**WorkforceGPS**

**Transcript of Webinar**

**Work-Based Learning State Best Practices**

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GRACE MCCALL: And welcome to "Work-Based Learning." So without further ado, I'd like to turn things over to our moderator for today, Amanda Poirier, federal project officer, region 1 and 2, ETA. Take it away, Amanda.

AMANDA POIRIER: Thanks, Grace. So hello, everyone. My name is Amanda Poirier, and I work in Region 1 and 2, also known as the Northeast region, as a special project office in ETA. I am the regional Trade Adjustment Assistance, also known as TAA, coordinator in the Northeast region, and I'm excited to be today's moderator for the work-based learning webinar that you're in right now.

As a quick caveat for today's session, we recognize that the audience is large and diverse and that, although this webinar is hosted by the Office of Trade Adjustment Assistance, OTAA, it is intended to ultimately share best practices around work-based learning that will benefit the TAA customer.

There are several best practices that are outside of the TAA program that are being shared today that we believe everyone can learn from, based on the presenters' experiences in developing partnerships with critical stakeholders and the necessary infrastructure around work-based learning models that work.

Also, today, we have a closed chat, meaning that you can ask questions in a chat, and we will address them in the chat either directly to you or to the wider group. If a question comes up frequently enough that I will raise it to the group so that everyone has the benefit of hearing the answer.

So please ask your questions throughout the webinar, and we will work to address them throughout and at the end. If we don't, we are planning a panel conversation with the same group of presenters, and that will take place on April 6 so that we can work to address questions that we did not have the opportunity to answer today.

So for this webinar, we're going to dig into several best practices around work-based learning. But before we do, I'm going to review some work-based learning opportunities available under the TAA final rule, as well as some previous technical assistance provided by OTAA on work-based learning.

So what are we talking about when we talk about work-based learning in the TAA world? There are four options for work-based learning under the TAA final rule. First, there is apprenticeship, which can be registered or other non-registered apprenticeship programs, which combines on-the-job training and on-the-job learning and leads to a post-secondary credential.

There is also on-the-job training, which is a work-based training provided under a contract with an employer to an adversely affected worker who is employed by the employer. An OJT must lead to suitable employment, which is defined in the TAA final rule.

The third type of work-based learning training is customized training, which is designed to meet the requirements of an employer or employers. It's a training provided by the employer. There is a commitment to hire upon training completion, and the employer pays 50 percent of the training cost. Quick plug if you are doing this, and please let us know. Feel free to enter into the chat. The data suggests that it's not happening, perhaps, but perhaps it is and has and we'd like to talk about it more. So please let us know.

The final option is a combination of training and may contain any or all types of training, work-based or not, that is documented in individual's employment plan and meets the six conditions for training approval. It's important to note that there is a lot of opportunity to leverage work-based learning, and it's all now codified in the TAA final rule.

Why are we talking about work-based learning? Why is it important? The TAA final rule published in late September defined apprenticeships, which was not previously defined in the regulations for TAA. And, therefore we want to share best practices from states that are making apprenticeships happen for unemployed and underemployed jobseekers and facilitate some R and D for you, opportunities to rip off and duplicate, a phrase that I ripped off from Colorado.

Also, work-based learning is another training tool in the toolkit and allows customers an alternative option to traditional classroom training. When considering the demographic of a TAA population average age 49, 50 years old and a substantial work history, it's not always a viable or preferred option for them to take a pause and take some classes and then go back to work.

So work-based learning is a great fit for those that aren't interested in the traditional classroom training. It's also a win-win, meaning it supports employers and adversely affected workers with direct reemployment. And, finally, it offers an earn and learn option, particularly to those customers that are not eligible for income support under the TAA program.

Here is a list of all the work-based learning technical assistance available on the TAA community through WorkforceGPS and the ETA TAA website. All of these are hyperlinked and will be accessible to you when the slide deck is posted on WorkforceGPS and also are noted at the end of this presentation.

Just to quickly recap, there was a webinar held on the TAA final rule for work-based learning that provided a high-level overview of what can be done in the Trade Adjustment Assistance Program around apprenticeship and work-based learning.

Also, there was a webinar that shared on-the-job training best practices in New Hampshire and Georgia. There was a blog from Missouri on OJT best practice. There's a fact sheet on common myths around OJT and how to overcome them, and a fact sheet that outlines how the TAA program can support apprenticeship.

Please, if you haven't already, check out these webinars, blog, and tools, and leverage them as you engage in expanding work-based learning in your state and your local programing.

Finally, before we move into our state best practice portion of this webinar, I would like to call your attention to the data. We always like to have a data slide in the TAA webinars that we host. And in this case, the data might be considered a little discouraging. For fiscal year 2020, only 1.9 percent of the population received an on-the-job training in the Trade Adjustment Assistance Program, and .1 percent received an apprenticeship. Again, this is national data for the fiscal year.

In fiscal year 2019, the data is similar, meaning that there were a handful of TAA participants engaged in work-based learning, which we take to mean that this is -- there is a lot of opportunity for growth in this training modality. And we would like to hear from you all as to what are the barriers with work-based learning. Why aren't there more, and what can we do to help you overcome those barriers?

So please, throughout this webinar, enter your thoughts into the chat. We want to know so that we can -- we want to know so that we can work together to develop solutions.

And on that note, there are several states that have developed successful on-the-job training and apprenticeship models inside the TAA program and outside of it. I believe there are key takeaways from all of these speakers, no matter where they sit, meaning that the apprenticeship, the partnerships, the operations, and the tools are models that can be replicable, maybe with a few nuanced changes, but essentially taken and leveraged in your state or local to open up a pathway for more trade participants to have the opportunity to engage in a work-based learning opportunity.

Ultimately, our goal is to improve customer choice for participants and help move them into high quality reemployment. And what better way to do so than an employer connection identified from the start of a training?

So next, I'm going to turn it over to the state presenters, we have a great group today. For the OJT portion, we have Jeanna from Missouri Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development, who works with the TAA program coordinator closely on all things work-based learning.

Next, we have Meg and Claudette, TAA specialists from Minnesota. And then we have AJ from the New Hampshire Employment Security, who works with the dislocated worker shop but has a lot of knowledge to impart on the OJT model in New Hampshire that can be replicated for the TAA program. So let me turn it over to Jeanna. Thank you.

JEANNA CALDWELL: Good afternoon. This is Jeanna Caldwell. I'm the apprenticeship and work-based learning manager for the state of Missouri, and I'm with the Missouri Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development.

Today I have the unique opportunity to present to you a technical assistance strategy that hinges on the strength of Missouri's network of champions. Our work-based learning technical assistance is offered for every workforce role.

The technical assistance strategies that I'll share today are developed through Apprenticeship Missouri, our return strong initiative, and they're a product of our Job Centers of the Future here in Missouri.

In Missouri, we've started something post-COVID that was very fruitful, which is our virtual office hours. This is reserved time that we set aside to be able to engage staff on work-based learning. It's planned technical assistance that allows for time for question and answers. So we offer 20 to 30 minutes of planned content and then the chance to interact with staff across the state and answer their questions.

We've also launched regional listening sessions. These sessions have been great for engaging with regional learning cohorts for various work-based learning programs, including incumbent worker training and on-the-job training. This has allowed us the opportunity to provide development tools based on a common need that's identified by actively listening to the region's concerns and needs for the programs.

Other technical assistance strategies include business engagement coaching. It really is key that anyone who is in employer relations be on the same page when you're talking about various programs. So this involves communication coaching that ensures active listening principles for employers is being followed because work-based learning really does have leading it the employer engagement piece to where it is a benefit to employers.

And, granted, there is a participant driven model also involved, but we must make sure that we remember that employers and our participants are also customers. So there's an increased focus on customer relationship management.

We also have cross-department and interagency champions for work-based learning. So this involves a number of different types of teams. The first that I'll talk about is our Missouri Apprenticeship team.

The Missouri Apprenticeship team actually was founded by Higher Education and Workforce Development in partnership with U.S. DOL's Office of Apprenticeship here in Missouri. So with our federal partners, we created a Missouri Apprenticeship team for apprenticeship coordinators, no matter what their employer is. We meet once a month in order to be able to share best practices and be able to share fully -- with full transparency our development efforts for apprenticeship expansion.

We've also developed apprenticeship expansion core champion teams. This actually connects our regional managers within workforce development, our trade team members, our employer relations and engagement specialists, our job center supervisors, and local workforce development boards in order to develop what we need in order to continue the expansion of apprenticeship and work-based learning.

And in Missouri, we are fortunate to have the Office of Apprenticeship and Work-Based Learning Council. This is an interagency council that actually has created champions for apprenticeship and work-based learning to help connect employer talent pipelines. So this includes interagency partners such as the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the Department of Corrections, Department of Economic Development, our rehab services, adult learning, our Department of Social Services, and our Office of Postsecondary Policy.

Alongside workforce development, we're all able to work towards solving those employer talent pipeline needs and helping to create that common language around work-based learning. So, again, it all comes back to the technical assistance that we offer. Whenever we are leading work-based learning, we're ensuring that everyone is speaking the same language.

Employer outreach in Missouri is a partner driven initiative. We all work together. Trade navigators and employer relations and engagement specialists work together to provide our employer outreach. Specifically, whenever we are talking about, for the purposes of this presentation, we have some common tools that we use. And these are the types of tools that you might see developed whenever we have our regional learning cohorts in regards to work-based learning.

So trade navigators and our ERE specialists both use the OJT flier as a tool to promote the OJT program to employers. It points them to the Missouri Job Center, and it also helps to provide the benefits of the Trade Adjustment Assistance Program for eligible workers.

This is our on-the-job training flier. This is available as a resource in your downloads today. Trade navigators will use this as a tool together. And you can see by viewing it that it helps introduce to a business the benefits of on-the-job training and helps to direct them to not just the benefits but then the next steps that they would need to take. It's a fillable form. So we've designed it that it can be customized for any region.

Trade representatives and the job centers provide trade-affected workers with copies of that flier and a letter to give to employers whenever they apply for jobs or whenever they're participating in some interviews. The flier and the letter just help to add an incentive for employers to hire the trade-affected workers. And an example of the letter is right here.

This is an on-the-job training letter. This letter is particularly useful because it lets an employer know that the candidate that has supplied it to them would be eligible for the trade program. And so as a trade-affected worker, this is giving them an extra incentive, letting the employer know about on-the-job training, and it's on our department letterhead. So it is a useful tool to help get the attention of a potential employer for our trade-affected workers. And it's been beneficial, in addition to the flier, for trade-affected workers to be able to use that to help market themselves.

Anything that we can do to help them increase their advocacy.

We got to experience Missouri's network in action. We're going to provide you a good example today of how this works whenever partnership comes together.

Regal Beloit America in West Plains actually had a rolling layoff and then there was a town hall for employers. So whenever Regal Beloit in West Plains was TAA certified, the community leaders of West Plains came together and they organized a town hall. And you think of a town hall. This is a very large opportunity for many people to come together.

It was a rolling layoff. The town hall included presentation by program staff from Trade, WIOA, Apprenticeship Missouri, our local Missouri Job Center staff, training providers, and community leaders, all put there to connect people to the next right step. This also provided a great opportunity to discuss OJT benefits.

After that town hall was over, the employers were able to speak to the panelists to find out more about the services that might be able to help those trade-affected workers. And then later that same day, the panelists and some of the employers participated in a job fair for Regal Beloit workers, and they were able to provide training information, hire workers, and later develop OJT contracts.

So you see, it's Missouri's network of champions in the coming together and the technical assistance that's common to all that helps to create opportunities for our trade-affected workers and all of Missouri's citizens. We believe in technical assistance for every workforce role.

And now, I will hand it over to Minnesota and Meg and Claudette.

MARGARET ODANGA: Thank you, Gina. Good afternoon, everyone. My name is Meg Odanga, and I'm a trade adjustment assistance specialist with the Minnesota State of Employment and Economic Development, which is DEED. I have been with DEED for about two years now.

Before I continue, I will invite my colleague to introduce herself before we go to the next slide. Thank you.

CLAUDETTE PARCHMENT-ROEHRICH: Good afternoon, everyone. My name is Claudette Parchment-Roehrich, I'm a TAA specialist. I've been with TAA for two and a half years. I will turn this over back to Meg. Thank you.

MS. ODANGA: Thank you, Claudette. So some of our best practice in Minnesota, we do have one point of contact, which is general mailbox. So Minnesota TAA is centralized in St. Paul. We do not have TAA staff based in American Job Centers. We rely on dislocated worker customers to provide face-to-face case management to the customers.

TAA staff provide case management by phone and email only. This has enabled communication to be more efficient for TAA, for employees, dislocated worker counselors, and our OJT customers.

We also have incentive programs. So last year we introduced an incentive program to our customers. Minnesota TAA started giving a $50 gas card at informational orientation sessions, and as a result, the number of the attendants increased and more people got the information about the program, hence the increase people enrolling in the OJT program.

We were able to do one quarter of giving the gift card at informational sessions. Unfortunately, we had to stop this when COVID pandemic hit.

Our other best practice is that our materials are translated in other languages. Minnesota TAA recognizes that -- the fact that some of our customers have limited ability to write, to read, or speak English because English is not their primary language. So to eliminate this barrier, TAA has translated some of our materials into four different languages, and those are Spanish, Hmong, Somali, and Swahili. This has contributed to effective empathetic communication between two different cultures.

Minnesota TAA has data for all languages that are being spoken in each and every county. In the future we plan to get the languages that are spoken in the counties where the layoff is and send the materials that are translated to those languages.

Minnesota has high population of immigrants that speaks the languages that we have translated. Brochures also have pictures that reflect the culture of the target language. TAA Minnesota has also employed specialties that speak different languages and also -- this has also helped in breeching communication barrier.

I will stop there and welcome my colleague Claudette to continue with the next slide. Thank you.

MS. PARCHMENT-ROEHRICH: All right. Thank you, Meg. So we also have help from dislocated worker counselors, that whenever the customers come to the American Job Center, the dislocated worker counselor always mention OJT to the customers.

Dislocated worker counselor knows that not everyone wants to actually go back to school. Not everyone wants to go back to school, especially if they have a degree and the school. For example, when Minnesota actually had a large layoff, many of the employees actually, they have a degree and they just needed additional skills. So in this case, OJT is perfect for them to gain employment and also to learn relevant skills needed for a specific job.

Dislocated worker counselor, they also have specialties that go to the job sites and promote OJT to the employers. This is a great way to connect with employers. Dislocated worker counselor, they help potential employers in the surrounding areas who are interested in learning more about OJT and want to learn more about our service. So dislocated worker counselor make sure that the customers -- they have their cover letter from TAA that explains the OJT benefits and process.

So if the customer has an interview with a potential employer out there, he or she can present that letter to the employer. Our letter explains the OJT opportunity, and then it briefly outlines the requirements process. So if the employer has any questions or concerns, he or she can actually reach out to dislocated worker counselor or to TAA for more information. And this turns out to be a win-win situation for all.

That concludes Minnesota best practices. So if you have any questions, please write them in the chat box on the bottom of your screen on the left. So now, I'll pass it on to AH from New Hampshire. Thank you.

AJ LAMBERT: Thank you, Meg and Claudette. I do appreciate it. And welcome to everybody who signed in today.

My name is AJ Lambert. I'm an employment counselor specialist with the state of New Hampshire Department of Employment and Security. I'd like to start first by going over a little bit of the history that New Hampshire has with its OJTs.

We received three OJT NEG grants from 2010 to '14, and then we received the job driven in sector partnership grants from 2014-'18. And the sectors that we basically concentrated on were IT, healthcare, manufacturing, and hospitality. We had enrolled 486 NEG customers in OJTs with over 90 percent entered employment rate. And to date, we've enrolled 1200-plus formula adult and dislocated workers in OJTs from 2010, as I said, to present.

President Obama at one point in time highly praised New Hampshire's OJT program as a national model. We also received a commendation, and we did get a visit from at the time, Vice President Biden and Secretary of Labor Perez. Also, one of our OJT customers was also invited to the White House panel for a long-term unemployed participants.

A little bit more on our history. In 2018, the state was awarded two new grants, the Mature Worker Grant and the National Health Emergency Grant. The Mature Worker Grant is a demonstration grant to service people that are 55-plus and that are living at 125 percent of the poverty level.

Now, we also have a memorandum of understanding with AARP where we use their seven smart strategies, and, basically, what those seven smart strategies are, seven fairly brief educational videos on multiple different parts of reentering employment.

And the National Health Emergency Grant was to combat the opioid crisis here in New Hampshire, which is very -- has been very severe over the past several years. And with that grant, we're able to work with recovery centers themselves, people actually in recovery, and businesses.

The benefits to the participants. It's a great gateway to advance their career, which they -- may not have happened if they didn't have the OJT opportunity presented to them. Customized skill gaps training by the employer to expand their skill base. They learn while they earn their full salary. And a support system of professional employment staff throughout your OJT. We're here for any questions, issues, problems for the participants. Actually, and the employer, for that fact as well.

The benefits to the employer. We find the right candidate. They get to select. They get to hire and train, and we will assist the employer in creating a training outline that best suits the client and the employer as well. The employer receives a 50 percent wage reimbursement for the full-time employment over the duration of the training period, up to 26 weeks. By allowing the employer to train its workers on the job, gaps are filled and employee retention improved in the workplace.

We assist in streamlining the paperwork process to make it simple for the employer, thus making the OJT look more attractive.

Our outreach strategies. We basically send out approximately 2100-plus emails a month to employers from our database. We are in constant communication and follow up with our past and current OJT employers and especially with our past to find out their -- what their hiring needs are at any given time during the year is when we'll typically reach out to them.

We cold call new companies that are not in our database. We use social media such as LinkedIn and Facebook to spread the word. And in a pre-COVID world, we attended employment job fairs and held special events at employer's locations and we attended networking events, including chamber and networking after hours.

Some of New Hampshire's best practices is recently we started to facilitate job clubs via Zoom with multiple topics that we cover several times a month with mature workers. However, anybody else who's interested is welcome to join in, whether they be an adult or dislocated worker.

The topics of these job clubs are connecting with organizations that help employers find the talent, targeted job search, the AARP seven smart strategies from those seven videos, job application and applying for the job, networking, cover letter and resume writing, and interview techniques.

We also hired employment counselor specialists in each of the 12 New Hampshire Works offices to assist the job club facilitation and to work directly with the 55-plus population and, again, our dislocated worker population as well.

We've utilized the U.S. DOL OJT toolkit for our contracts, our invoices, evaluations, and several other of the templates that are offered by them. We do have marketing material that we do provide the jobseeker and the employer that outlines the benefit of the program to each the jobseeker and the employer. And I do see that both of those fliers are in the file share section of this webinar.

Lessons learned and our challenges. Paperwork and billing. Oftentimes employers will come to us and say that the paperwork is extremely cumbersome to them. Employers often submit incorrect invoices and time sheets, and they often neglect to send evaluations.

So our best practices for this was to streamline our paperwork process. We provided sample invoices, provide support in billing -- to the billing personnel or to the person who will supply the paperwork to us. Not a lot of small companies have got the ability in the HR component --and this is where NHES support assists in the flow of the paperwork. We will definitely do follow ups to ensure the employers are submitting timely invoices, evaluations, payroll records all with those invoices. We need all of those components to move forward.

Challenges in a COVID-19 world. I'm sure everybody out here can talk to this, and I'm sure everyone's had their challenges. In the pre-COVID-19, contract signings were done and conducted at the employer's location with the client and the participant. Our QA site visits, which we did about 35 days after the signing, were also conducted at the employer location with the client and participant present.

During COVID-19 our best practices were contracts were sent to the employer prior to the start date of the OJT. Conversations with the employer walking through the process of the paperwork prior to the signing. The signings were done over the phone with all parties for a seamless transaction. Our QA site visits were done the same way. The paperwork was signed at that point in time by the participant and the employer, and it was scanned to us and then sent to us in the mail for original copies.

This here is a quote of what I call one of our frequent flier OJT companies. It goes on as, "We moved our manufacturing company from Rhode Island to New Hampshire. We inquired about the OJT program, and it fit our needs. In fact, if it wasn't for the program, we never would have been up and running as fast as we were. The OJT program provided us with the quality people we asked for, and we plan on using the program as we are growing." And they do continue to use the program on an ongoing basis.

At this point in time, I'm going to pass this back to Amanda Poirier. Amanda.

MS. POIRIER: Thanks. Thanks, AJ.

MS. LAMBERT: You're welcome.

MS. POIRIER: So just to transition quickly, we'll -- please, this is a reminder. Enter all your questions into the chat. We are looking at them, and we're addressing them as they come in.

The other thing is too that, if anything we don't address again today, things that kind of percolate that are common themes, we will do our best to talk about in the panel conversation on April 6.

So as we segue into our apprenticeship portion of today's webinar, please note that not all these models are TAA related, Trade Adjustment Assistance. And so we're kind of -- although not all the models are related to that, we are honing in on answering questions related to it from that regard. So if you have questions about maybe WIOA youth or other programs, please continue to ask them. But we might not necessarily address them through this training exactly.

But the partnerships and the elements of the models, all of them can be replicated. So that's why we're really encouraging all to answer questions, ask them in -- well, ask questions in the chat and we will work to answer them.

Also, not all apprenticeships are alike. There are federal models, date models, intermediary models, but there are elements that can be taken from these best practices and replicated. So let's hear from our presenters.

First, we have Laura from Oregon, a TAA liaison, and then we have Deb at Arizona @ Work - Maricopa County. And then we have Nick, president of Adaptive Construction Solutions. And I'm going to turn it over now to Laura to kick us off. Thanks, Laura.

Laura Lausmann: Thank you. Amanda.

I am an analyst on the TAA program in Oregon, and about three years ago I was asked to assist on a strategy to increase apprenticeship opportunities for our trade-affected workers. At the time, I might have secretly rolled my eyes. I was the TAA case manager during the recession, and I know both the rewards and challenges of that role, the deadlines to get workers into training, delays for open application periods, and just not really understanding apprenticeship.

Back then, there might have been a time when a worker stated they were interested in becoming an electrician, and I might have said, have you ever considered the HVAC program at your community college?

While some of our staff had more knowledge in apprenticeship, I just didn't feel confident with understanding the point system for application, the interview and selection process, or even navigating our state's apprenticeship website. And this may sound familiar to some.

At the time, we did know as a program we needed to understand apprenticeship better, and we needed to do so before we could help our participants have their best shot at this essential work-based learning. So we set out with our goal in mind, increasing apprenticeship opportunities to those we serve. And in the next few slides, I will share some of the strategies we are using to reach that goal.

We knew that we had three major stakeholders, our TAA staff, apprenticeship staff, and our participants, and we needed a strategy for each. It started with assigning a single TAA point of contact to apprenticeship programs, and I currently hold that role.

So I first set out to learn everything I could about apprenticeship, the different ways they can be structured, whether they were registered or non-registered, union or nonunion, with classroom training in house or is it contracted out. I needed to become familiar with our apprenticeship website, figure out what apprenticeship programs we had in our state, and who was coordinating that.

While we are beginning to see success, I have restarted this intentional outreach to all programs to review the expansion of the TAA apprenticeship benefits. I provide an update on those benefits, as well as a reminder of the worker pool that we bring. They have great soft skills and often a longstanding employment history.

For our TAA staff, we put together training on what apprenticeship programs are, when and how to use the apprenticeship programs, and navigation of websites here in Oregon to assist workers research and learn of open enrollment periods. We are developing training for all staff again on all things apprenticeship, and we do this periodically through quarterly training.

On the apprenticeship side, I maintain communication with apprenticeship programs and some will send me an email when application opportunities open. I make sure to forward these out to the team. We attend any and all meetings that apprenticeship programs will let us in on.

During pre-COVID times in the greater Portland area, some of these meetings were held on site and rotated between programs. We could tour the facilities and learn more about a specific trade. In these meetings, we had an opportunity to do breakout sessions and experience an example of what an apprentice learns in the program.

One breakout session I participated in was for the pipe-fitting trade. So I needed to figure out the angle to bend a pipe, and I quickly realized that that math that I was so sure no one would ever use in their adult life, well, some people actually use it.

This too helps us understand the math requirement for most apprenticeship programs and where pre-apprenticeship and math courses can help skill-up our trade affected workers so that they can meet that requirement on the application. Currently, these meetings are held virtually and are still a great place for us to both share and learn from each other.

Our agency, the Oregon Employment Department, was awarded grants to assist in creating apprenticeship opportunities outside of the traditional trades. And with that included the development of the website OregonApprenticeship.org. It's a great site for all TAA and American Job Center staff to refer anyone to that's interested in the prestigious.

There are videos that we share with workers where they can learn more about the steps that will take them from apprentice to journeyman, as well as the user-friendly search for open application period. One of our new strategies we will be implementing from TAA final rule is to have the TAA manager let me know when they have a participant interested in a specific program. I will then reach out to that program coordinator to learn more about the program, review any specific requirements an applicant must have, ask about the interview process, and seek suggestions they may have to help us prepare our participants so they can be as competitive as they can be.

I will then let them know the participant's name and advise them that, if their worker is selected, they will want to reach out to me directly to set up these amazing benefits to both the apprentice and the employer that they will be working with during their OJT portion of their training.

As a part of my outreach to apprenticeship coordinators, I recently developed a quick guide that I send out to each program. This reminds them of the great benefits our participants can bring with them, as well as that single point of contact in our program to connect to for all questions and coordination. We are excited about the new benefits in the TAA final rule, and I sense that apprenticeship coordinators are excited as well, especially about the new OJT benefit for TAA-approved apprentices and the increase in time we can support them on their path to becoming a journeyman in their trade.

We have experienced the reward of assisting TAA participants access these career paths. So no more eye rolling on my part for sure, and we look forward to taking this to the next level, continuing to increase those opportunities. Thank you. And I will now pass it off to Deb Furlong in Arizona.

DEB FURLONG: Thank you, Laura. Great to hear all that you're doing over there in Oregon. My name is Deb Furlong, and I am with Maricopa County, Arizona @ Work.

I had the opportunity to be on this amazing panel today because Maricopa County is ranked number one for its integration of WIOA funding in apprenticeship. It's an honor that we have held for many years, and we're very proud of and excited to have the opportunity to share with you all a little bit about how we got there.

This slide is really important and -- because leadership counts, and having the folks that are working at the top support you is incredibly important. So for any of you that are ready to embark on this -- my slides keep moving. Any of you that are ready to embark in this journey, certainly reach out to your DES. Make sure you have the support of all of the leaders within your team. For us, that starts at the state level and then our board of supervisors and then, of course, our workforce development board and then ourselves as the service provider and then even down to that, the leadership with the -- and the employees within the county that support it.

So how did we get there? Talked about leadership at the top, everyone on board and supporting what we're doing.

So what we did is we just went out and connected up with every local apprenticeship program in our area. We met with them and identified, what are our common goals? How can we support you? How can you support us? And we built a collaboration around those shared goals.

And then we trained the program and we -- and the staff trained, as probably one of the unique parts I'll talk a little bit more about later. We designed a process, and then we implemented and learned. And that last piece right there is continual. It didn't stop years ago after they started this. How do we engage in this in a much bigger way? They didn't meet with everybody and then kind of end it there. We continue to get together and learn. And this became incredibly important as COVID hit us and our communication with our partners.

So how do we do it? We promote all of our career advisers, promote apprenticeship programs with every single participant that we serve. We want all of our participants to know about all the available programs that we have for them and ways that we can support them.

We also have our business service team that promotes apprenticeships with our employers, and that's really key here. Everybody's got to be connected, and really your employer side and your participant side that really come together.

I said I'd talk a little bit more about this, but our dedicated staff to each of the apprenticeship programs, that is really key. I've got two amazing staff that manage currently right now our apprenticeships, and we do see that growing. But they are dedicated to those programs. They don't -- they not only know about workforce development, but they probably know a little bit about pipe trade and electrical stuff that they would have never done. But they're very dedicated to these programs and supporting the participants and the staff there.

Strong and constant communication. The dedicated staff on our side, but the apprenticeship programs also have a dedicated staff and that strong and constant communication with them helps us to troubleshoot things and address things as they come up all the time. And you could imagine that COVID right there was huge. A lot of our programs shut down. Our team was there to help get us back up, and what was that going to be like? And we were someone at the table supporting them and opening back up.

What we do now and what we did before and so proud to say what we're currently doing is still providing on-site services. Our apprenticeship programs worked with us to create a safe environments so that we can continue to serve folks on location, meeting folks where they were at. We knew they were going to engage in the programs, and we were able to do that even through COVID. We've still been consistent with our onsite orientation and enrollments for folks.

We have stayed aboard in our needs assessment and providing support services. This is always a really important role that we play in the work that we do and certainly has been much bigger this year and with that ongoing case management to get them through. One thing that I like hearing from some of my staff is -- because they go on site, what -- some of our apprenticeship sites have a dedicated location for our staff to work, is that they kind of get to see folks along the way and do check-ins even at their facilities.

And then also leadership check in. Remember, I talked about you created the process and then come back and come back to it. So we as leaders also, we have our staff that are on the daily doing their communication. And then as leaders, we check in and how are things going? We had a -- we got together as a team with one of our apprenticeships just like a month ago. And something that we were able to knock out was just an issue with invoicing. So just staying connected and communicating is really important to our success.

This is a shameless slide because I just want to give a shout out to all of our partners that we've been working so closely with that really got Maricopa County to number one in integration. And you'll see at the top I've got our leadership and then the trades that we are consistently working with. And you'll see those are all construction. I'm going to talk about that.

Some of the occupational titles that we currently are supporting are electricians, heating, pipefitters, plumbers, sheet metal workers, construction. Those are all in construction. And I hear you in that. We've done a really good job of that, and some of the things that my team is working on right now is really expanding the services that we do. We're looking in IT. That CompTIA, we're working with them and Gateway Community College that are developing an IT apprenticeship program. And we're at the table supporting them.

Rio Salado, we're working with our IET programs, our integrated education training programs that just started a medical training program. This is important to be at the table, to make sure that people know that you're interested in expanding and you want to talk and you want to help get these things going.

I was mentioning about mechanics. Next thing I know, I'm at a meeting yesterday talking about, is this a need in our community and how do we bring this here to Maricopa County for our residents?

Given the audience today, I wanted to make sure that I just shared some of our demographics and, as you'll see, we almost have 50 percent of our participants in age 25 to 34. We believe, as a team, as we continue to expand the titles of different apprenticeships that we work with, that we'll see a move in that needle a little bit.

One of the other things is I have our greatest number of veterans are engaged in our apprenticeship program. And Nick, who's coming up behind me, is going to talk to you a little bit more about why that's such a great connection for them. I'll let him speak on that a little bit.

So our fiscal year 2020, what does that mean? It accounted for approximately 40 percent of those we served. I just want to leave that for a minute. 40 percent of those we served and it accounted for approximately 25 percent of our service budget. What's exciting about that is that it's -- and what we've seen is that our apprenticeships are a little more cost effective than some of our occupational skills, and they've led to greater employment outcomes for us.

So where are we sitting currently? 93 percent placement rate. Our median wage -- starting wage is $16.50. I put this 83 percent matching rate here. This is something we're really proud of, and the matching rate is something that we look at long-term. Long-term, did individuals stay in the same industry in which we supported them with? And so we have an 83 percent matching rate in our apprenticeships long-term, and we're excited about that. Those are some of the things that help continue to keep us number one in the nation for integration with WIOA.

So some of our learning, the higher percentage of veterans that I mentioned, the higher median wage, higher placement rates, we've seen great retention rates in our apprenticeship program and, again, often less dollar value than we're spending on our occupational skills.

But if you're going to embark on this, I think there's things to watch and things that we're taking a look at even right now is our -- some of our referrals are not always in the priority of service and making sure that you account for what you're willing to have that be and just watching it. And, again, with that balancing your budget, making sure that you're supporting apprenticeship and also have room for supporting folks in occupational skills and making sure there's a good balance there.

Stay connected. Stay connected to your community, your business services, your ear to the ground what's going on.

Through the cross-referral program diversity, ensure that we're making sure that we're reaching lots of different folks. And so something to definitely keep an eye out as you all are starting your programs.

Next steps for us is expanding our occupations in apprenticeships and just be at the table as often as we can to talk and promote either getting new apprenticeship programs here or talking with our employers or talking with our participants, increasing our crossover referral. One thing I was talking with my -- our apprenticeship team and they were like, we want to talk to all those folks that end up not making it. So we're also trying to figure out -- we're working on a way to get those folks that apply for apprenticeships, not even through us, but through them, and don't make it and see if we can wrap them back with us and help them make it to the next level. And increased community awareness about all the apprenticeship programs in your area.

And then off to the left, these are some first steps that I would encourage all of you to do, if you're getting ready to start your program.

Here are some resources I have for you. Please feel free to click on those links. And with that, I'm going to go ahead and turn it on over to Nick. Thanks so much.

NICHOLAS MORGAN: Thank you, Deb. Now, that was a great pointing out some of the key factors of what made it successful in Maricopa County and Arizona.

Today, I'm going to speak about what we've done in Houston as we've continued to expand apprenticeship programs with our partners, with workforce solutions.

So, again, my name is Nicholas Morgan with Adaptive Construction Solutions. We're a workforce intermediary. We started in 2016 and immediately focused on registered apprenticeship as a way to integrate veterans and other populations into the workforce while providing meaningful careers.

So the Gulf Coast Workforce Development Board ranked number one in Texas for integrating WIOA services into registered apprenticeship programs. And a lot of that success has been based on their talent development strategy, which works hand in hand with apprenticeship sponsors across the 13-county region.

And so at ACS, we're actually the apprenticeship sponsor of a non-joint registered apprenticeship program. We have over a dozen occupations in multiple industries to serve the populations in our area but, as well, employers. And we focus on really trying to increase access for underrepresented populations like veterans, foster youth, low-income individuals, and now looking at how to integrate TAA participants both from support at Texas Workforce Commission but locally with our workforce board partners.

We also operate two homeless veteran reintegration program grants from DOL VETS. And with -- over the past four years, with the 700 apprentices that have entered our programs with our employer partners, roughly just over a third of those individuals were federally recognized as homeless veterans.

And so as a workforce intermediary, we play a series of unique roles in the partnership, and these will look differently based on the employer and training providers that are leveraged to deliver training as well as the workforce system. But the workforce solutions, they have been absolutely critical in our continued expansion in multiple ways.

They help refer individuals that they come across in their American Job Centers, the career centers, that are interested in apprenticeship. And that's an always evolving process, especially with COVID. And it has been critical that support, as we continue to meet the needs of employers, that they're helping us with outreach. But they fund our partnerships for individuals who do meet WIOA eligibility, which is not every apprentice, with OJT and sometimes an ITA.

A combination really helps, especially during these challenging times. But we understand that often there's a -- or currently, there's a higher demand for WIOA resources. And so there's a lot of additional DOL resources that have kind of support it to fill in some of the gaps. And that's important because at least for the models that we've utilized where an employer is not required to pay a wage during related instruction, the classroom component, because a lot of the participants need to be able to sustain themselves while they're training, especially if it's front-loaded instruction, our employers have always paid wages to the apprentice in the classroom in addition to the OJT, which they're required to do.

The coaching and mentorship that Workforce Solutions performs on behalf of our employers and our program has really increased retention, especially as those individuals start to -- start their on-the-job training to make sure that any -- what we would consider personally as a minor challenge doesn't become a significant challenge for somebody, such as transportation assistance and childcare assistance and so on. So those supportive services continue until they exit the program.

And when this is important from -- since we have a lot of workforce system partners on the call -- is when apprenticeship -- you don't look at the length of the apprenticeship program as your WIOA common exit date. It's the end of services. So generally speaking, unless there's reasons to continue somebody into the program, Workforce Solutions exits our participants at the end of their OJT contract.

So from an apprenticeship sponsor, we're there also to help to perform outreach to veterans and others. We deliver or facilitate training with partners, and then provide that long-term mentorship as that person continues to progress through the apprenticeship.

Now, employers value as a group program that we're there to help with the apprenticeship compliance because we are the sponsor. But employers are really making the largest investment in these individuals by providing a job. I mean, frankly speaking, a long-term, full-time employment is the biggest investment being made. And to say, look, as long as this individual continues to progress, we're agreeing to these wage increases as they gain additional skill.

And that structured OJT is key. Every employer has on-the-job training, but structured on-the-job training means that there's a method to the madness. It's not just follow Joe. We're going to make sure that you gain experience in different areas of the role. And that, specifically, I'm not referring to an OJT contract. I'm talking about actually performing, learning their job.

And then that employer's investing in them by providing that ongoing career pathway. And really, the outcomes are directly a result of all partners effectively collaborating. And that's why with workforce solutions, they've been a fantastic partner because they've adjusted their services to meet the needs of both employers and our apprentices.

So we're known for having a really high amount of veterans in our program. Roughly 70 percent of our apprentices are veterans. They face -- and there's a lot of common components or similarities to a veteran or TAA participant. You're going through a period of immense transition. If you were affected by trade adjustment, often you are -- you're going to go into perhaps a new occupation, or you're going to have to learn new skills, perhaps.

And that can be intimidating, but you also have a need to continue to earn a paycheck, and that often is a barrier for a lot of TAA participants when they consider going back to college is, hey, look. I have a family to take care of.

Well, veterans, when they transition from the military, it's very similar. They gained a lot of confidence in their skill. They knew what it took to get promoted, and now they're having to do something completely different. And, in addition, they often want to go to work instead of school and GI Bill benefits work with apprenticeship programs. Traditionally, it does not pay for training, but what it does do is it provides for apprenticeships. It doesn't pay for the tuition, but it does provide a stipend, an allowance that helps be a financial bridge to learning a new career.

So veterans have access to their GI Bill or vocational rehabilitation if they're -- if it's eligible and, of course, WIOA and other programs like HVRP, but with trade readjustment allowances, WIOA can still be braided into it. And, again, as I stated earlier, with a higher demand than average for resources, this is a great time for workforce boards and partners to consider, hey, can we leverage other programs that have been underleveraged for apprenticeship and work-based learning strategies?

So just a couple key points, some strategies or recommendations from our perspective, And we -- last week we spoke to our commissioner of Texas Workforce Commission for the -- for Labor, Commissioner Julian Alvarez, and the TAA partners within NTWC to really think about what are some great methods in order to provide more TAA opportunities for TAA participants for apprenticeship.

And a lot of that can be based on, like Deb said, reaching out to apprenticeships. But think of some of your larger apprenticeships. When I say larger, greater access to employers, has a very diverse set of employers, but think about also often state workforce agencies or local workforce boards even sponsor apprenticeship programs. And then there's DOL equity partners that are there to assist different populations that have barriers to employment to enhance greater access to apprenticeship.

And keep in mind, there's a lot of exciting things going on with apprenticeship. So many new occupations always being added. For example, we even have an HR apprenticeship for our own office, which we have seven HR apprentices, and we look to add a TAA participant soon to our office. But healthcare, manufacturing.

And then the other part, as I've mentioned twice already, is leveraging WIOA when it's allowable to better enhance what TAA has to offer employers and to assist those individuals. So I will turn it back over to Amanda so we can move into questions.

MS. POIRIER: Thanks, Nick. So we have a couple of questions that have come up -- well, many questions, actually, that we've been answering in the chat. One of the things that we will do, hopefully, is make the chat available after the presentation so folks can take a look at it and have access to all the different questions and answers that were provided.

One question that I'd like to start off with, Jeanna, if you don't mind, what is your outreach method? And to follow up on that, how do you connect individuals with employment that's suitable, if you don't mind answering?

MS. CALDWELL: Thank you. No. Our outreach method is very much based on demand. And I will say that, because we have not had to do cold calling in Missouri, just been open for business. Since we've been focusing on apprenticeship and work-based learning since 2016. So our calendar stays fall.

But with saying that, we also have engaged with outreach to sponsors that have existed prior to us. So this involves personalized communication, handwritten notes, phone calls, making sure that they can associate our programs and what we have to offer with us. And so that takes the partnerships that we have, that engaged core champion network, and making sure that we're not stepping on each other's toes.

We do communicate monthly with all partnership coordinators. That includes our trade navigators and staff. So nobody works with employers in a bubble here in Missouri. We share that progress, and we're able to openly communicate and make sure that we're serving employers with meeting their best need and really just get them to the next right thing, because sometimes the program that we think we need to offer isn't the one that we are able to discern is the true need once we actively listen to that employers need.

MS. POIRIER: Great. Thanks, Jeanna. Meg and Claudette, do you want to add to that too? Any particular outreach methods that you have that work and also making that connection to suitable employment for an on-the-job training?

SARAH: This is Sarah from Minnesota. I can take that one.

We found our introductory letter to be very helpful. It is in the file share section. So people are welcome to download that. For suitable employment, yeah. We just work with the employer to see what their wages are and what the person was making at the layoff wage. I would say those are probably what we've been most successful with.

MS. POIRIER: Thanks, Sarah. And, AJ, if you want to expand just on the -- particularly the outreach method and also as a follow up, what you do in New Hampshire that helps mitigate or assuage some of the challenges in terms of employers having to access OJTs, the fact that sometimes that can be hard and not easy? And what do you do to act as a -- to alleviate some of that burden for the employer?

MS. LAMBERT: Oftentimes, what we'll do is we'll introduce them to some of our existing OJT clients and encourage them to have a conversation with them to see -- so they can see how it went for them. And we also do have calls from other clients and things like that.

So that's basically how we try to handle it here, is try to do a peer-to-peer connection with existing OJT clients who think the program is outstanding and with somebody who's potentially hesitant in getting into it, because of the fact that they may have heard where some of the paperwork could be cumbersome and whatnot. And, again, we've done our best to streamline the paperwork here in New Hampshire. And, I mean, I think I missed the very first part of what you said.

MS. POIRIER: Just in terms of outreach, the types of strategies that you guys have, if you could just expand on that.

MS. LAMBERT: As I mentioned, it's still going. Obviously, the emails and we are in constant contact with, like I said, the current and past OJT clients. And what we're looking for, especially when we're looking at past OJT clients, is we're looking for hiring trends. So we'll go back and say, oh, they seem to start onboarding people in January or November.

So if we're in that time frame, then we'll potentially reach out to them and say, hey, this is what you've done in previous years. Are you ready for the program, because sometimes if you don't use them for a while, they forget about your program? And that's a big part of our outreach is looking at hiring trends that are out there in our industries.

MS. POIRIER: Great, Thanks, AJ. Laura, do you want to expand on that, too, in terms of the apprenticeship program and what you guys are trying to do in Oregon? Anything that you're doing in terms of brokering relationships with employers and then, at the same time, conducting outreach on behalf of adversely affected workers?

LAURA LAUSMANN: So I think in Oregon when it comes to apprenticeship and what we're trying to do is really connecting with the apprenticeship coordinator, so not necessarily the employers that are connected to that apprenticeship, but really on that front end part where we're trying to help those workers with that application to that apprenticeship program.

So we're reaching out to figure out what are the right -- what are the requirements. We want to check those boxes off for that worker. So if math is a requirement to be accepted as an apprenticeship as an electrician -- excuse me -- and our participant hasn't had math in five years or 10 years, then it's us circling that box to say, okay. We're going to need to look at pre-apprenticeship or a math class, but then also connecting with them when they do put in that application back to that apprenticeship coordinator to say, this person is a trade-affected worker.

So, I mean, that's just really important that they understand that those benefits come with them. I think the coordinators will have those conversations. I spoke to one recently, and he was pretty excited about sharing just with the employers that were connected to that registered apprenticeship that there is this worker -- trade-affected workers and they do come with a benefit for their work-based learning.

MS. POIRIER: Thanks, Laura. Also, too, I don't know if, Nick or Deb, if you have any thoughts on virtual skill-based training, if that's anything that you guys have endeavored to take on.

MS. FURLONG: I --

MR. MORGAN: Go ahead, Deb.

MS. FURLONG: I -- okay. I will tell you we've had this kind of academy that we've done in our team that was on the ground, and our team is working on moving that all to a virtual. We're not quite there yet, but we're really close. In fact, they're getting ready to launch in April.

MR. MORGAN: And for ACS a lot of -- not all of our occupations are tied to construction, but about 70 percent are. And we've been able to successfully integrate our training through our partners with NCCER to -- and the support of workforce boards like Workforce Solutions Gulf Coast. But the Coastal Bend Workforce Board in Corpus Christi was absolutely critical in providing some extra resources to move a lot of our training into a virtual platform, which allowed us then to train apprentices safely in very small groups because a lot of it was being delivered virtually. We were just doing hands on performances and groups of two or three individuals.

MS. POIRIER: Great. Thanks, Nick. For Nick and Deb, too, there was a question that came into the chat in terms of what you would recommend for a nonprofit that is in multiple states making partnerships with apprenticeship. So kind of from the reverse angle. What would you recommend if anyone wants to make a connection with you all, how best to do that?

MR. MORGAN: At ACS, we work with several nonprofits, not just here in Texas but across the country, to connect with potential apprentices. And that has been very important, especially, for instance, a population that we've done a lot with is young men and women who've aged out of the foster system. It's very hard to do the coordinated outreach to that population.

If it's a veteran initiative, it's easier to have a job description and say there's a veteran preference; right? But -- so that's where we've really relied on our partnerships with the local workforce boards and nonprofits to identify individuals who would be interested in enrolling into an apprenticeship.

MS. FURLONG: When I --

MS. POIRIER: Thank you. Go ahead, Deb.

MS. FURLONG: And I would really connect up with your local one-stop. They've got a list of apprenticeships. This is something that we all do and we're all encouraged to do. It may not be as big as the one we have in Maricopa County, but reach out to those folks. I know for the state of Arizona, they have a whole -- one of the links I sent you was a -- is a connection up to the state and all the ones within our state. So I think connecting up with your local area would probably be the best.

I know you're crossing over states, but as we've all kind of identified, there is some uniqueness within our states. So that would really be my recommendation. But, certainly, you guys want to join -- anyone want to jump on a call or we've got that next meeting coming up. We can talk a little bit more about that.

MS. POIRIER: Thanks, Deb. Also, too, there's been some questions coming in in terms of who funds what. How does this work? Generally speaking, who funds apprenticeship or who funds positions to make this happen?

And really the ideas under the one-stop system that, essentially under WIOA, there are partners and job developers who might be doing that work. And so trying to figure out a strategy to work with the individuals that are doing business engagement in the system to make those connections, to help leverage that connection, to build off of making the work-based learning opportunities for participants, whether it's adversely-affected workers, which we're talking about for today's presentation for the most part, but then also just for jobseekers in general that are seeking reemployment.

So that's just something to keep in mind, too, that really there isn't a specific funding stream that's supporting this effort on a formula basis in the system, so to speak. But really, it's about leveraging the funding that does exist.

For one other question, too, I think that there were some questions about, for institutions that are partnerships with four-year universities. And I think, Jeanna, you had some feedback on that that might be helpful for the group and also how that connection with being where you sit and the benefit of where you sit in terms of building work-based learning models that help the system at large.

MS. CALDWELL: I think that what's great about Missouri is, in fact, the merger of higher education and workforce development. I will say that key to what we would want to be able to offer these four-year universities is for them to be able to see that this is a way to make postsecondary education more accessible. And that is -- that has been the most worthwhile in initial meetings.

I will say that the initial buy-in from most four-year universities has been to consider their own staffing needs. And so many of our partnerships with the four-year universities have been made in order to meet their own talent development needs, such as in maintenance positions, healthcare technicians. We have that at numerous universities across Missouri, and that's just the beginning.

And then that leads to meetings too with different academic sections and how they might be able to move apprenticeship in through their Agriculture Department or sciences. So it's been worthwhile, and we get to have conversations with postsecondary policy. We get to be able to collaborate in great ways. I think opening up the lines of communication and first acknowledging that that university is also an employer with needs is one of the best ways to do it.

MS. POIRIER: Great. Thank you so much. Another question came in that I think might be good for everyone to hear. One of them was, can we -- if a person is at the end of completing a training and they're unable to find a job, would you be able to add an OJT or an apprenticeship?

And really, ideally, this is the sort of thing that happens prior to the end of a training. But, ultimately, going back to the beginning of this presentation when we talked about the different types of trainings that are available, one of them is that combination and really going back to the individual employment plan and always looking at that every time that you're talking to the customers to make sure that there shouldn't be any amendments or anything else that needs to be considered in order for folks to be successful and ultimately gaining reemployment.

So if at any point in time, it does seem like there should be some consideration for amending that training plan, you can always look at the TAA final rule for the conditions for amending the training plan. And that may be something that's another tool that you can consider as you're working with participants.

So just to kind of talk about the next thing that's coming up, we have some resources, like I mentioned earlier. Several of them on workforce GPS. Some of them are in this file share too that we mentioned. And also, there were some questions about some of the tools that each of the presenters have.

So at the end of this session, there's everyone's email addresses. And really, I think that everyone would say that, yes. Absolutely. Reach out to them if there's something of interest that you would like to take from them to leverage.

AJ had mentioned the OJT toolkit as one of the tools that he uses, for example. And that's something that's accessible too that might be of use as you're looking to expand your work-based learning opportunities under the TAA program.

And also, we have two upcoming sessions. We received a lot of questions. So we're going to take those questions and lift some of those up for the panel conversation that's happening on Tuesday, April 6. And then also, too, if you have any feedback or any questions that you want us to address, please enter them into the chat, and we will work to address them during that time.

The other thing that's happening this week is we have a TAA outreach letter - overview, trial status, and next steps. So please -- please register, if you haven't already, and come and listen. There's some really interesting findings, and we'd like to engage in a conversation on that, too.

And I'd like to really thank all the presenters today. Thank you for your time. Thank you for everyone in the audience for listening, for your great questions, and please come back on the 6th and talk to us again. And I'm going to turn it back over to Grace to wrap it up.

(END)