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**Transcript of Webinar**

**Lessons Learned From COVID-19: Using a Sector Strategy as the Compass for Finding Successful YouthBuild Career Pathways**

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LAURA CASERTANO: Again, I want to welcome everyone to today's "Lessons Learned From COVID-19: Using a Sector Strategy as the Compass for Finding Successful YouthBuild Career Pathways" webinar.

And I'm going to turn things over to your moderator today, Jenn Smith. She's a YouthBuild director with U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration. Jenn, take it away.

JENN SMITH: Thank you, Laura. Welcome, everyone. Good afternoon or good morning, if you are on the West Coast. Thank you so much for joining us for today's discussion. I'm very excited about this topic. I think this is going to be a great conversation. We've spent a lot of time working on this, and we're very excited to share it with you. Next slide, please.

So joining me today will be Phoebe Reeves, associate director of technical assistance with YouthBuild USA, as well as Mary McRae, senior manager of DOL Coaching with YouthBuild USA. And then I am also thrilled to have Jennifer Lawrence here from one of our YouthBuild programs. She's the executive director of the Social Enterprise and Training, otherwise known as SEAT, Center in Schenectady, New York. So thank you, everyone, for joining. Next slide, please.

Just to highlight what we're going to be talking about today, and I do say talking because we're doing this in a slightly different way. We're going to have sort of a conversational podcast-y (sic) vibe. I think I just coined a new term there. But we want this to be sort of an interjecting conversation.

We certainly also encourage you guys to interject thoughts, questions as we're talking through things in the welcome chat. And we will have a little time at the end for specific questions and a little bit of chatting. But if you bring up something really relevant, we may highlight it as we're going through this session. So please feel comfortable doing that.

But our real objectives today are to define what a sector strategy is and talk about how it is beneficial in terms of creating those pre-apprenticeship to apprenticeship pathways for our YouthBuild programs.

SEAT Center – Jennifer Lawrence from SEAT Center is going to share her specific sector strategy experience and some of the successes and challenges.

We're also, because it's still a pandemic year, going to make sure that we highlight some of the key COVID-19 challenges that are affecting sector approaches right now as they are impacting specific industries.

And we're also going to introduce an adaptable sector strategy tool for you guys to take away and start using. Hopefully, this will provide a lot of good information for everyone.

And I did – I do also want to highlight, of course, that there is an obvious connection between what we're going to talk about today and the Construction Plus work that many of you are doing. I just want to point out, because I saw that somebody had put in the welcome chat that they were interested in thinking about how to use this information to support Construction Plus, and I think that's great. Next slide, please.

All right. So we're going to start off. We have a couple of polls right now and then a couple more a little later. So we're going to start off with this poll.

We want to know which Construction Plus – are you offering any Construction Plus tracks, and if so, how many? So we have one track, two tracks, three or more, or not currently offering any.

And I see we have three programs who said they're offering one track, two programs saying they're not offering any. Up to four offering one track. Two who are offering two tracks. Nobody who's taking on more than two industries, understandably, but okay. Now, we have five programs saying they're offering one track. So that's definitely sort of – oh. Oh, hey, there we go. Now, we have two programs saying three or more tracks. Impressive.

OK. Good – good blend here of answers. So thank you for sharing that. OK.

Next poll question, the next slide. Construction Plus offerings. If you are offering one or more Construction Plus tracks, which industry are you – or industries, I should say, are you targeting?

So of course you can answer for any of these that are relevant, healthcare, culinary, hospitality, manufacturing, logistics, IT, customer service, or other.

And I see, as anticipated, healthcare and IT seem to be our biggest ones. That's usually what we see. But a few in hospitality and culinary and a few in logistics and customer service or retail. OK. Yeah. Not particularly surprised by that. That reflects what we generally see. So thank you for sharing that info. All right. Next slide, please.

I'm now going to turn it over to Phoebe Reeves to introduce us to Sector Strategies. Phoebe.

PHOEBE REEVES: Thanks so much, Jenn. Hi, everybody. It's wonderful to be here with you all and to be able to take part in a conversation that we're really hoping is going to take us all to the next level with YouthBuild. I think we're really poised to do so, and it's one of the silver linings in the dark gray that we've faced over the last year with COVID. Next slide, please, Mary.

It's really exciting, Jennifer, to get to talk with you today about sector strategy because you had been one of our pioneers on sector strategy way back in 2015 when we first rolled this out at a region five virtual training, no less.

So looking at this definition of sector strategy and knowing that you have gone through a lot of work on this, we see that sector strategy is something that typically we don't automatically or naturally connect with YouthBuild, even though, as we see here in this definition, YouthBuild should not only be an integral player but can form the actual bridge between all the partners and the systems here.

So what does sector strategy mean to a YouthBuild program, and how do we make sectors more accessible?

JENNIFER LAWRENCE: Hi, Phoebe. Great to be on the call this morning or afternoon, depending on your time zone. I think in looking at the definition of sector strategy and what it means to YouthBuild, I really believe it means accessibility.

And I think it means a bridge between the employer community and between our programs because in each of our regions, our employers – and I know each person on this call can think of employers who are saying there are so many – so much need that they have for entry-level workers and we have that supply of people.

But I – what I see as sector strategy is a way to bring those two worlds together, to have a real plan that goes beyond formal education and really addresses with the employer needs more than the necessarily the college – the traditional college education and things like that.

MS. REEVES: So need for entry points for youth and employers and needs for openings to consider youth. In terms of integrating the education and the professional training, where do we start?

MS. LAWRENCE: Yeah. That is a great – that's a great question, Phoebe. I think that when I look at the sector strategy is really it's about creating a new entry level. A lot of the sectors – so we – our work where we were – the work that was discussed that we originally did was in the energy sector. And what we found was that the entry point was just too high for that – for people to really get into the field easily. And there were a lot of jobs and not a lot of people entering the field.

So one of the things that we looked at, what the profession was, what are the skills you really need to get people in the door? What skills do you need, and what specific training do you need versus what credential do you need because that credential could take two – a lot of times look like a two-year college degree?

So one of the – where we started was looking at what were the needs of the region. And we surveyed employers in the region, in the sector that we were looking at to understand what their needs were and where they were recruiting from to meet those needs and how we could develop really a new entry level.

MS. REEVES: And so this question, Jenn, is also for you. What would you suggest from the DOL perspective as a starting point for grantees?

MS. SMITH: Yeah. That's a great question. I – first, I just want to say that, obviously, this is an area that the Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration has spent a lot of time on. There's been a real focus on being employer driven. And I think that, as we talk about this a little bit more, you'll really see that the sector strategy is sort of that demand driven business side component of the career pathway approach.

I really love what Jennifer said about it being about accessibility because I think that's a key point; right? The whole goal here is to create a connection, an accessibility point for our participants to jump on that pathway in their chosen sector. And to her point; right, some of those bars right now may seem a little too high. So the whole idea of the sector strategy is to try and make the connection points where they're logical?

So you look at the first bullet here, serve the dual purpose of aligning education, training, and supportive services to the needs of employers in an industry sector. I feel like right there you're describing what a big part of what the youth model is; right? Whether it's in construction or in Construction Plus, that's exactly what the YouthBuild model is already sort of focused on doing.

And I think one of the key things to think about is how YouthBuild can be either the strong intermediary organization or the driver behind finding that strong intermediary organization. It may not be – that organization may actually be sort of a consortia, community college partners, the YouthBuild program. Obviously, you'll see here the workforce system has to be a big part of that.

But I think we'll have to talk a little later about how the Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration is trying to, in their own way, be part of that solution through a couple of specific grant projects that we have. So we'll talk about those much later on. But we're also really trying to make the sector strategy approach more accessible to workforce development organizations such as YouthBuild programs.

MS. REEVES: And so if I can ask both of you, Jennifer and Jenn, what do you see as the absolute foundational thing that you need to go into this with, keeping in mind for the employer?

So what is the thing that you've got to respect for the employer in entering into this sector strategy approach? And what is the thing you've got to respect for the YouthBuild participant going into this?

Going back to, Jennifer, when you were talking about the accessibility and then, Jenn, your talking about the need and the demand from the employer. So what is – what's the absolute there for both?

MS. SMITH: I would say the absolute to respect on the employer is, one, do your research. Go visit their company. Visit multiple companies. Let them see and know that you've done your research because I know their time is valuable and really dive into the sector yourself to be able to formulate the questions needed to value their time and to really create the strategy with them.

Like I said, I think it's something where visiting companies, seeing what they're doing hands on, seeing where our young people in YouthBuild could fit in.

And then from the student side, I think that – from the YouthBuild student perspective, really understanding schema. I know it's something we talk about in Mockingbird, but understanding what schema they have going into this sector and how to build schema inside and outside of program.

So if young person has never taken apart an alarm clock or built something in the past and that's a prerequisite for a lot of – for certain careers where you have a lot of hands-on knowledge, how do we help build that schema in our program, not just during the program hours, but after hours that they feel that they can speak the language of that sector when they get into that sector.

MS. LAWRENCE: Yeah. I mean, I certainly don't think I can say it any better than Jenn just did, but, I mean, obviously, I think the industry engagement is a huge piece of this; right? It's finding the right partners. Not every employer or even industry is going to be the right partner to bring on board for the career pipelines that are the best fit for our youth.

And I think on the youth side, it's certainly the organizational capacity and alignment; right? Making employers understand what our program can bring to the table, and it's a lot of the supportive services. It's the dedicated staff. And I know we're going to talk about that a little bit later, but I think dedicated staff is a big part of this, if you're going to have a successful sector strategy, just to keep the relationships flourishing.

And because really the role of YouthBuild is to be sort of that grease that – the wheels between the supply side and the demand side. So, I mean, looking at sort of this chart, I would say it's the industry engagement and organization capacity and alignment that are very important in terms of the YouthBuild piece.

MS. REEVES: And would you both say that COVID puts us in a better position to affect a different kind of pipeline and a different kind of relationship with industry sector employers?

MS. SMITH: I think I would –

MS. LAWRENCE: Yeah. No. Go ahead, Jennifer.

MS. SMITH: I would – I know I'm not talking about maybe a little bit later, but I think COVID has a unique opportunity because some restrictions that were placed before in different sectors are now being lifted because of the demand for workers or because of the new environment we're in might see some restrictions being lifted which are beneficial.

MS. LAWRENCE: Yeah. I think that's exactly right. I mean, I guess my answer was going to be sort of a cagey potentially; right, because you still have to understand how those industries are shifting. And obviously, there's a lot of shifting.

I mean, I kind of want to scream into my pillow every time I think about how we spent all this time and effort working on this relationship with the National Restaurant Association Educational Fund right at the time where that industry really took a hard hit. And they're coming back. They're going to come back. But what does it look like when they come back?

Some things are not going to come back the same way that they did. And being able to understand that and sort of see how that shift has happened is going to be very important to whether this is an opportunity for YouthBuild programs. And I think it's also about how YouthBuild programs have been adaptive and can prove that in this current virtual environment that they can fill the niche that's needed. So it certainly can be a great opportunity.

MS. REEVES: Great. Great. Good to know. So, Mary, we've shared a chart here, five key capabilities and capacities of successful sector focused organizations. Why capabilities and capacities? What's the relationship there?

MARY MCRAE: Well, good afternoon, good morning, everybody, and thanks for making the time to be here.

So let me just give a little backstory on this so that this – this chart really is the framework that back in 2017 the Department of Labor's ETA developed for a sector strategy implementation framework. So this really presents this framework that, through research and best practice, that ETA looked at and said, if workforce collaborations are really going to happen well, then these are the kind of key – five top key capabilities that need to be in place for long-term sustainability and long-term really investment around any sector strategy approach.

So we're going to – we're going to walk through what the framework looks like in a little bit more detail. And Jennifer is going to join us and talk about how the SEAT Center has taken the sector strategy approach and actually put it into place.

And as we're going through this, really asking you in the audience to think about, both from your program – at your YouthBuild program perspective and from your organizational perspective, is how would you bring this sector strategy framework into your area and the kinds of things that you would need to think about and start putting in place to really take this approach successfully.

So the first area is is having a data-informed decision-making process. And so, Jennifer, in thinking about SEAT Center and how you all came to thinking about sector strategy, is – what kind of data sources did you use to really inform a particular approach or a particular sector?

MS. LAWRENCE: Yeah. I would say some of the most useful data sources were reports that were compiled by our local Economic Development Councils. Those were very helpful because they had already surveyed a number of businesses in this case around manufacturing. They had already surveyed a number of businesses in the area, manufacturers, and the data was very, very useful to our process.

In the energy sector, that was a little bit different because the energy sector cut across so many other careers. For example, electricians, carpenters, residential home builders. So energy is tied into so many other O\*NET careers. But in either case, I really felt that the local Economic Development Council data was very helpful. And then our state Department of Labor also provided – helped us with LMI data that was very helpful.

MS. MCRAE: And did you use any kind of strategies in both engaging your staff, your board, your collaborators around really making this data real?

MS. LAWRENCE: I think one thing that – I think to make the data reveal is having those conversation. So we were able to use that data and then have roundtables with employers, and we had a series of questions that we asked them at the roundtables. And we also did some of our own surveys. And having an advisory council and active board members, it's just very important to have the capacity to do that.

One thing we have worked on is getting – having planning grants to do some of this because there is quite a bit of upfront work around the data piece.

MS. MCRAE: So the second capability is industry engagement, and this is really being responsive to the employer base. So, Jennifer, how did you and how do you customize training for the YouthBuild participants to actually get them in the industry door?

MS. LAWRENCE: I think the biggest takeaway for us that YouthBuild Schenectady was we were like, okay. What's the industry recognized credential that we have to have?

And what we realized is we will offer that credential. It's super important. It builds student confidence. It builds resume. But that's not necessarily what we had to do to get the student ready to get in the industry door.

So we had to listen to the industry and hear them and have them say, what are the skills that they need because that credential may or may not match up to those skills exactly. It may be a good foundation. It may be a good addition, but they may need – and in both cases, they needed specific things that were not in those industry recognized credentials, but may have been a three-day workshop in addition to it or a two-week workshop in addition to.

MS. MCRAE: And from the – so the third capability is the sector-based service delivery. And so this is being responsive to the worker. And so thinking about it from that perspective is how do you balance the need of your YouthBuild participants with the employer needs?

MS. LAWRENCE: Yeah. That is a great question. I think really developing – seeing what is capable in your YouthBuild program in the timeframe you have students in YouthBuild and then seeing do we have to have additional programing, which we did develop at YouthBuild Schenectady and secured other funding for, like a tier two of programing.

But how do we think outside of the box and create a pipeline? We're sometimes trying to do everything within that 6-month or 12-month period. And really understanding know student – being able to assess what skills students are coming in with and then how to scaffold skills in the program while they're with us.

MS. MCRAE: So, Jennifer, on this slide we talk about here the third bullet about experience within capability to develop effective employer validated career pathways.

So what were some strategies – in looking at your career pathways, how did you engage employers to actually validate that these were actually career pathways that would bring workers into their industries?

MS. LAWRENCE: Absolutely. The biggest thing was developing that pathway with the employers, hearing them talk about – so in the field of energy efficiency, the entryway to energy efficiency, when we started this, was an energy auditor. And that required a high level of intuition, understanding the house as a system, making a lot of judgment calls.

So it would be – and what we learned is, even for someone in the construction industry, it takes about a year for them to really understand and be able to produce those reports. So that entry point was just not great for the industry, not even necessarily for YouthBuild. Just wasn't great for the industry.

So we're – in bullet three where it talking about experience to develop effective employer validated career pathways, sometimes it takes a lot of questioning to get the employer to really help us understand, well, what do they really need. But after lots of roundtables, data, questions, a huge need came out that they really needed people who could install – just install the insulation or do certain parts of the audit job, learn how to monitor the fridge – refrigerators, learn how to put devices in the home that monitored electricity use, which was very different than the whole job in itself.

So we asked – the industry actually was – it was trending in this direction before the sector strategy work, but the industry ended up adding a new credential, new training because they realized that that was really too high of an entry point. And so I think how you develop employer validated career pathways is working with them hand in hand.

And some employers – I will say we talked with local manufacturers recently, and some of them were really willing to do the work. Some didn't have the time to do the work. And some said, yes. This is needed, but we're not really sure how to unpack it. We just want to kind of stick with how we're doing it, which I think is challenging for the industries because we have to unpack this and get employer validated pathways in order to get more people into that career pipeline for – to get more people hired into these companies.

MS. MCRAE: So, Jennifer, as you've done this, because, again, I know that in the work that you and I have done together with – under your Department of Labor grants and – so the sector strategy approach actually started many years ago.

MS. LAWRENCE: Yeah.

MS. MCRAE: Do you see more employers – like employers that might have balked at this back when you first started out, are those employers now being open to having more of those conversation? And really where has the COVID and the lockdown and the shift in some of these industries impacted this kind of approach?

MS. LAWRENCE: I do think employers are becoming more open. I think as diversity and inclusion are also becoming much more at the forefront, I think employers are seeing the need for a pipeline.

Our local Chamber of Commerce has been really encouraging members to develop pipelines because, if not, we're really – what one manufacturer is doing is just hiring someone from the other guy down the street just for the other person to offer them 50 cents more a few months later and take them back.

So they – they're starting to realize that the pipeline is important to the sustainability of the whole industry and that our regions, wherever people are from on the call today, our regions need to be able to attract businesses. And that's not just one business. That's multiple businesses that's going to help us thrive.

COVID has – COVID's impact, I think it's been interesting, but I also think it's an opportunity because people are willing to look at things differently now.

MS. MCRAE: Great. And then the last – oh, no. Go ahead, Jennifer.

MS. LAWRENCE: Yeah. No. Go right ahead. Yeah.

MS. MCRAE: No. I was just going to shift because the last bullet here, which is really a – a YouthBuild peace, is the willingness and ability to respond to non-workforce needs.

So how did you actually engage employers in talking about or being open to thinking about the young people that you were bringing into the industry, that they may have additional challenges outside of the work? And was there – was there – is there a learning curve? Do employers really care? They just want the employers to show up and work? What kind of conversations, if anything, were you able to have with employers around that?

MS. LAWRENCE: That's a great question. I think where I start is I usually ask the employer what their experience is with their entry level workers in general. So how are they experiencing turnover in entry level positions? What is their attendance rate like? What are they seeing?

And what I usually find is that I think our students definitely have non-workforce needs, but I don't think that they are that different than what the employer is experiencing in those entry level positions. And I think there's – I think that's where employers are really struggling. How do they manage their workforce so that they are retaining them?

So I think the idea that we provide case man- – we kind of provide career advancement services to that young person while they're in placement for that year – that year after they're in the job, I think that's a really – that's been a positive conversation with employers.

One thing that we have asked the partnering employers is that they develop a mentorship program on site so that there's a company – someone who works at the company who has been selected to really help that young person navigate this new world and that – and companies have taken that seriously. We've seen that make a big difference.

MS. MCRAE: Thank you for all of that.

So the fourth capability is sustainability and continuous improvement. And, obviously, in the world of YouthBuild, we're always talking sustainability. Continuous improvement we certainly want to talk about what kinds of things can occur while we're looking at and continuing to work on the growth of our programs.

So in looking at your sector strategy approaches, how did you – how do you measure success?

MS. LAWRENCE: That is a great question. Success I think to us, a few things. One is really the employer or student or the – really the employer. And to us, where we've seen it come out dividends is that the employer went from being someone who hires our youth to a partner in the organization.

So we just had an employer come back to us now. We worked on a program with them, and now they have a new career track that they want us to work on with them. I don't know that it'll work out, but just the idea that the employer saw this as a value, that it increased their ability to hire and that they're working and most of the time it could be employers who are competitively working with each other and now they're working together because they all see the need for a pipeline.

So I think one way to measure success is really that at meeting employer need. I think a lot of times, rightfully so, I mean, it's like how do we meet the student need? But I think when we can see the intersection of the student need being met and the employer need being met it's a win-win for our community.

MS. MCRAE: Agreed. And I think, again, this is also taking a much bigger approach, which actually in the long term provides a bigger payoff. But programs really need to think about utilizing their full – the full breadth of time that they have with a young person from kind of that first touch in recruitment all the way through the 12 months of follow up as really being able to get their young people ready and into those industries. This is not something that's going to just happen overnight for programs.

MS. LAWRENCE: Yeah. Very true. Very true. It takes – and it's building blocks. It may start – I think there are things that can be implemented right away, and there's things that you have to build to in there. I think a big part of sector strategy work is there funding in your community to have a second tier YouthBuild program or are there things – because a lot of these sectors have additional funding available that could really dovetail very nicely with the YouthBuild program that you're running.

MS. MCRAE: Great. So the last capability is organizational capacity and alignment. And how are you aligning or how did you align the SEAT center with a sector strategy approach?

MS. LAWRENCE: That's a great question. I think that capacity and alignment definitely were our two things that are challenging because, as I always say, to run a YouthBuild program, you're basically running five programs in one as it is. But I believe that alignment to us was really relying on our partners. Jenn mentioned earlier community colleges.

It doesn't have to be the YouthBuild program. For us, we really relied on Center for Economic Growth and other Economic Development Councils to help us pull this together and to lead a lot of this work. So I would really stress that YouthBuild could convene partners, could help look – partners look at it from a different perspective, especially because our young people are those students who are not in high school, are not in community college.

So very often they may not be focused on some of the other work. So we can bring that perspective to the table. But I think really aligning partners and time with staff, because we know, running a YouthBuild program is very time consuming.

MS. MCRAE: Great. Jenn Smith, any thoughts about any of these capacities and capabilities that ETA kind of put out in this framework?

MS. SMITH: Can you hear me? Sorry about that.

MS. MCRAE: Yes. Yes.

MS. SMITH: Yeah. You mean in terms of this slide specifically or overall?

MS. MCRAE: Any of the previous slides or any of the – kind of the overall kind of strategy approach here is kind of any kind of big – big thoughts.

MS. SMITH: Yeah. Well, I mean, again, I think this is a key one, certainly. I mean, when we were doing our planning for this session, we talked a lot about how important dedicated staff is, which I already mentioned. And it's also the fact that this is not a short-term solution; right? This is sort of a long-haul project to get to sort of a place where you have that connection to a sector and you have the trust and sort of the understanding.

I mean, I think about what Jennifer was saying about how they had to really work with the employer to get the employer to even be able to verbalize what it was that they really needed. And I don't think that that's an unusual problem.

So I think, obviously, really, I think the staff piece and sort of the organizational commitment are probably some of the biggest pieces in terms of determining the capacity to do this approach and to really make it successful.

And I really do think it comes down to, again, having those right partners in place and also being able to kind of highlight to potential partners some of the early successes that you have so they can really understand the value add and figuring out early on what those assets are that you have and what assets other people can bring to the table and other organizations, whether those are financial assets or partnership assets. Those are going to be key things.

But it really is sort of like a little bit of serendipity as well; right? You have to find the right partners. You have to find the right employer. You have to find the right industry that connects well with the aptitudes and skills and abilities of the youth that you're serving and how to train them.

So it's not an easy feat. But I think as Jennifer shares a little bit more as we go on, you can see how being very thoughtful and strategic about this can pay off in the long run.

MS. MCRAE: Great. Thank you. Thank you both. Jenn, while you're on, we'll have you just take us into the next poll.

MS. SMITH: Sounds great. So I mentioned to everybody that we had a couple of polls for you. So we got two more here.

So based on everything we just described here, we wanted to hear from you guys. Which of the following sector strategy actions do you think that your organization is already taking, whether just starting to initiate it or deep down the path?

And getting some answers quickly here. I see sort of a moving target. But yeah. Certainly, people are talking about data informed decision making is a big one. Industry engagement is a big one. And then it looks like sustainability and continuous improvement is another big area. Little less is sector-based service delivery, but people are working on it along with the organizational capacity and alignment.

And like I said, I definitely think the organizational capacity and alignment, that one can be really, really tricky, but great to see people are already looking at the data to figure out where it makes sense to approach this and definitely industry engagement. I think the YouthBuild model obviously promotes that naturally, but definitely glad to see that those are areas of focus. So thank you.

OK. I'm not seeing them move now. So let's go to the next poll. Oh, sorry. Whoops. Don't want to get ahead of myself.

MS. MCRAE: It's all good.

So we wanted to really connect the sector strategy with the career pathways because the career pathway is what we've been talking about in webinars and in the new grantee orientations and the peer to peers and in your coaching TA and group calls that we have laid out for really the last couple of years. So we want to make this connection so that you in your programs can actually see how this approach could work.

So sector strategies are critical components of the larger YouthBuild career pathways. They provide the meaning and the context for a real world – real work experiences, content application and employer partnerships, which lead to the placements and next placements on a participant career pathway. So, again, kind of moving all of those pieces that help a young person actually move along their career pathway.

So we're going to now present Jennifer back looking at her – one of her – a couple of her actual sector strategy and career pathways. And so with that, Jennifer, I'll ask you to talk about this New York State energy market sector.

MS. LAWRENCE: Absolutely. So this is a great graphic that demonstrates all the things that we were talking about earlier. So we see under workforce entry, those are in the dark blue. Those are skills that were really being taught already in our YouthBuild program. We may have had to add some content for that specific industry, but in general, they were things that were already being taught. Just had to be tweaked.

And then if you see the second tier, what's called energy fundamentals, this is exactly what I was talking about, something that may not necessarily be a credential – industry recognized credential, but it's critical to the industry. So these were all classes that we added to build our students' baseline foundational knowledge that were not industry recognized credentials but very important to the industry. And we did secure state funding to implement these classes through New York State Energy Research Development Authority.

And this was a big piece to leading to the third tier, career pathways, where those did have industry recognized credentials.

So what came out of our sector strategy was it was too big of a leap to go from workforce entry to career pathway and how does YouthBuild kind of build that – build that infrastructure so a student could be successful in that career pathway and not just gain the credential but have the background, knowledge, and understanding to implement and use that credential, which I think builds their confidence and makes them feel like they can work alongside others in that workplace setting and understand how to interact in that setting?

So yeah. Very, very great graphic to kind of show the different career pathways that came out of our research and how we – how it all started with a broad YouthBuild program and then it funneled into these three pathways.

MS. MCRAE: So those of you that are on with us today will hopefully note that, if you've attended the peer to peers the last couple of years and really some of the – again, some of the webinars that we've been doing, that Jennifer's – the SEAT Center's New York State energy market sector model really starts looking much like the competency pyramids that we have focused on for the last several years.

So these competency models that have been developed by employers and ETA are very similar to this type of model. And this is really allowing you to see the structure of a sector, of a career pathway, how it all rolls out, and so encouraging you to actually look at kind of graphics like this to actually show what your pathways are.

So, Jennifer, while we're looking at this is, what role did your staff play in driving and contributing content in education and training to each of the levels that you've listed here in this image?

MS. LAWRENCE: Oh, that's a great question. I know our instructor – I was going to say GED because at the time it was – but now a task – our task instructor was really key. I actually remember that numerous staff, including our task instructor, construction, our special projects person, they all went through the energy auditing training themselves to understand how to retrofit it to a YouthBuild program and for a YouthBuild student.

So even though that wasn't their content area necessarily, they went through the training themselves to be able to understand how to weave it into our program content.

We did Intro to Green, if you see the second kind of pyramid looking under fundamentals. Intro to Green was a course that every staff member took. We had an AmeriCorps VISTA who helped develop that under – so that was another way that we blended funds and capacity building.

And then all the staff took that because we were really committed to being able to understand this in practice for ourselves and for our students and our – using our construction manager and the construction staff was very critical to developing this because they had the – for this sector, they had the credibility in the field. They were able to take what employers wanted and then synthesize it into the hands-on part of our model.

MS. MCRAE: Great. Thank you. So, Jennifer, can you talk about this dynamic market?

MS. LAWRENCE: Yes. Yeah. So I think this is the big piece. The need for residential energy services and targeted communities, plus the supply of youth, plus funding equals an expanded sector.

So I think the piece that I'd like to highlight there is there – these sectors are being looked at because there's need and I would – I wouldn't leave out the fact that there is additional funding. There's often additional funding in these sectors.

So I think the – once that pipeline to develop, there's really an ability to enhance the program through additional funds, which helps with match in DOL grants. And it really helps with making the program something that will be even more robust for young people and be able to help expand and work upon those C-Plus dollars, because I know that we're trying to do a lot with what we have.

MS. MCRAE: Great. And We'll shift over kind of quickly to your healthcare pathway that you were working on and just talk a little bit about that.

MS. LAWRENCE: Yeah. I think what's really been cool in healthcare, now there's some pretty large federal grants that we don't – we're not the recipient but have been – our community has been. So we've been able to dovetail and, again, knowing what's in your community and who is being funded for things is – being able to find a place where you fill students to fit into that funding that's coming into your community, which is what we did with healthcare.

I think the really cool thing about this is that it used to be – so for PCA in a YouthBuild program, there was not a lot of hands on practical that students were able to do because you had to be a CNA to do the hands up piece. But with COVID, there's been – I forget the word – (inaudible), but right now there's been like a moratorium where they've lifted it and PCAs can do a lot, like feeding residents, for example.

Our students were not allowed to feed residents because they were not a CNA until the end of the YouthBuild program. And now PCAs can do – can perform those activities because of the shortages due to COVID. And it's really – this has been a situation where students are getting more hands on, and now the field is saying, hey, maybe we didn't need people to be a CNA to do this job. Maybe we could have PCAs do it. And so I think that this is where the win-wins come in.

MS. MCRAE: Great. And we're going to break this down just very quickly in these four areas and maybe just a quick comment on each of these slides, Jennifer, around kind of what the thinking was around this.

MS. LAWRENCE: Yes. I think that really this is very similar to energy where we're looking at core YouthBuild programing and really looking at what can we augment in core programing to focus so that they are learning two things at the same time. So can we enhance our science curriculum to include things that are needed for the CNA credential?

And on this one, I would just say that trying to – trying to quickly go over them, but I think the biggest thing is having that hands-on partner again, that someone who's really going to provide lots of hands-on work experience. The construction sites lend themselves very well to that as we go into C-Plus and finding partners who will accommodate our students and really embrace them in their company is a big piece of making that work. We had a large nursing facility that was able – they had a whole volunteer services department. So they were able to accommodate this very well. They were able to take all of the students, which was great.

MS. MCRAE: Great. The CNA?

MS. LAWRENCE: Yes. And I think the one thing that I wanted to highlight on this slide is that we're seeing employers not necessarily even health – skilled healthcare but people, other employers who are giving more money per hour for that CNA. So we are seeing our local providers for people with developmental disabilities and other jobs related to CNA who are paying more for this career track.

MS. MCRAE: And then your kind of top tier of EMT.

MS. LAWRENCE: Yes. Yeah. So I think the biggest piece with this is partnering this employer – what made this successful was partnering with an employer who offered all that training. So they had awesome, amazing training. They just needed that pipeline built to get people into their training.

And I'm sure a lot of people on the call are hearing this with their local region where there is good training available, but it's not meeting the needs of our student population. It may be too long. It may be the wrong time of day. It may be located in a place that students can't get to. So we kind of helped solve on our end all of those problems and then let the employer conduct the training and do what they do well.

MS. MCRAE: So, Jennifer, just as a – kind of a quick question is, how did you and your staff ensure that a young person understood in both your energy pathway and your healthcare pathway, how did they – the young people understand that there were actually higher-level jobs? So how did they know when they were looking at a PCA job is that you could do and work your way all the way up to EMT in the course of a period of time?

MS. LAWRENCE: Yes. We – and I think this will be either at the end – I think at the end of the presentation, people will get to see some examples, but we created career pathway handouts for students that our staffed would use in talking with students. But that would show here's where the pathway starts, but here's all of the options. And this is something – a word I learned from you, Mary – career lattice.

So these are all of the options. It's not just stepping up, but it could also be taking a step over to a career that's related. And so we developed those sheets. It was a model we used from our work with YouthBuild USA and the Mott Foundation and created one for EMT, one for CNA, energy, and culinary at the time.

MS. MCRAE: Great. Thank you. Jenn, I'm going to turn it back over to you for that missing poll.

MS. SMITH: Oh, there it is. Thank you so much. OK.

So our final poll for you all, we wanted to find out what are the top three ingredients of a career pathway in terms of your consideration? So you could pick three of these; right? We've got first placement in an entry level position in an industry, second placement in a next tier position in an industry, a career assessment, job shadow, work experience, stackable and a reportable credentials and certificates, soft skills, and transportation tools, uniforms, or other supportive services.

Clearly, this is going to be a bit of a moving target, but you can pick lots of them; right? But I see so far soft skills and stackable or portable credentials and certificates, work experience, career assessment, and first placement. Those all seem to be some really big leaning numbers, particularly work experience and stackable/portable credentials and certificates are really – and soft skills. Those are really kind of the biggest ones.

And, I mean, I think that certainly aligns with what I would expect. We certainly hear consistently about the importance of soft skills. I've had many conversations with employers and industry associations where they talk about how they have the ability to do the obvious industry training, but that soft skills piece is what they really want to make sure people come with.

And yeah. Ten people have now said stackable or portable credentials and certificates. So that one's another big one. And, again, career assessment and first placement. And I think those all align really well with a sector strategy approach. OK. Thank you.

MS. MCRAE: Thank you. We're going to turn it over to Phoebe now.

MS. REEVES: Thank you. It really does our hearts good to see that work experience is so far up on that list of priorities that we just went through, Jenn. I just – it brings –

MS. SMITH: Absolutely.

MS. REEVES: – tears to my eyes. I think it stands to – (inaudible).

MS. SMITH: It made me very happy.

MS. REEVES: Just fantastic.

So part of what we wanted to do today was to start thinking high level, bring it down to practical level, and here we see that the COVID-19 pandemic, again, causing unprecedented disruptions, but also has really forced the issue on companies having to respond with new ways of working and doing business.

And I think that part of this, obviously, is a difficult thing to deal with because we've gone from what they call the movement of people to being the focus of industry to the movement of information and things.

And so there is an adjustment that we're needing to make, and industries are going to come out of COVID in any one of four states that are listed here. They're going to be strong or they're transforming or they're reshaped or they are uncertain. Mary, if you can take us to the next.

So our job here is bringing the economy back, but even more. And this is our real YouthBuild job. It's that it's an equitable future. Equitable future. Critical here to understanding not only what jobs and skills are likely to drive the recovery but how we can also drive it in a positive way.

So five distinct economies that they're predicting will shape the recovery, and we want to name these in order to get you thinking bigger picture than just a single placement or dealing with one particular partner. We've got the readiness economy, the logistics economy, green, remote, and automated. And next, please.

So with the readiness economy, starting with the particularly strong economy that was the series pivot that had to be done, you see there that we have industries like healthcare, cybersecurity, and that the kinds of skills that are going to be in demand will be these organizers of work skills, project managers.

With logistics there's going to be a new demand for advanced logistics skills, advanced manufacturing, and the internet of things, which is basically smart devices that we have and ways of connecting on and off to the internet and or each other. So the internet of things is expanded to be the internet of things and people. And we see that these will be ways that we can emphasize relationship between people and people and things and things and things.

With the green economy, obviously, climate change is big new administration goals, but also, we're seeing climate change in the weather that is outside our door, the temperatures, and that the energy systems are now moving to renewables versus fossil.

With the remote economy, part of that is being remote, as in working at home, but the eventuality will be that there will also be some reliance on VR, virtual reality, and AI, artificial intelligence. It's an inevitable thing as we become more dependent on data software networks, as many of us have become during the last year in particular.

With the automated economy, again, this acceleration of automation and artificial intelligence, which has been driven by the urgency of the pandemic, the urgency of needing to stay connected, needing to figure out a way to still do the things we like to do, whether that's eating out or trying to go out and have small gatherings somewhere or what have you. And employers will likely prioritize automation over hiring back low skilled workers.

And I think that this is significant here because, if you are looking at placement as either a one-off or as an end game, it's going to be tough. It's going to be really tough for your students to be able to stay in those jobs and to be satisfied with what they're learning so that they actually have some career pathway trajectory.

Jennifer, in terms of automated economy, how did this reveal itself, or was this something that you were faced with in any of these pathways that you had been exploring, whether it was the energy pathway or the healthcare pathway?

MS. LAWRENCE: I think what we're seeing is the job is shifting, but there's still – there are still the jobs. It's just shifting. And we're seeing there's just – there's more – hence what we know in talking about creating that layer of training, there is additional training that our students at entry level people need to be competitive as jobs are shifting, and we're seeing that.

Even very simple blueprint reading for manufacturing, where you have to understand some basics of blueprint reading to be able to assemble, and that's an expectation because the actual assembly is automated. So you're assembling using controls, and you have to be able to read some schematics to do that.

MS. REEVES: Yeah. Great example. Thank you. So to sum up here, we've done just a very straightforward alignment so that you can see where your related construction or Construction Plus pathway aligns with these five key economies. And again, we're giving you all of these, to use your word, Jennifer, schema, so that you have more tools for thinking about the huge world of career pathways and where all of these different pieces fall into that world.

This was a quote that Mary had located that I think, again, when we talk about the equitable future, it's examples like this that show that, in addition to the career pathway work and meeting the industry where it's at, we want to make sure that we do everything that we can to make the industry better, to make the industry be something that really focuses on people, even as the old economies and ways of relying on movement and people are changing.

Mary, I'm going to turn it over to you here.

MS. MCRAE: Sure. So just very quickly, we wanted to just talk with Jenn and Jennifer for just a minute or two just about, in your opinion, where do these economies leave our young people? And I'll address that to Jennifer first and then to Jenn.

MS. LAWRENCE: I think it's a lot of opportunity ahead of us. I think I am always concerned about our young people and the schema that they have to be prepared for these economies. So I think it leaves a ton of opportunity. Our students – I mean, every employer we talk to wants to know how to engage and then hire our students, but it's really helping them be prepared for those opportunities.

MS. MCRAE: Great. Jenn?

MS. SMITH: Yeah. I mean, I agree with everything Jennifer just said. I mean, I think – I mentioned earlier about how we've done all this work with the National Restaurant Association and then the huge downturn happened.

So, I mean, I think that I love the slide that Phoebe had just shown about how the fields that are the big ones for our Construction Plus fit into these different economies. But it does mean some shifts, particularly in those areas of manufacturing where things are going to be more automated and really figuring out how to be adaptive to the more virtual and remote economy work, I think is going to be a real question.

I think there's going to be a huge expansion in the green economy under this administration. And so those are some things to look toward. Obviously, healthcare continues to grow. And I agree with what Jenn said about how some of the earlier limitations have been lifted because of the extreme need.

So I think obviously having that data in hand and really understanding where those industries are shifting is some huge area areas of opportunity for our programs. But it's exactly right. Making sure that the youth have the skills that will help them to get those jobs and connecting to it is going to be the big continuing issue.

MS. MCRAE: Thank you. So we're going to now shift in to looking at the intersectionality of sector strategy, career pathways and YouthBuild. And with that, we're going to – the next two slides are actually – when you print this all out, is to cut and paste both of these next two slides into one, and it will give you the whole chart that Jennifer created around looking at course and career map. It'll just give you a better idea.

So, Jennifer, you want to walk us through these two slides here?

MS. LAWRENCE: Yes. I'm thinking because the two sides go together, I think what I'm going to do is kind of talk about the concept. And, again, we got – this was a template that was shared with us through our work with YouthBuild USA and the Mott Foundation.

But the idea was we took – it's seven different careers in the energy sector and showed young people that you might start in a YouthBuild program, but these are seven interconnected related career pathways. The top slide shows the different degrees, but the slide next – and then it shows the careers related to those degrees.

But the next slide, if we could move – yeah – shows, if we could move back to that next slide 44. Yeah. There we are. This one will show the entry level requirement. So it's really showing young people the pathway where – what you need to start, what's recommended. And as you see, in a lot of these internships, hands on experience above and beyond or after the YouthBuild hands on experience is what was really needed. More time on task was a big piece of this field.

But that there were – we did effectively be able to work with employers, work with our industry councils, and lower the entry point so that it was more accessible to more people. And then – but then it showed a young person, because these were all side by side, I don't have to stay in that one lane. If I want to move to wind or if I want to go into construction technology, there's a lot of opportunity to move around, especially with the age of our students.

They have a lot of opportunity ahead of them, and they – I don't ever want them to feel like they have to stay on one specific path because I think all of us – and I think, Mary, this is something we've talked about. All of us have had a lattice; right? None of us have had the ladder and just kept climbing. We've had different experiences, moved around, changed course.

So I think that shows them that within this field there is a lot of opportunity, and there's even secondary jobs in these fields that we couldn't show on this but we talk about, which is like the back-office functions, the accounting functions, the sales function. So that's another conversation we have in our programing with students.

MS. MCRAE: So, Jennifer, just before we move on from your career map here, something that came up earlier in our discussion was this notion of the near future and the further out future for the employer.

MS. LAWRENCE: Yes.

MS. MCRAE: So if we look at near future, further out, and how we can best meet the employer's needs while also making sure that our young people have the schema, they have the skills, how long would something like this take to implement for even one of these career positions?

MS. LAWRENCE: For us in our YouthBuild program, we are really focused on implementing a strong YouthBuild program and then that second tier – second/third tier of training and then really working with apprenticeships, local community college, other training organizations.

So depending on the credential, we look at what we do in our YouthBuild programs, looking at those shorter-term credentials, shorter-term training, which could get them one into all, but we're looking at getting someone into one of these fields within six – around six months. But I do know that the training after they're in that job is going on for two years and then with apprenticeships for up to four years.

MS. MCRAE: Great. Again, just to sort of give a little bit of perspective there in terms of implementation for staff who are listening in today.

MS. LAWRENCE: Yeah. Yeah.

MS. MCRAE: Thanks, Jennifer. So thinking about what Jennifer just kind of showed in her career pathway foundation's map is, again, thinking about the five key capabilities and capacities that we've talked about earlier and, again, thinking about this intersectionality piece.

So combining that with the useful YouthBuild Construction Plus framework, which you all should be very familiar with, combined with the YouthBuild model, this is what we get, so that the sector strategy really encompasses the career pathway pre-apprenticeship work, which encompasses the YouthBuild model, and the YouthBuild model being really at the center of this.

So let me turn it over to Jenn to talk a little bit about this.

MS. SMITH: Yeah. Thanks, Mary. So this is my – my new favorite site. We did a bit of doctoring of it, but this is a slide that existed without the YouthBuild middle portion here in the career pathways toolkit that ETA developed. And we'll provide a link to that resource in a few later slides.

But really, I thought this was a really great slide to help understand how sector strategies and career pathways fit together; right? I talked earlier about how the sector strategies is really sort of the demand side, and career pathways is really sort of that supply side; right?

And the YouthBuild work tends more toward the direct delivery of some of the career pathway work; right? You've got contextualized learning, integrated education and training, roadmaps to careers, stackable education and training options, and certainly the supportive services. But the key thing we really want to stress today is how important it is that the YouthBuild programs also understand that demand side; right?

You need to understand the competency models and how those work together. You need to work with the employer partners to get that work-based learning, the work experience that we talk about as being so important, to understand what industry credential requirements really are and what they really, really need from potential employees, as well as what those skill standards are.

So YouthBuilds really have an important piece in all of this work, but I think this slide just gives you a really good understanding of how these two things work together toward successful career pathways for youth. And at the very bottom, you'll see there's a link to where you can actually see the original slide without the YouthBuild add-in.

MS. MCRAE: Thanks, Jenn. Phoebe, turn it over to you now.

MS. REEVES: Thanks, Mary. Thanks, Jenn. So here, basically, we just want to give, again, a sense of what the ideal is and what the reality is for making the intersectionality of sector strategy and career pathways operational versus conceptual.

So ideally, industry leads will voice their critical human resource needs and form a customized regional education and workforce development solution or solutions. Ideally, they should respond with a focus on long-range career development and the advancement of people through the industry-defined career pathways. Again, key there, advancement.

So integrating work-based learning experiences as an essential part of training and opportunity that we all have now to do, and this would include the expansion of the registered apprenticeship programs, which are gold standard of work-based learning.

So the reality is, of course, that to make this successful requires systemic change in business and employer behavior and in the organization and delivery of workforce education and training systems. Huge. I mean, this is sort of an obvious statement, but I think important to name.

Likewise here, the most successful career pathway systems provide multiple entry and exit points. And I think I would add in there what Jennifer had said earlier, which is the accessibility and making sure that it's not so high that it's just not attainable for a young person going in.

The coursework should be sequenced. It should be modularized and contextualized. And this is something, too, that YouthBuild has the opportunity to really impact on. So this would mean really folding in things like vocabulary, like basic practices, like basic concepts into the reading, writing, science, social studies portion of programing.

Also, these career pathways would offer flexible scheduling, opportunities for acceleration, and, again, the extensive supports and counseling services that we were talking about earlier. And this includes really helping participants to identify the direction they want to go and the most efficient way for them to get there, whether it's credential attainment, careers, additional classes. And next.

And so, again, here the reality is, again, systemic change on the part of the education and workforce development systems. I mean, there's got to be agreement to make changes in the delivery, regardless of which specific sector is the focus. And this will likely be harder in some sectors than in others.

Jennifer, if I can ask you, how long do you think it took? And if you would do a comparison between the healthcare pathway and the energy pathway, how long do you think it took to shift the mindset of those employer partners that you were working with?

MS. LAWRENCE: I know the healthcare pathway for EMT, that took about two years with consistent meetings and a very committed employer partner before implementation.

The CNA piece was so well developed by so many other people that it didn't take as long.

Energy, again, was about two years. And, I mean, the first things we tried did not – were not very successful. We learned a lot of trial and error and refining and retooling, especially because it was a new sector.

So I think in comparing the two, healthcare was a lot straighter of a shoot because it was well defined, and I think with the energy sector, there was just so much new in that. And still right now, with the technologies that are continuing – right now, we're working on C pumps and how to get young people trained in that piece of the energy work. Offshore wind is really huge in our community right now. So it's constantly evolving, and we're always needing to respond to those industry changes versus healthcare where I see there's a lot more that's been built out over time.

MS. REEVES: So we basically come back to partnership being the thing that would make it work? Partnership or –

MS. LAWRENCE: Absolutely.

MS. REEVES: – it takes a village, and if you are trying to do this by yourself, then you're probably in for a long, exhausting process and getting the employers on board and getting the different systems that these employers deal with aligned seems key.

MS. LAWRENCE: Absolutely. Absolutely. There are people in the community who are working on these topics full-time. So being being at the table with them, representing our young people in that part of the pipeline, I just think is a very important piece for each community represented.

MS. REEVES: Great. Thanks. And next, Mary.

So, Jenn, I will turn it over to you to talk about these two important initiatives.

MS. SMITH: Yeah. So, I mean, as I mentioned early on, this has been a big focus of work in the Employment and Training Administration, really trying to be employer driven and figure out strategic ways to engage with specific sectors. And, again, community colleges, one of those linchpins in terms of being a key critical partner.

So we have a whole series of grants, the Strengthen Community Colleges Training Grants, that are really focused on collaborating with employers in the public workforce system to meet labor market demand. And particularly important during the pandemic that we're currently in, these grants have really been focused on trying to help figure out ways to be virtually driven; right, expanding online and technology enabled learning in creative ways.

A lot of these community colleges grants have sort of open-source classes and information that comes out of it. So it's a real also a learning model and a lot of peer sharing that comes out of what we learn from these grants.

And then the H-1B One Workforce Grants, for those of you who aren't aware, H-1B is the visa program that brings foreign workers to the U.S. to fill needed roles that can't be filled by Americans. So what this – the H-1B programs do is take that funding and uses the money that employers pay to bring those workers in and spins that money around into key investments to try and upskill our own workers to meet those demands so that we won't have to rely on foreign workers.

And so this most recent initiative, the One Workforce Grants, is really focused on investing in these key sectors, so a real sector strategy approach, particularly focused on information technology, advanced manufacturing, and transportation sectors. And if you click on those links, you can read summaries of what those projects are and who the grantees are, some of which are in communities where we have YouthBuild programs. And some of you may already be partnering with them without realizing. So just good awareness of some of the initiatives that are already underway that may be beneficial. OK. Next slide.

We have about seven minutes. I haven't seen any specific questions popping up, but this is a good time, if you have not just questions, but if you have any observations or a thought, we'd love to hear from you. What you've learned here about something that you might start working on when you go back to your program after this, any questions, this is a chance to share with us, and we'd love to hear from you.

I see somebody's typing. While we wait for that to pop up, I have a question for you, Jennifer.

If you had just heard this webinar, what is the one piece of advice you would tell people to take back to the programs, if they're really starting at the beginning of building a sector strategy? What would you ask them to do as a first step? What's that critical thing or things?

MS. LAWRENCE: I think – yeah. That's a great question. I think, to me, the one thing I would go back to do is see what sectors are – to see what sectors are really happy – what is important in your community, because I think it's – and what part of the sector is important in your community and then see what research, who is working on that right now, because I think in all – in these things there are people working on it. So let's not create – we have so much work here. Let's not recreate the wheel.

And how do we chunk it for ourselves? So see what sectors are emerging in your community, and then find who's working on those sectors. And our – right now, offshore wind is huge in our community. And we've been working very closely with Center for Economic Growth who's a Capital Region based organization who I learn so much every time I talk to them. But it helps me figure out how to best make this work for our young people.

MS. SMITH: Yes. That's great advice, and so plugging into some of the things we've already talked about, that's a great example of the green economy where we think there's going to be a lot of growth coming down the pike here and then also circling back to our initial rainbow arc of the five key elements. And that first one is that data driven practices and gathering your information, which is really what you just talked about.

And I see here Robin King just wrote, "I'm interested in the green economy."

Yeah. I think there's probably a lot of peer programs that you can connect to to think about that. We also – I'm going to highlight this in a little bit, but one of the upcoming trainings we have is on sort of the green construction training, certainly. So we'll highlight that as well.

I see that somebody's still typing here. I'm just trying to give a chance. Here we go, Pedro.

"Hi, I'm Pedro from YouthBuild Brownsville. I noticed some of the DOL initiatives were in Texas, specifically in Dallas. My question is if the team knows of any other initiatives for Texas."

I mean, what I would say is just initial point, Pedro, is that there is – I mean, Texas is a really big state, and Texas has a really fantastic labor entity, the Texas Workforce Commission. I think they're doing a lot of creative stuff there. I mean, their – we put a lot of money into Texas.

But in terms of specific initiatives offhand, I'd have to look at our grants page and see what's been recently announced. If you go to dol.gov/agency/eta, you can see some of the press releases around some of our recent initiatives. That might be the best place to start, but I think there's tons of things happening in Texas all the time. And they get a lot of our money because they're a big state.

I don't know if other people have any thoughts. Looks like Lisa is typing something. We only have a few minutes. So we'll see – I'll wait and see what Lisa's typing here, but if there's nothing else, then we'll – we can go to the next slides.

OK. Lisa wanted to remind us the ever-important survey helps us improve our technical systems and particularly our webinars. Let us know what we could have done better today. So definitely do stay on for that. Thank you for that reminder, Lisa.

OK. Let's go to our next couple slides since we don't have much time left.

So we have a lot of great resources for you. I want to highlight that a lot of these actually reside on the community of practice on WorkforceGPS for business engagement. So, of course, that's https:// – I just say that because people try to do the www and one thing to note is there's never a www with our WorkforceGPS communities of practice.

So it's just businessengagement.workforcegps.org. If you go there and you type in sector strategy in the search box, you will turn up a ton of great information. There's – one of the resources we didn't list here is this great one on how to ensure sustainability of successful sector strategies. And I would definitely highlight that one as well. But you'll also see we have some sector strategy resources that our YouthBuild page.

I also want to highlight a goof that I had just noticed in reviewing the slides in the middle of this. We actually have the titles reversed on two of these. Where it says Career Pathways Toolkit, that's actually the link for the Competency Model Clearinghouse, and where it says Competency Model Clearinghouse house, that's actually the link for the toolkit. So whoops. Apologies for that. But you can't go wrong by clicking on any of these resources because there's a lot of great ones.

We also highlight the National Skills Coalition's recent sector partnership policy toolkit. So lots of great information out there. Please do give it a look when you have a chance. OK. Next slide.

Just want to provide for you guys the contact information for myself and Phoebe. Thank you so much, Phoebe. Next slide. Mary, as well as Jennifer, thank you guys so much. So much great information and knowledge on this webinar. I almost called it a podcast. See. I have that in my brain now.

And then, finally, we do want to highlight for you guys to save the date for some of our upcoming trainings. We've already posted announcements about the NCCER train the trainer certification coming up in late April.

April 27th we're going to have a work experience webinar. That registration link isn't live yet, but it's coming very soon.

And then May 11th we have a virtual and hybrid learning webinar coming up.

And then I mentioned this earlier, but in May we are having our specific green construction training, NCCER Your Role in the Green Environment. So please do be on the lookout for information coming down the pike on those and where to register for them.

OK. Oh, and I see that Lisa posted the sustainability of a successful sector strategy link there for anybody who needed it.

All right. Well, we're right up at 3:30. So I want to thank you all for your time. Please do stay on for that survey. And at this point, I'm going to turn it over to Laura to bring us home.

(END)