**WorkforceGPS**

**Transcript of Webinar**

**Our Journey Together: The WIOA Youth Program Technical Assistance (TA) Series Kick-off**—**Where we've been, where we are now and where we're going!**

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*Transcript by*

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JONATHAN VEHLOW: So without further ado, I'd like to turn things over to our moderator today, Sara Hastings, unit chief, Division of Youth Services, Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration. Sara?

SARA HASTINGS: Thanks so much, John. And good morning, everyone. Thank you all so much for joining us today to kick off our technical assistance series, Our Journey Together. We are so excited to have you all here. There are about 1,600 folks that registered for this webinar.

So we're really, really happy to see that there's interest in all of you coming together – all of us coming together, really, as a community to discuss our WIOA Youth Program. As the youth workforce development field, we really have been going through a lot of changes and transition over the last few years and we're still really learning together from one another about how best to serve our youth and our young adults.

So this webinar is really – it's the first of our four webinars that we're hosting over the next two days, so today and tomorrow, and it's intended to remind us where we've been over the last few years with WIOA, including showcasing some of our resources that we've developed for you all, where we are now as it relates to sort of understanding our program and all of our priorities and where we're going in terms of technical assistance that we hope to provide you all over the next 14 months through 2018.

So we're also going to talk today about how you all can play a role in sharing your challenges and lessons learned and supporting all of your colleagues across the country in our, I think, awesome youth workforce development community.

We are going to be – we're calling this series – the technical assistance series – Our Journey Together, because we really – we can't do this alone and we think that by all of us communicating with you and you communicating with us and the rest of the field that we're really going to help insure that we're learning what works, what doesn't work, supporting each other and really growing together as a field.

So we really want to do this with all of you together and we're going to really talk about how we can pull you all in and get your insights and your input a little later on in this webinar today, but first, I want to turn this over to Amanda Ahlstrand. She is the Office of Workforce Investment administrator and our amazing leader who has helped all of us keep the most important things in mind as we transition from WIA to WIOA.

But first, I think we have some questions we want to ask you before I turn it over to Amanda. Tell us who you are. I know we got a sense of where you are listening in from, but who do we have in the audience? Do we have state workforce folks, local workforce, state education, local education folks, state human service, just local human services? And if we didn't capture you in any of those categories, any other parties that are on the line. So let's just get a little sense of who all we have in the audience today.

I'm seeing a lot of our local area folks that are joining in. We've got a few state folks. We'll give you just a few more minutes to just – or moments to just kind of do that. Yeah. It does – it looks like we've got a good number of our local workforce development folks there and we're really happy to see that. We've got another – a number of other partners that are joining. The numbers are continuing to go, but I think that gives us a really good sense of who is all on.

So please continue to do that while we continue. And the next slide, another question for you all. So for how long have you been engaged in WIOA YouthWorks? So we have the folks that just kind of came on board. I just learned about WIOA within the last year. I started in this work after WIOA became a law. So this is kind of what you know.

I was here for the transition from WIA to WIOA. And then we've got WIOA, WIA. Let me tell you about those JTPA days. I'm sure we maybe even have some people from the CETA days, folks that have been around for a long time. The field has been shifting. We know we get a lot of new people in every year that become new to the workforce development field. So it looks like we've got a number of folks, kind of the majority that look like they were here for the transition.

So they knew WIA and now are learning and really beginning to successfully implement WIOA. And I like to see all those folks that are – that have been around prior to that. Some of them have been around for the last decade or more. So that's awesome. Thank you all for taking the time to share that with us.

And so I do – I want to turn it over to Amanda Ahlstrand. She is our administrator. She's – she has wonderful insights and a great understanding of the many opportunities that WIOA can offer. And so I'm super thankful that she can be with us today to share some high-level thoughts with you all and really help us put the youth program in context to the broader vision of WIOA.

So Amanda, with that, take it away.

AMANDA AHLSTRAND: Great. Thank you, Sara. Just confirming folks can hear me.

MR. VEHLOW: Yes. We can hear you, Amanda.

MS. AHLSTRAND: Yes. Thank you. I am calling from a meeting of states from the northeast and the middle of the country from Denver right now and it's a beautiful, crisp fall day here if you're in this part of the country. So sorry, I have no visual cue, but thanks for the introduction, Sara and thanks to all of you for joining the kickoff webinar here in our series.

Our Journey Together has definitely been a journey. It's going to keep being one, right, and I think before we talk more about what's ahead, my job is to talk a little bit about where we've been in terms of the last few years since WIOA passed. I do think that our journey continues every day. We have young people, dislocated workers, people facing barriers to employment, people who are laid off of a job and looking for quick employment coming to our doors and websites every day.

We have businesses calling our offices every day and saying that they need talented people, they need people who are ready and willing to work, that they have openings they need to hire for today, but also, they need to hire in three months or six months or two years down the road.

And so our jobs are big jobs, but they're really important and I know all of you use your mind and your hearts as you go forward each day providing services to your job seeker and business customers. Since WIOA passed just a few years ago in July, 2014, this slide shows you a number of kind of the federal or national events that have taken place. The – per law, we had the provisions take effect the following year. We input performance accountability and state plans. You've all been through those processes.

We were able to publish the final rule just a year ago and ETA and our federal partners at the Departments of Education and Health & Human Services have continued to provide supporting evidence to help explain the regulations and the law and we've done a fair amount of technical assistance of this as a series that's part of those efforts.

But I do want to take a quick minute to thank our team at ETA and the division of youth services for the great support that they provide through supporting all of this work. This, of course, like I said, is just from a federal perspective. I mentioned our partners at the federal level and Departments of Education and Health & Human Services and I do think – and I hear from people across the country regularly that WIOA really did challenge us at all levels of the system to better coordinate the services that we provide to our shared customers.

It gives us some opportunities to identify and recognize where people have experience and knowledge where other partners may not and how you can better leverage and connect those services. I think it also offers an opportunity for all of us to think about how we can – how we put those pieces together in a way that does best serve our customer and if we focus on a common set of customers on both the youth or young adult or dislocated worker side of things as well as looking at our shared business customers, how do we collaborate better.

Those things are kind of hard to put in law, but I do think that WIOA has taken steps compared to previous legislation to get us further down the road. I also want to take a minute to just – to say thank you to all of you in the field, again, for the work that you do. This slide reflects the legislation that we're all working to implement and provide services through and day to day the work that you're doing to make adjustments to new requirements or updates or forge new partnerships is certainly not reflected in black and white here, but it deserves acknowledgement and thank you and I do want to say thanks again.

I also then want to shift a little bit to talk about the goals of WIOA and as Sara mentioned earlier, these are an opportunity for all of us. I guess with this webinar, it's a time to take a step back and look at that bigger picture and we'll talk a little bit more here in a little bit about that, but I think with – you know, just having a reminder now and then is good for all of us and focusing in on the prosperity of workers and employers.

Our new secretary of Labor has talked about making sure that we provide services that support economic liberty for everyone and I think that's really important to keep in mind as we go forward. We are supporting work each day to help people better their lives and to help businesses hire good workers and that's important to those young people's families and peers in their communities.

That's important to the economic stability of communities across the country. I think I also just want to highlight a couple of these goals. The promotion of improvement in the structure of our services, I think every day there are small things that we can do to make our work better and more efficient. Every day we probably come up with, in the back of our heads, some big things to do to do things differently and better, but focusing on how do I take information that I learned today and think about using it to influence and change and update the approach I might have in the future to do things better is something that's foundational to this legislation.

And certainly, promoting and increasing access to education, training and employment, particularly for people who may not have had that access in the past is a core value here of the work that we do. Switching gears a little bit, but obviously, still on the context that the legislation provides, I want to talk a little bit about sector strategies and career pathways.

Sometimes these terms might be viewed as something that's just for your colleagues who serve the adult population or dislocated workers and I want to make sure that that's not seen as the case. I think the legislation and setting for the role of boards and providers to think about and work toward implementing sector strategies and use career pathways and set them up in systems across the various partner programs challenges all of us no matter which population we might be focused on to keep in mind, I think, two bottom-line things.

With sector strategies, this is certainly the perspective of are we working with industry – with employers and business to take, like I mentioned before, that look at what skills are needed today and what skills are going to be needed tomorrow and how do we work together to plan for that future, but also meet the needs that are – that businesses face today.

This graphic here asks some good questions for us to think about the work that we do each day and the progress that we're making and maybe you can take some of these to your next partner meeting or your next service delivery strategy meeting to think about with some of your colleagues, you may not have had these conversations with. Certainly, many of you have, too, been working on the sector approach for a long time and I think we all have a lot to learn from that work and will create opportunities going forward to share information.

As far as the career pathways conversation, again, I think many of you are operating in this mindset or construct already. Many of you are working to implement career pathways. I think this summary slide is important to remind ourselves that we think about career pathways from a system level and connecting and leveraging resources and services that can provide a career pathway.

It's so hard to talk about career pathways without using the words to define it, but to take that next step into whatever door someone comes through to access education, that they leave with a license or certification or degree to get a job and sort of that mindset that we're meeting the customers where they are.

So ranging from a system view of that to that participant view of that, how are we setting up the services we provide to have that kind of approach. I think that the shift to the focus on jobs as the – as sort of the ultimate outcome of a career pathway is a bigger shift for some folks than it is for others, and that effort to kind of change the mindset of people, and training providers, and educators, and workforce development specialists, and community organizations is an ongoing one, but certainly, the connecting skills to future jobs is the work that we do and will continue moving forward there.

Lastly, I just want to have a quick preview, I guess, of the vision that was laid out in the final rule last year, but looking ahead, I think, remains very true today that we serve youth by aligning and coordinating our service strategies across youth serving programs. I think this is where the rubber meets the road in terms of the partnerships that occur at all levels of the system to better coordinate the services and leverage our resources to take that dollar further day in and day out. That sort of holds true a year ago and does today.

And again, back to that idea of working every day to continuously improve the work – the services that we provide and connecting it back to data. I know we're going to spend some time later today and in sessions yet this week about performance accountability, in particular, but I just want to leave folks with the idea that sometimes I hear from people that that -- (inaudible) -- like this in terms of continuous improvement and relying on data sounds a little bit daunting and I want to encourage you all to think about how much data you actually have kind of being produced each day in whatever part of the workforce system you play a role in and how you might use that to improve services.

It doesn't have to be something that you only hire out to evaluators for a three to four-year project. I think you can implement some quick, short-term reviews of data with your teams. We've spent some time at ETA working with many locals across the country on customer or human-centered design and sort of the idea of prototype and test is a key there that you can make this part of your everyday without breaking the bank to hire someone to help you, you can also hire some great people to help you.

But just that idea that this can be for everybody, I think, is important to the work that we do. With that, it's my pleasure to turn it over to Maisha Meminger who will speak next. And again, thank you to everyone for joining today and for your participation in the next series – this virtual series. We're always looking for feedback and ideas and want to hear from you what will be helpful for us to support the work that you're doing. So thank you and have a good rest of the webinar. Maisha?

MAISHA MEMINGER: Thank you so much, Amanda. We thank you for your time and thank you for setting the stage for us. I have the pleasure of talking about technical assistance and resources that we have available to you right now and the place you want to be is on WorkforceGPS, because we're going to show you where some of these tools that we have that we've created for you are are.

Some of you have downloaded a lot of them. We're so excited that we were able to produce these items for you and we want to share with you those locations. So the first resource we want to share with you is right before the final -- (inaudible). We really hope that a yearlong series called "Enough is Known for Action." Now, many of you were with us during that series and we also have it archived on our youth community of practice on WorkforceGPS.

Several of the themes and topics that we talked about were serving out-of-school youth, creating credentials for – that count for youth, we talked about different types of youth population, serving youth in rural areas, serving – connecting with TANF in serving youth.

So we have a yearlong worth of series available for your access and archive and they are there under our events tab on our youth community of practice and we hope that you go there and see some of the items that we were talking about two years ago and how we're getting ready to prep everybody to – for that transition to WIOA. This is our main page of our WorkforceGPS. Hopefully you all are members of our community and we just want to make sure that you are clear on the main blue box, what's available to you on our featured resources.

It's been pretty stagnant over the last few months, because we want to make sure that we highlight those key areas that we want to focus your attention on that has specifically to do with WIOA. So just, again, on the top bar, you will find the events tab where you will find Enough is Known for Action webinar series, but also, we want to make sure that you know what's going on as far as those featured resources for WIOA.

So if you click on the youth program resource page tab that's over to your left, you will be connected to the newest updated resource that we've created here at the national office with help of our regional staff and some of your input of what you need to be available for you and be readily available for your usage. We redid the youth case management toolkit that was created back in 2004. We updated it with some new language. We talk about Facebook on there now and social media that was not there in 2004.

We had the word pages in the original, but we had to change the language there and that's an awesome toolkit that we want you to use as you do case management. We also have a youth committee guide that we revamped from a youth council guide that existed back in the late '90s, I think. And we know tomorrow we have a great webinar being hosted by us on youth committees. So hopefully you all are registered for that.

We'll talk a little bit more about that toolkit and how we can make our youth committees successful. We also have our youth program reference tool and we have a list of program element resources. So I'm going to go to our program eligibility page and we wanted to highlight this page, because today at 2:30, Evan Rosenberg will be talking a little bit more about youth programs eligibility and hopefully you all have registered for that webinar this afternoon.

And again, we want to make sure that you know that on this page, there are already existing resources. There's a fact sheet on program eligibility. Hopefully you have downloaded that. You also have a desk reference that provides information on youth eligibility requirements under WIOA. And very exciting that – we were a little excited to do that – was there only -- (inaudible) – last year the podcast where we kind of give you a quick tour of yes-no's and what's the appropriate answer for youth eligibility.

So we really want you to use those tools that we created and Evan will talk more about that in detail at 2:30 this afternoon Eastern Time. I wanted to also highlight one other area that we're very, very proud of, and we worked very diligently on here at the national office, and with our regional colleagues, and with some of your input is our program element resource page.

And here we list out all 14 program elements that support our YouthWorks and we have different areas in which we highlight tools, resources, websites, program best practices that help you find areas to strengthen these areas of need for our young people who come into our program. One area we'll talk about really quickly just to show you one of the page is alternative education. Here we, again, talk about promising practices. We have guides and tools, additional resources.

And so when you talk to me a little bit later in this presentation, I'm going to tell you exactly how we want to hear from you and how we want to use your tools as well. So with that being said, I'm excited to learn from you all. I'm excited that we're starting a series off for the next how many months we need to talk about things and we want to really engage with you and hear from your successes and your challenges. So Sara, I'm going to turn it over to you and I look forward to talking to you guys a little bit later.

MS. HASTINGS: Great. Thank you so much, Maisha. I really appreciate you walking everybody through. We wanted to give you a little bit of a tour, because we know there's so many resources out there and we develop things and then we put them up and we then think, God, I hope someone ever looks up – I hope it's helpful for people. We hope we know – they know where to find it. So we did want to just take some time today in this kickoff so I can kind of walk you through it.

And actually, I see someone wrote a question in that I think is a good time to address is, is the career pathway map available online? And if so, can you list the link to it? And I can just tell you now, and we can pull up the link later, but Maisha was talking about the youth community of practice. So when you're on WorkforceGPS.org, you can go to communities and there's a dropdown, you will see youth connections.

That's where all of our stuff is. You can also go to the collections page and if you go to and look for the collection around career pathways, there's a dropdown, you will see career pathways, click on that and on the main page, you will see everything you want to know about career pathways, including that awesome, I think, description of what a career pathway looks like from the systems level all the way down to participant level.

So I love that picture, that slide and if folks want to use it, please do. It's in the enhanced career pathways toolkit and guide and workbook. So take a look at that there. So Amanda and Maisha really just shared with you guys a bit about where we have been. So this is all the stuff we've been doing up until now and I now want to talk about some of the things where we are really right now with our WIOA youth program.

But first, what I want to do is just hear a little bit from you. What makes a program a WIOA youth program? So when people ask you, what do you do for a living, what do you say? You know, what is the program you work on, how do you explain that? What are the few words that you use to explain what the WIOA youth program is and what your work is?

So what do you consider those key features of the program to be? So let's take some time right now just to type in the chat feature a few words, a sentence that describe what you believe the WIOA youth program is about. We see work with – change aspects, change lives. We love it. Education and work, 16 to 24-year-old out-of-school youth. I see a few around ages and out-of-school –

MS. AHLSTRAND: Career paths.

MS. HASTINGS: – support youth to get a jump start on their career.

MS. AHLSTRAND: I like the LMI, Tiffany [inaudible]. Use that LMI information. I like that.

MS. HASTINGS: Overcome employment barriers, help youth overcoming barriers for youth ages 16 to 24. Great. Helping youth transition from school to the real world, career pathways. Now they're flying in. I know that now we can feel that there are hundreds of people on this webinar, which is awesome. I love the feel of this. Help youth to find a path in life, mentoring. This is great.

MS. AHLSTRAND: Partnering, I like that one too. I like partnering.

MS. HASTINGS: Awesome. So feel free to keep typing it in if you've got a few more thoughts on that if you haven't yet had a chance. Employment and training services. I saw some out-of-school youth. Let's jump to the next slide. So a few folks, you talked about the ages, you talked about out-of-school youth.

You know, there really – we think about – there's a lot of priorities within WIOA, but there are particularly two main priorities for the WIOA youth program. Of course, one of the main priorities of the program is serving out-of-school youth. So why is this a priority? Well, I think most of you probably know the answer to that. And you've seen some of these data points before. There are approximately five million or more, depending on the source you're looking at, out-of-school and out-of-work youth.

One report that many of you have probably seen, so I'm not giving you anything new, but shows that failing to reconnect to disconnected youth can add a burden to taxpayers of about $14,000 per year and $236,000 over the course of a disconnected youth's lifetime, but that really doesn't consider all of the costs that could be borne by citizens, such as their lost gross earnings, lost productivity spillovers across the workforce, criminal justice victim costs.

You know, the estimate of cost increases up to about $51,000 per year and nearly $1 million over the course of a lifetime for one disconnected youth. So I think that's important to know, but I think what is probably more important is really that's over five million young adults that never get a chance to reach their full potential. You know, that – and I think that's why the field has really shifted to calling these young people opportunity youth, because by not helping them connect back to education or training, they –

And of course, our society really missed out on the opportunity to benefit from them being fully contributing and more healthy and happy members of our society. These young people are just waiting to explore all their gifts and talents and without providing them access to those education and training pathways, we're all really missing out. So that's who we're aiming to serve.

And then to put WIOA into perspective, we have these 5 million or more young people disconnected from many of the systems that successful adults have benefited from and then we have the WIOA youth program that, for example, in program year 2015, had a budget of just under $830 million and with that, it served over 156,000 youth. So we did a lot of great work over the last few years and we continue to do it, but putting those numbers into perspective and kind of putting them next to each other really shows the incredible level of need and the work that we have in front of us.

So I think it's really essentially that the public workforce system sees itself – we should all see each other, really as the system responsible for helping them gain the critical workforce skills necessary to become prepared and really ready for the future.

And of course, Congress sort of demonstrated that it understands this tremendous need to serve these youth and included in legislation a requirement that states and local areas send at least 75 percent of their funds on out-of-school youth and I think all of you are very well aware of that.

And it's been a really big shift for a lot of states and local areas. Some were – you know, their percentages were there, but others really had to make a big shift and how are we really doing around this? And when people ask us, how is the system doing, we say, states all responded impressively making huge shifts.

So looking at the data from PY-2015, which is the first full-year program year of data since local areas have 2 years to expend their funds, the nation spent 79.4 percent of local area funds on out-of-school youth, which far exceeds the 75 percent in the first year.

Every state – you might remember using our transition authority we gave states and local areas that had been focusing more heavily on in-school youth some additional time to change course, but every state met the PY-'15 transition goal of spending at least 50 percent of local area youth funds on out-of-school youth and increasing out-of-school youth expenditures by that 10 percentage points. So we had a little bit of a transition year. Everybody really met that. And so far in PY-'16, 84.2 percent of local area youth funds have been expended on out-of-school youth. So we're on track.

And the system has really done a great job as a whole with the shift of serving more out-of-school youth and I think we'll continue together to really identify effective ways to serve this out-of-school youth population and particularly for those communities that really have been serving more in-school youth than out-of-school youth and we're going to work together to continue to learn some great strategies on that.

So the other main priority outlined in the WIOA Youth Program is providing youth with work experiences, like summer and year-round employment, internships, on-the-job training, pre-apprenticeship. I think all of you know work experience is a big piece of that. And from the research, we know that providing youth with early exposure to work is really critical for getting young people on track.

I think we know the earlier they start the better. And there's a lot of data that shows that work experiences can broaden young people's career options, they're less likely to drop out, their attendance and grades often improve, there's increased earnings potential, so many great benefits from this. They have increased access to caring adults, enhanced motivation, better planning. It allows them to learn about different careers and acquire those work-related skills by watching those adults around them. And this is really regardless of their future career direction. They just get exposure to this world of work. And they also learn how to behave in a professional environment and you don't know it until you know it and you've got to experience that and those work experiences are just so important to our WIOA Youth Program.

And again, Congress demonstrated the understanding of this as well and -- (inaudible) -- system legislation by including the 20 percent minimum expenditure requirement on work experiences. And how did we – how have we been doing on that? The workforce system responded and by doing so, they spent exactly 20 percent of local area funds on work experiences nationally in program year 2015, met the 20 percent requirement despite the fact that work expenditures are really a new financial reporting requirement and despite implementation of new ETA-9130 reporting. That didn't begin until PY-'16. So we've been transitioning and kind of moving in this direction and you've all sort of kept pace with that. So far in PY-2016, 22.7 percent of local area youth expenditures have been spent on work experiences.

You know, we know that some local areas are spending more than the minimum requirement, others are maybe struggling a little bit in identifying those good work experiences for youth people and we're really going to continue to support the field, help to strategize partnerships and other opportunities for developing these quality work experience opportunities.

You know, at the same time, we think that maybe some of the challenge, too, may be reporting – there's just maybe some confusion around really understanding what are allowable work expenditures. So let's just take a second quick and get a sense of where – what people's understanding is around allowable work experience expenditures.

So pick one or more, as you see here, what you think are allowable work experience expenditures. We've got wages, stipends, paid for participation in a work experience, participant work experience, orientation sessions, employer work experience orientation sessions, staff time working with employers to insure successful work experience, all of the above.

So these are some of the potential allowable work experience expenditures. They may or may not be. So let's see what people think. And I'm really loving where this is heading here. I think people are kind of getting the point of this little exercise for the most part. So let's shift to find – I know people are still filling it in. So let's see, that's the last all of the above is 85 – 86 percent of the folks and it's going up. I think that maybe all of the above are allowable work experience expenditures.

Well – and the good news is that those are all allowable expenditures. So I think most of the folks were understanding that those all do count. And you can see here all the different types of activities that you are allowed to count towards that 20 percent minimum expenditure requirement.

So in addition to paying wages, there are so many other expenditures that can count and we're really hoping folks aren't feeling concerned about meeting this requirement, but are really more just focused on that important piece, which is how do we thoughtfully build into the program model quality work experiences that allow youth to gain both the basic and occupational skills and also get a sense of what it's really like to be a good worker while also, at the same time, having that support of the program staff, having mentors, having employers understand that they're still young adults and that they're learning and they're learning in a faith kind of environment.

So wanted to just kind of reiterate the requirements in some of the allowable expenditures so that people feel a little less unconcerned about how do we make the numbers sort of work. So those are really the two main priorities of the program.

Of course, there are many, but serving out-of-school youth and getting good work experiences are two of the main ones and we wanted to reflect on that today and also, really congratulate you all on the hard work that you've done up to this point to shift your programming to reflect the vision of WIOA. And so now I want to tell you a little bit about where we are hoping to go with you all together in the future as it relates to technical assistance and get your thoughts and feedback. So this is where you guys come in, we need you. But let me first tell you a little bit – so next slide.

Hopefully you all know this is the first of the four webinars that we have today, tomorrow on our two-day kickoff, which kicked off Our Journey Together series. You can see here this afternoon we have youth eligibility, tomorrow morning we've got coming together at the table around youth committees, tomorrow afternoon youth performance accountability. If you are not registered, we encourage you to do so, there's still room available.

And for those who can't join because they've got lots of other stuff to do, these will all be recorded and archived and posted on WorkforceGPS. So that's kind of how we're kicking off our technical assistance series with you all. But – so moving forward sort of from today and tomorrow through 2018, we plan to develop TA resources that focus on a lot of these topics that you see here.

We are thinking we want to do some webinars, but of course, not every TA topic warrants a webinar; right? We don't want to death by webinar here. We know that this is an effective way to communicate with you all, but there are other things in TA types that might be more helpful. So some topics may better lend themselves to a two-pager that just clarifies a policy, maybe a case study that highlights local effective practice, maybe we provide you a short brief that outlines partnership opportunities.

So we're trying to be creative in our technical assistance delivery with you all on QU. And here, in addition to the types, these are some of the topics that we're thinking about. We've got a number of topics around partnership Titles II and Titles IV, juvenile justice, child welfare TANF, job corps, SNAP E&T, a lot of other kinds of program elements around mentoring, financial literacy, trauma-informed care, which we've talked about in the past, summer employment career pathways, entrepreneurship, apprenticeship.

This was kind of our very long list of the kinds of TA topics that we've heard from you all thinking that this is stuff that would be helpful for you for us to touch upon, but we want your feedback. None of this is set in stone. We want to ask you now to just take some time in our chat feature, so if you go to the next slide too so folks can see, we're going to take a few minutes for you all to give us some feedback, affirm the topics you want to see.

So if you like the topics that you saw, please type those in, let us know that we're on the right track. If we're missing something, let us know. Tell us what you don't see on the list, but you think would be really helpful. Think about some of the things that you've been challenged with over the last couple years. That obviously leads to if you're challenged with it, it might be helpful to have some technical assistance developed on that topic.

And also, kind of give specifics, if you can. I'm seeing a couple here. So homeless, for example or mentoring; right? So what about mentoring or what about homelessness would be most useful? Is it how to partner with organizations that can provide mentoring? Is it how to incorporate mentoring into our program model?

If you want to learn about a different partner program, what exactly would be most helpful for you to learn about when working to develop that partnership? Is it just like we need to know basic eligibility, we don't know anything about this program or is it we understand, but how do we actually leverage? Or maybe it's all of the above.

So if you have a little bit more detail around when you say, credentials, for example, Ebony, I see your chat come in, tell us what specifically would be most helpful for you so we can give you a little bit of a better sense.

And this will help inform our TA development. And a little bit later Maisha is going to say, if you think we're doing an awesome job in some of these areas –

MS. MEMINGER: Help us out.

MS. HASTINGS: – we – help us out, we are going to come to you. We want you to tell us, you – it looks like lots of people need some help around mentoring or financial literacy or whatever the issue is. We are doing some really cool stuff in that area. So we'd love to share what we're doing. We need to hear from you, because we – if we don't hear from you, we don't know what's really working – what's working, what's exciting and maybe what some of the challenges are as well.

MS. MEMINGER: And if you have any outstanding questions on your mind around the topics that we've given or topics that you have, let us know now, because as we start to shape – we're working on presentations now with our partners for next year.

As we start to shape our presentations with our partners, we would like to ask those questions in our presentation. So again, like Sara's saying, be as specific as possible to help us, because we want to make sure that we get the right people at the table to present. We're hearing – we're seeing foster care, which is excellent. That's my – that's going to be one of my leads. So I'm looking forward to talking to you guys about that, aging out of foster care. So also, trauma-informed care – somebody asked, what is trauma-informed care?

This is the language that we're speaking at the federal level and AJ -- (inaudible) -- has taken an excellent lead on, looking at our young people as individuals who come to us with some type of trauma, mostly young people that we work with, our opportunity youth, come to us, because they've been through something that has been traumatic in their life and has stunted possibly their growth as young adults.

And a lot of times they get into trouble, and they get in situations, and how do we approach them, and how do we work with them to get their best return on their investment, and on our investment as well? So we have a – we are working right now – I have colleagues at HHS and SAMHSA that are so excited to be working with us to help us put together a presentation with you all and sharing some tools that workforce systems have been using on trauma-informed care.

So we want to make sure that we get that for you. And anything about mental health please let us know. There – our SAMHSA colleague is with us as well.

MS. HASTINGS: Yeah. Thanks, Maisha. So we're super excited. We're getting a lot of feedback. This is what we really wanted this first webinar to be about was to give you just a few minutes to tell us – to let us know. And we joke here at the national – at the federal level, really, sometimes we feel that we can't ask, because we ask you lots of other stuff.

So there's some rules around how much we can ask you to tell us, because we know you're already telling us stuff around data performance. But this is really, really helpful information and I think this is going to inform all the types of TA that we're hoping we're going to be able to provide with you and for you up through the end of 2018 and possibly ongoing, really. This is – technical assistance, I think, is where our focus is going to be over the next year.

So keep sending in your information, performance reporting, measurable skills gain. Lucky, Melissa, get ready, you should make sure you're on the webinar that's tomorrow afternoon. It's our fourth of the four webinars and Evan Rosenberg will share his expertise on the MSG, as we call it, Measurable Skills Gains.

MS. MEMINGER: And you were talking about language. Youth voices is one of my favorite topics in the world.

MS. HASTINGS: How do you include it?

MS. MEMINGER: So yes, how do you include youth voice? And I was just sharing with Sara I was in a meeting last week and that was a big push. So we're excited to talk about youth voice and add it to the list here, but I'm about to nominate it.

MS. HASTINGS: Okay. That got added.

MS. MEMINGER: It got added. Yeah.

MS. HASTINGS: Awesome. Well, please still do that. What we're going to do now – continue to kind of add your thoughts, we want to hear what you have to say. I'm going to turn it back over to Maisha now.

So she's going to talk about now how we want to continue to engage and connect with all of you now over the next – well, ongoing, really. We have technology, we need to use it and sometimes it's kind of a hassle to have to go to a certain site and type stuff in, but we're hoping that the more we do it the more we get used to doing it and we want to have this conversation with you all. So I'll turn it over to Maisha to kind of talk you through that.

MS. MEMINGER: Absolutely. So we're – we want to keep you engaged. We want to hear from you on a constant basis and we want to create an environment – a community where you can share your thoughts and resources. So first things first, we want you to become a member of our community. Many of you guys use our youth connections community of practice on WorkforceGPS.

This video, we're not going to show it, it's a little long, shows you how to become a member. And also, in the lobby earlier, before we started our webinar, we talked about becoming a member of WorkforceGPS and also a member of – (inaudible) -- member directory, what does this do? The member directory allows us to have access to your email address to get in contact with you directly.

It also allows everybody – if you want to communicate with somebody else within that member directory, you can as well. So it's a little bit of a benefit of creating a community. So we would like you to become a part of the member directory. We want you to fill out your profile, put – I have a cute picture of me in there, (inaudible), I'm so cute. So yeah, we want your picture up there, we want to know what you do. You could also put up your bio.

And so we want to know who you are. I mean, it's really, really important for us as we begin to engage with you. So if you're not a part of the member directory, this is your homework to do so. We encourage everybody to do so. We want – second, we want you to share your resources. So when you become a part – a member of WorkforceGPS and a part of our member directory, there's two ways to share your resource – your best practices.

Some of you guys have wonderful step-by-steps on how to produce a well-driven youth committee meeting. Some of you guys have some step-by-steps on how to create an MOU for your area. So you guys have awesome tools that you're using that really, really works for you. We want that information. Whether you want to share it for the national audits and just let us know what's going on so that we can know that you guys are doing these wonderful things.

So you can do it two ways. One way is we have youth.services@dol.gov, which is our email address and – but we really want you to use WorkforceGPS to do so. So there – on the right-hand corner of your page, there's a little red tab that can pop out and it says submit your – or submit a resource. And if you can go to the next slide, this pops up and you fill it in for us.

This really helps us know what you want to share. So what we have is a form, you put your name, your organization, you put – you can upload the information in there. Once you hit the share your resource, give a summary. Summary is very important, you guys. Unless you want me to make up something when I post this stuff, I would advise you to give me a summary or any information and upload the document and then I will approve it.

We'll review it here at the national office. We do try to avoid proprietary information. So if something costs money or is some kind of exorbitant fees, we will not probably share that information, but if it's free, we love it -- (inaudible) -- great with government resources, we love it even more. So please share your resources with us and we can be in communication with you if you have additional information if you have to do.

Third, we are posting discussion threads and we are asking you all to put your input into a discussion. And the first discussion that we have really -- (inaudible) -- in this new wave of technical assistance is about youth committees and it's currently up there under our discussion thread, but we see that about 5:44 today had our discussion thread, however, nobody's put anything in it. I got sad, because I was like, how do I get people to say something?

So what I want you to do is – another homework assignment you have is to go to our community of practice, go to our discussion area and if you have a challenge or a success regarding youth committees, click on that post and respond to my original post and share your practices. We're trying to make our discussion area an area where we can share thoughts, questions, best practices.

And again, if it's something that we, at the national office or regional office, see that's a benefit, we're going to reach out to you. We're going to email you back and say, hey so and so from XYZ place, we see that you put a wonderful resource or tool up or you shared this wonderful story, would you mind presenting with us on our webinar or our next toolkit or our next resource, can you help us write it up and would you review it?

We're looking for people to review stuff before we post it; right, Sara, so that it's usable? So we're trying to engage you guys. We are not trying to do this on our own. So we want to engage our audience, our constituents, our colleagues. You are all colleagues with us in this good work that we're doing. So don't think that you can't let us know and help us out with these things.

So those are the three ways, become a part of our member directory, submit your resources, if you have any and participate in our discussion threads; okay? And I think, Sara, that's it, right, on my end.

MS. HASTINGS: Awesome. Thank so much, Maisha. This was really helpful. I hope everybody got a good sense of the types of resources that we've developed thus far and what we're hoping to do sort of moving forward.

One other thing that I didn't have a slide on, but I wanted to give a little commercial here about is some new technical assistance opportunities that's going to be focused on youth programming that will promote some peer learning through the selection and establishment of a cohort group that are experiencing common challenges related to serving out-of-school youth, really all the way from the beginning of recruitment, engagement with young people all the way through to follow-up and everything in between. So this TA opportunity is really still in the planning phase. Hence, we don't even have a slide for you, but we are expecting to announce something in the near future.

You know, interested candidates will be able to sort of apply. We don't know what that looks like. It won't be a huge list, but to be a part of a cohort group. And the anticipated result that we're really hoping for with grantees will – that they'll get the technical assistance that they need, that they'll be working with their peers and their TA coaches and together over this period of time in this cohort, they'll find solutions and results that can be shared with others across the workforce system.

So stay tuned on that. It's a cohort challenge type of TA model. We tried it out a little bit with the customer-centered design work where some teams, maybe some folks on this webinar today, were a part of. I think it's a really cool way to get folks who are maybe struggling, some folks who already kind of got some answers get them kind of together in a room, be creative and thoughtful, take some time to work through some challenges and then come out with some tangible results or solutions that then can be shared with everybody, really.

So the whole point is to develop some TA materials that help guide and inform the system, but that do that by bringing in folks together and then sharing out as a whole group. So I think that is our presentation for today. As we said, we've got three other webinars, one this afternoon on eligibility – so we are going to quickly all eat some lunch and we are going to then come back for our eligibility discussion.

Tomorrow we will come together in the morning to talk about youth committees, the afternoon around performance. And so this is the start of our conversation with all of you here today. I see that there's a number of questions and I have some folks in the room. There are a number of them in a few different areas.

I think we addressed the career pathways map question. And there was another question around, will we post these – this list of the kinds of TA? I think once we take a look at all of the comments that you sent in – we have so many comments from you today. I mean, this was like the most amazing way to get feedback from all of you.

We're going to sift through that. We're going to think about what makes sense and we will put together sort of more of a concrete plan with some more tangible dates and then we will share that out with all of you. We do know that we are planning for January –

MS. AHLSTRAND: And December.

MS. HASTINGS: – December. We will – we are planning to have a webinar around partnerships with Title I Youth Program and Title II Adult Education. So that's one that we know kind of is on the docket and we have –

MS. AHLSTRAND: January we have mentoring.

MS. HASTINGS: And January we are hoping to have a webinar around mentoring and how businesses can be engaged in mentoring. There's a number of other questions that are coming in and I'm not sure we're going to be able to answer all of those today. Some of them are some questions that may require some thinking. We might just need to do a little research on some of these questions I'm seeing coming in and we would want to give you a really thoughtful answer.

So what I'll say is we gave you, earlier on, an email address and you can reach out to that email address if you have questions that we didn't answer today. We also – some of the policy-related questions that I think I've seen come in, I think, most of the folks in this community understand we've got local areas working with states and states working with their regional representatives to ask and check in on policy-related questions.

We also have a WIOA email address where you can post some questions that are policy related and that's a good way to ask those questions. But if we – if you sent in a question today that we just didn't get a chance to address – and we're reading some of these things come in. If we didn't get a chance to address them, you – feel free to reach out to that email address. I'm seeing my colleagues here – I don't know if there's any questions that they wanted to try to address as we're – as they're coming in here.

MS. AHLSTRAND: So one thing we can do as we – you know, as Sara said, sift through the questions, the comments and suggestions. I see a question about, is there a way to get a copy of all of the questions that were submitted and the answers? Some questions, again, as Sara said, we're going to have to get some policy folks on and make sure we answer the questions with thoroughness. Some questions we can't answer and we can probably just post them somewhere and let you guys know through our WorkforceGPS -- (inaudible).

Q: Well, here's a question we could answer. What is the email address – (inaudible) -- email address?

MS. AHLSTRAND: Oh, it's –

MS. HASTINGS: If you want to go back a few slides to my – well, back to Maisha's slide, if you go back a couple more, yeah –

MS. MEMINGER: Youth.services@dol.gov.

MS. HASTINGS: There we go, youth.services –

MS. MEMINGER: – @dol.gov. Please send your questions there if they did not get answered and we will get back to you, we promise. That's one of my jobs is to make sure that I have this.

MS. HASTINGS: Any other questions that folks want to try to answer now? We're taking a look at a few of those. I think, again, some of these are some specific questions. Send – feel free to send those to the email box.

We will definitely get back to you. I think we also work with our regional colleagues very closely. Those are the folks that are on the ground that come out and visit you, that give you some good TA and they take a look at programs and support you in that way. We work with them closely.

So for folks who maybe are thinking how does this whole DOL/ETA system work, we, at the federal level, work closely with our good friends and colleagues and in the regional offices – we have six regional offices and they are kind of the first person – people to go to around some of the specific policy questions, but we work closely with them.

They share answers and questions with us and we do the same with them. So that's another way – if you know your regional – your colleague, that would be great, reach out to them as well.

So any other specific questions? I think we've gotten to most of the ones that we can answer today. So thank you, all of you, so much for your time today. This is a conversation and we're just getting started. We've been talking to you guys for a long time, but we want to really make it clear that we want to be in dialogue and in conversation with you all. We're going to use technology as much as we can to do so and we will continue to do that.

So thank you all so much. Have a good rest of your day. Hopefully we'll talk to most of you at 2:30 Eastern and thank you so much.

(END)