**WorkforceGPS**

**Transcript of Webinar**

**H-1B America's Promise Grants Technical Assistance Launch Webinar**

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LAURA CASERTANO: Now I'm going to turn things over to your moderator today, Gregory Scheib, America's Promise Program Lead and works with analysts for the U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration. Gregory?

GREGORY SCHEIB: Thanks, Laura. It's really great to have everybody on the call today. We really appreciate you joining us, and we're certainly excited to be kicking off our TA support on the America's Promise Grant. Also I'd just like to thank all of you grantees for all of the feedback and questions that you've already brought to us in these first six months of the grant, and working with us as we tidy up some of the initial grant, little bits and pieces as we go.

We're taking a look quickly at the polling questions. And we have our results from there. Look at that. Just a few, slowly – there we go. Laura, can you open up to see all the responses?

MS. CASERTANO: You should see it on your screen right now. Do you not see it?

MR. SCHEIB: Yeah. I see it. Thank you. We're just trying to get a sense of who's on there. I see a lot of program directors. I think we had a bunch of authorized representatives up at the top as well, a few anyway. But that's looking good. This looks like the right group of people on here. We want to make sure everybody knows what kind of TA resources you're going to have available to you over the next three and a half years that we've got left on this grant, give or take a month.

But anyway, let's go ahead and just dive in onto our webinar. Today you're going to be hearing from me, Greg. I'm the lead on the America's Promise Grant. We're also going to be hearing from my colleague, Steve Canger, and our TA High Impact partners, Susan Shorters and Erika Humphrey. Now at this point I'd like to go ahead and just hand our presentation over to Steven, who's going to tell us a little bit about America's Promise.

STEVEN CANGER: Thanks, Greg. Over the course of the call today we'll be providing an overview of planned H-1B America's Promise programmatic activities, introduce the TA team, which includes coaches and subject matter experts, and what their roles will be for you, the grantees. We will be providing an overview of the coaching process, including coach grantee matches. And finally, we will be giving you a heads-up on the upcoming America's Promise events and activities.

Moving on to the agenda for this afternoon. We will be starting with an overview of the America's Promise Grant program. We will then have a deeper look in the programmatic technical assistance that will be provided during the life of your grant. We will discuss upcoming events and activities, and end today's call answering some of the questions you may have posed. Please remember that if you have any questions throughout today's call, please type it in the chat box, and we will do our best to answer them throughout the webinar.

So we have our second polling question of the day, and it is, in what stage of implementation is your America's Promise Project? Are you in the preparation stage, key staff are still being hired, identification of key policies and procedures, the early implementation stage, staff is hired, and initial participants recruited for service delivery, the full implementation stage, your project is fully implemented and staff are providing skillful service delivery, or other? If so, please provide a description of the box provided. Take a few seconds to make a selection that best describes where your organization currently stands, and we'll go over the results shortly.

All right. So it looks like most of the grantees are either in the early implementation stage or preparation stage. And as time goes on, we hope that you'll be going to that full implementation. Next slide, please. I'm going to turn it back over to our program lead, Greg Scheib. Greg, take it away.

MR. SCHEIB: Thank you, Steven. So I'm just going to – we're going to go through just a few little facts about America's Promise that you guys all might find a little bit interesting. This map up here gives you a sense of the national presence of the grant, which is great. It's actually quite diverse in all across the country. So things of note about the grant, as you may know, there's 23 regional workforce partnerships throughout the country that serves 28 states. Of our grantee, 11 of you are educator and training providers, seven of which are community colleges. And in fact I know many of you are also potentially have been or are currently a TAACCCT grantee, which is great. We like to see the continuity there.

Nine workforce investment boards, or systems, are presented as long as three business-related organizations, or – (inaudible) – intermediaries working in the workforce system. The AP Grant anticipates serving approximately 21,000 participants over the course of the grant over the next three and a half years or so. And as you know, our three target populations are unemployed, underemployed, and incumbent workers, but within those broad groups, the grants themselves are serving veteran, individuals with criminal records, refugees who have eligibility to work in the U.S., low-income individuals, individuals with limited English proficiency, and a number of underrepresented populations throughout the country.

Steven is going to take it over at this point and a few more insights about the grant.

MR. CANGER: Thanks, Greg. The 23 America's Promise grantees are covering a wide variety of H-1B industries. Fifteen grantees are providing training and advanced manufacturing. Twelve are providing training in the information technology field. Seven grantees are providing training in healthcare, and we also have grantees providing training in financial services, Aerospace and Blue Technology, and STEM occupations. The America's Promise grantees are also delivering their training in a number of ways including on the job training, paid work experience and internships, registered apprenticeships, and incumbent working training.

We will be working with our TA team to link grantees with similar training designs to allow for in-depth pure networking throughout the life of the grant.

And I'm going to turn it over to Greg to bring up the next polling question.

MR. SCHEIB: Sure. So we've got one other opportunity here for a polling question. What ETA grant do you currently have or have previously managed? So you've got some of the options here. Is this your first ETA grant? Have you done any other H-1B grants? Have you worked on the TAACCCT grant program? American Apprenticeship Grant, YouthBuild, or other youth programs, or other ETA grants through the Department of Labor, so just take a moment because we're all kind of curious to see where this all comes out.

I can already see quite a few of you are either current or former TAACCCT grantees. And I see even some YouthBuild on there. No apprenticeship. And a fair percentage of you, this is your first ETA grant, so it's good to – (inaudible) – TA component will certainly be – hopefully a help to you in terms of navigating the program delivery and the things that come up over the course of the lifecycle of the grant, so that's great to know.

And those of you that had TAACCCT grants before, you know a lot of this will be the same, but there's many things that are different about the America's Promise Grant, so that's one of the key pieces of our TA is to help you navigate what is the same and what is different across these various grants.

Now at this point, I am going to turn this over to our colleague, Susan Shorter, who's going to walk us through what we can expect from our TA menu and TA offerings going forward.

SUSAN SHORTERS: Great. Thank you so much, Greg, and thanks to all of you who are on the phone. As Greg said, my name is Susan Shorters. I am president and CEO of High Impact Partners, the TA contractor that you all have selected to provide the technical assistance, and we are absolutely delighted and honored to be able to be in this position to deliver TA to the grantees of America's Promise.

Our TA team originally comprised of several organizations. HIP is the prime contractor. We have a partner down on the side of your screen on this slide you will see the American Association of Community Colleges, AACC. Our team also includes the International Economic Development Council, or IEDC, as well as the National Association of Workforce Boards, or NAWB.

So our team is certainly thrilled to be able to deliver TA to you. And we would like to say that our support is really of the program office as well as the FPOs, and we work in collaboration and concert with them in order to deliver TA, and really for the success of the America's Promise Grant program and grantee.

So I like to call this slide the "why" slide. It really is why we're delivering the technical assistance to the grantees of America's Promise, and it really is to support you in delivering these core program elements and meeting these core program components.

And they're listed for you here, but this regional workforce partnership, the sectoral strategy, and having that integrated in particular engagement in employer and industry partnership, outreach, recruitment, and assessment strategies, which are so important of course, employment and training strategies, which are key, and integrated supportive services, job placement strategies, and the completed project work.

All eight are key components to the America's Promise Grant program, and we are actually going to be supporting you in TA delivery and strategy that will help you to achieve these areas.

So now with that, this really helps us to find out where you are right now. So in terms of your America's Promise partnership area, in what area is your America's Promise partnership particularly strong? If you could answer the polling question there, we would certainly appreciate it. You have four options. Are you particularly strong in employer engagement, in developing and maintaining strategic partnership, in outreach and recruitment, or in another area? And if it's other, please let us know what that is.

We're looking at the results coming in now. It looks like a lot of you are very strong – the majority actually are strong in employer engagement in maintaining strategic partnerships, which is excellent. Thank you. Just waiting for the polls – for you all to finish the poll here, and we'll move on to the next slide. Thank you.

So I call this slide the "what" slide. What TA are we providing to you? And it really is in several areas. It's in training, organizational development, case management and coordination across your organization, and in several strategies for enhancing and improving outreach and recruitment of your participants.

So again, the HIP team works in partnership with the Department of Development of – DSI, sorry. And we actually support the program office as well as the FPOs, and our goal is really the success of this program. And in terms of the actual specific initiatives, continuing on to the next slide, we're going to specialize in success strategies in particular with this for the target populations that you will be supporting with your grant program.

And we'll also be working with you and supporting you, informing, and maintaining the relationships with employers as well as the workforce development entities, and certainly post-secondary education, those institutions and those relationships and expanding placement opportunities for your participants.

Now how are we going to do this? The TA topics that we are going to actually support you on in terms of our deployment and delivery of TA will be done in a number of ways. Its webinars, we're certainly going to have webinars that are going to feature a variety of subject matter experts on a variety of topics that are really critical to this program. We're also going to provide monthly technical assistance coaching. You'll learn very shortly that you all have an assigned – each grantee has an assigned TA coach that will be working directly with you and be providing the individual coaching to you.

We're also going to have small-group events, because we value the peer-to-peer learning that is so important and critical in these programs so that you get to learn from each other. An on-line community of practice, so you'll have a place to share information. And I already mentioned the peer-to-peer activities and networking. And then case studies in lessons learned. We really want to document what is happening in your grant programs and look at what are success strategies and successful practices and lessons learned. And then the in-person grantee convenings where we will be bringing you together in person for workshops and more networking amongst each other.

So with that, we'd like to do another poll and hear from you, which is so helpful to us. Which of the following types of America's Promise peer learning group are you most interested in? We have a number of choices. Peer groups that are based on industry, those based on target populations, or those based on training strategies, or something else. And of course if it's something else let us know.

And it looks like the results are pouring in. Thank you so much. The majority is looking like it's interested in industry, groups based on industry. And we do have – a few are looking at group B, based on target population and a few on the training strategies as well. Thank you. We'll give you a few more minutes, or seconds rather, to respond to the poll.

Now our next slide, I really want to share with you lastly that our approach to TA, it's really relational. It's based on relationship with the grantees and rapport, and that relationship drive responsive TA. And our responsive TA is really listening to grantees' needs and finding out where you are with your grant program and also being able to provide technical assistance based on the phases of the grant that you're in.

And really that involves the coaching calls that your coaches will be providing with you on a monthly basis. We'll have virtual TA events. We'll also have peer calls, and these groups will be either with a coach across their grantee, or it could be multiple approaches across several sets of grantees, depending on the topic area and the need.

The convenings, both in-person and virtual, and the community of practice and discussion boards, which again give you the opportunity to upload and share information as well as view information from your peers. And then your quarterly narrative reports, which we will use to really see where you are with the grant and so that we can better serve and support you in this effort.

And finally, before we discuss the community of practice that you can use for your peer-to-peer learning, one last poll question here before I turn it over. What are your three biggest programmatic concerns right now? Developing the regional partnerships, the sectoral strategies, career pathways, outreach and recruitment and the assessment strategies that you need to implement, or integrated supportive services, or something else. And please specify if it's other.

We're watching the results come in now. Thank you. It looks like we have a majority with the recruitment outreach and assessment strategies. Second to that is the integrated supportive services followed by the regional partnerships.

So as a TA team, we will be helping you and supporting you in those efforts and on those topics, those with the coaching as well as the peer-to-peer and other deployment strategies that I named earlier.

And with that, I'd actually like to turn it over to Annalisa LaPara Silva, who will discuss the America's Promise community of practice that we've developed for you. Thank you so much.

MR. SCHEIB: It's actually not Annalisa. It's me, Greg, here again.

MS. SHORTERS: Oh, Greg.

MR. SCHEIB: But I can speak to the community of practice a little bit. One of the components that you all have access to is through our Workforce GPS system. We are currently in the process of developing an America's Promise community of practice site where you will be able to access best practices. We'll be able to facilitate some peer-to-peer things as well as getting monthly updates about either events or upcoming topics, things that are going to be of interest to you.

I would also encourage those of you – many of you may already be on Workforce GPS and are using it now, but I would encourage those of you that may not have an account to go ahead and set one up now. There's already currently a lot of good resources on there, and that's going to be another avenue for you to tap into to get relevant and timely information about America's Promise Grant.

The COP itself is actually under development, and we'll certainly be letting people know as soon as that is up and running and ready to be accessed in the next few months.

Now I'm actually going to turn this back – I shouldn't say back. But I'm going to turn this over to Erika Humphrey, who is our lead on the TA coaching efforts of our TA. And Erika is going to introduce you to the coaches that you'll be working with, Erika.

ERIKA HUMPHREY: Thank you. Hi, as Greg already mentioned, my name is Erika Humphrey, and I am the team lead for the America's Promise Grant. And our TA coaching strategies are designed to ensure that your organization receives ongoing support, targeted assistance, rich resources, and contextual to meet its need, the AP program goals and performance outcomes. A strong TA staff and effective strategies are vital to success and implementation of this particular grant.

For the purpose of the TA coaching, we'll be assisting you through the whole implementation component. We'll be providing coaching through a variety of modalities. We'll be speaking to you over the phone, webinars, in-person, and virtual meetings. Our goal is to develop strong relationships. We're also looking at cultivating a holistic learning experience for you through our coachings, our trainings, and our other TA strategies and our ultimate goal is just to ensure that we give you that support and make sure that your participants are prepared for successful transitions to post-secondary education or career pathways.

And so that's the whole purpose of us working together in building that strong relationship. And I'd like to now turn it over to Greg who is actually going to discuss TA guidance.

MR. SCHEIB: And I just wanted to touch base briefly just to review a little bit. In terms of the roles of our FPOs and our TA coaching folks, and really the TA coaches and your FPO are really going to be working together to ensure your success. Your FPO will be your first point of contact for things that are grant administration-related, or things like scope of work changes, or budget modifications, compliance issues, policy questions you may have.

Your FPO is going to be the person you're going to want to reach out to. But in terms of other topics, program design, best practices, coordinating peer-to-peer assistance or just contacting or connecting with some of your other grantees. Your TA coaches are going to be another resource for you.

MS. HUMPHREY: Great. Next slide. So I'd like to take this opportunity to introduce the TA team to you. I see that there was a question where a grantee asked will the coaches be assigned like an FPO? Yes. We are actually – the coaches will be assigned to various grants and they're going to take to introduce them self. Again as you see, I'm Erika, and an area of expertise that I have is program implementation and performance coaching. I've been doing that over the last four years.

And I'm excited to be working with – (inaudible) – workforce development board, doing business as CareerSource. And I'm also going to be working with Florida State College of Jacksonville and WorkSystems, Inc. And Michael, would you like to introduce yourself?

MS. CASERTANO: And for all the TA coaches that are going to be introducing themselves now, make sure you're dialed in the teleconference. And when you're dialed in, your line is muted so make sure you hit \*6 to unmute your line. Once you hit \*6 you'll be unmuted and you can introduce yourself and then use your phone's built-in mute button to re-mute your line.

MS. HUMPHREY: I think Michael is just trying to unmute right now. Okay. We'll go on to Libby, Libby. Again, hit \*6 to unmute your line.

MS. CASERTANO: And it looks like some lines are dialing into the teleconference, so that might be them joining now, if you just want to give this another second.

Michael Laidlaw: Hello. This is Mike Laidlaw. Can you hear me?

MS. CASERTANO: We hear you.

Michael Laidlaw: Hi. This is Mike Laidlaw. My area of expertise is human resources and organizational development. I've been an HR practitioner for about 37 years. And I also have experience in workforce development. I will be supporting the Illinois Manufacturing Excellence Center; the Research Foundation of CUNY, which is the City University of New York; and the United Way of Central Iowa.

MR. SCHEIB: Thank you.

MS. HUMPHREY: And do we have Libby or Lyle?

LYLE NEUMANN: Lyle is here. Can you hear me?

MS. HUMPHREY: We can.

MR. NEUMANN: Well, great. My name is Lyle Neumann. I served as a coach in various aspects on several Department of Labor grants. I was on the State Board of Education in Illinois for 10 years. I managed the technical assistance and training division for Workforce development in Illinois also. And my grantee is – (inaudible) – in Lafayette, Indiana. I just also happened to be coaching them on another grant, and pleased to be here.

MS. HUMPHREY: Great. Thanks, Lyle. Our next coach. Do we have Eunice?

EUNICE MAIZE: Hello. This is Eunice Maize, and I represent the American Association of Community Colleges. I will be coaching Delaware Technical Community College and Montgomery College. And I am in a specialty area of expertise in high education and workforce development. And now I'll pass it on to Bruce Rankin.

BRUCE RANKIN: Hi, everybody. Bruce Rankin here with AHTC. I'll be working with the City of Springfield in their Workforce Investment System and the Southeast Michigan Community Alliance. And I've been working with TA for a long time, but relevant to these grants with the city of Springfield and their healthcare focus. I've been with DOLs virtual career network and the focus on allied health professions, and hoping that we can put that to good use on the project.

And with that, Southeast Michigan mechanical engineer by training, so looking forward to the advanced manufacturing components of that grant.

AMANDA KOSTY: And hi, everyone. My name is Amanda Kosty. I'm also with the American Association of Community Colleges. My areas of expertise are in higher education and workforce development. I will be supporting Employ Milwaukee, Inc., Monroe Community College, and New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Investment Area Consortium Board of Local Workforce Area 2.

MS. HUMPHREY: Do we have Sarah or Lynn on the line? And someone will be speaking for Lynn. Lynn, are you there? Again you just need to hit \*6 to unmute your line.

MS. CASERTANO: Yeah, Erika. Go ahead. She can't unmute.

MS. HUMPHREY: Okay. No problem. So Sarah and Lynn – Sarah is going to be working with Alamo College and Greater Memphis Alliance for the Competitive Workforce. And Lynn will be working with Northern Wyoming Community College District and Rhode Island Governor's Workforce Board. Next slide. Kelly?

KELLY MIDDLETON: Good afternoon. Yes. I'm here. Hi. Good afternoon. I'm Kelly Middleton, and I'm the manager of program implementation at the National Association of Workforce Boards. For the last 10 years my focus has been grants and program management as well as developing public/private partnerships and strategic partnerships within higher education and medical education programs. So I'm looking really forward to working with MiraCosta College and Workforce Alliance of South Central Kansas for the America's Promise Grant.

JAN BRAY: Hi. This is Jan Bray, representing the National Association of Workforce Board, and I'll be working with Grand Rapids Community College and West Virginia High Education Policy Commission. I come out of over a dozen years in career and technical education, so I've spent a lot of time connecting education and industry, helping them develop strategies.

I've also worked on the Department of Labor's development of their career pathways toolkit, so I've spent a lot of time with that as well as an apprenticeship and work with industry organizations in developing apprenticeship programs. So I'm looking forward to working with the two organizations.

MS. HUMPHREY: Great. Thanks, Jan.

MR. SCHEIB: And thank you all, coaches, for introducing yourselves. This is Greg again, and we're going to do one more last polling question, and then we're going to do some final closing out things, see where we're at.

So I know we've talked about a lot, and a lot of strategies, and you've met a lot of people very quickly, but we'd love to hear what you're feeling right now about how you're feeling after this webinar. Slowly processing, but committed, I love it. But I'm glad to see that the majority of you are ready to go, and we're here to help certainly in any way we can. We are going to discuss a few last items, and I'm going to hand this back over to Steven who can talk to us a little bit about next steps.

MR. CANGER: Thanks, Greg. So what are the next steps for you as a grantee? First, please be sure to download all the handouts and PowerPoint presentation made available through this webinar, including the America's Promise TA menu. And it's a document – we'll give you an overview of the America's Promise TA plan and identifies the coaches assigned to you. Your coach will also be reaching out to you via e-mail on the coming dates and introduce themselves. And keep in mind that your coach and FPO will work together to provide you the technical assistance you require.

Next slide. Other upcoming TA activities, over the next two months a number of TA activities will be taking place. In June, your coaches will schedule individualized coaching calls and you will be receiving the America's Promise TA guide outlining and detailing the America's Promise TA efforts. In July, the America's Promise Community of Practice will launch along with a virtual chat. The community practice and virtual chat will be great opportunities to peer network and discuss your programs with other America's Promise grantees. There will also be a grantee convening held and more information will be coming out about the convening at a later date.

And at this point, if you have any additional questions that we have not addressed, please type them into the chat box, and we'll spend some time answering them.

MS. CASERTANO: And while everyone is entering their questions, I just want to remind you that you can find a copy of the PowerPoint, the TA menu recording of today's webinar as well as the transcript of today's webinar on WorkforceGPS in about two business days. For right now, if you look in the bottom left-hand corner of your screen you'll see a file share window, and you can download the TA menu and the PowerPoint right from there.

MR. SCHEIB: And this is Greg again. I'd just like to – some of the comments. It looks like everybody is being very welcoming to their new coaches. We're glad to see that. I know the coaches are excited to work with you all. And with the majority of you being in an early implementation stage, there's plenty of things to work on.

Yes. We will certainly. We have just actually brought on the evaluation team, and we're going to be coming out with additional information about that shortly once they get themselves rolling.

MS. CASERTANO: We'll be sending out guidance as we move forward via e-mail to get things started, so it's a good plug if you have not provided us with your contact information and that's not just the primary program contact, but any other contacts at your grant that you would like to receive communication from our office, please make sure that we have that at America's Promise at dol.gov. We can only e-mail you if we have your contact information.

MS. SHORTERS: This is Susan. I think William had a question. William, I don't know what grant you're actually from, or where you're actually from. But you will be contacted by your coach even though you weren't officially able to announce and I hope that answers your question.

MS. CASERTANO: The coaches will be reaching out to the primary points of contact for your grant, so whoever we have on file is a primary program contact will be who – will be communicated to from the coaches. So there's some great comments in here around guidance around policy questions and documentation of some of our eligible populations, and that's a great question you should send to your FPO. And we'll work with your FPO in responding to guidance on any policy questions around eligibility or documentation of eligibility.

It looks like some more folks are typing into the chat function. I think there's another comment. Robert, you had said that you had a second question, reevaluation and reporting, and I think – and please correct me if I'm wrong – but your question is, "Will we be giving technical assistance not just in the evaluation, but also on performance reporting?"

And the answer to that is yes. Performance reporting technical assistance will come from the national office. And we have been e-mailing guidance on the intern reporting policy and procedure as well as some updates via e-mail. And we do plan in June to be rolling out technical assistance webinars around submitting your performance data. So certainly stay tuned for that.

MS. SHORTERS: We're just giving the questions another minute. We thank you for your active participation in asking questions, and we want to get to as many of them as we can. So we'll give it just another minute or so. Thank you. (Pause.)

Another great question came in. "Are there any plans for a national convening of the America's Promise Grant?" There are plans. We're still working on those plans. And as soon as we have confirmed information, we will certainly send a save-the-date notice out to all of our grantees. And in general, we allow two individuals per grant to attend, two programmatic individuals in the event where it's held in Washington, D.C., so definitely stay tuned for specifics as we move forward.

MR. SCHEIB: You can continue – if you still have questions, you're more than welcome to continue to put those in. We will certainly get back to you with responses. But I'm going to hand this back over to Steven for a last thought here.

MR. CANGER: Sure. And this is just a reminder that if you do have performance-based questions for the national office or you wish to get in touch with your technical assistance provider, please e-mail us at the America's Promise mailbox, which is americaspromise@dol.gov.

And Megan said it before, please send us your up-to-date point of contact information. We cannot send you e-mails if we do not have the information, so please include your name, what your grantee is, your grant number, and all the pertinent information. We'll be sure to include you on future communications.

MR. SCHEIB: And finally, we'd just like to thank you all for taking the time out of your afternoon to let us introduce you to your TA team and to your coaches. You should be hearing from each of them shortly, and I'm sure there will be plenty to talk about.

So again, from us in the national office, the FPOs and the others that are joining us today and certainly our TA team with High Impact Partners, we'd just all like to say thank you, and please reach out to us if we can offer any assistance.

(END)