**WorkforceGPS**

**Transcript of Webinar**

**Learning & Leading: Service Delivery to Job Seekers in a Virtual Environment**

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GRACE MCCALL: Hello, everyone and welcome to today's event. My name is Grace McCall and I'm here if you need anything technically speaking. Hopefully you won't need to hear too much from me, but if you do have any technical questions, please let us know in the chat window on the bottom left-hand side screen.

You can also use that chat window to introduce yourself now. So please go ahead and type into that chat your name, your organization and how many are joining you today if you're attending in a group. You may also use that chat box to ask our presenters any questions you have during the webinar.

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Additionally, to continue producing quality content, we'll be sending out an anonymous survey concerning today's events. Please take a few minutes to fill that out once the webinar concludes. We'll also be sending out a follow-up survey in a few weeks' time. Again, if you haven't already done so or if you're just joining us, please introduce yourself in that welcome chat, we'll have that chat up for your questions or comments at any time.

And welcome to "Learning & Leading: Service Delivery to Job Seekers in a Virtual Environment." So without further ado, I'd like to turn things over to Eric Nelson, director, Office of Special Initiatives and Demonstrations, Boston/Philadelphia Regional Offices, Employment and Training Administration, United States Department of Labor. Take it away, Eric.

ERIC NELSON: Good morning – afternoon, everyone, I apologize. As Grace indicated, my name is Eric Nelson. I'm excited to be with you this afternoon for such an interesting and much needed topic for today. So at this time, I have the pleasure of presenting our – the ETA Assistant Secretary John Pallasch to share remarks. Take it away, John. Thank you.

JOHN PALLASCH: Thanks, Eric and thanks to the whole Philadelphia team for putting this together. I promise to be brief, but I did ask Leo Miller, who's the RA up in Philadelphia, if I could just say a few things. Given kind of the current state of play with the economy and the country and where things are going I certainly think that today's topic is hugely important.

The virus continues to be the virus and continues to not cooperate, but there's certainly positive news on the medical side of things with the vaccines and that's why I think that this conversation today is so important, because with help now coming, I want to make sure that the workforce community is turning an eye towards the future and turning and eye towards helping put Americans back to work.

Obviously, over the last nine months we've been in various stages of lockdowns and we all know about the businesses closing and businesses laying off workers, but now with vaccines coming, now with the economy struggling but coming back showing real progress, we know the unemployment rate's down below 7 percent and even more positive than that it's below 6 percent in half the states.

So despite the challenges of COVID, despite the challenges of the shutdowns and the lockdowns and our inability to be together and to be in the office and to be at the movie theaters and all the places that we want to be, we're starting to see positive trends and we know from our friends at the Bureau of Labor Statistics that there's about 6.7 million job openings right now in the country.

So now is the time for us as a workforce community to, again, shift focus away from kind of the UI side of things and providing folks much-needed benefits and allowing ourself to think about how we begin serving those employees in a virtual environment and helping them get back to work.

So that's why I think today's conversation is so important, because there's so much work to do now on the workforce side of things. We'll let the medical experts deal with the vaccine and the distribution of the vaccine, but it's our job now to reengage with those customers virtually or any way that's possible, any way that's safe and help them either reskill or return to the workforce.

So that's really just what I wanted to say. I wanted to say I'm excited about this, I'm excited about folks going back to work. That's the core mission here at ETA is making sure that folks have family-sustaining wages and a career path and a career progression and that's the topic of conversation today is how do we do that in a virtual environment.

Yes, it's challenging. We have tried, here at the national level, to give you as much flexibility as we possibly can, including resources to provide those virtual services. So we'll be curious to hear kind of your feedback and what else it is we could do on our end to make that service delivery even more efficient, but just thank you all for the commitment and the work over the last 10 months as we've struggled with this virus, but now –

Like I said, now there are rays of hope, there are positive things happening and the next positive thing is going to be the workforce community rallying and helping put America back to work. So with that, I will turn it back over to Eric and just say thank you for the time, I appreciate it.

MR. NELSON: Well, John, thank you very, very much for taking the time to share your – (inaudible) – what you accomplished. We really appreciate you taking the time. We know you are very busy and it means a lot to me to take some time to share your thoughts this afternoon.

So with that, we are going – I want to share with you what to expect today. So just quickly we just heard opening remarks from Assistant Secretary Pallasch. At this time, I want to introduce our presenters and there are a couple of poll questions that we have. We want to get information from those of you in the audience.

So we have the pleasure of a group of panelist presenters, experts and – (inaudible) – presenters coming from various aspects of our workforce system.

We have Michele Martin who is the senior associate at the Heldrich Center for Workforce Development at Rutgers University, we have Laurie McKnight who is the director for Area 14 Workforce Development Board in Ohio and then we have Lynn Strickland who is the executive director of Aerospace Joint Apprenticeship Committee, or AJAC as she likes to call it, who is also an Apprenticeship Closing the Skills Gap grantee and we're going to hear from them.

We're going to hear the perspective that they bring, they will share examples of promising practices that they have implemented – (inaudible) – deliver services to their respective customers to virtual platforms and virtual modalities. So – but we'd like to get to a little bit and learn something about those of you in our audience.

So we have a couple of poll questions we'd like for you to answer. They're not long, they're short. So on the first one we have, we'd like for you to tell us about yourself. Indicate from which aspect and component of our public workforce system that you come and let's get a sense of who we have onboard with us.

These guys are active responding to the poll question. We – so far it looks like we have representatives from the state workforce agency or state boards leading the number right now and we have kind of neck and neck with local workforce agencies and local workforce board and One-Stop or American Job Center staff.

And then we have individuals from other aspects of the system or other organizations. So a nice number of individuals. We know we have over 500 attendees in the webinar right now. So that is certainly a reflection of the importance of this topic.

So this is what we're seeing, mostly state workforce agency or board staff or representatives, again, followed by local workforce board staff or organizations and then we have, third, organizations from our American Job Centers followed by other organizations, then discretionary grantees.

So thank you for responding to that poll question. And so we now have another poll question that we'd like to ask you – have you complete that is a question where we'd like for you to share your – the way you've adapted to a virtual service delivery way of providing the various services of your organization.

So indicate that you've adapted very well, you were surprised by how well you adapted, you feel like you've adjusted pretty well or you have adapted in a skill somewhat well but have faced some challenges and then the fourth option is that we've struggled quite a bit with adapting and really still trying to figure it out.

So if you would start entering – let's see what we've got – what we have here when people start responding, that would be awesome. We have most of you indicated that you've responded pretty well, a lesser number feel that you've done a really good job, not too many of you who want to make that claim and we have come in at third where folks have indicated that you adapted somewhat but have faced some challenges.

But what I'm encouraged by is that not many of you have indicated that you have struggled quite a bit. So that's encouraging that most folks have – most of you have indicated you feel that you've done a pretty good job adapting and/or you adapted somewhat but there's been some challenges and then there are some of you who believe that you've adapted very well.

So I'm going to give it another couple – another minute for those who haven't responded yet to see if the numbers change at all or the percentages. I imagine the numbers will change, the percentages may not. So yes, it seems the percentages – the high percentages really haven't, by category, changed.

You feel like you've adjusted pretty well is the most prominent response followed by, in terms of percentages, adapting with some challenges and then third, very well, that you were actually surprised how quickly you were able to adapt, but still the numbers are the lowest for struggling quite a bit.

So that's encouraging to hear. Great. So hopefully what you learn from the presenters today will result in getting information that will allow those numbers for adapting somewhat and pretty well to increase. Let's move on to the next poll question that we have.

And so the next poll question, if we could go to poll question three. Let's end this poll. So we'll come back to the third poll question, which really was about the modality of the virtual service – (inaudible). So we're going to kick off the presentation with Michele from the Heldrich Center for Workforce Development.

She will share perspectives of initial trends that have been seen throughout the system as well as some specific examples of promising practices that her organization has engaged in and has implemented. So with that, I'm going to hand it over to Michele.

MICHELE MARTIN: All right. Great. Thank you. Let me – thank you, Eric. This is Michele Martin and I am with the John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development at Rutgers University where we conduct extensive research into – I'm sorry, there's a poll that's popping up as I'm trying to talk.

MR. NELSON: Yeah. I think –

MS. MARTIN: Do you want to get rid of that poll?

MR. NELSON: Yes. I'm trying to get rid of it now. If our friends at Maher can remove that poll. So I'll advance it to your slide. It's as if the poll insists on – (inaudible). So some of you have actually completed that poll and it indicated that most have used videoconferencing as a way to – (inaudible) – virtual services. So now we are with you, Michele – (inaudible).

MS. MARTIN: All right. So I'm trying to get the web cam going, the poll is still there. So back to the Heldrich Center for Workforce Development at Rutgers University where we conduct extensive research in the field of workforce development. We also have the opportunity to do some applied research where I'm able – we're able to try out different ways of providing virtual services that I'm going to share in today's presentation.

When COVID hit in March 2019, what we started to wonder was how was the public workforce system operating. And so we created – we put a survey out into the field where we looked at what we called the Suddenly Virtual experience. With these links, you would – the link here, you would actually get access to all of the research that we did.

What we found in talking to the workforce agencies in multiple states, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, we heard from Virginia and Massachusetts as well, was in these initial findings, there was minimal guidance that areas were receiving from the states about how to provide virtual services primarily because states were overwhelmed with responding to the unemployment claims.

We also found that most areas were seeing the situation as temporary. I think that all of us back in March were hoping that it was a more temporary situation and that we would be returning to providing physical services relatively quickly. We also saw that there was some use of social media.

Many organizations had Facebook pages, Twitter accounts, YouTube and so forth to provide services and the primary focus was basically on how do we shift what we've been doing in person into an online environment and in particular, how do we do things like provide case management, certify eligibility, how can I get them presentations online that people can look at and how do our staff work from home in providing these services?

Not only did job seekers have challenges with accessing technology at that point, we also heard that staff were having issues in terms of using technology and having access to technology that then limited their ability to provide services to job seekers. We did survey a follow-up eight weeks later and took a look at what was going on in the workforce system at that point.

What we saw was that there were many organizations that had put up a bunch of COVID-specific resources. They were starting to get training online, they figured out how to do documentation in virtual ways and they had also – we saw that there were many organizations providing staff training, in particular, on things related to using technology in order to provide virtual services.

The main focus – the main priority for areas at that time was on how to continue digitizing the services that they were providing. There was also attention being turned to reopening centers and having people be able to come into their physical locations.

Essentially, what we saw at that time was a world that was really thinking about how do we become suddenly virtual, how do we take what we've been doing but do it online and also having teams working from home? What we're now thinking about is what do we need to do to be strategically virtual?

How do we move from this environment where things were a certain way and we just need to adapt as quickly as possible into having a more strategic use of virtual services, including really focusing on what is happening right now as opposed to what – the environment we were operating in previously.

Thinking about what – given the impact of COVID and our current economic conditions where do we need to really be putting the focus in terms of services, how do we provide those services and also how do we leverage the possibilities of virtual, because virtual services opens up a lot of different opportunities that we could start to take advantage of.

There are a couple of things that I think are sort of elephants in the room, if you will, around really thinking about how our situation is much different than it was a year ago. Certainly, there is continued economic disruption and confusion. We know certainly that some jobs are starting to come back, but we know from the last recession that recovery took a while and it's likely to be the case this time.

We also know that there is physical distancing and even with the vaccine that is some time off in the future and there's going to be a need to really think about how are we providing services virtually. We also know that we're not going to be able to train our way out of this.

Training is definitely part of it, but we are also really going to have to look at how are we providing ongoing supports to job seekers and in that – in thinking about that, we are also very – at the Heldrich Center, very aware of the ways that unemployment can scar both individuals and communities.

There's a huge financial tool certainly, but also a huge emotional and mental toll that takes place as we're dealing with unemployment. So I want to first talk about sort of what we should be doing as we think about being strategically virtual and then I'm going to talk about some examples of how we can deliver those services virtually.

We know that unemployment is a disaster financially, mentally, emotionally, psychologically for job seekers and it's even more of a disaster in COVID partly because so many of the things that are available to people to provide support to them are no longer available, they're socially isolated and so forth.

We also know that folks are having to deal with a lot of other issues that they wouldn't otherwise have to deal with, which is children doing homeschooling, lack of childcare and so forth. So this is just a whole other environment that we've never dealt with before.

We also know that there are certain things that support people in an effective job search and that we want to be thinking about how are we providing supports for all of these different components as we're working with job seekers.

We all are aware of the fact that job seekers need a resume, they need to be able to do online applications, they need to be prepared to interview and so forth, but we also need to be supporting people in terms of that emotional rollercoaster of motivation that happens, how intense is their job search, how motivated are they feeling, how supported are they feeling as well.

One of the things that we know is that the longer that unemployment goes on the more confused job seekers get about what they should be doing, the more isolated they are feeling and so forth. And so we've really been trying to look at what are the best practices we need to be using to support job seekers.

We know, for example, that stress causes cognitive overload and makes it harder for people to pay attention, to follow instructions and so forth. And so we have to think about how do we use technology to help manage people – help people manage that cognitive overload.

We also want to look at how we can disrupt the haphazard job search strategies that people tend to use. They have a lot of bad habits that they go into when they first start job searching and we have to disrupt those bad habits. How do we help people on an ongoing basis address the emotional and cognitive aspects of the search?

Because again, it is more than just having a resume and sending in your resume. How do we help people be able to refine their search as they're going along as they get feedback on whether or not they're competitive in the market? What do they do with that information? How do they practice new skills and how do they manage rejection in the process?

We also really want to look at how do we reduce isolation and also the sense of shame that many job seekers feel about being unemployed? And finally, we're really looking at how do we utilize peer support? One of the things that we know from the research is that people actually do better with peer support and having access to peers on an ongoing basis.

So let's talk about how we can provide these kinds of services then in a virtual environment. I, for the last five years, have been involved with a project at the Heldrich Center called the New Start Career Network where we had been providing primarily virtual services to older job seekers over the age of 45 who have been out of work for 6 or more months.

We've had lots of experience in working with virtual services. And so a few of the options that I'm going to share with you now come from our experiences in working with New Start. One of those things that we have done is we used email campaigns. We create schedules of multiple emails that are triggered when people sign up for certain things.

So when they signed up to join our website or when they – we are doing job fair prep, essentially, those email campaigns give them a series of emails that focus each day on some specific aspects. So for example, when we've done job fair prep through emails, what we do is give them a weeklong series of emails.

Each day there's a specific activity that they can engage in to prepare them for the job fair. We consistently have gotten positive feedback that that's helped people. They liked having daily activities that they could focus on and once we set it up in the system it's automated and it's not something we have to worry about.

So thinking about ways that you can use email campaigns to get chunked targeted information to job seekers is a way to provide virtual services in a lot of different areas. Another thing that we do is we have an online orientation to our services.

Our goal is not to do an information dump with all of the things that we offer, instead we use that as a place to show what should your job search look like, what are the bad habits that you may be engaging in and the better habits that you should be engaging in and how can you use our resources to help you accomplish those goals and have that more effective job search?

We also use it as an open opportunity for people to bring up challenges or roadblocks or other kinds of things that they're experiencing and to be able to talk to other job seekers. We use Zoom for all of our online live events and for recording our webinars and so forth. And so our folks have an opportunity to participate in that way.

Another thing that we've done is we have recorded – we have over 100 webinars that we have done on all aspects of job search.

Those are a library that's available to any of the New Start members when they need them, but we also have put them together into what we call roadmaps, which are basically thematically connected webinars that are on specific topics and we have a description of what the webinar involves and we're able to share that with our members.

We also can send those if they have specific questions about how to do things. One of the things that we can do is send those webinars to them since they're able to look at that information and follow it themselves. When COVID hit, we then started having to really look at how can we do some pivots?

We already had these experiences in working with a particular population providing virtual services. Since we had the experience in providing virtual services we really wanted to look at how can we expand what we're offering, how can we help more New Jersey residents in a virtual environment?

We also wanted to look at how can we engage people earlier in the process? We're very concerned about people becoming discouraged quickly, particularly in this environment.

We want to engage with them, have them feel like they're part of a community and connected to other people, to information, to resources on an ongoing basis so that they – we don't end up having a lot of the issues that come up when people have been out of work for six or more months.

We also really wanted to think about, particularly again in light of COVID, how can we create a sense of place and community for people. They're feeling very isolated, they've feeling very alone, they feel, frankly, depressed and we wanted to find a way that we could connect people not only to us and to the resources that we offer, but also to one another so that they felt less alone.

And so what we came up with was this idea for the New Jersey Career Network Job Seeker Community. It's an online community, sort of a virtual career center, if you will. We're using a tool called Mighty Networks, which is a relatively inexpensive white label social network.

Basically, it has a ton of functionalities that I'll talk about in a second that lets us really create this community feel for people and – I don't know why slides keep going back. And one of the big things that we liked about it is that it's also optimized for mobile. It has apps that you can use both on Android and IOS – on iPhones and tablets.

So that gave people multiple ways to be able to participate in the community even if they didn't necessarily have a computer at home. Our goals really are to communicate to people, first of all, that we care about them and their situation. What we're seeing repeatedly is that people are just feeling so discouraged and no one cares about them.

Their experience with UI only reinforced that for many people, unfortunately. We're also trying to look at ways that we can give people an opportunity to connect with others who are in the same circumstances, really provide a safe space for them to ask questions, be able to practice their job search skills, be able to get peer support and not feel so alone in this process.

So we start with being – creating an environment that is extremely welcoming. When people join the community, we have staff that reaches out to them. There's a direct messaging feature and they reach out and welcome every single person who joins. They point them to key resources and let them know that there's a person that they can reach out to if they need help.

We also run what we call meet and greet sessions on a weekly basis. These are more informal meetings where folks can sign on, they can come in, they can meet other people. Those are conducted through Zoom. We also will give them a tour of the online community, answer any questions that they have and so forth.

If someone has been off of this site for two or more weeks, we also have started a direct message campaign just to check in with them and see if everything's okay, do they need anything and we've found that has resulted in a 20 percent return for those people who haven't been on for a while.

We're looking at actually creating welcome teams that include members of the job seeker community. That's something that we're looking at for the future. We also have put in community guidelines. We wanted to create a particular kind of environment. And so we put in positive community guidelines of the ways that we want people to participate and behave.

We're not rules people as much as saying let's talk about the positive behaviors and by doing that, we're communicating sort of a culture of support and help and kindness and compassion and since we've put the community up in September we have found that that has consistently been the case and we've had no issues around that.

Another part of the community that we're able to do through Mighty Networks is have topics. We're able to organize information within the community so that there are specific topic areas, for example, job search tools. Within each of those topics, we are able to do daily posts that share information either that we've created or more often links to outside resources that people can use to help them in their search.

A key feature of the community is that we have been running ongoing events. We have daily sharing support sessions that are facilitated by volunteers. This is a place that people can sign on to a Zoom meeting. The agenda is based on what are the concerns and issues of the job seekers, what – where are they having challenges or problems and they can troubleshoot, get support from other folks.

We're also providing weekly wellbeing events. We have a volunteer coach in our community who does things with yoga and meditation and has been interviewing wellbeing experts, because we're very much paying attention to that emotional and mental wellbeing.

We also use it for webinars on various job search-related topics. We've been running career clarity conversations to help people clarify what their next steps are and so forth, basically, any kind of event we want we can put in here and people just RSVP to the event, yes or no, they're coming and then they can click on the link to join the Zoom meeting.

We also are able to create smaller communities within the larger community. We call these circles, but basically, they are more private areas where people can have conversations related to specific topics. We also have the volunteer facilitators for the share and support sessions.

They each have a circle that goes with their event so that people can connected when they are in between the meetings that they're having, they can also share resources and so forth. So this becomes another way for people to really communicate.

This is also where the coaches of those share and support sessions can share things like the chat messages, we have people chat with each other during the Zoom meetings and then we can save the chat and post the chat in the circles. Often we find that job seekers are giving each other links to other job potentials or resources that they've found.

And so that's a way for us to share that information and people can access it. With Mighty Networks, we also have the ability to create online courses. That's something that we're going to launch coming up in 2021. We're calling them learning labs, but basically, we're able to do either live courses or we can do tutorials, we can have video, we can have audio, we can do whatever we want.

And so it includes sort of this course option that we think is a really great opportunity as well to be able to provide ongoing workshops for people. To help manage sort of that cognitive overload and so much information coming into people, we send out a daily post that says what's happening today.

It lists all the events that are happening today, it lists events that are coming up tomorrow and then we give everyone a daily action, something that they should do to support them in their search. We also do a weekly roundup post that sort of summarizes everything that's been going on in the community.

It also highlights new people that have joined and invites others to reach out to them and just welcome them into the community as well. We have found that people are finding work and that they're coming back and telling us about when they've been finding their work. We're also getting incredibly positive comments.

For example, I think of it as a safety net in case I fall down as I'm trying to create these new habits, this is a guiding light as I try to establish daily routines and schedules, I look forward to logging on every morning, see what's happening. What we're really seeing is that people are seeing it as a place to go.

It gives them structure, it gives them a sense of purpose, they know that they can start their days, end their days with us. We've also found that there are reduced requests for individual support. So with the New Start Career Network, we had offered individual coaching.

We're actually finding that we're getting less – fewer requests for that, because people are getting the group support and feeling more supported there. This also means that the resources that we're offering are available to people 24/7, our center is never closed in the sense that all of the information and resources we have are posted in the community and we're starting to see that we have emerging job seeker leaders.

We have actually had people who are looking for work are facilitating some lunch and learn sessions with us, we're there sharing skills, talking about different resources that they've found in their search that have been particularly beneficial to them and we've also been looking at training them to participate in the share and support sessions and have them be actual facilitators of the different events.

I'm seeing a question about the demographics. The New Start Career Network, as I mentioned, is for people over the age of 45 that have been out of work 6 or more months. I should say that all of the people who are in the New Start Career Network are able to also access services through this New Jersey Career Network.

The New Start Career Network we have found that it's primarily bachelor's and above in terms of the clientele. We're in the process right now, with the New Jersey Career Network, of doing some outreach through our public library system, the One-Stop system and so forth to bring more job seekers into the community and be able to support them.

I just want to leave everyone then with sort of some questions. I think for all of us, as we think about how are we strategically virtual for the future, I wanted to share some of the practices and some things that we've had opportunities to work with, but I think that these are things that we can use in the system as a whole and I think we have to start asking ourselves some different kinds of questions.

I do think that we want to think about how can we use virtual space so that it mimics the best of physical space and I think we've become very aware in COVID the extent to which we're missing community and connecting to other people in positive ways and I think we want to think about how can we do that in a virtual space.

A website, as we've found, is not necessarily the best way to do that. How can we help – how can we use technology to chunk information, to provide just in time information so that we're not overwhelming people by giving them constant information – (inaudible) – because they really can't handle it, how do we use technology to really create and support relationships with people and relationships on an ongoing basis, not just being transactional with people, which I think sometimes is what can happen, how do we use technology to support more group interventions?

I think there's a lot of one-on-one that we do in the workforce system and what we have consistently found is that people are actually doing better in many ways being in well-facilitated group settings. And then finally, I think we really have to ask ourselves how do we leverage technology across geographic boundaries and how do we create an ecosystem of support so that we are supporting –

Because we all have to realize that there are people in our communities who don't currently come into our One-Stop, physically or otherwise, that they're hurting and how do we provide services to them in an ecosystem of support, but also how do we leverage across geographic boundaries?

There is no reason that every single one of us has to have our own webinar on how to do a resume. That's something that we could curate and share across the system. We could collaborate across the system to be able to create new resources and share those resources, including collaborating with job seekers, because again, what we have found is that people really want to participate, they want to help, they want to support.

How do we leverage that opportunity so that we can share across the system? And that is my presentation. I don't know if there are any other questions.

MR. NELSON: Well, Michele, thank you so much for the information – quite of information you've shared and there was – (inaudible) – appreciate –

MS. MARTIN: Yes. And I do have my email. So I welcome people to reach out.

MR. NELSON: Yeah. There was a question about the email campaign. There was a question where there was interest in getting a little more detail about the email campaign, if you wouldn't mind answering that question.

And then we're going to – based on time towards the end, I've allowed time for additional questions and I didn't say this, but I – forgive me for not saying this, questions you have put them in the chat and we'll make sure we do our best to answer them. Michele.

MS. MARTIN: Yeah. Very quickly with the email campaigns, we use Constant Contact, and one of the things, and I think a lot of places use that, which are able to do in Constant Contact is set up what they call drift campaigns essentially where you set up a series of emails that are going to go out over a period of time.

So we have a welcome series, for example, where once you sign up that triggers the initial welcome period and you get an initial welcome to our program. Two days later you automatically get a second email that says, hey, you should pay attention to this resource that we have available.

Two days after that, have you tried this resource that we have available. And so it's really just something that you can set up in Constant Contact as a series that once the first is triggered then you're going to get an ongoing – you know, several emails after that.

MR. NELSON: Okay. Thank you, again. You have probably all noticed a slight technical delay in some slides. We're at over 1,200 attendees and I believe that might be impacting some of the delays, but quite a bit of information that has been shared thus far by Michele and we're going to segue into hearing the perspective from the local level.

So we're moving now to Laurie from the Area 14 Workforce Development Board in Ohio. So Laurie, handing it off to you.

Laurie McKnight: Great. Thank you, Eric. Good afternoon, everyone. And I appreciate the opportunity to speak today. Let me advance these slides here. So again, my name is Laurie McKnight and I am the director for the Area 14 Workforce Development Board. There are 20 workforce areas in our – in Ohio and we all form what we call the Ohio Workforce Association.

So the American Job Centers that I oversee are in Athens, Meigs and Perry Counties all of which are located in Southern Ohio and part of the Appalachian region. So most of our towns are rural towns. Athens, Ohio is one of the biggest towns with a population of about 24,000 people and of course, home to my alma mater, Ohio University.

Rural communities have additional challenges and considerations when moving to a mainly virtual platform, such as digital literacy, broadband connectivity and access to computers as many of our households are below poverty level. So we had a lot of thinking around that we needed to do.

Our American Job Centers, which we call Ohio Means Jobs Centers, just letting you know that off the bat in case I say something wrong, have done a great job pivoting the services that we provide to our participants. One of the first things the centers did was move their paper WIOA applications online.

So those are all online and accessed through their website. Participants can go online, fill out the application and can submit it via email or they can also – we also allow for printing it off, dropping it off in a drop box that's located outside of all of our three facilities or if they schedule an appointment, they can bring it in and have it reviewed right there on the spot.

If they do choose the drop box or email option, we contact them by phone afterwards to schedule an interview which can take place really however the participant feels the most comfortable. Participants can have any number of services available to them through the teams platform, over the phone or through a scheduled appointment in the center, including resume assistance and mock interviews as well as career services.

Those are all things that we have done and moved to the teams platform or through phone contacts. So our veterans are offered the VFQ via email and those can be returned in the same way and then they're delivered to our DVOP through a scanning system. The DVOP then reaches out to them and contacts them and sets up an interview as well, either on the virtual platform or through the telephone.

All of our centers have done a good job really kind of remaining open with scheduled appointments if they don't have access to or know how to use the computer, however, we can refer people and have partnered with our local library and they have a person actually who works in the library that can even help the most challenged person on digital literacies, which is a very significant barrier for some of our people.

All our centers have case managers that are equipped to make sure participants can get applications for additional JFS services if needed, such as SNAP, cash and medical as well as transportation and childcare. This really helps our participants get everything they need all at once.

These applications and appointments were also moved to the online format and interviews are mainly done over the phone. One of the first things the centers did was purchase hot spots for their parking lots so that participants without Wi-Fi at their home could come and use the parking lot day or night to access applications and/or do online schooling.

Those were purchased with TANF funds. We also work with the areas library to let the participants know that hot spots were available in the parking lots there making access even easier and closer to home for all of our participants. We are now providing laptops and Wi-If to WIOA participants who are enrolled in training so that they can access online classes and training.

These are provided under WIOA supportive services. Our Aspire program has moved many of their classroom features online and can provide online distance education, tutoring and link participants to free online certifications, such as OSHA 10 and fields that include healthcare, culinary, manufacturing and more which was funded out of IET supplemental grant funds from the Ohio Department of Higher Education.

Classes are being held synchronously and asynchronously depending on the student's availability and the course content. Aspire has established a technology lending program that is free for their students as well. The program lends computers and hot spots to Aspire students that need access to Wi-Fi, reside in residential recovery programs or a part of virtual GED to manufacturing program.

One of our Aspire students recently received the Aspire student of the year college scholarship from the Ohio Association of Adult and Continuing Education. He completed his GED, the Career Bridges Healthcare program and his first college course on his smartphone demonstrating his tenacity and love of learning despite barriers in his life.

He's been nominated to win a national college scholarship through QADI [ph] and fulfill his dreams to go to college for an English degree and become a writer. Our GED students, in a local correctional facility, will be participating in a family writing project this summer.

This project is funded by the Caplan Foundation for Early Childhood. Curriculum will be designed for incarcerated parents for the purpose of parents education for early childhood development of early literacy skills, including writing stories for and with their young children.

Some of that curriculum has been moved to an online learning module. Beginning in January, 2021 Ohio University Aspire program will be partnering with Tri-County Career Center for an adult night program. Integrated education and training supplemental funding from Ohio Department of Higher Education funded this program as well.

Work readiness education and training programs in the fields of childcare, culinary, manufacturing, IT and healthcare will be comprised of blended learning platform, some virtual learning modules and certifications with opportunities for hands-on lab work and on-the-job training.

Additionally, the AJCs and I worked harder with other groups, such as Project RISE so that we could bring virtual presentations an career panels for our youth participants in K-12 schools in our area. For apprenticeship week, we filmed and had students at the career center edit videos for our local apprenticeship councils.

The videos along with information from ApprenticeOhio and a guest appearance from our Lieutenant Governor John Husted were sent to our local school districts for students to watch. The end of the week had a panel of some of our council leaders coming together to answer student questions.

I am working with Project RISE to coordinate monthly career panels for our area high schools so that students are getting ideas on career pathways being delivered to them on a virtual platform. This month's panel coincides with disability awareness month and jobs in those fields as well as for people with disabilities and will feature presenters from Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities and Personnel Plus, which is part of our board of ED.

Another great partner is our state office of workforce development, Ohio Workforce Association and Ohio Workforce Development set up a committee called Operation Restore which I sit on to assist our AJCs by providing information and workarounds as well as have a linkage to the ohiomeansjobs.com website that links participants right to their local OMJ center and provides them with the most up-to-date information on the status of their AJCs, such as hours of operation or how they can access services.

They also work to provide media campaigns that are being used both statewide but that the local AJCs can adapt for use in their counties as well. These will help to direct participants to centers so that we can provide much needed assistance. We also work to provide all the AJCs with an online schedule that participants can use to schedule a virtual phone or in-person appointment with the AJC staff.

Some of our long-term goals at the centers are to work on updating our conference room. Some of these updates will include video conferencing so that employers can conduct virtual interviews with participants as well as participants with training that either their employers feel their current employees need or that employers have identified as a need for potential applicants to have.

Enroll Ohio, not all employers or participants have access to – (inaudible) – Wi-Fi or video capabilities on their computers or laptops. We also hope to use the video equipment for our Aspire classrooms to expand on virtual training as well as to expand our reentry services.

Currently, we offer video interviews with inmates who we know are returning to our community. Prior to their release, they meet with our reentry coordinator to discuss things such as housing and services available at the AJC, including employment and training services.

The prerelease conference is currently only in our comprehensive center, but the hope would be to expand that then to all three centers with the use of the videoconferencing that we're going to add. In addition to that, we hope to provide mobile clinics by having a mobile unit go out to rural areas and provide onsite virtual job fair access or onsite mini job fairs for employers in their parking lots.

The centers hope to purchase larger data hot spots and laptops that participants can use to search for and apply to jobs and complete virtual interviews while our mobile units are onsite. We will also be able to provide resume assistance and interview preparation beforehand while onsite with participants.

Two of our centers are already equipped with the mobile unit, but we are updating those to have the additional Wi-Fi, better computers and printers. Our other AJC will be using a van and getting an outside canopy that will allow these services to be done outside when the weather permits.

We have already done some onsite job fairs, but this will allow us to expand the virtual services for more participants. Many of our changes were funded out of Rapid Response funds that were given to us by our state office of workforce development under the business outreach fund.

Ohio Workforce Association had a discussion with the office of workforce development on what we termed third-year money. This was PY-18 money that needed to be spent by June 30, 2020 or returned to DOL. OWD approached DOL for a waiver on this as we had funds that had not been spent due to really the uncertainty of COVID and participants not coming into the Ohio Means Job Centers.

The areas were allowed then to retain this funding and use it for training services for participants once the COVID situation has started to stabilize a little bit more. This has allowed us also the ability to use other money for expanded, supportive or dislocated services. We will be holding a virtual job fair in February.

This will be free for participants and employers and was funded out of a collaboration with JobsOhio, Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, the Governor's Office of Workforce Transformation, the office of workforce development and our local board. Our hope is then to continue and have additional virtual job fairs in the counties throughout 2021.

I think our largest and most important long-term goal, though, is increased and continued collaboration with all our workforce partners. That includes our state offices, our local economic development and chambers, our local colleges and training centers and of course, our employers.

A lot of the funding that we've received was based on the Ohio Workforce Association having a real discussion about issues and concerns and our American Job Centers with our office of workforce development and to think about the rules and the policies and how we might make them a little easier, like allowing for virtual signatures and virtual interviews to provide verifications as well as funding discussions, like the Rapid Response funds for business outreach and the third-year money.

Our workforce association, office of workforce development were already having monthly meetings. These went virtual very quickly which allowed us to collaborate immediately. Every state has an office of workforce development and each has Rapid Response money set aside with allowable expense being business outreach as well as other funding streams.

So I am grateful that we've had such a good partnership and have been able to utilize these funds. I feel that a silver lining out of this has been that we have been able to bring to the table more partners at a quicker rate as everyone is pulling together.

COVID response is not only thinking outside the box as to what we're delivering to our participants and employers but how we're doing it and what can we do to make it better and who should be at the table to make it easier for all of us to provide services better, more efficiently and effectively.

Finally, in closing, I would like to say not everything has worked out. We have had some great promising practices, such as our online services and training, but there are things that we are trying to figure out or things that have been delayed, like our pre-apprenticeship and most importantly, the glaring issues of lack of broadband in our rural Appalachian counties.

I am grateful that COVID has seemed to put a spotlight on that one and I hope to look forward to letting you guys know that that's a promising practice next year. Seeing that we come with promising practices is probably a big dream for all of us in Appalachia. In closing, I would encourage you to look at all funding streams.

The hope for additional CARES Act funding in 2021 might allow for additional workforce activity.

So make sure you're talking with your office of workforce development, partnering with your JFSs, having discussions with your governor's office or county commissioners on the workforce funds and the CARES Act funds and most importantly, don't be afraid to think outside the box to collaborate and ask the what ifs. Thank you very much.

MR. NELSON: Laurie, you're – somehow we're not hearing you, but thank you so so very much for the information that you have shared. It's quite a wealth of information from the perspective of a local workforce investment area, workforce investment organization. Quite a bit of information has been shared, though, thus far, as I'm sure you will all agree.

I would like to share that we are seeing your questions and we're doing our very best to capture them and we hope to have time towards the end where we could answer a few of them, but at this time, we are going to segue onto Lynn Strickland from AJAC who is going to share the perspective from one of our discretionary grant organizations that manages an Apprenticeship Closing the Skills Gap. Lynn.

Lynn Strickland: All right. So thank you, Eric. And I just wanted to say I'm going to turn on my camera real quick and then I'm going to shut it back off, because unfortunately, I am in one of those areas in an unincorporated part of a county that does not have stable broadband.

So I want to make sure that I'm able to stay connected. So I'm providing everybody proof of life, I am a real person, I am here. And so let's go ahead and get started.

My name is Lynn Strickland and I am the executive director of the Aerospace Joint Apprenticeship Committee and what I would like to do during the presentation is just to give you a little bit of background about who we are, the program that we offer and how that relates to job seekers and the adjustments that we've been able to make during COVID.

So spoiler alert, I don't think that there's going to be anything really profound in here, we're a small nonprofit. So we like to try to keep things simple, but it's been very informative for me to listen to the presentations from Laurie and Michele, because it gives me a perspective of what's going on at different agencies and then how we connect.

So the service that we provide to job seekers is training and we do that with multiple partners. So just to be able to give a little bit of background on AJAC and who we are, we were established in 2008, we are a statewide nonprofit. We're set up as an apprenticeship service provider, which is often called an intermediary.

So in 2008, it was going into the recession, these are the things that we've been talking about for 10 to 15 years that were on the minds of those in the workforce development system in Washington State.

So our aerospace industry still does have a big footprint, but at the time, it was a $76 billion economic driver in the state and while we have 34 fantastic community and technical colleges and other training communities one of the things – one of the workforce development tools that was not being utilized was the apprenticeship model.

So both union and nonunion employers got together and requested from our state legislatures the ability to be able to start a nonprofit to be able to provide apprenticeship service providers – services to be able to address the retiring workforce, the increased globalization which is increasing demand from the supply chain and rapidly changing technologies contributing to the skills gap.

So why we have aerospace in our name, because that was the focused industry during 2008. Over the last 12 years, we've actually expanded out and kind of fall underneath a big umbrella of advanced manufacturing. So we actually have partnerships with employers in aerospace defense, agriculture, now newly, manufacturing, biomedical, the food processing, the manufacturing side, as well as space.

So when we were created, the legislature wanted kind of a 21st Century twist to the traditional apprenticeship program. So we're actually an incumbent worker apprenticeship program, meaning that a prospective apprentice will have to already be employed with an employer that is a signed-on training agent with us.

So it's an incumbent worker, it's a little bit different than traditional where people apply to a program and then they dispatch them out to employers. All of our programs are driven by employer demand by location and occupation.

So there has to be a consortium of demand in an area before we're able to start an apprenticeship program and part of the benefit of this is that there is a lot of small to medium-sized employers in the supply chain here, be it in manufacturing, aerospace or the other industries and sometimes it is a challenge for them to have training available for their individuals because they are a small organization.

So coming together and having kind of like an employer consortium, like AJAC, which pools the resources together, allows those small to medium-sized employers to be able to participate in apprenticeship programs. So we developed our curriculum – our curriculum is developed by the employers with professional curriculum developers that convert that into academic speech.

We hire all of the employers. We have 60-plus employers employed across the state of Washington in a part-time capacity to be able to provide instruction for our courses. We have an intentional partnership with our community and technical colleges. So once the curriculum is developed and converted into academic speech, so to say, we work with our community and technical colleges to have that college credit attached to those classroom courses.

So in the state of Washington, if you're an apprentice and if you're in an apprenticeship training program that has college credit attached, you could receive 50 percent reduced tuition and with programs that are 4 years plus, that can wind up providing access to individuals to a 2-year agreed 50 percent reduced tuition and 0 college debt.

So we cannot do what we do without partnerships. So partnerships are very important to us and we've been – we've had the opportunity, during COVID, to be able to expand out our partnerships with different organizations and agencies. So we do work with our local workforce investment boards that we call workforce development councils.

Here in the state of Washington, we have a Career Connect network whose mission is really to connect K-12 with careers through career awareness, career preparation or career exploration. We work with our community and technical colleges, we work with our school districts and we also work with other state agencies, be they the One-Stops.

So there's a lot of partnership involved in what we're doing to be able to provide our programs. So we really do have four main programs, everything leading up to our apprenticeship programs where we offer 10 apprenticeship occupations.

So we also have our pre-apprenticeship program or our apprenticeship preparation program, which is really the program that we focus on during times like this, because a lot of people are unemployed and they're going back to try to upgrade their skills to be able to get jobs during this economy.

So we have Manufacturing Academy, we have our advanced manufacturing prep, which is basically a one to two-day session where people come in, we explain the career opportunities available in industries and how to get there and we work with people on their resumes, because sometimes people coming in they may or may not need additional training, they might need additional help to be able to update their resume and then we can connect them with employers that we know are hiring.

And then if they need additional training, then we can route them either to our community of technical colleges, but we also route them to our Manufacturing Academy, our pre-apprenticeship program and then we also offer youth apprenticeship program. We've offered that since 2017 and that is just an additional pipeline in the industry.

So the three programs underneath the apprenticeship programs are all pipelines or pathways into industry, first of all, and then into employment and then we work with employers to continue to upskilling people through our apprenticeship program.

So I'll just really quickly highlight some of the programs and then really focus on our pre-apprenticeship program, which is the one that is in the greatest demand right now, because people are coming back for additional training. So our apprenticeship program, we have 486 active apprentices right now, our target is 1,000 and we're hoping that being a grantee of the closing the skills gap will get us a lot closer to that target of 1,000.

Part of the other focus that we have is ensuring that there's diversity within the industry. The industries that we work with are predominantly white male. So we actually use our pipeline programs to be able to infuse diversity into the industries. And so currently, it's always a work in progress.

Currently, you see the numbers with minority and women participation, that women participation, again, is really low. That's about average for a lot of our occupations nationally. So we're definitely focusing in on bringing more women into the advanced manufacturing industry.

So – and with the 298 training agents that we have, really, a majority of them are small to medium-sized, as I alluded to earlier. So this provides opportunities for small mom and pop shops that might have 20 employees or less or maybe even 100 to be able to put in the number of apprentices that they need to be able to train their workforce, especially for those that are retiring.

The enrollment actually has dipped during COVID. There's been some challenges with regards to participants either not having connectivity, not having the appropriate like technology and we're working more and more with community-based organizations and some of our other WDCs to be able to provide those individuals those technologies that they need to participate, but the other thing is that a lot of the individuals that we train to are really – they like the in-person hands-on type of training, because that's how they learn best.

And so we've been working with our apprentices to be able to have orientations to be able to speak with them to be able to connect them to resources so that they feel comfortable taking those online courses. And so again, we talk about industry partners and the different industries that we work with and beyond aerospace.

Quick highlights of our youth apprenticeship program, we have 92 active youth apprentices in our program. So these are full-time high school students that are actually taking college-level courses. They can earn up to 15 college credits and 1 year towards their apprenticeship program if they continue on into our more advanced program.

They have 2,000 hours upon completion, 2,000 of paid on-the-job experience in the apprenticeship format. So these are just some of the numbers. Due to the interest of time, this is also in the PowerPoint presentation, but in the beginning, it was kind of a little bit slower, but the purpose of the youth apprenticeships that the employers came to us and say, hey, we want a bigger connection to K-12.

And so we do have a lot of great career technical education programs in the state of Washington, we have other programs that are also able to try to connect youth directly with industry and this is one of the ways that we're able to do this. And so our advanced manufacturing prep, our AMP program and our MA, Manufacturing Academy program, these are really the programs that in a –

During times like this in the economy, people are moving from industry to industry and sometimes they need additional training. So these are just some of the information about our cohorts. So we do cohorts for adults who are either longtime unemployed or people transitioning from industry to industry.

We also work with our local juvenile rehabilitative administration. So we are providing this training to young men who are currently incarcerated to be able to give them the skills that they need so that when they transition back into the community we're able to connect them with employers, specifically employers that are looking to – that are part of the Second Chance and willing to give these young men a second chance.

And we're also working with more Opportunity Youth students in the state of Washington who, again, especially those who are also credit deficient, to be able to help to get them back on the right track, get them to the level where – the time where they're able to graduate and then they have that direct connection into industry.

And so generally, as I said before, our AMP program, our one to two-day program, we were seeing, prior to COVID, about 250 participants. Many of them were transitioning into our Manufacturing Academy and then on into industry with a job and then going on into apprenticeship.

And so again, the numbers for minority and women are very important to us, because we also want to infuse into industry a diverse pipeline of individuals.

I'm going to come back to this story, because I think it would be a great way to end, but during this pandemic, there's a lot of challenges that we've heard about, a lot of challenges that many others are going through and for us, as a training agency providing the service of training, we did a lot of stuff face to face in person.

So we had about four weeks to flip our apprenticeship classes and our pre-apprenticeship classes and all of our orientations online and it wasn't – it was smoother than we thought it would be, but there were still some other questions that we're asking ourselves as a training organization to be able to continue to provide training during this time in the pandemic.

So how do we reach out, how do we tell people about our program if we're not doing it in the physical form anymore? And so I am not promoting any particular platform here, I'm just letting you guys know what we use.

So in addition to our social media for our organization on our own website, we've – for – we've promoted our programs through platforms like Indeed and we have actually gotten a lot of responses, more so than we did pre-pandemic from individuals responding to us and wanting more information about our pre-apprenticeship program or our job training program than we did before the pandemic.

So that's been one thing that has been good for us, a success for us. We also realized that we also needed to partner more.

While we can use Indeed and different kinds of platforms to reach out to job seekers we realized that we needed to have better connections and more relationships with our One-Stop or our WorkSource, not just the counselors, but also on the business outreach side of that, because we need to understand what employers are looking for to ensure that our training is meeting employer needs during the pandemic, which sometimes changes pre and mid-pandemic as well as understanding what is going to be needed on the back end of that to make sure that we're able to train to that.

So we've also partnered with more community-based organizations. So we are a training organization. We don't do wraparound support services. So as alluded to before, I believe by Michele and both Laurie, individuals going through – as we all go through the pandemic and as they are seeking jobs and stuff, there's a lot of supportive services that individuals need, not just to connect to training, but to be able to stay in training.

And so we've expanded our list of partners with CBOs, we've partnered with more of the business chambers to be able to understand, again, what the employers are needing, but we're also using cross-marketing. So we market with our One-Stop shops or our WDCs and they market our programs.

We also market through business associations and different things and stuff like that. And so we're having more orientations to be able to talk about the programs and we use Zoom for that. So then some of the biggest challenge for us being in the apprenticeship program is how do we convert, how do we make sure that there maintains that high quality of training for individuals who learn best in person and hands-on?

What effect would that be if we converted that to the platform? And so we initially were utilizing a platform called Moodle, which is free. As a nonprofit, we're looking for things that are free but good or cost – you know, is not a whole lot, to be quite honest with you, but to be able to provide that high quality.

So we used that our first quarter for our training for our apprenticeship and then we actually wound up converting over to Canvas, which we do have to pay a little bit for, but that provided a better opportunity for us to be able to show more projects, have more projects and to be able to deliver more – better training for those who learn hands on.

So we continue, also, with our employer engagement. We do that by working with them and our employers are very open about wanting to do virtual tours or we will have our marketing team come in there and we will broadcast from an employer side and have a Zoom platform where interested individuals that want to take the virtual tour are able to be able to do that.

You know, one of the other challenges is that now we were on track and we were doing really good, then the pandemic hit. So how are we going to meet these grant deliverables? And I think that that is a work in progress and we have to continue to be creative about services and partnerships to be able to continue to work and assist people.

And we also – in the state of Washington, I don't know if you guys heard, but we have some things going on with one of our big OEM tiers. So in addition to the pandemic, there was challenges in the aerospace industry. And so it was just a lot of things that hit at the same time.

So – but we are of the mind that when there is challenges, there is also opportunities. So how can we look at the opportunities that are available? And one of the things that I talked about is that we value partnerships.

And so we had to cast our net a lot further and again, hearing what Laurie and Michele had talked about those are resources, actually, that I'm interested in and I'm going to contact our local One-Stop shops and have some other conversations to be able to see how we can partner with them to be able to get more information and resources out to individuals who are job seekers, whether it's a part of our program or not.

And so some of the other opportunities that we've seen is that we've actually had more people participating in our programs, specifically our pre-apprenticeship programs for job seekers online, and historically there was an issue with barriers, so transportation and childcare, but with job seekers being able to take the course online while their children are there, there's not that transportation and that childcare issue.

And to talk about what Michele was talking about a little bit earlier, she is right in that individuals – everybody's freaked out about this, right, and that includes individuals who are pursuing forward and continuing in training at the same time.

And so in some of our pre-apprenticeship classes, we set up a breakfast time so that the participants can log on ahead of the training and just talk with one another about some of the challenges and there is that peer-to-peer relationship that is – that kind of peer-to-peer counseling and also we bring in individuals from CBOs that have wraparound support services to be able to provide for them, because we all know, even in the midst of a pandemic, while you're in training, there's other things that are going on.

So one of the other things is that we're able to hold – have somebody from the east side as well as somebody from the west side of the state participate in the same training, because we're doing it online. So we actually have the ability to have more people participate be it an online training.

So we've had increased completion rates, which is something that surprised us during this time. Again, we have virtual employer tours and more career fairs and we are – we will probably continue some element of this online even as we phase through the pandemic.

And so one of the things that I would like to end with, Eric, and I know that we're short on time, is that Turdie Dole, the individual that I talked about, she actually was working in the hospitality and restaurant industry prior to the pandemic. The pandemic hit and she was out of work.

She had a friend that was doing manufacturing. She wanted to get in and work for Boeing and she was able to come in through our Manufacturing Academy. She is a mother of four and she completed that. She was able to do a virtual job fair and she is now employed in the advanced manufacturing industry and is loving her job.

So at any rate, I know that we're short on time. So I will kick it back over to Eric at this time.

MR. NELSON: Well, Lynn, thank you so much, also, for such a great presentation and quite a wealth of information.

I imagine that any one of our presentations could've taken the hour to talk about the approaches that they have used, the successes, the challenges, but we wanted to be able to give you a diverse perspective throughout the workforce system from the – at the state level broader, local level and also for a specific program on the discretionary grant side.

So join me in just thanking our presenters. I really appreciate – we appreciate all that you've done and I say we, because I'm part of a team that consists of three individuals that have pulled together this webinar, Robin Fernkas, Jason Hudson and Randy Painter are all my partners in crime in putting together this webinar.

So I thank them for all that they've done to make this go over what we believe as well. Quite a bit of information, we have questions. One of the key themes we certainly have heard has been partnership, partnership, partnership, making it clear that you can't do it by yourself and I'm sure all of you on this call know that.

And it was interesting to hear all the different approaches from acknowledging the emotional pull that this whole situation has had on individuals and providing support for that to the various email campaigns, various virtual job fairs, just so many good things that were shared today.

The slide presentation is available. It does include contact information for the presenters. I encourage you to reach out to the presenters individually with specific questions. I do – would like to share that there are some resources that are included in the slide deck as well from ETA.

It reflects the broader group that has been working to come up with resources, the Pathway to Recovery Community of Practice, there's a link to information that's available there and then also we have a new training and employment notice that's recovery related and we encourage you to access the link on this website on the slides to access the TEN.

Also, upcoming in the future we'll be – there'll be a webinar on NDWG, National Dislocated Worker Grant recruitment and podcasts in the future focused on what states are doing for contact tracing and excellent and employer services. And then there's also the Workforce Information Technology Support group.

There's a link there as well. And if you have questions, there is a mailbox, dol.wioa@dol.gov. So we are exactly on the hour at 3:30; it's quitting time. And so if you have questions, we will be – (inaudible) – a couple minutes where you can place those questions and some of the presenters will be looking at questions and we'll make some effort to try to get information back to you.

So with that, I thank you, again, Michele, Laurie and Lynn. Thank you very much and I hope that all of you who have attended have benefited and received something with value from this webinar. Thank you and have a great afternoon. Back to you, Grace.

MS. MCCALL: All right. I'd also like to thank all the participants and presenters for today's webinar and to please stay logged into the room for just a minute longer to provide us with some feedback or any last-minute questions, please do so. You'll see a feedback window where you can let us know what you thought of today's webinar.

Please take a second now to share your thoughts, let us know what you liked or what we can improve upon. There's also an additional topics window where you can let us know what you'd like to hear about in future webinars. A recording of today's webinar as well as a transcript will be made available on WorkforceGPS in a few business days.

Also, to better connect with your WorkforceGPS colleagues, please take a few minutes and sign up for the member directory on WorkforceGPS. That link is located at the top of the feedback window. Thank you to everybody for joining us and with that, have a wonderful day.

(END)