**WorkforceGPS**

**Transcript of Webinar**

**State Apprenticeship Expansion Grants: Engaging Youth in Apprenticeship**

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JENNIFER JACOBS: Now I'd like to turn things over to our moderator today, Amy Young, senior program manager at Maher & Maher. Amy?

AMY YOUNG: (Inaudible) – Young, and I'm with Maher & Maher. And as I think probably all of you know, Maher & Maher is very pleased to be the technical assistance provider for the State Apprenticeship Expansion Grants, and have the pleasure to work with you all across the country on your grants and moving forward your apprenticeship strategies, and glad that you could join us today for this webinar on engaging youth in apprenticeship.

So almost all of the state apprenticeship expansion grants in one way or another are touching youth, either maybe building on what they're doing now or starting up new efforts. And more broadly, there is just a growing interest in apprenticeship as a career pathway for youth.

Today we're going to be exploring youth apprenticeship in kind of two areas, looking at preparing and moving high school students into registered apprenticeship programs as a pathway after high school, and we're also going to look at how we can use apprenticeship to work with out of school youth. So those youths that are disconnected from work or school, and how we can reengage them to start a career in a range of fields.

And our objective for today, so we're going to first learn about the new framework that the Department of Labor's Office of Apprenticeship released just back in January. That document is also available in the file share window for download if you'd like to do that while we're getting started. We'll also share with you the link of where it's located.

Next we're going to hear from two speakers about two different youth apprenticeship programs and hear about those models. And finally today we really want to hear from you, from your comments and questions. And we have plenty of time throughout the webinar for questions, and we'll actually stop in between each presentation. So as soon as your question comes to mind, please just go ahead and enter that into the chat, and we will answer them throughout the webinar.

So let me introduce our speakers today. We're pleased to have these three individuals with us to talk about their experiences and expertise with youth apprenticeship. First we have Amy Firestone from the Office of Apprenticeship at the Employment and Training Administration. Amy is going to be talking about that new framework for high school students and registered apprenticeship.

We then have Jamie Bernthal, who's with the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development. And Jamie's going to share with us information about the Wisconsin statewide youth apprenticeship program.

And then finally we have Cheryl Feldman from the District 1199C Training Fund, who's going to talk about her work with youth apprenticeship in the healthcare area.

So as I mentioned before, we do want to take questions throughout the webinar. So please as they come to mind, just go ahead and enter them into the chat, and we'll answer them as we go through. So with that, I'm pleased to turn it over to Amy Firestone.

AMY FIRESTONE: Well thank you very much, Amy. I'm very excited to talk to you all about all the options you have with working with high school students on registered apprenticeship programs. I wanted to talk to you a little about the framework that Amy Young mentioned. I wanted to show you some pictures of apprentices in the United States.

As you will see on the slide, these are different high school apprentices working in Washington, D.C., in Wisconsin, and in South Carolina. They're working in a number of industries. So it's very exciting to put some faces to the program that I'll be telling you a little bit about and about the framework.

So as you can see, here we have developed just a visual for you on this framework that I will go into a little bit more detail about. This is how we envision how programs for high school students can be set up.

As you can see we have a high school, a college, and there's a picture there in the middle of an apprentice – I think it will show up when you download it later – on how a student in high school is dually enrolled in high school and college, and they're receiving college credits as they move through an apprenticeship program.

The student is also taking classes in CTE and working with employers getting on-the-job training and classroom instruction. So that's a visual to show you how a student can move from high school into college debt free through an apprenticeship program.

So I'm really excited to discuss with you the Training and Employment Notice (TEN) 31-16, that was published in January. This is joint guidance issued by the Department of Education, Department of Labor. It's a very useful document for all of you as you start planning new programs for high school students. It exclusively focuses on students in high school, not out of school youth. So wanted to make sure you took note of that.

So what you can find in this document are the components of a high quality registered apprenticeship program for high school students. Also recommendations on what this program can look like. And we also encourage greater use of pre-apprenticeship programs. And this is starting with 16-year-olds enrolled in secondary school.

So I wanted to delve a little bit into the framework to kind of guide you on what areas to look at depending on your needs in your area. So we have identified two different types of programs you can consider or both for students enrolled in high school. A is a pre-apprenticeship for high school students or school to registered apprenticeship. B is a registered apprenticeship program that begins in high school. I wanted to take you a little bit through both A and B, both of these models, so that way we can better answer some of your questions.

So when looking at a pre-apprenticeship program for high school students, the guidance suggests that these programs prepare individuals to enter registered apprenticeship, that the courses that students take are approved for registered apprenticeship and for high school. So that way a student is taking courses that will help them complete their high school graduate diploma. And on-the-job learning for pre-apprenticeship participants will also start at age 16, which is the minimum legal age to work as an apprentice in the United States.

And a pre-apprenticeship program can also have the opportunity to earn industry recognized credentials and certifications. And they can apply – this is a very important point – they can apply for the RA program leading up to or upon graduation from high school. And sometimes there is opportunity to obtain college credit.

So option B, which you'll hear a little bit more about as we move forward with some examples and other follow up, is a program, a registered apprenticeship program, 16 years olds and older high schools students are registered as apprentices with the US Department of Labor or with their state. So this means that a high school student has an RA agreement signed by a parent guardian if necessary, student; any employer sponsor. In this model students are taking courses at their high school, at the community and tech college, and these courses are counting towards high school graduation.

In many cases students are also earning postsecondary credit. They are participating in on-the-job learning. Again, age 16 is the minimum age required by law to work on sites. Students are employed, so they are receiving a paycheck just like in any other registered apprenticeship program. And also they're earning industry recognized credentials. And that's just a synopsis of what you will read in the framework. That's not everything. I just wanted to provide you with some of the highlights.

Some very important attachments that I wanted to explain to you. We have two attachments that accompany this TEN guidance. And I wanted to point to the sections that I think you will find most useful. So we developed an attachment on child labor laws and workers' compensation. And child labor laws, as you will find in your initial conversations with employers and with other partners, that this is a large area of concern.

Many folks are worried about equipment, work conditions, etc. So we've provided you with some of the basics on the federal and state child labor laws. Some links to help you find more information, as you can see there's hazardous occupation exemptions for apprentices. I won't go over this now, but this guide contains this information and we encourage you to distribute these attachments to your partners.

The second attachment is on workers' compensation. So many times we have employers ask us, – they're a bit concerned with employing a minor – and coverage available for them, all of these issues. What we have done is come up with a very simple short guide on resources by state. Because we found that workers' compensation laws for minors differs in each state. So we provide you with some links to look at what the laws are in your state and also some very general information on workers' comp for minors, with some information for apprentices.

So we hope that this TEN will give you a great starting point to see how you can model your program. And I wanted to mention that the TEN was formulated by a group of experts. And many of them were the beginning states in building these high school registered apprenticeship programs. So they have gone through trial and error to see what programs work. And so we hope that this guidance will be a great starting point for you in building high quality RA programs for high school students 16 and up.

So I wanted to wrap up my section of the presentation with some new and exciting tools and a convening. And these are two items that we have planned for this year. And the first would be an online tool kit on how to build a youth apprenticeship program.

So you have the guidance in front of you and we know that it'll be a very resourceful piece of information as you talk to new partners and build a program in your state. But we also are looking forward to providing you with some more hands on instruction, videos, and more information on child labor laws and workers' compensation. We've done a little bit more research on these topics to provide you with a much fuller guide.

In addition we're very excited to announce a high school apprenticeship convening. This will take place September 13 and 14 in Charleston, South Carolina, and Trident Technical College. Trident Technical College runs a youth apprenticeship program in the Charleston regional area, and they have probably 20 or 30 high school registered apprenticeship programs in a wide array of industries.

And so this will be an opportunity to go on a study tour and learn more about their programs that are in IT, culinary arts, healthcare, basically in all industries that you might be interested in. So if you're interested in more information on this convening please let me know.

And with that I will end my section of the presentation. And if there's any questions on this section, please let me know. We'll be on the lookout for your questions.

MS. YOUNG: Thanks, Amy. I have a question and I'm sure others will start to roll in either now or throughout the rest of the webinar. So we have only a short time today, so we went kind of a high level of the framework, which really provides I think kind of building blocks for people to think about as they're starting to develop a youth apprenticeship program.

I'm wondering if the elements that you talked about, if you could maybe talk about one or two that you think are particularly important for people to think about if they're thinking about developing a youth apprenticeship approach.

MS. FIRESTONE: Definitely. So I know that this is a new concept for many of you and you're just starting to figure out who your partners are and building an apprenticeship program for high school students. So one thing I wanted to mention is the availability for dual enrollment and the opportunity to earn postsecondary credits. And as I've seen in a few states, this is a unique partnership between both postsecondary and secondary institutions.

As I mentioned, Trident Tech, which you'll learn a lot more about if you're able to attend the convening in the fall, they run the youth apprenticeship program. So the courses are taken at their college campus. And high school students are earning kind of towards their associate's degree. So I think if you are a secondary institution or a postsecondary institution, think about these partnerships that might be of use to you with other education institutions in your area.

MS. YOUNG: That's great. Thank you. And just one more question too, because I think another thing that you really talked about that really was one of the driving things behind the framework is this idea about partnerships. So it's working with employers, it's working with high schools, it's working with postsecondary.

You mentioned sometimes employers some of their concerns or some of the child labor and workers' compensation. I'm wondering what other thoughts you might have in terms of either how to approach partners, whether it's employers or schools, any concerns or also what people gain from being involved in a high school apprenticeship to apprenticeship effort.

MS. FIRESTONE: Definitely. So another group I didn't mention that I think will be very important for you to include are the school counselors and career counselors. As you know they play a very important role in guiding students in working with faculty, both postsecondary and secondary levels on these programs.

So I think working with everybody at the very local level, school counselors, principals, I mean everyone's kind of a part of the pie, for lack of a better word. So I think it's very important to include them in any sort of outreach you produce.

Also parents are another important factor especially with high school programs. There might be still some stigma around what is registered apprenticeship especially for high school students. But as you can see in some of the pictures, we have students who are in healthcare, they are vet techs, they're in IT, and they're doing apprenticeships in high school that will lead them to really great jobs, and also an opportunity to start earning an associate's or a bachelor's while they're still in high school. So these are definitely folks you should keep in mind.

MS. YOUNG: Great. That's really useful. And then just one last question before we go to our next speaker, someone just entered. Can you talk about the need to articulate high school pre-apprenticeship programs with existing registered apprenticeship programs in the community?

And I think it's talking about how do you make the – the importance of maybe how you make the connection between those two.

MS. FIRESTONE: Well that's a very – that would be a longer kind of answer to give you for this webinar. But that's something that we are also working on in the national office here in Washington, D.C. Because I know that there are many different approaches to pre-apprenticeship and there is guidance. I believe it's at the end of this webinar, the last slide, you will find Department of Labor guidance on pre-apprenticeship programs and ideas how to link them with registered apprenticeship programs.

So I think with this, we will have more models to talk about as more programs are grown for high school students especially in new industries. So I think we'll be able to provide you with some more examples as we move forward and do some more follow up on that.

MS. YOUNG: Thank you, Amy. And with that we're going to move to our next speaker. So I will turn it over to Jamie.

JAMIE BERNTHAL: Hi, and thanks for having me. I'm Jamie Bernthal. And I work with Wisconsin's Youth Apprenticeship program. And fitting into the framework that Amy talked about just a minute go, we're kind of in that pre-apprenticeship or school to RA program space, although we're also more than that. But before getting into the weeds on that, I'm going to start with a brief overview of what our program is about.

So the Wisconsin Youth Apprenticeship program gives high school juniors and seniors a career targeted hands on learning experience that takes place in a workplace setting. Our standard program lasts for two years and there's an option for a one year program. Students will start by choosing an industry based on their career interests usually in their sophomore year.

Then they're interviewed and hired by an approved employer over the summer or in the beginning of their junior year. While they're at school, the students are going to be taking a class each semester that's related to their job. And while they're on-the-job, they work with an onsite mentor to learn the hard and soft skills required in the workplace.

And after working for at least 900 hours, passing all of their required school classes, and achieving the skill standards that are required by their industry, they receive a certificate of occupational proficiency that's signed by our department's secretary.

So to give a little bit of history, our youth apprenticeship program was born out of this national movement in the early 1990s to serve what we called the forgotten half. Now as the economy of our state along with many others moved away from traditional factory jobs into higher skilled manufacturing, as well as into the service economy, many of our students were struggling to find jobs with just their high school degrees.

So our program took our successful registered apprenticeship program as an inspiration and applied those same program design concepts to youth, showing them that they could have real world applications to their academic knowledge.

Now originally we were targeted towards the students who were still on track to graduate high school, but weren't necessarily going to be college bound. However as we continued growing this program and expanding into new careers, it became clear that low, average and high performing students all actually became more engaged with their school classes after they experienced these work applications to their learning.

So the program started using a $27 million grant and that last from '95 to 2000. And about 35 states got these grants at the time. But once grant funding ran out, Wisconsin was one of the few states that saw enough value to continue funding this program now entirely through state GPR funding. So these GPR grants were able to keep the program operating, and we were able to expand to serve an ever growing diversity of career pathways, from manufacturing, to health science, IT, biotechnology and more.

So today the youth apprenticeship program in Wisconsin serves over 3,000 students per year. And we offer programs in 10 out of the 16 nationally recognized career clusters, including 50 distinct career pathways within these. Now we're an employer driven program, so our enrollments are going to reflect Wisconsin's economy. Manufacturing is our largest sector, and it's followed by health services, hospitality and agriculture.

Our students are all paid employees of their businesses and earn an average of $9.70 an hour, which is above Wisconsin's minimum wage of $7.25. More than 80 percent of them will successfully complete the program and earn their certificate. And all this is accomplished using state funding only, without federal funding for the most part, and with a cost to the state government of less than $900 per student served.

So how did we get to where we are today? Our regional model is really one of the important reasons. And I want to talk a little bit about it. So in Wisconsin's model, the state sets program standards, but the program is really implemented on a local level. And we operate almost entirely on state discretionary funding with the state sending general purpose revenue grants each year out to regional youth apprenticeship consortium. There are 32 of these that are active in this year and they serve over 250 school districts covering most of our state. And you can see them on this map.

Consortiums have to apply to operate each year and they have to follow our state guidelines. But they can be organized in a lot of different ways. You can see that some of these are localized down to a single school district, while others are serving dozens of school districts in a big chunk of the state. Now consortiums have to include one or more school districts as partners.

They also have to include employers. And they also often include other stakeholders from nonprofit agencies, technical colleges, chambers of commerce, and more. Some of these are the main agencies in charge of running the program, but there's really a lot of diversity in who applies.

Each of these stakeholders gets represented on a steering committee for the consortium. And that steering committee appoints one person as the regional coordinator. This is the grant manager, there's a general administrator, and they are often going out recruiting talking to students in schools and also talking to business associations. And typically this is somebody who's employed outside of a particular school district by one of these larger agencies like a technical college or a chamber of commerce.

So while the regional coordinator is somebody who's typically going out and speaking to these larger level business organizations, most consortiums also have school based coordinators, one for each participating school. And these are the people who are primarily responsible for recruiting students, going into classrooms and talking to them. They coordinate school hours with worksites and they find the appropriate related instruction classes. And our school based coordinators are usually existing school employees, examples including CTE content teachers and school counselors.

So implementing our program through this localized model we find has several advantages. First of all, because we can only offer apprenticeships where there are willing employers, we have to be driven by people who know the local economy. Our regional coordinators, as I said, are funded personally by our grants, but all of them are actually employees of another agency, whether it's a school district, a tech college, or another nonprofit. And these are always going to be agencies that are intimately involved with either the education of students or the promotion of local businesses. So they're going to be responsive to the local economy.

Now while the regional coordinator is typically speaking to businesses, our school based coordinators become the experts in recruiting students and in selecting appropriate related instruction. So we like to encourage our youth apprentices to take tech college courses, but they might else be taking high school courses or other things.

And finally using this localized model reduces the cost of the state government administering the program because they're mostly getting paid through their other agencies. We have a really talented group of coordinators that we've got by doing this program for over 20 years. And they're really invested in helping the students in their own community get ahead. So our grant costs are only covering part of the total effort that they're putting in every day.

Now that I talked about that, I want to talk about some of our key aspects of program design. And one aspect is the high quality of our skill standards. Now we're kind of similar to a hybrid model registered apprenticeship program, where we prove our mastery through both work hours and through specific skills competencies.

And we take a lot of care in designing these competencies. Each curriculum that we develop goes through a rigorous review and approval process. We have industry focus groups in different regions throughout the state so that we know we have statewide representation from industry. And we have them review everything we develop. And that's all I'll touch on on that because I have to hurry up.

But this statewide standardization really shines when we try to make this connection with registered apprenticeship. The average age for new workers in registered apprenticeship in our state is 28. And our students are graduating at 18. So there's this 10 year gap where students could be going between different temporary jobs. We'd like to cut that down to zero. Now you can see that we both are organized in the same way.

We're now making direct comparisons between the skills that are learned in youth apprenticeship program and registered apprenticeship program. Ideally they're getting their employment through the same company and they're going to be able to apply directly for a registered apprenticeship when they complete. In some areas they're even getting credit for the OTJ hours that they're working.

And we're really excited about that. And we hope that someday every registered apprenticeship program can have a youth apprenticeship behind it to serve as a pathway for students to enter that career. So I'm actually going to leave it at that and see if we have any questions to take on that, because it looks like I'm out of time.

MS. YOUNG: Jamie, actually why don't you just go ahead and do your last slide.

MR. BERNTHAL: Sure. Because this is really a question slide. And it says, for those interested in starting a youth apprenticeship program, what are some tips?

MS. YOUNG: That would be great.

MR. BERNTHAL: Yeah. Sure. So first of all, the program is always going to depend on the local business climate and what happens in our state's economy. And we found that it always works best if it comes from an industry's need, rather than from the government level down.

So youth apprenticeship in our state began with a request from a single printing company to set up an internship program for their local high school students. And that's what we used as a basis. And as we expanded into new industries, it was always based on a request from a specific industry partner on the ground.

But what we need to do as state administrators is go beyond a program that's specific to one employer and grew it into something that's universal across the industry. So for us, before we can offer a youth apprenticeship program in a new area, the curriculum has to be reviewed by industry groups throughout our state using multiple meetings to make sure it's valid in each region. And we do that with the perspective of trying to provide a set of skills that's going to prepare a student for an entry level position in the industry.

And what you might think about when you're making this a pre-apprenticeship program, you would want to talk to the existing registered apprenticeship programs, see what kind of minimum standards they're having, and see what you might be doing in the first year of a registered apprenticeship. Try to make that as similar as possible to what a youth apprentice is going to do.

So we think of it as almost a trial experience in that way. And this kind of statewide standardization is what takes us from being just a way for employers to lock in a stream of new workers, to being a program that's designed for students to get skills that they can take any business that they want to go to. And that's really what we want is to provide good value to the students, in my opinion.

And then secondly, we take the statewide plan that we've developed and we have to actually put it into place in each of our local communities. And to do that we've always found it best to use existing community organizations as partners and really as drivers of the program. And for us, one of the most important lessons was to let the locals drive what we offer for our classroom related instruction.

In the beginning of the program we had the specific youth apprenticeship courses, but it was so expensive for us to both deliver them and to maintain an up to date curriculum, that we allowed more of that decision on coursework to be made by local areas. And so many of our local schools already have strong tech ed departments or they can use our grant funding to strengthen those courses. So what we really do is try to empower or locals to set up these work based learning experiences in their own communities, but following a standardized plan.

And I also wanted to note that all this time that we spent developing workplace curriculum, promoting the program for the first time, setting up meetings throughout the state, was a really significant cost. Like I said in the beginning, when we created this program we had a federal grant of $27 million over five years. And that was what was really necessary to develop all of these standards for the first time.

But once we got the ball rolling, we've been able to maintain and even grow the program at a much lower cost. As I mentioned, in the last year we served over 3,000 students with just about $3 million in funding. So once this program is set up, the real drivers of it are employers with an interest in training new workers and educators with a passion for helping the students in their community. And together we found they get really wonderful things done. So that is that.

MS. YOUNG: Thanks, Jamie. Thanks for doing that. I think that was all useful. One of my favorite parts of the things you covered is just that something you said in the beginning, that apprenticeship really used to be thought about for those when you were focusing on a youth population, for maybe those that weren't, quote unquote, college bound. But your experience that it helps all students at all levels and all levels of learning more engage with education, I think is a really great message.

MR. BERNTHAL: That's right. One of the programs I love to talk about is our biotechnology program, where we have students that are being placed as lab assistants in our University of Wisconsin, Madison labs, which are research ones, university very strong in science.

So students are actually getting this hands-on experience with laboratory work that can prepare them for entering into PhD programs later. A really interesting way to get them involved from a high school age, even if they're interested in that kind of academic science career.

MS. YOUNG: Thanks. So we do have a couple questions for you. One is actually one that came in when Amy was wrapping up her presentation, is about how we engage school counselors to embrace the idea of apprenticeship. And I wonder if you could talk a little bit how your programs actually work with school counselors and maybe even parents and students on kind of promoting the apprenticeship as a career pathway for students.

MR. BERNTHAL: Yeah. It's a big effort now in our program. Because when we were developed, we were really kind of based on a registered apprenticeship but separate. And we sort of grew in that way. And now we're kind of coming back together and trying to make this an integrated career pathway.

So we're developing materials that we're going to be giving back to our regional and school based coordinators that will show just what a great deal registered apprenticeship is for people who can get into it. So that's the kind of information that we're looking to give to school counselors, stuff like there is going to be your average wage when you complete a registered apprenticeship program.

And of course for now we're focusing on where we have registered apprentices in Wisconsin, which is in manufacturing and construction. But they're going to be growing that into the health and IT pathways too through one of these federal grants that's about that. So it is something that we're just starting to work on, is promoting this information about registered apprenticeship down to the school counselors.

And in my opinion it has to be a very localized thing because registered apprenticeship is very localized, at least for us. You don't get into the program except by applying to a very specific – you go to a specific place at a specific time, and go to the electrical committee or whatever and apply there.

So it's something that we have to strive for and we try to make communication as good as possible between our local youth apprenticeship coordinators and the local – (technical difficulties.)

MS. YOUNG: Jamie, I just wanted to ask you one quick question, then we'll move on. But can you talk a little bit more about how the youth apprenticeship program leads to registered apprenticeship programs? Someone entered that question for you.

MR. BERNTHAL: Yeah. And I see it was also asked if it was a federally recognized pre-apprenticeship program. And I'm not totally sure. We're not quite familiar with what that means. And we'll learn more about that I'm sure from DOL. But does it lead to registered apprenticeship is a good question. And we can't say that it does universally. But what we can say is that we're trying to build these local kind of things.

It's kind of a long answer, but we come about it in two different ways, one from a statewide level. What I've been doing is been going to our state trade committees. I don't know if this works the same way in every state or if it's just for Wisconsin. But we have statewide trade committees for each registered apprenticeship trade. There would be for example a machining state trade committee.

And I've been taking our youth apprenticeship curriculum there and having it reviewed by them. And they found that it's similar to what a first year registered apprentice would be doing. So what they do then is they create this crosswalk document that compares the skills learned in both programs and they come out with a recommendation that says, we recommend that 50 to 100 percent of the OJT hours that you work in your youth apprenticeship program could be carried over to your OJT hour requirement of the registered apprenticeship program. And they also recommend that somebody who completes the youth apprenticeship would be well-prepared for immediate entry into registered apprenticeship.

Now from the state committee level, that comes as a recommendation that any given employer can decide whether to honor or not. So that was a very important aspect too. There is no requirement on an employer that you have to take these hours. Because that was felt that that was way – that would be way too restrictive. It could be damaging to the registered apprenticeship program. So that's the statewide aspect.

On the local level, what that's been doing is trying to build connections for us between our local YA staff and our local RA staff and RA sponsors, so that they have more students enrolled in both programs, and just educating them about what youth apprenticeship is so that people can go right from that into registered apprenticeships. So I hope that answers the question.

MS. YOUNG: Yeah. Thank you so much, Jamie. So let's now move to our next speaker, Cheryl. I believe you also had phone problems as well. Cheryl, are you there?

CHERYL FELDMAN: I am. Can you hear me?

MS. YOUNG: Yes. I can hear you well. Please go ahead.

MS. FELDMAN: Great. So we are excited in Philadelphia. We have new leadership through the mayor's office. And we are formalizing a coordinated workforce strategy to connect disconnected youth, returning citizens, low-skilled adults, with career pathway opportunities. And we formed a citywide steering committee to design a framework that targets the city as model employer in high demand industries.

And so in that context we are developing in Philadelphia a youth strategy with the support of Annie E. Casey Foundation, part of the GenWork initiative. And we're really working on providing the equity vision to this youth work, a vision that intentionally knits together practitioners, funders and employers in moving youth forward. So we're really excited, especially because we are battling a 27 percent poverty rate in Philadelphia. And workforce is seen as one of the most important strategies to move our residents out of poverty.

Our context is that we are a 42-year-old labor management partnership with multiple employer partners. We also have created an industry partnership way back in 2005 that includes union and non-union employers, higher ed and technical trainers, workforce and policy practitioners, all within the human services and healthcare industry. Another bit of information about us is that we operate a 35,000 square foot learning center which serves about 5,000 students a year. And so my presentation is within this context.

About 600 of the 5,000 students we serve are youth. We do have some in school youth programs, but today I'm focusing on our out of school youth programs. And we are moving towards incorporating more pre-apprenticeship to registered apprenticeship models. We're in the process of demonstrating our first one right now with a behavioral health pre-apprenticeship moving into a registered apprenticeship. And I'll talk a bit about that.

But I wanted to kind of provide you with how we fund this. We braid a lot of funding through our Philadelphia Youth Network, which is our youth council Title I funds, TANF funds, Title II funds, philanthropic and private funding. And we develop our career pathway by using these different funding streams to support different components of the program.

We're a grassroots organization, a community-based organization in the heart of Philadelphia. And so in recruiting for our youth programs, we're really connecting to all of the systems, the workforce system, the education system, the one stop system, the county assistance office, the school district, our youth serving organizations, our labor networks. We generally don't have any recruitment programs because we have a long history of providing quality programs in Philadelphia.

We have over the years developed what we consider to be a comprehensive service delivery model that has four major components. One is academic preparation which is very critical here in Philadelphia. Even youth with a high school diploma or equivalency do not have the academic skills that we need to really shine in the workplace or to move into college. And so academic preparation is very important as well as workforce preparation. A third component is the employment coaching and counseling support. And then financial coaching is the final component.

And there are three key aspects to our delivery structure. One is an integrated approach to workforce and education. They're not linear. Every level we're integrating both the workplace, the workforce in a contextualized way with the academic prep. And contextualization is very important, authentic materials, embedding work based learning, providing that career exposure.

And then a third aspect obviously is the employer engagement at every step of the process, even before the training starts, engaging the employers around the programming and the employment piece. And obviously a pre-apprenticeship to apprenticeship model really works well with that.

And then I guess the final aspect that I'd like to highlight of our model is kind of this intentional scaffolding process, where the initial assessment from the very beginning is engaging the youth around workforce. But we're also bringing employers in at the very early stage. But scaffolding the experience so that we can move students through into job shadowing, into structured supervised internship, and then into an apprenticeship experience. So we've really developed a comprehensive model and are able to ensure that the youth are successful in moving through.

So this is a slide that shows you the work that we've done so far in apprenticeship. At the beginning of the fiscal year last year, for us that would be July, we had three community health worker apprentices. By this coming July we're going to have over 80 apprentices. So we've really, really kicked into this work in a big way and are very excited with what we're doing. I wanted to kind of highlight the reasons employers are engaging with us. And they're different for every one of the pathways.

So one reason might be – and they're different for different industry sectors – but the workforce needs. So in early childhood we have a lack of credentialed teachers. We've now gotten approved a CDA2 associate degree apprenticeship program with our state. We're engaging 36 apprentices with about 25 employers. It's a multi-employer standardized apprenticeship program in Philadelphia. The community college is the education provider.

Another reason an employer might get engaged is standardizing on-the-job competencies in an area like behavioral health or community health, where the industry itself hasn't set forth those competencies. And apprenticeship really provides us with the ability to do that. And in both of those programs, the students are getting college credits and moving into degree programs as part of the apprenticeship program.

Another area of interest for employers is kind of an incumbent worker upgrading and retention strategy. And for us – and I'd like to give a shout-out to HCAP, who's working with us in implementing the advanced home care nursing assistant apprenticeship statewide in Pennsylvania, standardizing the on-the-job competencies with centers for independent living. And we hope to be connecting this pathway with our practical nursing programming.

And then another reason finally employers have engaged with us, is when they really are committed to playing a community role. And in our medical assistant apprenticeship, we're working with a community health clinic which has embedded itself with a high school in Philadelphia, and the students get medical assistant training during high school, and then move into our apprenticeship program. So I want to underscore the important role of our organization or any others as intermediaries, bringing resources to the table, bringing support to the apprentices and mentors, and technical assistance.

I wanted to drill down a bit momentarily because I don't have time on the pre-apprenticeship to behavioral health that we're implementing at this time. On Monday, 30 youth began with our agency, many of them with lived experiences in behavioral health.

And we have a multi-employer apprenticeship linked with our partner Philadelphia University. The students are going through the academic and pre-apprenticeship work and will move right into apprenticeships in behavioral health. It's multi-employer with a variety of union and non-union employers in Philadelphia. And they are extremely excited about hiring youth out of this program.

Our key strategies, this is kind of a summary slide pointing out – I don't have time to go through it, but I'm happy to come back to it if you wish – pointing out some of the major work that the training fund does in standardizing the learning on-the-job, connecting it with the related instruction, ensuring that those on-the-job standardized competencies meet the employers' needs, and providing a lot of wraparound support to the employers from training the mentors, supporting the mentors and apprentices, helping them to do everything that's required in getting the apprenticeship program approved, and then supporting the whole apprenticeship process.

We're very, very keen – and I like what Jamie had to – (inaudible) – connected to the industry, but making sure that we're providing a quality educational experience for the apprentices, and ensuring that the employers have the tools to support those apprentices.

So I just wanted to end with one success story, Brittany Spivey, who recently finished our nurse aide training. In this case it wasn't an apprenticeship, but it gives you an idea of how we can start with someone, helping her to get her GED through our organization, moving right into training and into placement, and then right into college.

In this case she's working as a nurse aide and going to school at the community college to get her radiology degree. But also providing the wraparound supports that our youth need. And in this case Brittany really was struggling with her housing, and she's a mother, single mother, and we were able to help her to get subsidized housing.

So as part of her experience with us, not only did she get the credential she needed to be employed, but she also rather than a one stop at the nurse aide and then we're done, she's also on a pathway now for a great career and being able to support herself with her training, but also being able to provide for her family.

And so I just wanted to emphasize that when we're working with youth, especially disadvantaged youth, we can't just place them in an apprenticeship program. There's just a huge amount of supports that are needed to help them be successful. And we're certainly happy to be part of that experience.

MS. YOUNG: Thank you, Cheryl. We have one question for you. Well a couple, but to start out with, one kind of specific question. On one of your slides on the behavioral health pathway, you mentioned that there's a college granting 24 credits, and wondering which – the question is, "Which college is granting 24 credits and for which courses?"

MS. FELDMAN: Okay. So I went back to the slide. Philadelphia University is our partner. We've been working with them since 2004. We actually have pipelines of incumbent workers going through the degree programs with them. And now opening up to youth is really exciting.

So when the students are going through the apprenticeship, the registered apprenticeship, they're going to be attending a 300-hour technical program offered through the training fund that is vetted for 21 college credits by Philadelphia University. They move right into their first college course as part of the apprenticeship program. And at the end of that first course, they then have the 21 credits plus three more, that's the 24 credits as part of the apprenticeship program.

But they then also have the opportunity through our organization in Philadelphia University to move into their associate's degree where everything will be articulated directly into a bachelor's degree and into a master's degree in human services. So having succeeded with our incumbents in this pipeline, we're just thrilled now that the youth will be able to take advantage of it.

MS. YOUNG: Thank you. Next question, I think both Cheryl and Jamie could touch on, so I'm going to first start with Cheryl. And you mentioned that the range of organizations you partner with, but could you talk a little bit more about how particularly you partner and work with the local workforce system WIOA youth program?

MS. FELDMAN: Sure. So the Philadelphia Youth Network is the lead WIOA agency in Philadelphia. And we work with them on so many different levels. I sit on the council myself and I sit on the WIB as well. And it's working with them on programming implementation of course. But it's also working with them at the strategic level, which I think is really important.

I started the presentation with a vision we have in Philadelphia now to knit our systems together in a holistic way. And so we're partnering together on the Generation Work project through Annie E. Casey (sic).

And at that strategic level we're really I think going to blow up our framework that we've developed at the training fund, and that exists in some other agencies in Philly, and really develop a connected system of providers, funders and employers, so that we can in an intentional way and with fidelity serve larger numbers of youth, and move them through pipelines, and share them among agencies in a strategic way so that they can be successful.

So our work with the youth serving infrastructure in Philadelphia goes very deep. And I would say that we have a fantastic framework upon which to work together.

MS. YOUNG: Thank you, Cheryl. And Jamie, can you touch on that as well how you work with WIOA programs and how the local workforce system is involved?

MR. BERNTHAL: Sure. And there's kind of two ways. One is that our consortiums as I mentioned that run the program, have these steering committees. And workforce development boards in the area are supposed to be partners on those steering committees, and pretty much required to be partners unless there's some cases where they've just not been interested.

But probably about 80 percent of our consortiums have a workforce development board as part of their steering committee. And of course they often use those for contacts with businesses, as kind of an organization that knows about the local business environment, and they would also be able to use that for some of the students that can get supportive services, so they can help that.

Another one is that sometimes the consortium is actually led by a workforce development board. In the Madison area the grant actually goes to south central workforce development board. And that's a WIOA provider as well.

And in that case sometimes these are actually kind of a little bit too big to be running the consortium. In that south central area, it's actually most of the day to day duties are divided between three different local coordinators, one covering just the Madison area, one covering the kind of suburbs and Dane County around Madison area, and the other covering Jefferson County which is right to the east of Madison.

So I would say that it's a little bit too regional to cover a consortium, but they are great partners on the steering committee because they can help our programs get involved with businesses, and they are also great to talk to because they can help with supportive services for the students who quality as at risk.

MS. YOUNG: Thank you, Jamie and Cheryl, for that last question. And unfortunately we are up at the hour; wanted to share with you just a few resources that might be helpful. The Framework on Registered Apprenticeship for High School Students, the link is there, but it's also in the file share if you'd like to download it before we wrap up.

There is a new Youth Apprenticeship Resource Page. It is on the ApprenticeshipUSA Community of Practice. If you've never visited there, we have a range of examples of programs, of tools, of marketing materials. So definitely want to check that out. And finally we have this resource on the Role of Secondary CTE Programs in Preparing Students for Apprenticeship Programs.

Lastly I wanted to share our contact information for all of our speakers today as well as myself. Feel free to reach out to any of us if you have follow up questions or we can provide more information for you on youth apprenticeship.

And with that I will turn it back over to Jen, but I wanted to just thank you all for joining us today. I hope you found it useful. And also a very big thank-you to our speakers, Amy, Jamie and Cheryl, for sharing their experiences with us today.

MS. JACOBS: Okay. Just want to thank all the participants and the presenters.

(END)