**WorkforceGPS**

**Back from Tennessee**

**Debriefing their National Trade Convening**

**Wednesday, October 30, 2019**

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LAURA CASERTANO: I want to welcome everyone to today's "Back from Tennessee - Debriefing their National Trade Convening" webinar and I'm going to turn things over to your moderator today, Susan Worden, the supervisory program analyst. Susan, take it away.

SUSAN WORDEN: Thanks, Laura. Hello. Welcome and thank you for attending today's presentation on Tennessee's Debrief on Their National Convening, which took place in July of this year. This is an important achievement built on part of the state and in terms of the program in terms of supporting cross-program communications and collaborations and the resources used to organize it.

As a result, we're happy to provide an opportunity to showcase how it came together and the result it provided in today's presentation. Before we get started, we're going to do a couple of polls. So I'd ask everybody who's in the audience to participate. The first question is did you or your state attend the Tennessee Conference?

We're going to give a minute for folks to answer. (inaudible) seeing a bit of an even mix, a little bit more did not attend than did. So it continue to enter in. I know – I think we've got around 40 folks in the room and I'm seeing not quite there in terms of the responses. OK. It looks like we're seeing a healthy representation who did attend, but more folks did not attend.

Just to give you perspective on materials that will be provided as part of today's recorded event, which will be posted about a week from now, it will include the full agenda that Tennessee used for their conference to give you a more fleshed out idea of what went on at the live event. Moving onto the next poll the question is have you attended an in-person meeting of TAA professionals within the last year?

And we've got several options here, yes, a local meeting, yes, a state-level meeting, yes, a multi-state meeting and yes, a regional-level meeting. You can choose more than one. So this information that you're providing right now helps us to plan in terms of technical assistance events moving forward and also to be frank, helps us provide a justification for a need for us to meet together across states certainly to talk about TAA.

So thanks very much for participating and providing this information to us. With that, I am Susan Worden, a supervisory program analyst with the Office of Trade Adjustment Systems in Washington, DC and I'm delighted to have the opportunity to be the moderator for today's presentation.

So in today's presentation, we'd like to kick off to remind you of the power of integrated services as it shows up in data, the abundance of resources available to support integration and the importance of working with ETAA in ensuring compliant innovation where strategies involve multiple programs. So we're going to get an introduction from Rachel Floyd-Nelson who is ETAA's Region 3 Trade Coordinator.

She's going to provide an introduction to Tennessee and also to Robin Wright and Jamie Franklin who are the key organizers of this conference, a critical foundation that allows for a conference of – in the order of this magnitude to be hosted centered around a highly-engaged leadership with regard to integration.

So we're going to talk a little bit in the beginning about the leadership that was in Tennessee, but I just want to take a moment to note that some of you may come from states that do not enjoy such forward thinking and proactive leadership. For those of you who have a more restrictive state environment in supporting integration, you've got to have a bit more of a grounding, don't you.

Regardless, though, of where you fall in the spectrum of leadership support, I really encourage you to take advantage of the opportunities to learn and contribute with your TAA peers through live and remote forums to identify strategies that can support the TAA program in your state. So having secured leadership – having secured the buy-in from their leadership, Robin and Jamie will then share how their conference planning evolved over the course of time in the course of their development planning.

Importantly, they'll discuss how the sharp TAA focus throughout their conference agenda allowed them to leverage TAA type management flexibility to fund the meeting. They'll share the impressive geographic reach of those who actually came to the conference and then the feedback that they received as well as what they got out of the experience, how they benefited and how they do it differently moving forward.

This will lead to a useful list of to-dos that they would recommend in supporting a successful and compliantly-funded conference. So in today's presentation, we'll be saving the question and answer section until the very end of Tennessee's overview, however, although, we won't be orally addressing questions until the end, we highly encourage you to make use of the chat functionality throughout the presentation to enter questions you have.

Although we may answer a few questions via the chat window, most of them will be cached and saved to be addressed in the question and answer portion of the presentation. To close out, Tennessee will hand it back to me for related resources and future webinars currently scheduled. So let's look at some data. These visuals show the effect of co-enrollment between DW Title I program and TAA.

For both graphs, the red signifies result of TAA participants co-enrolled with DW Title I while the blue signifies participants with no co-enrollment. The left graph comes from those tapper and plural reporting. It shows that from 2009 to the present, quarter after quarter, co-enrolled participants consistently outperformed those that are not based on national results.

The bar trend on the right comes from most recent four quarters of reporting on DW Title 1 in PIRL. It also shows that DW participants that are co-enrolled in TAA do better than those who are not co-enrolled in TAA. So we're looking at it from both sides. Next, let's review just how much money is currently available of remaining FY-2018 funds that will be expiring at the end of the current fiscal year.

This began on October 1st of this year and will end on September 30, 2020. This is an enormous amount of money. Every quarter OTA compiles a detailed fiscal analysis on a state-by-state basis, which is then shared with states via the ETA regions of exactly how much money they're spending and how much remains across the three available grant years.

This is designed to provide your state partners – our state partners with an ongoing understanding of the fact that there are ample financial resources to innovate in support of TA case management, including staffing, systems, material development and live meetings. When we are talking about integration strategies of any kind, it's always important to emphasize the importance of proper cost allocation so the spending is compliant.

To this point, when looking at building, hosting or providing services in tandem with other programs, always work with your ETA regional lead in the planning stages to ensure compliant spending.

And now I'm going to turn it over to Rachel Floyd-Nelson, Region 3's TAA coordinator. Rachel.

RACHEL FLOYD-NELSON: Thanks, Susan. In Tennessee, TAA has really transformed into a program that is integrated into a larger state workforce system. The state has consolidated oversight of all dislocated worker programs under one unit, including the dislocated worker's unit, which has state oversight of the TAA program, WARN, rapid response, Title I Dislocated Worker and the RESEA program.

The state has also realigned its local workforce development areas and has consolidated its previous 13 local workforce development areas down to just 9. Another change Tennessee TAA has experienced is the decision to regionalize some parts of the program breaking the state into three sections, each with a dedicated TAA staff specialist who covers three local WIBs.

This allows for more local control by our frontline TAA staff to meet the needs of TAA participants, but now, that's not the end to Tennessee's efforts to integrate and innovate to serve participants, but let me tell them – let me allow them, excuse me, to share this important work with you themselves and without further ado, I'll go ahead and introduce today's presenters.

Jamie Franklin came to work for the Tennessee Department of Labor in workforce development in December, 2015 as a Trade Adjustment Assistant specialist. Jamie has held several positions since joining that department and since June, 2018, he has held the position of business services program manager.

In this role, he has statewide programmatic oversight responsibility for the following programs, WARN, Rapid Response, TAA, RESEA, WATSE (ph), federal bonding and Title I Dislocated Worker. Jamie believes public service is his calling and he's very thankful to hold a position that allows him to assist the people of Tennessee in working for a better future for themselves and their families.

And now I'll introduce Robin Wright, our other presenter. Robin is 44 years of service with the Tennessee Department of Labor in workforce development working in numerous positions that have emphasized connecting job seekers to employers. Over the past 20 years, she has been a part of the Trade Adjustment Assistance program as the TAA coordinator overseeing the program and its operations.

Throughout Robin's tenure, she has been a teacher, a mentor and a friend to many folks that have been a part of the TAA program. She has had the opportunity to witness how the TAA program can transform lives of its participants. Robin is very passionate about the TAA program and hopes she can continue to make a difference. And now, I'll turn it over to the folks in Tennessee.

ROBIN WRIGHT: Thank you, Rachel. We want to thank the ETA for allowing us to have this opportunity to present our Tennessee Dislocated Conference information. It was a very near and dear step in our heart to put this together. We put a lot of work into it and appreciate all the positive feedback we've received.

As we begin our presentation, we wanted just to give you just a brief overview of the location and the registration process. Our conference was scheduled for three days. It was held in the Nashville area. We tried to make it in a centrally located area so it would be easy access to get to the conference.

We used electronic conference registration to invite everyone to the conference and the flyer that you see on the screen is the one we designed that we sent out as part of the invitation to give you an idea of what the conference was going to be about and where it was going to be located.

MS. FRANKLIN: Tennessee is uniquely organized in that TDLWD's workforce service division encompasses all dislocated worker programs within its sphere. Our leadership has always been proactive on the cross-collaboration between programs and promoting co-enrollment.

With co-enrollment as a forethought in our department of the conference, our leadership saw this as an opportunity to bring all programs to the table to discuss what we had in common and how we could provide a better experience for our customers. This was an important – or this was an opportunity to develop our closer relationships among the programs and encourage the combining of programs during state conferences.

In the case of this conference, both Commissioner Record (ph) and Deputy Commissioner Thomas (ph) were keynote speakers. All workforce services senior leaderships were in attendance at some point during the conference. We understand this may not necessarily be the case with other states, but we hope this information still helps you. Leadership buy-in is the first element you must have and is key to a successful conference.

MS. WRIGHT: Initially, our conference discussion was centered around TAA and TRA and training providers, but as our discussions advanced, we began to question are we really looking at all the programs that could impact TAA. Very quickly we realized the answer to the question was no. So we began to add additional programs that interacted, in our minds, with the TAA program.

We believe those programs to be RESEA, Title I Dislocated Workers, WARN and Rapid Response and since TAA workers are dislocated workers, RESEA workers would be considered dislocated workers. Title I Dislocated Worker program is very obvious and the WARN and Rapid Response part of the program is what we utilized to identify the dislocated workers and provide much needed services at the time of the dislocation.

Our discussion did not stop there. When we expanded our viewpoints, we discovered more avenues to impact TAA workers. These programs included adult education, because many of our workers do not have the education or the study habits that are needed if the workers choose to return to training. Reentry was another program we looked at.

TAA workers could be eligible for reentry. Therefore, we felt our audience needed to have the opportunity to hear about the impact this program could have on our workers. Labor market information, in Tennessee, we call that WIRED. Since TAA workers are dislocated workers, we didn't want to move them in a direction that could cause them to be dislocated again.

So labor market information is there for a logical step towards identifying in-demand occupations. One of our teams in our career centers, the welcome team, we noticed that the majority of them were not familiar with many programs that were offered, except for the one that they worked in. So we thought that bringing them to the conference would strengthen their knowledge of the different programs and how they interact together for the good of the worker.

We also looked at veterans and eligible spouses. With veterans transitioning out of the service, they are considered dislocated workers. Also, veteran spouses may be considered dislocated once the veteran changes stations. So depending on the background of the veteran, he or she could also be TAA impacted at the end of their service, therefore, strengthening the staff's knowledge regarding returning vets and their spouses was an essential part of the conference.

And finally, we looked at our eligible training providers list. We felt there were two reasons to include information about the list. We were bringing in our training providers. So therefore, it was an opportunity to have experts explain how to apply to be on the training providers list and also it was an opportunity to train staff on understanding what the ETPL is, what it's used for and why it's needed.

With all these important programs added, we began to feel what I can – I'm calling an evolution explosion. And so our evolution explosion really came to be, because at that point, we decided that our state and our partner staff could benefit from other states that handled their program perhaps differently than we do here in Tennessee.

During our conference in 2018, we invited our sister states from Region 3 to attend and participate in that conference. That was a huge success. And so we decided that since we had such a successful outcome with our Region 3, we would expand it nationwide and ask all 50 states to the conference.

We thought the other states could show best practices that they could provide additional motivation for our staff and we had received earlier feedback from the states that said they were interested in how we were training our training providers. So this would be a great opportunity to have them see this firsthand. Once every state and program had been included in our list of attendees, our conference audience expanded to over 300 attendees.

So with that expansion and the decision on who we were going to invite, it was necessary to determine how we were going to fund this conference. We looked at all of our available sources, the TAA is touched by all the programs involved in this conference. So we felt that the information being provided would benefit the TAA staff and it helped provide services to our participants.

That being the case, we felt case management funds plus applicable funds from other programs in attendance would be the appropriate way to fund our conference.

Now, there's several things that you look at when you start looking at funding your conference and I'm not going to tell you everything we looked at, but some of the things you might want to keep in mind are your room rates for your staff that are coming in, your meals, your refreshments, your breakout rooms, if there's parking costs, you might want to look at that. So that's just some of the things that we looked at for the costs.

JAMIE FRANKLIN: So as we had this evolution explosion and who we wanted to invite and how we were going to have – get them there, we also had to start developing our agenda and saw a continued evolution of that as well. After identifying our ideal audience, we wanted to make sure that we gave the information that was pertinent to them to make sure everybody had a chance to talk – or to present their information.

We had already secured approval from our leadership. So based on their feedback, additional brainstorm sessions became essential to finalizing the agenda. As the conference goals evolved, so did the agenda, we reached out to stakeholders, both in and out of state, requesting their help in establishing an agenda that met our conference goals of emphasizing co-enrollment, collaboration and the opportunities to showcase best practices in all partner programs.

The content for the agenda expanded information was gathered from partner programs and state presenters. We also had a series of meetings with our partners to further develop content that would be appropriate and beneficial to the conference. We sat down with several of these people, including adult education, vets, reentry, RESEA, Title I as well as other external clients as we added them to the agenda.

Development of this agenda was a team effort. All programs involved in the conference collaborated to develop a final agenda that represented the focus of the conference. A copy of the final agenda is available in the related content of this webinar. The final agenda had both plenary and breakout sessions. You can see a portion of the second day's agenda on your screen.

At 8:15, our colleague, Ricque Smith held a plenary session about Oregon's TAA Navigator program. She provided excellent information to think about, especially on how the program went about identifying, investigating and reaching out to companies and workers that may be impacted by TAA. She shared how identifying companies early benefits the lives of TAA-impacted workers.

Rigue also recognized Sherry Saunders, a TAA Navigator from Virginia. Sherry discussed the impact Oregon's program had on development of the Navigator program in Virginia. Even though the two programs operated a little differently, both states greatly increased the number of petitions filed and workers identified because of this new concept.

You can also see a snippet of the breakout sessions we held throughout. This particular day we had a total of 20 breakout sessions and 2 plenaries. Having both gives you the opportunity to share information that is relevant to your entire audience and then be able to drill down to content relevance to specific audiences.

Who attended? As you can see from this map, we had a wonderful representation from attendees stretching from coast to coast. In total, there were over 300 attendees. In that number, 24 states were represented. The audience incorporated staff from various dislocated worker programs here in Tennessee and across the nation.

MS. WRIGHT: So the results that we saw came from a survey that we distributed to all of our attendees. So here is a snapshot of what our survey looked like. We received 88 responses from the survey and to show you kind of some of the responses we got back, overall we received very positive feedback from our survey.

This chart shows you that we got 85 percent of our respondents that liked the topics that were covered at the topics with 77 percent considering the overall information to be between good and excellent range. We also had 65 percent that enjoyed the opportunity to network across states and 55 liked the overall structure or layout of the conference.

With our positive feedback, we also received some constructive improvement comments. So this screen gives you an example of those. As you can see on this screen, we have 22 percent of the respondents thought the presence of an opportunity to hear from U.S. DOL representatives would've been a great addition to the conference.

Also, we had 22 percent who wanted to see additional breakout sessions and that was primarily because we had single breakouts and if we had provided additional breakouts, they would've had more opportunities to go to all of them.

Seven percent indicated that detailed descriptions of the breakouts would've been helpful so that they would – could decide better on which ones they would like to attend and then 3 percent thought expanding the conference to at least a 3 full-day conference would provide additional breakout session time and networking amongst the program.

MS. FRANKLIN: The State of Tennessee, looking back, there were several areas that we learned that we could benefit from the information that was shared and have benefited. The conference provided a great opportunity to bring in all programs that touched TAA to learn from each other and provide a chance to develop many new relationships that will increase our opportunity for improving our program as a whole.

It gave us the opportunity to utilize case management funds to train staff on co-enrollment between the programs. This will ensure the TAA participants have full access to all services within the AJC. It allows for free discussion about monitoring and why it is necessary for the success of the programs. It opened networking with all programs and states setting the stage for sharing best practices that could be adopted to Tennessee or any other state's needs.

It helped us to further explore the Navigator model and we are now using this information to work on implementing a version of this in the State of Tennessee. The benefits also include using the information we learned from the conference to help us in developing our WIOA state plan for the TAA section.

The lessons we learned from the conference have prompted discussion about next year's conference. It will be very hard to top this one, but I know we can. We are anticipating the conference to be in late 2020 or maybe early 2021. We are excited about the possibility for more states to attend, hopefully all 50. We are planning to implement interagency workgroups and interstate workgroups, which should generate presentations and activities from more states and programs.

We would possibly like to see more partners able to attend and more opportunities for networking. We also want to utilize more external subject matter experts to expand the pool of presenters to provide greater overall perspective. We would like to utilize breakouts to have more program-specific communication for best practices, as many – a recent coordinator workshop as an example.

Then we also look forward to working closer with ETA to better coordinate the conference with federal program priorities in mind. So as we shared this information about the conference and talked about our evolution and how we paid for it and how we had developed the agenda, you may be wondering if I'm interested in setting up a convening, how do I go about doing that?

Here we provide a summary checklist of how you can do that. First off, it's critical to get that buy-in from your leadership. You want to present an overview of your conference idea, who will be included and what you would like to share, your expectations, outcomes and etc. with your leadership.

You know, we are lucky here in the State of Tennessee to have our leadership combined for this, but keep in mind even if you have a more state-restrictive environment when it comes to supporting integration, there's ways you can learn and contribute with TAA through reliable remote forums that can help support and improve the TAA program in your state even if it necessarily isn't a full-blown conference.

Always consider including your partner programs, those that touch your specific programs, with opportunities that can strengthen the outcomes for your customers. Work with them closely, develop the content and it's going to take a lot of meetings. It did in our case as well. Work as a team to develop your agenda, include the best of each program, don't forget to share with U.S. DOL so they can provide input in advance of your plans.

Find that ideal location. Like Robin was saying, we found one that was centrally located, had easy access to the airport and had lots of shops and everything around to do in the evenings. Reach out to those that you want to invite. Try to throw a broad invitation out there if you want to bring a lot of people in. That's what we did.

Finally, execute your plan. If you follow these steps, we can almost guarantee your conference will be successful and you will learn so much from those that attended. And as I said earlier, Tennessee is in a process of planning our next conference and we are looking for a conference that will support TAA program development across states.

I would like to ask states that would be interested in volunteering to contribute to a workgroup to help us plan for an interstate agenda development to send me or Robin an email to let us know you're interested. Finally, we would like to thank ETA again for the opportunity to share information about our conference. And with that, I will now turn it back over to Susan.

MS. WORDEN: Thanks so much, Jamie and Robin. So we're going to be going through questions, but before we move to that, we're going to do another quick – it's not exactly a poll, it's a word cloud. The instructions are in one word, describe a benefit of attending in-person meetings of TAA professionals. Keep in mind, we do only want one word for each entry, but you can make more than one entry.

The goal here is to really get a sense of what are the elements that really make a difference for you in terms of being able to be at a live presentation. What's the unique value of being at a live presentation that you can't necessarily get any other way? And again, we do need one-word answers, but you can do more than one entry.

OK. So clearly, we've got lots of responsiveness from you. Networking is huge, collaboration, motivation, sharing, connecting. No surprise that there is a lot of power to being able to meet face-to-face with our colleagues who have faced the same challenges in terms of brainstorming and solving problems.

Again, we appreciate you giving us this input. We are always looking to advocate for more in-person opportunities. It's one of the reasons why we're delighted with Tennessee's innovation in leveraging case management flexibilities for TAA, among other things, in order to be able to host a meeting to provide for this opportunity.

Amalgamate, resources, exploration. Yeah. Great. Thanks so much, Laura. We're going to move on to looking at our questions that we've gotten thus far. I really encourage folks to continue to enter questions of Tennessee. This really was a really important achievement and they have a lot of moving parts.

First question for Robin and Jamie is from Laura Lausmann in Oregon, how long did it take to plan all the elements of the conference?

MS. WRIGHT: Well, it probably took us longer than seven months. We actually started talking late 2018 and began to put together our invitation list in January of this year and then we worked right up until the day of the conference. We were still working during the conference to make sure everything fell into place and worked like it was supposed to. So it was a continuing effort. It didn't just happen overnight.

MS. FRANKLIN: Yeah. It was – it started off as a development of we were at a program manager coordinator meeting and I looked over at the program manager, Furese (ph) at the time, and says, how about we combine conferences? And that started it all off back in December, '18.

MS. WORDEN: And this is a quick follow-up before we move onto the next question, who else did you consult with? You said you basically did some brainstorming with partners in terms of setting the agenda. Could you say a little bit more about that?

MS. FRANKLIN: Yeah. We actually kind of worked with a lot of partners. I met with the assistant commissioner for adult education to kind of see how they wanted to put any input in. You know, we met with the reentry – in the State of Tennessee, we have a coordinator in workforce services who deals specifically with reentry and justice-involved individuals.

So we had meetings with them. We would just sit and meet every couple of weeks. We met with our WIRED division or our labor market information division every week for about four or five weeks to get that presentation ready to go. So it was a lot of different meetings. Robin had a lot of meetings and phone calls with people from other states on the phone to coordinate the state roundtable as well as the presentation by Rique Smith.

So it was a lot of either getting on the phone or sitting down. We had a really cool kind of skit at the end on the last day for Rapid Response in action and we worked over the phone to kind of practice that and then stayed after on the first two days of the conference to really get that down pat with one of our excellent Rapid Response coordinators, but we also had our TAA specialist on there and all the programs worked together really well to pull off what we hoped was – what we thought was a great conference.

MS. WORDEN: Sounds like you guys were a great source for knowledge for how to host a great conference. We have a couple of questions from Shannon Turner. First question is who else contributed funds aside from the TAA program funds?

MS. FRANKLIN: So RESEA did because of their coordinator who attended. You know, Wagner-Peyser did, because we had some Wagner-Peyser staff attend. Title I did in the form of, again, salaries and such for the executive directors and board staff that came and their leadership. Rapid Response men were paid for the Rapid Response coordinators to come.

And so that was a lot of those costs for rooms and per diem and stuff like that and then we had a few other little things that we split up between RESEA and TAA. So those were the primary programs that helped contribute funding.

MS. WORDEN: Sure. And not sure you have these percentages at the top of your head, but there's a question about what the turnout was like percentage-wise from RESEA, veterans and other non-TAA as well as TRA and also Title I.

MS. FRANKLIN: I can't say off the top of my head. I know we have a representative from the board level from every LWBA. We had a –

MS. WRIGHT: From Tennessee.

MS. FRANKLIN: From Tennessee. We had every Rapid Response coordinator for the 9 areas from Tennessee, we had every RESEA coordinator in the AJCs and I want to say that's maybe 50 of those – or almost every one of those. I think one or two are sick or couldn't make it. We had all of our 25 Trade representatives. So I can't give you percentages. I know that –

MS. WRIGHT: And from the states that attended, the number of folks that attended from the – from each state ranged from 1 to 19, depending on which date and who they brought. They may have brought their partner staff with them, they may have brought the RESEA staff with them. I know we had some Trade Navigators there.

So really, we don't have an actual number of participants from the other states. We could pretty much pull what came from Tennessee, but from the other states, we don't actually have that.

MS. FRANKLIN: Yeah. I know there were a couple of state Rapid Response coordinators that came as well.

MS. WRIGHT: Uh-huh. And of course, all the state coordinators.

MS. WORDEN: Sure. I think I know the answer to this question, but I'll let you answer. Approximately, how many attended in total?

MS. WRIGHT: Our last count was 308.

MS. WORDEN: OK. Great. And how many staff helped with the development of the conference?

MS. FRANKLIN: Oh, it was a real team effort. On the – if you want to call it, I guess, conference committee, there was us, me, Robin, Eric (ph) helped out, our RESEA state coordinator was on there quite extensively, we had our – we have an administrative assistant who does our conference planning for us.

So she did a lot of booking the hotel, doing the paperwork with them. We had a communications point person who works the communications, help us kind of get the word out and make sure everything was in good branding style and all that stuff. So those were the core, but we had help from across the floor.

MS. WRIGHT: Maybe 20, 25 folks, probably –

MS. FRANKLIN: Yeah. Come in to help work the front desk, do stuff like that, but even just meetings. Like I said, there were assistant commissioners from two or three other different divisions that at least sat and met with us and helped us develop content. So it was a really big team effort.

MS. WORDEN: Great. And how early did you – I don't know if you did them altogether, but if you sent them – did you send the invites out in one swath? How far in advance of the actual event did you do that?

MS. WRIGHT: In February, I sent out a – what do you call it?

MS. FRANKLIN: Would you be interested?

MS. WRIGHT: Yeah. Would you be interested, site the date kind of invitation to kind of find out where the interest lies for the conference and then I think we maybe sent the final invitation out in May.

MS. FRANKLIN: Mm-hmm. And then we followed up with agendas as we were getting them ready and such.

MS. WORDEN: OK. Great. So I want to encourage folks who – I think we've got a couple folks who are continuing to ask. It says to whom were the invitations sent?

MS. WRIGHT: The invitations – since we did not have any clue who to contact in the states for the other programs, we sent invitations to the Trade coordinators for each state and asked that they pass the information to the other partner programs and as I said, we had a very good turnout from all different aspects of the conference with the programs.

We did have some states that couldn't – weren't able to send more than one attendee, but there were some states that sent almost everything that we had asked in the program – we had scheduled in the program they had a representative for. So the word got shared and we really appreciate the fact that the Trade coordinators helped us with that.

MS. WORDEN: Sure. It sounds like that was a great strategy for you.

MS. WRIGHT: Yeah. You know, we've got good Trade coordinators, what could I say? They're all helpful.

MS. WORDEN: That's for sure. So I'm just going to – in case there are any additional questions, I'm going to wait another minute or so, but I have a quick question for you. Obviously, we know from the word cloud everybody is very hungry for live meetings. So it's no surprise that it really was an event that was met with a lot of positive feedback.

Was there anything about the conference that particularly surprised you? A lot probably gratified you and gave you what you thought you would get in terms of collaboration. Was there anything that you didn't see coming that was good that came out of the conference? And I'm not saying there is, I was just curious.

MS. FRANKLIN: I would say the intensity of which people were really happy to come to it. I mean, it's always nice to get out of the office and go to a conference, but it seemed more than that to me. It seemed like everybody was just very excited.

You know, here in Tennessee we're lucky enough to have a couple of conferences a year, but this was the one that we really brought in a lot of the frontline staff that don't typically get to go and they really got a chance to see across programs, across even states and I think just seeing that excitement kind of really was what surprised me most. I don't know about you, Robin.

MS. WRIGHT: Yeah. I think it was – the excitement, it's the numbers. The numbers excited me. I was – you know, every time I would get a call from somebody or an email from somebody that said they were bringing X number of folks, they could hear me across the floor, because I got extremely excited that we had that many folks interested in coming to our conference and that they were willing to share their knowledge with us and that was very beneficial.

I didn't have anybody tell me no when I asked a question and I think that was – made my know. I know it made my year preparing for this conference.

MS. WORDEN: Sure. We've got a question from Joe in Connecticut. It's kind of a detailed question and I guess I'm thinking this may be something for follow-up on the TAA community discussion topics that we have posted to provide a follow-up to this meeting. He asked for an estimate of how many total staff hours it probably took to put this event together. Not sure you can come up with that number.

MS. FRANKLIN: My – I just had my boss hold up a sign that said a lot. So – but yeah, it was quite extensive. I know me and Robin spent, especially as we got closer, more than 50 percent of our time on this with meetings and everything else. I know that our communication specialist, within the last couple of weeks leading up to it along with our conference planner, spent a huge bulk of their time on constant assignments.

So just as primary people, there were quite a few hours and then we also had to use staff to work the conference and help with meetings and so forth and so on. So I can't give you the exact number, but I think a lot encompasses it.

MS. WORDEN: Yeah. Great. Thanks. So we're – got a thanks from Joe. So we're going to move forward back to the slides. There's a couple of more things I'd like to cover today. Thank you so much to Jamie and Robin. It's a wonderful event to have hosted and we're so delighted to have had the opportunity to give you the opportunity to kind of recap the – your great experiences and what you've learned from it moving forward.

Quickly, I just want to remind our audience that we have upcoming webinars scheduled on November 12th from 2:00 to 3:30. We're going to have a webinar featuring folks from the State of Oregon and Montana on Guiding and Coaching Trade-affected Workers. This is actually the first of the two-parter that is modeled on the components that are part of the TAACCCT Navigator model that was implemented under the TAACCCT program for community colleges.

The first of these two webinars kind of focuses on the front end of really dealing with the fact that the Trade program demographics, they are very often training averse, how to basically kind of guide folks into training and make them feel more supported in training and then the second piece is really about creating training curriculums that's really tied into business needs and of course, in order to do that, you need to engage with businesses.

So the second part of the two-part webinar will really talk about business engagement. These are not items that are fit under the banner of traditional Trade case management, but we really think it's something that we really want to encourage folks to kind of stretch the envelope of their kind of normal paradigm of case management, because we do have states that are beginning to stretch out with results that were having higher enrollment rates, higher training participation rates and also creating more tailored training curriculums that really fit more directly with business needs and Trade can have a role in supporting that in coordination with its partners.

And in December, we're going to have a webinar on "Seven Tips for Preparing Approvable TAA Program Reserve Funding Requests;" again, December 11th from 2:30 to 3:30. So related resources from today's presentation, I really want to plug, again, thinking of case management flexibilities, doing a Lean analysis of your state.

We have a webinar that was provided to us by a couple of states that had very successful results as a result of doing Lean Six Sigma analysis of their case management processes, not just with Trade, but also how it plays out with their partner programs. I'll remind you, again, that we had a dedicated TAA and DW co-enrollment webinar that was done in association with the Office of Workforce Investment talking about the advantages of co-enrollment to both programs.

And last but not least, thinking of opportunities to learn and contribute with your state peers, we have the TAA community on WorkforceGPS. We are aware of the fact that we have a lot of folks in the states that are not familiar with or don't have a lot of experience in interacting through an online community.

We really want to encourage you to, again, be brave and stick your necks out and also let you know following our webinars moving forward we will be providing discussion topics and this is kind of our inaugural launch of that protocol. So I really encourage you to follow up with this webinar by going to the TAA community on WorkforceGPS and selecting discussion topics.

We've got a couple of different discussion topics that we'd love to get your feedback on related to today's presentation.

(END)