**WorkforceGPS**

**Transcript of Webinar**

**SkillsCommons Field Guide of TAACCCT Innovations: Aligning Workforce Development Stakeholders**

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JON VEHLOW: Welcome to "SkillsCommons Field Guide of TAACCCT Innovations: Aligning Workforce Development Stakeholders."

So without further ado, I'd like to turn things over to our moderator today, Cheryl Martin, TAACCCT program manager, Division of Strategic Investments, Employment and Trade Administrations with the Department of Labor.

CHERYL MARTIN: Thank you, Jon. Hi, everybody. I am delighted to see your names scrolling across the screen there as you join us. We have had a really good time with all the webinars in the series so far.

So we're really glad to see more than 100 of you here today with us. It looks like about – well, when I last looked, about a quarter of you are from colleges, maybe a third or so are from the workforce system, a few community service providers, and the balance from other kinds of organizations. So welcome to each one of you no matter where you are from. We hope you will find this beneficial.

I'm Cheryl Martin from the Department of Labor and I'd like to introduce my co-moderator for this series, Erin Berg, who is the community college specialist at the Department of Education. And we'll be hearing from Erin in just a moment.

But first of all, welcome. Before I turn it over to Erin, I just want to mention that our presenters – I want to say a little bit about TAACCCT because maybe not all of you know about that. But our presenters today were both involved with a U.S. Department of Labor grant called TAACCCT or Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training Program. You can see why we call it TAACCCT.

For those of you not familiar with that grant program, it was a $2 billion, seven-year grant that will be wrapping up at the end of this month and TAACCCT provided funds to community colleges to support changes that would make it easier for adult learners to attain industry recognized credentials and improve their job prospects.

So while TAACCCT was only authorized for four years, the impact is expected to last much longer because of the things that the colleges did like the initiatives that we're going to hear about today. And I'll say a little bit more about how you can benefit from those learnings from TAACCCT and that kind of thing a little bit later. But now – right now, I'm going to turn it over to Erin to tell us a bit about this webinar and the series that it's a part of.

ERIN BERG: Thanks, Cheryl. Thanks, everyone. Erin Berg with the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education. Today's webinar is part of a series – and I'll talk a little bit about that in a second – but today's webinar is considered a field guide for bringing employers, Departments of Labor and Education, workforce development boards, and community colleges together to create new programs and career pathways for students and adults.

It's hard work, for sure, but when all of these entities can come together to support students into programs that have real jobs waiting for them when they finish, everybody wins. And I particularly like – in this – today's examples that we'll cover today – that they include many pathways to careers such as apprenticeship and, crucially, how to provide useable outcome data in career exploration resources for students, parents, and counselors.

So thank you in advance to Kaye, Dawn, and Rhonda for bringing this topic to us all. So this is a list of the webinar series that we're doing this fall. If you were – today is the second webinar in the series. We're off to a great start. It's a packed schedule. We'll cover a lot of topics of interest to career-focused educators and community college specialists.

In addition to this week's topic on aligning stakeholders, future webinars will show how community and technical colleges are improving student outcomes through strategic support services, how they're advancing academic achievement, and how they're incorporating adult learning strategies into community college courses.

So really excited about the next few weeks here and probably have some more coming up for you after that maybe. But I'll turn it back over to Cheryl so that she can kind of explain what SkillsCommons is and what the open educational resources that are available to community colleges and others – what's there and why it's there.

Thanks, Cheryl.

MS. MARTIN: Thank you, Erin. Yes. So about that flag – you know, going back to that opening pole about open educational resources. So it looked like about a quarter of you say that you're using OER regularly – which is great – and a quarter of you have started to use it – which is also great. And about half of you are here to figure out – well, not necessarily to figure out what it is but you're like, "What is it?"

Well, we've got a great example of that for you today because OER is just a fancy word for free stuff you can find and adapt and use for your own purposes. And so of those 700 TAACCCT funded colleges, they developed nearly 2,700 new or revised programs of study. Like, for instance, the curriculum for a manufacturing or a healthcare program at a community college. And the fact that it was done in the form of OER means that you can use these resources that those colleges have developed.

So those colleges also develop new ways of doing things like building strategic alliances between colleges and workforce boards, the topic that you will hear about today. And so SkillsCommons is the place where all of that material has been placed because we require TAACCCT grantees to share their curriculum that they developed, to share their ideas of what they developed. And so SkillsCommons is a place where you can find this OER – or free resources that you can find, adapt, and use – and that's one of the reasons why we say that the benefit and the impact of TAACCCT is lasting long after the end of the grants.

SkillsCommons was developed through a cooperative agreement between the U.S. Department of Labor and Cal State University. And more materials are being added to this website through the end of this month. With the round four grantees, there's a lot of really good stuff that they are adding. And Cal State will be continuing the site after the TAACCCT grant ends. So it doesn't go away then, either.

Even though the TAACCCT grants are wrapping up, you and others can really benefit from what grantees learned and built. You can benefit right now and going forward. So this field guide – slide forward, please. Actually, next slide, please. One of the ways that you can do that is something that SkillsCommons calls a field guide. And we are hearing today from a couple of examples that are coming out of this field guide which will be available very soon. This has been more of the programmatic side of things.

I said, there's curriculums on SkillsCommons and there's programmatic information resources on SkillsCommons. The second part of that is more what you will be hearing about today. So Dawn's story – and Kaye's are available on those links that you see there on the slide. These are going to be part of the field guide. Stay tuned for more about that. It's upcoming. We'll be doing more webinars that highlight it but this is just a little sample of what you will be able to get from that field guide. So we hope that you will find this really useful and come back for more.

So without further ado then, I would like to turn it over to our presenters and let them tell us about the very exciting things that they've been doing. So first, we're going to hear from Dawn Busick-Drinkard and she's the grant director with MoWINs at the Missouri Community College Association until the end of this month. And also, her colleague, Rhonda Anderson who is with MERIC or the Missouri Economic Research and Information Center. So they'll be telling us about some data integration activities that they did that are quite exciting.

And Kaye Norris who is the project director at HealthCARE Montana at Missoula College is going to be telling us about apprenticeship projects that they have done with HealthCARE Montana. And that is also a really exciting project. So you're in for a treat today. Let me start with Dawn.

DAWN BUSICK-DRINKARD: Thank you, Cheryl. Well, good afternoon, everybody. And welcome to the Show Me State's round four TAACCCT statewide data integration system. We're honored here today to be able to showcase our MoSCORES system which stands for Missouri School Credentials for Occupations Resulting in Employment Success. So the reason that we chose this statewide data integration is because a couple of things happened and that is all the TAACCCT grants required a grant performance scorecard.

And then while we were in the middle of some of these TAACCCT grants, WIOA was enacted at the federal level. So there was an opportunity there that required the state workforce eligible training provider systems to be reworked so they start looking at annual approval of each program of study based on performance. So we felt, in Missouri, that we would take an opportune time to build a system that would support all of that.

At the same time, there was another overarching issue here with the 13 Missouri community and technical colleges and that is, we had no performance collection or tracking system for our noncredit students. And with all three of our TAACCCT grants, we did offer noncredit stackable industry credentialed programs of study but we had no common database. We had no common database. We are a decentralized state so our community colleges do not report to one regulatory body.

So we built this statewide data integration system that was going to enhance and help all the colleges but also our public workforce partners. And then there's a public site and private site to this new website that we're going to demonstrate for you here today. And then as soon as I'm done with my live demonstration, I've got here with me today, Rhonda Anderson with the Missouri Economic Research Information Center who manages and houses the data on a state data server where this system will be sustained long after the grant goes away.

And she's going to quickly show you the career explorer that was built along with this. So let's get started. So on this next screen, you will see the funding that – we use the funding to implement the noncredit system. Here's all the partners that we needed at the state level.

The association, of course – Missouri Community College Association – which all 13 colleges participate in, the Missouri Department of Economic Development which is where our Economic Research Information Center is housed, our Division of Workforce Development which handles all the WIOA formula funding, our Missouri Education Department, Department of Higher Ed which is where our EMSAS system is where all the credit student performance is reported for IPED, and then, as well as our Department of Elementary and Secondary Education – which we were able to partner with them in order to create this adult career explorer which we'll tell you about in a little bit here.

And then of course, we couldn't do any of this without our Missouri Department of Labor and Social Services. And their role is to provide the wage data even though it's lagged. That's their role and we've got an outstanding relationship. So we couldn't've done any of this – these last four years – without all of these great partnerships.

Our outcome for what we accomplish through this system is noncredit and credit programs. Every program of study – this system was built was for to support ETPS and our coordinating board of higher ed inventory of programs of study. It's a useable system for high school counselors, college counselors, for students, parents, and the public. There's a public side to this system. It's web-based.

There's also a private business side to this where each individual college can see their own performance reporting. You cannot see another college's performance but you can – as the college administrator, you can make some data-driven decisions in support of your program.

The Noncredit Program Collection we started four years ago with the statewide TAACCCT force. We met every month. Long, painful meetings about what the data dictionary needs to look like, common terminology, the types of upload, and – as well as what is it that we need to collect on noncredit students?

They are completely different type of student than our traditional 17 and 18-year-old students. Most of them are adult learners with jobs. So the programs upload into the ETPS system and the EMSAS system is done at the colleges quarterly and we've been uploading data since 2016 – I think it's August of 2016. It replaces data entry processes for the WIOA program. It's one system where a college personnel can upload their programs of study for the ETPS system as well as the IR staff can populate student performance and generate some performance outcomes.

It updates consumer information on post-secondary education programs. It's connected to labor market information. It's a sustainable system for reporting program results long after these grants go away. The project definitely will outlive the grant. It's automated and we have heightened, enhanced security for the longitudinal database. So let's get to our live demo.

Here you have the screen where you can plug into. Okay. You should all be able to see the MoSCORES screen from that login. Can you see it?

MR. VEHLOW: We're not seeing it yet there, Dawn. But just wait one second.

MS. BUSICK-DRINKARD: Okay.

MR. VEHLOW: You may have to – did you select your desktop?

MS. BUSICK-DRINKARD: Yep, I did. There we go. All right. Are you seeing it now?

MR. VEHLOW: Seeing it now. You're good.

MS. BUSICK-DRINKARD: Awesome. So this is a landing page. Under the MoSCORES option at scorecard.mo.gov. This is the public side of the page. A little bit about our methodology – there is a methodology tab here that you can click on your top right-hand corner that –

MR. VEHLOW: Dawn? Dawn, just to interrupt – we're actually just seeing your desktop right now. We're not seeing actually any browser open right now. There we are. Yep. Now, you're bringing it back up so we see it.

MS. BUSICK-DRINKARD: You got it?

MR. VEHLOW: Yep, now we see it.

MS. BUSICK-DRINKARD: Okay. So at this top right-hand corner, you'll see methodology here which will upload down at the bottom of your screen. And so for those that are in higher education or in workforce, we do have some methodology notes. I recommend everybody take a look at – before you get in here and start querying up in some reports. A couple things. All programs that are uploaded into the system are for school. All results are populated in 10 or more students in that program of study.

Also, note that when we get into this, there will be some wage data that's not quite populated yet and that's because the programs of the students completed in 2017 and we don't have the 2017 wage data populated into this system. So let's just start with a noncredit program because that's the main thing that we built this system around. As you can see, you have all these type of degrees, credentials that you can search by. But let's go to certificate because that's what our workforce job training programs are in the 13 colleges here in Missouri.

Let's pick a field of study and we'll go with health professions and we'll look at – let's go to St. Louis Community College. And so you can pick by college. You can also expand and search by location and you can add additional filters like is it WIOA approved, offered online, transfer degree programs and apprenticeships.

Now, the reporting on apprenticeships isn't robust yet. Hopefully, in the future, we've planned to expand that out. But these are other filters. So let's hit our search button. So what you're seeing now is all the health professions at St. Louis Community College. You should also note over here that you can see whether they're WIOA approved or not. You can see that – since we're only looking in one college, there's no distance, the location's there. Is it a certificate award diploma? What's the length of the program?

So to learn more about that program, let's go to nurse assistant training for nursing homes right here. Let's pick this one. So that takes you to that program page at that college. It starts out with the program name, the credential awarded, the length, where it's located, the description about it, websites that it's linked to, it's noncredit, a contact person, and some financial information. As a public student or parent looking, what are the costs to this program? $800 in supplies here.

Another tab here that you'll see is school details. And this just goes into a little bit about the school, their institution wide transfer rate, their student Pell Grant percentage, and the actual location and web address. Here we can share with the public some demographics about this program at this college and then, how it compares to similar programs within the state. Here's the college program demographics, stage demographics, and here's in comparison to similar programs within Missouri.

We have gender statistics and race and ethnicity statistics, as well. So these are helpful demographics to help the public to make some informed decisions about programs of study choices. Let's go to the performance of this one particular program. So as you'll notice, under earnings there's a little information button that pops up. Earnings are the median wages at one or three years after a student completes the program. So this graphic is empty and that's probably because the college hasn't collected the median earnings for the first and third year yet and reported those. No?

RHONDA ANDERSON: No.

MS. BUSICK-DRINKARD: No? Is that correct, Rhonda?

MS. ANDERSON: We don't have the wages yet reported through the employers matching in the database.

MS. BUSICK-DRINKARD: Okay. All right.

MS. ANDERSON: Sorry.

MS. BUSICK-DRINKARD: That's fine. Then the credentials attained first year at this college – this 84 percent represents the college. This bar with a number to the right – that is the statewide average. So you can see St. Louis Community College is performing one percent better. This is the second-year credential rate. Eighty-four percent and 83. Again, they are outperforming by one percent.

Here is the payroll employment rate and since the employment rate for 2016-17 program completers has not been included yet into the database – it should shortly. I think those come in fall of 2018 which is where we're at now. So check back maybe in January and this should be populated by then. There's – we have no data available since we just launched this program for 2014 and '15. We do know that there were 40 students at this college that took this program of study. And then potential careers: nurse assistant. In the top industry that it could correlate to since this is a health profession, it would stay in the health profession.

And again, only programs of study with ten or more student completers within them will show performance data in these type of demographics. So if you go to comparisons, you also have the option here to take the same program and compare it to similar institutions that offer this. So let's take a look at this program in comparison to – Carver College is one of our colleges and I'm going to try – let's try Webb City. So go down here and compare. And there it is. There's St. Louis Community College and Carver College. So you should be able to look at some comparison data here but it doesn't look like Carver is populated just yet.

Although, we do have their employment rate, 86 percent, and their median earnings for this program. Is there a reason that these are not populated yet with the Carver Nurse Assistant Center?

MS. ANDERSON: It could be that the data has not been sent through the school at this point.

MS. BUSICK-DRINKARD: Okay. Okay. Let's try another one. Let's see if State Tech or – no, State Tech hasn't started this yet. They're about to, though. Let's go to Moberly – or not – I need another nursing assistant. Here we go. I looked at that one – (inaudible).

MS. ANDERSON: I think the short story to that is in a perfect world when we have all of the data, then those fields for comparison purposes would be populated so that the programs could be compared side by side.

MS. BUSICK-DRINKARD: Okay. Thank you. Then you could have a reporting. And this is something that the public – when you look at the reporting tab, you can look at – with this program of study, you can look at – this is other schools, right? So each school would have a login that is unique to them and they would only be able to see information for their institution. For MCCA purposes, they would have permissions to the community colleges in the state.

And so with that, since we're using Dawn's login, she has information with the dropdowns. Schools would normally just be their school and then they can query on these different things. They can look at programs by step two or step four level and then start looking at different school years and degree types. Then they could use some of the demographics to filter those results down even further to generate some results.

So the reporting tab is still under construction at this point and we're adding in some other quick reporting features for the institutions. We had a data advisory task force made up of people from each institution that had input on what they wanted to see from the reporting and what we could pull out of the database. And so that's what we based all of this information on. So you can also see you could match it to ETPS programs, to Department of Higher Ed programs that don't require WIOA approval, match similar matched programs and nonmatched programs.

So without showing any colleges actual performance data which is private to those college, I won't go any further. But what I'd like to do next now is trans over to Rhonda and have her share with you the training career explorer options that we have for the public site real quickly before we go to our closing site.

MS. ANDERSON: Thanks, Dawn. And the screen that we're looking at now is actually the training and education page on our state's Department of Workforce Development site. So with that, we – (inaudible) – and links to all these different tools including Missouri Connections. The Missouri Connections is actually a tool used by our middle and high school and we have contracted with them to add an adult component.

So when we go into this system, we click adult on the toolbar and then we see information specific to mature learners. Some of these things are still under construction. So I'm looking at exploring careers. We then see where Missouri specific data has been added to the system with career grades and career pathways. They're using out projections for the long-term and determining the information here. All of this has been set up on – (inaudible) – and API. So the information, once updated with the state, then automatically flows into this system, making it sustainable for the long-term.

The users can then go in and take assessments based on their own interest, their lifestyle, and their workstyle and it will match to occupations. We can actually go straight into occupations looking at career clusters. And when we look at career clusters, we can then choose occupation and then click into them and find additional information connected to O\*Net. So we can see, again, task lists, skills and abilities, wages, all of this information. And then there is a printable summary that goes along with each of these different occupations.

There are components added in for military experience as well as entrepreneurship and starting your own business. This system, if you do go to it, do expect to find some links that aren't quite live yet but they will be by the end of the month.

MS. BUSICK-DRINKARD: Okay. Thank you. So that's just a real quick view of what's coming up in the MoSCORE system. We are launched, we are live now, and we've been live since April. There is a feedback button. So if you're out here and you've got some ideas or you think of some areas we might've missed, we would love to hear from you. I lost my main connection, guys. I'll bring it back.

MR. VEHLOW: Dawn, are you finished sharing.

MS. BUSICK-DRINKARD: I am finished sharing but –

MR. VEHLOW: All right. I'm just going to bring you back then.

MS. BUSICK-DRINKARD: Yeah, I've lost the Adobe – there we go. There we go.

MR. VEHLOW: Got you.

MS. BUSICK-DRINKARD: I'm back. Next to happen with this MoSCORE system is – we just renewed the super agency MOU for another four years. I know in previous presentations, everybody's like, what does a statewide super MOU look like? Well, all those partners I mentioned earlier all did sign memorandums of understanding to come together to build this system so we could all use it.

But other things that we've got coming out is we've got new departments that were in discussions now that want to join this MOU and that is the Department of Social Services, – (inaudible) – programs or ScaleUP! Program that will be scaling and sustaining a lot of our TAACCCT innovations into and then as well as the Department of Corrections for all of those reentry programs.

As we said earlier, the career exploration, we're going to be building that adult users and that will be more enhanced. Additional reporting tools for program inventories, a report builder, separate WIOA report, and as well as a lot of downloadable program files. And then of course, we do have the printable summary page.

The security access – we will have a formal technical guide out there on how colleges can go and enroll into this system and gain access to participate as well as to see their own respective colleges performance report. And then those other interested stakeholders like the Department of Higher Ed that may want to have access to all higher education performance data as well as the Community College Association that may only need to see the community colleges to generate reports.

So there's still a lot of work to be done going forward but we've got the commitment of all the state agencies and dedicated resources to sustain this system long after TAACCCT goes away. So with that, I would love to entertain any quick questions.

MS. MARTIN: Great. Thank you so much, Dawn. You know, I – that is an awfully short amount of time to give a tour of such a complex system that you have built there and I know that you could talk about that for four hours and I know that took four years to build. So that is pretty amazing. If people have questions about that – I know we went through it really fast – we would be happy to answer them to the extent that we can.

We got one question that says – that talks about synergy with other kinds of programs. And I – because it came in so early – you can put that question up, John. Because it came in so early, I'm wondering if it really is actually aiming more toward is there synergy will SkillsCommons. So somebody asked, "We have a grant for another program that works with advanced manufacturing, 3-D printing, and information technology. I'm really glad to hear that you're treating those as impact investments because that's great. And can you envision any synergy?"

If you're asking about that with respect to SkillsCommons, definitely. There would be a lot of resources on SkillsCommons that you could use for 3-D printing, for IT, that kind of thing. We're not even really talking about that at all today but there's a lot of curriculum on SkillsCommons in addition to the programmatic materials that we have today that would be very useful for that kind of thing.

So we do have a specific question for Dawn. "Did you say the colleges are able to upload their data into this system and it automatically populates into WIOA ETPL list?"

MS. BUSICK-DRINKARD: Yes. Actually, the system sits on the WIOA server of that state agency – DED. So we took advantage of the stars aligning when we were developing and designing this. The new ETPS systems needed to be enhanced, as well. So we brought them into this. So this system does sort of sit on the same system where the ETPS automated system where colleges go in and annually update their programs of study for WIOA approval and record their performance. So; yes. It is on the same system.

MS. MARTIN: Great. Thank you. Okay. So we are going to move to Kaye Norris now because we have two fabulous examples of stories today that we wanted to tell you about – resources that you can find more about on SkillsCommons but also just about projects that people did that you might want to know more about. And so I want to give Kaye as much time as possible. Let's turn to Kaye and then if you have other questions that would go to Dawn, as well, we'll try to catch those at the end. But, Kaye, let's turn it over to you.

KAYE NORRIS: Thank you, Cheryl. And it's nice to have the opportunity to speak to the group about HealthCARE Montana. Just so you know, the CARE in HealthCARE Montana stands for Creating Access to Rural Education. HealthCARE Montana, as Cheryl pointed out, is a TAACCCT grant – a $15 million TAACCCT grant.

We have 18 consortium partners. Fifteen of those partners are community colleges of which four are tribal. And then we're also partnering with the Office of Commission of Higher Education, the Montana State Department of Labor and Industry, and also, the Montana Area Health Education Centers.

We have over 200 employer partners who have participated in a variety of activities and we had really wanted to create this synergy between the colleges and the employers around the state. Our goal has been to create a homegrown solution for Montana's HealthCARE workforce. And when you're talking rural, particularly in Montana, if you don't start figuring out how to do homegrown training, we're going to have fewer and fewer people who are providing healthcare out in the rural areas.

So I just want to quickly give you an overview – just a little bit about the accomplishments that we've had over the last four years. We are – we have directly impacted approximately 3,600 students. We have over 5,000 students who are enrolled in our healthcare programs. One of our focuses, in addition to the apprenticeship program which is what, of course, I'll focus on today, has – what's really revised the nursing program in the state of Montana.

And we wanted to get – we have a real big nursing shortage in this state and so we wanted to try to get these graduates out into the workforce more quickly and really help them to save some money. So basically, we reduced each of the practical nursing, the associative science and nursing RN – that's a three-year program – two and half year program – and then the Bachelor of Science which is also a registered nurse program but at a bachelor level – the completion that the ASNs can do. Once they've already become an RN, they can then go on to the BS and completion.

One of the things that we did was we really reached out to employers around the state on a regular basis to find out what their needs were and we found that we had a real shortage in the rural areas of Montana for licensed practical nurses particularly in the long-term care facilities and also in some of the critical hospitals that are there. A very important role. And so we decided that the best way for us to really try to grow your own – which I talked about a minute ago – was to put this program in a distance format. It’s a hybrid program so they do have to come to the college campus some of the time but most of their time is spent in their own community, doing their didactic education online.

And then we worked really hard with the rural facilities in these areas to make sure that they were able to – the students were able to do their clinical proponents in those facilities that are in their community. We created training programs for the preceptors that would be in these rural facilities and this will really allow these students to not have to move away. They were – these are working people with children and to leave their rural community and to get a degree was really not an option for them.

So we also put the Bachelor of Science and nursing – the completion program – also online. It's a three-semester course that is fully online. There is a clinical component to it but the registered nurses who have the ASNs, they can actually continue to work in their facility that they're already working on while they're getting their bachelor's degree. And their clinical component can be done right there in the site that they're working in.

So this has really been a real benefit for Montana because we're getting nurses into the workforce more quickly and we're also saving them money by reducing their programs by one semester. And we did not reduce the rigor of the programs at all. These are highly regulated. The nursing program is the most highly regulated of the programs in our – that our colleges were working on in this project. And so we have to make sure that they get the kind of education and training that they need.

So what we really did was reduced the number of pre-recs that they had to do or the content that was absolutely essential as part of their nursing program was woven into the courses that they were taking. And so essentially, we kind of created an accelerated program that – it's content was the same but people were able to actually graduate a semester sooner than they were before.

We were concerned about the distanced practical nursing program because it's hard sometimes for students to learn online and the rigor of the program is very intense. But we are very pleased to see that we have 39 graduates and 98 percent of them passed their licensing test. That is not an easy test to pass. And so we're feeling really pleased about that and so it was a great reinforcement for us to continue this program to continue to allow these students to learn in their own setting.

We, additionally, either enhanced or created new 49 healthcare programs in the state. And, again, we really reached out to employers to find out what their needs were and where their shortages were. And we really wanted to create programs that would be sustained over the years. And so we knew that we needed to create programs or enhance them in ways that met the needs of the field.

And so we really appreciate the TAACCCT funding because that has allowed us to do that in Montana and will be sustained for years to come. Now, the final thing that I'm going to talk to you about is what the presentation's actually focused on is our HealthCARE apprenticeship programs – our registered healthcare apprenticeship program.

When we started the TAACCCT grant three and a half years ago – actually, I guess it's almost four years now – there were zero registered healthcare apprenticeship programs in Montana. And so I can say right now that we did have some challenges in getting this up and running and I'll talk to you about those challenges in a minute. But, for right now, I just want you to know that we went from zero registered apprenticeship programs to 21 and we have 51 facilities across the state to – or have an apprenticeship program within their facility. And we have enrolled 204 apprentices.

So this is a major accomplishment and – so, I just want to just quickly show – give you a visual of where these programs are located. You can see the state of Montana there. We're incredibly rural. You can also see that these programs are located all over the state in very rural areas and also in what I call our larger towns of Billings, Bozeman, Missoula, Great Falls – those are our largest towns in Montana and I actually call those towns because Billings is the largest and it has only just slightly over 100,000 people.

So we are incredibly rural and frontier in a huge geographic space. So being able to do these apprenticeship programs and have people be able to learn in their own communities and do on the job trainings as their doing their curriculums was really, really a powerful thing for us to do in Montana. If you look at that grid across the top of the map, you can see all of the different occupations that are now registered with our apprenticeship program.

And as you can also – there's a variety of college programs as well as continuing education or industry recognized certificates. And so it's been a really nice combination of both of those. You see the number 60 is the very largest and those are CNAs – the Certified Nurse Assistants. This is a very challenging position for facilities anywhere and particularly in the rural areas. It's an entry level position, there's lots of turnover, it's really hard to keep people in those positions.

So the employers have really seen this as a win win for them because the apprenticeship program creates a bond between the employee and their mentor – because every apprentice has a mentor within the facility – and also creates a commitment from the employee to the facility because the facility is providing them with this extra training, they're giving them raises along the way, and then the employee commits to do the entire apprenticeship program and then feels committed to that organization when they're done and wants to continue working there.

So before I talk about the challenges, I'll talk to you a little bit about what the strategies were for success. And again, I mentioned before, everything that we did was very employer-driven. We really asked the employers in regular ways through surveys, through staff visiting and asking questions, "What are your shortages? What employees do you need to have higher level skills? What are those skills that you require?"

And so by having that constant employer involvement and input, we created things for them that they will be able to use and will last. Again, we had a very strong rural focus. We spent lots of time in the rural facilities sharing with them, sharing with each other. We also were very strategic in partnering with our licensing boards, our professional organizations, other workforce development stakeholders because healthcare is very regulated.

There's board regulations, there's accreditation requirements. And so all of these things needed to make – when we created these apprenticeship programs, we had to make sure we met all of those plus we met the requirements of the federal apprenticeship programs and that we did this in a way that worked for the workforce in Montana.

The other thing that was really, really helpful for us is that we have very high-level leadership support. Our governor was very supportive, the commissioner of the Montana Department of Labor and Industry was very supportive, we had support from our legislators, and, in fact, our governor actually put forth a bill to the legislature – which passed – which provided a tax credit for – not just healthcare facilities but any organization that took on an apprenticeship program or an apprentice. They would get a tax credit of $750 for each apprentice and if those apprentices or any of those apprentices was a veteran, then they would get $1,500.

So again, just really putting it out there to the state that this is a very valuable tool for really enhancing the workforce so let's all work together to make this happen. The other thing that we did was the statewide scaling. We shared best practices amongst each other, we had webinars with the employers, we had where we talked about what we were doing at HealthCARE Montana, we had them talk to each other about the benefits once they were doing these programs. And so that sharing back and forth of the best practices really got this whole thing going.

And in Montana, there's not a lot of people. And so we're all kind of working together and going to meetings together. And so word of mouth is a very powerful way to share what's going on in this state. And so pretty soon, this word got out and we got to the point where the employers were demanding things that we couldn't quite meet because we didn't have the time to create them.

So that was actually something that was exciting and also challenging. And so just to talk about the challenges now, then, when we first began, as I said, there were no registered apprenticeship programs in healthcare in Montana. And the healthcare facilities – they didn't have any idea what an apprenticeship would be in healthcare. They know plumbing and they know electrician. That was just – they couldn't quite see how that worked in a healthcare facility or with a healthcare employee.

So we found that we were – we had staff that were travelling around, talking to the facilities and trying to engage them in the apprenticeship process and they were – we were finding that they were saying the same things and going back to the employers maybe two, three times and they just weren't getting any traction. So we decided, "Okay. We really need to develop a toolkit" – what we call the Apprenticeship Implementation Toolkit which just basically provides visual aids for what these different programs could be and why they are important.

And so the nice thing is is that all – this entire toolkit is now located on SkillsCommons and there's a link through this presentation that will take you directly to that – and I'll show you here in a minute. And it's a very – it really helped the employers to be able to see, "Oh, this is how this would work. Oh, now I understand better." And then like I said, once they got on board with it, word of mouth and moving through, we were just like, "Wow. We were continually having to keep up with what they wanted."

And then finally, it was very important for us to partner with education providers because there's a curriculum. You have to have the curriculum. And so that is with a combination of colleges, of online continuing education programs, we developed our own curriculum and made that available through distance or through other ways to get the curriculums to the facilities. And what that allowed us to do was to give the employers options, to give the education partners options, for that matter.

Talking to them about how their particular college program currently would fit with an apprenticeship or did they need to make some changes? Get some of the on-the-job training? Replace some of the curriculum that they were doing? And so those options and those conversations were really important for us to have.

So here's – this is a link right here to the SkillsCommons site where the HealthCARE Apprenticeship Implementation Toolkit is located and it includes general information, it includes documents that talk about the outreach to campuses, to other partners, to employers, to sponsors, it gives very occupation specific information about each of the programs that we developed. And there's registration documents in there and whatever curriculum we actually developed is actually housed up in SkillsCommons. So you can download that curriculum and just use it completely, already developed if that's what you would like to do.

In total, there are 67 different documents up there for you to use if you want to and I'm just going to share just a few with you so that you just have a sense of what is there. So this one is just a document called, "Taking the Next Step" and it's really just a brief description for a facility about why they might want to have an apprenticeship program within their facility. So a little description of what healthcare apprenticeships are, another list of occupations that are available, and, of course, this is now what we've done over the last four years. This was grew over time because – as we created more and more programs.

But anyway – so, these are all the ones that we have available that you can actually use these materials for if you choose to try to create these programs. And then again, for the facilities and healthcare, because students go to healthcare facilities and do their clinical rotations all the time as part of their education, it was very important for us to explain to them, "What's the difference between an apprenticeship, between a clinical rotation, and between an internship?"

And so by just kind of laying this out in a very simple visual way, the employers really started to get it. And so this was also important for us to do with the campuses because faculty didn't understand how this could possibly happen with a college healthcare program that there could be an apprenticeship involved. So again, just a document that very simply states what a healthcare apprenticeship is.

And then what are the benefits to the campuses? And what we have found as we've been doing this is that they get a name for themselves if they offer an apprenticeship program. It increases enrollment and retention and really makes a statement out there that, "Wow. This college is progressive and willing to look at different ways that we can help students get jobs and have on-the-job training along the way and be connected to an employer from the get-go." And so again, it was a pretty easy sell once we really put it all on paper what it was that we were trying to get across when we were doing it – (inaudible) – before.

Every apprenticeship program has a trade schedule and that basically lays out what it is that – the term of the apprenticeship, how much wage increase they have, what is the actual curriculum. And again, these are employer-driven in some ways. So – and also by the skillset of the apprentice. So if someone has a strong skillset, they can start out at a different wage and maybe have their wage increases happen based on what works with their particular occupation or the job that they are learning how to do.

And so again, this can be created with the employer and with the apprenticeship program in a way that makes sense for both the apprentice and the employer and meets the federal regulations. So this also was actually really an important thing that we created. We created this specifically for the practical nurse apprenticeship that we were trying to get going because, as I said before, nursing programs are really heavily regulated. And one of the things that they're regulated on by the Board of Nursing in Montana is that when they're doing their clinical rotations or doing their experiential learning in the healthcare facilities, they cannot get paid to do that.

And so as you know, an apprenticeship – when you're in an apprenticeship, you actually get paid. So in order for us to create this particular apprenticeship program, anybody that applies to be an apprentice in this program must have a certified nurse assistant certificate and they actually get paid for doing that work. And then as they progress through their program, they get bumps and raises as their skills improve.

So just trying to help the facilities as well as the faculty to really understand how this works, we created this grid that basically laid out, what will happen in the first semester? What will happen in the second? What will happen in the third? You know, what is it that for each of these things will be required? What's the curriculum? How many hours of on-the-job training is expected? What will they end up with in the end and how long will it take them to actually get the credential of the apprenticeship – the certified apprenticeship credential.

And when we put it into this framework, then the faculty started really feeling much calmer about, "Oh; okay. We can figure out how to do this." And the facilities really understood, "Okay. What's our role and how do we get there?" And so when we created this and it was very helpful, then we decided, "Well, we need to create one of these for every occupation that we are doing a program with."

So we – again, on SkillsCommons, there's the link to this one and you can get these grids for every occupation that we created that – very helpful to share with the employers as well as the colleges. And then one other thing that we created that was really, really important was what we called a Competency Checklist. And this is really – we did this because the employers in the healthcare facilities – the mentors, they really didn't know what they were expected to do because this was all brand new.

And so these checklists are really for the apprentice to keep track of what they're learning along the way and know whether they've accomplished a certain thing. And so it's just basically set up so that here are the requirements and then here's what courses are going to meet those requirements and then this is how you're going to get assessed over here. And then here, the apprenticeship can keep notes on – the apprentice can keep notes on what's been happening and maybe if they had struggles or if they – (inaudible) – or whatever.

And then the mentors will work through this with them and when – and then, they date it and approve it. That, "Okay. Now, this person has actually accomplished this level of competency." So they can track what they're doing along the way. And they sounded really, really important because it helped them to understand, "What was the obligation of the actual apprentice and how could they make sure that they were doing what they needed to do?" So again, we have competency checklists like this for of the occupations that we created an apprenticeship program for.

And this is just an example. We talked about curriculum. This is also stored in SkillsCommons for you to use. When we did our employer interviews and surveys, what we found was that they really needed their CNAs to get up skills. They needed to have courses, curriculum that gave them the extra skills that would really help them, one, to feel more confident in themselves, and also to feel like they were learning and would want to stay in that position longer because they're actually getting a slight little raise.

And then – so, anyway – so, this is all located in SkillsCommons and we created this so that – actually, the instructor is located in the facility, they have to be a practical nurse or a registered nurse. But all of this information which is given to them – actually on a flash drive. And then we created an employer curriculum guide and then all the other documentation that goes along with the apprenticeship program. And then – and so, that was really just one of the curriculums that we developed that you have access to.

So in my final slide here, I am just – wanted to quickly end by letting you know that the employers have really found this registered apprenticeship program to be an incredibly good opportunity for them. And so I just would quickly want to tell you Glendive Medical Center says, "The facility is writing a new job description for a CNA Restorative Coordinator which I feel the students will apply for and likely be selected for and this will offer an increase in wage for each though they have already both received increases as a result of this education as they advanced on the CNA career ladder."

So this particular apprenticeship program changed the way that this facility – they added an extra career path in there for someone who wants to be a restorative coordinator. And these CNAs who have this extra restorative care training actually could apply for this position. So I won't read all these to you because I'm kind of limited on time but I just want you to know that all of these programs have really increased the culture of learning within these facilities.

So thank you for your time and I can answer any questions.

MS. BERG: Thanks, Kaye. We do have a few questions for you here. And, also, Dawn, if you're still not muted, go ahead and weigh in if you wanted to share the Missouri reaction to the question. But the first one we got is, "How easily adaptable is the toolkit if another state wanted to deploy it?" So –

MS. NORRIS: Yeah, I would say it would be totally adaptable. There may be some things that would be different in your state than in our state but if you have a – we have a registered apprenticeship program – a state registered apprenticeship program. You could run that by them and they would be able to help with that. Or somebody at the federal level if you don't have a state program. But there's really – everything in here – there's really very little of it that's dictated by Montana law. The only – the Board of Nursing or if there are specific things that are happening within those regulations but they're pretty common across the states what those regulations are.

MS. BERG: Great. Thanks. And can either of you share any interactions that you had with high schools? One of the things that I personally work on is sort of – (inaudible) – high school programs – either pre-apprenticeships or ideally – high school students completing apprenticeships in high school. But how do those groups – or in your program, how are those groups included –

(Crosstalk.)

MS. NORRIS: [Inaudible] and then you can jump in if you want to. But we do have a program in high schools where they can actually become a certified nurse assistant and we are in the process of creating those into pre-apprenticeship programs. So it's very doable. Those high schools are actually giving those students time away from – during the school classroom to go do their clinical and to do their studies. And so it really is very doable.

MS. BERG: Great. Dawn, did you work with high schools at all?

MS. BUSICK-DRINKARD: No, we did not. Not with high schools. Not in the TAACCCT grant.

MS. BERG: Okay. Thank you. Cheryl, did you have anything else to add?

MS. MARTIN: Thank you, Erin. And thank you so much to Kaye and to Dawn. Wow. How much you had to cover in such a short amount of time. There's so many things going on there and we really appreciate that. The cool thing is that there's more of all of that kind of good stuff on SkillsCommons. And so you can follow SkillsCommons on social media. All these slides that you see here give you some connections and links. We also wanted to let you know that you can join an impact community and if you have questions about the kind of resources that you can get on SkillsCommons like these, you can email support@skillscommons.org and get some help with that.

As Erin said at the beginning, this is part of a series of webinars and if you like what you got here and would like to hear some more excellent, cool stuff, please join us for our webinars later in September and at the end of October. And if we can, we're going to be adding some more at the end of this series, as well, too – we'll add on more things.

So with that, I want to turn it back over to John and say thank you to our presenters and thank you to my co-moderator, Erin. And thank you, most of all, for all of you who joined us.

(END)