**WorkforceGPS**

**Transcript of Webinar**

**America's Promise: Innovation Supportive Service**

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LAURA CASERTANO: But with that, I'm going to turn things over to your moderator today, Gregory Scheib, he's a workforce analyst with the US Department of Labor. Greg, take it away.

GREGORY SCHEIB: Thanks, Laura. I really appreciate that. And welcome everyone. Really Nice to have you here today. I am just here primarily to say hello and thank you for being on the call. We've got, I think, a really interesting webinar today talking about supportive services that we're providing and ways that we're accomplishing those things for our customers and our participants.

I'm not going to take any more of your time. I'm actually just going to go ahead and pass it right on over to Amanda Kosty, who is one of our TA coaches and who is going to be leading our presentation today. Mandy, would you like take it?

AMANDA KOSTY: Thank you Greg. Hello again everyone. My name is Amanda Kosty. As Greg said, I'm one of the technical assistance coaches for the America's Promise grants. I also work at the American Association of Community Colleges. And today I'm very excited to help facilitate this webinar on innovative supportive services. Today we'll have two brief presentations from two of the America's Promise grantees.

And following the presentations we'll have a discussion on issues your communities are facing as it relates to supportive services, what tools, techniques, strategies are being used to address those, and answer any lingering questions you have. This will be a participatory webinar for those of you who are joining us via the chat, so I hope you pay close attention to what's going on in the chat.

We'll be sharing that and there'll be an opportunity towards the end of the webinar for a peer to peer sharing. First, we'll hear a presentation from Liz Annis, who is the lead navigator at New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Investment Board in Virginia. And then we'll hear a brief presentation from Kristina Kurtz and Kimberly Allen-Bradfield, who are with the Southeast Michigan Community Alliance Program.

I want to highlight some of our objectives today. The real question is why supportive services and why now? As we're almost two years into the grant, one of the biggest topics we as coaches are hearing from the grantees is questions regarding participant retention. A big part of that is the ability to identify when participants need supportive services, figure out how to provide those, and ensure no one is slipping through the cracks.

So today we're going to explore different types of supportive services being offered, things like transportation, hunger, medical needs, childcare, counseling, supplies needed for training. And in addition to that, we'll discuss strategic partnership programs, funding, and this webinar will heavily on how some of the grantees have innovated their case management and processing to further engage those participants and community partners moving forward.

So before we jump into our presentations, I have a question for everyone, so please type into the chat. What type of supportive services does your program provide to participants currently? So if everyone will just take a second and provide some of the different – provide answers in the chat function to some of the supportive services that your program is providing currently and we'll talk a bit about those and then I'll have a second polling question that supports that.

So we'll give it a second. Rosanna in Delaware is talking about transportation. That's definitely a conversation we'll have today. As we wait for more folks, I see multiple attendees are typing, which is great. Mostly – Amy is sharing that mostly transportation, but some childcare and rental assistance. I'm assuming that's talking about housing. Those are all great areas. It looks like we have a few more people typing, so we'll give it another couple of seconds.

And I'll take this time now to say if at any point during the presentation, if anyone has any questions, feel free to chat them in the main chat for any of our speakers today or anything moving forward. Chris is sharing about a career readiness boot camp, work skills navigator, helping with job placement, and financial support with rent and emergency funds. Renee mentioned uniforms and tools, boots, shoes, transportation. Those are all great areas.

All right. And then keep your mouse over the chat because I have one more quick question for you all. So, if you talk about these different types of support services that are out there, what sources of funding are using? Obviously, some grants from America's Promise, but are there outside sources of funding that you all are pulling from that you'd be willing to share? I know this is the question we've gotten.

And Jenny has stated that they are really focusing on providing for their needs so that they can complete their goals, so some of it also looks like developing relationships with vendors to pay for training for the credentials. Chris has shared that they're looking for funding with other grants, foundations, and other partners. I think we'll dive into the other partners aspect a little bit later in our conversation to figure out how we're identifying those potential partners.

Mandy shared – oh, Mandy's having audio problems, so Laura can look into that. Rosanna shared the Delaware Department of Labor has provided funding for transportation for those who meet those funding criteria. And Jenny in Virginia shared their integrated resource teams are working together to provide for those needs. So Jenny, I'm sure we'll have more questions about that and maybe even hear a bit from that from Liz. Great.

So as we look at these different types of services, we're talking about a number of different –a number of the services that you all listed, we also want to look at how can we better leverage existing resources and partnerships for those services. I'm hearing from Jenny about their integrated resource team I think is going to be very valuable to this conversation.

And also talking about how we're identifying those other partners. We'll hear the presentations from some promising practices and we'll also touch on sustainability strategies to continue these types of programs. So thank you all for sharing in the chat box. Like I said, if you have any questions throughout this webinar, please be sure to chat in the main box.

First, I'd like to turn it over to our first presenter, Liz Annis. Liz is the lead navigator for New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Investment Board, which is in Virginia. Liz has been in the workforce development arena for three years with prior experience being an adult education as well as K-12 education. Spent most of her career in retail management before transitioning into the education field. As a coordinator of an integrated education and training program in the state of Virginia, Liz was able to help people complete their training and gain employment, and she found that to be very fulfilling work.

And so once the America's Promise job training grant was funded, she saw this as an opportunity to continue to have a positive impact on people's lives. And ended up working as one of the workforce system navigators for the New River Mount Rogers Region in Virginia and she's continuing to enjoy that. So, I'm going to go ahead and turn it over to Liz who can now share on their program in Virginia. Liz.

LIZ ANNIS: Hello, I'm Liz Annis with the New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Development Board. I am a workforce system navigator with the Pathways to the American Dream grant, which serves 1,100 people. It's a four-year, $6 million project serving 1,100 people in manufacturing, healthcare and information technology industries. This project does include for workforce development areas in the Commonwealth of Virginia to include 35 jurisdictions.

Our program structure is as follows: We had the businesses and the industries interact with the business services specialist to share their workforce needs. And the business services specialists as well as the curriculum and instructional specialists and navigator work together on the business solutions team and it's how we help the businesses and the industries through that business solutions team.

So the integrated resources team is made up of the business services specialist, the workforce system navigator, and the curriculum and instructional specialist all working together. The curriculum and instructional specialist makes sure that the training is adequate to meet the needs of the businesses and that it's – it will lead to a credential that's required. The business services specialist ensures that we – that there are actually jobs and there's a need for this occupation training.

And then the workforce system navigator works frontline with the applicant to bring them into the program to get them with the training that they need to get that credential to get the job. And that is our integrated resource team. It also includes other partners such as WIOA, DARS, Department of Rehabilitative Services, whoever we need to bring into – onto that team in order to help us be successful with that applicant. We also use (B2B ?), which is a comprehensive database. It documents our business and participant activities to support our work.

We provide many different support services. These services all make a difference in the lives of our participants and helps them become successful. Any service that we provide must be necessary so the participant to be successful in training or employment transition. There are several on here, but I want to highlight a few of those services and the processes that go with the service.

One thing that we started doing is, once we realized the need for financial coaching, we have the applicants look at the living wage for the MIT website online and they find their living wage for their area, their circumstance. If they're single and they're working, that's one adult working, if it's two people with one child, so it's very specific to the applicant. We then have them add 10 percent to that living wage to come up with their social mobility wage because we want them to have a wage and earnings that enables him to be able to take care of their needs and not have to live paycheck to paycheck.

So if the social mobility wage is below what the wage rate is for the occupation, that's a positive. So if it is an RN and their social mobility wage is $14.50, but the standard salary range for that RN in that area is $20 to $30 an hour, then that's a good sign.

If what they need by way of that social mobility wage is more than what they will be earning, then as navigator we make sure we point that out because they need to make an informed choice, an informed decision as to should I really be going into this training if it's not going to meet my needs. So we want to make sure that the occupation is a good fit for the applicant.

Another service provided is reimbursement by way of gas cards for miles traveled to training. So in order to be reimbursed, a participant to provide a MapQuest of the route as well as a signed attendance sheet from the training provider, and then the navigator creates an expense document to process the payments.

So in our area, we have a lot of healthcare participants and there are a lot of expenses involved in getting them out of training, into the workforce. So we realized that there is – once they complete that training, they're not ready to go into the workforce because they have not taken the national exam and become either an RN or LPN or Occupational Therapists or whatever the occupation it.

So the need for the payments of the application itself, the participants did not have it. So we are initially reached out to the board of nursing and they said, no, we can't do anything for you. And then we went to the training providers and we asked the training providers and what some worked out with us was that they would allow the students to come in, do the application, put it on the credit card, the school's credit card, and then they would invoice us. So that that took us out as far as having to come up with the funds.

And not the funds, but how do we pay for it because it had to be done individually in the computer. So they agreed to do that, which is a big help. And with the background check, we have a contract with the background check provider and they the students or participants are able to go schedule their background check at any time and then the company sends us an invoice for all of our participants who have scheduled that exam. And then we pay the invoice.

And then we've also reached out to Hurst Review, which is one of our training providers, and they agreed to give us a $50 per participant discount. Because we reached out to them when we have so many healthcare participants.

Now almost all the nurses or the healthcare participants need uniforms. They need uniforms when they go into clinicals and then uniforms when they go to the job. So we approached our local vendor, which is Super Shoes, and we set up an account and we were able to give the students a voucher that stated on there what they needed; whether that was two uniforms and a pair of shoes or a stethoscope, whatever their needs were. And then they take the voucher to the store with their ID, they make their purchase based on what the voucher states, and then Super Shoes sends us an invoice, and we then pay the invoice.

And then the training providers also allowed us to submit tuition vouchers once we asked, and then they submit us – submit an invoice for us to pay off of that. And that's really been a big help. Having those relationships with those vendors has helped us to be able to, in a timely fashion, get our participants into the workforce because they're able to their exam faster, they are able to get their uniforms; they don't have to get a job outside of that timeframe. They're able to immediately go in and get their job.

So for another one for job search and networking, we work with our partners to provide information on job fairs and employment opportunities. We also provide help with résumé and interviewing situations.

So we found the key to our success has been our partnerships and relationships. Cornerstone. Foundation. So the first one is our relationship within the staffers ourselves. We have five navigators within their area. We have one curriculum and instruction specialist, we have a business services specialist, and we have a data specialist, and a project manager, and we all worked together as a team to develop new paperwork if need be, we find what they're going to and find-tune our systems from intake to exit. And we're able to enroll applicants who demonstrate they have the ability to benefit from the program.

With our partners, it's night and day between last year and this year because of the relationship that has been developed. Being able to go back to the training provider. A lot of the training providers have provided office space on site, so that when we're there once a week we have an office space to go to, we have the computer, the printer, everything set up to where the participants know we're there and they can have easy access to us.

We worked together with the partners to be proactive. So for the monthly follow-up, if we find out from either the students or the teacher that the student participant is not doing well, we will then work with that training provider to get assistance to help that partner to be successful.

And we also have collaborative funding model so all partners have a vested interest in accountability. Everyone knows what's put on the table, what we're bringing to the table. And so we work together to make that happen.

Participants. One of the key elements that we work on is an intake document, is a prescreening form. In the first step, we have their prescreening, we're looking at the applicant is – they complete an applicant prescreening as well as assessments.

So if they are in a four-year program and they have the academic transcript, we'll use that as an instructor reference. If it's someone who's in the workforce and has no academic assessment, then we can use career scope or a math or reading exam to make sure that they have the skills that they need to be successful in that occupational training.

Some of the questions we found out early on if they're currently employed. We asked to make sure that they want to seek to be paid employment in the occupation which they were trained. We also asked them if they received any financial –educational financial assistance, so we can check on leverage funds. And then we asked them to let us know what their financial needs are.

And then we asked them to put into words and to tell us who they are so that we can learn a little bit more about them, and ask them why they need financial assistance and how they use this funding. And so once they fill this out and we're able to read that as navigator, we can see exactly what their needs are, and we can move from there to see how can we meet those needs.

So the prescreening form is a very important document for us. And then the assessment tools that are that are designed for that particular occupation. Relationships are key. The time that we spend listening and showing the participant that we really care about them and their success has proved invaluable from start to finish because they reach out to us now. They know that we care.

They know that we want them to be successful. And we asked them, don't wait for us to contact you, if you need us, you contact us. So and then we tried to be very thorough in our follow-up with them and our follow-through. So if we tell a participant we're going to do this for you by next week, we want to make sure we do that for them by next week and follow-up with them.

Also, our database is critical in keeping up with them. So if they've graduated and they've earned the thirst credential, yet we're waiting on them to earn the second credential, we can easily go into our database and look and see, OK, they haven't earned this second credential yet. We can check the credentialing board to see if they've earned that credential. And then if they have, we can use that as a follow-up with the participants and say, congratulations, I see you passed your state board, what is your job situation?

So maintaining that consistent communication with them is invaluable. So that's mine and I'm going to turn it back over to Amanda.

MS. KOSTY: Thank you, Liz. I appreciate that. I just wanted to call out a couple of innovative services that you named on one of your slides. Some of the interesting things that they are doing is providing help with car repair, not just subsidized bus passes and things like that. Looking into ways to help fund test fees.

Financial counseling I know has been a big component for it. And Jenny, I know you're listening in, if you don't mind maybe chatting the link for the social mobility wage calculator, I think that's something that people might find interesting and helpful in their own communities as well. But also their partnerships that we're able to help support their nursing students with uniforms. So I think those were a couple of really great ways that New River/Mount Rogers has been innovative in terms of the types of support services they're able to provide.

And before I move on to our next presenter, if there's anyone who joined us a little bit later and you haven't introduced yourself in the chat box, please do. And as a reminder, if anyone has any questions for any of our presenters at any time, please feel free to put them in the chat box and we will try to address them. We're watching that.

So now moving on, I want to – I'll turn it over to our next presenter, Kristina Kurtz, who is the director for Oakland County Michigan Works program. She has over 13 years directly providing career services and managing federal and state workforce development programs at Oakland County Michigan Works. And her colleague Kimberly Allen-Bradfield, who has been working with within workforce development for over six years and is currently a workforce development specialist at Oakland County Michigan Works program. And they are going to share a bit about how they are approaching this within the Southeast Michigan Community Alliance program. So Kristina and Kimberly.

KRISTINA KURTZ: Hi, good afternoon. So we're going to talk about a few things. First when we meet with our customers, we do meet with them individually and we do a case management review, is we call it.

We have them fill out a seven or eight-page document that we call the comprehensive assessment. In this assessment, it talks about their short-term, long-term goals and they are able to identify barriers that they will have to attend training or to find employment or what has been causing problems for them to be unemployed. And then here's Kim to talk a little bit more about that.

KIMBERLY ALLEN-BRADFIELD: OK. How are you? This is Kimberly Allen-Bradfield and I will address a few of the barriers and the processes for identifying supportive services to address those barriers.

And first, as Kristina referenced in doing the case management – I'm sorry, the comprehensive assessment, one of the things that we do is when we're identifying barriers is we're kind of identifying the resources that we have available, whether it be inside and internally or externally to basically address some of those barriers and assist the customer. And some of those specific barriers are pretty much a mileage. Where we're located – mileage and fuel, I should say.

Where we're located, we're probably about 50 miles one way to the closest facility, which is usually a community college, from us, where the training is located that we're utilizing. And actually what we found is many of our customers will need some support with that. So we typically try to provide some type of a fuel or either some type of mileage check, is what we do.

The process for that is once we identify that, then I have to come in and kind of brainstorm with Kristina to identify what funds do we have available to assist the customer with this. And we've been successful in providing that and it has definitely been promoting the success of the participants. Because many of them are, you know – it does work, and it does last throughout the duration of the program for them.

Additionally, some of the other barriers that we find, that we run into is in the programs. A lot of them will incorporate something; some sort of interview day where employers will come in and conduct interviews. So of course what we asked that the participants do is dress professionally and that of course sometimes can pose a major issue.

So we will definitely – we have different locations that we can refer them to and most of them do require a written referral or either for myself, a verbal referral to call over and say, hey, we have this customer coming over, they're going to need some help, here's the date. And then the customer has to kind of stand accountable from there and make the phone call over to set up their appointment because they are not – because their hours are based on volunteers; unfortunately, they're not open all day.

And most of our customers are in training until, you know, it's like a job. So they're there until 4:00, 4:30 p.m. So they have to schedule with them on their own and they will accommodate many times and they go over, and we'll get them set up with multiple interview outfits or professional attire. And that has proven to be pretty successful and they've all walked away pretty pleased.

OK. And additionally, some of the things that we also do to make sure we're addressing their needs are – all of the Michigan Works will go over, basically rotate weekly, going over to identify with the – to meet with the participants, just to identify what types of issues they may be having. Because they are pretty intense programs and their there all day, we try to go over – one person will go over weekly just to identify what needs – what are their needs, and then they come back and report.

And it's the needs of everyone, not just your specific customer. And then they come back, and we'll make contact with the particular case managers and just say, hey, I met with your customer, this is something that they were inquiring about, this is something that they need some additional support for. If it's something that you can identify because it's a general base, you know, like a basic need, maybe a timesheet, something of the sorts, we always try to go equipped with those additional timesheets so that we can address that and then we just may make their case manager have, you know, aware. And that's some of the things that we're doing with the Advanced Michigan Catalyst grant here.

So, I'll turn it back over to Amanda – oh, to Kristina, I'm sorry.

MS. KURTZ: Hello, this is Kristina again. So we did talk about, you know, first you always assess to see if the participant can be referred to a partner agency. If they need something that we cannot get addressed right away, we do review the process of the managers.

I can tell you that we have been dual enrolling all of our catalysts, the America's Promise participants into WIOA. We have had a displaced homemaker, a youth, and priority adults. And so mainly all of our support services has been running through the WIOA grants instead of the America's Promise dollars.

So after that's reviewed with the manager then we put in a process. So we're doing addition –similarly all the same support services that other people have addressed today. We do do car repairs. We absolutely – we can do three months of car insurance. We're able to do driver's licenses, tab renewals so they can have legal transportation.

One of the other things, too, that is different for us is that we've started to utilize Uber and Lyft for our participants. So we are actually doing a direct reimbursement to the participants after they show us proof of their Uber receipts or Lyft receipts. And we can do the reimbursements either by cash, because we are unique, and we have a petty cash requests that we're allowed to do, or we do a check directly to the participant for mileage. Any other type of support services that we do, if it's to a vendor like an auto mechanic, we do directly to the mechanic, so it's out of the participants hands.

The challenges as we talked about from the field, are also just that our participants are low income, the ones that we've had enrolled. And they are absolutely begging for mileage and auto repairs. So we do track the support services when they are given to us. We track them through our accounting department in back, and we do have a receipt process where we do have the customer come in, acknowledge that they received money and the check and what it was for.

Also, if we give them directly to a vendor, we will get the receipt directly from the vendor that services were paid, and then we document these all on our paperwork, of course, and our database that we utilize.

And then I will turn this back over to Amanda.

MS. KOSTY: Thank you Kristina and Kimberly. And I'm glad you started – that you guys shared a bit about kind of leveraging those resources and really trying to provide those services particularly as it relates to Uber and Lyft for your participants. I think a lot of what we heard from our two presenters was around making sure that they have strong partnerships.

So for the next few minutes I wanted to really facilitate a peer-to-peer discussion amongst all of you on the phone. We heard from two of our grantees, but I'd like to hear more from all of you in the chat and also potentially on the phone. So if you don't mind, I may do a little cold calling.

One of the questions we heard – we saw early on in the chat was from Rosanna Brown Simmons and if you – your question kind of at the beginning when you were introducing yourself, was asking how people are funding this and what do those partnerships look like? Rosanna, would you mind speaking a bit to what is – how you are approaching that currently and maybe we can get a little insight. And to unmute your phone and you can push \*6 to unmute your line, Rosanna. I'd love to hear kind of how you're currently approaching that in Delaware and then we can build off of that. If you don't mind.

ROSANNA BROWN SIMMONS: OK. The transportation issue that we have in Delaware is mainly in our Sussex County, in a rural area. And actually we're doing the same thing as the last of speakers, is that we're going through Delaware DOL for the WIOA transportation money that they have. So they have to qualify for those funding – for that funding. So if – what we're running up against is that people who still have a transportation problem and who do not meet the funding.

So, I'm actually in the midst of trying to – actually it's in our office of the president in the finance department, to kind of reevaluate our budget to see if we can appropriate more money for those folks who don't meet the WIOA criteria and provide. So those – we still use the MapQuest for those who are applying, they get the bus tickets. They have to actually attend, and they have to attend a certain period of time showing consistency in attendance before they are actually given the transportation money. And if they keep attending, they keep getting the funding.

MS. KOSTY: Thank you Rosanna. Is there anyone out there who is approaching that in a different way that may have some words of advice for those folks who aren't quite meeting the WIOA requirements? What other sources of funding are folks using to approach this? If you can just chat in the box really quick and say, I do, and then we can have you unmute your line, that would be really great.

I know one of the kind of – some of the partnerships folks have been talking about were with their employers. Is there anyone out there who's utilizing their employer partners as a way to also help provide supportive services in your community? OK, well we can continue to look for some of those kind of promising practices to share with everyone.

One of the other things we talked about during the presentation was talking about our case management point of view and how different people are approaching case management to make sure that folks are not slipping through the system.

I see Jenny typing and I know New River/Mount Rogers as Liz presented on has a really great system in terms of just tracking their participants and the various cases. I was curious to hear a little bit more from folks on the phone how they are doing that. I saw Mandy typing. Mandy, if you want to unmute yourself and you want to share what question you had or what answer – response you had you can push \*6 to unmute yourself. Mandy?

MANDY: Can you hear me? I'm sorry. I was just going to – I was just thinking through your last question about if we have utilized any employers to help us with supportive services. And I wouldn't necessarily call this a supportive service, but it was a partnership that we developed with one of our local partner – with one of our local employers who has hired a lot of our CNA students.

And because we were able to use America's Promise dollars and WIOA funds to help with our tuition for CNA, the employer agreed to directly give the tuition money that they would normally give to their employers, directly to their employees to kind of help with expenses while they were taking the program. So that was just one kind of unique thing that we worked on with one of our local employers.

But we heard from our students and that just really helped because sometimes they would have to cut their hours in order to take our class, in order to move up in their company. And it was just really helpful for them to have a little bit of extra money in their pockets that came directly from the employer. So it was just everybody was kind of working together to try to help that employee get a better job, get a better paying job. So I just wanted to share that.

MS. KOSTY: Thank you, Mandy. Can you remind me where you're from?

MANDY: Grand Rapids, Michigan. Grand Rapids Community College.

MS. KOSTY: Excellent.

MANDY: Yeah.

MS. KOSTY: Excellent. Thanks, Mandy, for sharing. And I saw Jenny had something to share. Jenny, do you want to unmute yourself and add on to that? \*6.

JENNY: Hi. Can you hear me?

MS. KOSTY: I can.

JENNY: Wonderful. I just wanted to share, you know, we're not working with our employers to specifically provide these types of supportive services, but we are working with them and we're finding them very helpful and a support capacity. And that we're asking them very specifically, what competency, what skill do you really need? And they work with us. We bring in some alternative training providers. We looked at the job descriptions.

We really tone in on the very specific welding skills or machining skill that they're looking for. Then it's very beneficial to the employer, but it's also really beneficial to us because it allows us and the participants to really make sure that the training that's in place is going to get them hired. So the employer kept taking some time, a great deal of time with us and have worked to help us and everyone around them really understand what's needed and what will help the participant get employed. It's not massive numbers, but what they have provided has been extremely beneficial to us as we've already covered the need for lots of different types of training and training partnerships to come in.

Or we would have continued working with the traditional training that was already in place and training people and them finishing the training and not getting a job. So you know, these relationships have been very valuable. Not in the traditional sense of you know, give Johnny a gas card, but it's really, let's really understand what competencies, what skills Johnny needs so he can get the job with the company that he really wants.

MS. KOSTY: Thanks, Jenny. One of the other questions I wanted to ask the participants are also, kind of, what other – we heard a bit about some of the partnerships in terms of funding, but what other additional services.

Now that you've heard some of the unique or more innovative services that some of our presenters have talked about, are there any additional services that people are able to provide through their partnerships, through leveraging funding that haven't been named yet? I know I learned about some new ones from our presentations. If you do, please do chat that in the box or you can go ahead and unmute your line at \*6. I see Andrea typing, if you went unmute your line and share, that's \*6.

ANDREA BAIRD: Hi there. This is Andrea Baird in Memphis, Tennessee at GMAC workforce. Some of the things that we've done here with our training providers, with our participants. Not quite sure if this kind of falls in this area, but one of the things that we do – so we partner obviously with the training providers that are offering the courses to the participants. But in addition to that, the other thing that we do is we encourage internships, co-ops, and the like for the students, the participants of the grant.

And what that does is it increases the exposure that the participants have within the industry. And in addition to that, what it allows is the employers get to see the actual participants that are going through the programs, the training programs, but it also encourages them to hire them on once they're done with their program. And a lot of the opportunities that the participants actually engage in, they are paid co-ops, internships, and the like. And so it's a really great opportunity for our participants to actually see, you know, the industry, the field.

And just recently we've actually, it was a really neat thing, a few of our co-op students that went in and had this opportunity, went in making a pretty decent part-time wage. They've completed their program and they ended up getting hired on full-time and now they're making over $20, $21 an hour.

So, I mean, it's just stuff like that when you partner with industry and you partner with – or encouraging co-ops and internships, it just gives the individuals going through these training programs that are part of the America's Promise grant further opportunities.

MS. KOSTY: And if you don't mind if I can ask you a quick follow up question, Andrea.

MS. BAIRD: Sure.

MS. KOSTY: Were these co-ops established before or when they established as part of this grant.

MS. BAIRD: They were, as far as I know some of them were before. But what happened was because we were – we basically got our movement and our drive specifically for the grant, the America's Promise Move Higher grant, which is medical device. We had a lot of industries saying we need individuals in this industry.

And so because they saw that the Department of Labor was willing to support that, they then in turn – we ended up getting way more opportunities for the individuals to actually have that co-op opportunity. So it was – it's kind of a – it was kind of a twofold. I mean, there were some of them already, but it just strengthened it, I believe that we had more, we had an increase of co-op opportunities.

MS. KOSTY: That's great. We're glad to hear that. Thank you so much for sharing.

MS. BAIRD: You're welcome.

MS. KOSTY: I wanted to give – if there's other folks online who haven't shared yet on any, the questions I asked before. Again, feel free to chat and we can call on you to unmute your line. But I did have another question related to kind of how your internal processes and policies have you implemented that have really supported your ability to provide supportive services to your clientele or to your participants in your program.

And I was curious to hear from maybe some folks who you haven't heard from yet. Carissa, would you mind sharing a bit about, kind of, how you guys are handling case management and in your grants? And then you can press \*6 to share.

CARISSA: At this point we have a team of about three people with our work skills navigator, our registrar, and myself as a special programs coordinator. And we have very small class sizes, round 15 to 18 for our core programs, so they have a lot of hands on services to create that direct pipeline to jobs. So we – we're a not for credit program and we work really closely with our business industry to build our curriculum to exactly what their needs are. We're a very accelerated program so all of our programs are less than 20 weeks long, so we get them in, we get them trained, and get them out to the industry quickly. So with all that wraparound services and since they're with us for such a short amount of time, we can kind of help them out with the fiduciary issues if they have that just to get them through the program. As well as like food needs, even like a flat tire fixed, they need some extra gas cards. Anything really, if they can stick it out, we do the best we can to really push them into the industry and get them through the program. The industries were mainly manufacturing right now. We have an engineering technician program, a biomedical technician program, a machinist program, an ROV drone operator technician program, and we're starting a craft brewing technician in January.

MS. KOSTY: Great. Thank you so much.

CARISSA: Yes, of course.

MS. KOSTY: Thank you for sharing. I think there may be another question for you. I see somebody typing. Hold on before you jump of the line. I see somebody typing. I think that's really great to hear more about how people are engaging employers. Oh, Jenny wanted you to know that maybe you could share more about these programs in the future, so as you're building all these new programs, so we'll definitely take that into consideration planning moving forward.

CARISSA: Yeah, and of course you can always share my information if anybody has any questions.

MS. KOSTY: Absolutely. Great. So I think we heard a lot today from our various participants in this webinar. And as we're coming close to our time, I wanted to make sure to be respectful of everyone's time and move forward. But there's a number of services that are being offered and if you guys have any services that you're offering that haven't been mentioned yet, please do chat those in the box. I think this is a great opportunity to brainstorm new ways that people can provide services.

Moving forward, I wanted to make sure that you are aware of some of the resources that the TA team has been working on to share with you. If you visit WorkforceGPS, we will in the next couple months continue to upload new resources all the time. In particular, our coaches have been working to design tool kits, which are basically shortened versions of – these are not 20-page documents, these are not a white papers, these are shortened, pre-vetted resources that we think might be beneficial to grantees, specifically in the America's Promise grant program.

And then we also have been sharing success stories. So today we heard a lot from New River/Mount Rogers, but they also have a success story that's recently been published on WorkforceGPS. So please be sure to find that under the America's Promise Community. In addition to that, some resources related to innovative supportive services. Our coaching team again looks through WorkforceGPS and looked at other federal grants tee what are some of the key resources that might really help you if you're looking for support in case management, if you're looking on how to develop internal supportive services policies, here some case management, again, ideas to share.

These were some of the many, many resources on WorkforceGPS we identified might be very particular to the America's Promise grants grantees. Separately, and I know Jenny shared during the presentation a link to – MIT has a living wage calculator and that is what they have been using to help support some of their financial counseling with their participants.

So if you haven't seen that, it's not on this slide deck, but you can see it in the chat box from Jenny there. And as a reminder, this PowerPoint is available online on WorkforceGPS. You can also download it from the file share right now. So you can have direct access before leaving the building, but that will be published very shortly.

Any last questions from the one on the, on the call, you can feel free to chat in the box really quickly. And other than that, I think that will be it.

So I'd like to take a second to think all of our presenters again today. Liz Annis, Kristina Kurtz, Kimberly Allen-Bradfield, I really appreciate you guys taking the time to share what's going on in your community. And I'm going to put their contact information up on the screen right now. If you have any questions for them directly, feel free to reach out to them.

And as always, if you have any presentation – or questions directly for America's Promise, for Department of Labor, please, please, please always feel free to email the America's Promise mailbox and somebody will get back to you.

So thank you all again and we appreciate you taking time out of your day to be here. I hope you enjoy the rest of your afternoon.

(END)