**WorkforceGPS**

**Transcript of Webinar**

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

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JENNIFER JACOBS: And now I'd like to turn things over to our moderator today, Ayreen Cadwallader, workforce analyst for the U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration. Ayreen?

AYREEN CADWALLADER: Thank you so much, Jen. And welcome, everybody, to one of our first of many technical assistance opportunities for our TechHire grants. We are excited to bring you together on what is the Thursday prior to a Memorial Day holiday. It looks like everyone is really pumped up and excited to meet with everyone through the chat window.

We do have a poll up in which we'd like to know who is on the line today. If you can quickly scroll down the options and select which roll you are playing your grant program, just for us to get an understanding of who's on the call today. It looks like there are a good number of project directors and managers, but also service providers, which is certainly very appropriate, given the topic of today's webinar.

So welcome, again. And let's go ahead and close this result.

And like I said, this is the first of many technical assistance opportunities for you to hear from our subject matter experts also from your TechHire grant colleagues, who we also consider to be experts on the field.

And today's topic will provide outreach and recruitment strategies for those TechHire target populations, which we know is a broad range of individuals that have barriers to employment. And these include youth and young adults – and for TechHire grants we consider those to be ages 17 to 29 – including individuals with disabilities, individuals with limited English proficiency, and individuals with prior records. And so today's topic is certainly, we hope, to provide you with outreach and recruitment strategies that will meet the broad communications needs of these different populations.

And with that, I'd like to introduce our subject matter experts. Today we will hear from – the next slide – Terry Grobe, who is the director of youth pathways in the Jobs for the Future's Oakland, California office. She has more than 40 years of experience in managing national demonstration projects, supporting local multi-sector partnerships, and designing education to career pathways that promote success for out-of-school youth and young adults. Currently, she coaches five West Coast site centers – (inaudible) – strengthen alternative education programming (and/or building bridges to collect ?) for opportunity youth, to focus on young people who are transitioning from the foster care or juvenile justice system.

We'll also hear from Lucretia Murphy, who is a senior director at Jobs for the Future, helping low-skilled adults advance to family-supporting careers, while enabling employers to build and sustain a productive workforce. Dr. Murphy's work focuses on place-based initiatives, developing integrated education and workforce development pathways that enable young people and adults to earn credentials that are in high demand in their local economy. This work also includes addressing structural barriers to success for individuals of low-income and communities of color.

And with that, I'd like to turn it over – we also have our – speakers from Jobs for the Future, Sara Lamback. And you'll also hear from your fellow TechHire grantee, CareerSource Tampa Bay, Michelle Schultz, who is the program director at Tampa Bay.

And with that, I'd like to turn it over to Sara.

SARA LAMBACK: Great. Thank you so much, Ayreen. Good afternoon, everyone. And again, very excited to be here with you today.

So the objectives of today's webinar are to really highlight some specific actionable strategies that TechHire grantees can use to meet their outreach and recruitment goals across each of the TechHire target populations. And while the focus of the webinar is really on youth and young adults, it provides an opportunity as well for those grantees who are working with other target populations to really think about what's similar and what's different among the individuals that they serve and are hoping to serve.

Thirdly, this webinar aims to provide some opportunities for you all, as TechHire grantees, to really interact with each other and our subject matter experts on effective recruitment and outreach strategies.

Next slide, please.

As far as today's agenda, after this first introductory portion we'll hear from two highly experienced subject matter experts, as Ayreen mentioned, both Terry Grobe and Lucretia Murphy from Jobs for the Future, who will highlight several particularly effective strategies to recruit target TechHire populations.

Then we'll hear from Michelle Schultz from CareerSource Tampa Bay on what has really worked well within their TechHire initiative.

The second portion of the webinar is really dedicated to interaction and discussion with your TechHire colleagues. So we'll engage in a really – a great breakout group discussion – a facilitated discussion on which you'll be in breakout groups, as well as some report outs. And you'll have an opportunity at the end for Q&A.

Next slide, please.

And with that, I'd like to pass it over to Danielle for our next poll question.

DANIELLE KITTRELL: Thanks so much, Sara. So now, our next polling question will be, "What is the biggest challenge or question your project faces related to outreach and recruiting?" Please go ahead and type your response into the chat box. The biggest challenge or question or your project faces related to outreach and recruiting.

I see some grantees typing in here. (Pause.) OK. Getting the youth interested. Excellent. Targeted populations. Recruiting youth candidates. I will give you a couple more seconds here. (Pause.) Rural areas. Absolutely.

MS. CADWALLADER: Great. Thank you so much, for those of you that added your biggest challenges here. And we do hope that we will have some strategies to support you in outreach and recruitment strategies. The rural area challenge and understanding eligibility requirements, that would definitely be something we'd like to handle offline if you have immediate questions related to that. But let's go ahead and continue.

MS. KITTRELL: I'll turn things over to Terry.

TERRY GROBE: Great. Thanks, everyone. And welcome to the webinar. We look forward to sharing some recruiting strategies with you. I think we can go to the next slide.

So these are the key points that I want to cover and I'm going to cover them fairly quickly. And I'm going to draw from a long history of coaching experience, but most recently, my coaching was five sites in the West Coast – on the West Coast – that had Social Innovation Fund grants that are building education to career pathways for older youth. They are all – have developed youth programs and had some anxiety about how to outreach to young people and get enough folks in the door for new programs to really get off and running smoothly. So I think you'll find a lot that's relevant for you as you build and open new programs.

So these are the key points I'm going to talk about. What I think is the most critical thing here, which is to really understand and begin to form some hypothesis about your ideal candidate. What do youth need to know and be able to do to be successful with your program? Then to outreach to the most strategic partners that you can find for recruitment. Once you do that, there's a lot of – (inaudible) – to maintain these strategic partnerships.

And to discover and then use a lot of different strategies for recruitment. Testing was one of our most effective for you in getting youth in the door. And then really thinking a little bit about how you need to outreach to different subpopulations if you have intended to serve key subpopulations of young people.

So let's go on and look at that first one about identifying the ideal candidate. That's the next slide. So this I think has taken some work with the program partners, to really sit down and have some time and discuss and brainstorm the ideal candidate. And be really specific about what you think youth will need to succeed in your program.

Do they need certain skill levels? Do you want them to have demonstrated some interest or facility in IT before? Do you want them to have prior training? Do you want them to have certain competencies? Do you want them to have recommendations from other people or programs? Do you want them to have demonstrated they have consistently attended or completed other programs in the past, even if these were work experiences or summer experiences? What do you need to succeed in your program?

And I think it's important to be as specific as possible. And once you do that, I think it's also important to brainstorm lists of factors that might get in the way. What barriers or circumstances might youth bring with them into the program that would limit their success? And these youth just may be youth that aren't quite ready for your program and so they need some onramps or they need some further support, they need some coaching, they need some services in order to get to your program and be successful.

And once you have that determined, then you need to talk a little bit about whether there are other programs in the community that you think could suggest or refer students who are ready. You don't want people to come in your door, not quite be ready, leaves in pain. So it's good to have some sense of what programs and services provide onramps so that young people can get what they need and then go on to your program and be successful.

And you'll use that information to be as clear and specific as you possibly can be with your outreach partners on what kind of a candidate you're looking for. And use this to educate them on what youth might need more supportive services in order to be ready to take advantage of the program. So those recruitment partners will be sending you good candidates and also be working with you if there's groups of young people or specific young people who aren't quite ready and that they can help in supporting them to get ready to be successful in your program.

And you know, no matter how careful you are about thinking about this beforehand, you're going to be surprised. All my programs that I have been coaching have made some guesses about the ideal candidate. They have tried it out in some of the first program cohorts, and then they've had to test this along the way and adjust.

So one program I can think of in particular, two young people who had been formerly homeless and had some stability in their housing and thought they would be ready to take on a new program, and found out that the length of time between when a young person finds stability in housing and when they really actually feel like they have firm ground under them to participate in a program and not just be settling themselves, was a lot longer than they predicted. And so they've had to really differentiate the population of young people coming into the program because their first population was just not as ready as they thought they would be.

And as you go through these program cycles, you keep testing and testing, and I think what you get is a much more specific and realistic set of requirements for young people, who you want for your program and who you have confidence will be as successful as they possibly can be.

So let's go on to the next slide. This is a resource, which I will talk about a little bit later, from a school district in south Texas who ran a dropout prevention program for young people who had left school and come back to that. And if you check on their website – and I will reference it later – they have a really good discussion about how they identify potential students. They have a great one-pager on who their ideal candidate is, which is really good. And then they have – they talked about how they recruit eligible students. So it's a really good resource to look at. And we'll go on to the next slide.

So once you have your ideal candidate, you have the specifics lined out, you have some information for partners, then you can try to determine what the best partners are who will help you get youth in the door.

So for example, many of my sites have started with system partners because they've had such specific populations of young people that they wanted to serve. And so they started with state or local agencies that may serve youth with disabilities – support youth with disabilities – or they've looked at local offices that are supporting youth transitioning from foster care.

They've worked with probation offices – local probation offices – to recruit youth who've been involved with the juvenile justice system. Or they typically have reached out to a broad array of community-based agencies that may serve these youth and also kind of a broader youth population that falls between the ages of 17 and 26 or 29.

And sites that have reached out and gotten the interest of leaders in these systems at the local levels, have also found that once they have the interest of leaders, they actually need to penetrate the agency deep enough to reach direct care workers – like case managers, coaches, social workers – and provide them with very specific information on the kind of candidates they're looking for. Because these are really the people that, if they have information in hand, can send you the best and most ready candidates.

And all of that, of course, is time consuming. And many of the program people that I have been working with have learned that this kind of broad outreach is really hard and they don't always get the numbers of young people they want for their first cohort. Some of this I think involves staff's natural reticence to refer youth to a new program, until they know that it's a go and they know if it's good – a strong program that delivers results.

And I think across the board, some recruitment partners are just going to be slow to refer youth until you've had a cohort or two, until they know it's a program that's effective and will meet their young people's needs. Hard to swim against that kind of a stream. But once you get up and running and have some success and start creating some buzz, you'll get more referrals from these partners. And you'll probably get closer to the dream that everybody has, which is that you get full referrals just by using word-of-mouth.

But I think another way to deal with the problem of maybe agencies being slow to refer youth is to try to work a little more upstream and reach out to school systems, if you are working with youth in that population group, so that you can interest principals and you can get in to talk with school counselors and students before they finish high school. And then that way, your program staff can meet with youth ahead of time who may be looking for this kind of training opportunity after high school, build relationships, and then you have youth who are just ready to come to you after they finish high school.

So these slides that you're looking at show good examples, I think, from the sites that are here and on the phone, about some of the most important referral partners. So you'll see organizations like Goodwill and vocational rehab department, United Way, adult education programs; and even local colleges whose counselors may know of students who are in general programs of study and are struggling and might benefit from a shorter term, more accelerated, more structured training program.

And the next slide shows more examples. Again, adult education schools and achievement centers. I wanted to make a point here, though, that for those of you who may be in cities or regions that have got some youth-focused collaborative efforts going on – cradle-to-career initiatives, dropout prevention partnerships, opportunity incentive funds, partnerships, gang prevention initiatives, that kind of – those kind of efforts that really have infrastructure in place, those broad multi-sector group of people coming together to try to address the needs of youth. These are great places to link into because you have access to so many partners who will be interested in your program and can help with referrals.

OK. Next slide.

So once you get these partnerships, it takes a lot of care and feeding. I think partners need a lot – besides needing clear information about the program – and I think I've made that point – and your preferred candidates, they also need to know important timelines. They want you to follow up and tell them what happens with youth that they referred to you. I know that referral partners can get very annoyed if they send you youth and they don't know what happened. And they appreciate kudos and credit for the work of helping you recruit young people.

And I think finding regular ways to keep in touch with your partners so they won't forget you're there, and appreciating their role and assistance in keeping the flow of youth going is really important to maintaining partnerships once you build them. I think one of the things that the program leads have told me again and again is it's incredible how quickly partners can forget you're there, because there's just such a welfare (sic) of information; particularly in big places, less in rural.

And if you have any hiccups when you start – so the youth might be coming back and reporting that something's a little chaotic, or something that they thought was there wasn't there – then that makes people a little hesitant too. So it really does – clear flow of communication with your partners is really important. And it's also a lot of work and part of the work of building a new program and making sure you have a clear pipeline of young people who want to join the program and will be successful if they're there.

So next slide. You want to use a multi-faceted approach to recruitment. There's lots of places where I've seen them design a flier and put announcements on the radio and probably not as helpful as doing things that are more multi-faceted and more sophisticated. So we have so much social media out there. And I think it's almost an axiom that youth don't like Facebook; they like Instagram. But there's a lot more than just that. So I think you really need to figure out what kind of social media are your young people on, and you want to penetrate that social media.

You want to construct some very powerful and intriguing outreach material. And I will talk about that in a minute. You don't want to just adapt materials that might be for your recruitment partners and for adults and expect that that will work with youth.

And you want to differentiate your message for different populations. So if you have youth that have some learning challenges or you have individuals with disabilities or individuals with prior records, you want to speak to why this program is good for them, structured for them, and will help them address their needs and achieve their ambitions.

So next slide. I'm going to go a little deeper into all these things. So let's look at the sample.

So this is the point about taking advantage of social media. So Twitter and Instagram are really good venues through which to communicate about your program. One point is to use relevant existing hashtags or create a new one that's pertinent and might even create a buzz. Encourage young people, even as they are joining or in the first weeks of your program, to use social media to share with others what's going well in the program and to provide information about the program.

You might consider some paid placement on some of these platforms that appeal to different audiences. Many of them have really good data analytics so they can really appeal to certain populations of young people, even a certain age group of young people. And you can use all sorts of Twitter chats or – to share your message with recruitment partners and with young people.

And I would say that when you're both designing the social media campaign and deciding on what social media you want to use, and also when you're doing your outreach materials – and I'll come to this in a minute – your very best advisors are youth and youth leaders. They know how to do this. They know what works. They know what their peers use. They know what messages will appeal. So if you could have a youth advisory group that can assist you on your recruitment approach and your recruitment method, it will help you so much.

Next slide.

I think these are a little hard to see; you might want to blow them up later and take a look at them. But this was my example of how fliers need to be differentiated for different audiences. So this is an example of a flier you can find when you just google fliers in your search engine.

This is an announcement for summer youth employment program in Prince George's County. And if you look at some of the language, you'll find that it is – there's a lot of opening language about this is a partnership between youth, system folks, et cetera and so on. Not going to be interesting for youth. May really be interesting for high-level system leaders who then might say, oh, I want my people to pay attention to this; I want my people to recruit for this. And I think you would need a different flier for direct care workers and yet a different flier for young people.

So don't design for a certain audience and then try to use it for everybody, because it just doesn't work very well.

The next slide shows a different kind of flier and this was really developed for young people. And it is a youth radio program, very jazzy, in San Francisco, the same kind of jazzy program I think many of you are trying to design. So you can see that both through the messages and the use of graphics – and again, I would encourage you to look at these in more depth because they're really interesting and I think that they illustrate the points I'm making. This is a different kind of flier and it is built to appeal to youth. And youth have helped design it and youth take it out and spread the word.

Next slide. I guess there's one last thing I want to say about recruitment materials, and that's don't undersell your program, but be careful you don't oversell it either. I mean, I have a history with – I have one daughter who through her years found I don't know how many programs that she thought looked really great. And the recruitment material looked really great. And then she got to the program and it just wasn't anything like the recruitment flier had promised. And there's a trail of lost money in my family from enrolling her in programs that just didn't deliver what they promised and she didn't stick with them.

So don't under promise, but don't over promise either. So deliver what you say you're going to deliver, I guess, is the message there.

So just a couple of practical tools and resources that I think you might find interesting. Again, I take them from south Texas and so this was a dropout prevention program that blended finishing high school with starting college. And so there's a really nice outline of the model on the website. There are a lot of resources for how to get your ideal candidate and do recruitment. There's a flier, and this particular flier – if you click on the link and take a look at it – it's a very nice flier and designed to appeal to youth.

But what I loved about this particular program is they had such a wonderful recruitment message. And they put it on billboards and they put it on fliers and they put it in churches – they shared it with churches and youth organizations, 4-Hs and other places around the county, which is fairly rural. And the message was, "Dropped out of high school? Start college today." And I thought that was just a wonderful example of a really powerful and appealing message, both for parents and students, as well as people who might work directly with youth and want to refer youth to the program.

MS. CADWALLADER: Terry, I'm sorry to jump in, but we're just running really short on time and so I might ask that we actually maybe speed through into the next poll question, if that's OK with you?

MS. GROBE: Yes. I think I'm done.

MS. CADWALLADER: OK. And I apologize. Thank you so much. That was wonderful. And so Danielle, would you like to go ahead and lead our next poll question, please?

MS. KITTRELL: Absolutely. So moving on to the next question, we'd like to know which recruitment strategy have you found to be most effective for your TechHire program to date? Is it word-of-mouth, printed collateral, social media, your partnerships, or something different? Please let us know.

(Pause.) All right. Word of mouth is winning, and the partnerships. Awesome. We love to hear that. And we'll give you a few more seconds to move on. (Pause.) Sure. And if you vote for partnerships, could you please type in the chat box which partners you're referring to and let us know? We'd love to hear that.

All right. So we can move on. I'll pass it back to Terry.

MS. GROBE: I think I'm not –

MS. CADWALLADER: Yeah. We're actually going to pass it over to Lucretia who will now highlight a couple of examples of what works especially for adult populations. So Lucretia, take it away.

LUCRETIA MURPHY: Sure. And again, it's great to be with you all this afternoon. Really looking forward to the breakout groups too, to learn a little bit more about what people are learning in their sites.

You see on your screen a few bullet points about examples for crafting your message for the adult population. And I think Terry's point about the importance of partnerships is really well taken and I would say the same thing for your adult population.

One thing I would emphasize, though, is the example of using your own organization as a referral, outreach and recruitment site. So we've worked, for example, with an organization actually in a rural community. The organization serves as their – a facilitator of a lot of things. They do they help services and community outreach and recruitment, they do some early childhood Head Start facilitation of outreach and recruitment.

But they were also trying to connect their work to bridge to workforce training programs. And they had reached out to all their workforce partners, but they also took a lot of care in their own organization to make sure that everyone in the organization knew about the workforce program; knew about the eligibility requirements; knew who their contact colleagues were within the organization who were running that program, in case there were any specific questions; and also came up with a protocol for each department to be able to crosswalk what they were doing – so for example, the folks who were working in the Head Start, how are we as the Head Start program going to be able to talk to parents who may fit the requirements, be interested in this, and make sure they get connected to our colleagues in the organization?

So I think that's an example that people can think about. Sometimes we overlook the fact that within your own organization or outreach and recruitment, there are people in your own organization who may know someone who's eligible for the program. They can also be a source of recruitment and outreach. So that's one area that I think would be really helpful to capitalize on.

This can be true for your partners, as Terry mentioned. You want to make sure the information is filtering down to the level of case manager. But you can also provide some quick talking points for people in different parts of the organization as well. But I would just emphasize that one example about thinking of your own organization as a source for recruitment and outreach because that can also be a critical link.

Just because we're short on time, I'm not going to go through all of these. But they're there and we can definitely talk about them as we do the breakouts in the small groups. But if you could advance the next slide, I'll pick up on one for individuals with criminal records.

I think again, partnerships will be key. When you're working with folks who have criminal records, I think it can also be really important to think about the partners who have connections to the criminal system, either because they're part of the court system itself, or because they have more connections to folks who are going through criminal records and criminal supports; for example, community-based organizations who help people think about how to address criminal records from a legal perspective. Or if you have partners who work on connecting people with health services, to keep those partners in mind as well, specifically.

But I think another place that can be sometimes overlooked, for those of you who are in close proximity or have relationships to your prisons or county jails, is that they do have a period of time where folks are working on transition planning for people who are transitioning out of the system. And if you can make contact with your wardens, if you can make contact with your probation or parole, they can tell you if they start to do this work at the prison within six months of release, then nine months of release, then three months of release.

Building those relationships, understanding that timeline so that your work can become part of the transition planning conversation for eligible partners, it'd be another way to get connected early on and make sure that you are making really good connections and can do a warm handoff as people come out.

So for example, we work with one community college, they're very embedded into the prison system but they had never been invited to a transition planning conversation. So what they started to do was just to reach out to those partners that they knew were invited – the parole, probation – so that they could start to get their information into the transition planning process. Over time, they were able to build a partnership through which they could actually have some of their recruitment team actually joining in on those transition planning conversations.

But they started by making sure they had clear materials, some coaching, some conversations with the partners in the transition planning, so that they could get a jump on people coming on. Because as you all know, when folks are leaving there are so many things that they're responsible for to meet their parole or probation and any other supervision, as well as finding a house, getting reconnected with the family. Beginning these conversations at that time period can be really, really helpful.

So I think that'll be the quick example that I'll share here, just in the interest of time. Let me pass it over to Michelle now and we can keep going through and get to the breakout.

MICHELLE SCHULTZ: All right. Good afternoon, everyone. So our TechHire project focuses on youth and young adults as the population. So IT and health care are our targeted industries.

We have a lot of partners in the region. CareerSource Tampa Bay is a regional workforce board for Hillsborough County, which Tampa is located. We also partner with CareerSource Pinellas in an adjoining county. And we have the same CEO and a lot of shared staff, so we're able to share resources between both regions in that effort.

Our partners in the grant are the local training providers, the local community colleges, the school district, the adult and technical education centers, as well as the University of South Florida. We rely on our community partners to assist with outreach both to the participants and the employers.

Tampa Innovation Alliance is an employer industry group that's been very helpful for us, as well as Tampa Bay Technology Forum; they're another industry group based in the technology industry, with over 300 members of the large tech companies in the area.

And then as well as University Area Community Developments; they provide one of our trainings on CompTIA+ as well as assist with outreach in the community in addition to the economic development organizations in the region. So it's really a region-wide effort in order to outreach to these individuals.

To date we have an online application. To date we have over 3,000 individuals that have started that application and shown interest. So that's a huge response since we've received the grant and opened it around mid-August is when that online application was opened.

So some of our outreach and recruitment strategies that have worked really well for us to target the youth and also gain incumbent workers, we've really found that you need to know your audience. You really need to target their habits and interests, where they go and what they do, to be able to locate those individuals and find the right location for that.

Our incumbent workers are recruited through our employment partners, which are IBM for the IT side and then BayCare. So these are frontline incumbent workers that have been identified by their supervisors as being able to benefit from the training, so we rely on our employer partners for that.

For outreach in the community for the youth and young adults, we really utilize all of our resources, as well as conduct research to find the best place for these individuals. We have a dedicated outreach staff member. She is full-time conducting outreach either in the community, going to community events, looking for community organizations to partner with, promoting all of our services and programs – but of course primarily TechHire.

In addition to being really engaging and open, she's really able to connect with the employers, whether it's an employer industry event or a community outreach event to find the individuals in order to refer them to the website to go through our application process.

We also use our online employment database. In Florida it's called Employ Florida. And we can look for individuals that have registered and have an interest in IT and be able to outreach to them directly. So that's been a great resource for them as well.

And then also, the resources of our One-Stop centers, the customers that are coming in and looking for assistance, meeting with case managers and other staff through workshops, career counselors, things like that. They're always referred to the TechHire program if they are within that age range and show that interest in the program.

Some of our outreach and recruitment approaches. We've tried to be creative because of these populations; that's been mentioned in the previous presentation. We really have clear outreach tools. We use fliers, fact sheets; we have it on our website. We use social media, Twitter, Facebook, things like that. Our marketing staff is very young, as well as our outreach coordinator. New college graduates, definitely able to connect to the individuals that we're trying to target, has been really successful for us.

We also do targeted outreach through email blasts, events. Again, finding those events that individuals within that age range and interest are going to frequent. We also have our educational partners send out email blasts, fliers, postings, things like that, for individuals that may frequent that location and be eligible and interested in the program.

For broad outreach, just posting fliers at businesses that our population may frequent, including coffee shops; barber shops and hair style salons have actually been pretty successful and kind of more creative businesses in that regard.

For structured outreach, we really try to advance our partnerships and employer engagements. We work with industry groups – the Tampa Bay Technology Forum that I mentioned earlier, and also Tampa Innovation Alliance. They both have a large employer base, where they're able to provide the resources through blasts on their website, social media, things like that.

We also work with community development organizations for the same things. Also, our economic development organizations provide outreach as well through hosting at events, website, things like that. A lot of social media.

And the same with our education partners. Either direct referrals or just educating their staff of the resources that are available, educating their technology instructors for individuals that may meet the criteria for this program.

And then as well as other community partners, like libraries, the community centers, the businesses that I mentioned, faith-based organizations, the examples that were provided in earlier slides.

So that's really just an overview of kind of the things that have worked for us. And we continue to have success as far as individuals being interested in the program. And then just moving through and hopefully reaching the individuals that we haven't. We'll keep trying new things to be able to find those, hopefully, individuals that we can assist with training and ultimately employment.

MS. CADWALLADER: Thank you so much, Michelle. Those were really great examples of the partnerships that you have and the outreach, the strategies that you're utilizing to identify your target participants.

I'll turn it over now to Sara, who will talk about our breakout groups that we're going to put you guys together so that you can communicate and do some peer networking. Sara?

MS. LAMBACK: Great. Thank you so much, Ayreen. Next slide, please.

So I know a number of you indicated which group you'd like to be included in during your – as you signed up for the webinar. So we have three groups; one that's dedicated to youth and young adults age 17 through 24; another dedicated to young adults age 25 through 29; and then a third group dedicated to special populations, including individuals with limited English proficiency, individuals with disabilities, and those with criminal records.

So for those of you who didn't sign up to a group, we've assigned you to one. And you'll have an opportunity to really engage with some of the other TechHire grantees on the topics of outreach and discussion.

And before we move into the breakout groups, which will be about a 10-minute discussion, I did want to just give everyone who's on the line a quick heads-up, but we probably will go over time by about five minutes or so. It shouldn't be longer than that. But we understand that some of you may have to drop off right at 2:00, but we did want to allow that full 10 minutes for discussion. So just a heads-up.

And we will go ahead and move into breakout groups now.

MS. CASERTANO: All right. So in just a moment we'll be transitioning into breakout rooms, and you'll be placed into either breakout room one, breakout room two, or breakout room three. To figure out which breakout room you're in, you're going to see visually on your screen that you are either in breakout room one, two, or three.

If you're in breakout room one, you're going to press 1## on your phone's keypad so you can hear what's happening in breakout room one, allowing you to actively participate in the conversation. If you are in breakout room two, you're going to press 2## to hear what's happening in breakout room two and participate in that conversation. And if you're in breakout room three, you're going to press 3## on your phone's keypad.

So again, we're about to start breakout rooms. If you're in breakout room one, you're going to press 1##. If you're in breakout room two, you'll press 2##. And if you're in breakout room three, you'll press 3## on your phone's keypad.

All right. So we're going to transition into breakout rooms now. And have a great time, everyone.

MS. CASERTANO: OK. Looks like we have everyone back. (Audio break.)

MS. CADWALLADER: Oh, great. Well, thank you so much, everyone. This is Ayreen again. Want to thank you for participating in the breakout rooms. I think in the interest of time, if there is someone from breakout room one that would like to share what – sort of what was discussed in your room?

MS. GROBE: Great. This is Terry; I'll do it. I mean, we had four or five really great ideas. The two that I'll mention is working kind of the back end of the college pipeline. So when young people are finishing community college or even four-year colleges and they may not have some specific skills to get settled in the labor market, to offer this opportunity to young people. Because a lot of young people are doing that, finishing college and then going back to skill training programs.

And then there was another really good example of working with employers, so that you talk to employers about people who are in entry-level positions but would like to get more firmly established in the company; or have tried to get in the door and interview, but didn't have enough skills. And picking up those young people and offering them opportunities so they can go back to those workplaces once they're skilled, and get good jobs.

MS. CADWALLADER: Great. And then so you – (inaudible) – the question on outreach with rural communities in your breakout room. Can you talk a little bit more about that?

MS. GROBE: Yes. Thank you very much. So we were really talking there about working with adult education programs and how they've been such a good source of referrals. But the idea about also talking to college partners as well as adult education partners was one of the rural strategies mentioned. So that when people finish higher education, either two- or four-year, they may still be in need of training programs and those colleges will refer young people to you.

MS. CADWALLADER: Great. All right. We can transition to breakout room two.

MS. LAMBACK: Hi. This is Sara. I think we had some audio-related challenges in breakout room two, so I don't have much to report out. I do know that social media and the role that social media can play is one thing that kind of came up in some of the discussion as being particularly helpful but also sometimes particularly challenging.

MS. CADWALLADER: And this is Ayreen. It looks like we did have a grantee identify that partnering with local colleges is now going to be a priority moving forward. And another grantee that talked about using job boards for their recruitment strategies.

A policy type of question did come up in this group that I'd like to share with everybody. It looks like they were using the WIOA definition for the target population of youth and young adults. And I wanted to let everyone know that the WIOA definition – that the TechHire definition of youth and young adults is much more broad, and that there are additional supportive services that you might be able to provide in the TechHire grant that you may not be able to provide under WIOA.

So I do want everyone to really know that you don't have to limit yourself in aligning with the WIOA definition. Again, this is a very different grant program under different legislation.

We can move to breakout room three.

MS. : Great. So for breakout room three, I think in terms of what resonated, there were comments that folks had, what they would take with them. One of them was to coach where potential participants are, instead of having them come to you. So I think that was a great one.

Strategies that people are using echoed the poll question. A lot of people were using word-of-mouth, but also building relationships with high schools, counselors, college and high school counselors, working with their WIOA and adult ed programs, and collaborating with their youth centers and their young councils to think about what could be not only outreach strategies but material for those as well. I think for – oh, and also using faith-based, connections with local churches.

And in terms of questions for the group, I do just want to share there was an interest in being able to connect with other rural areas to talk about some of these outreach strategies, as well as how to really get folks engaged who are a little bit concerned about the level of commitment and also how they would access and make it through the FAFSA process. So folks have strategies on that.

And then there was a question which I'm thinking that the DOL can help with, about how to work with folks who have expiring work authorization during the course of training, and how folks have been able to either move them more quickly or make sure they're – they can be supported through that.

So that's it, breakout room three. Thanks, everybody, for your participation in this discussion.

MS. CADWALLADER: – over to 10 minutes past and we do have some other questions that came in earlier. But I just – sorry – I wanted to quickly address. Let's see if we can get those questions back for a second.

I guess while we do that, let's go ahead and if, Sara, you can talk about some of our upcoming TechHire TA – (inaudible).

MS. LAMBACK: Sure. Thank you so much, Ayreen. So there's a lot planned both for the remainder of May, which is not too long right now, but also the upcoming month of June. I know that some of you all have begun conducting the grantee needs assessment, in collaboration with your coach. Those needs assessments will continue through the month of June and grantees will also hold their regular monthly coaching call.

In addition, we are planning several TA activities during June. There is a performance reporting webinar with – for which we'll share additional information very soon. Our first performance reporting webinar. And then also, the launch of the online TechHire community of practice, which is going to be a really great way for you all to engage with each other on a really excellent platform and kind of collaborate and share resources online.

And then finally, we are also planning a peer learning call probably late in the month of June. And more information on that is forthcoming as well.

MS. CADWALLADER: Great. Thank you so much for that, Sara. And if we could again just go back to addressing some of the questions that came in. There was one about the clarification for TechHire definitions. Does this go for the definition of people with disabilities? And if you could expand on your question by sending an email to the TechHire mailbox, we would be able to handle that offline.

There was an earlier concern about – and we addressed this in our breakout room too – finding candidates that are available who – certainly this target group need to work, and that they need to be supporting themselves during training. And again, I just want to encourage everyone that this is the purpose of the H-1B TechHire grant program is that there are paid work experience training internships, apprenticeship opportunities, OJT, really ways that you could subsidize and provide a little bit of wages to help grantees go through training and still earn a sort of a wage.

So I really encourage you to go back to your training design and really look at what you have and what you have to offer to your candidates. Really look at your supportive services and make sure that you are able to continue to support them as they go through training. Again, this is the main purpose.

And then related to a question on internships, there was a question where the grant does not allow us to hire interns on campus or at any city government agency. And this is a reference to the prohibition of providing OJT to public sector organizations. And so there are no restrictions on the types of internships that you could provide to your individuals and the different types of organizations that they could have an internship opportunity with. So if you have further clarifications on that, please send an email to the TechHire mailbox.

With that, we're at the tail end of our presentation. We hope that this information was really useful for you. The TechHire grantee mailbox is available here, at TechHire@dol.gov. And again, you can use this email address to reach federal project officers, the national office, and our technical assistance providers with JFF.

And with that, if I could turn it over to Jen?

(END)