**WorkforceGPS**

**Transcript of Webinar**

**Round 4 Sustainability Virtual Institute Final Wrap-Up:**

**Grantee Sustainability Plans**

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JONATHAN VEHLOW: So without further ado, welcome to "TAACCCT 2017 Sustainability Virtual Institute Final Wrap-Up."

CHERYL MARTIN: Hi. This is Cheryl Martin. I will be your moderator and your facilitator today. I expect that I know most of you and hopefully have met many of you, and if I haven't, I hope we'll be meeting for sure at the round four convening in September, which we'll talk about at the end.

Welcome. Thank you for joining us today. Thank you in particular for joining us for the sustainability virtual institute. We found that it was so helpful for those who participated in round three that we are – and we hope that it was for you as well and that one of the things that perhaps was most helpful to folks was just to sort of have the time and the space and the opportunity to think about what you're sustaining and to articulate that and that that can be a valuable way of helping yourself to move that forward.

So again, welcome. I will be doing introductions as we introduce each of our five sets of speakers for today. We have grantee examples from Kansas, Wisconsin, Ohio, Montana, and New Jersey, and we're looking forward to that. In the file share, the slides that you see in the file share there are actually grantee sustainability plans for other grantees who are not speaking today, but that will give people the opportunity to see what else is happening besides what we're talking about today.

After we've gone through our grantee examples, we'll be hearing from each of them. They'll give each a brief three- to five-minute presentation, and then we'll have time, a lot of time for question and answer because for each of those we have 90 minutes today. So for each of those groups we've got somewhere between 10 and 15 minutes. So definitely put your questions in the chat box, and we will pull those up as soon as people are done and presenting and come back to you on those.

After we hear from our five presenting groups today, we'll talk a little bit about what happens after this, and we'll have any – if there's any more Q&A and then a little bit of closing wrap-up.

So I'd like to move us into getting started, into the meat of this today. So first of all, we are delighted to welcome Pamela Combes and Christa Smith from Washburn University and the KanTRAIN Project, and let's hear from you what it is that you are sustaining and how you've done that.

CHRISTA SMITH: Thanks, Cheryl. Hi, everybody. This is Christa Smith. I'm the research analyst for the KanTRAIN grant project at Washburn University in Topeka, Kansas. I'll be talking these first few slides, giving an overview of the KanTRAIN grant project and all of the collaborative sustainability planning that was done at the grant level. And then Pamela Combes from Flint Hills Technical College – she's the KanTRAIN grant director there – will provide the perspective of the site-based sustainability planning that was done at her consortium institution.

OK. So just a little background on KanTRAIN. It's an $11.9 million round four TAACCCT grant award. We are a statewide consortium comprised of four community and technical colleges in Kansas, and Washburn University is the lead institution.

Our consortium institution members are Washburn Institute of Technology in Topeka, Kansas, Flint Hills Technical College in Emporia, Kansa, Garden City Community College in Garden City, Kansas, and then Wichita Area Technical College in Wichita. The KanTRAIN project focused on two core industries in Kansas, healthcare, which was mainly in Topeka, and advanced manufacturing, which was in Wichita, Garden City, and Emporia.

So for grant-level sustainability planning we started at the very beginning by keeping the end in mind, and by that I mean that we envisioned what the end of this TAACCCT grant would look like. What did we expect to accomplish, and then how do we intend to get there? And to further solidify our sustainability plans, we conducted a SOAR analysis. You may have heard of a SWOT analysis, S-W-O-T. It stands for strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.

We used, very similar to the SWOT analysis, a SOAR analysis. So we looked at strengths, opportunities, aspirations, and results. And because, as we all know, what gets measured gets done, we took the results from our SOAR analysis, the R part, and we quantified them further so that we knew when and how we have accomplished the results that we have expected.

And now, I'm going to turn it over to Pamela, and she is going to discuss the site-based sustainability planning that was done at Flint Hills Technical College.

MS. MARTIN: Pamela, are you on mute?

MS. SMITH: I can keep going, Cheryl, if that's OK.

MS. MARTIN: OK.

MS. SMITH: OK. So for the site-based sustainability work the sites aligned their innovation practices and methods to the TAACCCT core elements, and for evidence-based designs the Flint Hills Technical College plan was to sustain their AWS certification – their focus is welding – in that process that was established during the grant. And then when they looked at what had the greatest impact, they looked at sector strategies and employer engagement, and they're looking to sustain the annual reverse career fair, which created a strong connection between the college, the students, and the businesses.

So what they looked at for the site was to prioritize the innovations, practices, and methods. They looked at which ones are critical to success, and does this align with the institution's strategic plan? And then do you have college leadership on board?

And they're looking to support their plan with performance data, for example, using our quarterly narrative performance report and the annual performance report, the data from those to look at – to project forward and then looking at baseline enrollment until right now to make that argument that it has increased enrollment over time and then look at the employment outcomes of the participants as well.

So that's us. This is KanTRAIN. Debra Mikulka is our project director, and I failed to get Pam's number – phone number on there, but that's how to reach her via e-mail and how to reach me via e-mail as well. So thank you for listening.

MS. MARTIN: All right. Thank you. We have a couple questions for you, and if other folks have questions for Washburn, please – I mean, yeah – for the KanTRAIN consortium, please put them into the main chat. One of my questions was, you talked about results as measured by.

What did you measure – what did you find most useful when you were measuring results to track because obviously there's certain things you have to measure for DOL, but some folks chose to measure other things as well? And just wanted to – I'm just curious what you found as the most useful measures as you went along to manage your project.

MS. SMITH: Yeah. I think what was the most useful was looking at our baseline enrollment and that was prior to the grant starting and then looking at current enrollment and then project that into the future to see how – what our enrollment – anticipated enrollment would look like and looking at it in different ways as well, not just student number but FTE as well.

Those were some of the most useful metrics. That was a little bit harder for employment data because we weren't collecting it as consistently before the grant, but we're now collecting it obviously more consistently. And so that will be a great measure to look at as well.

MS. MARTIN: OK. Thank you. And so that was for the programs of study that you set up and –

MS. SMITH: Correct.

MS. MARTIN: – to project whether these were going to be able to continue and grow and whether it was worth continuing them?

MS. SMITH: Yes.

MS. MARTIN: OK. We do have a question from Rebecca Nicolai (ph). Thank you. "How will you continue to serve the needs of service members and veterans when the grant funding ends?" Good question. I know KanTRAIN has had a lot to – a lot of emphasis on that. What's your plan for that?

MS. SMITH: Yes. Thank you. We do have a strong emphasis on veterans and service members. We have a – currently have a KanTRAIN – a person who is a military service – or military transitions director who's focusing solely on those transitioning soldiers who are looking for education and training opportunities after they've transitioned out of the military.

So we've really focused a lot on promoting our programs to veterans and then helping them through the system and making programs that are for – or I guess you could say we've really had the institutions in our consortium focus on what are they doing for veterans currently and how they can improve that.

And so to institutionalize those systems that we started with the KanTRAIN program and making sure that those systems are then implemented and the college finds them beneficial and so they will continue to promote – or just provide services I guess post-grant.

And we also have done a credit for prior learning database. We are aligning military – the MOS, military occupation specialties, to credit for prior learning at the institutions with our programs through a database – some database work we're doing with the Kansas Board of Regents. So that's another thing that we're – another initiative that will continue to be sustained past the grant being over.

MS. MARTIN: OK. And maybe I missed this here as I was looking at questions and things, but did you say how you're going to fund that?

DEBRA MIKULKA: So this is Deb Mikulka. So I'll throw in on the money part. So the idea of institutionalizing the initiatives at each institution, that funding model will be institutionalized within each of our partner institutions so that – and then for the database, the KBOR will manage and keep and it will go way beyond the life of the grant. And that will be supported and sustained through the Kansas Board of Regents.

MS. MARTIN: OK. So as we've heard from many other schools, it would be very different. Different members of your consortium find different ways to fund the things that they find valuable?

MS. MIKULKA: Correct.

MS. SMITH: Yeah.

MS. MARTIN: Yeah. OK. So we have another question. How will – related to that. "How will you financially sustain AWF certification for instructors and your site?"

MS. SMITH: So our AWF certification at the site is done through an employer partner who comes in and certifies the weld – I'm sorry – the students' welds. So the way that this is going to be sustained is by that continued partnership with that employer. They have – they're a very strong employer partner with the college. So they will continue to come in and certify the welds in that way.

MS. MARTIN: Great. OK. So another question I have for you is, "How will you ensure that whatever sustainability plan is developed will be monitored after the grant is done so that partner colleges continue to work on their priorities?"

MS. MIKULKA: Well, when the grant's over, the institution – so the idea with sustainability is that you enable the institutions or you set up the system so the institutions monitor or implement it themselves.

There's no way that we're going to be at the grant management level monitoring because we won't be existing so that the key toward any of this is to get your institutions strong and the systems embedded within those institutional practices so that they are continued on. And so whatever monitoring systems are worked into the process, that will be at the institutional level, if that makes sense.

MS. MARTIN: And finally, how will you keep internships alive with your employers afterward? Will – do you feel like they have understood the value of that and will continue those, or what's your prognosis on that?

MS. MIKULKA: The internships are kind of getting pretty exciting, and actually, we're able – we're starting to see some expansion with those with the consortia member – some of the consortia member institutions. Certainly, Flint Hills does an outstanding job with their internships and practice as does Wichita Area Technical College, and those are just growing. And so I – and they're growing because the businesses are finding them of value.

MS. SMITH: Yeah. Yeah.

MS. MIKULKA: So that the – the viability of internships rests on the perception and the belief on the part of the employers that they make a difference. And so that's the key, and whether it's grant-funded or whether it's part of the institutional planning, it benefits the institution to have employers believe that what they're doing is beneficial to their businesses. So that's how those will be sustained in that manner.

MS. MARTIN: Yes. Absolutely. I'm asking you leading questions here.

MS. MIKULKA: Oh, it's OK. Lead away.

MS. MARTIN: Yeah. No. I'm actually going to move on to our next set of presenters here, but thank you to KanTRAIN. That got us off to a good start.

So let's move next to – we had the questions – to the Impact Consortium. This is Wisconsin Technical Colleges, and I'm going to turn it over to Scott DuBenske. Thank you for being with us, and what can you share with us today, Scott?

SCOTT DUBENSKE: Well, thank you so much for having me, Cheryl. It really is a pleasure to be here. As I'm looking through the slides here today, let me move us on. We are part of the TAACCCT IV, Exceeding the Cap group, and our particular application and interest was in the area of career pathways, specifically taking career pathway development and maintenance in Wisconsin to full scale and alignment, which didn't mean necessarily creating greater numbers of pathways but rather truly aligning and systematizing the way that we approach pathways in Wisconsin not only from a local and regional point of view at our colleges but across the state and all of our WIOA partners as well.

So what we discovered very early on is that our system of colleges, like many other colleges across the country, collect a lot of information about students, their enrollment, their outcomes, their completion rate. So we wanted to really find a way to better utilize that information to inform the policy alignment initiative that we were undertaking with our ACT2, Advancing Careers of TAA and Transitioners grant.

So what we came up with was the concept that as students transition across their educational experience, they run into key markers and transition points either in the pathway or as a course of completing their program, and we thought, boy, we have so much information that could inform what exactly that the picture on these students look like at each of those key intervals throughout their educational experience.

So what we decided to do was pull together all of those information sources into one system, user-friendly WTCS career pathway scorecard. And as our previous speaker commented on, if you measure it, it will get done. So with that we have a scorecard that you can see there on the screen using over 20 different indicators for key transition points across the student's experience, pulling data from multiple data sources about our students and about their experience.

This scorecard was developed within the system office here in Madison, but all of our institutional research staff at all 16 of our colleges across the state have access to this particular scorecard. And what's more important, they have access to their own internal college data and information so that, when they see something of interest or they want to drill down, so to speak, into a particular topic or into a particular indicator there on the screen, they have all the capacity, the power, and the resources right there at their fingertips to do so.

And really what we're doing here is using data to inform our decisions, specifically related to this grant, decisions around taking career pathways to scale, not only building better, newer, more efficient pathways but refining, maintaining, and in some cases potentially removing older, outdated, ineffective pathways.

The fact that Wisconsin has been organized as a system has made this really a very easy path to follow here from a collaborative point of view, but really I see this type of a scorecard and using data to inform your decisions as something that any college with student data could undertake and really benefit from anywhere in the country, regardless of your governance and organizational structure.

So as you can see, the last bullet point on the screen speaks to curriculum development and approval process. This particular bullet point is key because we're using data to inform those decisions specifically with respect to new programming, new programs, new pathways, new credentials. The way that our system office is set up now requires colleges and programs to utilize data from the pathway scorecard in order to support the rationale for developing or maintaining or modifying any program that it currently has on its catalog of programs.

In that way we're constantly providing a mechanism for colleges to revisit program information, to use it to support new program development, but more importantly, we're really able to take a look longitudinally now year by year as we get more information about what those key transition points look like as we seek to really enrich and strengthen career pathway development in Wisconsin.

Of particular note are the pathway coordinator positions that were funded by our Exceeding the Cap project from the federal TAACCCT grant there, and what this scorecard has done is really given us the data and the tools to go through and take a look at what's been happening from a career pathway point of view across the trajectory over the years these pathway coordinators have been in place.

And where once Wisconsin really didn't have any sort of a tool like this, it was really left up to each individual college to decide what might be important information to seek out and ask their institutional research staff to do that on an ad hoc basis.

Now, we have a uniform, consistent scorecard in which to really tackle those questions, and as I mentioned earlier, every college has the capacity and the resources to drill down into those questions to really take a look at what those larger measures, what those larger transition points are saying about their programs.

Now, specifically, if I were interested in looking at fiscal year 2016 at my college, looking at embedded technical diplomas specifically in the information technology cluster based on what I see in the report card, I could isolate all of my different programs there and really take a look at the percentage employed, the percentage of students that were employed in a related field, and the percentage of those students who remained employed in my own district and begin to understand more about what was driving the number that I saw on my report card there.

It might intrigue me to look at certain percentages as being very high potentially in the employed category while potentially not as high in the percentage employed in a related category and what could that tell me about the job market, about the employability of our students coming through a certain program and whether or not they stay in our regions where really our pathways are being developed to support economic development to meet the needs of employers.

So this entire model of reviewing a pathway scorecard and giving our colleges the resources to drill deeper into those questions has really presented us with kind of a unique circumstance here whereby our pathways and our decision making I think is much better informed than it ever used to be.

And for those colleges who may not already have this type of a model in the works or on the horizon, I'd be happy to share some of our experiences with anyone who would be interested. So with that, we're really looking to sustain the notion of career pathway development by using data to inform our decisions, to make better decisions, and ultimately provide a better product for our students and, moreover, better economic development for our state.

And now that we have this in place, our system office is driving this initiative as part of the data work that we do. We have 10 out of our 16 career pathway coordinators that are going to be funded beyond the grant. So already in year three of the three-year grant under Exceeding the Cap we're seeing some very positive return on investment from pulling together all of this data into a meaningful, useful tool that really everyone in our system can benefit from.

So with that, I'd be happy to answer any questions that you might have.

MS. MARTIN: Yes. So please, if you have questions for Scott, please put them in the chat box, and we'll direct them his way. Meanwhile, I have a couple of questions, which one of them is, so it looked like on there you had data from 2013 to 2016. Is that representative of how many years you have the data that you showed us, or did it take a while to get it started? How many years of data do you have, and how many years are needed to actually have something meaningful there?

MR. DUBENSKE: Absolutely. Well, I'll start with your last question, how many years of data are really needed. Certainly, the greater the information set, the more broad information set you have across multiple years has some built-in advantages because you can begin to see sort of the longitudinal effects year by year, and that's really where trends begin to identify themselves. So having greater numbers of years of information is going to add strength to the information itself.

But you see 2013 on our particular scorecard because that is really when our student information systems began to capture data that we could clearly connect to a pathway program or an embedded credential. That's really when that particular process came into existence. And five year – or four years – excuse me – of data may not seem like much, but, boy, you would be surprised at some of the really unique opportunities we've had to drill into some really interesting areas based on some very basic trends we're seeing within those four years of data.

MS. MARTIN: Great. OK. So can you share an example of how the scorecard data changed how a career pathway was designed?

MR. DUBENSKE: Absolutely. Very early on there was a lot of talk around online programming, hybrid programming, how do we better meet the needs of our students, especially some of our returning adults coming back to continue their education, to upskill, to gain new credentials? At one of our system colleges a particular percentage was a little bit low with the student completion rates for a particular embedded diploma.

So we were able to effectively utilize the scorecard to drill into that particular program to take a look at what classes were involved, how and when were they being offered, and what was the student data telling us about each individual component of adult education with respect to a particular upskill or a credential there. And what we found out was that the main roadblock to student completion was the online delivery.

That was the complete opposite notion that people had moving into that space in that particular part of Wisconsin because all of the data and the information, at least on a national scale, pointed to a hybrid format and online information being the wave of the future, the way to connect with and provide the most flexibility to our students. But you can imagine our surprise when we found out that those same students who were taking face-to-face classes were actually performing and completing at significantly higher rates than the online version. It really caused us to go back and explore how and why we were offering those different avenues of education and credentials.

MS. MARTIN: Yeah. It just goes to show that we have to test our assumptions, huh?

MR. DUBENSKE: Absolutely.

MS. MARTIN: Data is how we do that. That's a great example. We have a question from Lorain County Community College. "Is the scorecard sharable to other states, or does it build on programs specific to Wisconsin?"

MR. DUBENSKE: Well, I'll start with the first half of that. Yeah. Sort of the methodology and some of our business definitions and what it took to build the scorecard, absolutely. We're happy to share that out. As I'm sure you can understand, we're not going to populate it with any Wisconsin program-specific data, but it does build on programs that are within Wisconsin. It pulls data from some of our workforce development partners. It pulls data from O\*NET. It pulls data from our own internal student reporting data system. So while it's not necessarily possible for other states to have access to those programs, we're certainly happy to share the piece of this tool that we can.

MS. MARTIN: Great. Great. OK. That is wonderful. I'm sure that there are others who would be interested in that. So I have some other questions for you, but I think I'm going to save them, if we have more time at the end. I want to make sure we get through everybody's, and then we might come back. And for those of you on the line, if you think of questions later, even you want to go back and catch something from Wisconsin or from KanTRAIN, just let us know, and we'll have a little bit of time to come back to those at the end as well I think.

So let's move now – thank you so much, Scott. That was really interesting. I suspect that we could have a long conversation about that, and I hope you'll do a proposal for the September convening. So I hope all of you on this call will do that, actually. We'll talk about that at the end, but let's move to Ohio TechNet. And we've got two presenters from Ohio TechNet. We've got Bernie Gosky from Lorain Community College, and we have Terri Burgess Sandu. So please tell us what you have to tell us today.

TERRI BURGESS SANDU: Hi. Good afternoon. This is Terri Burgess Sandu. I'm going to get started, and then Bernie will be joining in. We are excited to share our work here in Ohio where we have been managing a $15 million TAACCCT grant under round four that supports a consortium with 11 community colleges across the state of Ohio. We have a great mix of urban, rural, and medium-sized communities that are served. You can see some of our key stats up there in terms of the impact that it's already had.

We were proud to start with 47 employer partners and today we have over 300 that are working closely with one or more of our partners in Ohio TechNet and we're really seeing the results focused on advanced manufacturing and really those acceleration strategies that many of you are also doing that help adults come in, quickly get upskilled, and get back to work with these companies. Or in many cases what we have seen is a strong need for incumbent worker training. So that has been I think one of the surprises for us is how much demand there is and how many companies have really used these strategies to support moving up their existing workforce.

Some of the partnerships that we also want to highlight that have really led to what we want to share with you in terms of our sustainability thinking is we work really hand in hand with our – with leaders from the Ohio Department of Higher Education. Our consortium is 11 out of the 23 community colleges in the state of Ohio, but we have key allies that really are focused on economic development within Ohio Department of Higher Ed that we meet with weekly. Ohio Department of Job and Family Services we are working closely with to, again, leverage their data systems, and we continue to do that and see that as an important point, similar to what our Wisconsin colleagues are doing in terms of the long-term vision of how we best track the employment results for students that we serve and many others in the state.

We are working closely with Jobs Ohio, which is an economic development driver in Ohio, Small Business Development Centers, the Governor's Office of Workforce Transformation, and others. In particular I did want to note that many of the logos you see at the bottom there are institutes within the Manufacturing USA Network. That was really – that's been a key focus for us is Ohio sits at the center of many of those investments being made by entities like Lift, NextFlex, America Makes, Digital Manufacturing Innovation, Design Institute, and others, so really helping our colleagues know what's coming out of those and leverage those investments so that we can amplify the impact of Ohio TechNet and the TAACCCT grant.

We have four kind of key things that our partnership shared with us, our – that should drive our sustainability strategies, and Bernie's going to talk more about those.

BERNIE GOSKY: Thanks, Terri. So this is Bernie Gosky at Lorain, and I'm the project manager for Ohio TechNet. The four key areas that we would like to keep in TAACCCT – ha, ha, ha – are employer engagement – and you'll hear more about that when Terri presents next – the acceleration and modularization strategies like PLA, competency-based education, and remediation, work-based learning models, and supportive services.

So as far as acceleration is concerned, we're working very closely, as Terri mentioned, with the Ohio Department of Higher Ed to enhance the awarding of PLA credits. Ohio was well on its way with PLA prior to this grant but, as with many things, initiatives stop and start and stop and start and this was a great opportunity to reignite the conversation regarding PLA and really move the needle in partnership with our colleagues down there. We're currently researching tying PLA to manufacturing certifications. We know that Michigan has done a nice job with this, and so we're in the process of looking into that.

One of our partner schools is Sinclair Community College, and they have developed accelerate manufacturing as a CBE model, and that is a replicable model. As far as being able to replicate that at another Ohio TechNet school before the end of this grant, it's probably not going to be able to happen. However, that is – that's definite sustainability goal for this is how can we take those lessons? And the seeds for that were sown in a prior TAACCCT grant when they launched their accelerate IT program. Sinclair Community College did. They learned how to do it. Now, they've replicated it with accelerate manufacturing.

So the building blocks are all there for us to take advantage of, and one of the priorities for Ohio TechNet has been to capitalize on the expertise of our Ohio partners. So while we learn so much from national experts, we have experts within our state, and that is one of our sustainability models is to capitalize on schools like Rhodes State College who is very, very strong in apprenticeship programs.

So they're kind of leading the charge for Ohio TechNet so that, when the grant ends, those experts at Rhodes State will still be with us, and even if the players change, the expertise remains. So another example of that is Columbus State Community College has launched the modern manufacturing model under an NSF grant, and Honda is a main employer supporting that model. And so we're learning from Columbus State, and that is benefitting other regions of Ohio who are trying to replicate that model.

Here at Lorain we have partnered with NextFlex, which is a manufacturing USA initiative, to launch Train Ohio. And that, we're working with 21 employer partners and many of whom are small, and this is all tied to the innovation economy. So it's getting workers prepared for highly technical fields that the technology is being developed at – simultaneously with the talent.

And of course internships are a big piece of what we're doing, as are the apprenticeships. Ohio does have an Apprenticeship USA grant, which is supporting a school sponsorship model for apprenticeships. And for those employers who are like, "I really don't want to sponsor the apprentice but, if the school will do it and pick up the load as far as some of that record keeping," they'd be more inclined to offer the registered apprenticeship program. So – and then capitalizing on funding that's available through NIMS and JFF and other people who are also playing well in the apprenticeship space.

And then the – with supportive services the value – I always think that the success of this grant rests on the shoulders of the navigators. They're the ones who are doing the hard work and heavy lifting of connecting with those students and making sure that they stay in the program. Retention is higher for these programs, and also moving along to the employer – to employment. So these employer relationships can't be minimized in that whole conversation.

MS. BURGESS SANDU: And on that – so building on that – and you heard us talk, Bernie mentioned a lot of the earn and learn programs, the work-based learning. One of the things we see is that that field is very crowded. There are an increasing number of initiatives, which is a good thing, but it can be overwhelming for employers, especially in a state like Ohio where many of our employers in manufacturing are small and medium-sized companies. So one of the key sustainability strategies that we have really focused on and it's really, again, leveraging investments that have been made in Ohio through the Manufacturing USA Network, is to fully support a workforce strategy that's being rolled out by a statewide association called the Ohio Manufacturers' Association or OMA.

OMA represents about 1400 companies are members throughout the state. Many of them, over 60 percent, employ fewer than 50 people, many are fewer than 25, so these are truly the bread and butter companies in our neighborhoods. We certainly need and celebrate the fact that we have large companies like Honda and Ford and GM, but at the community level many of the places where our students are going to get hired are at those companies that have 20, 25 people. And those companies, frankly, often struggle to know where to best engage. They may not have hired in a full generation. So there's a whole suite of strategies that we're excited about.

Lift, which is one of the Manufacturing USA Networks focused on light-weighting, has made substantial investments in Ohio as well as a number of other Midwest states. One of the investments they made was really to partner with OMA to lift up this workforce strategy. So it just made sense from Ohio TechNet's perspective that we align and support what we were doing with the TAACCCT grant because OMA has been here for 100 years, and we anticipate they will be here for another 100 years. And there is – they are the go-to place for our legislators, for example, when there is anything being discussed around manufacturing policy.

So within their workforce strategy they're basically rolling out a engagement strategy with their members. They have looked at what works well in terms of industry, and they've really endorsed the industry sector partnership model. So how do you – from their lens they're saying, how do we get employers to really own this problem?

So they are organizing a series of regional meetings that we support. Out of that our goal is to make sure that companies in all the regions of the state of Ohio know best to articulate their needs and how to tap into the students that are being trained through Ohio TechNet. So we're excited to talk more about that and answer any questions you may have.

MS. MARTIN: Great. Thank you so much. This is – one of the things that we have observed definitely is that, when you align your grant objectives with priorities that exist external to the grant environment, whether it's at your institution or, like you're saying, at OMA, that obviously – I guess it's kind of obvious but not – we don't always observe that it happens – that this – it leads to a lot more sustainability. So that is a great example of that.

Let's take the question from Maria. Hi, Maria. She asks, "Are you using a specific model for building employer partnerships? Do employers ever meet with you as a group, or is it more focused on individual partnerships between the project colleges and employers? Do you have industry associations involved as well?" And I might add – multi-part question, but how are your college faculty involved in the meetings with employers so that curriculum can be adjusted as needed? Take whatever piece of that you'd like to chew off.

MS. BURGESS SANDU: Sure. Much of the employer engagement rests at the institutional level. So obviously, all of our partners have really vibrant partnerships with companies in their community, and that ranges from both one on one, those one-on-one meetings with companies to group work.

I know Bernie mentioned Rhodes State. In their area they have a very strong consortium called the West Central Ohio Manufacturers' Association. In Mahoning Valley, which has really been the model that inspires OMA, we have the Mohoning Valley Manufacturers' Council. So it sort of depends on what region and which company, but we also have looked – in terms of our work with OMA and how – what happens post-TAACCCT grant, we've looked heavily at what other states have done.

And, Maria, we notice – we appreciate you asking the question. We've actually looked a lot at Colorado. We love the website that was built, and we're using that to inform work here. So a lot of our work as the lead team really is focused on what are we building that will have legs beyond the grant with that particular focus on what works for transitioning adults. You can have the perfect program, but if it's not delivered the right way – and very often the right way includes you got to have those strong employer partnerships.

So it's got to be both the consortium level and the individual level. One of the things we hope comes out of the work with OMA is that it is easier for small companies to know where they best fit in, and they now have a resource, which is their colleagues within the association, to say, well, what are you doing that works?

MS. MARTIN: OK. Thank you.

MR. GOSKY: And just to follow up on that, we traveled to Louisville last week to find out what – all the good work that they're doing with the MPSC CCT program down there and the success that they've had. And I was really struck because there was an employer who was not a large employer who said maybe four times during his presentation, we can't thank the community college enough. Without the guidance of the community college, we wouldn't be where we were today and the assistance that they have provided for talent planning.

And I don't think that a lot of small employers intuitively know to look to the community colleges. So hopefully, through this OMA initiative, what we're striving for this fall is on November 1st we're having a convening and open to 750 people in the conference center in Columbus, Ohio that will be bringing everyone together. So all the TAACCCT colleges, the Ohio TechNet colleges, all the employers who are engaged in the sector partnership, and then of course our workforce partners.

MS. MARTIN: Great. Wow. Well, that – when you said that quote from the employer who said he couldn't thank the community colleges enough, it just gave me a little bit of a chill. It was like, this is what – this is why we're doing this; right?

MR. GOSKY: Right.

MS. MARTIN: And it's so exciting to see those results. So thank you. That – wow. We just keep building on wonderful things that we're hearing here. So let's see what else we can add to that. Thank you so much, Bernie and Terri.

We're going to move to HealthCARE Montana now and hear from Kaye Morris – Kaye Norris K – sorry – at Missoula College. And, Kaye, what do you have to tell us about sustaining your TAACCCT grant in Missouri – Missouri – sorry – in Montana?

KAYE NORRIS: Hi, Cheryl. Thanks. So HealthCARE Montana is almost a $15 million project with actually 15 colleges included. Missoula College is the lead. We have – I'm not going to go through that entire list there because there's too many, but four of our college partners are tribal colleges and so that's been really exciting to get to work with them.

We really – the project really is about connecting employers and education partners to create curriculum and training programs that employers say that they need. We started out with around – with 39 letters of support from employers across the state, and now we have over 200 industry partners that are contributing in various ways to the project.

A major partner of ours is the Montana Department of Labor and Industry. They actually – we have a contract with them, and they employ our apprenticeship specialists that are focused completely on healthcare. And we also have a contract with the Montana Area Health Education Centers, and they employ our workforce coordinators who travel around the state and continually talk to our rural industry partners to find out what's happening with them, what their needs are, and to inform them of what we're doing and get their input. We also work closely with the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education.

HealthCARE Montana stands for – the CARE part stands for creating access to rural education. Montana is very, very rural, mostly frontier. We have almost just right at a million people in the entire state, and our largest city is right around 100,000. So we are very low population, very large geographic state, and so trying to reach our rural citizens to help them to get trained in these healthcare careers that are desperately in need in the rural areas was a major component of what we have been doing for the last three years.

So what we've accomplished and what we feel like that's one of the – and others have alluded to this too. The communication that we have created between employers and faculty, that partnership to develop our curriculum has been vital to the project. We – for the first time in Montana employer partners actually sat on curriculum development committees and contributed to the content of the curriculum.

And in addition to that, because it's oftentimes hard for employers to attend meetings – they're just set up differently than colleges are, and so we created what we called a rapid response network where we – through our workforce coordinators who'd been traveling around the state and making connections with our partners around the state, the employer partners, we developed a survey system.

And whenever the curriculum committees were working on particular content areas, if they had questions related to what was needed in the field, we would send out these surveys – SurveyMonkey to the employers around the state, and they would give us input. And that would get to the curriculum committees, and then they would make their decisions about what content needed to be in there. So we've done a total of 16 surveys over the – over a two-year period of time, and we've gotten over 400 unique individuals who provided input. So for a very rural state like Montana, that's a lot of input.

One of the things that came out of that employer input was the need to shorten the nursing training programs. Our practical nurse, our registered nurse, and then our registered nurse to the bachelor of science nursing programs have all been reduced by one semester each. So you can now get a bachelor of science nursing in four years going through the two-year schools and yet get your RN along the way so that you can actually work as you're completing your final BSN didactic portion.

That BSN completion is online, and for the first time now we have developed the practical nursing program also in a distance format. This was also at employers' request so that the people in the rural areas didn't have to move into the towns where the colleges were because oftentimes once they move, they never come back. So we now have 33 rural and frontier towns that have someone that is either in the pre-nursing or the practical nursing program, and we just started it just this last fall. So we're very excited about that.

And related to what one of the previous presenters was talking about, for us we are finding that the distance students, particularly at one college that's doing both distance and face to face, the distance students are actually outperforming the students that are doing face to face. So I think it depends a lot on the personality of the people that are in the programs, and we just need to keep our options open and, again, test each program that we're doing to see if the distance piece is working or not.

Another thing that we did as a result of employer input was we have aligned – we – our prereqs for all of the health programs, all the health profession programs are being aligned so that, if someone starts out in one program or has a goal of going into one program and then for whatever reason changes their mind or doesn't get accepted or whatever, they can lattice into a different program without having to redo a lot of the coursework that previously would have had to have been done in order for them to get into a different program, aand we're trying to align that with the nursing program too so all the health professions programs will have similar prereqs and pathways for moving from one program to another.

As I mentioned earlier, we have workforce coordinators and healthcare apprenticeship specialists that are – work in our Department of – Montana Department of Labor and Industry and our Area Health Education Centers, and through their very hard work they have created 84 healthcare apprenticeships in 14 different occupations and in 29 different facilities. This is really – we had zero healthcare apprenticeship programs in Montana before this project started, and it took us quite a while to get things up and running.

In fact, in April we only had around 30 apprenticeships, and just in these last few months now we have really seen an explosion where finally the employers and the colleges are really starting to understand what the heck a healthcare apprenticeship is. And it's been really fascinating to see that explosion happening now, and now we actually – even though we have four staff that are totally devoted to healthcare apprenticeships as well as four healthcare workforce coordinators, we cannot keep up with the demand. So that's been pretty exciting to see.

We also, as a result of employer request, developed a program that we call LEAD, Learn, Engage, Adapt, Do, fostering self-awareness for workplace success. This is very directly related to employers indicating that soft skills or what we're calling success skills were lacking in their employees.

So these are materials that have been distributed to 61 healthcare facilities, and they're self-paced materials that are used in the organization, topics of the day, professionalism, conflict resolution, the kinds of areas that all professions actually are indicating that their employees have problems with. And the good thing about what we developed here is that it does not have a healthcare focus. So any employer in any industry can use these materials and actually really begin helping their employees to develop some of these soft skills or success skills.

And then finally, we also have a healthcare workforce strategic plan that we've had in Montana. A couple of times we've updated it, but nobody ever really completely owned it or took it and decided that this was something that we were going to actually put in place. And so as a result of that, the success of the TAACCCT IV grant, the Montana university system has actually developed a council that's Healthcare Education Workforce Coordinating Council. And their second priority is to actually implement the strategic plan that was revised as a result of HealthCARE Montana's funding.

And so the fact that this council now exists is a huge step forward and we still have a ways to go but it means that the university system, which includes all of the four-year schools as well as the two-year schools, are really taking ownership of healthcare education and workforce development in Montana and will do this in a strategic way with both the healthcare – the educational institutions responding to what the needs in the field are and doing that in a strategic way that is both efficient and cost-effective.

So we do have our Area Health Education Centers, and they – we have a great infrastructure with them already. So we are expecting that a lot of what we have developed with the TAACCCT IV grant will be – continue to be sustained through the Area Health Education Centers, particularly with this council in place that there will be direction for how that's going to happen. The Department of Labor and Industry is already cross-training their permanent staff so that they will be able to take on the roles of the healthcare apprenticeship specialists that were specifically funded by HealthCARE Montana and the TAACCCT IV grant. So that is – those positions will already be in place.

We are very closely looking at braided funding. We really feel like, as others have alluded to, that our – what we are calling our workforce coordinators, who really are traveling around the state and getting employers engaged and connecting the employers to the colleges, we feel like they are a vital part of our communication and infrastructure that has been put in place as part of this grant. So we are looking as a state at braided funding to hopefully continue those positions after the TAACCCT IV funding is gone.

Then the various curriculum changes that I already talked about, those will be sustained via tuition or fees in some way as part of the education programs in the state of Montana. And so those are sustainable as long as there's demand. So anyway, that's what we're doing in Montana, and happy to answer any questions.

MS. MARTIN: Thank you so much. Wow. That is another exciting set of thoughts to add onto the others. This is one of my very favorite webinars to do. When I heard all the things that were being sustained by the round threes last year, I made it – made me really look forward to this webinar this year as well.

So we have a question from Mary Benedict. "How many of your healthcare apprentice students do you believe will be placed post-graduation?"

MS. NORRIS: Well, that's a good question. Currently, the way that it is structured, unless something goes wrong – and things do go wrong – all of the apprentices are currently working for an employer that they want to continue working for and that employer wants them to continue working for them when they are done with their apprenticeship certification.

MS. MARTIN: Great. OK. And you said you had more demand there than you could fill; is that right?

MS. NORRIS: Yeah. Yeah. Not that we can't fill it with people. It's that we can't get the curriculum developed quickly enough for – or put – get all the paperwork done fast enough. So really what we have is employers that have people that are already working for them that they want to enter an apprenticeship program, but we haven't been able to keep up with them.

But because we're still developing a lot of – we have developed – the big – one of the biggest demands from the employers in the rural areas is that there's certified nursing assistants. They wanted them to have extra training in various ways so that they could take on more responsibility, and so some of those kind of specialty trainings are already online in various – offered nationally. So we've connected with that.

Some of the schools did offer some things online, but we've had to develop a lot of that curriculum ourselves. And that's really in high demand right now, particularly Medicare is going to be requiring that CNAs get dementia training and so those kinds of things. So we're trying to keep up with all of that.

MS. MARTIN: Yeah. It is a constant process, isn't it?

MS. NORRIS: Yes.

MS. MARTIN: Wow. So we have a question about braided funding. Can you – and there's a resource that Christian Lagarde has posted on there about how to get braided funding but – and a toolkit for that that's posted in the chat there. But can you tell us a little bit, Kaye, about how you have braided funding for some of your programs?

MS. NORRIS: Yeah. We – currently, we don't have braided funding in place, but it's what we're looking at. And basically, what will happen is that all of the partners that are involved in what we're doing – so that would be the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education, the Department of Labor and Industry, the Department of Public Health and Human Services, the Office of Public Instruction, all of the various organizations that are needing these healthcare programs to be in place in a certain way and to have this connection between the employers and the faculty as well as other educators in the state – would all contribute some of their money into a pool.

And that money then would be used, and particularly what we're working on is for that money to be used to fund our workforce coordinator positions. And the employers too. We will also be reaching out to the employers and asking them to contribute. So it will be a statewide project that's owned by all of the agencies and organizations that find it useful and a need for it.

MS. MARTIN: Yeah. OK. Awesome. Thank you. And I know there's different ways of doing braided funding. That's one way to do it, and those resources that Christian posted will talk about maybe other ways of doing it as well.

I see the comment here from Lorain County that says, "Ohio would love to learn more about Montana's success with healthcare apprenticeships." And we at DOL would as well. So I suspect that we will be coming up with something in writing, a little description about that or something that then we can share more widely with folks as well, as well as about other kinds of apprenticeships as well. So great.

So let's see. I just wanted to ask one other question about your apprenticeships before we go on to New Jersey. Were you surprised that the apprenticeship kind of grew as – grew like it did? Was that something that you intended from the beginning? Did it kind of come along more spontaneously that you grew that that well? And did it surprise you, or was that what you expected?

MS. NORRIS: Well, we really put a very concentrated effort on trying to grow the apprenticeship. We actually were a little bit – didn't understand how challenging it was going to be when we wrote the grant. So we actually have a very high bar that we need to reach, and so we really got all hands on deck. So we created a lot of projects around the state, both with all of our staff, the workforce coordinators, the apprenticeship specialists, and then our staff that are located at the colleges.

We created projects with all of them as a team all around the state to work on specifically apprenticeship projects. And as I said, the workforce coordinators are just constantly traveling around the state talking. And truly, once the employers and the colleges, for that matter, started understanding really how this whole piece works, then it became very much easier, the people – plus we developed the materials actually really importantly, and I should have mentioned this.

We actually developed what we call a toolkit. It's not really a toolkit. It's just an example of the various documents that have to be signed by everybody, the responsibilities of the sponsor, as well as the apprentices, checklists for making sure that everything is getting done in a way. And so our workforce coordinators, they just take those around with them whenever they go talk to an employer. And when they can lay it out like that and show them this is really what's going to happen here, they get it right away, and then they want it because they see real true value in award – rewarding their employees along the way for gaining skills and also it just makes their employees more loyal and it makes – and it's just a win win.

MS. MARTIN: Yeah. Sure. Well, that's really, really exciting. I know we've done webinars before on apprenticeships within TAACCCT grants and you can certainly find those on WorkforceGPS on the TAACCCT CoP but I don't know. Maybe we will do another one about some evolving ways that apprenticeship is working within TAACCCT grants because, as we are all aware, that is a big priority right now.

So great. I am going to – I could ask more questions, but we want to save time for New Jersey here. So let's move next to New Jersey, and we're going to be hearing from Justin Doheny and from Bergen Community College. Justin?

JUSTIN DOHENY: Cheryl, thank you.

MS. MARTIN: Want to bring the slides back up, Laura?

MR. DOHENY: That's a good idea.

MS. MARTIN: But, Justin, if you – there we go.

MR. DOHENY: There we go. OK. So New Jersey PREP is a consortium of 12 community colleges across the state, and we're a $15 million TAACCCT grantee enrolling currently about 2600 students, about 1600 of which have completed, and somewhere just over 600 have been successfully employed or received a salary increase subsequent to completing their program. So I think we're feeling pretty good about enrollment and completion, but lots of work still to do in employment.

We do offer 32 different programs across our member colleges, and we are really I'm going to say almost a second generation because our consortium, the New Jersey Health Professions Consortium, was originally funded through a grant from Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, an HPOG grantee. And so we learned a lot of lessons from them and a lot more to keep going, to keep learning. We are a little behind in the sustainability process, trying to figure out how our colleges will sustain the variety of operations and programs that they've put into place. But this is a process that we've begun or we started.

Bergen Community College's president sent a letter to the presidents of each of the 12 member colleges asking that they appoint a taskforce to be chaired by a vice president of their college to develop a specific plan related to sustainability of their TAACCCT programs. The intent is that we will then take those 12 plans, consolidate them into a plan that represents the direction that the consortium as a whole is going to take.

Additionally, we'll be looking at issues surrounding sustainability of the consortium, a function itself. Our consortium has been very independent, a group of independent colleges, and so the priorities that each college will select to sustain are really theirs to select. And we are not at a point where everybody has settled on precisely what it is that they're going to do, but the things that we're talking about are shown there on the slide, updated and academic programs, student support systems.

We've talked earlier this afternoon about crew navigators. Workforce relationships, we have more than 500 employers that we've developed new relationships with through the life of our TAACCCT grant. And management systems, trying to move this group of 12 colleges in the same direction has been a bit of a challenge over the last few years, and so we developed some approaches to doing that. And I think those can be helpful longer term.

So what are we expecting to find? Probably the biggest chunk of our sustainability approach is going to be integrating successful aspects of our project into individual colleges' budgets. We've already seen evidence that leadership of colleges have recognized the value of the career navigators, and that has been a big step forward for a number of the schools. And there are other examples of that as well.

We have new curriculums in occupational therapy assistant and massage therapy that will – are two of our programs, and those clearly are being integrated into the budgets of their schools. So a big chunk of what we've done so far will in fact be integrated into the colleges' budgets and essentially supported through the normal tuition revenue mechanisms that the colleges employ.

We've also incorporated in – our consortium, I should add, represents the public workforce system. We work with 10 workforce development boards in the area covered by our consortium, and we work very closely with the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development. We have a deputy director of the state's Department of Labor and Workforce Development that sits on our leadership council along with a representative the 10 workforce development boards. And that has I think enabled us to coordinate our work much more closely with their priorities.

We're expecting that one of the strategies that we'll be pursuing is employer support, especially in the area of apprenticeships. We've had some success with apprenticeships so far. Nothing that would approach Kansas', but we have operated three cohorts of community health workers and in cooperation with Rutgers University, and that seems to be – seems that the employers are accepting that approach very well. We're having some difficulty I would say in the whole nursing and CNA. Those apprenticeships don't seem to be met with much interest in the employer community at this point. But – and then we are also pursuing private foundation support both at a local college level as well as a consortium level.

And then the last thing in terms of thinking about how we sustain the consortium function, the coordination of healthcare education activities among the community colleges, is looking to the New Jersey Council of Community Colleges. This is an entity established through state legislation that is designed to coordinate the efforts of our community colleges, but there is no focus in that entity and within that council on healthcare education.

So everybody in a sense kind of goes off and does their own thing. And what we're hoping to do is to begin to move in the direction of integrating the New Jersey Health Professions Consortium into the efforts of the Council of Community Colleges. And in that way we would hope to be able to sustain the coordination activities that I think we successfully pursued the last years.

And that wraps up the comments that I would like to make; and questions?

MS. MARTIN: Great. Thank you, Justin. Do folks have questions for Justin? If you do, please put them in the chat, and we will address them to him. One of the questions that I would have is, how are you using data, program or employment data to determine whether program emphasis might need to be changed?

For example, you talked about CNA not being – that was an apprenticeship angle on it, but I think also as well you had mentioned previously that you started with CNA programs and you're currently having trouble recruiting students, given the low wages or other reasons now that employment is more robust. So how are you using data to direct the direction of your programs?

MR. DOHENY: Yeah. I would say actually the problem has not been so much with certified nursing assistants as it is with home health aides. In New Jersey, that's where we're having the employment problem; a big demand but inadequate wages.

I think that issue of which programs we offer is at a macro level guided by workforce data that we pull from the state of New Jersey and the federal level, O\*NET and a whole variety of other things, but then it's I'm going to say adjusted for local market conditions and really driven by the colleges' interactions with the employment community that they're serving. We really – I mean, from a consortium standpoint it's very hard to make a judgment that a particular occupation is needed statewide.

Rather, what we're trying to do is promoting the colleges connecting with their employers and reaching a decision then since it's a local market condition. Home health aide is actually an excellent example of it. There's a big demand here in the northeast Bergen County, but in the northwest counties people are looking for both that education and those jobs. So there are employment seekers who are willing to take those occupations at lower compensation in certain parts of the state than other parts of the state. And so the local college has to have the ability and the flexibility to adjust its program offerings to that local employment environment.

MS. MARTIN: OK. Thank you. Yeah. So many different ways of doing this and so many different – I mean, I was really struck by the differences in how things happen in one area to another.

And this is a slightly different subject, but the piece about how distance learning was not working in Wisconsin and they figured that out from their data but in Missouri – Missouri – I'm sorry. I keep calling it that when I look at Missoula and probably because I'm sitting here in Kansas right now too but – which is of course next door.

But anyway, in Montana in Missoula, that consortium, that you found that the distance learning did work. So everybody having their data is so important to understand what is working for you and what is working now because what worked yesterday doesn't necessarily work today.

So I am going to move us to a couple of follow-up questions, and I want to talk a little bit about what happens after the SVI. And then if we have time for a couple more questions, we'll go back to that, but I want to make sure we don't miss out on this part of it. I wanted to mention that after this webinar there's a few things that will happen.

One is that there will be a resource page that we will continue to populate that will have things like what's in the file share here, the grantee sustainability plans, which are the sustainability plans for the other grantees who are not on this call. I also failed to mention for Montana that there are two documents in the file share that are about their apprenticeship program, if people are interested. The first one is the practical nursing apprenticeship model at a glance, and the second one is their surge tech program. So you can find those there, and of course the slides from today are in the file share as well.

After this webinar we will be focusing on sustainability as well at the convening. That will be the round four convening happening September 26 to 27, and I hope everybody has that on their calendars. Very shortly in the next couple of days you should be receiving a call for presentations so that you can submit your proposals for that, and those will be due at the end of the month – end of not this month but the end of July.

And so give you a little time on that, but we strongly encourage those of you in particular who have been involved in the sustainability virtual institute to put forward proposals for that because we feel like you will have had an opportunity to think this through and have good things to share with others because that sustainability is going to be a big emphasis and focus at the convening that we will be holding in Washington, D.C.

So we're looking forward to seeing your proposals for that. You might want to think about combining. So if you have – if you're aware of another grantee that has a program in apprenticeships and you say, hey, let's get together and do a session on that or something on healthcare and the two of you want to do it or something that you have learned different ways of doing employer engagement that are sort of complimentary just from your conversations with your colleagues, that would be another way to think about doing that.

Heads up that we're also going to encourage you to think about including your third-party evaluator in your presentation team, if that makes sense for you to do that. So that is what happens after this. We will keep talking about sustainability.

We also have a few questions that we would like to ask people. Have not seen additional questions that have come from folks to the panelists, but while – but I have a couple, of course. So what about if we put up those poll questions that we have about the sustainability virtual institute, and we'll let people respond to those while we continue to multi-task here and ask a few other questions?

I wanted to go back and ask – let's see. What did I want to go back and ask? Kaye, you said that you started out with 39 employers, and you went to 200. And in Ohio, if I'm not getting everybody mixed up here, I think that you told us that you had 300 employers. I'm curious how many you started out with at the beginning, Bernie and Terri, and then was that a big increase when you – from what you started with?

MS. BURGESS SANDU: Yeah. We started with 47 employers.

MS. MARTIN: OK. OK. Awesome. Those are some incredible quotes that we would like to get from you, and you might be expecting Eugenia (ph) on our team to be following up with you on that. We are working on pulling that kind of information together and specifically focused a lot right now on employers and where that has gone. So thank you for that.

Going to Wisconsin, Scott, I had a question about how are the – I think you said a little bit about this, but is there anything else that you can say about how the colleges are funding the continuation of the career path coordinators after TAACCCT and how that has tied into the statewide efforts that you have been doing so it's not just about the community colleges? As I understand, it goes all the way K-12, community colleges, and beyond; is that correct?

MR. DUBENSKE: Yeah. Absolutely. That's correct. The entire concept of career pathways really is universal in that it affects everyone at any stage in their life, whether that be from a planning perspective in the K-12 space through our traditional students coming out of K-12 to returning adults.

And sustainability is really, as you mentioned before, a key component to maintaining the momentum and really ensuring that all of the good work that you've done up until this point has the opportunity to continue and to grow. And when you get to year three of a three-year grant, sustainability really needs to be the focus, and it certainly was for us. So we're very, very grateful for the good work and the great conversation that Jennifer Freeman from Jobs for the Future provided to our team.

And really it was kind of a combination of using the data in the scorecard to drive and make good decisions combined with all of that other intangible information where we were able to combine some of the metrics contained in the scorecard from our student data along with more subjective information from coordinator surveys, getting some more narrative type information, and putting it together in a way that really speaks to the return on the investment for our coordinators.

Now, if you're questioning that methodology at all, I would throw this out there. When we started this project, the expectation was that we would have 16 individuals on board for the three years of the Exceeding the Cap piece and with only maybe one of them continuing following the grant funding.

We're at a point today where we're not done with the grant, and we've got 10 of the 16 colleges that have made a commitment to keeping the individual in place in an FTE as well as five other additional colleges who aren't in place to provide the resources for a position but they're taking that work and they're taking that responsibility and building it into the performance metrics of other key positions such as deans and vice presidents.

So informed decision making is really critical. It absolutely has to be informed, and we'd like to think that the scorecard is just another tool toward that whole sustainability piece because career pathways, as we agreed, is really a universal concept unto itself.

MS. MARTIN: Yes. OK. Well, thank you, and I think that that is a good note to wrap things up on here. Keep tracking that data so that we can keep making informed decisions; right?

So thank you for your responses to the poll questions. It was interesting to see what people have there, and we'll be digging into that a little bit more on our end. If you have other comments that you want – other kind of feedback that you want to give about the SVI and your experience with that, please feel free to send it to your coach or to the TAACCCT mailbox or however you'd like to share that.

I'd also like to encourage anybody – we only featured five of you on the call today, but I'm sure that others of you have other information that might be useful to share. And please share that with your coach, or share it with the TAACCCT mailbox so that we can add it to the resource page. If you've got samples like Montana shared here today or like Wisconsin said they can share their career pathways tracking structure, that kind of thing, we would love to hear about that.

But I will say that I want to just wrap by saying thank you so much for joining us today. The resources that you see on the slide right there, of course we've heard from people that folks are using that TAACCCT Sustainability Toolkit for other programs that have nothing to do with TAACCCT but just basically using the structure of it to help them think through other either grants or other projects that they want to sustain. So that's one idea.

There's a link there for a collection of TAACCCT sustainability plans and resources that I'm guessing that you folks are the ones who know those best, but still, if you're not familiar with those, please take advantage of them. And thank you so much. I do look forward to hearing proposals from many of you in the call for presentations for the meeting, and I hope to be able to meet many, if not all of you, at that meeting in September.

So thank you so much for joining us today, and take care.

(END)