**WorkforceGPS**

**Transcript of Webinar**

**H-1B TechHire Grants Technical Assistance Launch Webinar**

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LAURA CASERTANO: And now, I'm going to turn things over to your moderator today, Ayreen Cadwallader. She's a workforce analyst with the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration. Ayreen?

AYREEN CADWALLADER: Thank you so much, Laura. And good afternoon, everyone, to today's webinar. We're very, very excited to hear from you today. In addition to introducing yourself in the chat window, you can certainly use this virtual name tag to introduce yourselves and also share any contact information if you're so inclined. Throughout this webinar, we will have several opportunities for you to post some questions and give us some feedback or add your comments using this chat window. So this will be our primary point of communication through this chat window.

But again, welcome. And before we start moving over to the next slide, we also want to do a quick poll to determine who is on the call today. Really important as we launch our technical assistance kickoff webinar just to hear what role of those of you on the line are playing. Are you an authorized rep? Are you a program director or manager? Are you representing your IT/data management or staff, a training partner, employer partner? And if you scroll down a little bit, supportive – service providers or other. And I'll give you just a couple more seconds to respond here. Sounds great.

And it looks like a few of our SPOs are also on the call. So wanted to welcome them as well. And it looks like the majority of the folks on the call now are program directors for our H-1B TechHire grant program. And so with that, I'd like to turn it over to Megan Baird for the next slide and we'll do some more introductions.

MEGAN BAIRD: Thank you, Ayreen. Good afternoon or good morning to everyone, depending on where you are joining from. We are very excited to have today's webinar to fully launch the technical assistance available for your grants. So thank you for joining us.

To let you know who will be on today's webinar from the program office. So we are located in the national office in Washington, D.C., the Division of Strategic Investment. If you don't know by now, we are the program office for the TechHire grants and we work in close coordination with your federal project officers located in the region. Again, I am Megan Baird. I am the program manager for all of our H-1B funded grants.

Joining me and who you just heard from is Ayreen Cadwallader. She is our lead for the TechHire grants. So you will all get to work with her very frequently over the life of your grant. And also, Danielle Kittrell, who is also supporting the TechHire grants. And you'll get to know her name well as well.

And I'm happy to introduce our technical assistance team that will be supporting you all. Tom Hooper; he is a senior director with Jobs for the Future. Also joining is Sara Lamback, a senior project manager with Jobs for the Future. And supporting Jobs for the Future, who is our lead technical assistance provider, is Todd Cohen. He is the director of strategic initiatives at Maher & Maher. And Bridget Brown, a senior workforce development specialist with ICF International.

And I'm going to turn things over to Danielle to give you a heads up on what to expect from – within the next hour.

DANIELLE KITTRELL: Thanks so much, Megan. So really quickly, we have a few objectives for you all today. The first one being we want to give you an overview of the planned H-1B TechHire programmatic TA activities. We also want to introduce the TA team and roles and responsibilities to the grantees, which includes the coaches and subject matter experts. We want to also give you an overview of the coaching process, which includes the coach/grantee matches. And last, we want to alert our grantees to upcoming TA events and activities. Next slide.

And moving on to today's agenda. We first want to give you a program overview and a snapshot of grantees. And we also about 12:15 – 12:15, excuse me, want to introduce the TA team, talk about the TA goals and objectives, the TechHire coaches, and roles and introductions. We also want to talk about upcoming events and activities, followed by questions and discussion.

And now, I'll turn it over to Ayreen.

MS. CADWALLADER: Great. Thank you so much, Danielle. I wanted to just do a quick recap of the TechHire grant program. Next slide. And again, we're just, again, really excited to bring you together today to launch our TA activities. But just as a recap, the TechHire grants are public, private partnerships that include the workforce investments systems, education and training providers, and business related non-profit organizations with programs that support and scale innovative job training programs to help connect the Americans with Jobs that require technology skill.

The objective for the TechHire grant are to expand access to learning – to accelerated learning strategies that provide the fastest path to good jobs. This includes boot camp style programs, online learning options, and competency based programs to give people the technology skills required for employment.

The second objective is to improve the likelihood that those populations with historic barriers to accessing employment and training, complete training and enter employment through a specialized training strategies, supportive services, and other focused participant services that assist these targeted populations to overcoming their barriers, including networking, job search, active job development, transportation mentoring, and financial counseling.

And lastly, the goal is to connect those who have received training or who have already have the skills required for employment, but are being overlooked to employment, paid internships, or registered apprenticeship opportunities to allow them to get work experience and prove themselves to hiring employers.

As an overview of the grantees – next slide. DOL awarded nearly $150 million to 39 public and private partnerships. Grantees are located across 25 states, with four of these projects serving multi-state projects. Awards range from $2.1 million to $5 million. And the period of performance is 48 months; from July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2020. Next slide.

Here is a map of where your fellow TechHire grantees are located throughout the U.S. And just to note that this map shows only the headquarters of where you're located. I mentioned, again, there was at least four TechHire grantees providing multi-state services. So this map only identifies those grantees in which their headquarters are located. Next slide.

Just a few more items to note. TechHire grantees will serve nearly 19,000 participants throughout the life of the TechHire grant program. Just to note, in our most recent reporting quarter, it looks like we have several grantees that have started to serve participants. So we're very excited by that as well. The target populations for – that the grantees are serving, we have 33 grantees serving youth and young adults ages 17 to 29. We have three grantees serving individuals with criminal records; two grantees serving individuals with limited English proficiency; and one grantee serving individuals with disabilities.

Grantees are serving – are training participants in a variety of H1-B industries that include information technology, advanced manufacturing, healthcare, financial services, and other industries, such as biotech, professional and technical services, and education services.

And with that, before I leave off, we have another poll. We'd like to know in what stage of implementation is your TechHire project currently at. The first stage – are you in the preparation stage? Are you in the early implementation, meaning staff has been hired, initial participants have been recruited, and you've started to provide services? The third section is full implementation; project is fully implemented and staff are providing skillful service delivery. Or four, other. And please feel free to specify in the inbox – I'm sorry, in the main chat window.

Sounds good. It looks like we have the majority of the early implementation stage, which is all very well and good knowing where our mirroring – we've ended our third reporting quarter and really excited to see that. There's also a good chunk of you that are in the full implementation phase and have started to provide services.

And with that, I'll turn it over to Tom from JFF.

TOM HOOPER: Great. Thanks so much, Ayreen. Hi, everyone. This is Tom Hooper; I'm a senior director here at Jobs for the Future, or JFF for short. And we're really excited to be working with you over the next few years – over the next few minutes. I'll give you a brief overview of the TA team, I'll talk a little bit about the types of programmatic technical assistance that we'll be providing, and I'll also talk a little bit about how that TA will be provided.

So first, let me give you a quick overview of the technical assistance team that will be supporting you through the life of your grant. JFF and two very experienced and skilled organizations, Maher & Maher and ICF International, will be working together to provide you with programmatic TA. Our three organizations make up the TechHire TA team and I'll give you just a quick snapshot of our respective roles.

JFF is the overall lead for the team and our staff will be coordinating TA activities, we'll be serving as coaches for grantees, and providing subject matter experts on very targeted topics. And Maher & Maher is one of the other critical partners in this effort and Maher staff will also be serving as coaches; they'll also be providing subject matter experts on very targeted topics. And they'll be leading our virtual TA activities, and we'll talk more about those virtual TA activities in a little bit.

The other key partner in this effort is ICF International. And you'll see a theme here. They, too, will be providing coaching to grantees. They'll also be providing subject matter experts on very specific programmatic topics that you all face. And their other really critical role is providing performance reporting technical assistance to all of you. We won't focus on that as much during today's presentation, but you'll definitely hear more about that as we go through the TA process in general.

It's really important to note that as part of our work providing technical assistance, a big chunk of our focus is providing you, the grantees, with direct technical assistance. We'll also be providing you TA itself with grants administration and performance management support. So we have two roles in this.

So now, let me give you a very quick overview of the technical assistance that we're providing. As I mentioned, the focus of our support is providing you with programmatic technical assistance to help you achieve the goals and objectives of your individual grants as well as the TechHire program itself.

We'll be providing you with technical assistance through a variety of formats and we've taken this approach to really ensure that we have grantees with the full scope of their needs and by providing formats that are really geared toward different types of learners. So with that in mind, at a very high level, we're providing three types of TA. Some of the technical assistance we're providing is universal technical assistance; an example of that would be a webinar. That's a type of technical assistance that all grantees are encouraged to participate in and that will be applicable to all or to most of you.

A second type of TA that we provide – a second big bucket of TA are targeted TA activities. These are activities like pure learning conference calls that focus on a certain type of challenge that grantees face or a certain issue that grantees are addressing in the course of their grants. And that are really relevant to a subset of grantees. It may be – (inaudible) – for example – as an example of that type of TA.

And then the third general bucket of technical assistance that we're providing is individualized TA. And these are activities like coaching activities that are provided to individual grantees and are really targeted to serve the needs of a very specific grantee. And we'll talk more about coaching as we go through this session.

This next slide goes into more detail on the different ways that will provide TA. And I won't go through this slide in a lot of detail, but I just wanted to touch on a couple key points. So as you can see, and I've mentioned a little bit in the last slide, you'll be receiving technical assistance through a wide variety of formats and those range from having coaching be provided through an individual coach. And you'll all have a coach that's assigned to you and working with you. That includes virtual technical assistance. As an example, there are webinars as well as a really comprehensive virtual institute that'll be offered later on this year. It also includes in person convenings as well as developing written materials that we'll share with you to provide you with assistance in that way as well.

The last point that I want to make here – and I've talked about coaching a little bit already – is that all of these activities are really based on your specific interest and needs. And we'll be asking for your input and feedback during the whole period that we're working with you to really have a good sense of the specific types of topics that you'd like to receive technical assistance on and your interest in learning more about. And please don't hesitate in being shy about sharing your feedback on that; both on the types of topics and the way you like to receive TA. It'll really inform the way that we provide assistance that lead to a better product I think for all of us.

So with that in mind, we will go to our next poll, which really focuses on peer networking. And something I think we've all learned over time is how valuable peer networking is as a technical assistance strategy. So we wanted to get your feedback on peer networking in particular. So which of the following types of TechHire peer learning groups are you most interested in? And there are three specific examples that fit here. Industry-based peer groups; let's say where all of grantees focused on manufacturing come together in a very targeted peer group that only includes them.

Peer groups that are based upon target populations. And that could be a peer group that focuses on ex-offenders; individuals with criminal records. Peer groups that are based upon training strategies, like accelerated training models. And then if there's another peer group that we haven't listed here that there may be another way to shape your peer group. So we'd love your feedback on those.

All right. That's great. OK. That's great. Well, it's very clear from your feedback that a large chunk of you are really interested in peer groups that are based upon target populations. And then there are a number of you who are also interested in industry-based peer groups. That's great. And we can definitely – that will help inform the TA strategies that we look forward going forward. So thanks. That's great.

So I also want to touch on the specific types of programmatic topics that we'll be providing TA on over the next three plus years. As you can see from this slide – and this is just an example – we'll be providing you with technical assistance on a range of program topics. And they range from anything from helping with participant recruitment to employer engagement and partnership development to planning for sustainability. And so we're really focused on providing you with a wide range of topics that are relevant from the beginning of your grant period all the way to the last day of your grant.

As we provide TA and we're going to be aligning TA with the stage of grant implementation that you're at, and that's another really critical aspect of this technical assistance. So just to give an example, obviously recruiting's going to be particularly important at the beginning stages of your grants. And so that will be a topic that we'll definitely make sure we cover earlier in the grant stage given its importance. We can go to the next slide.

The last topic I want to touch on through a polling question is about peer networking. And I mentioned this a little bit earlier, but a big part of our technical assistance strategy is supporting peer sharing and peer learning, with each of you sharing your promising practices with each other and working through your challenges together as well. But with that topic of peer sharing in mind, we wanted to get a sense from you of some really key areas that you feel your partnership is particularly strong on already. So let's take a poll there.

We listed out three specific topics here: employer engagement, developing and maintaining partnerships, and recruitment. And if you feel like you're really strong in another area, please specify that in the text box. We'd love to hear about that.

OK. That's great. Great feedback. So I'm seeing a lot of existing strong competency already in developing and maintaining partnerships as well as employer engagement and some in recruitment. That's great. So just to give an example, we'll – as we start to flush out our TA, specific – whether webinars or peer learning groups, we'll call on some of you to participate in those. Like, folks who are really strong in recruiting.

So I will stop there. That's a quick overview. And I'm now going to hand the session over to my colleague, Todd Cohen, to talk a little bit about how we evaluate the TA we provide. Todd, take it away.

TODD COHEN: Thanks, Tom. Hi, everyone. So as Tom mentioned, this TA importantly designed to be really responsive to your needs. As he mentioned, you all are tackling some different issues, you're focused on different topics. You got different approaches, you got different needs. And likely, even those needs may even evolve over the life of this project. So we want the TA to reflect that.

So we don't have a cookie-cutter approach to this. We really want to hear from you early and often about what your needs are. So we've got a few different mechanisms for doing that. These feedback loops you will see built into just about all of our TA products and events from the TA events and the peer calls, the webinars, things like that. There will always be opportunities both during the event itself, but afterwards where we would like for you to include your latest needs.

At the convening, there will be an opportunity to white-board to jot down needs that you see that are emerging. And the discussion boards that are on the online community of practices, I'll get to it in a minute, that's another great place for you to share what your challenges are and what your technical assistance needs are.

And then finally, the coaching calls are probably the best. As was mentioned earlier, you'll have these at least once a month, but that'll be your real direct opportunity to talk to your coach to talk through the specific needs that you have. And then you should know that all of the coaches that you'll meet here will meet together regularly to share what we are finding from you all to see some different topics that are emerging. And that – as Tom mentioned, that will be used to really inform technical assistance going forward.

So next polling question, which topic represents a technical assistance need for your partnership? One, understanding H-1B occupations and industries, leveraging resources to support TechHire partnerships, collaborating with industry partners on program design and delivery, and then other, again. If there is another, please write that in the text box as well. Give you a minute to do this one.

Great. So not surprisingly, leveraging resources is a critical piece of all of this and we will certainly have TA devoted to that. And it sounds like and looks like collaboration with industry and occupations and industries and drilling down of that will also be important. Great. Thank you.

I've mentioned briefly the Community of Practice. For those of you who have been grantees of ETA or currently are, I know some of you are, you probably are very familiar with the Community of Practice. We're going to do one for this project. It is an online space where we hope will be the go-to place for all of your project information, where you go to get best practices, where you learn about the latest events, latest announcements. We see this as really a dynamic venue, not a static one.

So our promise to you we will keep all of the information and resources up there really fresh and up to date. And we hope and we'll encourage you to go there and download but also engage with the discussion groups, post some of your challenges, your discussions, but also some of your successes. And we'll continue to work with you as we do that. But we really want this to be the place where all of this information is centralized and where we can communicate and where you can communicate with each other. That's a critical part of this as well.

So the TechHire Community of Practice itself, you'll get the information of where to go. It's coming soon. We're in design mode, but it should be really pretty quickly here.

SARA LAMBACK: So we've provided you with a lot of information over the last few minutes. I want to just take this opportunity to pause briefly and see if you all on the webinar have any questions that we can answer. So please, type your questions into the chat box. We'd love to hear from you. If there are any specific areas as far as the overall TA approach or the TA team, we're really happy to respond to those at this time.

So use your chat box and I'll pause for just a minute so you have the chance to type some things in. And while everyone is typing in their questions, I just want to remind everyone that a copy of the PowerPoint as well as a transcript and the recording of today's webinar will be found on Workforce GPS in about two business days. But for now, continue typing in your questions.

So we have a question here around connecting with the TA providers. And the question is can we connect directly with the TA providers? Or should we go through the FPO first? That's a really great question. And we're going to let Tom go ahead and address that one.

MR. HOOPER: Sure. Great. That's a great question. And I think an important note here, too, is that while our team will be providing programmatic TA, FPOs also provide programmatic TA. And you'll definitely continue to receive assistance from them on specific topics. Like, an example would be on employer engagement, for example.

So with that context, in terms of the TA that we're providing, you can contact your coach directly to ask for TA. And we'll always make sure we're keeping federal project officers informed of the loop on communications. But you can definitely go to your coach directly. And Sara will talk a little bit more about how your coach is going to make contact with you.

MS. LAMBACK: Yeah. Absolutely. We'll go into coaching in a little bit more detail in the next portion of the webinar.

So the next question that came in is around the WIPS reporting system and when training around that system will be launched. And I think that's something that will maybe table for right now and – go ahead.

MR. HOOPER: All right. Ayreen and Megan, if you guys want to weigh on that, that's probably a good update from you.

MS. BAIRD: Yes. And I think – yes. We'd like to table it for now, but address it in one of the upcoming slides about next steps. So if you can hold on to your WIPS question, we'll talk about it a little bit later on in the presentation.

MS. LAMBACK: So the next question that came in is around a TechHire convening. That's another great question. And we will come to that in the next portion when we talk about next steps a little bit later in the webinar. So we'll hold that for right now.

And with that, I think we'll move into the next portion of the presentation, which will tell you a little bit more about our coaching team and the team – (inaudible) – that will help support you in the programmatic technical assistance available to you through this project.

So my name is Sara Lamback. I'm a senior program manager here at Jobs for the Future and a member of the TechHire technical assistance team. As our other presenters have said, I'm really thrilled to meet you all today and to be a part of this webinar. I'm very excited to be on this project.

We have, in addition to the three organizations that will support you and lead those TA activities, we also have an excellent group of coaches and subject matter experts who – to whom you will access to as resources in this project and through these activities.

As we've mentioned before, the role of the TA team by no means supplants the role of your FPOs. FPOs will continue to provide really critical assistance to you both around policy questions and also on some programmatic components. But the coaches on the TechHire project will really help address some of your specific programmatic needs and provide you with some targeted assistance and resources that help you meet both the needs of your individual TechHire project as well as those of the grant overall.

So the TA team plans to support the work of both the national program office and the FPOs to help you really on a wide variety of topics. And these include things like organizational structure, recruitment and participant outreach. As some of you have mentioned through the polls already in this webinar, topics like recruitment and partnership development are things that we can definitely – we plan to draw out in the TA and to really focus on to make sure that you are meeting the goals and objectives of your project.

We also are planning things around – we're planning activities around employer engagement and really, again, making sure that placement and ensuring that folks who take part in training opportunities have access to jobs.

So in the next section –

MR. HOOPER: I think Megan was going to provide a comment here. Go ahead.

MS. BAIRD: Sure. If you could go back one slide. I know for you all, you'll – there's a huge team from the national office from the regions and from technical assistance teams supporting your offers. And sometimes it can be confusing who you go to for which specific question. And so the chart on the slide we hope really helps make it clear. Your TA coach will – is for programmatic technical assistance. And there's some great examples here that Sara covered of the reasons you'd be working with a TA coach.

And we wanted to make it very clear that there's very specific items or questions that you may have that are – that should go to your federal project officer. So TA is programmatic and your FPO is for compliance related issues. And so there's some great examples here. And certainly, we'll make sure if you have questions about who to go to for what, certainly reach out to your FFPO and ask them for guidance. But we wanted to make sure it was laid out really clearly who you go to for what type of assistance.

Great. Thanks, Sara and Tom.

MS. LAMBACK: Thank you so much, Megan. So as I mentioned, we have a really strong group of highly qualified individuals who will serve as the TechHire coaches on this project. They have strong backgrounds and a lot of expertise on topics that are specifically relevant to your TechHire project and to your success. So many of them have worked with a specific target population that TechHire really focuses on, including youth and young adults. They have backgrounds in supportive services, in H-1B occupations and industries. And many of them have also done work around topics like regional and sector strategies and how to create and maintain really strong regional partnerships to support this type of effort.

You'll receive a little bit more information about the coaching team in the TechHire TA guide, which will be released later this week. But I would like to give the coaches an opportunity to introduces themselves to you all so you can start to get to know the coaching team overall and see who the team of experts who will support you in this project will be.

So we'll begin with Jobs for the Future coaches. Randy.

RANDY WILSON: Thank you, Sara, and welcome to TechHire and I'm looking forward to working with you all. I'm an associate research director at Jobs for the Future and I've had a lot of experience both researching and working on the ground as a coach in a number of sectoral and pathway initiatives, particularly in healthcare but also in IT. I wrote a practice brief about protect our communities just last year. And so really looking forward to seeing the innovations and helping nurture and help your work success.

MS. LAMBACK: Thank you, Randy. Matt from Jobs for the Future.

MATT POLAND: Hi, everybody. Matt Poland from Jobs for the Future here in Oakland, California. I'm a senior program manager and I have 14 years experience in workforce development both with you and adults. I know a lot of folks are working with disconnected youth, which I've done some as well. I also have program management design experience. And while I'm a proud west coaster out here, I'm originally from Michigan and a Midwestern at heart. May be working with some you all in the Midwest. So looking forward to that. Thank you.

MS. LAMBACK: Thank you, Matt. Now, we'll move over to the group of coaches from Maher & Maher. I'd like Todd to start out, please.

MR. COHEN: Sure. Hi again, everyone. I've got – I look forward to this. I've got close to 20 years experience in the workforce space and a lot of that was – has been on technical assistance provision. I work closely with community colleges, economic development, local workforce area, community based organizations, industry associations. And it's largely been in the area of helping grantees better engage with employers. And so things like sector strategies, integrated business services, things like that. So I look forward to work with a number of you on those types of issues and bringing a number of best practices from around the country to bear for those projects. So looking forward to it. Thanks.

MS. LAMBACK: Thank you, Todd. Silvia, please.

Silvia Middleton: Sure. Hi, everyone. I've been in the field of workforce development for about 10 years and with Maher & Maher since 2014 where I work both on the federal and on the state or regional side. On the federal side, I've been working on the implementation of WIOA and the in uniform guidance and several areas that was in the office of grants management as well as in the office of unemployment insurance and with Job Corps on initiatives like reemployment and student center design.

More relevant to this project on the regional side of Maher & Maher, I've been doing technical assistance and coaching for statewide practices, statewide projects in the areas of workforce system assessment and improvement, sector strategies – (inaudible) – pipeline development, and planning and implementation.

So before I came to Maher & Maher, I was actually with the state administrative entity for workforce development in South Carolina for several years. And there, I have worked literally with every workforce program that we had in our house under WIOA, the trade adjustment assistance program where I also collaborate with TACT grantees on IT, healthcare, and advance manufacturing projects. As well as I worked with jobs for America's graduates, work ready communities, state board activities.

So yeah. That sums it up in a nutshell. I think it's pretty much the workforce system from every angle.

MS. LAMBACK: Thank you, Silvia. Christy.

CHRISTY MONTGOMERY: Hi, everyone. My name is Christy and I am located in Tennessee. I am a previous state workforce board director from that state, but also have experience working directly with the targeted populations; English language learners, justice involved individuals. Primarily working with Maher for the last two years, I had focused on technical assistance around employer engagement, sector strategies, and career pathways.

But one of the things I like to really do is help build partnerships that design programs that meet the needs of the customer. So whether that's dealing with the employer's needs or also the targeted populations that we're serving. So looking forward to working with everyone.

MS. LAMBACK: Thank you, Christy. And now, I'd like to pass it to Lynn.

LYNN BAJOREK: Hi, everyone. I'm Lynn Bajorek. I'm a senior consultant with Maher & Maher. I've been with Maher for about five years. I work on a broad variety of projects both at the federal level and the state and regional level mainly focused around sector strategy implementation, unified business services, career pathways. I'm currently focused on a registered apprenticeship project. And then also working with state and local boards around planning – strategic planning, I should say.

Prior to joining Maher, I was a policy specialist with the Michigan Works Association. I live in East Lansing, Michigan. And before that, I was a federal project officer with the Employment and Training Administration. So I'm very much looking forward to working with you.

MS. LAMBACK: Thank you, Lynn. And now, I'd like to pass over to Bridget to introduce the coaches who will be supporting this project from ICF.

BRIDGET BROWN: Thank you very much. ICF is pleased to provide two really experienced and capable coaches to this effort. Venessa Marks specializes in supporting and evaluating community based workforce development initiatives for vulnerable populations, particularly young adults and individuals with criminal backgrounds.

She has over a decade of experience in developing, programming, and training, including mentoring and career development programming for first general college students. Venessa also has led training in technical assistance efforts supporting federal grant programs focused on positive youth development and non-profit capacity building.

Jessica Kendall has over 15 years of experience in law, policy research, and capacity building and training assistance. She works on a broad spectrum of issues related to court involved youth and children. Have experience in child welfare, juvenile justice, education, and workforce. She oversees some of ICF's training and TA initiatives, including initiatives supporting state and county TANF programs, implementing case management redesign, and initiatives supporting workforce TANF and responsible fatherhood programs.

Both Venessa and Jessica are really, really excited to be working with you. It was just one of these things they were not available to be on the call today, but they look forward to meeting with their grantees. Thank you.

MS. LAMBACK: Thank you, Bridget. And thank you all coaches for introducing yourselves. We've provided you with a lot of information and wanted to give you a sense now of what's coming next within the TechHire project.

First, we will plan to release a TechHire TA guide within the next couple of business days. This guide will recap some of the information that we provided in this webinar in written form and also, provide you with your dedicated TechHire coaches. So each grantee will be assigned a coach with whom they'll be working throughout the duration of this grant.

And as Tom mentioned a little bit earlier, your coaches will be holding monthly calls with you and those will commence later this month and early next month. So you can expect to hear from your coach very soon after this webinar. And specific coaching assignments will be provided within that written technical assistance guide that you'll receive within the next few days.

I'd like to allow Megan and the Department of Labor team to talk a little bit about next steps in terms of the WIPS supporting sense since that was one of the questions that came through from our participant.

MS. BAIRD: Sure. And if you want to go to the next slide, it's not an immediate next step, as you will see in this slide. We are hoping to provide performance reporting webinars in conjunction with the WIPS system being available for you. And for those that don't know, WIPS stands for work –

MR. HOOPER: A Workforce Integrated Performance System.

MS. BAIRD: Thank you. It is the system being used by the Employment and Training

Administration not only for the WIOA grantees, but as well as several of our discretionary grant programs of which H-1B is one of them. And we're hoping that – hopefully in June we'll be doing detailed online training of the WIPS system, which will commence with you actually having access to that system. So stay tuned for that.

Again, if you ever have performance questions, in the interim, you could always send those into techhire@dol.gov. And we will certainly be holding quarterly performance calls closer to the performance reporting deadline that will send out that information. You can call in and you can ask about the narrative or you can also ask questions about tracking data to prepare for submitting it through the WIPS system.

MS. LAMBACK: Thank you so much, Megan. And thank you also for segueing us to the upcoming TA activities. In addition to those immediate next steps that we mentioned, we have a really robust set of activities planned for you throughout this spring and summer. So again, you'll expect to hear from your coach very soon. And those calls with your coaches with continue throughout the duration of the grant. But really, the focus will be in the early months of your coach getting to know you, you getting to know them and building that relationship so that you can collaborate together really effectively on this project.

As we get towards the end of the spring and into the summer, we'll begin the grantee needs assessment process and we'll share more about that very soon. But that process is going to allow your coaches to just learn more about what your really specific technical assistance needs are so that we can provide you with activities and resources that meet those needs. And that will take place in May and into June.

The online TechHire Community of Practice, which Todd provided an overview, again, that's our online community to share resources and interact with coaches and subject matter experts, will be coming hopefully in June. And we will share more about that very soon and as soon as we have some additional information.

During the summer of 2017, we are hoping to host a convening and we will let Megan and the DOL team say a little bit more about pending – the pending processes and what that's looking like.

MS. BAIRD: Thanks, Sara. Again, we're planning on summer 2017. As soon as we have confirmation of a date, we will immediately send out a save the date notice. Generally, each grantee is allowed to bring two individuals from your grant. And the appropriate people to bring would be those involved in the management of the grant program. So definitely stay tuned for a save the date.

I realize summer is broad. That's all that we can really say right now. And we're very excited. And thank you for answering the peer networking polling questions because a lot of that will be used to inform how we structure a grantee convening. It's typically two days and it would be held in Washington, D.C. at the national office department of labor. Summer is a great time to visit Washington, D.C. if you like the heat and humidity.

But definitely stay tuned for information on a save the date for our grantee in-person convening.

And I did want to answer one question related to performance reporting just to help clarify – and thank you, Leslie, for pointing it out. And if you have other grants in addition to TechHire, maybe you're a state grantee and you have formula funds, you may already have access to WIPS for that state grant. Even if you're including H-1B data elements in that submission, it doesn't go anywhere for us. So it's not considered a submission for us. So you are unable right now to submit an H-1B QPR for your TechHire grant in the WIPS system. Just as an FYI.

If that confused you anymore, just let me know. But definitely, going forward, we will continue to be giving out guidance on interim reporting and how you can prepare to be ready for the WIPS webinar and the first submission through the WIPS system.

MS. LAMBACK: Thank you, Megan. And I see we have some other questions coming in right now, but please continue to type those into the chat box. This is a great opportunity to ask about whether it's types of TA, whether it's on questions about the team who will supporting you, or what the process will look like. Please go ahead and share your questions because most likely other grantees on this webinar have similar questions. So please, let us know what you're thinking and what you'd like to know.

So one question that's come in is for the next quarterly report. Are grantees expected – are the requirements expected to be the same as for the one that they just completed? And we'll let Megan and the team over at DOL respond to that question.

MS. CADWALLADER: Thanks, Sara. This is Ayreen. And again, thank you for this question, Gretchen. Certainly for the next quarter report due – for the quarter ending March 31st due May 15th, we will be releasing our interim reporting guidance next week, which we can share with you now in that grantees will continue to submit a quarterly narrative report via the TechHire grant mailbox directly to your FPO with a CC to the TechHire mailbox.

MS. BAIRD: So it's exactly the same.

MS. LAMBACK: Thank you, Ayreen. Another question that's come in is whether a TA provider of some sort will be assigned to each grantee. And the answer is yes. Each grantee will have a dedicated coach. The coaches will be that group – one of the individuals who introduced themselves during this webinar today. He or she will reach out directly to you, copying your FPO very soon, in the next week or so and begin the set of in depth coaching and TA activities.

And just to add to that as well, the coach will work with each grantee to develop a customized technical assistance plan that really makes sure that you are able to meet both your project and the overall TechHire grant's objective and that the supports that you're receiving really address specific needs that you have.

MR. HOOPER: Sara, a related question came in, if you can tackle that, too. A question came in from a grantee that says they've got multiple areas or locations and ask if each location will have the same coach, although they're in different areas of focused specialization among the locations.

MS. LAMBACK: Yeah. That's a great question. So each primary site will have a dedicated TA coach. So just one coach per project or TechHire initiative. And of course, the coaching calls will take place with the person who is most involved in the day to day program and project work. But if there are individuals spread across those sites who want to attend and individual coaching call, that's definitely – you can have that discussion with your coach. We're definitely open to that on the TA team.

MS. BAIRD: And just to clarify, the primary person that Sara was talking about, it's the lead grantee. So it's the lead grantee that will have that direct communication with the TA coach.

MS. LAMBACK: Thank you, Megan.

MR. HOOPER: And in terms of the specific question, too, definitely – this is Tom. Please ensure that the coach is aware of the variety of TA needs that you're experiencing in those locations and based on those specializations. And a TA plan that the coach works with you on will encompass needs across your different locations and areas of work. So you're not restricted on that. That's just one type of area of focus.

Other questions?

MS. LAMBACK: All right. So we will provide, obviously, on the recording of this webinar and if questions continue to come in or you have questions after the webinar, feel free to share those with the team. I think we can continue on to close.

MR. HOOPER: I think one more question came up. The WIPS question and publication rollout. Question number six.

MS. BAIRD: We'll make sure – I think to hold on to the performance, we'll make sure that when we release the interim guidance, there is an update on the status of WIPS that goes out to the TechHire grantees.

MS. LAMBACK: Thank you, Megan. And with that, I'll pass over to Danielle and the DOL team.

MS. KITTRELL: Oh. Sure. All right. So program contact information. So please ensure that we have the most up to date program contact information. So please send your updated contact information to an email to our techhire@dol mailbox with the name of your grant organization, the grant number, and the following program contact information: name, title, address, phone number, and email address. Thank you.

And our TechHire grantee mailbox, again, is techhire@dol.gov. And to reach your FPO, please reach national office. Thank you. Ayreen?

MS. CADWALLADER: Great. Well, this has been a really informative webinar and we really hope that you found it just as exciting as we do. Technical assistance is a really strong component of your grant program and certainly your TA coach and our team with JFF, Maher, and ICF is really the folks that will definitely help you get to the finish line in 2020, which seems very far from now, but I'm sure it'll go rather quickly. I think there is –

MS. BAIRD: There's one great question that just came in about how to brand your products. That's certainly a good one to send to your federal project office. (Inaudible) – and your grant agreement package does identify what language you need to put on any products or material that you produce with grant funds. So a good question to send to your FPO.

MS. CADWALLADER: And with that, the last poll, we really want to know how you feel after today's webinar. Geronimo; we're ready to jumpstart our program, which from earlier polls, it sounds like you guys are. TechHire what? Sounds like no – that wasn't selected. And there's still a few of you who are a little overwhelmed, but super excited. And certainly for those of you that are overwhelmed, our TA coach and our plans for technical assistance will be there for you in the next couple of weeks.

With that, we'd like to thank you for participating in today's webinar. As Laura mentioned, the webinar will be recorded and the transcript will be provided in the same webinar link in which you registered for the webinar. Let me turn it back over to Laura for last few polls. Laura?