**WorkforceGPS**

**Transcript of Webinar**

**VETS Apprenticeship Pilot Overview Webinar**

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LAURA CASERTANO: With that, I'm going to get myself right out of the way. I want to welcome everyone to today's webinar. And again, if you haven't done so already, just introduce yourself in the chat.

I'm going to turn things over to your moderator today, Andrea Hill. She's a program lead with the Office of Apprenticeship. Andrea, take it away.

ANDREA HILL: Hi. Thanks, Laura. And welcome to everybody who was able to join us here for today's webinar. My name's Andrea Hill, as Laura had said, and I am the apprenticeship State Expansion grants program lead here in the Office of Apprenticeship.

And today we're so excited to be joined by our colleagues at the Veteran Employment and Training Service, which is another agency here at DOL.

We're honored to have the director of Transition Assistance Programs here with us today, Tim Winter. And he'll talk a little bit about the program.

Carolyn Renick leads the apprenticeship licensing and credentialing work in VETS. And then we've also got Meg O'Grady and Stacy Ruble who are here to speak a little bit more about not only just employing vets, but how the apprenticeship pilot program can help vets but also might give you some ideas of how your grant might be able to partner to help vets and your program. These vets are transitioning back into civilian life.

So again, if you would, enter the information into the chat box if you didn't have a chance to do that already or you might have come in a couple minutes late. Who you are and where you are. That would be fantastic.

And we invited a bunch of different programs to this award – or to this presentation, excuse me. And so if you would, maybe just take a quick second here – woops, there it is – and respond to the poll about which grant you are affiliated with.

Whether you're affiliated with the state grants, either the SAE, the ACE, or the SAE2020 program; Closing the Skills Gap; Scaling Apprenticeship; the Youth Apprenticeship Readiness program; if you've maybe got one of the VETS grants here and you're coming from that direction. Or if you have no direct grant affiliation and are here maybe as a federal employee to see exactly what's going on here, that would be great.

We'll just give you a couple minutes here. Looks like most everybody is affiliated with the state grants, so we're excited that you're here. But as I said, we did invite some other programs, so I'm really excited to see folks from all of the other ones.

Our Youth Apprenticeship Readiness grants are brand-new and so we weren't – they're not quite fully rolled out yet. So we appreciate you taking the time to do that. Thank you very much.

We've got a pretty full agenda today. We're doing the welcome right now and then we're going to go over sort of the apprenticeship pilot – the goals, the general goals. And then they're going to talk a little bit about the pilot participants, who the folks are that are signing up for their programming on their end.

We're going to talk a little bit – and you might get some ideas again, as I mentioned, about how your apprenticeship grant might benefit from this program. Then we'll go into some resources that are available for you to explore more and some next steps.

And then we will have a Q&A at the end of the presentation. So be sure to enter any questions that you might have over in that chat box. We may be able to answer some as we are going along, but those that we can't fit into the program we'll answer at the end. So be aware of that too.

So with that, we're very excited and I'm happy to pass it over to Tim Winter. Tim?

TIM WINTER: Thank you very much, Andrea. Good afternoon, everyone. My name is Tim Winter. I'm the director for the Transition Assistance Program here at Department of Labor Veterans Employment and Training Service.

And I will start out. I realize that maybe some of you have an understanding of what TAP is – Transition Assistance Program – and some may not. Don't mean to insult anyone's intelligence, but I just wanted to give a brief thumbnail sketch of the program and then go into the vision and goals of our apprenticeship pilot that we are running as part of that program.

The Transition Assistance Program has been around since 1992, so it's a well-established program. It is an interagency partnership that provides services to assist active duty service members in making a career transition as they get out of the military.

The partnership includes Department of Labor; the Department of Defense, along with the military services; the Department of Veterans Affairs; and Department of Homeland Security, because of the Coast Guard. It also includes the Department of Education, Department of Veterans Affairs, the Small Business Administration, and the Office of Personnel Management as well.

Again, the purpose is to assist service members in making a smooth career transition. So Department of Labor's portion of that for years has been providing employment workshops at military installations around the world to transition service members and their spouses.

So each year we – at around 200-plus installations worldwide, we conduct these brick-and-mortar workshops for the 200,000 service members who are leaving the military every year.

With COVID-19 we've had to adjust obviously adjust to a more virtual synchronous environment, which I think we've done a pretty good job of accomplishing that so far. And what that has allowed us to do is really to give us a bit more capacity in how we reach the service members.

So in FY19 Congress provided us some additional funding to conduct this apprenticeship pilot. And so beginning in January of this year we initiated the pilot, and then we were fully operational for the pilot beginning in April.

The main goal of the pilot is to place transitioning service members and their spouse into apprenticeships before they transition from the military, allowing them to step right out of the military and right into a rewarding career path.

In addition, it is our aim to increase the number of apprenticeship programs available to transitioning service members, seeking out and working with employers and their intermediaries.

I will go to the next slide and to Carolyn. Thank you.

CAROLYN RENICK: OK. Thank you, Tim. Hello, everybody. My name is Carolyn Renick. I'm the apprenticeship licensing and credentialing lead at Department of Labor VETS office.

I'm really excited to be talking to you all today. I know there's a number of apprenticeship grantees on the line. You all have certain requirements in your grant to bring on veterans, transitioning service members or military spouses, and this is really a great opportunity to connect our initiatives.

We can bring you a pipeline of apprentices and you can meet your goals by having your programs hire our transitioning service members and military spouses that we can connect directly with your programs. So really excited to be on this call today and collaborating with the Office of Apprenticeship and ETA.

So this slide here, this is our pilot execution. The pilot, as Tim said, officially it kicked off in January but was not fully operational until April. And that was when our contractors were fully staffed and we developed all of our supporting documents and our applications to support the project were developed.

So what we've done is we've placed 16 new apprenticeship placement counselors – we're calling them APCs – at eight pilot locations across the United States to assist transitioning service members in their apprenticeship placement.

So these installations were chosen in conjunction with the Department of Defense and the include, for the Army, Fort Bragg and Fort Bliss; for the Navy we have Naval Station Norfolk and Naval Station San Diego; for Air Force we have Nellis and Travis; and for Marine Corps we have Cherry Point and Miramar.

And on the side here you can see that we have (3) – number (3) next to the locations for the Army and Navy, and we have (1) next to locations for Air Force and Marine Corps, and that is the number of apprenticeship placement counselors that we have staffed at each of those installations.

And it's all based on the number of transitioning service members that are anticipated at those locations. The Army and Navy locations are definitely much larger than the Air Force and Marine Corps ones that we have in our pilot.

So these counselors will be serving as the key role in implementing the pilot. They're going to introduce apprenticeship to the service members during a DOL in-person and virtual TAP classes. There's the one-day employment fundamentals, the two-day employment workshop, and the two-day career credential and exploration workshops.

So this is where the transitioning service member – you take these classes about a year out from their transition – six months to a year out. So the counselor will provide personalized assistance to the transitioning service member and their spouses interested in getting placed into an apprenticeship.

For those transitioning service members who hear about the brief – hear the brief and are interested in working with the apprenticeship placement counselor to find placement, what they do is during their first meeting together they say, hey, can you please provide me with three different locations that you would like to transition to after you leave the military? And also, can you tell me what occupations or industries that you would like to go into?

And so that helps the transitioning – the counselor focus their efforts a little bit more so on where that transitioning service member wants to go.

What we're also doing now is we are presenting to them open opportunities that we know about right now. So let's say a transitioning service member, if they're getting out of Fort Bragg in North Caroline, they may want to go back home to Michigan or go to California. We can say to them, hey, you know what? I know you want to go to these locations, but we have a fantastic cyber program in Georgia that you might be interested.

So we're going to be bringing them all different options and putting that in front of these transitioning service members.

So the counselor will also work closely with a number of stakeholders to identify these opportunities across the country. So what we've given our apprenticeship placement counselors, we've given them access to apprenticeship.gov.

On apprenticeship.gov, it's the One-Stop shop for apprenticeship. We've given them the apprenticeship finder tool there. And in the apprenticeship finder tool, that's where someone can go and find open apprenticeship opportunities. They scrape the web for these opportunities and they download them into their system.

There's also a partner finder tool. And in this partner finder tool, one can go and they can search on a certain location in the country, use keywords to find certain occupations and industry sectors to locate apprenticeship programs. So those are our two things that we've given them.

We've also connected them with a number of stakeholders. We have the Office of Apprenticeship staff, the VETS staff, their workforce system.

One thing I want to highlight here is we are not only connecting the transitioning service members to registered apprenticeship programs, but we're also connecting them to the new industry-recognized apprenticeship programs when they do come up online, as well as other unregistered high-quality apprenticeship programs. And the lessons learned will be used to develop a broader digital strategy as we move forward.

And go to the next slide. So the apprenticeship pilot status to date. As I mentioned, we have apprenticeship placement counselors that are attending these TAP workshops to inform the transitioning service members about apprenticeship and their counseling services.

As you all know, COVID-19 has affected the entire country and it's affected our pilot as well. So what we've done is, due to the inability of our counselors to brief the in-person TAP classes because of the virus, we've extended the pilot to now include transitioning service members and their spouses that include the virtual classes – TAP classes – that are offered worldwide. We're also now including the Coast Guard as well.

So to date we have placed nine transitioning service members into apprenticeship programs. The apprenticeship placement counselors have helped the transitioning service members submit over 80 apprenticeship applications. And over 500 transitioning service members have expressed interest in working with an apprenticeship placement counselor. And these counselors have briefed over 10,000 transitioning service members.

So as you can see, we've been really, really busy over the past few months. We shifted gears. As soon as we could not brief in person, we are now engaging virtually. The pilot – as you all know, pilots are a learning tool and we're definitely learning as we move forward.

In addition, we've created a number of marketing and promotional materials to help assist with this pilot. We've developed one-pagers and – (inaudible) – fliers that can be shared, TSM – transitioning service member – fliers, social media postings. And we've developed some key documents for our stakeholders to use and learn more about the pilot.

In addition, we're having key meetings with DOL apprenticeship investments; as well as, for example, people like you all, so contractors and the grantees; as well as other entities who have expressed interest in engaging with the pilot.

So with that, I'm going to stop and I'm going to turn this over to Stacy Ruble, who is with our contractor, and he is the project lead for the pilot. Stacy?

STACY RUBLE: Good afternoon, everyone. My name's Stacy Ruble. I'm the pilot manager. I work for SERCO North America and we serve Department of Labor. And so we've been working on this for quite a while.

Our employer and sponsor engagement, we are continually reaching out to our employers with apprenticeship programs nationwide. We meet with these employers to learn about their programs and to determine if they're a good fit for our pilot. And if so, we add them to our database with all of their key information; i.e., their points of contact, the jobs they are seeking, any prerequisites they have, start times of their cohorts, et cetera.

We then have the employer conduct a webinar with our apprenticeship placement counselors to ensure the counselors are aware of the program and to allow the counselors to ask any questions directly to the employer. Next slide, please.

On this slide you can see the timeline of our pilot. We are roughly halfway through. Our original goal was to place 385 transitioning service members during the pilot. As previously mentioned by Carolyn, COVID-19 has severely impacted our ability to meet this goal. Nonetheless, we're still pleased with the progress we have made and the processes we have developed, and we believe these will be invaluable in our future efforts.

And upon conclusion of the pilot, the Chief Evaluation Office will be preparing a detailed report and assessment. Next slide, please.

To ensure we keep a close eye on the population we serve, the transitioning service members and their spouses, we continually analyze our data. For example, in this slide you can see that we have determined our primary target population to be the junior enlisted service members, those who are generally finishing their first enlistment and are 21 to 22 years of age.

Also, while it is our goal to begin interacting with the transitioning service members at least six months away from their exit date, this is not always the case and we will work with a transitioning service member regardless of their exit date. But the further out the transitioning service member is, the more time our counselors have to find a good match. Next slide, please.

We have also found that our transitioning service members, about 15 percent of the time they want to stay at the base where they're currently stationed. The majority – roughly half – want to relocate either to a specific location or they're open to moving anywhere. And about a third want to return to their home state. And we also track what industry the service members would like to enter. Next slide, please.

On this slide – this slide depicts the career clusters that we track. And those career fields in yellow depict those career fields that are the most popular with our transitioning service members. And as you can see, IT; manufacturing; and transportation, distribution, and logistics are at the top of the list.

I'll now transfer this over to Meg.

MEG O'GRADY: (Pause, in progress) – and some of the attributes – I'm sorry. I think I may have been on mute.

So this is Meg O'Grady. I am the national veterans employment manager for DOL VETS. I'd like to take just a couple minutes to talk to you a little bit about veterans and their attributes. I think we probably have several veterans on the phone with us today.

As I've been looking through the comments of where folks are and what they are doing, I see that we have some DVOPs and some LVERs. So just to level-set, I think some of you know some of the great attributes that veterans bring to the workplace.

Our assistant secretary of labor for VETS is John Lowry, who is a retired Marine officer himself. We want to make sure that, although there is all kinds of good will around hiring veterans – and it certainly is the right thing to do – we really focus on the point that it's a very smart business decision. And we believe that veterans are a talent pool that can add a lot of advantage and opportunity to any organization that hires them.

So when we take a look at veterans, it's interesting. They start out as a group that's already a step above. Out of all the high school seniors in the United States, only 28 percent can qualify for military service based on academics, physical fitness, or strength of character.

So out of all the high school seniors in the United States, 28 percent even just qualify for military service. So right there you have a demographic that is generally at the higher levels of the high school seniors who are coming out every year. And we're very honored and fortunate to have that type of service member enter into the military.

You know, in addition to following orders, service members begin learning leadership from the moment they enter basic training. And so they all have inherent leadership qualities. They're taught teamwork from the very beginning, from day one. And although service members are assigned an occupation, they have a wide range of cross-functional roles and responsibilities. So they're constantly learning and developing and they have a growth mindset.

What's very interesting is that in the research that's been done, many veterans say they do not want to transition into the same occupation that they have done in the military. So for example, someone who was in the military police may not want to go into law enforcement. Someone who perhaps was a truck driver perhaps does not want to go into the transportation field.

And so apprenticeships give them a great opportunity to take their learning mindset and really show employers what they have. It's an opportunity to test great talent, but it's also an opportunity for them to learn and transition into a new career.

Most veterans are productive. They have really high retention rates. They tend to be very loyal employees. And they are really adaptable, which is one of the things I think that makes them really great employees.

So when we look at veterans, they consistently have a higher standard of living than non-veterans. And what does that mean? Well, when you look at the different veterans as opposed to perhaps other employees, they tend to be more loyal. They tend to retain in their job. They tend to learn very quickly. And they tend to have this growth mindset that allows them to move through a career path.

And so over the past 40 years we looked at Census Bureau data. And so households headed by veterans actually do have higher income, are less likely to be in poverty, and so they tend to be very stable employees and ready to learn.

I know many of you know our regional veteran employment coordinators who are throughout the United States. We have six different regions where we have a regional veteran employment coordinator – or an RVEC. These RVECs are at those regions to help you help veterans and their family members.

So our regional veteran employment coordinators, all of them are military veterans themselves. They have extensive networks and resources to share with you – both to organizations and to employers. So those employers who are ready to hire, they can go to one of our RVECs and the RVECs can actually help them find the resources they need to get a program started.

If they're looking for matching or you want to match a veteran or family member with an employer, those RVECs can help as well.

We have – Roxann Griffith is our acting RVEC in the Chicago region, and she also is the RVEC for the Dallas region. And so she works throughout those regions to ensure that employers and organizations and partners have the resources they need to reach our veterans.

Nicole Neri is our RVEC in the Philadelphia region. You can see the states there that Nicole works with.

Paul Furbush is in our Boston region, so he works the majority of the Northeast. And then he is also the acting RVEC for the Atlanta region, so he has the Southeast there as well. Interesting that Paul, who is in the Boston region, also has Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. And I don't see that here on the slide, so just a note that Paul does have that Puerto Rico and Virgin Islands area as well.

And the we have Tony Forbes, who is in our San Francisco region. And he covers all of the West Coast, including the islands and Alaska.

So their emails are right there. We would love to have you contact them. They stand ready to connect you with veterans, employers, and resources, as well as apprenticeship programs within their region.

At this point I'm going to turn it back over to Carolyn to talk about benefits.

MS. RENICK: Great. Thank you, Meg. So as you all engage with employers who want to hire veterans, you can share with them many of the key attributes and characteristics that a veteran can bring to an organization that Meg just presented.

So, many employers also – they reach out to our office with questions on how to attract more veterans to their company. We often share with them the value that developing an apprenticeship program can bring to help attract, train, and retain talent. But it also helps to attract veterans because the veteran can tap into their GI Bill while in the program.

If the employer starts an apprenticeship program and gets it approved by the Veteran Affairs state approving agency for education benefits, an eligible veteran can tap into their post 9/11 GI Bill benefits.

So what that means is that the veteran can earn their apprentice wages, in addition to their monthly housing allowance, tax-free based on where the related technical instruction is occurring. There's also money available for books and supplies.

So I just want to make sure that we highlight, this is a good source of additional funding and it'll count toward your requirement for your grants, for those of you who have them.

So on this slide as well you can see there's an employer handbook link. This is a link to the VA and it also has information on the OJT Apprenticeship Information Guide. I encourage you to look at that.

And also, there's a state approving agency contact list, another great resource for you all.

So on this slide here we have the DOL valuable resources. Just want to make sure that you all have these going forward. The Career One-Stop Business Center provides guidance on hiring veterans. All of these resources here are really great resources for you to share with the employers that you're engaging with.

The second one is the VETS Employers Guide to Hiring Veterans. This was just released over the past few months. There's information in there such as the business case for hiring veterans, information about posting jobs, the best practices, federal and state organizations, veteran service organizations. So I encourage you to go to that link and see all this great information that we've compiled.

The next one is the veterans website, veterans.gov, provides veteran employment resources that include exploring careers, finding training, search for jobs, and getting one-on-one assistance.

Also we have our VETS office, our Veteran Employment and Training Services – (inaudible) – included. Again, links and resources not only for the veteran but also for employers.

One thing – the next one, the apprenticeship website. As I mentioned earlier, apprenticeship.gov, a one-stop shop for everything about apprenticeship. Provides general information on apprenticeship.

It has information on registered apprenticeship and industry-recognized apprenticeships, has resources for employers – employers who want to hire transitioning service members or veterans. It's got information for career seekers and educators. And how to find open apprenticeship job opportunities and locate apprenticeship programs based on location and industry. So encourage you to go to that. That's a great resource for anybody who wants to learn more about apprenticeship.

The last one – link here is the Hire Vets Medallion Award. This award is the only federal level veterans employment award that recognizes a company or organization's commitment to veteran hiring, retention, and professional development.

I encourage you to share this Medallion Award information with any of the employers that you're engaging with that hire veterans. It's been something that the program has just – I think we're in the second year of it and it's been really exciting. A lot of great awards have gone out to some (fabulous ?) employers out there.

So the next steps. So, many of you all, as I mentioned earlier, have these requirements in your grant. And we want to connect you all and your grantees with our pilot. We'd like you to share information about the pilot with the employers and other stakeholders that you're engaging with.

Connect the apprenticeship program that you're engaging with to us; we'd like to tap into this potential pipeline of apprentices. As I mentioned earlier, it can be for the registered apprenticeship programs you're engaging with, those IRAP programs, or other high-quality unregistered apprenticeship programs.

And those high-quality unregistered apprenticeship programs are those that meet the DOL criteria of an apprenticeship program. Someone is paid from day one. There's on-the-job component. There's a related technical instruction component. They're working with a mentor and it ends with a credential. So those five components are those high-quality apprenticeship programs.

Those employers and other entities interested in connect with this, please forward that information to us. You can email us through VETSapprenticeship@dol.gov.

Also, other organizations or entities that you're engaging with, like associations, community colleges, or your colleges, that are interested in our pilot, we're happy to speak with them.

And then lastly here, for more information we encourage you to go our VETS TAP website. We have a blog post on the pilot from our assistant secretary you can reference, as well as more information on TAP in general.

So with that, that ends our presentation and I'm going to turn it back over to Andrea.

MS. HILL: Thanks, Carolyn. And thanks, everybody. We have had a few questions come in and so we'll answer those in just a minute. We've got a bunch of grantees who are here from different programs. And just also want to make sure that insofar as the high-quality apprenticeship versus registered apprenticeships versus IRAPs, that you want to make sure that everything is allowable by your grant program.

So one of the first questions that we got in is, "Are the APCs state JVSG staff or contractors?" Tim, can you answer that one?

MR. WINTER: Sure. The apprenticeship placement counselors are contractors through our current contractor SERCO.

MS. HILL: Fantastic. Thanks for that. And I think, Tim, this would come to you too, is, "What role has My Next Move, the veterans edition, played in helping apprentices to understand the occupational research available to service members and their families?"

MR. WINTER: Yeah. So My Next Move for Veterans and also O\*NET Interest Profiler, which are all kind of tied together, those are actually parts of our curriculum that we cover in our one-day employment fundamentals and then in our employment workshop and also our career and credentialing exploration workshop.

The last one, the career and credentialing exploration, is we go into great depth in walking the participants through three evaluations – or three assessments that they do. And then based on those three assessments they look at possible occupational – occupations that may fit within those – kind of the sweet spot of those three assessments.

And so also within the workshop we do go into quite a bit of detail in researching occupational – occupation codes, occupation fields, and the different types of careers that are available through that. And then we also bring them through kind of a self-exploration of the training that's available, what they would need in order to get credentials and the training available. And we walk them through some pretty significant research and into that particular occupation.

And if they haven't taken those workshops by the time they talk to an APC, the APCs will then walk them through some of that – some of those assessments as well.

MS. HILL: That's awesome. Thanks so much, Tim.

Stacy can you answer if VETS is working with employers to adapt standards of apprenticeship to recognize prior learning credit for service members? And if so, how that's happening?

MR. RUBLE: Sure. As a matter of fact, VETS can be a great help for the service members. If they come into the program and they have experience that directly relates to the apprenticeship they're applying for, that often fast-tracks them into the apprenticeship and can at times carve off months or even years of apprenticeship time and catapult them further into the program, which is a great benefit.

MS. HILL: Thank you. Have another one for you, Stacy. "If an APC queries a state for general apprenticeship occupation information, is that information then shared across the other seven pilot installations?"

MR. RUBLE: Yes and no. If an APC queries a state for general apprenticeship information, that information would be shared with all of the other counselors in that state. And if it were applicable to, say, another counselor that's looking to place someone in that state, they would also have access to that information.

And we have a database that collects a lot of the information that we gather. And we also have biweekly meetings with the counselors where they share openly share information that they gleaned from whatever sources they're working with.

MS. HILL: Great. On a related note, Stacy, I'm coming to you again. "I just want to clarify," asked the person asking, "if there was or was not outreach undertaken to programs in specific states?" They believe that all states were not part of the pilot program and they just wanted to confirm. And if there are plans to broaden into those states maybe that haven't yet been reached out to?

MR. RUBLE: Well, that's a good question. The states where they have the installations – those five states – that's where we started. But please keep in mind that we are placing service members in all 50 states, depending on where it is they want to go. So we work across the nation and we work with all of the agencies in the different states as it applies. And so I guess that would be the best answer I could come up with for that.

MS. HILL: That's a great answer. I just want to put in a little plug here, speaking to that point, is for those of you who are developing programs through your grants, if you would encourage your sponsors and your employers to make sure and post openings on the apprenticeship.gov website, that can also help those installations where those pilots are located to be able to find those apprenticeships in places where the transitioning vets are headed, if they're not staying in their current area.

And then another related question. I think it goes to Carolyn. "Just for clarification, vets can draw from their GI Bill for what type of programming? Can they utilize the GI Bill for high-quality apprenticeships? Can they use it for –" well, we know they can use for registered apprenticeships. "And how about IRAPs?" Can they use them for those two alternate types of programming?

MS. RENICK: Yeah, sure. So with regards to the GI Bill, so an apprenticeship program – if it's a registered apprenticeship program or any apprenticeship program – if they want to get approved for education benefits through the VA, they have to apply to their state approving agency.

So a registered apprenticeship, when they apply to the state approving agency, they've already been registered with the Department of Labor or state apprenticeship agency. They are fast-tracked. So what that means is they are fast-tracked for a 30-day turnaround in terms of approval.

With regards to IRAPs or other types of apprenticeship programs, they will have to go through the approval process with the Veterans Affairs office. So they have to then review their program and determine whether or not it fits the criteria that they determined to be approved for the education benefits.

But in terms of IRAPs with the Department of Labor that they're working through, I don't think there's been any determination yet with regard to the GI Bill. So only once an approved program is approved through the VA for education benefits, that's when the veteran can then pull their post-9/11 GI Bill benefits.

MS. HILL: Great. Thank you. We've still got some questions coming in and we're still taking them. So if anybody has any more, feel free to keep putting them in.

I wanted to – there's another one that came in about, Carolyn, "How long does the evaluation process take to determine the eligibility of an apprenticeship program to be part of the pilot initiative?"

MS. RENICK: Oh, so if anybody is interested in becoming part of our pilot, if there's any employer or entity that wants to engage with us, please have them contact us. And really, there's no wait period at all. So if you all are engaging with an apprenticeship program, they want to connect with our pilot and recruit our transitioning service members, we can go ahead and add them to our database.

Right now we have a database about – over 80 employers that have reached out to us who want to engage and want to hire our transitioning service members through the pilot, and their spouses. So anybody is welcome.

We've been – so far, the nine placements that we have had been all registered apprenticeship programs. But again, it could be other unregistered apprenticeship programs. So there's no waiting period at all; we just want to make sure that the programs are high-quality and want to recruit our transitioning service members.

MS. HILL: Great. I think this one comes back to Stacy. And if not, Stacy, pass it off to who you think would be answering. "Is there a warm handoff with the state JVSGs with the programs and then with the APCs that place veterans in their state to conduct follow up after they enter their program?"

MR. RUBLE: There is not, that I'm aware of. Carolyn?

MS. RENICK: No, there is not from what I'm aware of either.

MR. WINTER: This is Tim. And so we – as a follow up, so I know that we have place that – so service members, if we have not been able to place them into an apprenticeship before they separate, we have – we are handing them off to the local AJC where they'll be heading.

So we wouldn't necessarily refer them directly to JVSG staff because there are some kind of eligibility (wickets ?). But we absolutely can refer them to the AJC staff for assistance going – once they've separated.

MS. HILL: Thanks, Tim. That's kind of the last of the questions that we've gotten. So we'll give a last call here. I'll give you guys another minute to kind of think about it.

And really want to thank everybody, Meg and Carolyn, Stacy and Tim, for being here today and letting us all know a little bit more about the apprenticeship program pilot that you guys are doing. It's really exciting stuff and hopefully we'll be able to partner a little bit more.

We had contacts in the specific regions that was on the PowerPoint a few slides back. And so just a quick reminder that this recording and the slide deck will be posted on the Apprenticeship State Expansion community of practice on WorkforceGPS in three to five days.

But here's the contact information for the speakers who are here as well. So if you have any particular questions for them to follow up with on how you might be able to contact or get involved a little bit more with this pilot.

And so, also want to remind you that we've gotten all the questions here we think addressed. But if you do have any follow-ups, specifically about co-enrollment in your particular grant, to double-check with your FPO. And don't forget your FPO and your TA coaches as well. So there'll be lots of opportunity as this pilot continues and it's a really exciting program.

So thank you again, all, so much. It's so much appreciated for you to take your time and come talk to all our grantees.

So with that, I'll pass it back over to Laura.

(END)