**Workforce 3One**

**Transcript of Webinar**

**Best Practices in Employment Placement & Support for
Nontraditional Occupations in the Construction Industry**

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BRIAN KEATING: And without any further ado, I'm going to turn things over to our moderator today, Felecia Hart with the WANTO federal project officer with the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, Office of Apprenticeship. Felecia, take it away.

FELECIA HART: All right. Thanks, Brian. Good afternoon, everyone, and thank you all for joining us today for our WANTO webinar series. Today's webinar is on employment placement and support for nontraditional occupations in the construction industry. We have several WANTO grantees and industry experts that will share their best practices and promising practices in supporting women as they enter into the industry and employers and achieve a workforce diversity and inclusion.

But before we – well, before we get started, Brian actually wanted to take a survey, a poll to see where you're from and how many – where you're located and how many people are attending with you today.

MR. KEATING: All right. So like I said, if you haven't already, let us know your name and the name of your organization, your location, and again how many are joining you. We see many of you are typing that in. So thanks for that. We'll leave that welcome chat up for another minute or two. So go ahead now and just introduce yourself in that chat window. And again, very similar chat is where we're going to be accepting your questions and comments throughout today's event. So feel free to type those in as well once we go ahead and get started.

MS. HART: OK. Thanks, Brian. This is a little brief overview of the WANTO. It's Women in Apprenticeship and Nontraditional Occupations Act of 1992 authorized that the U.S. Department of Labor to award grants to assist employers and registered apprenticeship programs in promoting recruitment, training, and employment and retention of women in nontraditional occupations; with the U.S. Department of Labor defining – no – nontraditional occupations that comprise of less than 25 percent of women.

As you can see in this slide, the WANTO grantee service areas are Chicago Women in Trades and a consortium of tradeswomen organizations lead by the Oregon Tradeswomen, Inc. And each of the grantees has launched regional technical assistance centers under this grant to provide technical support and their service area, which are identified on the map above.

Today's presenters are Amy James-Neel with the construction job placement manager at the Oregon Tradeswomen, Inc. And we also have presenter Kathleen Culhane, who is the president of the organization on Nontraditional Employment for Women, and Chelsea McGrath who is a training manager for NEW.

Then today's – (inaudible) – is on employment and support for construction industry are focused in on the construction industry and its unique employer placement challenges and opportunities to both support an employer needs and promoting and retaining women in an industry which remains underrepresented.

Today's presentation will provide also information on how this model can increase diversity in the workplace pipeline and help women to achieve success in registered apprenticeship and nontraditional employment.

We will now take time to do another poll. Before we get started we'd like to know – take a moment to find out who our audience is.

MR. KEATING: All right. And basically, some of you may have already voted in this because we had this up before the webinar began. But we do want to invite you to let us know what type of industry stakeholder you are. And again, your choices are up on the screen. Please go ahead and click a radio button next to your choice. Your choices again are registered apprenticeship program, employer, WIOA or American Job Center, community college, community-based service program, government, or something else. If you choose something else, we'd love to know what that something else is in the chat, haven't already put it in when you introduced yourself.

And again, many of you have already voted, but if you haven't, go ahead and click one of those radio buttons now. Give you a few more seconds to do that, and I'll turn things back over to you, Felecia, to comment on what you're seeing so far.

MS. HART: OK. So far what I'm seeing is there are 41 percent of government. 13 percent registered apprenticeship programs. 18 percent is WIOA. We have 11.4 percent in community-based services, and 8.2 percent in other. That's where the poll stands right now.

MR. KEATING: All right. Great. And I think most of you voted. So we're going to take that down but thanks, everyone, who voted and look forward to you typing in your questions throughout today's event, again, in that chat window on the left-hand side of the screen.

MS. HART: OK. Thanks, Brian. I'd like to introduce Kathleen Culhane, the executive director, and Chelsea McGrath for NEW that's based out of New York. Kathleen, I'm turning it over to you.

KATHLEEN CULHANE: Thank you, Felecia. Hi, everyone. I am Kathleen Culhane, president of Nontraditional Employment for Women, and I am joined today by my colleague, Chelsea McGrath, training manager here at NEW. And we will be discussing our employer placement and supports here at NEW.

Our successful strategies for placing women include a coordinated effort between NEW, labor unions, contractors, owners, developers, and government. The number of women construction workers in New York City has grown substantially as a result of this effort. We are also going to discuss the New York City commission on construction opportunity and the NEW signature projects program, which have been two of our keys to success in increasing the number of women in the trade.

So to give you some history, in 2006 the mayor's commission on construction opportunity here in New York City, which included members of NEW's board in partnership with the Department of Labor, provided NEW with direct entry into apprenticeship programs. Direct entry allows our new graduates to bypass public recruitment and be slotted into upcoming apprenticeship class opportunities. This commission has recently been renewed with the current New York City administration.

Also, as part of NEW's partnership with the New York City Building and Construction Trades Council, NEW continues to be included in recent citywide PLAs – or project labor agreements – that focus on both maintaining union market share as well as increasing diversity on city projects.

One example is the PLA with the New York City Housing Authority or NYCHA, the city's agency for providing subsidized housing to low income New Yorkers. NYCHA has included NEW and its pre-apprenticeship partners in New York City in the PLA for work done on these projects.

I will now turn it over to Chelsea McGrath.

CHELSEA MCGRATH: Thank you, Kathleen. So to continue, as you can see here, this is a list of our union employer partners. Now, we are going to talk about NEW's signature project program, which refers tradeswomen to projects around New York City. Projects include all of the World Trade Center Towers, the new New York Bridge to replace what is now the Tappan Zee, the Barclays Center, and several Columbia University projects.

The NEW signature project program was launched in 2010 by NEW's board of directors to increase the number of tradeswomen on job sites, target local residents as tradeswomen on construction projects, ensure that there is an adequate supply of skilled tradeswomen prepared for the demands of the industry, and to help industry leaders adopt best practices.

The construction projects commit to a goal for hiring tradeswomen participation, and NEW acts as a resource to help the project meet its diversity and local hiring goals. NEW maintains a list of our out-of-work graduates by trade that can include certifications, zip code, year of apprenticeship, and other pieces of information valuable to a contractor.

NEW's signature projects reach out to NEW for union contacts, sample language for contracts, and tradeswomen referrals, where appropriate. Typically, projects are connected through NEW's board members, NEW's ambassador council, or our real estate developers council.

Here is a quote from the president of Ronsco, a carpentry contracting firm, regarding the new signature projects program. "Tradeswomen make up 15 percent of our workforce. Without NEW I don't think our company would hire nearly as many women. We hire women from NEW because getting into by the time they come to our jobs. They have been educated about the industry and what is really involved. That gives NEW referrals a two-to-one success rate over a standard candidate."

This concludes NEW's portion of the webinar on employment supports and placements. For further information or technical assistance, here's NEW's contact information. I'm now going to turn the presentation over to Amy James-Neel at Oregon Tradeswomen, Inc. to discuss connecting tradeswomen to the industry.

AMY JAMES-NEEL: Thanks, Kathleen. I appreciate it. My name is Amy James-Neel, and I'm the construction manager and job developer here at Oregon Tradeswomen, Inc. in Portland, Oregon. I'm a carpenter by trade, and I'm the student field trainer and classroom trainer.

So at Oregon Tradeswomen we are a pre-apprenticeship training program that prepares low income women for high income jobs in the construction trades. We currently graduate approximately 96 women per year. There are many more women that seek our services that we can't help at this time just because of funding, and we're always looking to expand that funding stream and for our partners to understand the importance of funding pre-apprenticeship.

The graduates who make it through our program, they are able to get work in the trades. Eighty-eight of them got their first trades job in 2014. So anyone who makes it through our program is well-prepared for the trades, and they are absolutely able to go to work.

Some of the women who go through our program decide that the trades is not a good fit for them, and that's fine. That's part of the success of our program is that, if they do make it through, much like Kathleen was saying, they are ready for industry, and industry knows that. 31 percent of our graduates are women of color, which is a tremendous success considering the population of Portland is only 21 percent people of color. And the average starting wage for our graduates was a little over $15 an hour.

So to prepare our students for a career in the construction trades, we have a number of processes that we have found to be successful. So one is that we partner with non-profits in our community that need construction work done as a way to offer our students that hands-on experience. All of our instructors are women.

They are journey-level carpenters from the industry, and it's good for our students to see these women out in the field being leaders as role models because most likely our students are going to be working with men out in the field. So it's really good for them to see that women can do this work. They're good leaders, and it helps them picture themselves doing the work. So we run all of our job sites like a professional site.

So it's not structured like a class or a workshop that you would take through a community college or through some school. We want it very much like you would a professional job site so the students get a really good idea of what it's like on the job site. So we talk about industry pace, the physical demands. There's endurance. They have to exhibit all of these things in order to be successful out in the field. So by the time they're finished with our field training, they are really confident, and they have very much the realization that they can learn how to learn.

And that's the thing that they struggle with the most is they feel like they have to be really good at this work when they go out into the industry and they learn out in the field under this sort of duress. So that's not the case, that they can rise to the occasion. They can learn how to learn, and it really builds their ability to go into an entry-level job in construction.

And a part of our desire to train our students for the industry is our weekly evaluations. So our instructors are asked to evaluate students as if they were an employee. So most of our instructors are contractors out in the field, and this feedback that's given to the students is very much part of their learning process of how to accept feedback.

And we know that this is super important skill for success in the industry is being able to grow, accept that feedback, and understand that it's not personal and just sort of know that that's part of the apprenticeship process and that's part of getting an entry-level job in the construction trade.

We also have a very strong reputation in our community. We preserve that reputation by only graduating students that we feel are ready to go to work. So if our instructors feel that the student is not ready for the industry, we don't complete them. We ask them to come back. So if we give them our stamp of approval, the industry knows that they're ready, and we preserve that reputation by only sending people out that we know are ready to go.

An important part of our program is teaching what it means to be a trades professional. So for our purposes, that is a strong emphasis on timeliness, what it means to show up on time. You can't just say, show up on time. You have to explain what on time means. In the construction industry that's different from some of the experiences that our students may have had in the past.

We talk a lot about attitude, what a professional attitude is out on the job site, out on the construction industry. We talk about preparedness as being part of a trades professional, having that childcare in place, bringing your rain gear, having your personal protective equipment, packing your lunch and having that lunch be something that will sustain you through a long day of physical labor, having your tools and that they be in good shape.

We talk about communication, the importance of communication, that in the industry it's direct and it's clear and that your reputation is really important and follow through is really important for preserving a reputation. Leadership, just what it means to be a leader. You need to step into a role, even if you're uncomfortable with it. You need to step up. You need to be the first one at that tool or first one at that task. These are all indicators of those who are going to be successful in the trades.

And we also talk a lot about the importance of grit or that perseverance, is what we call it. When things get hard, you have to do it anyway, and that's the difference between people who are successful in the trades and people who wash out is having that eye on the long-term prize, having that eye on what you're end goal is.

And we talk about that a lot in class, and we know that that is the difference between people who are not successful and people who really stick it out is having that knowledge in the back of their head that, if they have that perseverance, they're more likely to get through, even when things are tough.

So some of our job placement strategies, we partner with training agents here in our city that can offer our students an insight into what the different trades are. So we have field trips out to these various training centers, and the students get their hands on the tools. They get to talk to people that are in the industry doing the work. So something usually resonates with the student through the course of our program, and then we are able to help them navigate toward that career.

This also allows our partners to know that the student knows what they're getting into. They've talked to people at the training center. They've seen the training center. They've had their hands on the tools, and that they know they're getting into, which is something that the training providers really value about their partnership with Oregon Tradeswomen.

So we work really closely with what we see as four pathways into the construction work. So we work with union apprenticeships, the training programs, and their contractors. We work with open shop training centers and their contractors. We work with non-apprenticeship affiliated contractors, such as residence remodelers, folks in the weatherization industry – (inaudible) – contractors, and environmental remediation contractors.

I think part of our success is that the construction manager, I'm one of their field trainers. So I can see – I work very closely with the students in the field, and I'm really aware of their strengths and their opportunities for growth. And we're really honest with our contractors so that they trust us. We connect students with opportunities that are going to be a really good fit.

We also work with our training centers to come up with – we are typically known as boot camps. So this is a scenario set up by the training center in partnership with Oregon Tradeswomen where students will go through a very intensive training. And it's usually just a vetting process to make sure they know what they're getting into, that they have that resilience, they know how to show up, and that they are invested in a career in this particular industry.

And if they make it through this boot camp, there is some kind of facilitated entry attached at the end of that. So maybe they'll go in as a second-term apprentice instead of a first-term, or maybe they'll go to the bottom of the auto work list without having an interview because the employer knows if they show up at the training center, knows that they show up and they do this thing. They're invested. They don't need to go through an interview process. They've already had skin in the game.

And some of our employers, they don't have opportunities for entry-level. I mean, the fact is they're looking for mid-level carpenters or mid-level sheet metal workers. And once we convinced them of the value of having a diverse workforce, oftentimes we'll work with them to create an entry-level version of their trade jobs.

So it will be a training position or maybe an entry-level maintenance position or a helper position. And these are really good opportunities for our employers to get their eyes on our students and the students to grow their skillset so that they're better prepared for those trade jobs.

So part of our success also in placing our graduates into trade jobs is selling the benefit of a diverse crew. So there are goals on many job sites which in some ways tell the benefits, but we're invested in letting employers know that there are benefits beyond simply meeting these goals to having a diverse work crew.

So the first thing we do is we deconstruct that can't find the women argument. We deconstruct that. So of course because we have graduates on the shelf ready to go to work, they know that there are women who want this work, and they're talking to me. And I'm a 20-year industry veteran and I can tell them that we want this work and I love this work and that's a value. So we are able to tell them that women are available. They're good at this work, and we also assess their outreach strategies.

So if they are unable to find women who want this work, then they – we need to tweak their outreach strategy. What does their recruitment material look like? Does it have images of women doing the work on it? Is it gender neutral language? We need to make sure that they're reaching out to the population that they're looking to hire.

We also know that diverse crews have a tremendous broad skillset and a better pool of resources solving challenges. So a group of people who come from different backgrounds, different experiences, they're much more able to solve problems, and it makes for a better crew, a more nimble crew. You're better able to communicate with the job owners, and those valuable perspectives mean efficiency. And that adds to the bottom line, and contractors like that.

You also have access of course to contracts with diversity goals. You have an embedded crew that's trained, and they do good work. You're naturally going to have more opportunities open up to you. Men and women – diverse men and women make exceptional leaders, and we know this too. So we know that diversity brings client connectivity, valuable perspective that's prosperity.

We also know that collaborative style is good for the team building mentality, communication styles effective with crews. If women are in charge and diverse men are in charge, there's that attention to detail. All these things are really good reasons to diversify and really good ways to communicate with your employers that it's in their benefit to have a diverse work crew. So I'm going to send it back to Felecia Hart from the Department of Labor for question and answer. Thanks so much for your time.

MS. HART: Thank you, Amy and all of our presenters today. We are now going to open up for discussions for choosing answers – choosing questions and answers that you may have. So please enter your questions into the chat room at this time.

MR. KEATING: All right. And again, please go ahead and type in those questions and comments into the chat now, and we will be answering them as many as we can today. So thanks for that. All right. Great. So we've got a couple of questions. Just give us a sec here to queue those up.

MR. ALESHIRE: Hey, Brian. This is Chad Aleshire here with Felecia and Franchella. There's a question coming in that I think either NEW or OTI may be able to answer.

Question is about the minimum requirements that are required for people to enter apprenticeship programs. "It seems that the underrepresentation of women in construction apprenticeships is perpetuated in part because some employers – (inaudible) – say they can't find qualified women. My understanding is that apprenticeships are generally considered entry level. Is that what the experts' understanding is? Is there some basic definition of qualified? If so, what are the minimum requirements for entry into an apprenticeship program?" Can one of our speakers speak to that?

JESSICA SUAREZ: This is Jessica from NEW. I can take that one. So basically, there are no qualifications except that they need to have a high school diploma or GED and be interested in the type of work. So for our program, which is a pre-apprenticeship training program, we require that they're over the age of 18, have that high school diploma or equivalency, and are able to stand on their feet for eight hours a day and are able to lift at least 50 pounds is something that we're basically looking for. And those are our basic requirements.

CHAD ALESHIRE: (inaudible) – NEW, can you tell me how your pre-apprenticeship training program was able to get direct entry into some of the registered apprenticeship programs or with employers?

MS. CULHANE: Thank you. This is Kathleen.

So to dive in further, as discussed in the presentation, back in 2005, 2006 there was in New York City a mayor's commission on construction opportunity that was created specifically to ensure opportunities for the building and construction trades, unions, and apprenticeship programs to reflect the diversity of New York City. And so members of NEW's board and NEW's partners in construction and real estate industry were part of that commission, along with our friends in government.

And out of that came opportunities for what's called direct entry for NEW for 10 percent of women in each apprenticeship class for all the building and construction trades and for our two partners that are – one is the Edward J. Malloy Initiative for Construction Skills working specifically with high school students and some programs with adults, and the Helmets to Hard Hat program, which is a national program working with veterans and a few years ago Helmets to Hard Hats New York City became its own non-profit.

And so those are – out of that commission the direct entry was established, and it was adopted by our partners at the Department of Labor. And that's been continued up through and renewed.

MR. ALESHIRE: All right. Thank you. We're looking. The questions are starting to fly in now. We appreciate it. We're trying to traffic cop them a little bit. Let's have a question for Amy, and it's a pretty basic one but I think an important one. "How do you form partnerships with your contractors?"

MS. JAMES-NEEL: Well, basic question but complex answer. A lot of the partnerships that we form with contractors are based on reputation. So as I talked about, we turn out a project – a product, meaning our students, that are trained, trained, and ready to work. So it's a benefit to them to have people coming into their firm that have been vetted. So I am from the industry.

The contractors know me, know that I'm from the industry. I've been a builder for 20 years. I'm in the field with the students, and I am not going to put my name at the bottom of an e-mail to them saying that the student is ready to go to work if they're not. And they've grown to trust that, and contractors talk.

So my best advertisement are my students who have been placed with these contractors and are performing well. So I value making those personal connections, picking somebody from my class who I know is going to be a good fit for that contractor. I meet with them. I go out to their job sites. I sort of get a feel of the atmosphere, and I make sure that I connect them with the graduate that's going to be a good fit.

I think also, like I stated, it's turning out students that are prepared. And not everyone who goes through our program is prepared for the industry, and we just simply don't graduate them until they're ready. And it's really important to preserve that reputation so that contractors will know that if they call us, we send somebody out. They're going to be ready for the industry.

I think also I think making those personal connections, going out, helping them assess their outreach materials, that builds trust. And when you've built that trust and that reputation with one contractor, the next contractor is going to ask them, hey, how did you get that contract? How did you manage navigating that CBA? All of these things become self-perpetuating.

MR. ALESHIRE: There's another question coming in for Kathleen. Thank you, by the way, for the last answer. I'm so sorry. We were just keeping our eyes up here on the screen. The questions are coming in fast. They're excellent too.

A question for Kathleen. "You mentioned that your program was able to bypass public recruitment. Can you talk more about how you did that?"

MS. CULHANE: Great. So what we refer to as direct entry or direct opportunity that came out of that commission I spoke of earlier is – how that actualizes is that each time a building and construction trades apprenticeship program starts a new class, they're – we are able to work with them directly to send successful graduates of our pre-apprenticeship program for opportunities for that class.

So what that looks like is that here in New York City, as is elsewhere around the country I know as well, the public recruitment process to get into the building and construction trades registered apprenticeship programs can look like anywhere from standing on a line and sometimes standing on a line over a number of days to wait for possibly the opportunity to put your name into the hat, as they would say, and for possibly your number to get picked to have a possible opportunity to get into a number of slots in the next year or often two years.

Oftentimes a public recruitment process happens maybe once every two years to get into the trades apprenticeship programs. And I know a number of them have now moved to online systems and such. For NEW since that 2006 time, we've had the opportunity where each time an apprenticeship program starts a new class – and new classes could start – typically one starts in September but one classes, depending on the trade, could start even once every quarter, for example.

Each time a new class starts, we have an opportunity to send a specific number of candidates that are successful graduates of our program for opportunities. And now, they don't bypass the remainder of the process to be accepted into apprenticeship program, be it a physical test or written test and usually interviews and the like.

And as Amy was talking about with Oregon Tradeswomen, for NEW as well, we don't graduate someone from our pre-apprenticeship training unless we're sure that they're ready for that opportunity. Thank you.

MR. ALESHIRE: I'm sorry. Thank you, Kathleen. We've got another one coming up for Kathleen. We're going to bounce around a little bit. This one's for Amy. "Amy, can you give us some information on the best way to reach women in the community, where to advertise an event geared towards women? How do we get the word out to women that apprenticeships are available and out there for them?"

MS. JAMES-NEEL: Well, we do not have problem reaching women. As I said, there are many more women that come in our door looking for our service than we can help. But part of that success is just the longevity of our program and our graduates talking to their friends about how much they make and how satisfying their job is and this program that helped sort of launch them into their careers.

So I think our graduates are probably our best advocates, but our strategy is to reach women where they are. So women are on the bus. Women are at the DMV. Women are at employment centers. Women are at libraries. And we flood this community with information about how you can earn a living wage by going through our program. So I think that sort of outreach helps.

We also have a very large annual women in trades career fair, which is a tremendous way to get the word out about the opportunities for women to make more than three times the federal minimum wage by going into construction, and that appeals to women. So this event is a large event. We take over one of our training centers.

We have representatives from all the trades out bringing all of their tools. We have a crane out there and we have jackhammers and we have bucket trucks and there's welding and there are – you can build a house or you can run a fire truck. Just every trade conceivable is out at the trade center, and we have girls come in and young women come in and the general population come in and get their hands on the tools.

All of the workshops are led by tradeswomen, and it's a tremendous opportunity to sort of touch on the idea that this could be a career for you. So that mentorship component, that being able to see these women doing the work, see them running this equipment, they see it on TV. The media comes out and covers it, and the press is really good for getting that information out.

But frankly, our graduates are what we – when we survey our incoming students, the majority of them have a friend or know somebody or their parents know somebody who went through the program and were successful.

I think there's also sort of touch on the idea that this is a good career for women is that girls don't always know that this is an opportunity for them. I know I certainly didn't. My career path would have been completely different had somebody introduced the concept of women in construction earlier in my life. So we sort of go on that principle that if girls are introduced to the idea that women can do this work, they are more likely to consider it as a career option.

So there's a youth component to our program, and we know that there's gender socialization. I mean, the – we talk about that you can do whatever you want to do. Whatever career you want to do, you can do it. But if you've ever walked down the toy aisle of a store and seen what's considered girls' toys and what's considered boys' toys, we know that's not true. We know that there's gender socialization. We are sort of geared toward fields that are dominated by men or women from a very early age.

So overcoming the – just that sort of block that this is a good career for women and starting putting a drill in a girl's hand when she's really young and building a playhouse, which is something that our youth program does, that gives girls and young women just the idea that they could make considerably more money if they go into an industry that is dominated by men. Thank you.

MR. ALESHIRE: I'm sorry. Thanks, Amy. Another question came in. I think this might be best for Kathleen. "There was a reference made to the use of PLAs to help expand participation of women in apprenticeship." Kathleen, can you tell us a little bit more about PLAs and how they work, how you use them to recruit?

MS. CULHANE: Great. Thank you. So PLAs refers to project labor agreements and utilized often here in New York City but I know around the country as well to – as projects are in the development stage or as projects around the city are looking to be launched, working closely with the building and construction trades here in New York City and others involved in projects and government, project labor agreements are established to ensure that the work and the workers reflect the diversity of the city.

And so project labor agreements – in New York City, many of the project labor agreements, be it with – the example we gave was with NYCHA, the New York City Housing Authority. In New York there is also project labor agreements with the School Construction Authority that constructs all the schools in New York – public schools in New York City.

There's a number of project labor agreements in New York City, and part of – and nontraditional employment for women, along with the partners I spoke about earlier, the Edward J. Malloy Initiative for Construction Skills and Helmets to Hard Hats, are all named as pre-apprenticeship program or feeders into apprenticeship programs that should be utilized to ensure that those projects have both women and minorities and others included on those projects.

MR. ALESHIRE: Thank you so much. We have another one coming in. This one is – I think it might be best for – again, I'm going to throw it out there. You guys tell me who you want to – who should answer but, "How do you screen females for minimum requirement? Do you screen or test their mathematical abilities, their mechanical, spatial, or physical abilities? Could you give us a little bit more about that screening or testing?"

MS. CULHANE: Sure. I'd be happy to talk to that. We screen women much the same way you would screen men. It's just suitability for the industry. So in order for them to be entered into our program, they have to demonstrate that they've been clean and sober for six months. They have to have stable housing.

We have determined that women who don't have stable housing simply can't – they can't endure the rigors of the program and typically don't succeed. So that's become one of our parameters. They must have their GED in place again because our – the industry expects it. Our employers expect it. So we expect it. They have to be 18 years old. They must have a driver's license in place, and most importantly, they need to be serious about a career in construction.

So there are some people that come through our doors who are interested in fixing up their house or they're curious about how drywall works and we screen those people out. Although we understand the need for those services, that's not what our program addresses. So we really screen them tightly for their ability to be serious.

There is a fitness component to getting into our program. It's very basic, but we have also determined that that's linked to whether or not they succeed both in our program and in the industry. We offer a very simple math test, but we don't use it as a screening tool. We basically use it as an assessment tool. We know we cover math in class, and we know our employers.

Our training centers will train them in math. So we're not really worried about whether or not they can multiply and divide fractions when they come in our door. We'll give them that training. Our employers will give them that training. We don't link that to whether or not they're successful in the trades. It doesn't tend to be that way. So if they come in with low math or into our program, it's not at all linked to whether or not they'll succeed out in the field because our employers will give them that training.

So we're happy to share this process. I mean, we certainly don't want people to reinvent the wheel. We've tweaked our process over the last 10 years, and we have determined what worked for us. And we're very, very happy to share any documentation around what's working for us with anybody interested. Thanks.

MR. ALESHIRE: Thank you. Thank you. All right. There's a question coming in that I'm – looks like maybe Kathleen might be best to answer it. "Have any of the presenters been able to have their programs identified for direct entry in the sponsor's registered apprenticeship selection procedures?" I know we had a similar question come in earlier, but, Kathleen, can you take a shot at that?

MS. CULHANE: Yes. I think I understand the question. So we are identified through the Department of Labor for direct entry, and we work with our registered apprenticeship program sponsors in that capacity and so that we work directly with both our sponsors and the Department of Labor over the years in terms of bringing in more partners in that work where registered apprenticeship programs are working with us through the Building and Construction Trades Council and through the Department of Labor in order to increase those direct entry opportunities for graduates of nontraditional employment for women.

MR. ALESHIRE: Thank you. Amy, another question for you that's come through. "Have you utilized pre-apprenticeship programs to get people into your program?"

MS. JAMES-NEEL: Well, our program is a pre-apprenticeship program. So we work closely with other pre-apprenticeship programs in Portland to make sure that the student that's entering the pre-apprenticeship is in the training that will best suit their skill set or their situation. But we are pre-apprenticeship.

MR. ALESHIRE: OK. Great. Thanks. Appreciate you clarifying for our participant.

And I'm sorry. Just give us a second. We're just continuing to scan as the questions come through, and I'm also keeping an eye on the clock here. I'll tell you what. I'm going to throw this question to Felecia here in the room with me. Felecia, our participant's asking, "We would like to launch an outreach effort to attract more women into apprenticeships and/or the trades. Where should I look for best practice and/or lessons learned so we can launch a program without recreating the wheel?"

MS. HART: Hi. Thanks. That's a great question. In our presentation on page five there is a map of where the WANTO grantees are located, and they are setting up technical assistance resource centers for sponsors and organizations that are interested in setting up registered apprenticeship programs and doing pre-apprenticeship. And also I would like to turn it over to Franchella Kendall who has some more – additional resources for you to get involved with.

FRANCHELLA KENDALL: Thanks, Felecia. That's a great question. I'm really excited to be here with you today to provide you some information about two brand new resources that have been developed by organizations here at the Department of Labor. I had them up on the slide.

As you can see, one of them has been developed by the Office of Apprenticeship. It is a pre-apprenticeship toolkit. It provides a lot of resources and information, and this toolkit will help community-based organizations and other workforce intermediary build and sustain quality pre-apprenticeship training programs. There is a wealth of information about outreach and recruitment, how to start a pre-apprenticeship program. The information will help organizations be able to meet the requirements in the Training and Employment Notice 13-12.

The other resource, as I mentioned, is from the Women's Bureau. It's the Women's Bureau Nontraditional Occupations Portal. The Women's Build, Protect, and Move America Portal will provide information and resources about women accessing higher paying careers in transportation, construction, and protective services. You can learn about training and apprenticeship opportunities, supportive services, existing research, and tradeswomen organizations.

This portal also will have success stories, promising practice, and guidance on workplace rights. We feel that both of these will be valuable resources, and we encourage you to utilize the information that is on this website. And we hope to – and we plan to continue to update the information as we get more best practices for the specific requirements that are met in the Training and Employment 13-12.

So those are some resources we hope that you'll look into, and we look forward to hearing your feedback on them. OK. Felecia?

MS. HART: Thank you, Franchella. Well, thanks, everyone, for participating on the call. As you can see up there, we have the upcoming webinars. We have one coming from March on creating equitable jobsites and classrooms for sexual harassment and prevention, and then we have one coming up in June for best practices in mentoring for nontraditional occupations.

Well, it looks like we are out of time for further questions. We'd like to thank all of you for participating on this call this afternoon, and thank you for all your comments and your questions. They were all good ones.

Today's webinar is being recorded, and a PowerPoint will be available on Workforce3One website. And we encourage you to register for the 2016 webinars in this series. Thank you.

(END)