**WorkforceGPS**

**Transcript of Webinar**

**Implementation of Fiscal Year 2016 RESEA Grants**

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LAURA CASERTANO: Now, I'm going to move us right over to the presentation. Again, welcome to the "Implementation of Fiscal Year 2016 RESEA Grants," the webinar. Again, if you haven't let us know already, please just let us know where you're joining us from in the chat window.

Now, I'm going to turn us over to the moderator. His name is Lawrence Burns. So he's the reemployment program coordinator for Division of UI Operations at the Employment and Training Administration, U.S. Department of Labor. Larry?

LAWRENCE BURNS: Thanks, Laura. Hi, everybody. This is Larry Burns from the Division of Unemployment Insurance, UI, Operations and I am pretty new to the team but I am working on reemployment programs, including RESEA.

And I'm very happy that you guys joined us. Just looking as we were setting up, the registration had a very good turnout and a good mix of people from state workforce agencies, UI agencies, as well as some locals and some board people. So welcome to the session.

I'm joined here by a few other folks from the Department of Labor national office, including Gay Gilbert, who's the administrator of the Office of Unemployment Insurance, and Betty Castillo, who's the chief of the Division of UI Operations. So they'll be co-presenting with me on a few subjects.

But I also am very happy to be joined by a few of our states that are currently operating RESEA. We realize that there's a big difference between theory and practice. So we're really looking forward to seeing what their models look like in practice, in reality.

So I want to give a warm welcome to Ann Astin and Kristine Porter from the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development and also Beth Goguen from Massachusetts Department of Career Services. So I'll be handing over the presentation to them shortly to go through some really interesting information about what's going on in their states.

For the agenda today we do have a very packed agenda. So we're going to try to keep things moving along, and we're going to reserve all questions for the end. So as you go there's a question field. Please type those questions in. We'll keep a tally and try to keep as much time as we can at the end to get to those, but just to keep things moving along we're going to go straight through the presentation, then have our little discussion at the end.

To kick it off we're doing our introductions now. We're also going to hand it over to Gay shortly to give us some opening remarks about the importance of RESEA Division moving forward and then we will go into our two state case studies. So we'll have the meat of our presentation will be based around those two case studies, and we're going to wrap up with some research highlights and some frequently asked questions that we've been seeing here at the national office before going into your questions.

And also as a heads-up, throughout this presentation I've included quite a few polls where we're going to try to get some information from you about the status of your programs, questions, TA needs moving forward.

So speaking of polls, we already headed this one up at the beginning, and I notice that, like I said, we had a really good mix of folks, primarily state workforce agencies and state UI agencies, which we expected, but also a few others joining us. So – (inaudible) – filling that out and we'll go on to the next slide.

So I'm going to hand it over to Gay now to get us started with some opening remarks about the RESEAs, and then we'll get started.

GAY GILBERT: Great. Good afternoon, everybody. Pleasure to be with you here today, and thanks to Larry for moderating. We're real excited to have him in the Office of Unemployment Insurance, more recently from the Office of Workforce Investment. So he has a nice blend of knowledge of the workforce system and UI to bring to this – to his work with RESEA.

I'm not going to say a whole lot, but I think I do want to kind of, just to set the stage, we've been evolving the RESEA program over time and obviously, most recently a number of – I think two major changes that I'll highlight. One is that we've moved to consistent targeting, as you know, starting last year, and hopefully everybody's transitioning this year. So we're focusing on those most likely to exhaust and working to prevent long-term unemployment as well as focusing on our UCX claimants and our transitioning veterans, so also a population that tends to have more barriers to employment. So that's a big change.

The other big change I think is the fact that our funding has grown, and it's also now allowed to be used not only for what was traditionally the REA portion of things but also for actual reemployment service delivery. And that $35 million bump was a big one I think, and it's the first kind of real injection of new money into our workforce system for quite some time. So pretty important.

I want to spend two seconds talking about RESEA in the context of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. Obviously, actually, RESEA is sort of a microcosm I think of WIOA – of sort of the intent of WIOA in terms of integrated service delivery and cross-program integration. And it's also – in the sweep of all the reemployment services we're doing broadly for all jobseekers, I think it's a program that can very effectively be leveraged among our other work with regard to rapid response, with regard to trade, with regard to dislocated worker program, et cetera. So I'm hoping that all of you in your states are thinking about RESEA as one of those bridge programs that really does speak to the vision for WIOA.

So the other thing I might say is that this is I hope the first of many webinars. We obviously want to learn more from all of you about and looking forward to hearing from the states today but want to do that over time with more states because we want to understand how the new model works for you.

Are we reaching our intended audience, and how are your costs being dealt with; how you're using the reemployment service delivery money versus the traditional REA money, and obviously at some point we're probably going to mount another evaluation of this program since we've moved to a new model to make sure that we continue to see the really strong evidence that says this is a great program, which it is.

So that's really what I wanted to say to start with, and I know you have a packed agenda. So I'm going to turn it back to Larry, and thanks, everybody.

MR. BURNS: Thank you, Gay. So as Gay mentioned, RESEA is a transition. There's some new changes, some new elements in there. So before we get into the state case studies, we wanted to just ask a quick polling question here about where you are in the process when it comes to moving over to the RESEA model.

Are you fully transitioned and operational and have been for a while, three months or more, recently transitioned, less than three months, currently in the process of transitioning, or still planning to start but will be well underway before October 1? So this just helps us get an idea for where you are but also where each other are in the process to help with the questions and answers later. So we'll give just a minute for folks to answer.

Great. So thanks for providing the feedback. It seems like the majority, well over 50 percent, close to 63 percent of you are fully transitioned and operational. That's great to hear, and a few others are well on their way. So we've tried to make this webinar applicable to everybody, no matter where you are on the transition, and I think no matter where you are there's always lessons to be learned from other states.

So we will be moving on to our case studies, and first up is Wisconsin. On my way in somebody asked if I picked Wisconsin to go first because they were the first to adopt UI. I had not thought of that, but I will claim it now. Sure. So I will hand it over to our presenters from Wisconsin, allow them to introduce themselves a little bit more and dig into their presentation.

KRISTINE PORTER: Well, good afternoon, everyone. I am Kristine Porter. I'm the bureau director for Job Service with the Department of Workforce Development in the great state of Wisconsin.

ANN ASTIN: And I am Ann Astin. I'm the RESEA program coordinator, Division of Employment and Training from Wisconsin. Good afternoon. So I'm going to go ahead and get (settled ?) and get started with you and just kind of give you a little bit of a background of what we implemented in Wisconsin. We did a complete redesign of our reemployment services program last year, and I kind of just wanted to give you a walk-through of what had happened and why we decided to take this – do a redesign of the program.

So previous we were only able to serve participants in person at local job centers. Of course transitioning to RESEA, that is the approach that we have taken. During peak unemployment levels only 25 percent of our eligible participants could be served. We've changed from a one-size-fits-all approach and really want to focus on those most barriered and hardest to serve.

The biggest portion of our whole redesign project really focuses around this next bullet point here. Sessions were scheduled without considering attendees' actual availability. We have adopted an approach and we now have self-scheduling in the state of Wisconsin. And prior to that our attendance rates were very low.

So with redesign what our key components were here was we've transitioned to an online orientation and assessment for all unemployment claimants who are required to look for work. We have a scoring and automated triaging system based on the answers that they provide to the questions on the assessment. We have online tutorials that we adopted from the state of Utah and transitioned to fit Wisconsin's needs. Self-scheduling, use of e-mail for communication, unemployment claimants will only get one letter that's sent to them.

All other communication is done via the use of e-mail. Increased UI/DET coordination, this whole project there is I believe what we have considered now about 27 touch points web services that we use to communicate back and forth from DET, Division of Employment and Training, to unemployment. Law and policy changes and then of course our communications just in general.

MS. PORTER: Before Ann gets into the real process that we go through, it's important to know that this transition into the RESEA and the self-scheduling and all the things that she has just briefly shared with you right now has really streamlined our process not only for the jobseekers, participants, claimants but also at the local job centers. Because the participants have the ability to do so many things online, including scheduling themselves for the available RESEA sessions. It really puts the motivation and the control in the hands of the participant and the claimant.

Previously to doing this automation and this online, we had a lot of claimants and jobseekers that would need to come into the job centers and have someone personally talk with them and call UI or help them kind of wander through the process to find the right opportunity for them and the sessions that they needed to attend in the appropriate timeline. And sometimes that was difficult, and sometimes there were changes that needed to be made even after something was scheduled.

So it has given the opportunity for more control to the participants, claimants, and jobseekers, and has really provided better communication and has lessened from a local job center perspective crisis points when it comes to handling some of the questions that the folks would have. So really it has been extremely positive for both groups of people as we have moved through this.

MS. ASTIN: Wonderful. So to get started, for Wisconsin in order to be in – get into the RESEA program, there's some criteria that have to be met. The individual has to be registered on the Job Center of Wisconsin and showing you a visual of what our website looks like. They have to be required to look for work, and they have to have received their first UI benefit payment. Once that happens, a letter gets sent out to them and instructs them to go online to this location to complete the online orientation and assessment.

This shot here is what the online orientation is. It's basically a walk through that describes all the services that are available at the local job center and will also provide links to helpful information in guiding them through the employment process. Once that's completed, it will take them to the online assessment.

Now, this is the step here that we are using as basically the – our profiling methodology. Based on their answers to the questions that are provided here, 31 questions, we have scoring set up behind the scenes on this to determine those that are the most barriered and would benefit from the RESEA program. At the end of it they'll be able to look back through, and there's all the responses to their questions. Once this is completed the system will then tell them – I'm sorry. I want to back up here.

So at any point in time, based on the level of staffing or the unemployment rates in Wisconsin, we have the ability to change the scoring at a moment's notice. We can do it at a statewide level. We can do it with each and every local job center also. Once we determine what we want to set the scoring at, it becomes effective the next day. So we put this piece in place so that we didn't have to continually go back to our developers and have to change. So this was a great addition to our redesign process.

But once the individuals – and it may be a little hard to see – have completed the assessment, they are then notified on the Job Center of Wisconsin what their next steps are. We have compliance points all along the way. Once it's determined that the participant is going to be an RES participant, they have 21 days in which to schedule and attend an in-person RESEA session. We are typically seeing these individuals in about the third week of their unemployment claim. So they're getting in very, very quickly into the program.

So the next step here, once they are told what they need to do next, they also receive an e-mail letting them know that they have compliance that they have to follow. This is I guess what we want to say is the best part of our whole redesign process is the scheduling piece. Previous when they would get the letter in the mail, they were told the date, time, and location. They had the ability to make a change only one time.

So if something were to come up, they basically had one chance to change that date, time, and location. Here in that 21-day period we have it set up so they can change it as many times as they want as long as they're still within their compliance deadlines. They can search by city or zip code, and they can search basically statewide. We implemented that, in the event the person was maybe traveling for a job interview, whatever the case may be, that they would be able to attend a session anywhere in the state that they chose. So this was a great addition, great feature for claimants.

Once they have scheduled they receive another e-mail that gives them the information of when they need to attend, date, time, and location again, and all the materials that they need to bring with them. On the Job Center of Wisconsin website, all the through the process the claimant is notified where they are at by either a green checkmark saying you have completed or a red X on what they have not completed yet.

So it's very visual. It helps them navigate through the process and know exactly where they are at during the entire process. So once they have completed, next screen here shows that they've completed everything they need to do. Just that they need to actually attend the session.

So the lessons that we've learned through this process for the redesign was we have the dedicated cross-division test environment. That was a big factor in this in joining the two unemployment insurance and the Division of Employment and Training. Just the level of communication has increases significantly.

We have real-time information that's being shared, and it keeps the unemployment claimants – their claims current and up to date at all times. We formalized external communications planning, created cross-divisional team with open communication, like I said. I think that communication between the divisions is wonderful. It's great in the state of Wisconsin here, and we shared the statement of work. With this process too we were able to get early definition of reporting and performance requirements.

So our best practices, we're using tableau for dashboards, metrics. Our management now has the ability for reporting much easier than previous. Executive commitment of course and our self-automated scheduling, fluid cross-divisional communication, again, I can't stress that enough, how much that has improved just with going into this project. And again, real-time integration of compliance.

So what I wanted to let you know, with the self-scheduling piece how much this has improved, increased compliance. Pre-redesign we had a show rate of about 55 percent. Post-redesign and still holding steady we're about 82 percent show rate, and that was almost immediate. Just with the ability for the claimant to schedule themselves and basically put their destiny in their own hands for their reemployment needs I think has significantly helped this process. Increased class attendance, our attendance rates are, like I said – are great. New metrics and reporting numbers.

Here is just a shot of our tableau environment that we use. Up in the top right-hand corner it shows the holding steady of our show rates. This can be used at a high level. It can be used from our management in the local workforce development areas, and they can drill it down to their need.

What we've also found throughout this process is that the turnaround to compliance has significantly increased. What we're finding is that individuals that come in for RESEA and the employment services, they're trying to compliance at the point of this slide with 42.4 percent were completing in five days or less. So that's great news.

I mean, if we're seeing the individual coming in in about the third to fourth week of their unemployment insurance claim, we're getting them through that process very quickly. They're completing that online orientation assessment. They're getting themselves scheduled, and they're getting into the local job centers. So that's – that was a great plus also. So for me, that's all I had on my end.

MR. BURNS: Great. Thank you very much, Ann and Kristine, for presenting on that. It's really interesting, especially the self-scheduling. We've done a lot of research not just in RESEA but in other programs, and that's a really powerful tool for getting participation and especially that combined with real-time info is really interesting.

And what we'll be doing is we're going to be moving into our next presentation. I just wanted to remind folks we'll be answering questions at the end. If you have any questions specific for Wisconsin and their model, just include Wisconsin somewhere in your question. Type it into the box, and we'll do our best to get to them at the end of the session. But to keep things moving along, I'm going to pass things over to our colleagues in Massachusetts to present on their RESEA model. So, Beth, take it away.

BETH GOGUEN: All right. Good afternoon, everybody. Hello from the Bay State. As you know, the RESEA program is funded by DOL, and it assists our UI claimants with their return-to-work process. DCS communicates regularly with DUA and our career center partners using the MOSES database to timely and accurately identify and report any issues that come through regarding RESEA participants.

In Massachusetts we are a multiple RESEA state. We have an initial RESEA and then RESEA review. So our RESEA program provides claimants entry into a full array of reemployment services available at our career centers, and it helps to ensure that our claimants will comply with UI eligibility and prevent any improper payments. Massachusetts has always leveraged RES with REA components as part of the mandatory requirements, and we've also modeled our program so that customers are integrated into our career center customer flow.

We've also used RESEA participation to help identify customers for other programs that flow through our career centers, including as we move into WIOA, appropriate referrals that could be made to our partners within the career center, such as UTA, Mass Rehab, etc. as we start building those partnerships – continuing those partnerships.

So our enrollment process, each week we select up to 2,000 permanently separated and UCX claimants and they also have to receive their first UI payment and then they are enrolled into the RESEA program. They are notified by DUA, Department of Unemployment, of their mandatory participation and meeting dates and requirements that they have to meet and deadlines.

These notices are also checked in their – we have a new – well, it's three years new – UI online database in our state, and so people have – customers, claimants have mail inboxes in their UI accounts in which those letters will stay so that they can refer to them and it will help them to ensure that they make their deadlines.

The first notification, as I indicated, is they're enrolled at the time they receive their first check, and then they are sent that letter. It is mailed out to them, and it's also kept in their UI online inbox. Second notifications and third notifications are made in the form of a robo call, and they are for those who haven't completed who need to, for example, attend – still attend the CCS, which I'm going to go through the phases of our RESEAs and go over the RESEA review.

So the RESEA program consists of developing an individual needs assessment, creating and developing a career action plan that meets the individual needs of the claimant, and identifying next steps in their job search. We review work search activity to ensure that they're complying with the requirements of – for collecting UI. We assist in connecting them to LMI research that will help them in their job search.

They also register in our Mass JobQuest system, where they can do job search, etc., and we also have them sign off on a state program that has some specific deadlines referred to as the Training Opportunities Program. So that has some particular requirements, and so we're up front ensuring that they are notified of that and can make those deadlines, should they want to participate in that program.

So as for the program overview, the first step is for them to attend a career center seminar, which I was referring to earlier as a CCS, and they have to complete an initial RESEA. So the career center seminar introduces the jobseeker to the career center services, and it's one of the mandatory requirements.

Additional reemployment services are required and recommended based on their individual needs, and the CCS can be conducted – normally it's conducted in a group setting. However, if the person does have a particular language barrier or they're up to their last – their deadline and it's Friday afternoon and – then we will make accommodations to do one-on-one. We also have implemented self-scheduling for the CCS through our JobQuest – through our Mass JobQuest system, and so whenever they log into their account once they have registered, they can see the date and time and place that they have scheduled themselves for.

The career center seminar will also introduce them to things at the career center such as other job search assistance, job fairs, workshops, and other training opportunities. They will complete an individual needs assessment and then begin and that's the first step as they move into their initial RESEA, which occurs after that. Go ahead.

So during the initial RESEA it is a small group or one-on-one meetings with – where they further develop their career action plan. The career action plan can help – will identify the mandatory requirements of RESEA and ensures that the client understands the requirements. It's really a road map of realistic and attainable goals and tasks that are clearly defined for the claimant in order to help them find successful employment.

They create action steps within timeframes and deadlines which will help them to relate to their goals and help them meet their goals. It's comprehensive. It's a living document. It can change as they identify changes that they have as they move towards their goals to reemployment. And the CAP will also give them their next meeting date. They have to have a date in which to come back for their RESEA review and what tasks they need to complete before they come back for that review.

If a claimant does not attend that initial RESEA review and the career center seminar, they will receive a one-week sanction to their UI benefits, and again, like I said, they do receive a review – RESEA review appointments at the time they leave that initial review. Their work search is also reviewed at the time of that initial RESEA to show that they are in compliance with collecting UI.

Here's an example of our career action plan form or individual reemployment form that's used throughout the career centers in Massachusetts. It is integrated into our MOSES system, which is our participant tracking system, and it can be edited, printed for the claimant to take with them so that they have everything outlined on what their next steps will be.

So the next step is their RESEA review. This needs to be completed by week five. This is a one-on-one meeting with RESEA specialists within the career center and they assess their continued eligibility for UI benefits and they evaluate their progress that they've made towards the goals that they identified on their career action plan during the initial RESEA. And like I said before, it can be changed, updated, whatever the case is.

The RESEA specialist – it allows the RESEA specialist to assess the claimant's job search progress. They talk about understanding labor market information. They will look at their resume. They'll get a copy of their resume and help them learn how to customize it towards their job search. They'll look at the results of their job search and help them focus on demand-driven jobs that they may have identified through their LMI exploration.

They'll talk to them about any interviews they've had and what the results were, and it also helps to continue to connect them to the full array of other services available at the career center. They will also schedule any next steps such as other workshops that the claimant may want to attend, such as resume writing, training, exploration, those kinds of thing, help them identify a job fair that may be coming up.

So during the review the RESEA specialists, they try to pull the focus away from it just being a checklist of what things that they were required to do and did they do them to being more of an individualized appointment, assisting with directing the claimant to other reemployment services that would help them specifically return to successful employment.

So our big picture approach is pulling all those pieces of the puzzle together so that they can successfully return to employment.

So communicating with the Department of Unemployment Assistance, we do have some forms that we use as somebody is going through RESEA services in which we can identify if there are any potential issues in the discussions that the staff have with the claimant. So those will be brought to our unemployment agency's attention so that they can decide whether action needs to be taken on them or not.

We also try to capture anyone who has returned to work. So we have a mechanism to communicate with them about those. We also have bi-weekly meetings with our DUA partners, and we review any statewide issues and program performance. In this way we can share any information with our career centers that may affect them in the program.

Lastly are some statistics of where we are in our RESEA grant this year. So as you – I won't read the numbers. I'm sure you can read them but we do have a 94 percent completion rate and obviously that has to do probably mostly with the sanctioning that will occur if they don't attend their required meetings. So I think I mentioned the one-week sanction if they didn't attend the initial RESEA, but I did not mention the indefinite sanction that will occur if they do not attend the RESEA review.

And they do have the right to appeal those determinations, and they do have the opportunity to attain afterwards and continue benefits and then receive a hearing on the weeks that they were sanctioned. We also share this information with our career centers and the career center staff, and, like I said, it goes to show our compliance. And I think that's about it.

MR. BURNS: Great, Beth. Thank you for presenting. Some of the similar things we saw are the self-scheduling is a valuable resource but also with Massachusetts there's interest when you were talking about the referrals and partners. You had a really robust list there which kind of aligns with the vision of WIOA and having a more comprehensive way of serving UI claimants by connecting them to other partners.

So that was a really great presentation, and if folks have questions specific to Massachusetts, similar to Wisconsin, just include Massachusetts in your question, and we'll try to get to those in the end.

In the meantime, we have one other poll. We're curious – actually, it's a good segue into partnerships for reemployment services and what – (inaudible) – of RESEA. Have you always had the partnerships in place and you're just leveraging them? Has RESEA implemented and resulted in new partnerships? Are you still developing the partnerships you need to really make RESEA successful, or are you having some challenges that you're working through? So curious to get some feedback on those questions. So we'll give this question about a minute, and then we'll move on.

Great. So it looks like about 60 percent are just using the strong partnerships they already had in place, which is great to see. But we're also seeing kind of an even split between some difficulties and also the creation of some new partnerships.

And we know out there in the workforce system as they're implementing WIOA and some of these other changes that building partnerships, there's a lot of demand for attention. So we can understand that, but it's good to see that predominantly there's already some strong relationships that are being leveraged there.

So want to move on to the next phase of our presentation is we're going to jump into just two very recent research studies that were published. And each one of these studies on its own could be an hour-long presentation. So we're really just going to jump into the highlights of these, and as a resource to this presentation I've included the full reports.

In the case of one report, we have a final report and the other one we have only a briefing but I'm going to attach those as resources to this presentation and also towards the end I'll show you a resource where you can find some of these studies on your own. What we're going to do first is jump into a behavioral insight study, and I'm going to hand it over to Betty to talk a little bit about that.

BETTY CASTILLO: OK. Well, hello, everyone, to you all on the call today, and thank you again to the state presenters. Very interesting and worthwhile information. The Department of Labor has been looking at and exploring the use of various behavioral insights to improve the performance and outcomes of DOL programs.

So I'm going to cover, as Larry mentioned, briefly cover the highlights of a very neat study that was conducted in the state of Michigan. The Department of Labor partnered with the Michigan UI agency and the Upjohn Institute to test an intervention that was designed to encourage RESEA program participation in the state of Michigan.

So the study was designed to test and measure the effectiveness of sending a series of e-mail messages to claimants that were selected for RESEAs. The messages were intended to serve as reminders, to provide clarifications, to also explain the benefits of the programs.

Certain behaviors, which we're all basically very familiar with and I'm sure can relate to, such as procrastination, things like inattentiveness, discouragement, lack of understanding or misunderstanding are the types of things that can prevent individuals from participating in program activities such as an RESEA program. Between March and September of last year in 2015 there were a series of e-mail messages that were designed and were sent to half of the claimants that were selected for RESEAs each week in the state.

This selection was done on a random basis. So there was a treatment group, those that received the e-mail messages, and there were the control group, those that did not. These were designed to be thoughtful messages to help individuals overcome some of these types of potential barriers and to encourage participation. Michigan had been experiencing a high no-show rate, and so these were designed as sort of personal, friendly, welcoming messages than what we would normally see in the typical call-in notice that most states send when you schedule, oftentimes when the RESEA is being scheduled.

They were also designed to be very clear messages that conveyed information about deadlines, the requirements, and they also highlighted the benefits of the programs and they of course – as I said, they served as very timely reminders to people, much like your doctor's office or some other office calling you to remind you that you have an appointment the next day.

In measuring the effects of the new messages being sent, it was found, as demonstrated and shown on this next slide, that there was a pretty significant increase in the number of claimants that scheduled and attended the initial RESEA after receiving these e-mail messages. There was also an increase in the number that completed the RESEA.

It was found that there was a high percentage of those who started the programs and also tended to complete the program, which applied to actually the claimants in both of these groups. Low participation rates are certainly a concern because past studies have shown that the program is effective in reducing UI duration. So it's in everyone's interest to get people in and participating in the RESEA program. The relatively simple step of sending e-mail messages that consider these behavioral insights seems to be a cost-effective way to increase participation.

And in the next slide it reiterates the findings. It shows that basically participation is increased by these types of messages coming in that are much more personal, much more inviting, and basically encourage people to come in. Additional research will help to determine if these increases in participation also result in increases in employment rates and earnings and the corresponding reductions in UI durations. We expect the final results of this study to be published in early 2017.

MR. BURNS: Thanks, Betty, for giving the highlights of that behavioral insight study, and that's just one of several studies the Department of Labor is doing with some of our other partner agencies on behavioral practices. So at the end I'll give the website where you can look through those. They're very interesting, and some of the lessons learned about getting forms completed and sending information, it definitely travels across programs.

And also, as Betty mentioned, it's really – could potentially be a low-cost strategy where it's not a matter of redoing everything you have but simply changing a few words makes a world of difference. So we've included the link to the brief event study, and also, if you just do a search for behavioral insight, you'll find a bunch of other things that are going on in government along these lines.

So the second study – and I'm going to take this one – is a small demonstration project we did in four states, Georgia, North Carolina, Illinois, and Texas, where we gave them some money to basically test a wide range of strategies for outreach to the UCX population. At the time we had heard that UCX population, there was between separation and them actually coming into services, there was a pretty substantial gap. So we wanted to get them in earlier, and the projects we funded focused really on partnerships, data sharing, and outreach.

There's a full report of this study, and this report, it only covers the implementation. There's no results of these activities in there yet, but the implementation study is a really interesting read where you can go through and actually see the strategies they used and some of the challenges they encountered and how they got around them. So it's a great study to look at, and there's a few key practices, promising practices, recommendations.

One of the big ones here is social media. I believe we've all heard at this point that you really need to have a social presence, especially with younger generations and people just entering the workforce to have some sort of social media presence. That's not new news, but what this study did in Illinois is they looked at that and tried to develop some metrics to go around it to prove the value of having the social media presence in serving the UCX population.

These next two items, military skills translation tools and resume development, these kind of go hand in hand. One of the things that we've experienced across different – (inaudible) – programs here at DOL is that there's definitely a problem with translation. A military resume is very technical, uses terms of art that aren't familiar in the public workforce, and there's often a challenge with translating what someone has done in the military to what that equates to in the civilian field.

So some of these states actually experimented with developing new tools to help with that, but I wanted to just highlight here that the Department of Labor does have a resource that you can use now in serving UCX claimants that may be helpful. And that's the my next move for vets.

So I've included a link there and it's similar to our regular my next move for the general public but the vets has an interesting add-on where individuals can type in their military occupational code and get a match there. And by looking at the civilian matches, it really helps to make that skills translation. This is a website that's up and running. It's available for everybody to use, and I just really wanted to let people know that it's out there and to check it out, if you haven't done that already. Just a quick resource.

North Carolina and Georgia, at the time they were operating REA. So this was kind of the predecessor to the RESEA model where we're serving UCX. They went and did some outreach to those populations and started serving them. There's no data regarding the outcomes, but the anecdotal evidence was that it was a really strong relationship and had good results.

One of the things I wanted to kind of highlight about that is I had the opportunity to visit North Carolina and to be on some calls at some of these other states, and at the very beginning of this demonstration study we requested that the four states do an asset map of all resources available to the UCX population.

That asset mapping exercise was extremely valuable in identifying the resources that are out there and also bringing people to the table to have those conversations. So using that asset map, they were able to identify their partners serving the same population, and actually start some really deep conversations about how to align their activities and resources.

The last big activity these states did, three of the four, they looked at their intake processes and completely revamped them. At the time of this demonstration, the department had just issued Training and Employment Guidance Letter 19-13 and Training and Employment Guidance Letter 20-13, which implemented the reforms, the jobs for veterans state grants. Basically what that – those reforms did, for those that don't know, is it limited the population that can be served by the disabled veteran outreach program and local veterans' employment reps to veterans with significant barriers to employment. So they went through and redid their process to make sure that individuals they were doing outreach to were being referred appropriately to the correct programs and quickly. So I wanted to highlight that as an activity and also give you the links to that guidance just as an FYI.

The final slide here, this is just a new resource – relatively new resource the Department of Labor has put together, and it is a clearinghouse for our evaluations and research. I know in the past it's been kind of difficult to go through our websites and find some of the studies we've posted. This puts everything in one place, and specific to the RESEA grants, there is a topic for reemployment.

So if you click on that reemployment topic, it will give you both full reports and also briefs of some of the research that's out there. So it's a great thing to check in once in a while and to see what's new and what's happening in the field of research and evaluation. So check out this website. Add a bookmark for it, and just a really good resource.

So before we dive into some of the questions you guys have been asking – and keep asking questions. We're putting a list together – Betty and I wanted to address some of the frequently asked questions we've been getting here at the national office to try to preemptively answer some of those big questions. So Betty and I are going to take some turns going through these. I will start first.

One of the most common asked questions is, what is the status of the 9128x and 9129x report? So these are the reports that are changes to implement RESEA specific to the UCX population. The short answer is they – the package is still with OMB. We have an information collection request with them pending approval. We've been following up with them, and we expect to have it approved very soon.

As soon as it is, we will issue guidance quickly to you guys about how to implement that. I do know a few states have approached us, and they wanted to start doing some thinking about programming and what those reports look like. So if you go to writegovinfo.com, all of our information collection requests for the department are public. So you can see the package we submitted and what those reports will look like, if it's approved.

We'll keep you posted and let you know as soon as it's out there, but we're just waiting for that final approval before we can move forward on that.

MS. CASTILLO: OK. We've also been getting a lot of questions about whether the 9128 and the 9129 forms will change. The 9128 form is remaining the same. We obviously have the 9128 for regular UI and the 9128x for the UCX program.

The 9129 will change in that we are no longer going to be collecting information about comparison groups because states do not need to have a comparison group as of last year. So that form will change, but it basically just simply removes the information about the comparison groups. So that's a change that you can expect to see on that.

MR. BURNS: So for this next question, a lot of states have transitioned to doing RESEA statewide, and I – a few months ago we received a lot of questions about whether or not the 9048 and 9049 reports – those are the worker profiling reports – are still required for those states. So if you are doing RESEA statewide, those reports are no longer required.

As we transitioned a few states received error messages about a delinquent report, but we've worked to update that system to prevent those messages from going out in the future. If you do receive one, please let your regional contact know and also myself, and we'll work to rectify that. So there was a little bit of confusion with the transition, but we believe we've worked those out for the future.

MS. CASTILLO: OK. We've had a lot of other questions related to merit staff and whether or not reemployment services must be delivered by merit staff. And the answer is no, that the reemployment services themselves, the career services do not need to be delivered by merit staff.

However, with respect to the RESEA and these states need to know that and remember that only merit staff can answer questions or provide advice or make any decisions that could affect a claimant's UI eligibility. So that may be part of a training issue with respect to advising staff in the One-Stop centers or even on the phones, if people are sending in questions remotely or calling, that that's the restriction.

And you can refer to the UIPL 1201. There's a 1201 and 1201 change one related to outsourcing of unemployment compensation and administrative functions. So it's pretty much the same guidance that we've been giving that only merit staff can handle activities that result in determinations being made or advice that is being given that may impact eligibility.

MR. BURNS: So for our next question, how do I report an individual who reported to both training and reemployment services in the same quarter? As part of our reporting guidance, we say you can only enter those people once in a field. So if you have that situation where somebody has reported to training and reemployment services in the same quarter, report that individual as someone who had reported to training.

We realize that in the referral and report to training, there's a lot of services that usually go along with that, such as assessment and reemployment services. So we build that into our consideration when looking at the data, but for that instance please use the training element for those individuals.

MS. CASTILLO: We've also gotten a number of questions related to updating of profiling models. These profiling models are even more important today because they are being used for RESEAs along with any states that are still conducting the worker profiling and reemployment services program and still operating that program.

We do have available technical assistance for any states that need it. There was a Training and Employment Notice that was issued on June the 3rd of 2016. It's Training and Employment Notice number 37-15, and it provides information that gives you the names, telephone numbers, and e-mail addresses of staff here in the national office that would be willing to schedule time with you to provide any kind of technical assistance that you would like to receive related to updating or enhancing your profiling models.

MR. BURNS: And for our final frequently asked question, it's a big one. "When will the UIPL 2017 RESEAs be published?" We are working on that now. We're developing and we're trying to get it out as soon as possible, much earlier than we have in the past. One of the disadvantages of getting it out earlier is we may not know the exact funding levels, but we'll take a best guess at it.

So again, we're working on those now and also attempting to go through some of the feedback we received last year and streamline the application a little bit, take out some of the duplication that was in there. So we'll keep you guys posted but it's in the works and we are going to do our best to get it out earlier than we have in the past. So that's it for our frequently asked questions.

Before we go into your questions, I believe we have two more quick polls. This one here, as Gay mentioned at the beginning, we're planning on doing a lot of technical assistance around the RESEA program and we're curious to see what you'd like us to prioritize as a department moving forward.

We've included a few items here, outreach to the UCX population, performance reporting, updating profiling models, delivery of reemployment services to those likely to exhaust, delivery of reemployment services to UCX population, or if you have any other ideas, please insert them in the chat box. So I'll give you guys a minute to respond to this, and this is really going to help us shape our plan moving forward. OK. I'll give you guys another 30 seconds or so on this one.

OK. So – (inaudible) – performance and delivery of reemployment services to likely exhaust were pretty much tied for a while, but it looks like reemployment services to those likely to exhaust has pulled ahead slightly. So that's definitely an area we'll be working on, and when it comes to the reemployment services and the context of WIOA implementation, we'll be working closely with our partners on the WIOA formula programs to make sure we're aligning, getting you guys the most recent information there. But thank you for that feedback, and before we get into our questions we have one last poll related to this.

And this one here is we're interested in what forms of technical assistance are the most helpful to you. We know what you want us to prioritize. How do you want us to deliver it? Written guidance, webinar, virtual meetings, or if you have some other ideas, please use the chat box. And I'll give you guys about another minute for this one. OK. So written guidance is definitely number one on the list. So UIPLs, TEGLs, and et cetera. So thank you for that feedback.

And we're going to jump into your questions now, and I'm going to start off – since we have Beth, Ann, and Kristine here, I'm going to start off with a few questions for them. I noticed coming in there was a lot of questions about sharing materials, about the corrective action plan and a few other things. So I'll coordinate with everybody after this call, and anything that we can share, I can do so as an attachment to this webinar.

This webinar will be archived, and we can put those resources up there for people to access. So I'll do some coordination there. But it's a common question, if the self-scheduling for both states created any issues with duplication or complication where people may have multiple booked or had issues with the self-scheduling, because there are many challenges with that.

MS. ASTIN: So this is Ann in Wisconsin. I wanted to add no. We don't have any issues with double booking. We took a sort of a lot of precautions in place to make sure you – we did a lot of thought. What could possibly go wrong? So the system that is set up, the individual can only book themselves into one session at a time. They can cancel the session or they can reschedule but there is no option. Once they are scheduled, they have to take a step before they can reschedule themselves.

MS. GOGUEN: So yeah. In Massachusetts you're only allowed to schedule the CCS once, and you can reschedule but we only allow you to reschedule – you can only have one scheduled in there is what I'm saying, and you can reschedule it. We didn't have any problems with it.

MR. BURNS: Great. Another question that came up for both states is people were curious where as priority RESEA/UI staff are required to be involved. But they're curious where UI staff are involved versus where WIOA staff are involved. So can you guys give a little description about where the UI staff come into your models?

MS. GOGUEN: In Massachusetts the UI staff are primarily here at the state level with working with us and working on any of the issues that come up, if they do not attend.

MS. ASTIN: In Wisconsin we also have the unemployment insurance at the central office level. All of our job service staff have been trained by unemployment insurance. So they've been given some knowledge and moving forward and helping the participant out through the process.

MS. PORTER: And just to piggyback on what Ann just said, part of our training, we offer three different types of training for job service and job center staff. We offer training for rapid response. We offer training for RESEA, and we also offer training for WIOA. Because we don't have the luxury of having UI staff in our local offices, we want UI and our bureau wanted to give our staff as much information and preparation as possible.

So we targeted the three main areas where UI comes into play. Each of those training sessions then were – you received a certificate after you were done with the training session because one of the things that we wanted to do was we wanted to present the opportunity for staff to do something for a claimant and perhaps check a box or provide some information that was absolutely not accurate, which could then compromise a claimant's payment. So we strategically planned three different types of training and, granted, some of the people who came were certified in all three, but it really helped define the boundaries of information that we could provide.

In addition, for our overall WIOA training, because we know we're going to have UI claimants coming into our job centers, UI worked with us to get a top secret super-duper staff phone phone number that is only accessible by state staff. It cannot be provided to any claimants, and if there is a question that someone has above and beyond the expertise of the person that they are speaking to, they call that number. It is immediately answered by a UI person, and the UI person then will talk to the claimant and provide the information that they need to have.

MS. GOGUEN: In Massachusetts I'll just add that DUA does work with us from developing the grant to implementing strategies towards having a successful program. There are also some UI staff in our local career centers. So I know that the partners will work with them if they have specific questions regarding their UI claim.

MR. BURNS: Thank you. And now, I'm going to alternate back and forth between questions. So I'll take one that came in for the national office, and it is curiosity. "Is there a community of practice somewhere where states can share these resources and best practices?"

So the good news there is we are working on relaunching our reemployment community of practice, of which we'll have a section for RESEA. We're hoping to get that done in the next few weeks. We will have a community of practice, but in the meantime, if there's some really good things that you'd like to share, you can always feel free to reach out to me or your regional office. But we will have a site up and running shortly.

And I believe there's a question for Wisconsin about how you guys funded your self-scheduling. Was it federal funds used?

MS. ASTIN: Yes. We – actually, we used a combination of federal funds and state funds to implement that whole project.

MR. BURNS: And, Beth, there was a question for Massachusetts about the RESEA review. "Do you find the majority of participants are already employed by the time of that review?"

MS. GOGUEN: No, because the RESEA review occurs by week five of their first payment. So there are some but not – I would not say the majority.

MR. BURNS: Now, I want to go back to Wisconsin. There was a question here. "What percentage improvement did you see when you switched to self-scheduling?" I know you might not have the percentages, but do you have an idea how big of a change the self-scheduling made?

MS. ASTIN: Yes. Actually, right from the get-go it increased literally by 25 to 30 percent, and that was right away the improvement and it has held steady for well over a year at that increase.

MR. BURNS: Now, Beth, do you know if Massachusetts has had similar improvement? I know you might not have the percentage, but did the self-scheduling of the CCS make a big difference?

Donna: It made a big difference that – this is Donna answering for Beth. Yeah. It made a difference. I think more and more people are self-scheduling, and so there tends to be less rescheduling on missed appointments.

MR. BURNS: Great. So there was another question here, and I'll throw this open to the group. There's some curiosity about are RESEA participants enrolled in the Wagner-Peyser employment service at some point? Is that part of it, or is it just a referral?

MS. ASTIN: For Wisconsin, most of those individuals, when they come to the in-person RESEA session, they're given the information about our WIOA, and we do referrals to them. But also throughout that process, maybe if they had – depending on their layoff location, they may have already had a rapid response session. So they may already know and could already potentially be enrolled.

MR. BURNS: OK. Thank you. Question for me. "Is it possible to get something in writing to state that, if a state is conducting RESEA statewide, there is no need to complete the 9048 and 9049 reports, that information being captured in the 9128?"

So as part of that, once we have this information collection request approved with those changes approved, we'll have to issue some additional guidance. So it most likely will be a change of the 401 performance reporting handbook and also potentially a UIPL to go along with it. So yes. There will be formal guidance, but we can't move on that until we have the final approval of the proposed changes.

This is another big question, and I'll throw it out to my presenters from the states, about the UI staff. "Non-UI staff, how are they trained for the RESEA, if they're involved in it?"

MS. ASTIN: So for Wisconsin we actually had – we went to full implementation statewide in April of this year, and we had a two-day training session for all presenters or anyone basically that touched RESEA. And it was a complete walk through of what their – what they were expected to accomplish during the in-person sessions and then what the claimant could benefit from. So we did a two-day in-person training and then of course followed up by the certification training from unemployment.

MS. PORTER: And at that two-day RESEA training that Ann was mentioning, we had UI representation and presentations as part of that two-day event, so to add more information and to show what a claimant experience can be going through the experience. So it was very comprehensive.

DONNA: Hi. In Massachusetts we do statewide training. We have a RESEA team, the state RESEA team and DUA is a part of that team that puts the training together and then goes out and trains the staff. And then we provide ongoing on-site technical assistance and training. So we have a pretty comprehensive training for our RESEA staff. Our MOSES team is involved in that too for all the data entry issues that may come up. So it's a pretty comprehensive training that we do.

MR. BURNS: So there's a common question going around, and I'll throw this out to the group. People are curious with the self-scheduling, what's the capacity for the RESEA sessions? How often are they offered, if they are trying to self-schedule?

MS. ASTIN: Sure. In Wisconsin it's based on location, availability of room, and of course staffing. But usually at a minimum there is one session offered per week. Again, depending on the size, it can range anywhere from 10 seats up to 20, 25 seats at each location. We have many locations throughout the state. We currently have 53 locations I believe at last count, 52 or 53 locations that are currently servicing the RESEA program. And at many of those locations we have multiple sessions per week, anywhere up to 75 seats to 100 seats per week. So we do service quite a few individuals here in Wisconsin.

DONNA: And in Massachusetts we serve up to 2,000 claimants a week. So we have 32 career centers across the state, and each of them has built in enough capacity to do our career center seminars to meet that capacity. And they may be doing three or four, sometimes six or more career center seminars a week with 25 people probably in each career center seminar.

MR. BURNS: So I believe Massachusetts indicated this, but there's a question, "May states indefinitely disqualify claimants who fail to participate in RESEA?"

MS. ASTIN: Yes. In Wisconsin we do an indefinite suspension based on when the individual gets out of compliance. The one difference in Wisconsin is throughout the process of scheduling and if they miss a session, they actually have an indefinite suspension until they come back into compliance. For us, becoming compliant again would be scheduling that session. So if they schedule a session, that would bring them back into compliance. It would be at the point that they miss two sessions, that's when they actually can't proceed any further until speaking to an adjudicator.

MR. BURNS: One other question on the self-schedule, "Do they have to have a good reason for the – to reschedule?"

MS. ASTIN: They do not. For Wisconsin anywhere between the – anywhere in the first 21 days they can reschedule for whatever reason, as long as they are not out of compliance. Once they go out of compliance, meaning they've missed a session or they missed that 21-day period, they can only schedule and attend after that point. They no longer have the option to reschedule.

MR. BURNS: There's also a question here for the national office. "Have other states found difficulties generating the ETA 9128 report?"

So I just wanted to – (inaudible) – I guess, it's part of the transition. The 9128 report has a bunch of data checks that operate in the back, and we notice as folks transition to reemployment service, some of those data checks weren't working correctly. So we're working with our reporting team to fix it.

If you are having trouble submitting the report, please get in touch with your regional RESEA lead, and they'll work with me. There's some manual fixes we can do until those permanent fixes are in. So just please let your regional lead know, and we'll coordinate that. But we are aware that there's a few states that those data checks are creating some issues.

So another issue that's been popping up on the 9128 is when do things get reported? So, for example, you may have somebody come in for – in RESEA but then – in one quarter but then they report to training or reemployment services in the following quarter. So in accordance with our 401 handbook, basically activities are tracked when they occur, for the quarter they occur.

So that's one of the reasons those checks have been acting a little funky. It's because you could have an instance where more people report for training or actually more likely report for reemployment services in one quarter than you had actual RESEAs participate. So long story short, it's in the quarter where the activity occurred that you report that.

A question for Massachusetts and Wisconsin. "Are the workforce centers in your state county or state-run, and did you have to set up implementation differently for each?" So that's a great question.

MS. ASTIN: Hi. This is Wisconsin. So they are actually coordinated through both, through the workforce development boards and state. And no. We did not have to implement anything differently in each of the areas. We did a standardized program throughout the state. We want to make sure that doesn't matter what area of the state that you're in. If you're a participant coming into the program, you're receiving the same level of service.

MS. PORTER: And even if the job centers are technically run by our local – a local board, we still have state equipment and state staff in those locations to provide the services. So the linkages are very consistent throughout the entire state up to and including the reporting of the activities for RESEA.

MR. BURNS: So we'll take a few more minutes to go through questions. If you still have some questions, please put them in. And I just wanted to give everyone a heads up that at the end of this we'll have an inventory of the questions you asked, and we'll be trying to develop some frequently asked questions for some of the more difficult or technical questions that are coming in just to make sure we don't misspeak here and get you the answers in writing.

And to access those what we'll be able to do is this webinar will be archived. So when you come back and visit it, we'll put some attachments. So I know there's a lot of interest in seeing some of the documents and materials that are used by Wisconsin and Massachusetts and also some interest in some of the guidance that's out there. So we'll update that with some resources following this webinar to help out there.

And I'll throw it out – I've been going through the list, but if any of the other presenters saw any questions they'd like to answer, feel free to grab them.

MS. ASTIN: So this is Ann from Wisconsin. There was a few that I was going to answer, but I won't take up all of the time so that Beth can jump in too. One of the questions was, "What technology vendor did you use for your self-registration, and how many customers do you serve yearly in RESEA?"

So this is actually a state-owned system. It's referred to as an asset case management system. We had Pro Rivers (sp) on site here through the Department of Workforce Development that did all of the programming for it, and it was quite a lengthy project. It was almost three years in development. So we did put a lot of effort behind this. We've actually been giving some presentations to states throughout the country that have actually contacted and wanted more questions. We gave a demo yesterday to the state of Ohio and actually got to learn what they're doing in their state. So it was beneficial for us also.

But per year how many are we serving? Again, we just went to full implementation in April of this year. Last year we were part of the REA study group, one of four states that was in that. So we're planning on serving between 45,000 and 50,000 individuals in Wisconsin.

MS. PORTER: And if I can just comment on our state-owned system, I don't know how many states that are participating in this call today have a state system. But for Wisconsin it is a great opportunity because just down the hall or up a couple of floors you can talk to someone, and our turnaround time on making changes or solving problems or fixing something is very, very short. And so that availability of the expertise and to problem solve or make additions or changes we appreciate every day.

MS. ASTIN: So two others that I just wanted to address, and then I'll turn it over to Beth. One of the questions was, "Are e-mails sufficient for DQs? And do you use e-mail for DQs?"

I never like to assume anything, but I'm going to say that DQs is standing for disqualification. Yes. It was run through our legal department here in Wisconsin, and that the information can be shared via electronic – electronically. The disqualifications, though, those are sent out via the U.S. post office, so at this point in time.

One of the other questions I saw a couple times on here was, "I assume participant names are put through the profiling model and then register with ES." I'm not quite sure what that stands for – "And then can you expand on that process?"

So in Wisconsin Department of Labor did approve our questions on our assessment as our profiling model. This would be an example of a profiling model. So based on their responses to the 31 questions on our assessment, that's our determination and putting these individuals into the RESEA program.

MR. BURNS: I think in that one, ES was for employment services.

MS. ASTIN: Thank you. Thank you.

MR. BURNS: And we're running out of time, but, Beth, if you had any questions that you were – that I missed that you're dying to answer, feel free to grab them.

DONNA: Hi. This is Donna answering for Beth. I think we've answered everything that we saw up there, either we answered or Wisconsin answered it in a similar way. But certainly if there's anything outstanding that you feel needs to be addressed, we'll be happy to answer those questions.

MR. BURNS: Great. And we'll have some – the presenters here will have some follow up after, and after we get these questions consolidated and put together, if there's anything really that we missed that we need to get to, we'll perhaps do that in writing as an FAQ later on.

So at this point I'm going to end the questions because we're running out of time. We have a little bit of housekeeping to wrap up the webinar, but I want to send a giant thank you to our presenters, to Kristine and Ann from Wisconsin and to Beth and Donna from Massachusetts for joining us. And also throw out an open invitation.

As Gay mentioned, we're going to try to do a few more webinars. So if there's a few other states out there that are doing some really cool stuff that they want to share with others, just reach out to me, and we'll put you on a list as potential co-presenters for some future events.

So at this point I'm going to hand it over to Laura to help wrap this up, but my contact information is in this presentation. And keep an eye on the archived version. As I said, we'll try to post some more resources following the webinar there. So thank you again for taking the time to participate.

MS. CASERTANO: All right. Great.

(END)