**WorkforceGPS**

**Transcript of Webinar**

**Customer Centered Design Overview of the WIOA Youth Spring Convening**

**Wednesday, May 25, 2016**

*Transcript by*

*Noble Transcription Services*

*Murrieta, CA*

BRIAN KEATING: All right. Again, if you're joining us online, go ahead and let us know that you're there by typing into the welcome chat. We're going to be starting in another minute or two. Thanks for joining us virtually for those of you joining us online. (Background conversations).

All right. So it sounds like we're going to go ahead and begin. So let's go ahead and kick things off.

Welcome, everyone. Thanks for joining us. My name is Brian. I'm here if you need any technical support logistically during our virtual portion of the workshop this afternoon. Thanks to those who are joining us online today. So again, if you're just joining us for the virtual portion, if you could go ahead and introduce yourself in that welcome chat on your screen, feel free to go ahead and do that. And if for some reason you're only reading this in the closed captioning pod, please go ahead and dial into the teleconference. But if you're hearing my voice, you're in the right place, and welcome to today's virtual portion of the WIOA Youth Spring Convening.

So I'm going to get myself right out of the way. Again, you can use that chat window if you're just joining us virtually to ask a question, make a comment, introduce yourself, and obviously let us know if you need anything technically speaking.

With that, I'm going to go ahead and kick things off. So again, welcome, everyone to today's "Customer Centered Design Overview of the WIOA Youth Spring Convening." And to kick us off, I'm going to turn things over to Beth A. Brinly. Beth is the VP of Workforce Innovation with Maher & Maher. Beth?

MS. BRINLY: Thanks so much, Brian. And hello to all of my friends in Philadelphia region. I'm so glad to be a part of your youth program today. And thanks, Toby, for allowing me to be a part of it.

Joining me is one of our veteran practitioners of Customer Centered Design, Pam Streich. She's the director of planning for Workforce Development in the North Central Workforce Development Board.

So together, you're going to have a virtual an in-person presentation on Customer Centered Design and I'm so glad to be with you.

Wanted to make sure that you knew this was part of Maher & Maher's work with the U.S. Department of Labor and that today we're really hoping to cover three main things. One, we want to introduce you to customer centered design or design thinking concepts. So if you haven't experienced that before and for those of you who have been introduced, this will be somewhat of a refresher, but we're hoping that the youth examples will really grab you.

We're also going to be focusing on how to reimagine youth services by asking the question how might we. And when as we move into some design thinking exercises, you'll have the opportunity to see how this can impact your service delivery in your local workforce investment area and in your service strategy.

So first, I think it's really important that we ground this in the direction that we've been receiving, providing the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. So it's really important to think about how this works. It is supportive of being demand-driven, aligning services, focus on continuous improvement, data driven through some of the research we'll be talking about, most definitely customer-centered design, and then finally that it really is a solutions based approach to you providing services.

With that, I'm going to turn it to Pam here to give a little bit of an overview in regard to where CCD has been over the last few years and where we hope to go. Pam?

PAMELA STREICH: OK. Thanks, Beth. This chart just shows – I don't know if any of you were familiar – how many in the room participated in the U.S. DOL challenge that started last July? OK. So it started – back in July, U.S. DOL announced a few challenges for the workforce system to participate in. And the teams that were interested in our area, which is north central Pennsylvania, we had two teams. The state – all of region two had 20 teams altogether.

We had to take a seven-week online class that's powered by Novo Ed and the curriculum is through ACUMEN. And then we did a five week prototype phase. And then out of the whole country, there were 130 teams formed, 80 of those teams submitted a proposal and those proposals made you eligible if they chose you to participate in a learning exchange at the White House. And there were 11 teams chosen for that and we were at the White House on February 16th of this past year.

And we're doing some ongoing mentoring. So if there's questions after this, I'm one of the teams that can help people through the process.

You can flip the slide, Beth.

BETH BRINLY: I'm having a little technical difficulty here. We'll see if –

MS. STREICH: OK. And this number, 143, has anyone seen this slide or heard what this is? 143 is how many times customer is mentioned in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act legislation. So it's all about customer focus.

And this is just – we look at customer-centered designed and how can we apply it to the guidance that we've received, the TEGLS, all the different guidance we received from our state. And honestly, it can be used for anything. Specifically this is one of the first times it's been used for workforce program. So it's pretty exciting and it can be used for just about anything that we do in our programming and other policy making.

This graphic that's coming up next is – OK. If you can go back one, Beth.

OK. Design thinking graphic, this one, picture quickly. This just shows the methods that are used when you're design thinking. And of course, you're solving problems. So you have to do a lot of brainstorming and then you identify the problems and you do some more brainstorming. And you do kind of feel like you're going all over the place, but when you're brainstorming and generating a lot of ideas, then as you prototype them, you get to validate them.

MS. BRINLY: And the next slide is just – basically it just tells – you stating the obvious. You need to start with the customer, you identify the people that you are going to design your project for. And once you've identified them, then you can go through and relate it to feasible and viable windows. And when we participated in the customer centered design at North Center, we followed the class to a T (sic). The class contains four different workshops. So we just followed right through the process and it really helped us learn all about customer centered design. This is just an example of what we did.

They're a very hands-on workshop. We did an ice breaker. We had to draw the person to our right. We had one minute to do it. This is one of my teammates. And then we just all kind of talked about why we're taking the course and why we want to learn more about the customer center design.

So as we move into that process, what we're really looking to gain is look what people are saying and make sure we understand what they believe. So often times folks will tell us one thing and then sometimes they may be thinking the other. And that's what we're hoping to drill down with with customer center design. Here is an example of the different types of emotions that folks might be experiencing as they engage in our workforce services, whether used or others and they feel stalled or encouraged. They may be fearful or elated or they might just be exploring what might be out there.

So those are the different types of emotions that people may be experiencing, whether or not they are sharing that with us. So this is important information for us as we develop service strategies for young adults and for our other customers.

A good example here is David who said that he's been just simply copying his friend's resume and putting his own information in there because he didn't know how to make one for himself. So that's where customer centered design can be helpful to us. It is a five stage process and it's grounded in research. And with that, what you're wanting to know is you want to listen to what people are telling you about the services and also to garner new ideas from them about the services.

And just think if you've been in the youth business for a while and for some of us it's been 30 years, hard to believe, that things have changed in the young adults life. And the technology alone is enough to be able to make you think that we may need to do things a little bit differently. So this research phase is an important part of gathering data from a lot of different perspectives.

Then we move into the synthesis phase where there really is bringing all of those insights together and what does that tell us about how we might need to rethink the way we approach our work. Then we move into the ideate space. And with that one, what we're really looking for is brainstorming new ideas on how to approach and serve our customers. Those young adults might be engaged through something we hadn't thought about before and this process is all about that.

Then we move into prototyping and that is take those ideas and test them. And this is an opportunity for us to quickly fail and to move forward with those strategies that work and then tweak those that don't and then finally move into a very productive service delivery model with the test phase.

So how do we go about synthesizing with folks? First of all, we observe what they're doing and how services are currently being provided. We engage our customers and other stakeholders who are serving those customers in a very proactive way to garner their insight. And then finally, to immerse ourselves in those services and that may very well come in through a process of shadowing or having somebody do secret shopper efforts.

So with that, let's talk about our friend David again. So instead of still doing resume building classes, what if we provided him a template that he could quickly use and that is a need to be able to move forward. So just thinking about different ways to provide the type of support that our customers need.

Now, let's talk about how design thinking looks in the private sector. This approach is not something that you would – (inaudible). And this may look familiar to some of us in the audience that you've been through a CT scan and it's an overwhelming thing to develop. Can you imagine what it would be like for a young person?

So they went through a customer centered design approach in regard to use in this particular situation. And then we see this. It's a far more inviting situation for young person. It removes a lot of the fear and it's just a positive way to have that same experience and have a better customer experience as a result of it.

So I think one of the big challenges that we often face when we're talking about doing something new in the workforce system and youth services it's we don't have the resources to be able to do this. And so these next couple of slides shows how Human Services and design thinking has been used in the developing world. This, of course, is an incubator and it's practical here in America, but it's not a practical model for the third world.

So we went the ideation process and prototyping and lo and behold, these are the elements of that incubator in a third world country. And the reason that that design was so different is that they didn't have the sophisticated parts and tools to replace things as it broke down. So they're using things that are in their world and in a way that will help them accomplish the same objective. So very innovate, very creative.

So then with that, the real question then becomes how it affects the system. And Pam, I'm going to turn it over to you.

MS. STREICH: So here we are with the workforce system and customer centered design process. I don't know if you can read the quote up there. This is a jobseeker. He says, "I've been exploring new roles and new directions, but really I'm using it as an excuse for not pursuing a job search. You can spend a lot of time doing nothing." So he's a customer that we didn't talk to in our challenge, but this is just one example of how we can learn a lot from our jobseekers.

The challenge that North Central took on was how might we design services and programs for out-of-school youth that will engage them and produce great outcomes? This was, as I said, for our first challenge. So we formed a team. And during our first workshop, we just brainstormed a little bit on what we really felt were the issues or what was needed. And it's just a quick list. I won't read them all.

We had Title I use staff who actually work with the youth. We had some program supervisors and then board staff, myself on a team. So it was really nice to work together. We both learned a lot. So we identified the paperwork sometimes as overwhelming for youth. We need the partners working together better. We have to understand the barriers. We felt that a poor transportation came up on a rural area. Transportation has its challenges and barriers everywhere, urban and rural, definitely. And we'll go on to the next slide, Beth.

Then the next workshop is they actually take you through the forms you have to fill out. So they have you work as a group, say what do we know. So we know that transportation options are limited. We know that we have youth coming in for services and they don't have money to buy food. We know that sometimes they don't know what they need. And we also know that our programs could be structured a little better and perhaps there's that lack of positive support network in their family.

And then we listed what we didn't know. And sometimes we don't know everything a youth is going through. Sometimes we don't what really makes them tick, what will bring them back for more services. We don't know how they manage their money. We don't know the dynamics of their living arrangements. And these are things that we wanted to find out to develop our programs based on those needs.

So then what we did, we had to define our audience. So naturally, we wanted to talk to out-of-school youth. We looked at the WIOA guideline, 16 to age 24. Disconnected – I like how we heard earlier about calling them opportunities. We wanted to talk to agencies and other representatives that serve youth that might have these barriers. Parents, guardians, grandparents, neighbors, peers, these are all people that we were planning on talking to to develop our research.

Then we also wanted to talk to some experts. So we looked at the barriers for WIOA and naturally, we wanted to talk to possibly probation officers, OVR staff, people from Woman, Infants Children, they see a lot of young mothers. So Project Rapport agencies we have in our area, GED teachers, and so on. And then part of the whole customer centered design process is also bringing in secondary research and we know that there's a lot of that out there, especially when you're talking about out-of-school youth. You can just look on the internet and find a bunch of studies that will help you – that helped us figure out what we wanted to do.

And now, Beth is going to talk about another youth program that was used in another area.

MS. BRINLY: Thanks, Pam. So what I wanted to share an overview from is the Operation Fresh Start program, which is going on in Dane County in Wisconsin. And there, they use secret shoppers. They use young people, between the ages of 18 to 22, to actually go in to the center and to interact with the physical space and the staff and to provide some clearer and specific direction back to the team who is managing this customer centered design project.

So here, I'll go through just a few of the questions that they want to talk about. So one was before this was what you – before this, what was your interaction with the job center? They want to get a sense of how long it took for them to get help, whether their needs met. Did they think that the folks who were serving them care about them? Did you see other youth like yourself? And do you think that the services would be accessible or more used if they were offered through a youth agency? So those were just a few of the types of questions that they asked the secret shopper after they went through the process.

So that then leads us to that wonderful synthetization process, which is the second step. We've done our research, now we're synthesizing and Pam's going to share a little bit more about the work that went on with them.

MS. STREICH: OK. Part of the process that after we completed all of our research, talked to the youth and the youth agencies and parents and looked at all of the research we had developed, things just, obviously, came up through everything we have done and the four common things were transportation, relationships and connections. You really desire that one on one relationship and to have someone there for them, a welcoming environment.

In the North Central area, it's rural. Our youth are served in the TA CareerLink, which is what we call one-stop centers. They're served right in there. And oftentimes, they're being served the same as adults. So we knew that we might have to do something a little different there in our area. And then, of course, they deal with issues surrounding self-esteem.

So another part of what we did was to develop a list of insights and these insights then led to a list of ideas that I don't believe we have here, but you can see the insights up there. Youth want to be part of something. They like a fast flow for things. So we had them sitting in some two hour workshops that was part of the reason some of them didn't come back. They liked to meet with their own peers, people their own age. They like hands-on activities. And again, that strong desire for personal connections.

MS. BRINLY: So then it's an opportunity to see how this process – so the same – leads to some common themes, but from different outcomes. So we go back to Operation Fresh Start. The challenges that they experienced were communication issues. And specifically, they were wanting to know or felt that they really didn't establish a rapport between the staff and those that they were serving before things got moving. And there was just a sense that when they left, they really didn't know what was available to them for support.

The second common theme was the quality of the help. And so the issue was that there was an expectation on the part of the staff that they knew what they needed and would ask for it as opposed to really being provided a full overview of what would be available to them and what would be helpful to make sure that they would be successful and those sorts of things as we talk – as they went through the theme process.

So the idea that percolated out of that whole process was the – (inaudible) – format. So what the Dane County folks did was they posted flyers in some of the local restaurants – fast food restaurants where young people go. They were there between 11:00 and 1:00 p.m. every day. They would sit and establish a rapport with the young people, getting to know them, understand what's important to them and those sorts of things as opposed to bringing them into the youth center or some other place initially.

And then after that rapport was established, they would bring them to the career center for that opportunity to see what was going on – which is our beautiful segue into ideation, which is where you brainstorm the new ways to serve your customers. And that is such an important of the process and Pam's going to walk us through the essential questions how might we.

MS. STREICH: OK. So first, when we're thinking about how might we as kind of the whole basis of the customer centered design, we want to how might me assume solutions exist. How do we do that? How do we reduce commitment? And how might we do it together? It is really about collaborating and bringing the partners together.

When the North Central group met and we did the ideation thing and the brainstorming, we had a lot of ideas that we couldn't bring to fruition with this project. So we had quite a list. But they liked two additional questions and those were how might we minimize the impact of limited transportation on youth participation in youth programs? How much we create a positive network to assist these young adults in overcoming the life-happens events? And how might we create a more welcoming environment and time schedule to serve our young adults? So that is where we begin. Those are the three issues that we concentrated on.

And some of the ideas that we came up with right now we're still prototyping because we implemented our Connection Café, our youth staff chose that as the name. They just – it's almost like a support group. It's the first step for youth to get into the program. They don't do the paperwork right away. They just come in and talk with each other about their needs and what they're doing and the barriers to finding a job. We bring guest speakers in. We take it around to different places, whether it be a library or a college, and have people come in there.

We have other partners from WIOA helping out with this. It's led to a couple of our CareerLinks saying open in the evening, which is generating more youths coming. And there's many partners coming and working together, including OBR and adult education and they're actually providing them more individualized and group services in that setting when it's – the CareerLink is basically closed but it's open to the youth.

And we're also using insider friends so that they can bring a friend with them to the program. And so far, it's working out really well. It's helping – it's increasing our numbers and really helping meet the needs of those youth.

MS. BRINLY: Thanks, Pam. And so the point of prototyping is trying out your ideas and getting feedback from your customers and making other tweaks and adjustments as you go along. Sometimes you have a great rough draft and something you want to accomplish, and then through prototyping, you can truly polish it and refine and address the flaws that you might've not thought about. I like to sometimes call them the unintended consequences of some of the things that we are working on.

So one of the most important things, and I know that Pam will agree here, is that when you're in this process, it's still your design team and you want to make sure that you have a really engaging group of folks, a very diverse group of folks. And you want to have at least five members.

And the reason that you want that is that you want to make sure that you have enough different perspectives from multi-disciplinary teams to make sure that you're getting a lot of different eyes on the situation and looking at the research and all the information that you're gathering. But you don't want it too big because then it becomes just unwielding sometimes to get a group of people together and to make decisions. And you want to make sure that you're looking at folks from different backgrounds, different skill sets if you had some unexpected and innovative ways to move forward with solutions.

So some of the types of people that you want to think about. First of all, your core partner organizations that are working with you and serving young people. You want to work with stakeholder groups that test those customers. You want to make sure engage your front line staff. I know in Kentucky if we've been doing our redesign work, some of our front line staff were some of the brightest – had some of the brightest suggestions to bring forward, and so want to encourage that.

Also, some of your business service staff might be helpful because they know what the business community is looking for. And of course, your customers, and we talked about how customers have been an effective part of the various stages so far.

The next thing, of course, in prototyping, you want to do it fast. You want to fail quickly, and you want to keep what works. So the whole idea is, just like with the cafés, they went out with them, they tried the different locations, they changed their hours; those sorts of things. Some of those things may work; some of those things may not work. And so you just want to learn your lessons quickly and then continue to perfect your model.

Another example of the youth service customer centered design project is one out of Colorado and my good friend Joe Barela has overhauled their youth program efforts and have created what's now called Future U Tank and it's led to a paid internship and leadership academy. This particular Colorado team, their a-ha moments, if you will, were that they needed to build a better relationship between staff and youth. So I think you heard that in the first two examples that we shared with you and you're hearing it again here.

They also really needed to go where out-of-school youth were. Once again, similar to what we had heard in a Dane County, but a different solution here. And then finally – so there wasn't going to be enough to rebrand their program work. They were going to have to repackage the way they actually provide services. So their design question was, how do we drive and increase out-of-school youth to see value in accessing Arapahoe/Douglas Works! programming and resources? So that was their big design question. You heard a couple of the themes that they experienced with this, which led to the creation of a dunk tank, if you will, model for a program they did.

They established a leadership program, leadership academy that youth participated in. The employers and the workforce center employees comprised the panel that judged the marketing plans that these young people went through. And from that, those competitors, 12 students who completed the four- to eight-week academy, then were – and were ages 18 to 25 were then selected to move forward with their ideas.

So in their prototyping, they thought about exactly how do we set up this competition day access here. You can see the chart about how that looks. But now is your opportunity to be able to move into a little brainstorming around some key questions that we'd have. And given how much time we have, we think that – for those of you in the room, Pam is going to work you through that exercise. For those of you who are in the webinar format, we'll pull up the questions and then we'll pull up the activity sheet and you can work within your room to do this.

But let's put the questions out there. And Pam, I'll let you work through the logistics, but we will spend 20 minutes in your team – or actually, let's do 15 minutes on your team to do some brainstorming around these questions and Pam will walk you through them. And then we'll come back together as a group and ask a few people – a few groups to share some of the ideas on brainstorming on one of these five key questions.

So Pam?

MS. STREICH: OK. Thanks, Beth. I think what we should do is maybe every other row – like you guys turn around and get with the people behind you and form a group. And only you guys – (inaudible).

MR. KEATING: (Inaudible).

MS. STREICH: OK. Yeah.

MS. BRINLY: So for those of you who are on the webinar format and are setting, let's just walk through the "how might we" questions. Design rich and inspiring spaces that engage young adults. The second question you can select from is provide services that motivate, support, and empower youth – young adults. The third question, how might we support youth service providers in integrating sector strategies in service delivery? The fourth how might we question is engage our employers in work-based learning. And the final one is immerse ourselves in employer environments to better understand their needs.

So we'll leave this up for just a minute so you can select a question. And then we'll put up this ideation that you'll be able to use to catch your ideas on.

All right. Now, we're going to – and we will reconvene in 15 minutes, which is 20 after 2:00. Those that are on the webinar, if you have any questions that you'd like to ask as you're brainstorming around one of these particular questions, don't hesitate to drop something in the chat for me and I'll be glad to answer.

And for those of you who are participating via webinar, you certainly can go full screen on the top right hand corner of your slide. And if you have any questions, don't hesitate to type them in there. Be glad to help.

So we have about five more minutes of discussion time. So those of you in webinar land, if you have some ideas you'd like to share with the group on some of the questions, please feel free to start typing those in the chat room and I'll make sure to share them with the rest of the group. Thanks. (Pause.)

So this is your two-minute warning to finish up those conversations that you identify those brainstorming ideas that you might want to share with other folks on the webinar and in the room.

All right. That sounds like –

MS. STREICH: OK. Are we ready?

MS. BRINLY: I think we're ready for the webinar. So we haven't had any ideas typed into the webinar chat yet, but it may start flowing. Why don't you share a few ideas from the big room?

MS. STREICH: OK. All right. Does someone want to share some of their ideas that they talked about? If you just tell us the question that you talked about – question or questions and some of your ideas that you brainstormed.

MR. : So we chose the last one, immerse ourselves – how might we immerse ourselves in employers environments to better understand their needs? And I think initially we decided to go with that one because we're always talking about designing a program based on what we do within our role with the young people. But what came out of our group is if you're not designing a program that employers want or that employer's – that each city's employers need, then you're setting up young people for failure.

So we talked about ideas and things that we can do to maybe engage those employers. And we talked about some of the things that have been working in our respective areas. We talked about summer youth employment programs, some of the programs that – some of the things to reach out to employers. So we took it from that perspective.

MS. BRINLY: What are some of the ideas that are going on?

MR. : Well, one of the things that I was talking about what we do in DC with the summer youth employment programs, how in the summer youth employment program, we actually went to the employer, not just government agencies and recreation centers, but actual organizations in DC and say, "OK. What do we have to – or what type of training are you looking for for you to be willing to accept young people to come in to work for the summer?"

And they were all these meetings that the city had to find out what the employers needed and then we talked to them. So now, during the orientation process, we helped them dress a certain way; they have to participate in certain orientation. While you're at the orientation if you're not acting the way you're supposed to, you'll be sent home and you won't be able to participate. It's no longer a guaranteed thing where all you have to show up and get the job. But now you have to actually conduct yourself a certain way. And that's one of the things that employers were saying they were looking for, as that's one of the reasons why they stopped taking young people a while ago.

MS. BRINLY: OK. Thank you. Any other group want to share a little bit of what they brainstormed? OK.

MS. : We talked about the first question, about designing a space where –

MS. BRINLY: We might need them to speak up a little bit or come closer to you, Pam, because we're having –

MS. STREICH: I'm coming up here.

MS. : So we were talking about different things that we can do to make the space more engaging. We talked about having – if money was no object, having food available, having comfortable furniture, having colorful art – having it be light filled and open. Having access to technology. They could be mobile, right? The tablets rather than desktops. Making sure that it was a space where all the services that we wanted to provide were available right there so young people didn't have to travel around too much. Having non-traditional or extended hours. So make it accessible as possible. And if we're just really thinking big, having a team opportunities and games and even a music studio. Things that really expect people to participate.

So this question led into the next question about activities we could provide. So one of our group members was talking about having opportunities for young people to work on their assets rather than just deficits, right? So we were talking about the value of service opportunities and how they team projects where people can work together to really give of themselves back to their communities, how valuable that could be and engage people.

MS. STREICH: Wow. A lot of great ideas. A lot can be generated in just a few minutes. Thank you very much. Do we have anything on – else to share, Beth?

MS. BRINLY: I don't see anything else on the online format. There were a couple of questions that I think we can pick up on as we move forward. So let's flip back to the PowerPoint slide, Brian, and then we'll continue on.

So the most important thing as we're then moving forward is to hear a little bit about some of the successes that Pam and her team have experienced.

MS. STREICH: And again, this is more about when we did form a team and what worked well for us when we saw the exact process of going through the workshop. The workshops, again, I think I did mention – we followed the workshop guidelines as closely as possible. It just gave our team a structure to the whole process. We did have members take turns leading the workshops. We scheduled all of our workshops in advance and used technology for them. We used video conferencing a lot of times because where our area is, it's a six-county region. Like I said, very rural, about the size of Connecticut. So to get from one end to the other takes a few hours. So we use video conferencing.

And for us, when we – we were excited about the whole challenge from U.S. DOL because there's not often training that staff, workforce board staff, workforce staff can participate in. So we looked at it as a way to increase our skills in how we develop programs and policies. And the certificate of completion at the end was a plus for us that we got to put in our HR file. And next slide.

What worked well. We had very motivated and encouraging team members and leaders. Our youth staff are very motivated and they work front line with the youth and were able to prototype everything we did right away. We tried to summarize the meetings right after the meeting so we wouldn't lose all of the knowledge that we talked about. And we, at every meeting, had the brainstorming. There's a list of rules for brainstorming that was sent out with this training. We kept that with us because when we first brainstormed, people would say, "No. We can't do that. We're not allowed." But the whole purpose of brainstorming is just don't judge. Ideas will be lead to – the ideas will lead to other ideas.

And using a lot of visuals. Normally, we would have everyone using Post-It notes and put the pads up on the wall and make it a little more active, but that was a little difficult to do here. So you can get very creative when you're doing things like this.

And challenges. Trying to get everyone to come to the common meeting dates was difficult, but we moved ahead anyway. We had partners from other – we had members from other partners that had to drop off of the team. That was a huge challenge for us, but we didn't let it stop us. We just kept moving ahead. And we really wanted to talk to youth who we had lost over the years that didn't come back for services to find out what would keep them coming back or have them come back, but they're the youth that are hard to find. And our youth staff are still trying to work on that. We haven't – just because the class has stopped and we completed it, we're still trying to prototype our program.

MS. BRINLY: Pam – go ahead. Sorry about that.

MS. STREICH: That's OK. One more. Just what would we do differently. Since we're participating in the second challenge, we hope that our team members will be able to meet more in the evening or on weekends because everyone's busy and it's just a lot of work to add to a normal workday. And we will hopefully submit more press releases to the newspaper just to kind of have them learn more about what we're doing in our region.

MS. BRINLY: Pam, thank you so much for sharing the wealth of your experience with me and everybody in the webinar room and everybody in the room there in Philadelphia. We did get some questions along the way. And so what I'll do is I'll read them and Pam, if you want to take a first stab and then I'll come through with any added comments.

So the first question that we had was I'd like to get a perspective on where other organizations and programs are in terms of establishing partnerships with other WIOA partners. So anything you want to share from your experience in north central, Pam?

MS. STREICH: Well, regarding the partners under WIOA, in our region, we feel that the partners are all working together and we're working on increasing that. We work closely with the Office of Location and Rehabilitation and even other agencies that are a required partner. Is there anyone else in the room that would want to share – answer that question?

MR. : In the District of Columbia, all the programs, especially out-of-school youth – I want to speak to out-of-school youth. All of the programs who receive WIOA funds for out-of-school youth all receive those funds through the Office of Youth Programs or through the Department of Employment Services. And because they all meet together and work together and have the monthly meeting together, we have encouraged them to all work together with each other, especially in terms of referrals to each other's programs.

So if there's a young person interested in one program, they go to that program and that program doesn't have the services that they need, they can refer that young person to another WIOA funded program seamlessly without that young person having to go through a whole new process of registering and filling out a different application and everything else. But that's something that's been fostered through our office and the Office of Youth Programs.

MS. BRINLY: That's great. Thanks for sharing that. And let me tell you, in Kentucky where I was the commissioner of the Department of Workforce method and we were moving towards team-based case management approach prior to actually the passage of WIOA, using a customer centered design conversation is a great way to bring your partners around the table because you're focusing on the customer as opposed to all the rules and regulations with our programs and it gives everybody a fresh start and a great opportunity to understand what the needs of their common customers are and how they can tackle those together.

So anything else to add on this question, Pam, or should we move to our next one?

MS. STREICH: I think we have another question.

MS. : (Inaudible) – with Health and Human Services here with the TANF program. Hi, Beth. I was just wondering how you're reaching out to welfare agencies to become partners because there are mandatory partners, whether they're part of the plan or not – (inaudible). So when you talk about partnership, it goes beyond DOL and education. So I just wanted to know what work has been done in that area.

MS. STREICH: And I can only speak for north central, of course, which is a small part of it, so if anyone else can add to it. Our board director and staff as well as Pennsylvania CareerLink administrators get together on a monthly basis for a meeting with the executive directors of the assistant's offices in all of our six counties.

And I know they – I'm not part of those meetings so I don't know exactly everything, but I know they talk about getting referrals from the assistant's office and vice versa and how they can start to offer – I know a little bit of talk has been about workshops, offering workshops maybe at each different site since they're not part of the TA CareerLink centers in our region. So the communication is happening. I'm not sure. That's about all I know. Does anyone else?

MS. : A great source.

MS. STREICH: Absolutely.

MS. BRINLY: Yep. I think some of the customer centered design groups that actually have our Health and Human Service partners oddly that are working with them because not all of them are focused on youth in particular. So it's a great opportunity to start that partnership effort, which is at the heart of why we're doing this plenary. So great question. Thank you so much. Other questions in the room?

STEVE: Yeah. Beth, this is Steve. I'm just going to interject here that the Workforce Development Board, which is the state workforce board, has been partnering with TANF on their summer youth employment program. So the local areas in Pennsylvania have established a summer youth program with WIOA money to do it, but in Pennsylvania, they're also investing in TANF – using TANF dollars to enhance and increase the number of summer youth employment opportunities with the TANF youth development funds and that's a good thing. We're encouraging that in other states of the region, but it's happening in a big way in Pennsylvania.

EILEEN: But I think Pennsylvania is an exception that TANF has always been part of the one-stop in Pennsylvania. They've always been involved. But we have other states in this region, too, which aren't quite where Pennsylvania is. So those states to reach out to Canada. There are some states where we still have people talking to each other. And those are the ones that we have to really focus our resource.

MS. BRINLY: Good point, Eileen. And Steve, thank you for sharing that example. We did that, too, in Kentucky, especially back in the days of recovery where we had some additional resources to support. Let's take another question that came through the webinar format. This one was what's the best practice in immersing ourselves in employer environment? Do we contact them directly and set up an observation visit? And I'll start first, Pam, and then I'll throw it out to you.

I think there are a couple of ways that you can do that. One is that if there's an existing sector partnership that's in your local area, I would suggest that you do that first, that you reach out, because then you're going to find a number of employers that might be willing to offer an opportunity for an emerging setting. And if no one volunteers from that perspective, then you might want to make a personal contact. Oftentimes what's helpful is if you know a business person within that sector and they may even do the outreach for you, sometimes that is – it's an ice breaker and a great way to get in if you're having difficulties.

Pam, any suggestions from you on that one?

MS. STREICH: In our region, we have industry consortia. So I think all American Job Centers or TA CareerLinks in Pennsylvania have business service teams and they're required to build the relationship with employers.

So in addition to the business service team meeting, our business service rep for Title I is charged with having an employer consortia meeting on a monthly basis where employers come into the CareerLink for a meeting to talk about common retention and recruitment issues that they might be experiencing. And they also are involved with a lot of company tours. They'll go with the Office of Location and Rehabilitation business service reps and other members of the business service team and go when a company wants to talk more about maybe on the job training or something. So they go on a team approach.

And then we also have industry partnerships in many different industries. For north central, for our region, we have a manufacturing and healthcare industry partnership where we're bringing those employers together to talk about those issues. So that's another way to convene employers.

Does anyone in the group have anything to add to that that they might be doing? OK.

MS. BRINLY: I'm going to move us along a little bit. Have a few wrap-up slides and I know that our next presenter is going to start in about five minutes. So what we want to do is make sure that you know if you're excited about what you've heard, there are some great resources and these links are available to use.

There's a great video on what is human centered design. There's a YouTube link for what is design thinking. There are resources in the ION community of practice and also in WorkforceGPS. And then Act Now on customer centered design, there's a webinar series if you want to delve further into this topic.

In addition, ION, which is a great resource that is part of WIOA implementation, has some great resources around change management, building stronger partnerships, introducing a regional mindset, system alignment, customer-centered service delivery, and then also implementing talent development strategies, like Career Pathways, Registered Apprenticeship, and Sector Strategies.

So we want to make sure that you avail yourself of those of those resources through our online materials. And then from here in the webinar room and beautiful Frankfort, Kentucky, I want to thank you all so much and thank my co-presenter Pam. I hope that you took away a couple of tools and that we have wetted your appetite for customer-centered design work in your youth service areas. And thank you so much for your time and energy and your commitment to the young people within the mid-Atlanta region. Not often that we get an opportunity to say how important your work is, how life changing your work is, and just appreciate and respect the work that you do each and every day.

So with that, Brian, I'm going to turn it over to you to queue up the next PowerPoint and hope that you all have a great rest of the day.

MR. KEATING: Thank you, Beth. Thank you, Pam.

MS. STREICH: Thanks, Beth.

MS. BRINLY: Bye, everybody.

TOBY: So I want to, as our next presenters come up, just speak a little bit about the numbers that Beth put up. There was a slide that had a single number, 143. Do you all remember what that number stood for?

MR. : The number of times the word customer appeared in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act.

TOBY: Customer-focused. Right. But there's something that appeared more in the law than even that. 162 times, partner, partners, or partnerships is mentioned in the law. So clearly, they're saying we need to be getting together a whole lot more to focus on the customer. Not the money, the customer.

Seventy-nine times, "coordination" is mentioned. Again, we need to be getting together, coordinating as partners for our customer that's in the middle that we all share.

Forty-six times, "coordinate," three times, "collaborate," and 12 times, "collaboration." That's a whole lot of let's get together. If you all have it, done it, search it, that's how I did it. I got it from Beth. I said, "143 times." I wonder how many times it talks about partnership and it outnumbered the customer because the more we partner, the more we leverage resources, the further we can go with our shared customers. If we duplicate services, we're not going to get as far with them as we could if we leverage each other's strength.

So keeping our customer in the center, playing to our strength, we should take this time to act on the opportunity to innovate in the workforce system. That is WIOA backwards. Take this opportunity to act on opportunities for innovation in the workforce system. WIOA backwards. OK?

So this next presentation is on collective impact. In our December meeting, folks had already been through the collective impact workshop. So I wanted to do as much of this convening has been about is how to – a DIY workforce development for young people.

So using the tenant of collective impact, we have again a partner, a federal partner, NCCC, and what I thought was good about them is those who are here from the youth bill portion because they talk about AmeriCorps, is how we can use this potential education placement as a way to serve a youth who has not yet seen or come to know either her potential.

Because what we need to figure out is how do we serve them, but also meet performance. We're going to talk about getting to performance tomorrow. And as you notice, we've not been talking the numerators and denominators. The regional administrator explicitly said that's all we know and that's why we intentionally decided not to go there during this time. But what we decided to focus on was the customer and the how-to partner together to serve our shared customer.

So we have this backbone organization – who is usually the workforce system, but I would like for us now to look at a different backbone organization, NCCC, because they share some of our agenda items. That is to get our young people employed or in some post-secondary education or training. And this is an option folks may not know about or may not think about because it's a little different. We have to innovate how we think. We have to think how we can serve them in our program just a little bit different. We have shared measurement, placement, education and training, work experiences, what do our alumni, in their case, and our exiters do after they leave us.

And there is an opportunity for a reciprocal relationship. If we get one of NCCC participants, we get someone who's demonstrated two weeks to over a year of commitment. The work is not necessarily easy. So if they can commit to two weeks to a year there, then that demonstrates for us their perseverance in our program. So some of the screening has already been done.

You all have heard about mental toughness today, right? We don't have it in our programs. But as they see there, they pretty much have been through a mental toughness. We know they have some tenacity, some commitment, some perseverance, and that can be one way for us to see how successful they may be in our program.

And vice versa, if we see a young person who may not have that fire that we want to see to see if they're going to persevere through our program or where we are trading in in-demand only and we want to still serve the youth, we can say, "We see they're passionate about something" and we can talk to them about how NCCC can give them an opportunity to participate, get out of their usual setting, earn a stipend while they learn skills – workplace skills, work readiness skills, educational skills – and they have credentials in their program that will also be transferable to our program as far as community college credits.

So there is a reciprocal relationship between what they can do and what we can do. Looking at their program and our required element now 14, we have some things in common. Leadership development happens there. It's also one of our program elements. Adult mentorship is something that they can provide in their programming because they're working with an adult team to do some community-based. Paid and unpaid work experiences. They earn a stipend. So it's not that they're not earning anything. They're learning something as well as valuable workplace skills that we want them to know and demonstrate a commitment to themselves and their future success.

It's an educational placement that concurrently teaches workforce preparation. Again, all of the same things we have for program element. It is an activity that is preparing up a post-secondary education. Again, they earn some credits there. They earn some federal department agency credentials there. So what do we hear? We hear a commitment factor that we need to know.

We hear about credentially that can transfer to our program. We hear about employment and training placements that we can reciprocate. These are the things we're looking for. And they offer similar supportive services. So while they're in their program, we may not have to provide certain things like a living allowance. They get the additional benefit of their educational award, plus whatever IDA or things that we offer.

Healthcare is provided by them. Childcare is also provided by them. So we have some things that we each do that if we work together in some kind of partnership we're not duplicating. But we can play through our strength and allow them to play through their strength.

So as you listen to their presentation, keep the mindset of a collective impact. We have the same customer who's going to get an added benefit of our two agencies working together and we can use this opportunity to either refer to them a customer or get a customer from them who's demonstrated a commitment to their self-improvement.

So with that in mind, I'll invite Charles and LaQuine up here from NCCC and have them explain more about what benefits they have for our shared participants.

CHARLES DAVENPORT: Thank you very much, Toby. We'd like to say good afternoon to everyone. It is good to be here in Philadelphia. Needless to say, Toby is going to have to join our team and go with us on the road because he did an excellent job of giving us an introduction and explaining a little bit of what we're going to present. (Inaudible).

All right. I guess that didn't work. I thought I was going to be about partnership, but I guess – (inaudible). That's all right. (Chuckles.)

We want to get a feel for who's in the room. So I know you got a wonderful bunch and –

(Technical difficulty, silence.)

MR. KEATING: All right. Can anybody hear me?

MR. DAVENPORT: All right.

MR. KEATING: It sounds like you're back. Great. Thanks. Sorry about that. Keep going, if you would. Thanks, everybody, for the feedback. All right. Still there in person? All right. Does anybody hear me? All right. Seem to be coming in and out. All right. If you can hear me consistently, let me know and might ask the in person room to hang up and dial back in. All right. You can hear me consistently, though? All right. Might be the in person – got it. All right. So I'm going to ask our speakers if they could hang up and dial back in, that'd be great. So Toby and team, if you could hang up and dial back in, that would be great. It sounds like maybe there's something going on with that phone line. Seems people seem to be able to hear me, but not the other team.

MR. DAVENPORT: So we will do our best to stay within the 75 minutes, but here's what you have to understand, we have 44 years of experience to share with you.

MR. KEATING: All right. Standby, everybody. Having some trouble it sounds like with the audio and trying to reach out to our speakers. So stay tuned on that. Again, we're aware that there seems to be a problem with the audio. So please stay tuned.

MR. DAVENPORT: And so needless to say, we stepped away from our offices because we thought this was an important partnership for us to look at to see how what –

MR. KEATING: All right. Again, to our virtual audience, just so you know, let us know when you're back. Right now, we're not hearing anything. So we're aware of the issue and we're trying to fix it on our end. So stay tuned, everybody. Be right with you.

MR. DAVENPORT: So again NCCC. And then also with – oh. We have a mic here. That's going to be good. All right. Let's see. All right. Thank you very much. And then the slide? Oh. We got that. We know we're getting there. All right.

So there's some programs that we see funding from the Corporation for National Community Service to do the work that they do. And then others, they are non-profit and they receive additional funding. And some of the organizations that I mentioned, they receive funding from different sources. NCCC is 100 percent funded by the federal government. And so even though we've been around for almost 23 years, what's interesting is every year there's a possibility that we will not exist because we're funded by congress.

And so back in 2006 wasn't a big year for us because we didn't even make the president's budget. And so when you don't make the president's budget, you just need to pack up and go home. And so we were in the process of doing that. And unfortunately, Katrina hit, but fortunately for us, we had resources to go down to Mississippi and Louisiana and we sent all 1,200 of our members down to that area and we focused on helping the individuals or citizens down there recover from that. And from that, they gave us the levels to notice that we were there and some of the work that we were able to do. And next slide, please.

So when you look at our program, the theme of our program or our mission is strengthening communities and developing leaders through direct team-based national and community service. So once again, we're looking at strengthening communities, and then number two, developing leaders through direct, team-based national and community service. Next slide.

So with that, you need to understand a little bit about NCCC. LaQuine, during her presentation, she'll go into more detail of what takes place on a campus. But when you hear NCCC, automatically you should think 18- to 24-year-olds. You should think that they work as a team. There's usually 10 to 12 individuals on a team along with a team leader. A team leader could be someone in their early 20s all the way to mid 50s or 60s. There's no age limit on the team leaders. But for the actual participants or corps members, 18- to 24-year-olds.

They travel throughout the country in a 15-passenger van. You may have seen some of our vans, white vans, red, through all colors, but the main key is that they're 15-passenger vans and that's how they get around to each project. Also, the work that they do, they could have a project in Oklahoma City; the next project depending on their region might be down in Dallas, Texas; and the next one could be in New York City.

And so what we try to do is give them a variety of experiences while they're in the program. And you can imagine we're dealing with folks who have just graduated from high school or they're working on their GED all the way to they're going to grad school. And so when you think about it, how often do we get such a great group of folks to come together to work together hand in hand for national services?

Now, with NCCC in 2012, we had the opportunity to partner with FEMA. And so with FEMA, we started the FEMA Corps and basically the same type of work that was due – not so much the work, but the structure is the same as what we do with NCCC as far as the team based, 10 to 12 on a team, travel in vans, – (inaudible) – etc. The difference is that with FEMA, we're more focused on working with FEMA staff people as well as working in the field and in the office setting to support the work that's being done.

With AmeriCorps and NCCC, when you see at disasters, we're the ones out there helping with the mudding and gutting, the roof, anything there's more than physical part, when you see FEMA Corps, FEMA Corps are in these blue shirts – (inaudible) – that they say FEMA on the back, they are the ones that do more of the administrative type work. Next slide, please.

So as I said before, we're a national program. So national program, we have five regional campuses. Sacramento, California, we have a campus located there, which is the Pacific region. And Denver, Colorado, we have the Southwest region. And Vicksburg, Mississippi, out of Jackson, Mississippi we have the Southern region. And Vinton, Iowa, we have the North Central region, that's right outside of Cedar Rapids, Iowa. And then the campus that LaQuine leads is in Baltimore and that is the Atlantic region. And then our headquarters is in Washington, D.C. Next slide.

So there used to be a time that if you asked me when can an individual apply to be in the program, I would have this long list of times of is it between this month and that month and they can take these three months off and then it's followed by another month. And so after a while, you either confused or you would say, "You know what? I don't know when you're available so I'm not going to apply."

So we took care of that. If you were to ask me today when can my individuals apply, they can apply any time, 24/7, 12 throughout the year. We now have three cycles. We have the summer cycles; it begins in July. You need to apply by April 1st. We have a fall cycle; it begins in October. You need to apply by July 1st. And then finally, we have the winter cycle; it begins in February. You need to apply by November 1st. And then if you had individuals who were interested in team leader position, it's one month earlier.

So the key here is that we have three cycles, meaning that probably our most popular cycles as far as school years, of course, fall more with the summer and fall, but also we have great opportunities in the winter. When you hear us talking about the campuses, the individuals do not get to select to go to a certain campus said, you know what, I really want to go to California. It's like because I know that I can make a difference there. So I'll go to San Diego. I think you have our program just a little confused.

That's what we have to say to young people. That's where your home base – that's where you're going to come for training, but you're only going to spend maybe 10 percent or 15 percent of your time actually on the campus. The majority of your time will be out and about doing service throughout the country.

So I'm sorry, Toby. Could you go back one? Maybe it's at the top of this one. I'm sorry. Thanks. Yeah.

So right there, the www.americorps.gov/nccc, that is where you need to go in order to apply for a program. So once again, americorps.gov/nccc. It also tells you more about our program. Don't think that it's everything that we're sharing today, but it has information about how to apply, about the experience – (inaudible). When you go on YouTube, you put in "AmeriCorps NCCC," our corps members have been very creative of coming up with some videos that I think that you would enjoy how they explain about the program as well.

Eligibility and selection. Now, what I will say about this is that there's no way – go back one more. Sorry.

There's no way to actually go over everything for eligibility, but what I want you to know is that it is our job to work with you as our partner to see how we can get your young person into the program. And so unlike maybe some other programs where it's, like, well, sure, we have medical mental health screening. We do have legal screening. We do have background checks for team of corps members.

And the reality is some people do not pass the legal. Some people do not pass the medical. Some people do not pass the mental health. Some people do not pass the background check. However, we don't know that until we go through the process. And so I would never want someone to be scared to say, "I know my background and I know there's no way there's no way I can get in." No. Let's talk. Let's talk about this and see how we can make it happen. We try to do all we can to accommodate whatever situation a young person is in in order for him to have the opportunity to serve in national service. And we probably can even go as far as to say that if not NCC, there has to be a national service program that works for you. Everyone, we believe, has the right to serve especially if they have the drive and desire to serve in the program.

But I need to stress, though however, for some organizations that come to this as a dumping ground for these youth. I feel kind of sad about that in a sense, and I look at it a couple of ways. We didn't do a good job explaining what we need to explain of who was successful in our programs. And then maybe we didn't understand the type of youth that was coming as far as maybe they need something else before they come to us. So those are the kind of conversations we needed to have. But once we started having those type of conversations, it's no different than any place else. You need folks who are motivated. You need folks who are self-governing, who have the initiative, who are flexible; who really want to do this.

Unfortunately, the type – we've had people show up on campus saying, I did not know what this was. If I would've known this was it, I don't think I would've done it. Well, already we did not set them up for success. So we worked very hard with our partners to start looking at webinars with our counselors and with our partners and it's, like, this is what we're looking for. This is how best prepared your young people, when they step on that campus, they go, you know what? I didn't know it was going to be all of this, but I do have a good feel for what AmeriCorps NCCC is like that. Once again, you're looking at a residential program. And so even though some of our young people have dealt with residential programs before, this situation is amazing, but at the same time, it's so life-changing for them.

We do have what we call team leader training or corps member training that takes place, and sometimes we lose people during that time because they think you know what, this program isn't for me. I don't see how this works. I always wished, man, I wish you could've actually gotten on a project because if you actually would've gotten on a project and saw the good work that you would be doing and how you would be helping the community in a field that you would learn, I think you would be very excited that you stayed in the program.

Back in 2009, the Serve America Act was passed and this was passed by – this was presented by President Obama or signed by President Obama and it's the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act for 2009. Some of you may be familiar with it. What was monumental about that act for us is that it was going to take AmeriCorps membership from 75,000 a year to 250,000 members a year. As you know, that was such a big jump. Very, very exciting.

Now, not sure they gave us the money to go along with that, but there it doesn't matter. It's written in the legislation, right? So it gives us something to shoot for. So what we have to start doing is being more creative of how we get the word out and how we get the folks into the program.

Well, in NCCC there was another component that was really interesting for us and 50 percent – up to 50 percent of our members need to come from youth from disadvantaged circumstances – up to 50 percent. We had always worked with that population; however, they had it in legislation – actually gave it the teeth we needed in order to move forward.

So what that means is that the Serve America Act defines disadvantaged youth as those youth who are economically disadvantaged in one or more of the following: who are out-of-school youth, including out-of-school youth who are unemployed, who are aging out of foster care, who have limited English proficiency, who are homeless and have run away from home, who are at risk to leave secondary school without a diploma, who are former juvenile offenders or at risk of delinquency, and then who are individuals with disability.

So those are the type of individuals when we talk about circumstance up to 50 percent. So those are the type of individuals we're looking for.

And so where do you start? I mean, our traditional corps was 600 – I'm sorry, 1,200 folks. We needed to get at least 600 from this category. So we did partnerships with Job Corps, worked with the National Association for the Job Force Association. They helped with Job Corps centers. We also, of course, worked with youth academy. We worked with YouthBuild. YouthBuild, obviously, you're familiar with. And between those three organizations, Job Corps, Youth Challenge, and YouthBuild, we were able to – right now, we're probably at about 35 percent of those who enter our program that successfully make it through the first day of the program in order to serve in AmeriCorps NCCC.

So I kind of give you a few numbers. We've been doing for the last five or six years. For Job Corps, we've had about 2,500 applications, which turned to 934 members. Our Youth Challenge, we had about 1,300 applications, turned to about 453 members. And then YouthBuild, we have 337 applications and the members are 136. And so each of the relationships with our federal partners vary from partnership to partnership. So what I will say about this, if you're thinking about a partnership with us, once again, like I said, we're in the partnership building business. We'd be very excited to talk with you about this. Some things we may want to do as a pilot just to see how it works.

Other times, we may want to work on MOU – memorandum of understanding – because a lot of times the organization has things that they want to make sure takes place. We want to make sure that certain things takes place from our part. But at the end of the day – that's why I brought up the MOUs because we have to get our general counsel involved. And general counsels, they keep us out of jail and we love them, but sometimes they can be slow. And meanwhile, we've missed out on some opportunities. But once again, we love them because they keep us out of jail and they keep us legal. But that's why sometimes we may want to look at a pilot to see how we do this.

And then finally what I'll say on this part is that you may know some young people that were interested in the program. So maybe we're not at the state the formal MOU or pilot, but you know what? I've got Charles Davenport. He's one of my young people I'm working with. I think he would be great for this program. How can we move forward with this? We have a number of alums that are, of course, throughout the country; I think about 23 years of alums throughout the country on our staff and headquarters as well as one the campus. We have a number of alums who are there, they can answer any questions that you have regarding the program.

So at this time, we'll look at just a one-minute YouTube clip. And it's one thing to talk about the program. It's another thing to actually see them in action.

(video presentation)

You don't have anything else to do anyway, right? Other than reflecting on how much good time you had. And look at some of the visuals that are there and you'll get the excitement of the work that's being done as well as our young people.

So enough about the legislation, enough about how to apply. At the end of the day, we're going to make sure that if you have an interest in this that we're going to have more conversation. But you're probably wondering what actually goes on on a campus. And so we have my colleague, LaQuine Roberson, and she will give us some really interesting information about what your youth could expect if they served in AmeriCorps NCCC.

But at the time, I'd like to turn it over to LaQuine. Now, I know y'all – I saw you clap one time on – (inaudible). So you want to give her a hand? (Applause, chatter). All right.

LAQUINE ROBERSON: Thank you, Charles. (Inaudible). OK. Hi, everyone. I met some of you, I think. How many of you were in D.C. at the last – just one person. And we recognized each other as I came in.

So I am LaQuine and I am a camp director, or region director, as we call ourselves. And so my responsibility is to manage all of the young adults who come to our different campuses. You heard that we are located in Sacramento, Iowa, Mississippi, Denver, and Baltimore. That's where I am.

So Baltimore, where we're located, is that we're considered an urban campus environment. What does that mean for you all is that we're located – our facility is located directly in the middle of a community. So what we're doing in the community. The community for our young folks get up every morning, put on their uniform, get in the van, and go to work. So that's where we are now. But let's talk a little bit about campus survival.

Once your young adult has filled out the application and has been accepted into the program, that will then be assigned to a different campus. Coming to Baltimore, any of our campuses, we always have a welcoming committee. We have what we call stations where they will come in with all of their bags and then they get to in process. This is what you would do as if you're starting off on a new job. And it's also an opportunity for us to talk to them and just show them a videotape about the campus itself.

After in processing is over, that's done within two days, two and a half days. This processing is starting up their electronic equipment, making sure that we can process for those expensive items, trying on uniforms, getting their boots, getting them settled in their rooms, and then also getting them acquainted with the other members of the corps.

This year from our traditional corps, I have 175 members. Large class for us. And so you can imagine all the members that are coming in off the plane. And we also meet them at the plane. We meet them at the airport, train station, bus station. And so we have a – (inaudible) – time. They all get them in and then we bring them to the campus.

So then they go into three weeks of training, CTI, Corps Member Training Institute. That's where they learn a lot about diversity, CPR/First Aid, and – OK. And also, a lot of things about teams dynamic, team structure. Our members come in and they say, "Oh. We don't want all this training. We just want to get out and get our hands dirty." Well, sometimes we tell you, "You got to have some training before you can go out and do the work.

Yeah. Digging a ditch is easy, but just how do you do that? Do you dig a ditch this wide, this wide? And what is the reason why you're digging this ditch? What will it do for the community? So those are some of the things that we're teaching during Corps Member Training Institute. There's always a reason behind why you're doing what you're doing. So we make sure that our members are well informed, get some training experience, and understand all the work that are involved with the service.

Team-based structure. Once 175 members come in, then they are assigned to a team. A team always has a team leader, which you see the person here is in green. Our team leaders have on green t-shirts that designate them as the leader. Corps members are in gray shirts, khaki pants, and steel toe boots. So they're all in teams. Our teams are as large as 12, plus the team leader, or it can be as small as six.

Each team has their own passenger van and they've gotten creative. They name their vans because guess what? They're in this van all the time. Sometimes it's a little funky. We say please keep it clean, but that's how they travel. They don't travel in cars or anywhere else. It's always in a 15 passenger van. So we are allowing them some of those skills of being together as a team.

Now, we also talked about training. So in the van, who's driving? The team leader's driving. Sometimes are members are receiving driver's training. So they get to drive a 15 passenger van. So they're getting more experience on how to manage and handle this van and the people.

Community-based projects and service learning. Community-based projects for us is that our program department or our product department, they develop projects for the different communities. (Inaudible) – campus, we are having projects from Washington, D.C., some in Virginia, all the way up through main. So how many of you are from the Philadelphia area? OK. We have had several teams in the Philadelphia area working on community service projects here within the city. Anybody further north? Claire, where are you from?

CLAIRE: (Inaudible).

MS. ROBERSON: Pennsylvania. We've had – (inaudible) – from Pennsylvania. Anybody Connecticut, New York, Vermont, Maine? OK. So no one else in my area. Anyone – let's see. The Big Bird campus in Mississippi, they're dealing with all of the southern states. Denver or Mid West, Iowa is Mid West state. So all of our five campuses, we're spread out so that we are serving communities in different areas.

So you may not be from this area, but I could also tell you the other four campuses are somewhere within the communities of which you're serving.

So our community-based projects, you could also be a sponsor. You could be a sponsor for your community. And if you enjoy – if you're able to fill out the application for a private because you think that your community needs to be improved, revitalized, here's where our teams come in. They are your workforce. We use those projects to provide them with the skills, skills of learning about the environment, skills of learning about mentoring and tutoring in schools, skills about working with disaster, skills about just working with other communities in some of the things that they want to do. So that's what our community-based products are all about.

And then we have service learning. What is service all about? A lot of people – a lot of our young folks come in and say, "Well, I just want to help people." OK. Well, that's good. But what kind of service learning are you getting from helping people? So our job is to teach them more about why are you in this program serving in communities as well as developing yourself as a leader.

So that's what the projects are doing. Our team leaders are in charge, but we also allow our members an opportunity to take on a leadership role and also be a team leader and serve in that capacity.

And then the campus structure and then the expectations.

So many of you know that within any organization, you always have to have rules. So we have rules. We have what we call our AmeriCorps NCCC handbook. This is a guideline that tells our members about being able to serve, getting the number of hours you need to graduate. It also talks about our drug and alcohol policy. We randomly drug test. We also don't allow cohabitation. We also talk just about all the good things that NCCC will bring them, but it also talks about rules and regulations of the program.

So the handbook is a great guideline for me as a region director and working with that. Next slide.

So talked a little about travel and exposure. So our members are using 15 passenger vans to travel everywhere. So you all know that when you're traveling, sometimes people fall asleep, but mostly our folks come from all over. We have a very diverse corps. So while they're traveling, the exposure that they're gaining is going into a community that they've never been before. Many of our members are coming from the west coast, Mid West. They've never seen the seasons change. They've never seen snow. They've never seen the leaves change. So that's a great exposure for them.

And then also the exposure is seeing these different communities that they hear about on television. They never know that, OK. I came from a poor community. My community is the only community that's poor. Well, guess what? There are other communities out here. And by having this exposure, it helps us to understand while I'm working here in Connecticut working with this community, the exposure that I'm gaining now and how it helps them – (inaudible) – themselves, I can take that back home when I graduate in November. So they're still gaining those skills and that exposure.

Networking. We're working with Habitat for Humanity. We're working with many different agencies with our projects. So they are the sponsors. What does that do for our members? It helps them to get a job. The networking is now resume building. They can put that – those skills that they've gained on those jobs.

So how many people can work for 10 months and gain exposure of working with maybe five or six different – (inaudible) –? Not many people can say that they've done that. But we can guarantee our members of at least six to eight weeks of skills training on the job hands-on training and they're working with Habitat for Humanity and other agencies that are our sponsors.

So we've been mentoring and tutoring in schools. We've also been working with community cleanup, planning gardens – community gardens. We've also worked with highways helping to do – how many of you see the rocks and things on the side of the road? That's called rick rack (ph). So why are we doing that? We're doing that because we want to stop the flooding when there's so much rain. Why are we doing that? So this is the type of exposure that we're getting to our members. So there are all kinds of things that we are giving the members as they come into our program.

Well, cross-cultural competence and understanding. We are a very, very diverse group. So you heard Charles talk about college educated, some looking to get their high school diploma. Some already have their high school diploma, but others are trying to get their GED. So we will provide assistance them getting their GED or getting a high school diploma. Once upon a time, it used to be – it only had to be GED. Most schools now are offering an opportunity for them to get their diploma. Members have an opportunity to do either one. We will pay for one testing and we will allow them to get that before they graduate.

Learning more about different kinds of people. Whether you're Hispanic, whether you're African American, whether you're Caucasian, whether you're of German accent, Latino, all the different things that several members, our youth America, have a hard time understanding that just because the color of your skin is different, we sometimes have the same things going on in our families. And so they understand now and learn more about the cross-cultural understanding.

We also do a lot of diversity training, key dynamics, teaching them how to work and live together. Our teams, when they travel to their project site, they're living, eating, sleeping, working together all in one group. So therefore, they have to learn how to cook. By the way, our members are getting $4.75 a day. So remember, to pull together, design a menu, go shopping for the week, and then cook a meal. So everybody is now learning cooking skills.

They're also learning budgeting skills. They're also learning how to manage their money because we do not allow our members to go out and eat in a restaurant. They must cook that meal. So therefore, we have vegetarians, we have vegans, we have meat eaters on our team. Again, diversity, learning about culture, learning about what does it take to fill a cover for a family of 10 on a small amount of money. So that's again, some of the knowledge that they're gaining.

And so that shows the stuff that they're doing. And sometimes you can say, "4.75, what does that do?" Well, trust me. By the time they come back from their – (inaudible) – project, we're changing out pants, we're changing out t-shirts because they're eating some very, very healthy meals. (Inaudible) – very health conscious. Everything has to be healthy and they want it just right. So they're learning how to manage.

And so what about member set? They develop cookbooks. So now, we have cookbooks on the meals that they are doing out in the field.

Professional development. We talked about the training. During this training, they will get three other graduate credits and those credits can be used for – going towards getting their college degree. And for some it also helps them to get their certification. Many of our members who come to the program may have already completed college, but they still don't know what they want to do. So they're still using the experiences that they're gaining for the 10 months for professional development. So that gap year – that is what some of them call it – is an opportunity to learn more about the environment and learn more about the community so that when they do go back to their professional jobs, they can see that they have now had some hands-on experience.

So they do get the three undergraduate credits. We also offer the presidential and congressional awards of service. So if they are working – so every member must gain 1,700 hours at the end of the 10 months. If they have gained 1,800 hours or more, then they would now qualify for the presidential and congressional award.

At graduation, they all get to put their medals around their necks and it's very inspiring for parents to come in and see that my Johnny or my Susie did more than just the bare minimum. They did more. They have excelled. They have exceeded the expectations of the campus because now they've received 1,800 hours or more. And they themselves are very proud that they were able to do it.

We talked about CPR, First Aid, AED certification. Well, we have change. As of today, Charles and I ran out of change. We are now going to require sponsors to provide the CPR and First Aid training, but our team leaders will get the training so that at least one person on the team is qualified. And that's just for safety reasons for us. But whenever our members are going out on disaster or working with other agencies, if those agencies feel that it's a need for CPR or First Aid, they will provide the training.

Life after AmeriCorps training. What we do is we also have a job fair. Throughout the year, we offer our job fair where we are inviting different organizations to come in and look at the resumes of our members so that when they graduate at the end of the 10 months, they now have something that they can look forward to in going to a job.

The Accenture Skills to Succeed Workforce Development. Those are just the skills that we offer our members so that they know that by serving with us for 10 months, it's not for nothing. You're developing your resume and you're developing your skills. You're also setting yourself up to have a good job. And so you can actually say that, "I've worked on this particular area. I've received the training." And in some cases, you received certification.

We have had many of our members to be hired by Habitat for Humanity. We've had many of our members to be hired by schools as well because if they're showing their potential while their time is at the particular site, then employers are willing to hire them. And it's great for us to see that success when those sponsors come to our graduation at the end of November and we can also recognize Johnny has been hired by this particular company based upon the work that Johnny did when he was out.

And then FEMA basic training. So those of your members who could be interested in working with FEMA. So everything I've talked about thus far has been with the tradition corps. They work the gray and khakis. Team leaders are green. Our FEMA, as Charles said, are in the red and blue symbolizing the American flag, the American way. Some of those things that I've talked about with the traditional corps transpired over to FEMA. The only difference with FEMA Corps is though that they're more of a – (inaudible) – specific training.

Some of them were coming out of FEMA. They have their laptop computers. And they are the ones that will go out. So if you have a disaster in your community, FEMA Corps members are the ones who will go out and do the analyzing of the disaster. They will take a look at the more specific of the need. They're the ones who will help those affected by the disaster fill out the paperwork, take them to the appropriate organization and receive the monies to help them rebuild. So that's what FEMA does. They live more on the administrative side. Our traditional corps are the hands-on worker.

So if you feel that your young adult in YouthBuild can mesh any one of these, I think that they will be a good fit for the program. And that's why working with traditional and FEMA, we found that we have two tracks now. So you have a choice. You can make that choice. And when we talk about FEMA position for specific training, members get to go to Vicksburg, Mississippi and get some additional training and then they branch out.

FEMA Corps can go wherever there's a disaster. They can go to Hawaii. They can go to Puerto Rico. We had a team that has gone to Alaska. Things that they would never have encountered if they hadn't been involved in this service organization.

A traditional corps can also do disaster work also. So you heard Charles talk about Katrina. Our traditional corps members have been involved in every disaster that has happened in the United States. And so we used to say that we were boots on the ground 24/7. A disaster hits, we're the next group of young people that are out there. So when Sandy hit, within 24 hours, we were sending teams to New Jersey to help set up with the Red Cross, set up with the – (inaudible) – and help them to get the food out to them and then also set up shelters.

So not only do we work within the community, we work hand in hand with disaster and other agencies who are helping communities to rebuild.

Katrina; we're still in New Orleans. They're still rebuilding. Sandy; they're still rebuilding. All the other hurricanes, all the other disasters that you can name, we're still rebuilding. Our youth, 18 to 24, are those that are out there helping to do this. Why is that important to us in America? Because most of us, when a disaster hits, we can go out within the first two weeks. Everybody's ready. But guess what? You got to go back to work. Our youth can stay there forever or as long as needed. And that's what's so great about having your youth become a part of this program because we are teaching them all about serving and community and then developing themselves as leaders.

So we also have second year members. Your young adult can serve with our program for two years and they will still get the educational award of $5,775 and still get their service award. I said that right, right? OK. They will still get that. And then they're still eligible for the presidential and congressional awards. So they can serve for two years and they can also go to another campus. Now, going to another campus, they would have to still be on the same cycle that we're on. But we encourage those who want to continue with service as second year member. That second year members can become team leaders also.

Team leaders. Team leaders can be of any age. So if you think that you have someone who is willing and able to manage a group of young adults, much like themselves, because our team leaders can be anywhere from 21 to 65. We've had someone who's 65 years old to be a team leader. Our corps members gained a lot from that gentlemen because he had lots of life stories that he helped them with. So team leaders are essential to our program because they're the ones that's leading a management team.

Team leaders are also responsible for managing up to $3,500 in cash money or by debit card as they're going out to the different communities. So what do they do? They're in the – team leaders get the project assignment. They have to map out their route going to communities. They pack up the van, put everybody in the van, travel to, let's say, Maine, all by van. Once they get there, the team leader is responsible for meeting with the private sponsor, giving the orientation, going over the work plan, they go to work. They are there from six to eight weeks managing the team of 10 and making sure that the work plan has been accomplished.

So it is a lot to them. A lot of them are still learning the skill, but it is always exciting and inviting to become a team leader as well as being a member of a team.

Now, careers in government. We have many of our FEMA members who have gotten jobs in the government. A lot of them – again, it's all about expelling while you're out in the community. People watch. People see. People understand what you're doing. If you're able to show that you are a good worker, you could be hired and become a member of the federal government.

And then with FEMA, FEMA also offers certification in emergency management. So if anybody wants to be an EMT or work in the FEMA arena, then that's the experience that they would need to build on. The other thing about being in the FEMA Corps is that they can also become reserves. How many of you know what reservists are? Nobody knows about the reservists? Not the military reservists, but the FEMA reservists. Anybody? You do?

MR. : Is that the group that is almost like military reservists, but whenever there's a disaster, you get called on to go and work this disaster. And whatever job you're working on, they have to give you the time off to go and help on one of these disasters.

MS. ROBERSON: Exactly. Yes. So by coming into FEMA Corps, our members are now signed up to become a reservist. So whenever disaster hits – so like the military being a reservist with the military, they are reservists for a disaster. The job that they're on has to hold their place. They go and work on the disaster. They're getting paid by being a reservist, but they're also gaining additional experience by becoming a reservist. And then that tenure of becoming a reservist can now lead into a federal government job. So there's always possibilities.

And so these are some of the things that our members gain by coming into NCCC.

And so this is a group of NCCC members. We do a lot of reflection at the end of every project ground. Our team must give a briefing of the project that they've been working on and then we also do reflection on it. So this is the team just reflecting. You see the numbers, see how many are there? You also see it's a diverse group. I think you can tell that. And so NCCC just provides an opportunity for many young people to get off the street, learn how to live with each other, figure out what they want to do with their lives and also become an active citizen in the United States and also giving back.

So again, we take wholeheartedly what developing leaders in serving communities – (inaudible). So if you have a youth in your YouthBuild organization that fit or that meets some of the things that we are doing, we would love to have you on our campus.

So thank you much.

MR. DAVENPORT: Thank you, LaQuine. We'll open it up for any questions you may have at this time that we can answer for you. Yes?

MS. : Yes. I just have one. (Inaudible). What are the – (inaudible) –?

TOBY: Can you repeat that for the whole line?

MR. DAVENPORT: Yeah. So if I understand the question, the question was what is built into the AmeriCorps NCCC program regarding the safety of the young people that will be entering into our program, understanding that they come from different situations and backgrounds? So I'll turn it over to LaQuine to speak on of where the members are located.

So my response goes back almost to when they apply; for example, made some reference to the medical mental health screenings that take place, the legal appearances that take place. All these appearances take place from that side of the house to make sure that the young people who enter into our program have all the criteria that we have in place – the sex offender registry and we run things through there; background check, make sure that there's no issues there that we weren't aware of that we couldn't address from that perspective.

Also, if there's accommodations that need to be made, whether it's dealing with medicine or facility, we want to make sure that we understand those and that we have those in place ahead of time so that they can be successful. There have been times when we had to defer someone from entering our program and that was only because we followed the mental health screening guidelines.

And a lot of times when someone has been involved with cutting or attempted suicide or different change of medications, there are standards that we need to follow to make sure that they are as healthy as possible both mentally and physically in order to serve in our program. So we may defer them for six months, a year, two years depending on the time frame is.

Also, on our teams, LaQuine mentioned during CPI, during our training period, a lot of folks had never been outside the comforts of their home. So once again, in certain communities that we're in, whether it's a rural community or whether it's an urban community, there's certain things that you should know in that community of how you function in that community. So we're definitely big on the buddy system as far as you just don't go out by yourself without someone knowing that you're out there. We have a lot of runners and a group of folks that like to PT. Make sure that you do that in groups. I'll turn it over to you to talk about some of the things on the campus.

MS. ROBERSON: OK. At the campus level, we also have two counselors and our counselors are licensed either in mental health or some social work. So when we have our members that's coming into the campus that have some mental concerns, those folks are brought into the counselors. They are seen immediately so that we have a better understanding of what is going on with a particular member. We always encourage our members to stay on their medication. It is not the time to wean yourself onto medications. We always tell them the doctor put you on the medication for a reason. You need to take your pill because it will help.

So we do have our two counselors that are available. The counselors do not travel with the team that they're going to different communities. But what does the counselor also do? The counselor knows where all of our teams are going to. So the counselors are also giving the team leader a medical – what we call a medical spike book and that book helps them to find the different doctors and different counselors who will also take our limited insurance that will help them to meet some of the medical attention that they need.

So counselors are always on board 24/7 as well as the region directors to help work with any of those issues that may come about. Yes?

MS. : I have a question. (Inaudible) – you guys are required – (inaudible).

MS. ROBERSON: 475.

MS. : 475. Oh. OK. So do they stay in hotels when they're – (inaudible)?

MS. ROBERSON: So thank you. FEMA, of course, stays in hotels because that's FEMA. Normally when FEMA Corps is going out in a disaster area, there are no types of places for them to stay so FEMA will put them up in a hotel. For our traditional corps, a sponsor must give a vacant room similar to this so that they can come in with their cot and sleeping bag. And so they – we have – teams divide off between male and female. And so they would use an open space like this as part of their living arrangement. Now, some sponsors will provide for them a house that they could use. Or some sponsors, sometimes they're camping for six to eight weeks.

Many of them like it. Some of them don't. But there are different variations of how our traditional corps, they are not in hotels at all because – the reason they're not in hotels is because when you're going to serve in a community, you need to live how that community is living. We can't put them in a hotel and then here comes the van driving in like fresh and clean. No.

The reason you're in that community is because they need help. It doesn't mean that you have to live in filth. No. We try to teach our team, but you still have to keep your area nice and clean. They still have to take showers. Sometimes if it's an open room like this, we say please take showers. But if it's an open room like this, the sponsor has to provide an opportunity for them to cook.

And if the sponsor does not have an open shower or bathroom for a large number to take a shower, then we collaborate with a local YMCA or a local gym, like Gold's Gym, and so they'll work out and then take their showers there.

But as far as the – (inaudible) – bathroom and a sink. So they learn how to wash in the van. So it's really roughing it at times, but they learn how to manage. And they become more resilient about it because now you have the understanding that everything is not what you see on a reality show on TV. This is real. This is how people actually live.

And sometimes it's a little small stove, but they manage. They manage to learn how to cook the meals for the meat eaters and meals for the vegetarians. So guess what? You cannot mix those pots and pans. You cannot put any meat on my pan. OK? So then we have to have two sets of cookware. We do provide them with their kitchen kits. So every team travels with a kitchen kit and it's a big tub full of dishes, glasses, pots and pans, all things that they need.

So they're learning cooking skills. They're learning a lot about family time, family management. When they're cooking their dinner, they cannot talk about business. They have to talk about what's going on in the world or talk about what's going on with each other. So that's family time. So that's how they're living.

Any other questions?

MR. DAVENPORT: We talked about the uniforms. So we provide everything. When they show up, they pretty come in just a duffle bag – a big red duffle bag with – a green duffle bag with all their items. When the program first started back in 1994, people were bringing their guitar and bicycles. And I don't know if you remember something called a Walkman, all those different things that they would bring.

And so we actually had to have a U-Haul connected to the van to load all that stuff in it. Somehow we got smart through the years. But really, do you need to bring all of that? So now they bring their items in a green duffle bag. And what's nice about that is because they know that they're always on the move and that they have to be ready to go, but we provide the uniforms. So all the uniforms that LaQuine talked about, we provide them that. So they usually just have to bring something to wear on the weekends sometimes. We take care of the boots.

We take care of – we have what's called a dress uniform or – (inaudible) – as well as their regular AmeriCorps clothes. And what's interesting is that one time they – for example, they felt the need to get as much paint and grime and everything on their uniform, but it was just the first week. So you don't get that much on the first week. You're supposed to earn that throughout the year. And so throughout the year, you'll see them and they look like they've been doing something for 10 months.

As Toby mentioned before, just want make sure you understood all those benefits, there's $4,000 that they get, which is their living stipend, which after taxes, is about $150 every other week that they receive. As LaQuine mentioned, they receive their education award. Our hope is that we run into some folks who say, "You know what? I want to go and work first and then I'm going to go to college." And so by the time they get an apartment, all the expenses, did they really save on $6,000 to go to school, and the answer should be not.

And so with us, at least you know that you walk away with that $5,700-plus. And then we were finding that some schools actually will match that. So now, you're looking at close to $11,000 that you now have to go to school or that you didn't otherwise have. Or just a certificate that you want to get that not always at the community college or the four year tuition.

It is a residential program. Just want to make sure we're clear about that. And there are childcare benefits up to $400 a month that can be used. The children, of course, aren't a part of the AmeriCorps entry fee program. Talked about healthcare; is there anything else benefit wise that we didn't cover? OK/

So as we get ready to close it, there's no additional questions – hold on, sir. Yes, please.

MS. : Do you – (inaudible) – program? (Inaudible.)

MS. ROBERSON: We are beginning to do a better job of tracking. We normally go maybe two to three years out. We've been around for 23 years now. And so we lost a lot of that history, but we're starting to get it back. So what we're doing now is doing the alumni spotlight. So that helps us to understand where some of our members are going and what are they using as some of the skills they gained at NCCC.

So yes. We are doing a better job of tracking what NCCC has been able to provide for them and give them the job. There's one thing that I didn't – had not mentioned is that our members become firefighting trainer. So they can also get their red card and so they can become a certified firefighter coming to the program. So they do have to pass the background and run the two mile run within a certain time frame. But we also put them on teams where they go out and fight active fires. And they're doing burns within certain communities as well.

All five campuses are doing this. So here's another certification that our members are capable of gaining. Gaining some skills and also getting a job being a firefighter. We sent people out to California for those fires all over. So when NCCC gets the call, we're the boots on the ground 24/7. We're responding.

MR. DAVENPORT: And to add to that, some of the – we've been around 23 years, but we're still growing in certain areas. So LaQuine mentioned the firefighting. Our southern region campus – construction team is a team that's focused on construction projects. And so once again, with the same focus that LaQuine was talking about that once you get done with that that you would have certain certifications as well as the ability to work with certain organizations because we're finding that obviously people, they want to do service. However at the end of the day, I need a job. You know, I need to be able to use the skills that I've learned to do something so I can take care of myself.

And I think when you asked about the – what happens post – after they get done. There was a time when the – I don't know if it was a picture of AmeriCorps team member with a patient, female, between the ages of 18 and 24. And so most of the time she had just graduated from high school, on her way to college, or she just graduated from college. So pretty much everyone who is very education focused on what they were going to do next.

As we diversified the corps, all of a sudden we see there's a lot more men in the program. We always thought because our brochures at the beginning definitely had a lot of women working hard. And all of a sudden some of the guys got smart and said, "Wait a minute. This program has a lot of women in it and hey, let's check this out." So whether or not they did it for the right reason at the beginning, it got them there and then all of a sudden, they're on a team of 10 to 12, eight of them females and four guys, you feel pretty good about yourself each and every day.

MS. ROBERSON: Now, now, now.

MR. DAVENPORT: However, what they did find out also is how do you treat women as well because the guys were trying to do all the work and the women said, "Hold up. Wait a minute. I have muscles just like you have muscles." And so you learned a lot of how to work together both gender wise as well as different races and ethnicities. So for example, with YouthBuild, what we found a lot of our members that graduated from YouthBuild, when they came to the corps, guess what? They had expertise that the average college graduate did not have as far as some of the work that needed to be done. Some of the college graduates are still trying to figure out which end of the hammer to hold in order to drive a nail; YouthBuild, let me show you how it's done.

And so what we tried to do is build upon all the experiences that everyone has in order to show that everyone has value and purpose on the team. And so those are the things that we're probably most excited about when you're looking at what happens towards the end.

So I'll give my closing words and give it to LaQuine. It should be right at 4:00.

Just want to thank you for your time, for your interest in this program. I hope that when this presentation is done, you've thought of somebody that would be good for this program or you thought of a group of folks that you would like to get some more information for them about this. At the end of the day, please don't let anybody count themselves out thinking by looking at the brochures, I've got some folders for you to take with you, that this is not for me. Let's have a conversation. Let's see if it is for you. If it's not for you right now, it could be in the near future. But we honestly believe that there's a spot for everyone with AmeriCorps. Thank you.

MS. ROBERSON: And I'd just like to add on as a region director, all of us are committed to the youth that are come into our program. I wouldn't have been around all this time if I wasn't passionate about service and working with the young adults. I've been the region director for the past seven years. I've seen different walks of life. Sometimes I never know – I have kids of my own, but I never knew that some of our young adults have so much going on in their lives and they're struggling and they're trying to find the way. And so they need us to help give them that pathway of at least trying to make a difference.

And we at the region director level, we're in the feat of making a difference with young adults 18 to 24, showing them that they can be successful. They should try to be successful. And if we just give them a little bit of time because coming into NCCC, it's not always easy in the beginning. So if you're trying to work with your young adult, there's some hard knocks that they're going to have to work with and that's just getting along with other people and just picking out a different way of doing things. But give it some time, we work with all of our members to help everybody be successful. And at the end of the day, in November when they're graduating, they will feel successful and that helps them to be a better person and they move on.

And so every year in the graduation I'm always crying because I see those who come in, say, "Oh, God. This is going to be a hard task." But Johnny makes it because somewhere down the line the light bulb has come on and Johnny said, "I can do this." And that's all we want to do is to continue encouraging our young adults that they can do it. So I would just like for all of you to be with me as we continue to motivate our young adults to try the community service way of life. It helps them to figure out what they want to do. And from after that, then they can move on and become and do anything that they want to be.

And if some of my language sound familiar, I'm military as well. So I like to say if we can wake up in the morning and see the world in a different light, but we can always accomplish anything.

So thank you.

And I'm sorry. We have brochures if anybody will like one. And we'll just move along here.

TOBY: Thank you all for coming. Thank you for your presentation. Again, this is one option. We will have other options. Tomorrow is a panel of three different types of these programs serving those – (inaudible) – your population. So again, this is just one option. And again, what we're looking for, how we serve our youth and not turn them away. This is a good option for how you might be able to observe the youth and have it come back to us and still have a positive outcome.

What we have now – nope. Yeah. (Inaudible).

MR. KEATING: All right. I think – correct me if I'm wrong, but I think we're going to edit there in terms of the virtual portion today. So thanks everyone who joined us online and we'll be making these available after the fact as well. So thanks very much, everybody. I think we're going to go ahead and leave it there.

We'll give you some chance to give us some feedback for those of you attending online and I'll go ahead and wrap so that the in-person team can finish up the day. Thanks very much.

(END)