**WorkforceGPS**

**Transcript of Webinar**

**SAE 2020 Tier 1 TA Orientation**

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JONATHAN VEHLOW: Welcome to "SAE 2020 TA Orientation Webinar." So without further ado, I'd like to kick things off to our moderator today, Michelle Mills, project manager, SAE 2020 grant lead, with the Office of Apprenticeship with the U.S. DOL. Michelle?

MICHELLE MILLS: Thanks, Jon. And welcome, everyone. It's such a delight and pleasure to be with you here today this Friday afternoon. As Jon mentioned, I'm Michelle Mills. I'm the project manager in the Office of Apprenticeship and the SAE 2020 grant lead. So I'm very excited to be here to talk about TA – technical assistance.

And many of you are probably already familiar with your TA coaches, have been really enjoying the menu of TA that's being provided by Maher & Maher. But today is just going to be a great refresher. Or for those who are new, going to really introduce you to what we can offer in terms of support as you implement the grant.

So I'm so delighted to be here today. And we have tremendous speakers who are really going to tell you about technical assistance for this grant. Next slide, please.

So again, just to kind of reiterate some of our objectives, we're going to talk about the grants, tier 1, tier 2, the TA support, the strengths, and also how can we identify some of your additional needs. So we're very excited to have that conversation and today we're going to kind of have our dynamic speakers help walk through some of these things. Next slide, please.

So I'm so delighted to be here talking to you with two of my great colleagues. Gina Wells, who is the TA project director for the State Apprenticeship grants at Maher & Maher. And then we have Joe Quick, who is also a consultant and a TA coach with Maher & Maher. So we're going to hear a lot from them today and I'm very excited to be presenting with them. Gina? Next slide, please.

GINA WELLS: Hi, everybody. It's Gina Wells here from Maher & Maher. I'm so excited to be spending some time with you. Thank you for carving out a little piece of your Friday afternoon to talk about your State Apprenticeship Expansion 2020 grant and the technical assistance that's available to support you in successfully achieving your grant goals.

I just want to say a big shout-out and welcome to those of you who are joining in with these apprenticeship grants now here at the award of the SAE 2020 grants. I see a number of familiar names there in the name chat. But I also see some folks who have been hired in either as new staff to work on these grants or you're a new partner. And so we're just really excited to be here with you all today and just spend a little time with a deep focus on your SAE 2020 grants.

So what we're going to do here at the top of the webinar is kind of ground ourselves in the purpose and goals and the strategies behind this most recent round of Department of Labor awards to states to support your expansion efforts.

And from there we'll move into some conversation about performance, which we know is always top of mind. And then we'll spend some time talking about technical assistance, how to get the most out of your technical assistance offerings. And then really leave the back part of our conversation today to hear from you and let you all talk to each other via the chat about what's going on, what your needs are, where you're having some success, things like that.

So without further ado, we'll dive into this first part of our webinar today. And Michelle and I are just going to bounce back and forth between the two of us talking a little bit about framing these grants and digging a little deeper into the Office of Apprenticeship's goals and purpose behind different structural components of the grant opportunity.

So let's talk a little bit about the Tier 1 grants. So all of you have Tier 1 grants, and these had required activities or components that you had to build into your Tier 1 grants. And so we'll talk a little bit about what those are.

So the first component of these Tier 1 grants is really around system building activities and covered things like improving awareness of and access to apprenticeship with education and employers, improving program registration processes and efficiencies, and creating systems and tools that help your programs remain in compliance and be successful. So all about kind of increasing your capacity as a state to develop, operate, and monitor and ensure the quality of apprenticeship programs.

Goal two focuses on system alignment to, among other things, build capacity through alignment with education and workforce partners – like postsecondary and CTE and workforce boards, and I see a few folks have joined us today from those communities – creating new systems and structures to promote access to supplemental services and funding sources, and promoting alignment of postsecondary programs with apprenticeship training.

So all those partnerships that help to develop a pipeline of apprentices, help to ensure the success of apprentices, to help situate apprenticeship as a true partner of the workforce system and as a component of broader career pathways and postsecondary education offerings.

And then finally, the third goal, which focuses on improving data sharing and data integrity through activities like the formation and utilization of new tracking systems to track apprentices' progress and report program data, and creating data-sharing agreements to share longitudinal data across federal and state programs for registered apprenticeship.

And there's one specific component that fell under this goal that applies only to a specific set of SAA states and I think Michelle's going to talk about that a little bit later when we talk more deeply about data.

But this is sort of the big picture in terms of what the Tier 1 baseline funding awarded under SAE 2020 is designed to do. And I want to turn it over to Michelle so that she can offer us just a few more insights into OA's vision for these Tier 1 grants, what OA expects – (inaudible) – through the structure of – (inaudible).

MS. MILLS: Perfect. Thanks, Gina. And just want to really echo what you said. You've outlined some of the key activities that we are kind of trying to achieve. And what is the ultimate outcome of all of this? What's the end goal and the vision?

So I don't know if many of you saw the press release that came out announcing the SAE 2020 round of grants that our assistant secretary John Pallasch was really just encouraging states in terms of the improvement of performance, the improvement of integration of systems across. And he talked a lot about the one workforce system and what that really means. It's like, how can we improve leveraging across programs? How can we encourage the system to really work together, whether it's the education system or the workforce system?

So a lot of this baseline funding is to help you build that basic infrastructure to support those type of activities. Again, also just looking at the national apprenticeship system building, a lot of that also is embedded and focuses on 29 CFR 29 and 29 CFR 30, coming into compliance. I know Gina mentioned a little bit on the compliance piece.

And of course, this year we've also introduced a new type of apprenticeship model. I think it's very important for this grant to really look at what registered apprenticeship elements pertain to, what it speaks to, strengthening local industry support to develop standards and programs that meet labor market demand, but also align with 29 CFR 29 and 29 CFR 30.

On the data sharing and integration piece, of course we want you to build up those case management systems, of course. But also, just how can we align some of those state IT systems. How can you leverage those to help report back to us in terms of the programming that you're implementing in your state?

So all of this is really to help strengthen the national apprenticeship ecosystem, to help streamline a couple of the processes, and hopefully the big impact is sustainability of effort, right? In terms of where funding – (inaudible) – each year, but hopefully the system can also sustain itself where there is less of a need for specific grant funding.

So that's kind of some of the purpose of this is to push for sustainability and supporting the general apprenticeship ecosystem.

So back over to you, Gina. Next slide.

MS. WELLS: Thanks, Michelle. We also wanted to spend a little bit of time talking about the Tier 2 grants. So this was the funding that you could also put in for, to apply for competitively. And 11 states received this funding under Tier 2, which focused on – (inaudible) – innovation strategies.

So the number of goals vary depending on the funding threshold. So states could get up to $3 million to focus on two goals with a target of 10 percent growth in registered apprenticeship; up to $6 million with a focus on four of these goals that you can see here and a 20 percent growth in registered apprenticeship; and then up to $9 million cutting across six goals and up to 25 percent growth in registered apprenticeship.

So each application in this tier had to credibly demonstrate that the stated goals could be achieved throughout the life of the grant. And you can see here that there were a wide range of activities that could fall under these, which I think speak to the Department of Labor's goals around apprenticeship expansion.

So more focus on business outreach, technology and technical assistance; a focus on diversification of apprenticeship into new industry sectors; general apprenticeship quality improvement goals; a focus on building a pipeline of diverse apprentices and creating programs that are inclusive and support the success of a diverse apprenticeship population; work around system alignment or partnership goals on a deeper level; and then there was also the opportunity for additional innovation that might not have been compensated or specifically expressed in the funding opportunity.

So here again I want to turn it over to Michelle to talk a little bit more about why the funding announcement was structured in this way and what OA is hoping to achieve through the Tier 2 grants. Michelle?

MS. MILLS: Thank you. Next slide, please. So wonderful. So we talked a little bit about the one workforce system concept supporting the state (system ?) through the state's funding. And then we transitioned over into Tier 2 where it got a little bit more competitive.

And so we're seeing a transition here in the approach to grant funding from our office. We kind of had the state allotments; here's this specific amount. Then we transitioned now, last year, to tiered funding. And then what's to come next year is full, open competition.

So the competitiveness has kind of changed in terms of how these grants are written. And so we wanted to kind of introduce that concept to you all with the tier funding approach that we implemented last year.

So again, 11 states received this. And again, these applications showed strong evidence of past performance in expanding registered apprenticeship programs. It definitely offered other factors, including geographic industry and then some of the Tier 2 goal distribution across, so we're happy to see that.

And many of the proposals included some really unique activities, expanding apprenticeships in health care, mental health care, addiction treatment, alternative (pay ?) management, working in rural areas, incorporating strategies to expand registered apprenticeship for diverse populations – women, minorities, vets, persons with disabilities, ex-offenders – supporting system alignment through the role of business service representatives in the workforce system, developing innovative technology strategies to connect registered apprenticeship sponsors to opportunities.

So we saw a range of different proposals, very competitive. We saw some innovation to the use of incentives plans, kind of a pay-for-success type of model being implemented. And an introduction of new industries, new non-traditional occupations that were brought up in some of these proposals.

So just want to encourage you all again and just be mindful, if you proposed something in the (path ?) for Tier 2 that didn't get funding in the past round, please don't scrap completely – take away that vision – but maybe work on it and think about it for the next round of grants that will be issued next year.

So just want to kind of implore you and encourage you that you do see a trend where it's becoming a little bit more competitive. So we're looking for some of those competitive applications as well. Next slide, please.

Perfect. So in this segment we will discuss a few updates, including co-enrollment and performance reporting. We'll go in a little bit about WIPS and even talk about RAPIDS and how they're different.

But just want to stress that the WIPS – Workforce Integrated Performance System – was really developed by ETA to help us track data from competitive grants on the WIOA outcomes, to be able to validate data, to be able to track participant services across the programs – education, the training, et cetera.

So this is a new layer of accountability for us as a department using this system to track the grant's activities. And so we're very excited. We received OMB approval of the PIRL – the Participant Individual Record Layout – that will be used for WIPS, and so just want to encourage all of you to look at that, become familiar with that, think about your case management system and how you can really utilize this to really track data and to have accurate data.

So just want to encourage you all as we kind of walk through some of the reporting requirements to really think through the purpose of this. It's going to help us in terms of accountability to the public in terms of what we're funding and some of the (subset ?) metrics from these grants. Next slide, please.

Perfect. So as you think about ramping up your activities, we also want to encourage you all to think about co-enrolling, leveraging resources across. So again, with all this – (inaudible) – 2020 this year, we rolled out new updated co-enrollment guidance.

So participants can be involved in more than one OA-funded program. So OA grantees, contractors, even (co-ops ?) can co-enroll across; but not the same OA-funded program type. So the ASE and the SAE 2020 are the same program types; they wouldn't be able to co-enroll across the same program type. But SAE 2020 could co-enroll across the YARG – Youth Apprenticeship Readiness Grants – or Youth Apprenticeship Intermediary Contracts.

So again, co-enrollment is defined as enrolling a participant in more than one grant program, contract program, or cooperative, that's funded with apprenticeship-appropriated funds, to provide participant services – hopefully non-duplicative participant services. And this should really entail covering things from the related technical instruction component, on-the-job learning, to supportive services, et cetera.

So just want to kind of remind you all that this co-enrollment policy does not apply to H-1B. The H-1B folks in the Office of Workforce Investment have their own policy around co-enrolling. So if you're working with a grantee, you want to kind of check to see is this H-1B or is this apprenticeship-appropriated funded grant or cooperative or contract that you're trying to co-enroll across?

And of course, if any questions, you can talk to your FPO and they can refer back to the guidance and kind of talk with us at the program office to get you the type of assistance that you need. Next slide, please.

So in this segment we're going to talk a lot about the WIPS and kind of the detailed requirements that go into the WIPS. But before we get to that, just want to remind folks that your QNRs are due this quarter, as well as the 9130s. And what should be included in this, of course, analysis of industry sectors, occupations participating in registered apprenticeship, the progress against grant goals, and update of the work plan.

So again, just referencing the TEGL there for folks if you want to reference back and kind of look at some of the elements that are captured there. Next slide, please.

Wonderful. So the next aspect is the QPR. And just quickly want to just reiterate again, we want you to get ready in the meantime. Think about your case management system. And then also think about what we're tracking. So total participants served, total participants who enter into a registered apprenticeship program, total of newly created registered apprenticeship programs in a new industry.

So we talked about WIPS – the Workforce Integrated Performance System. And we anticipate that around the beginning of December you'll start using this system, trying to get familiar with it. Training will be around December so that you can do your first upload around February 14 of next year.

Where the WIPS is concerned, just want to again make a quick distinction between WIPS and RAPIDS. They're very different systems. So for this QPR, you're going to track this data to enter into WIPS. RAPIDS, on the other hand, is a system that's used by regular employer sponsors to upload information about apprentices.

And on the RAPIDS side, we have SAA states, 10 of them committed – Massachusetts, Minnesota, North Carolina, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, Vermont, Washington state, and Wisconsin – that are going to be transitioning to use this new SAA portal that will upload information into RAPIDS.

So we have a whole unit that focuses on the RAPIDS and they'll be rolling out training for this new system for SAA states later this month or early next month. So stay tuned for that. But again, the RAPIDS system is very different from the WIPS, which you need to use this QPR to be able to upload that information in the WIPS. Next slide, please.

So again, I just want to emphasize again here – next slide, please. Oh, perfect. Performance outputs and outcomes.

So just want to emphasize here, as you're preparing thinking through the QPR, this was in attachment I-3; it's also on the screen shot. Yes, please go back. Thank you. Also on the screen shot there.

Just want to clearly define what participant means here. Participant is defined as an individual who is a direct recipient of a grant-funded service in a registered apprenticeship program or a pre-apprenticeship program leading to a registered apprenticeship.

So for that, in row one would list registered apprenticeship as well as pre-apprentices. For row two, however, you would only enter registered apprenticeship apprentices only.

OK. So just want to make that distinction very clear about what you're tracking, what a participant really means. And when we talk about grant-funded service, that is linked to elements in registered apprenticeship as codified in 29 CFR 29, Subpart A. Perfect. Next slide, please.

OK. So again just reiterating the trainings that are coming up in December; please screen shot it. Next slide. You went back a slide. Thank you. OK.

Yes, the WIPS training to upload information in the QPR. We also provided a link there with information that you can use to kind of get familiar with the PIRL and the elements that we talked about that are also in the performance outcomes and outputs table that was attached in the TEGL.

So we're very excited. When we don't really hear questions coming in, we want to just make sure that we are tracking any concerns or any challenges and we can really be attentive to your needs as it relates to performance and meeting your goals.

And on the performance, we just want to say I know a couple of people – we mentioned Tier 1, Tier 2, and there were some requests for some modifications here and there, especially for those who didn't get Tier 2 funding. So you want to think about that. Contact your FPOs as soon as possible.

But even for folks who aren't tracking participants, we're still going to use this QPR to input information, even if it's no participants for the first quarter. So you need to become familiarize (sic) with the WIPS, with the system, and what we'll be using moving forward for all apprenticeship grants, from the ASE to the SAE 2020, moving forward. Next slide, please.

Perfect. So now I'm going to turn it over to Gina and Joe. Joe?

JOE QUICK: Thank you very much, Michelle. So we are going to – now that we've sort of level-set the goals, purpose, and requirements associated with the SAE 2020 grants, we're going to shift the majority of this webinar's focus to the technical assistance opportunities that are available and how you can access them.

So, as many of you are aware, there is a full Apprenticeship Expansion technical assistance team that is here to serve you as you navigate your goals for your grant, including the Office of Apprenticeship – OA – staff; your apprenticeship consultants, who are available for apprenticeship-related program questions and questions about program standards and registering new programs.

But what we're going to talk about most today are your Maher & Maher TA coaches and all of the technical assistance you can access through them. And make some clarifications around – especially for those of you who are a bit newer to accessing this technical assistance, when you should access your federal project officers – or FPOs – versus when your TA coaches might be the most appropriate contact. So we're going to get into that a little bit in more detail as we start to talk about the TA coaches specifically.

But first, we are going to talk a little bit about the types of technical assistance offerings that are available as you work on your expansion goals.

The first is customized coaching. And we'll get into a little bit of detail on this after we go through the rest of them. We're going to spend a little bit more time here including how you can really leverage your technical assistance coach for strategic conversation and furthering your goals as you work through them.

We're going to talk a little bit about peer-to-peer learning; skill-building activities; some specific tools and resources, although they are constantly being added; and some communications to look out for that will help you in accessing additional promising practices or webinar opportunities that are coming up and really just to keep you informed as part of this overall grant expansion community.

So one thing that I'll mention before we get into detail about each of these TA types is that there are a lot of great opportunities to join live interactive sessions, webinars like this, cohort calls and things that we'll go over here in the next few minutes.

But we're also really intentional about recording a lot of those sessions, providing updates through those communication vehicles, and establishing and maintaining a community of practice on WorkforceGPS to facilitate ongoing resources and a place that you all can access these opportunities later if you miss any of these opportunities as they pop up.

So just know that through your technical assistance coach you can ask about resources. Anything that you might have missed is stored somewhere and can be accessed later.

So first we're going to talk a little bit about peer-to-peer learning opportunities. So there are several available to take part in. First, you all have been introduced over the last month to grantee cohort calls. Many of you have joined these in the past.

These are really great opportunities for states to join a cohort with other states that are working on apprenticeship expansion activities, share some of their strong strategies for expansion, ask questions of their peers, and really learn from one another in a peer-to-peer setting.

So I really encourage states to take advantage of those calls, learn from one another, find out who might be following a challenge that you've come up against and take advantage of one-on-one opportunities to connect with one another as you hear about those – (inaudible) – grantee cohort calls.

In addition, we have innovation cohorts, which are a little bit more intensive peer-to-peer learning. A handful of you – I think we have about eight states that have recently joined an innovation cohort around diversity, equity, and inclusion from an apprenticeship standpoint, through an application process. And those innovation cohorts are really great not only for the states that participate in them, but some of the outputs and conversations that are recorded – or strategies that come out of those innovation cohorts can be shared with others and have benefits to the full network.

Coaching connections, which we'll talk a little bit about the coaching relationship in more detail in a moment here. But peer-to-peer learning I find to be one of the most powerful pieces of connecting with your TA coach.

So if your TA coach coaches another state that has solved a challenge that you've come up against, or has some interesting strategies that can be shared, some peer-to-peer conversation and learning can really spring out of that relationship. Or out of a relationship with a state that another coach is working with, since we all, as coaches, have regular communication and share promising practices and challenges that you all are experiencing.

And speaking of overall promising practice sharing, so as your coaches are hearing about great things you're doing, we're collecting those peer-to-peer learning opportunities and really have robust conversation about how to share all of that out with you through some promising practice highlights. And we'll talk about one specific example of that in a moment.

The next is skill building. So recognizing that – I think as Gina mentioned for the beginning of the webinar, some of you are a little bit newer to this space. Some of you are partners who are stepping in to be part of your state's apprenticeship team.

And recognizing that we all have varying levels of experience in the apprenticeship and work-based learning ecosystem, we provide some opportunities to sort of catch up quickly and get some – get everyone a little bit more on equal footing in terms of their knowledge of apprenticeship and all of the associated strategies.

One of those strategies that we've employed is a business engagement boot camp. So you'll see information about that coming out. We'll also be doing some grants management training for those who might be a little bit newer to managing an apprenticeship grant. As well as an apprenticeship 101 boot camp recording that we have available that is a series of topics around sort of catching up to all things apprenticeship 101.

Next are some specific tools and resources. So as I mentioned, we are constantly evolving the resources that exist and adding new resources to the technical assistance tools and resources to help you with your apprenticeship expansion goals.

Two that we want to mention today are the five elements of effective apprenticeship expansion. There's both a framework and a self-assessment. Many of you have taken that self-assessment and have really worked within this five elements framework to approach your goals. But also to kind of think about where you might be strong right now at the state level, where you might have some differences in strengths across your state and across your regions, and where you might have some opportunity for improvement or additional technical assistance.

So those five elements focus on state leadership and policy; outreach and business engagement; capacity to launch, develop, and manage programs; development of an apprenticeship pipeline and steps to increase diversity; and alignment with career pathways and postsecondary education institutions.

So really thinking about – those five elements really align with a lot of the goals of these expansion grants and can help anyone that has a grant or anyone that's sort of working in the apprenticeship space think about innovative strategies to move their apprenticeship efforts forward.

In addition, I mentioned promising practice sharing. And we put together a "State Apprenticeship Expansion Promising Practice" brief resource that follows that five elements of effective apprenticeship expansion and really gets into some great detail on promising practices that are happening around the country. Many of you contributed to those resources and we really thank you for doing that.

Great resource to check in on within that framework what people are doing around the country and what strengths you might be able to tap into, both through those practice briefs but also through reaching out to some of your peers in other states.

And then communication. So a couple of opportunities. So these are ways to kind of stay updated on all of the technical assistance activities that are available, whether it's live webinar opportunities, peer conversations, sort of all of the things we just talked about above.

The Apprenticeship Connections newsletter is a great way to stay up-to-date on what's going on in the apprenticeship expansion network. And for anyone who might not already be receiving this Apprenticeship Connections newsletter, to add yourself or any other individuals that are working with you on your expansion efforts, you can work through your designated TA coach to be added to that distribution list.

In addition, I mentioned on WorkforceGPS that there are places to access all of this information, to follow up on opportunities you may have missed out on, access materials and all of the tools we've been talking about. And there are community of practice pages for both the SAE 2020 grants specifically and for a general apprenticeship community of practice. So great place to access resources and access some promising practices that have been highlighted both there and through those promising practice briefs.

I'm going to focus for a few minutes on technical assistance with coaches. So much of your TA activity and the access to all the resources that we've talked about really can be access through your technical assistance coach. They can get you to the right materials. They can get you to the right resources or people to answer your questions. So we're going to talk a little bit more deeply about that coaching role.

So many of you are already veterans of coaching engagement. But this'll be great for those who have yet to engage with your coach or you kind of need a refresher on the types of things that you can lean on your coach for.

So coaches can play a variety of roles. They can help you identify and navigate the challenges that you're experiencing. They can help you identify may new opportunities, whether it's partnering with new organizations or thinking about aligning other state strategies to support your apprenticeship expansion, and really – (inaudible) – through some innovative approaches and some strategic planning around apprenticeship expansion.

So this could be through one-on-one conversations between you and your coach to talk through those issues. It could be sort of manifest in consulting and support and specific topics. I mentioned partnership development, sort of leading change in your system, tracking your progress, thinking about sustainability and resilience of apprenticeship in this current environment. You might think a little bit about program design, policies, staffing, kind of talking through some best practices for really setting your team up for success.

You may also use them to connect to all the resources and tools, from a technical assistance standpoint, that we just discussed. Best practice sharing, of course. The coaching relationship really is a two-way sharing opportunity for you as well. So your coaches may ask you about practices that you have that are really promising and get a little bit more detail on that.

The reason they may do that and kind of get into that detail is not only to learn more about what's going well for you and to help build on that and provide some assistance there, but also to capture those things that you are doing really well that you might be able to help another peer with in another state. And vice versa.

So if there's a challenge that you're experiencing and one of their other states or one of the other coaches has experienced a really great practice to solve that challenge, they can set up a peer call between two states or a small group of states to kind of tackle an issue together and share best practices.

They can also aid in developing technical assistance not only for you, but to use with your subgrantees and other stakeholders. Whether that be sort of strategic planning overall or whether it's more of a training-based technical assistance activity for your subgrantees or regions across your state or other stakeholders you're working with, you can lean on them for some of that technical assistance as well.

As well as sort of really getting down into the nitty-gritty of strategic action plans, launching in some more of a – figuring out how you can ramp up your goals throughout the life of a particular grant to meet all of the goals that you set for yourself.

So lots of activity that you can – and expertise that you can tap into with your coaches.

So you should be aware of your technical assistance coach and be working with them already. A couple of things I'll say about the coaches themselves before we talk a little bit more about how to really effectively leverage that coaching relationship in a little bit more detail, is that all of these coaches have expertise in apprenticeship. But they come from different apprenticeship backgrounds.

So some coaches are really strong in developing programs from the ground up and going through that process, or have experience doing that.

Some coaches have really worked through strategic planning for strategic growth of apprenticeship at the state and regional level. Many have business services backgrounds and are really good at outreach strategies for business or really communicating the return on investment to business. Others have a great background in sort of tapping into underrepresented populations and kind of thinking about how to work with the education system to support apprenticeship expansion.

So one additional thing that you really can access through your coaches is the experience of all of these other coaches. So in our technical assistance, we really are intentional about our coaches sharing with one another, understanding what expertise each of us has and can bring to the table to bring coaches into conversations with states that might be experiencing a particular challenge.

So I will kick it over to Gina. We're going to talk a little bit about how to get the most out of that coaching relationship for a few minutes before we turn it over to you to hear a little bit about your (relationship ?) and practices. Gina?

MS. WELLS: Thanks, Joe. Well, as you all can tell from looking at the slide with pictures of everybody, Joe is a coach. So we want to take a moment to talk a little bit about what we've seen in terms of how states access coaching, and some examples of what works.

And while we're doing that, I wanted to ask those of you on the call who have been working with us, been part of the state apprenticeship grant community and have used coaches over the years, if you could chime in in the chat and just share maybe what is one way that your TA coach has helped you in the past few years with challenges or to advance your apprenticeship expansion goals? Share a little bit of what's worked for you with your peers who may be newer to the coaching model of technical assistance.

(Chuckles.) You can give a shout-out to your specific favorite coach if you want to. If you can also follow up and share a little bit about how you use your coach, that would be great.

And while you're doing that, I just wanted to ask Joe if you could maybe identify the two or three most impactful coaching activities that states can take advantage. What would those be? I mean, I know you just gave a big list a couple of slides ago. But if there are two or three ways that grantees could take advantage of their coach, what would you recommend?

MR. QUICK: Thanks, Gina. So I would say – if I had to choose two or three impactful coaching activities, I would say that really getting into strategy discussion and talking about strategic planning.

And what I've found is that I think all of us in the daily grind of our jobs, and what we're setting out to accomplish, can use a little time to kind of step aside outside of that daily grind and really think about what's working right now. What strategies are working? What strategies might be out there that we haven't devoted any time to really focus on? And what you might be looking for to tackle things that still seem to be barriers to our expansion goals.

So I think overall strategic planning and discussion and sort of leaning on your coach to think about, here's where we are now; here's where we'd like to go. And how do we plan for – plan some distinct strategies to get to where we're trying to get to.

I also think that the peer connections and conversations are really important. I lean on that a lot. So I reach out to other coaches; I reach out to other states. I leverage the states that I coach to bring their experience to the table for others.

And it really reinforces the national network perspective and brings expertise to the table so that we're not all sort of working on this – we all have our own state initiatives to grow apprenticeship, but really the goal is to entrench apprenticeship as a training and work-based learning opportunity across the country. So I think that national perspective and peer connection is really strong.

And then I think creation and/or delivery of technical assistance tools or materials or approaches to help subgrantees, to help regional partners and statewide partners figure out kind of how they fit into the overall picture of state apprenticeship expansion goals. How their subgrantee performance really impacts the overall state approach, and how they can look both to the state and to the technical assistance we've talked about to accomplish their goals as subgrantees as well.

So there are a few things I'd mention.

MS. WELLS: Fantastic, Joe. Thanks. And thanks to all of you who are sharing your own experiences and going above and beyond to thank your coaches specifically. We appreciate hearing that you're having these good experiences. And I think it's really helpful to get concrete about what's worked for you and that might inspire someone else on the call to think differently about how they're using their coach. So that's great.

Arthur, I see your question about, "Can the DOL contact people and emails be included in the slides? It's not clear who to contact for different grant issues." So that is information that we try to get out to everybody, periodically updated, to make it clear who's your FPO, who's your apprenticeship consultant, who's your TA coach, and how to use those.

So we'll get that back out to you all so that can just be really clear. It's different for every state and for every grantee, so we'll make sure that you have that information. And we can attach with that, Arthur, the slides that Joe showed a few slides back that kind of tries to – (inaudible) – what's the role of the FPO? When do you contact your FPO? When do you talk to your apprenticeship consultant? When do you talk to your TA coach?

And I'll also say that our TA coaches coordinate across those three kind of buckets. So our TA coaches are in conversation with your federal project officer, with your apprenticeship consultant. So we do try to help streamline that. And if you do get to a TA coach with a question that's maybe better suited for your FPO because it's about a budget mod or it's about an allowable activity, the coach will help you get to the right place.

I wanted to also sort of reinforce what Joe was saying about your coach – a lot of really valuable coaching happens on conference calls between you and your coach. A lot of valuable coaching happens over email exchange in between those calls, or just picking up the phone when you've got a question or you're experiencing a frustration.

Coaches can also do that more strategic support for you all, as Joe was sharing. We've had coaches who have helped to facilitate conversations between grantees and partners. We've had coaches who've been able to deliver training or help to put together and coordinate some conversations or work that helps you to advance your goals. So you can think about coaching beyond the box of just the routine calls and emails that you might be having.

I want to keep us moving. Sorry, Joe, I want to keep us moving because we have about 10 minutes.

MR. QUICK: Yeah. Go ahead.

MS. WELLS: Our conversation is getting away from us today. And we want to hear from you. So we're going to move into a bigger focus on the chat here for a few minutes. I wish we could just unmute line but there's a lot of us on the call today. But we want you to talk to each other.

So you're going to pull up the first question, which is you think about what you're bringing to your SAE 2020 grant goals. This particular funding stream, this particular grant investment. What are the – some existing strengths and promising practices that – in your state that you're building on to achieve your SAE 2020 grant goals?

We're thinking about maybe the Tier 1 grant goals here. So you're thinking about what you're doing for your data, what you're doing for your partnerships, what you're doing for your apprenticeship system building. Share a little bit in the chat about what you're bringing with you from your past apprenticeship work into your SAE 2020 grant work. (Pause.)

And I can see that folks are typing in, so that's fantastic. (Pause.) This is really the hardest part, when we're all eagerly anticipating what you all have to say. (Pause.)

And I think the great piece about how this investment is structured is that it really built on work that you all have been doing. And I think we're structuring in a way that lays the groundwork for sustainability and building enduring systems of apprenticeship at the state level.

So Scott's sharing about – that you're bringing an existing network of knowledge and relationships, organized in the network so that you're able to be focused and continuing to expand your work.

Jennifer talks about being able to align back to the governor's goals of aligning with education and workforce and using the teams that you created to do that to focus on work-based learning and apprenticeship. Fantastic. Using your existing structure and probably that looks like what might be interagency structure.

Melana talks about the strong connection to CTE programming. That's fantastic. And relationships with your tribal colleges. Great thing to be bringing into this work and building on.

And Arthur talks about having tapped into key players in the business community to serve on your advisory council for system building. That's fantastic, Arthur.

And Christina, you're talking about using SAE funds to build a database workflow tool, and with your Tier 2 grant being able to add additional functionality. I bet that's getting the attention of a number of people on this call. I'm sure there's a bunch of folks who would like to know more about that database workflow tool. Hopefully we can dig into that a little bit further in an upcoming cohort call or in another venue.

Richard, thanks for talking about standing on the shoulders of the many colleagues in years of work that you all have been working through, that you've built into your current work.

And Anne, thanks about making that connection to thinking about how you can use the adult registered apprenticeship system that you're building to lay the groundwork for youth apprenticeship. Going to be such an important part of our recovery here over the next few years.

I want to keep us moving. So I'm going to – we're going to bring up our next question, but don't let that stop you if you're typing something in. And I think this will probably have to be our last question for today. So let's use this to close us out.

What do you see as some challenges on the horizon for you and technical assistance needs? So we talked a lot about TA today. Joe walked you through the wide range of technical assistance approaches that we use and sort of venues and modes of technical assistance. Our number one goal is to be able to get you the right TA at the right time. So when you're having a challenge, that's when we want to get you what you need to tackle that challenge. We aim to be flexible and adaptable to make that happen.

So tell us now, what do you see on the horizon as your big challenge – (inaudible) – TA needs so that we can build that into our upcoming offerings, conversations, tools, and work?

And I'll just say, since we're using this as our closeout moment, hopefully you have raised questions as they have come along today. But if you've been holding onto a question, you wanted to save it here to the end, throw your questions in there too so we can get to them. (Pause.)

All right. Anne's sharing data collection and integration for RAPIDS and WIPS, and working with businesses in a COVID-19 environment. Thanks, Anne. I can guarantee you just hit on probably what are going to be the top two challenges. Those are the ones that we've been hearing quite a bit over the last few weeks – (inaudible) – about.

And we have been working here to think about sort of the best venue to help support you all in this data collection conversation. So stay tuned for some opportunities for that conversation, in addition to the WIPS training that's going to be coming up from the Department of Labor in December.

Christina, greater integration of the registered apprenticeship model into the workforce system. Such an important body of work. Thanks for raising that.

And Brittany, thanks for raising up this important element of grant management that you all have before you right now, which is sort of keeping these three separate grant initiatives – SAE, ASE, and SAE 2020 – keeping the details separate, tracking your activities back to specific grant dollars, making sure your work is allowable and allocable to the specific grant you're billing it to; while at the same time leveraging these resources to support your overall apprenticeship expansion goals. That's the tricky bit of grant management work. Your coaches are certainly available to help you with that.

Ashley raised COVID-19. Melana is talking about industry partners and data collection.

All right. It looks like we've hit – those of you who got in your ideas early, it looks like your peers are telling you that you hit the right notes for them too. So thank you.

Again, if you're holding onto a challenge that you don't see on this list, don't hesitate to put it in there. But I do also want to wrap us up and be respectful of your time here on a Friday. So why don't we move into the last couple of moments of our time together.

I didn't see any new questions come in, but I do see a couple people typing. So if we get a question in here, we will endeavor to answer it.

If you go here to slide 34 and do a quick recap of what we did here today, hopefully you had a chance to hear from Michelle about some of the why and strategy behind the design of SAE 2020 and what ETA is hoping to achieve with these grants.

Hopefully if you're new to TA you feel a little more grounded in how our technical assistance was designed and how you access it. And if you've been with it for – us for a while, thank you for sharing how you use TA. And I hope you heard a few things from your peers that were helpful to you.

And then we were able to have a good discussion of what you're bringing into this work and the challenges that you anticipate going forward, so that we can focus our technical assistance to meet those needs.

With that, I think we're all wrapped up for the day. So again, we want to thank you for spending time with us. This is always the highlight of our week to see you all here in this space. We wish you a very happy weekend and Jon is going to ask you to hang on. So I'll pass you over to Jon.

(END)