifically the building and construction trades, which are critical and a fantastic partner of ours here in New York; as well as the public utilities, our public transit authorities, and our facilities maintenance employers that really provide kind of the employer side support for breaking down barriers and securing high-quality blue-collar careers for women in the tri-state area.

So our model here is very much wraparound and provides – refers out for all of the services that a person might need in order to get into the blue-collar career of their choice. And I'm going to try to take a slant here with how your apprenticeships can sort of adopt some of these policies, because I do think often times there are certain barriers that affect women in particular that prevent their entrance and long-term success in these careers which we all know are quite rewarding in myriad ways.

So we can go to the next slide from here.

OK. So we start off where we really make sure that the folks who come through our program are well-prepared, that they're well-trained for this industry. So we start by making sure our recruitment practices are truly kind of vetting out those who are just in it for the paycheck. And everyone kind of knows what unionized construction and public utilities work can bring you in your weekly check.

But what we're looking for is people who really have the drive to be outside, to be physical, to be mechanically inclined, to learn something new, to work with their hands. So we really – we try to evaluate all of that throughout an intensive recruitment process. But that's not really something that I think many unions and apprenticeships across the country have an issue with. I think you all probably have a pretty good idea of how to figure out who's best.

So in terms of training, we do a very specialized training that we've kind of crafted over the years with input from our key employers. And then that really kind of helps folks to understand what the trade is all about; understand where their strengths lie, where their weaknesses lie, and how to build on those. So there's a very kind of working-in-the-sandbox – or playing-in-the-sandbox mentality, where try anything that you can get your hands on and we'll guide you towards where you might be most skilled.

So in any pre-apprenticeship, I think that's really a core value. And I think if the apprenticeships on the call can really start to foster relationships with other training programs like that, using those groups as a kind of clearinghouse, it can be very effective.

Then just a bit about our placement figures. So since 2006, we've placed over 1400 graduates in construction apprenticeships, and additional 1,000 in related industries. And these are jobs that on average start at 17 bucks or more an hour, which is quite significant, obviously, even in a high cost of living area like New York City.

Let's go to the next slide.

OK. So again, I think – we're not only helping our apprenticeships that we partner with reach diversity goals in terms of how many females are in their programs, but also in a host of other facets of diversity. So 82 percent of our clients self-identify as non-white, and another 80 percent self-identify as low-income. So these are folks who really are hungry; they're ready for these jobs and they are motivated.

So by working with Nontraditional Employment for Women, our apprenticeships and employers and such know that they're really – it's almost impossible for them to not be working with somebody where they're really lifting that person out of poverty. So I think that becomes a very – a critical component in terms of the actual work in terms of selling your apprenticeship program and fighting that PR fight that I know so many of us are fighting.

Let's go to the next slide.

OK. And I'll gloss over this quickly, but just to say that we work with a number of different trade unions here in New York City. And it really runs the gamut, from general carpentry down through the specialized allied painting trades and plasterers, where our folks really do have the opportunity to get into almost any trade that they are interested in getting into.

So I think in working with another pre-apprenticeship program, you may want to encourage them to be diverse. Or you may want to really kind of narrow it down and say, listen – like, this pre-apprentice program or – you know, a pre-apprentice program that we're running out of our shop focuses solely on our apprenticeship. I think that has been effective in New York as well and there are other programs where their pre-apprenticeships focus solely on carpentry or solely on general construction or laborers, depending in how it's called where you are.

So it really – I think those are kind of the two ends of the spectrum and I think it's important to kind of find the sweet spot for you.

Next slide, please.

OK. A key piece where I think apprentice programs can really kind of start to adopt some of the practices that we've adopted are on the long-term retention. I don't think it's enough – and I think we can all agree that it's not enough – to say we hired X amount of women, or we hired X amount of this, X amount of that. I think the real – we're all here to make a real impact. And I think where the real impact comes is a long-term sustainable wage-raising employment.

So we're constantly focused on retention itself and really taking a multi-faceted approach to achieving those retention goals that we have. So I think a big piece of retention is these informal or weak ties, as they're sometimes called.

So providing space for women to interact with one another and also interact with other apprentices, where it's really more off-the-clock or off-the-books, happy hours or celebrations or weekly outings, monthly outings. Something where folks can really kind of make connections with one another and feel like they can have mentors or have peers in the field that they can rely on, ask questions.

I know mostly likely we have a lot of apprentice directors on the call, so I think those folks – you all are already overwhelmed and this helps kind of spread that support around to the other apprentices and journey level or mechanic folks in the program.

We also do have a special focus – and this is something you can choose to adopt or not adopt, but we do directly support women in extreme cases, where they actually cannot afford their initiation fees or dues or tools. And that's a case-by-case basis thing, but it may be something that is a serious barrier to getting a very solid employee into your program.

And it may be something to think about in terms of setting up – it's kind of a brute force mechanism, but it really does help a significant number of women. This probably applies to about 20 to 25 a year who really – they're a great candidate, but financially they need that little foot in the door before they start making the real money that an apprentice does in one of these trades.

Then the obviously the third bullet is what we're doing right now. So obviously, this is a key part of it, sharing best practices. And we also have what's called a signature projects program, where we work with major projects in the New York area to essentially set goals for them, or have them set goals for themselves, where they are saying we're going to have 10 percent women on this jobsite, 20 percent women on this jobsite, 30 percent women. So then they commit to that and we help them actually do it.

So we'll work with the unions and the subcontractors to make sure that they have the appropriate staff or workforce to meet their goals. And this generates demand. Not just on the union side but on our end as well, where sometimes the unions will – they will run out of women to send out from their out-of-work list. And then they'll be calling us to say, hey, we need some more; please help us get some more women placed in the union.

And so this kind of – this spreads informally throughout the subcontractor community once they see the kind of value that female apprentices and female workers on these jobsites have. And it's not just about the strength and the mechanical inclination, their ability to actually do the job; but also the impact that they as women have for the team overall. Reduce safety violations, more organized jobsites, less chaos, fewer reports of behavioral misconduct.

So these are – we all know that a more diverse team is a better team, and this is a very simple way to get there. So we help kind of facilitate those goal settings and relationships between developers, contractors, and unions themselves.

OK. Next slide. And sorry. For the folks who are administering this call, should I answer these questions right now? Should I wait till the end?

MS. HART: We will have a Q&A at the end.

MR. ANTOKAL: Q&A at the end.

MS. HART: Yes.

MR. ANTOKAL: Thank you. Sorry about that.

MS. HART: That's OK.

MR. ANTOKAL: OK. I would recommend to any folks who have the capacity to do so, to really think about a direct-entry process, where you're partnering with someone. Because it can really provide a strong kind of clearinghouse for potential candidates. So I think that's really – we train them and we vet them and we'll send you the best. So that's kind of the value-add of having that separate organization, and this is just a bit about that.

We can go to the next slide. And I think I actually – I may be almost out of time. And I want to be respectful of everybody else's time.

But basically, I've covered all of this. I've covered all of the pieces that I think registered apprenticeship need to know about. But as you go back through the presentation, I think there's more in terms of the specifics of what we do. I don't think you necessarily have to do those things, but I think these are – what we've talked about so far is really kind of the key parts of having a successful apprenticeship program that's inclusive to women.

And so feel free to email me, contact me. We're totally open to providing guidance. (Pause.)

MS. HART: Thank you, Erik. We'll now turn it over to Morgan Stonefield.

MORGAN STONEFIELD: Hello, everyone. My name is Morgan Stonefield and I am the program director for ANEW – Apprenticeship and Nontraditional Employment for Women. And we're located here in the greater Seattle area. We've been around for almost forty years as well, doing very similar work to what you just heard, pre-apprenticeship training for women to get into the construction trades and manufacturing.

So my goal today is to discuss with you recruiting techniques for getting women into nontraditional jobs.

So here in our region we're facing a workforce shortage in the upcoming years around the building trades, manufacturing, maritime industries. And we know that women are going to be part of the solution to filling these shortages. So our work now is to build the pipeline so that women are in apprenticeship programs; they will become the journey level workers that will step in for the retiring workforce.

So today's objective is to demonstrate effective practices and practical approaches for recruiting women into the trades. I'm going to provide information regarding ideas and strategies that coordinators and program managers and employers can implement as they seek to ensure that their outreach activities are encouraging and motivating for women who are entering these nontraditional employment career pathways.

So first step is make the commitment and make it public. A commitment, a timeline, and a plan are very important components when approaching outreach goals. It's not enough to just ask women to apply. Often times we see at the bottom in small print, "Women encouraged to apply;" and that's not really working. So what we're looking at is changing how we are outreaching towards women.

So there are multiple steps – actions needed that will require probably a team or at least someone to take the lead on this, someone who can research best practices, someone who can monitor progress, provide feedback, and adjust the strategies when needed.

So first thing that we have to point out is that these individuals who are tasked with leading this change need to be people who have positive attitudes towards women. Don't expect that just because you're asking – or don't assume just because you're asking a woman to go ahead and help hire other women that she believes women can be in the trades. We see that these attitudes exist both in men and women. And when you're looking for people to maybe be on this team or take the lead, that they have positive attitudes towards women in the trades, in these nontraditional employment roles.

There is a really great website for our western technical assistance group and it's womeninapprenticeship.org. and this website will provide someone who is seeking outreach support an outreach template and a lot of helpful information to create an outreach goal for their organization.

So the basics when it comes to recruitment. The first step is to make sure that it's clear that women are encouraged to apply, and use pictures of women – real women that are tradeswomen from your current workforce – in your promotional material. So if you don't have women in your workforce right now, again, on that womeninapprenticeship.org website there is a tradeswomen library where you can download pictures to use in your material. So that's definitely step one.

In many cases, recruiters don't reach qualified women. Often times there is no clear understanding of the task, expectation of the job. There is negative messages that women are believing, that the workplace is full of harassment and discrimination, and so that is a deterring factor.

To attract top candidates, make sure to create a solid message that sells your company and your program. Start by generating a list of what your ideal worker would be. Use those words – those buzz words – to create your job descriptions. And then find successful tradeswomen that you currently employ or can work with. Interview them. Use their positive feedback to create your job announcement and your job description.

Women who often times report job satisfaction in the trades often also report that they enjoy tasks and environments that are similar to those who participate in outdoor team activities, individual sports, hiking. They participate in rigorous upper body strength. They grew up on a farm, have served in the military; a lot of times you'll find similarities in interests that will then parlay into someone who would be a good applicant for a skilled trade.

Also, don't rule out women who work in health care, hospitality, child care. These are high-stress environments. They require knowledge of site safety, measurement, working under pressure, safety is always a priority, and they become accustomed to challenging work schedules. So there are a lot of transferrable skills.

Some places that are common recruitment sources are women's programs within trades. So if you have an apprenticeship program, if you can build a women's program within, often times those women can become your recruiters. We have women – community organizations within your cities, those are outreach places. Trade schools, high school, fitness and recreation centers, women veterans organizations, and then also social media, Craigslist. You can create targeted outreach material for women. You can easily set social media marketing to target a certain demographic in your area.

So some unconventional partners that ANEW has found and that we see as being successful outreach avenues are apprenticeship and union hall office managers. Often times, office managers are the first person that is seen by someone who is interested in this apprenticeship program or for an employment.

We think that that person can either be a turn-off or someone who can be encouraging. And what we find is that an office staff that can help navigate and – help a woman navigate the process for apprenticeship and believes that women can be successful is going to be important.

What we hear from a lot of our students who come through our program who have already gone out to apply for apprenticeships, they've mentioned that just by applying to the apprenticeship – by putting in their application, they received some negative feedback. Or it's very discouraging language that women won't be successful in this trade. Or do you – all these – do you have the upper body strength that it's going to take? And just very discouraging.

And so I think office staff can be partners and maybe need some encouragement or training on how to be more accessible.

Another unconventional partner that we've been finding is organizations like Sister in the Brotherhood. These organizations have come together in our community to hold community events that have been attracting to women and people of color who have maybe not thought about these careers as obtainable for them, and who have never been told, hey, you know, this is something that you can do.

We've found here in our organization some different case studies that I'm going to be highlighting in the next few slides. So let's see.

What we know works. Recruiting for apprenticeship is – can be a very difficult task. But if you will work with pre-apprenticeship training programs or similar trades-related training programs, you can uncover the top candidates. And so working with or helping establish a pre-apprenticeship training in your community is not a daunting task that – and it's very achievable.

And I know that the womeninapprenticeship.org website – and then the technical assistance centers – have so many resources and guidance on how to establish a pre-apprenticeship training in your area. And I think that that's something that everyone should look towards.

And then also establishing – if you're an apprenticeship program, is establishing direct entry or an employer with your pre-apprenticeship training. It'll allow you to mold the type of candidates you're looking to see.

So when interviewing, also make sure that everyone is asked the same questions. And another suggestion that we're finding is that not allowing the interview to be the end-all. So if you're allowing the interview to be the one deciding factor if someone gets into an apprenticeship or an employment opportunity, that the interview panel may have some bias and that is preventing certain groups from getting through.

And so looking at your interview and intake process to add other components that might equal the playing field for everyone.

And then also, take the time to learn about your workplace culture and work to improve it. Once you have one successful hire who is happy in their apprenticeship, that will lead to more successful hires. And then your reputation as an apprenticeship program, as an employer, will encourage more applications and the top applicants.

Create an inviting culture by building a zero tolerance policy of anti-harassment and bullying. Where women and other individuals who not necessarily believe that the trades are places for them, that will start to change by making it known that this is a workplace where behaviors that have been occurring in the past, that may have been not appealing, that they've changed. And that now jobsites are not just hard hats and safety glasses, but there are policies in place that are making them – these sites – safe for everyone.

Some common barriers that exist for women getting into the trades are lack of access to quality pre-construction training. Often, young girls in secondary education are not offered trades-related programs. That message can be coming from home and it can be coming from the community and it can be coming from the school. So working with the school to expose young girls – you can go even to primary grades. We've seen some programs that are doing that.

But that construction is – construction apprenticeships, or maritime and manufacturing apprenticeships are not just for people who weren't doing well in school, but actually that they're for the people who want to work with their hands, like to work in challenging environments, problem solvers, enjoy math. Those are the type of people we want to outreach to.

And often times, we'll find that women are a big percentage of that, and that naturally they'll be attracted to trades when they're, at a young age, allowed to see themselves in these industries.

Another barrier is lack of tools and clothes needed to go out and look the part when applying for these apprenticeships and for on jobsites. So what we have established here in the greater Seattle area – and it's sponsored by the state and the local level – are supportive services programs where we'll actually issue tools and clothes along with the training and support for going to work.

So we want someone to feel comfortable and confident from head to toe, really, when it comes to applying for these positions. And having the appropriate PPE and attire is going to make someone be more confident as they step into the hiring halls, essentially.

Another thing is hiring managers a lot of times don't believe that women can do the job. We've heard just locally even recently, someone say, you know, we're not really willing to take a risk on a female right now because we're afraid of lawsuits. Attitudes like this and the culture, it needs to change and it needs to come from a top-down – we believe right now – from a top-down perspective.

And that really, once one or two females can enter into the trade, they'll break those stereotypes and that should be – those women should then be highlighted and used as – if they want to – as someone who can then help bring in other women. We see that relationships – once they go through a year or two of the apprenticeship program, that these women – the relationships they have with the managers will start to change the perspective of the culture.

And last for barriers, we see that résumés sometimes can be a barrier for women. Using the résumé to screen applicants only, based on what maybe previous experiences they have and looking for construction work, can weed out most women. And so oftentimes people are skipping those valuable transferrable skills and they're allowing their unconscious bias to take a part of that. So looking at your application process and ensuring that women are given a fair opportunity.

The last slide, case studies. So here in Washington, something that we know are working to bring more women into the trades – because we do have some really good successes here. It's definitely not to where we want it to be, but it's a really good trend. One organization is particular is the Sisters in the Brotherhood for the carpenters. And we have a very strong group here who will do outreach activities in their communities. So they'll be broken up by local or by region.

Here in the King County area, recently the Sisters in the Brotherhood participated in a Rebuilding Together neighborhood event, where they held a day-long event. Volunteers were encouraged to come out from a particular community that they were working in. They would do activities to improve a home of an individual who went through the Rebuilding Together application process.

But then the carpenters also held in an event space some training on some simple skills that might be needed in this trade. And so people would come from the community and would sit in these workshops and then would go out and utilize some of these skills. And then they would come probably to a pre-apprenticeship organization like ANEW and get some more training. But it's increasing the pipeline and showing women access to these careers.

They also have Habitat for Humanity Women Build days, where they'll outreach to the community to get women to come and participate in these days. And what's happening is that there's this cool factor. Women are picking up some tools that they maybe never even held before, but seeing that this is something similar to what they've done in the past or that they do have the (measuring ?) skills. They are working hard and they love it and they're outside and they're – it's fueling them to continue to pursue this type of career. So it's very successful.

Another program I'd like to highlight is the sheet metal women's group. This is an example of how – and this was very encouraged by the sheet metal apprenticeship and then local leadership. But this large group of women and they come together to support each other. They mentor within. They have monthly meetings. They come to support events from the other pre-apprenticeship training programs in our region.

And it's changing the way that women look at sheet metal as a potential opportunity. And women are seeing other successful sheet metal women. And actually, men are seeing other successful sheet metal women and they're saying, oh, that's something my wife can do, or that's something my sister should be doing because she's very similar to you.

And then the person that they're talking to has been – I don't know if it's exact training that they're getting, but they're being encouraged to then show how you would go about applying for these apprenticeship opportunities, whether referring, again, to a pre-apprenticeship if someone has no experience at all; or talking to them about the application process and letting them know that it's not this big, intimidating thing, that it is accessible.

And then lastly, another model of something that's been working here in the region is ironworkers. Ironworkers currently are operating a pre-apprenticeship on their own. And it's somewhat of a competition and it's like a four-week application. But in this four-week experience, they're building the skills that they need to start on their first day.

And if they can demonstrate things like dependable, reliable, ready to work hard, can learn, then often times at the end of the apprenticeship, if they pass the certain – some of these expectations, they're actually placed directly into a job. So you know when you start this four-week experience that at the end of if you will become an ironworker.

So it's not a one-day test where you have to test against all these people, all these men who've been maybe doing this in a non-union environment and have been working with their families. It's giving a whole four weeks to allow someone to develop the skills to be successful on the end.

And we – recently I was – we help those students get support services, men and women. And then I think there was about seven who made it to the end and did really well. And two of those – or three of those were women. And so I know that women don't want to be treated differently. They don't want to be given an easy way. They want to be treated the same. They just want access; they want a chance. And that model really gives that to them.

And on that note, I am done. Please feel free to write down my information and email me if you have any questions. And we're at anewaop.org. And again, a website that I referenced often was womeninapprenticeship.org. It's very useful. I highly recommend everyone check that out.

And I will turn it over to the next presenter, Linda Hannah at Chicago Women in Trades. Thank you.

LINDA HANNAH: Thanks, Morgan. Thanks, Erik and Morgan, for giving out incredible information about this challenge that we all are working hard on, and have wonderful ideas and concepts about how to fix it.

I am with Chicago Women in Trades, the program director. And our mission and history. We were established in 1981 by tradeswomen who sat around a table and talked about the challenges of being in the trades, wanting to go into the trades. And you fast-forward and here we are 35 years later, aggressively working not just in Chicago but around the Midwest to demonstrate how to successfully do that. So we've gone from potlucks to picket lines to policies and programs.

Our mission is economic equity for women through high access, high wages, high-skilled jobs, and want them to have access to that.

We have a pre-apprenticeship training, a welding program. We do advocacy and technical assistance. So I'd like to talk about our pre-apprenticeship program.

Could you advance the slide? Sorry. (Pause.) OK. One more.

And we have developed partnerships with the industry and community partners. With the industry, that is an incredible goal of ours to work on and we have been quite successful. The industry, number one, we have communication with them about the goals and objectives and the skills that they're looking for; and we also do hands-on field trips.

So our program is a 12-week long program that meets two nights a week and on Saturdays. On Saturdays, we go out. For example, we may go out to carpenters, the electricians, the bricklayers. And then we go to those apprenticeship schools and do – and spend six hours doing a hands-on. We bring with us many of the women who are journey level or apprentices in those different crafts, and they conduct a hands-on.

So the students get an opportunity to speak with women who are doing these trades and to talk about what we like to call the good, bad, and ugly. Because we don't just give them how much fun and how much pay you get. There's so many aspects of getting into the construction industry; we want them to have a good picture of that.

We also go to many job fairs. So we will go to the high school fairs, we'll go to community fairs. And three times a year we actually host an orientation. We did this recently on March 1st and we had 150 people. And we had the apprenticeship coordinators and also representatives from the railroads and CTA – which is our Chicago transportation. And at that time, we were able to have these women come in to meet and talk with the various apprenticeship coordinators.

And at the same time, we probably had 25 tradeswomen that were there. And we always give this really great picture of what these tradeswomen look like, what they talk about. And it gives women an opportunity to say, boy, she looks like me, she sounds like. She's a single mom. She has a college degree. She's been incarcerated. So it's just our women represent such a wide range.

We also have a relationship with the apprenticeship program which gives points – for an example, on the various tests. A student will complete the test and if they have a certificate of completion from Chicago Women in Trades, they will gain points for that. So the relationships are great and we're able to continually talk with apprenticeship coordinators. As new ones come in, it's just an ongoing process to develop those relationships.

Role models. Next slide. We have in the industry women who are quite visible. And they become our recruiters and role models. The female staff and instructors at Chicago Women in Trades are also available to go on these trips, but more importantly to have these conversations when women are struggling and they need a mentor.

We have a large number of women in our program. And the Chicago Women in Trades is a family. Once someone completes our pre-apprenticeship program and enters a trade, they stay with us and become the instructors and the mentors.

And then there's the women who don't quite know what they want to do. They come into our program and they don't do anything. So our goal is to continue a conversation and outreach to those women. And when the time is right, we want them to know which trades are taking applications. We bring them back in to do a test prep, because if they graduated six months ago, they need to brush up on their math.

The other thing that we do is the physical fitness. It's so important that the women see and know what it is – the physical – the physicality of going into the trades. Our committees that we have – the plumbers have a committee, the painters, the carpenters, and some of the other trades. And they have committee meetings at Chicago Women in Trades so that women who want to be a pipefitter or a plumber can come to these meetings and have conversations about the goal of getting in and then, most importantly, how do you stay in? How do you succeed? How do you go to work and reach journey level?

So it is an ongoing relationship that women need from the beginning and well into their careers, because that's a real challenge about how do you reach journey level and successfully manage your life during that time? So the committees are real important because they give women an opportunity to come in in a safe environment and just have an open conversation about being a woman in the construction industry.

The next thing that we do is our marketing materials. We're constantly developing – if you look at our website, like us on Facebook – those have been some of our most successful marketing is Facebook. The women look and search. They can find us very easily. But we have to make sure that we're staying current in social media because that is where we're going to find so many women, and particularly young women.

So we have orientations and every Wednesday we have an information session. Two weeks it's in the morning, two weeks it's in the evening, because our goal is to be able to reach women who are available at different times of the day.

The pre-apprenticeship program is 12 weeks. It's extremely intense. And to be selected for that we have a really rigorous process. So they must have a high school diploma or GED. They must take our assessment test and our physical. We want to make sure that women are not – they don't have the top scores, but we need to be able to determine that if in 12 weeks we can get them so that they can score high enough on the various tests so that they will be selected and invited to the next steps in the apprenticeship application process.

So we make sure that our marketing materials reflect the demographics of living in Chicago. We want to make sure that when somebody looks at their materials, it's really important that they see themselves. It is an ongoing challenge and we're always revamping and looking at our marketing materials.

And actually, it ends up being very exciting to see what gets results. We're finding that newspapers are giving us some good results. But we also know that we must complete our website so that it is always attractive and inviting for women.

So we have the targeted outreach. We use gender-neutral language. And we include women – well, we actually only have women in our pictures and talking about the process.

Next slide, please.

The whole idea of marketing is an ongoing effort and we're excited to say that we're doing a good job of that.

Career education and awareness. We have developed a really – and if anyone is interested, they can contact us here at Chicago Women in Trades. We have a "You Can Do It;" it's a guide to construction careers. It has even samples of the math that is involved in passing the apprenticeship test, and understanding the differences of each craft because women just don't automatically know that.

We have an ambassador program, where women are going out doing outreach. They're seeing – women and girls get to see themselves in these pictures. We want to expand the capacity, increase awareness, and reach more women. Our alumni are our best asset in that goal. So the ambassador program has been quite successful.

And in terms of diversity, last year we developed a diversity pledge and we're quite excited about each time we bring a group of women in – today we had a group of high school students, 28. And we shared with them our diversity pledge so that they can understand that Chicago Women in Trades is stronger because of it.

So we've all talked a lot about how, what, when, and where. Please reach out to me. My name is Linda Hannah. I am the program director for Chicago Women in Trades. Like us on Facebook. And more importantly, go to our website. We have some materials that are available for different organizations to use and we want to make sure that we model for anyone how to do this right.

At this time I'd like to turn it over to Chad Aleshire. And thank you so much.

CHAD ALESHIRE: Thanks, everybody. Appreciate that. That was great. I really appreciate your time giving the presentation, Linda.

All right. we are going to jump into some Q&A. And we only have a few minutes, so we want to do it quickly to try to get your questions answered.

Before we jump into the Q&A, I think we had one more question. Or maybe we're going to skip the question and go right to the Q&A. So again, thanks everybody for joining us and let's just dive into your questions here.

I think the first question I'm seeing is for Erik. Erik, what does – what states does NEW cover? In the map on the slides show – the question was here, bear with me here – the map on the slides shows where the regional technical centers are located?

MR. ANTOKAL: Yeah. So I can talk to this while the slide comes up. So we serve people from all over the tri-state area. Some folks come from as far as Pennsylvania or way, way upstate New York for our training program.

The vast majority of our employers are in the five boroughs of New York City, but we do have employment relationships with employers out on Long Island, especially public utilities, as well as New Jersey with PSE&G. And then we also work with many other unions, plumbers, steamfitters, carpenters, electricians, and so on and so forth, that cover the area outside of New York City.

For the most part, the way it works here in the tri-state area is that building and construction trades in New York City cover the five boroughs and then sometimes some close-by towns that are very, very near to New York City. And then there are other unions that cover everything outside of New York City, and sometimes those are stretching from Maryland on up to Massachusetts.

So we do – most of it's New York City, but we do work pretty extensively in the surrounding area as well.

MR. ALESHIRE: Great. Thanks, Erik. Appreciate it. All right. We're going to keep right on moving here. Sorry that we couldn't get the map up for the – on that slide. I think we had a little bit of technical difficulty there.

So let's jump to the next question. I believe it was for Linda. Linda, with respect to younger aged – opportunities for younger aged folks, like high school graduates, what avenues do you recommend to encourage their participation?

MS. HANNAH: It's really great for us to go out and talk directly with the young people, whether it's the Girl Scouts or going to the career fairs at the high schools. We also must talk more to high school counselors and teachers to make sure that they understand the incredible opportunity for young women. And then finally, like today we were able to bring in 28 students and we did a small hands-on with them in electricity and carpentry and they were so excited. We also fed them. They were just so excited when they walked out of here today.

MR. ALESHIRE: All right. Thanks. Thank you, Linda. All right. I'm looking at the clock. I want to keep us going.

I've got a question that came in for Morgan, I believe. What other measures level the playing field in not relying on interviews?

MS. STONEFIELD: Yeah. So I've seen where an application has a total score. And in the application, there are components that will give someone additional points – letters of recommendation, a résumé, certificates that they might have earned that would be helpful in the industry.

And then maybe a math test that would be related to the trade; a reading test that might be related to the trade; a hands-on test or an agility test that would include material handling, physical components, and then have that have a score. And then have the interview have a score. And then take an average or something that you would maybe add that up and have a score for each applicant.

And then maybe then use that to rate them and then decide what size class or whatever you're going to be taking it. That, we've seen, will get more women into the industry.

And then we've also seen trades that don't have any – they have one little application and then it's just an interview; there's no other determining factors except for the men who sit behind the desk on the other end. And we see fewer women going into those trades.

So nothing has been set research-wise, but I believe that having other components besides just a small group of people who are deciding who gets in and who doesn't, really help level that playing field.

MR. ALESHIRE: Right. Great. Thanks, Morgan. Really appreciate it. All right. I'm looking at the clock. We are just about out of time.

So I do want to remind all of our participants, thank you so much for your questions. Our team here is capturing all of the questions that have been put into – that you've put into the chat. And we will put together an FAQ that'll be sent out and shared with everyone to make sure that we do have everybody's questions answered. So keep your eyes out for that FAQ. We've been reviewing the questions; they are great and we're simply out of time. So we appreciate it.

I am going to turn it back over to Felecia Hart to sign off and thank our speakers.

MS. HART: Thank you, Chad. I'd like to thank each and every one of the presenters for presenting today. You all have done a wonderful job. I'd like to thank all the participants that were on the call. And there were a lot of great questions coming in, as Chad said. We will get your answers back to you.

And once again, thank you. And if you need more information on WANTO, my contact information is on the screen. Please do not hesitate to call me or email me.

And there was also, one slide back – can you go back one slide real quick? If you want any more information on resources, you can go on the Department of Labor's Apprenticeship USA website, where you can find more information as well.

Thank you, ladies and gentlemen, and you all have a wonderful day. This concludes our webinar.

(END)