**WorkforceGPS**

**YouthBuild Series: Incorporating National Service into Your Construction Plus Programming and Placement**

**Tuesday, October 1, 2019**

*Transcript by*

*Noble Transcription Services*

*Menifee, CA*

GRACE MCCALL: I want to welcome everyone to today's "Incorporating National Service into Your Construction Plus Programming and Placement Strategy" webinar. I'm going to turn things over to your moderator today, Toni Wilson. She's a workforce analyst, national liaison for the U.S. Department of Labor. Toni, take it away.

TONI WILSON: Thank you so much and good afternoon, everyone. Welcome to our webinar today. I've – as is stated, we're going to be talking about incorporating national service into your construction plus program and placement strategy. You'll hear a lot in reference to AmeriCorps.

Once again, I'm Toni Wilson and I'm one of the workforce analysts on our YouthBuild team here at the Department of Labor and we have some great guest speakers for you here today. I'd like to introduce David Weatherly. He's one of the AmeriCorps portfolio managers at YouthBuild USA and we also have Lauren Troiano who's also an AmeriCorps portfolio manager at YouthBuild USA. So we're excited to have them aboard.

And then we also have one of our YouthBuild peer presenters, Jerry Farley. He's the director of YouthBuild Dayton at County Corp. So he will be joining us. And then we have Vanessa Bennett who's a senior manager for Career Pathways at YouthBuild USA. So we look forward to chatting with them today.

But before we get started, let's first – I want to just talk a little bit about the webinar itself and then we do have a poll. So kind of get ready for that.

First, in reference to our objectives, I just wanted to stress that we're going to be focusing on the benefits of incorporating service into our Construction Plus pathways, so we have some really good pros around us, some best practices on adding services to your program, benefits of national service placements and then lastly, we'll touch base on some opportunities in national service placements.

But let's first get a pulse of who is on the call. We have a poll that's coming up and there is – we have our little vote button. We just want to see who has – if you have an AmeriCorps grant or do you have some knowledge of an AmeriCorps grant, no knowledge of AmeriCorps grant or just before you got on you Googled during this poll?

So let's see where we're at. Looks like we do have a lot of AmeriCorps grants, but we also look like there's – that there are those on the call that are not as familiar in getting some information and we have – this presentation is – will be good for all parties. So this will be good, give you a chance to learn about AmeriCorps and for those that have – are doing it, you'll go a little – get a little deeper information.

All right. So thank you for that poll. So with that said, I'd like to first hand this over to David Weatherly from AmeriCorps. David.

DAVID WEATHERLY: Thanks, Toni. So as Toni mentioned, we're going to be talking a little bit about AmeriCorps today. I saw from the poll some of you guys haven't heard of it before. So I just wanted to give a little bit of context. So AmeriCorps is a national service program that was started in 1994. So there's – they work with a lot of different nonprofits around the country and one of them they work with is YouthBuild USA.

So we've been working with AmeriCorps for 20 years and a way to think about it is it's almost kind of like a domestic Peace Corps. And so people are given the opportunity to serve in their community and then at the end, they get an education award that they can apply towards postsecondary education.

So with YouthBuild, we're a little bit not unique, but one of the few in the national service network, AmeriCorps network that works with opportunity youth and we really give those youth an opportunity to serve their community whereas oftentimes they would be seen as the recipients of service. So just a little bit of background of AmeriCorps and I know some of you are familiar with it, but just in case we bring it up you guys have some context.

So we're going to talk a lot today about why you should focus on service and how you can do it. So we're really focused and looking at it through kind of the DOL lens of how to incorporate service into your construction and especially your non-construction pathways at your program. And so how could you go about it, what are the benefits of it and also after your young people are done in the program, how are there ways that they can stay connected to national service?

So first, I just want to talk a little bit about the YouthBuild story. So I'm sure a lot of you know this story about how YouthBuild was founded in East Harlem by Dorothy Stoneman back in the '70s and she really started with a place of asking the young people what impact they wanted to make on the community.

If they had the resources available to them, what would they do to make their community a better place? And they really wanted to refurbish slighted housing. So they wanted to rehab these buildings and make them livable. So YouthBuild really started from a place of community service and that's always been engrained into the DNA of what YouthBuild is.

And so I personally am a big believer in national service and I think it really does a lot for our program. So that's – you know, part of – as we switch from construction where I think there's an easy buy-in to some non-construction pathways, we just want to make sure that service piece isn't lost in our program. So to kind of emphasize this, I just want to tell a little parable.

So some of you may have heard this story before, the cathedral builder story, but it's about a traveler who's going on a path and they come along and they see the outlines of this building going up and they go through the first worker that they see working on the building and they ask him, hey, what are you doing here?

And the worker replies, I'm laying bricks. So this person, they're very focused on their task and getting accomplished and laying bricks. And then the traveler moves onto the second person and he asks her, what are you doing? And she replies, I'm putting up a wall. And so she's putting the bricks in, she's getting a little bit more of the context, not just her task, but a little bit more.

And then she goes up to the third person and she asks sort of what are you doing? And that person says, I'm building a cathedral. So this person is somebody who gets the larger picture; right? So it's not just the task that they're doing, but they get the whole piece.

I think this is important to keep in mind of the context of YouthBuild, because fortunately, through my work, I get to visit a lot of different YouthBuild programs and I get to talk to young people and their stories stick with me and one of the ones that sticks with me in talking to young people and the impact of what they're doing has on the community.

So talking to a young person who grew up homeless and was able to do construction of low-income housing and the feeling that they had for seeing a family get a home and realizing that they were part of making sure that a child growing up didn't have the same experience that they did. So the service is a powerful way to connect our young people to the program.

So talking about the benefits of service that increased civic engagement, I think one of the things we see when our programs do a really good job with their service in giving back to the community is having those young people really get more invested and it changes their perspective of that and we'll talk about that a little bit more in a second, but really sort of how they view their community and how they view themselves.

I've had young people tell me how meaningful it was for them when they were working and community members would stop by and thank them for what they were doing and how that changed their perspective on themselves, because before, maybe they felt that people didn't respect them and now they feel respected and really, just sort of changing how they see –

Going out and serving with others you get to see that community really is a place where some people are trying to make a difference. So this is supported by some of the research we've done. So this is – I'm pulling from Youth Development Through Service study that we did back in 2010 through 2013 through the AmeriCorps network.

If you want to look more into this, you can look into the resource section and it has this study there, but to just kind of explain this chart a little bit, with the pre and post surveys, we're asking the young people I trust most people in my community. So you see there at the beginning, there were more people who disagreed than agreed.

So about 45 percent disagreed and about 30 percent agreed and then by the end of the program, you can see it's about 49 percent agreed and then about 27 percent disagreed. So it basically flips right there. So again, this is people, through their service experience, seeing their community in a new light and gaining more trust.

So here's another example of that, a similar question, but people in my neighborhood help each other. Again, starting with disagreed around 38 percent and agreed around 32 percent and then by the end, agreed over half and then disagreed down about 21 percent. So again, you see this perspective shift of young people where, through their service, they're able to see others give back.

And just having this connection and understanding that other people are looking out for community, I think, is really important. And then lastly, as we kind of transition to talking about construction versus non-construction, we did a study from 2013 to 2016 looking into this question, because we have more and more programs who are doing non-construction pathways and we were interested in seeing how did that affect the quality of the program and their experience as young people?

And the overall headline takeaway from the study was that there were not consistent differences between the experience and outcomes based on the service track. So the – whether they were doing construction or non-construction, what was really important was the quality of service that they were experiencing.

And so we're going to take a little bit of time to kind of talk through how you can set up your program for success in terms of having that quality experience, whether you're doing a construction track or a non-construction track.

So with that, I'm going to go ahead and turn things over to Lauren to talk here a little bit about some of the strategies on how to implement the service tracks.

LAUREN TROIANO: Great. Thanks, David. So yeah, David has just given us some great context and introduction to why service can be a great addition to your pathways and now I'm going to move us into talking about how to actually plan and implement a successful service track. So first, to start off, we'd like to ask a quick question to all of you so we can understand what you are all currently doing.

So right now what tracks does your program offer? Are you doing Construction only, are you doing Construction Plus one additional track, Construction Plus two or even Construction Plus three or more tracks? And I can see the results starting to come in. So a lot of folks doing just Construction, which is great to know, some folks with a few other tracks.

OK. Thank you for that. That is helpful context. And then in addition to that, what we'd love you to do is to just use the chat box off the left of your screen and let us know if you do have a C-Plus pathway right now at your program, what pathway is that? Those of you who are currently running a C-Plus pathway at your program if you could let us know what is the pathway?

Is it a healthcare pathway, technology, culinary? And I can give folks some time to do that. It's the chat box right over to your left there and if folks can do that, I will continue moving forward. Looks like some folks are starting to type. So keep typing in your answers there and we will look at that. I'm going to keep moving us forward for now.

So to kick off our conversation about service implementation, I want to first start by defining what we mean when we talk about a community need, which will come up a lot when we're talking about service. When we use the term community need, we're talking about a need of the community that is not being fully met by existing services.

So to make that a little bit more clear, some examples of these include a lack of sufficient low-income housing, healthcare facilities that lack sufficient numbers of volunteers or members of the community not having access to technology. So you can start to see how these correlate to different Construction Plus pathways and we're going to dive into that more specifically coming up.

The important part to realize here is that we are taking the focus in a way off of the member in the program and we're looking out into the surrounding community that you're a part of. So here we have a logic model of theory of change that will help walk us through the steps it takes to plan and implement a successful service track.

And as you can see, that first step is to identify your community need, which we just discussed in some detail. Another way to think about this is it is a problem that you're going to work on solving. Once you have identified your community need, then you need to identify what project resources do you currently have at your program that can help address that community need?

So what will be your input to the problem? Additionally, moving into that third box you want to identify the project components or the activities that happen at your program that can help to impact the community need?

Again, I know it may start to sound a little repetitive, but we are always thinking about how your members in your program are going to be impacting the community, which brings us further down our logic model and at the onset of planning a service track, you want to be planning what the evidence of your service implementation will be or what is your output or what is your impact?

And then finally, as we are used to in all of our work, we need to plan what outcomes we are going to be working towards and measuring in order to be able to report on the impact that you have had. Now, having laid this all out I know maybe it still (?). First, let's start with the one that we are all most experienced with probably and that's construction and hopefully this will start coming together a little bit more.

So our community need in this case of construction is going to be the lack of low-income housing in the community. So then the project resource that you can identify easily at your program is that you have young people who are being trained in construction. And then the core project components or activities that are happening at your program are that these young people are developing or repairing low-income housing while they're being trained in construction.

Therefore, the evidence is implementation or your impact will be the number of affordable units that are repaired or developed by your members. And the final outcome or effect that this has on that original community need is that individuals in need are placed in safe and affordable housing. You can see how this comes together and most likely reflects work that may already be happening in some ways at your program.

The important shift, again, is putting the focus on a community need and seeing your members as the agents of change to help impact that need. We're going to run through one more example and this time with a healthcare track. So a common community need in this field could be a lack of volunteers in healthcare facilities, particularly, when we maybe are talking about community health clinics that are perpetually under-resourced.

Well, at your program, you probably have participants that are being trained in healthcare. And so those members can volunteer at healthcare facilities.

And it's important to realize, again, this is probably something that is already happening while your members get their work experience in healthcare, but in a service track, we'd want to make sure that this is happening in a nonprofit or community health clinic that is primarily serving low-income or at-risk community members, because again, then moving forward your evidence of implementation becomes the number of individuals from these clinics from your community that were in need of better healthcare and were served by your members.

And then the final outcome of this service track would be better health outcomes at these facilities as a result of your members filling that volunteer need. So again, hopefully this brings out a lot of what might already be happening at your program, but again, we're shifting the focus back to that community need and the community service that members can implement in order to have that measurable and meaningful impact.

So what I'm going to do now is move into talking about a few general best practices and the first best practice that I'm going to mention is for the implementation of a successful service track and here what we really want to emphasize is that to plan a successful service track, you really need intentional implementation and planning.

Much in line with what I was just walking through on the previous slide, planning out that logic model and clearly defining your goals from the onset. You also want to build in feedback to your implementation plans, meaning you should incorporate a way to regularly get feedback from both your members and your community partners on how things are going so you can make sure that you're meeting the goals that you did set up.

A second best practice to highlight is one that we are actually currently focusing on in our network this year and that is consistent and quality community partnerships. You want to make sure that you have consistent ongoing activities, or service opportunity, with the same organization and you should ideally have an MOU in place between your two organizations.

You also want to make sure that the partner you're working with fits into your logic model and helps you meet your goals. So if you're talking about your main primary construction partner, you should be talking about an organization that will have your members building affordable housing in underserved communities or if you're talking about your main healthcare partner, you're talking about a nonprofit or community-based healthcare clinic that provides resources and services to underserved or low-income community members.

And lastly, another best practice is to align all of these service activities that we've been discussing with learning that is taking place at your program and really fully integrating service into all aspects of your program design. So this can be done by making the clear connection for members between the occupational skills that they are developing and the service activities that they are out doing.

Another way this can be done is incorporating service learning into your classroom curriculum to help members understand the context of the community need that they're going to work on impacting and also give them the opportunity to reflect on the impact they believe they had after completing the service project.

So with that, I'm actually going to turn things back over to David so he can talk us through some more specific examples of how this work is looking out in our field right now.

MR. WEATHERLY: Thanks, Lauren. So like I said, Lauren just went over some of the best practices that you can go and now I just want to have some examples of how we've seen this put into practice and how it can really have an impact. So the first example we have is a culinary track from Community Teamwork in Lowell, Massachusetts.

And I want to highlight them, because what I really love about what they're doing is how directly what they're learning in terms of food prep and learning how to make meals in that state directly translates to their service. So they're doing a lot of work at homeless shelters and they actually recently had a large partnership with Amway too – or Amtrak – or sorry, I think it's Amway, to provide meals through their low-income program.

So having this practice really helping them expand their recruitment pool, because there's more – there's some young people who are interested in culinary who aren't interested in construction and that's also kind of helping with their corporate partnerships and again, a very strong service component to the community where these young people get to serve food to folks who otherwise wouldn't have it.

So it's a good example of this being implemented. Another example to highlight, I think that a couple of you all mentioned the technology. So this is the Media Corps at American YouthWorks in Austin, Texas. So they do a variety of things. I think what I want to highlight for them is they do refurbishment of computers with a – and a partnership with the City of Austin.

So they actually get a number of computers sent to them and they work in their labs reconstructing them and making them functional again and then the City redistributes them to people who don't have access to computers currently. So it's this really great partnership where the young people are practicing their skills in a very hands-on way and the community is benefiting by having these resources.

And the great thing about it is through this partnership with the City of Austin, the City hires on several IT folks to help service different parts of their IT network within the City and because they're already connected to these young people and get to see their work ethic and get to see how they're giving back to the community, they've hired several of them on after their time in the program.

So that's just a highlight of how these service partnerships can be a really great employment pathway for young people when you have those strong connections with your partners. And lastly, I just want to highlight a pathway in Petersburg, Virginia, Pathways out of Virginia. So their logistics pathway. And so logistics is – (inaudible) – to be something that you wouldn't think how it's connected to a community need initially, but the way that they do it is they actually have a warehouse for food distribution.

And so as part of their larger parent organization, they have a food pantry that they operate. And so they have their young people working in that warehouse or serving in that warehouse. So they're using the equipment, they're learning about all the scheduling that goes into receiving these food shipments, getting these food shipments out of the door.

So really, getting that experience in a warehouse environment and getting those hands-on skills all at the same time helping to feed their community. So just some examples of how these things can be implemented in practice. And to highlight that, I wanted to turn it over to somebody I've been working with for a few years now, Jerry Farley in Dayton, Ohio and his work and their program's work about connecting their pathway to service.

JERRY FARLEY: Thanks, David. So I wanted to first give a perspective on why we picked the healthcare track. Here in Dayton, Ohio, our food and security rate exceeds both the state and the national levels as does premature births, low birthrate, infant mortality. We have some of the highest rates of mental health issues in the state and I'm sure everyone is aware of the opioid crisis here in Southwest Ohio.

So that's why we really started looking at healthcare services. The other reason we selected healthcare was because of the growth rate for jobs. So nursing and residential care positions are growing at a rate of greater than 15 percent a year, healthcare support occupations almost 25 percent and that equates to about 3,300 new openings every year making it one of the fastest growing sectors in this area.

We also started looking at a different way of looking at healthcare and really referring to it now as community health and wellness realizing that it – what we were doing with our youth needed to expand beyond just getting their credential, but really making a change in the community. And right now here in YouthBuild Dayton, not only do we do nurse assisting credentialing, we also do phlebotomy, you can see in the picture there, and this year we're adding EKG.

In this slide, you'll see some of the specific events that we did, but all of this was based around project-based learning and problem-based learning. We started identifying places where we thought our students could go in and really make a difference in the education of people of vulnerable populations to get them to better understand healthier life choices.

So we go into several dropout recovery schools, there's a homeless health clinic, a daycare, a homeless shelter for children and teenagers, an ex-offender reentry program, but all of that is really about getting our students to understand about giving back and the picture that you see is directly related to a blood pressure screening that we did at an elementary there for families.

So when we really started looking at what needed to happen for service and our healthcare students learning the craft, we first had to stop blindly sending our students to volunteer departments at healthcare facilities and hospitals, because they started putting them on tasks of delivering mail and delivering flowers and we knew that that was not going to help our students learn.

So just in construction, just like you have the houses where the young people have to own their craft and learn how to apply their skills, you really need to have that in healthcare settings and that's the reason of getting into these places and doing the things that they do is really, first and foremost, to practice and own their craft.

The second reason is you see on construction sites there's all these secondary benefits with learning how to layer your clothes and deal with inclement weather and maybe that delivery didn't come on time or the inspection didn't pass and learning how to be flexible. Healthcare students need to develop that skill too and those things often relate to the sites and the sounds and the smells of healthcare facilities and learning to deal with those things in a manner of dignity and respect.

So for our outcomes, we really focus on how many projects and presentations did we do, how many people do we really reach and moreover how many hours of service were they practicing their craft? We have a workforce advisory committee, which really guides us. Currently, we have two hospitals, one extended care facility, hospice and then CompuNet clinical labs.

The major areas that we work with our workforce advisory committee is what do we have to do with getting our training up to best practices? We found out from the hospitals that CPR wasn't enough for their entry level workers. So we needed to add BLS or Basic Life Support. When it comes to preparing our youth for their companies, they say the same thing in healthcare that they do for every other pathway, show up on time, be responsible.

So those things you don't see a change between different pathways. When it talks about how can they help us, one of the interesting things is in the healthcare profession, they will rotate our youth through the different floors and the different opportunities on each floor. They're looking to not only vet students, but see where they get along and where they have their greatest passion.

They know if a student is more interested in, say, working on the psychiatry floor other than the oncology floor, then they can start moving that student to get to learn the staff and they have a greater chance of hiring that student and keeping them.

As far as what they offer our youth, because everybody has to have some skin in the game, we go back to the employers and we say, we're training them specifically for you and you have weeks and months to vet them, then why don't you hire them at a higher rate than you would somebody else with the same credentials off the street and believe it or not they do.

So we're real proud of that. As far as closing this out, what we really found is that when our students have to learn it in order to teach it, they spend a lot more time because they know that they're responsible. We also talk about our youth having to find their voice and to really develop those skills of applied communication.

They have to be able to go in and talk to patients, talk to other care professionals and if they don't start having opportunities to practice that, then it's a skill they won't take into the job. We have to teach them that that's a functional skill they need, that they can't just take blood pressure without interacting with the person they're taking the blood pressure from.

So really, for us, the final point, the key lesson is that healthcare is a service profession and service is about giving back, it's not about you. With the resiliency that you see in construction to deal with the weather and the fatigue of the muscles and all those things, our youth have to be in situations where they can practice dignity and respect and demonstrate compassion.

Those are the key skills that our youth must learn and you can't do that in front of a mannequin in a classroom.

So with that, I'm going to go ahead and hand it over to Vanessa.

VANESSA BENNETT: Thanks so much, Jerry. That was great. So everybody, I'm Vanessa. I'm the senior manager for Career Pathways here at YouthBuild USA and I'm going to sort of pivot and take a little bit of time to talk about the concept of full-time national service as a placement opportunity for YouthBuild graduates.

So before we dive into that content, we have a little poll here for you. So if you could just take a few minutes to complete this, we'd love to know whether or not any of you have ever placed young people into national service. I'll give folks a couple of minutes to answer this. And just for some context here national service could be a full-time AmeriCorps program with state and national.

So something like a City Year program, Habitat for Humanity, a full-time AmeriCorps position at your YouthBuild program. It could also be National Civilian Conservation Corps or a position with AmeriCorps Vista. And we'll talk a little bit about the differences between those programs in just a few minutes.

All right. Last call for participation in the poll. It looks like quite a few folks have placed young people into service after graduation, which is great. We love to know that you guys are looking at service as a placement opportunity and for the young people that you're serving.

So what is full-time national service? So first, one thing that we want to point out is that full-time service qualifies as a placement under your DOL contract. Excuse me, your DOL grant categorized as education, other. So it is a placement option that's available under that grant and a good way to connect young people to an opportunity that might not be a full-time career or full-time placement in postsecondary education.

Service is paid volunteer positions. So it is an opportunity for a young person to volunteer with a nonprofit or a community-based organization and to gain a lot of skill building and professional development in a wide array of areas.

So here we have listed a few that are very common in the AmeriCorps space, things like education, environmentalism and conservation, nonprofit management and grant writing, but there's also ways in which volunteers through AmeriCorps are building skills in communication and project management, they're leading community outreach efforts and they're really developing a skillset that's going to serve them in whatever career that they choose to go into, because so many of the skills that they're gaining through their service are transferrable.

Service, particularly with respect to how YouthBuild USA looks at it as a placement, is also a pathway to postsecondary education and careers that provides a supportive bridge for many young people who, again, might not be ready for placement, in either a full-time job or a postsecondary education placement opportunity.

So here are those three main AmeriCorps programs that I talked briefly about during the poll. These are kind of the big buckets of AmeriCorps. First we have AmeriCorps state and national, which is a full-time direct service program in which members are serving 1,700 hours over the course of about a year. Members who serve as state and national members are working hands-on in the community to address critical community needs.

They're working in areas like education and healthcare, they are working in conservation, they're working in the construction of affordable housing, they're engaging volunteers and they are sort of serving as the on-the-ground hands-on volunteers who are really making sure that communities and individuals have what they need.

Some common examples of state and national programs that you may have in your area or may have heard of include Rebuilding Together, City Year, The Corps Network and Habitat for Humanity. Now, AmeriCorps Vista is a little bit different. It's a full-year service program where volunteers are embedded within a community-based organization or a nonprofit doing indirect capacity building work.

Their work is focused on ensuring that the nonprofit organization that they're serving is sustainable and has the capacity that it needs to continue to support the community that it is serving.

These members are typically working on things like the design of tools and resources, they're building partnerships, they're identifying fundraising opportunities and communications opportunities and they are really serving as a team member for that organization so that that organization can scale its work and serve more people and continue to advance solutions to ending poverty and other critical community issues.

And then finally, we have NCCC, National Civilian Conservation Corps. And NCCC is really the program that we do tend to see a lot of AmeriCorps graduates go into and I think part of that is because in many ways, it mirrors some of the supports that you all provide to the young people through your YouthBuild program.

NCCC is an 11-month full-time residential direct service program. During those 11 months, members serve in a cohort and they travel around a region of the country engaging in disaster relief and emergency response, leading conservation and environmentalism projects, doing community education and outreach and working directly with community members on the preservation and conservation of natural spaces and historic spaces.

Each of these programs offers opportunities for work, project and service-based learning as well as job training and professional development in both hard and soft skill areas. So for example, someone who's serving as a Vista can gain job training and skill development in areas like project management or communications or program design.

Well, someone who's serving with NCCC will gain the hard skills that are needed to pursue a career in something like the U.S. Forest Service or the National Park Service. Many of these programs, both under the umbrella of state, national, Vista and NCCC as well as other service programs that are out there, just provide a really wonderful opportunity to build on the skills and job training that a young person is gaining through your program.

The professional development piece cuts across all three of these AmeriCorps opportunities and can be a really valuable way to connect a young person to further career development once they've completed your program. So now we'll take a quick look at the placement triangle and I'm sure for some of you on the phone, this is not a new image.

This is really how YouthBuild USA looks at the concept of placement. We don't just look at service or education or careers, but we look at all of them in a very holistic way and recognize that each one contributes to the success of the other. So full-time service really is, I think, the one that serves as the strongest bridge and we're going to talk specifically in the next few slides about how service impacts job attainment and how it impacts access and success in postsecondary education.

So first, looking at service and employment we have some statistics here that come from a 2013 study by the Corporation for National and Community Service. They can come to the study to identify the impact that volunteerism has on someone's ability to become employed. What they found was that for volunteers who had been out of work, they were 27 percent more likely to find a job than their counterparts who had not volunteered.

This ability to find employment goes up for volunteers without a high school diploma to 51 percent and again, for volunteers who are serving in rural communities, to 55 percent. One of the big reasons that they believe that volunteerism and service has an impact on employment is because of the inherent increase in social and human capital that volunteers are able to gain through the service experience.

By serving, volunteers are connected to a larger network of professional contacts and social contacts. This means that they have increased access to employment leads, to a pool of references and that they are able to rely on other folks to help connect them to a career or education pathway and as we all know, finding a job very often is all about who you know.

So by being able to network and share their skills and build those communities, they're better poised to find jobs once their service experience has ended. At the same time, volunteers are growing their skills through the hands-on work experience that they gain through their service.

They're increasing their knowledge of different key areas, they're building transferrable skills that can be applied across in-demand industries and volunteers have often reported that services help them to build things like critical thinking and problem solving, it's helped them to improve time management and communication and it's given them an opportunity to try out and build other skills that they may have not previously gained and this could be anything from coalition building to knowing how, for example, if you're in NCCC, to prevent forest fires.

So the breadth and depth of skills that one can gain through their service experience are very vast and all of this goes to serve to help somebody become more competitive in the workforce. With respect to education, we see a natural connection between the full-time service experience and success in postsecondary education.

A 2015 study of AmeriCorps alumni showed that 79 percent of AmeriCorps alum have obtained a bachelor's degree or higher after their service. This is made possible in part because of the Segal Education Award that members receive after they've completed a full term of service. Right now that award is valued at $6,095.

That's $6,095 that somebody can use towards their tuition, towards books and supplies, towards student loans or towards the cost of fees or tuition that's associated with a vocational school, trade school or a certificate program. So there's many different ways that that education award can be applied to somebody's postsecondary goals.

In addition to that, we're seeing more and more universities, colleges and community colleges across the country match that award, which means that somebody who does a year of AmeriCorps could potentially have $12,000 to apply towards their postsecondary success. Individuals have about seven years to use that award and over $3.8 billion in awards has been used to date.

So making sure that young people who are pursuing AmeriCorps either through your YouthBuild AmeriCorps program or through a full-time AmeriCorps program making sure that they access that AmeriCorps award is huge in supporting their long-term postsecondary education goals. And then finally, AmeriCorps makes it possible for their volunteers to take classes while they're serving.

This has been a really great opportunity for many of the Vistas who have served with us who have gone on to take classes in things like nonprofit management or community organizing and have been able to have that classroom experience that contextualizes their services and helps them sort of think about where they want to go once their service term ends.

So some ways in which service can be leveraged to support career pathways and more broadly, postsecondary pathways as well includes that fact that it provides ongoing service learning, a way for young people to continue to connect what they're learning through their service to what they could be doing in a career in a different in-demand industry.

AmeriCorps is very good about promoting service learning, about engaging members in service learning and making sure that volunteers feel the impact and understand the value of what they're doing and how it can serve them once the service term ends. Service also provides additional opportunities for career counseling and planning.

It's a chance for folks to try out an industry and get a sense of the different jobs that exist within that industry. It's a way for them to attain different credentials or certifications and again, it's a connection to a broader professional network; more specifically here, a network of employers who have committed themselves to working with and employing service alumni.

So when the presentation is over, I encourage you to click on this link about Employers for National Service to see the vast number of public and private sector employers who actively try to engage alumni in their work. So how could you strengthen a national service placement at your program? Well, one of the first things that you should think about doing is building partnerships with local AmeriCorps programs in your community and/or with your local state commission.

Engage these partners in service projects that you're doing at your site, invite them to attend job fairs, ask them if they could give a presentation at your program. Any opportunity that you can create for your young people to serve along these AmeriCorps members is a great way for that program to see how valuable a YouthBuild student could be as a potential AmeriCorps member for them and it creates a really natural connection and opportunity for placement.

I will say through the work that I have done in this space, many AmeriCorps programs reach out to me and want to know how they can engage with YouthBuild programs, specifically to recruit YouthBuild graduates into their service positions. They look at YouthBuild young people as being incredibly skilled and smart and capable and a wonderful fit for the service that they're doing, because so many of them are already engaged in service.

They have that connection to civic engagement and they understand the value of service. So explore those partnerships and reach out to your AmeriCorps portfolio manager if you're part of the YouthBuild AmeriCorps program and they can help make those connections for you as well. You should also try to invite graduates to come back to your program if they've gone into a service experience.

There's no better way for a current student to learn about service than from one of their peers and graduates can give really great examples of the service experience, both of success, and really help a young person really think about whether or not it might be the right fit. Make sure that you're developing that culture of service at your program.

If service is a part of your program, then service as a placement will be very organic for your students. It will seem like a good next step. They'll understand the value of it. So focusing on service culture is really important. You also want to be embedding that service learning into the classroom and the work site.

The more opportunities that you can create for young people to tie their job training to what they're learning through their service and to see how each of those is presenting an opportunity for skill building will help them to really understand what service can mean with respect to being a stepping stone in their career pathway.

And then finally, as you're starting to explore this work, we encourage you to visit the YouthBuild USA National Service Placement website, youthbuild.org/service. We have a knowledge base here where we're curating tools and resources and all kinds of things to help you build partnership to the AmeriCorps program, identify different placement opportunities within AmeriCorps and talk about service as a placement with your students.

So definitely check that out, because there's a lot of great material there that can help you with this work. And then finally, before I turn it back over to Toni, I just wanted to share with everybody some information about YouthBuild graduates and national service to-date and these numbers are actually a little bit higher as we've had more students recently pursue service post-program, but since 2011, we've had roughly 30 young people go into the National Civilian Conservation Corps, we've had over 36 graduates join the YouthBuild USA Vista program and we've had 38 full-time direct service positions with a variety of AmeriCorps programs.

So AmeriCorps is a really great placement if you have young people who maybe aren't ready for a job or for postsecondary education. It's a great next step, it's a great transition opportunity and it's going to provide them with similar supports and wraparound services to help them really think about what their next step is and where they'd like to go long term. And so with that, I will turn it back over to Toni to close us out.

MS. WILSON: Thank you so much, Vanessa. We appreciate that. And thank you to all of our guest speakers today, David, Lauren, Jerry and Vanessa. Very good information. Hopefully everyone was able to get some great information out of today's webinar and we are about to move into the Q&A section of our webinar.

So if you do have any questions or comments, please enter those in the main chat and we will take questions in a few minutes. Hopefully everyone was able to get a sense of some of the – I know that we have a lot of construction on the call, but also some representation from healthcare, hospitality and technology.

So hopefully you were able to get some good examples from there. Also, just really focus on adding service to your program, some really great examples in reference to the healthcare and kind of that wellness aspect, the warehouse, but being able to give food to pantries, the – (inaudible) – and being able to help with homeless shelters and even the technology piece with their refurbishment of computers and being able to provide those computers to those that don't have access.

So very great examples there, also, just some benefits of the National Service Placements and then also opportunities in National Service Placements and as Vanessa said, I encourage everybody to check out the link for Employer for National Service and get some ideas there and we will be sharing some resources at the end, but just wanted to highlight that.

So once again, thank you to our guest speakers and let's move and see if there are any questions for them. There doesn't appear to be any, but just last call are there any questions? Just give it two more seconds.

All right. Well, let's move on and if we have any questions before we close out, we'll get back to that, but let me just finish up some of our resources while we're waiting.

Save the date, just a reminder for those we have a DOL NCCER Core Curriculum Construction Certification Training, which is going to be in a few weeks, October 21st through the 25th. Everyone should've received an invite and if you have not, please contact us, we'll make sure that we get that sent out to you and that will be in Detroit.

So we encourage everybody who needs anyone for that. And then also, our next webinar is next month, November 5th. It will be around Registered Apprenticeship, which is definitely a hot topic. So we hope all will join. November we'll have Apprenticeship Week, lots of highlights around the work that we're doing around apprenticeship and I know a lot of the AmeriCorps work you do is connected.

So hopefully we'll see a lot of participation in that area. And then as I mentioned, we're going to talk a little bit about some of the resources. As you can see, they're all here and clickable. So this will be – I encourage you to keep this resource to check these out. I know that David had mentioned that great study. So that's that third one there, Assessing the Impact of Construction and Non-Construction Services.

So that's great if you want to dive a little deeper. And then some just great service stories and some websites and information in reference to pathways in the Corporation for National & Community Service. I encourage you to check out these resources. We also did include those especially – (inaudible) – that might not be doing Construction Plus.

We have some great information around Construction Plus framework and some spotlights. So I encourage you to check out – and also, great information for those that are. So if there are no questions, which does not look like there are at this time, so we're going to close out. So once again, thank you to David and Lauren for great information around the AmeriCorps program.

We thank you very much for that. And then also – I'm not sure what happened there. Also, Jerry and Vanessa, thank you very much for your information and an extra thank you for Jerry, we always thank having our YouthBuild program come and give that peer perspective. So we appreciate everyone's time on that, but just wanted to give an extra shout out to Jerry.

And then also, if, for any reason, you need to reach out to me, here's my information and you're welcome to contact me for any information you have.

So with that said, thank you everyone for joining our webinar today. We really appreciate all of the feedback, the evaluation here.

So please include that. And we will have the webinar archives available so that you can share with your colleagues that were not able to attend. So thank you, again, and we hope to see next month at our apprenticeship one. Thank you.

(END)