**WorkforceGPS**

**Transcript of Webinar**

**SWFI-Data-Driven Decision Making: Tools to Review and Manage Performance**

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LAURA CASERTANO: I want to welcome everyone to today's webinar. I'm going to turn things over to your moderator today, Monica Evers Antonio. She's a SWFI grant program lead for the employment and training administration. Monica, take it away.

MONICA EVERS ANTONIO: Thanks, Laura. Hello, everyone. We are really excited about today's passage on data-driven decision making. Performance reporting is a very important part of grant management.

Now that you are well into the third year of your program, you are serving participants, enrolling participants and training programs and placing them into employment. It's important to emphasize that your performance is not just about tracking data and reporting outcomes to DOL on a quarterly basis. We also encourage you to use your performance data in ways that can improve your grant project. So to talk about all of this, your presenters for today, we have a lot of presenters.

From the Employment and Training Administration at the National Office, you have myself again, Monica Evers Antonio, as well as Kristen Milstead and Timmy Dudley to talk about your performance data and how you can use your own data to measure progress. We also have a SWFI grantee, one of your colleagues, OAI and from OAI we have Molly Dowling, Amanda Allen, Sandra Stasia Gore and Sue Gilbert. OAI will talk about how they track and use their own data to measure and build on their grant success.

We also have the evaluation team represented here by Christina Yancey, Jenny Daily, and Joseph Gaspar. They will talk about the bigger picture of how your performance data to report informed evaluation.

Performance reporting is definitely an important piece to managing your H-1B grant and it's always a huge topic of interest. We appreciate all the hard work and your earnest efforts to ensure accurate reporting in a timely manner, from learning about the LIP (sp) system to how to upload your data files and generate a QPR form to understanding the aggregation rules that make up your QPR form. And finally, in making the final submission of your quarterly report.

For today, we will talk about performance data for your SWFI grant project. We'll discuss how the SWFI grants are performing to date on the outcomes, how your performance data can inform a data driven decision making process when managing your SWFI grants, tips and strategies also for using the data to do these things effectively. We've also developed a progress indicator tool to help you see your data in a way that is a bit more interactive than viewing your data in files, spreadsheets and QPR forms.

We will be demonstrating that progress indicator tool today. Again, OAI, a SWFI grantee, will share how they track performance outcomes and how they use their data for process improvement. We will also hear from the evaluation team, the connections between performance and evaluation. As time permits, we will have question and answer sessions to give you an opportunity to ask your performance questions.

So now we're going to talk about the benefits of using your data effectively. Last year the SWFI TA team presented on using data to make decisions about recruitment and outreach. SWFI grantees have access to lots of useful data including your performance data. So let's talk about the value of reporting your quarterly performance outcomes.

As you know, performance reports are due each quarter and contain detailed information about your grant activities including leveraged resources, strategic partnership activities, timelines, grant outcomes, promising practices, success stories, and technical assistance needs.

All of this information is valuable. Tracking your performance and outcomes can help your organization sustain and grow your workforce development strategy. From the National Office perspective, performance data is used to illustrate your success. Your quarterly reports allow us to share your success with national and local stakeholders. This includes Congress, DOL leadership, the government accountability office as well as your own stakeholders across the nation.

Regularly reviewing your performance data allows you to develop continuous improvement processes to ensure that you are meeting the needs of program participants and business partners. Your quarterly performance data is your check points to let you know that you are on the right track of meeting your outcomes. There is a huge opportunity for you to analyze your program based on what the data is telling you.

And we will talk more about this later on in the presentation. You can also use your performance data to promote your program, to engage participants, employers, and other partners. Potential participants may be more willing to enroll in your training program if your performance data can guarantee successful training completions and employment outcomes. And potential partners are more willing to join if you can illustrate that your program is effective and successful.

Tracking performance outcomes also helps to ensure sustainability of your grant program and evaluate the effectiveness of future grants. Having mechanisms in place to track and report your performance outcomes should be an integral part of your sustainability plan. If you can show through your performance data that this program is effective for the SWFI program, you can have the opportunity to replicate this program in other industries or new target populations for future projects.

In addition, as we all know, being able to show a history of successful past performance is always an added plus for future grant solicitation. And lastly, performance data helps us identify areas of opportunity. Discretionary grant programs allow flexibility for grantees to propose and implement innovative strategies for training and employment. Therefore reporting successful outcomes will help all of us to identify effective programs that could be replicated and meets various needs in other parts of the country.

Performance reporting insures program activities are not just affective but have the greatest impact and improved the lives of many people across the country. Just remember that great programs plus great data plus great outcomes equals greater opportunities for American workers.

Now, your performance data is not just about reporting to DOL. We encourage you to use your performance data as the map in your glove box. Did you know that your performance data can inform grant management processes? Your performance data is a map that you can use to assess your SWFI project. Evaluating the effectiveness of your program by reviewing your performance data is one method you can use to make important decisions that will achieve your program goals.

This review process should be done at least on a quarterly basis depending on what makes sense for your organization, this can be done before or after the last reporting quarter at your quarterly stakeholder meetings or during weekly team meeting. It should also involve all members of your team, not just the executive level, authorized representative program director, but other staff including your case managers, job developers, business developers, and data analysts.

Your performance data is the tool to analyze the success of your training program. We ask grantees to provide annual target outcomes with several performance measures such as total participants served, began training and completed training and entered employment. Grantees should hopefully examine your performance data to analyze the effectiveness of your program and draw various conclusions about your programs' training design and delivery.

As you measure your quarterly performance against your annual targets, you may want to ask yourself, are you where you thought you should be? We'll provide more examples later in this Webinar to help through your data analysis process. Lastly, reviewing your performance data on a quarterly basis is the key to achieving your performance goals. It's great when your performance data shows that you are on track to meeting your performance goals, but what happens when there are gaps in your performance in the last quarter's data?

What do you need to adjust to attain your performance goals? Based on what you learn, you can take the opportunity to improve various aspects of your program before the end of the grant life cycle. While you are reviewing your performance data with your team, it's important to stop and ask these important questions.

What should you already know? Who are you serving? What is your training design? What did you expect to achieve? Having a clear picture of your end goal or destination, will help you manage your performance throughout the grant life cycle. What are your target outcomes? These are the outcomes indicated in your grant proposal statement of work. In addition, are there other goals not reported to DOL?

You could have internal goals for which your performance data can be used to illustrate the success of your program. Where do your grant performance outcomes to date? Are you where you thought you should be? One of the reasons that we look at your performance is to measure it against your target numbers. This is mainly to identify opportunities for technical assistance. As you conduct your own quarterly analysis, we encourage you to do the same.

Compare your performance outcome to date against your target outcome to identify areas where you need additional support. And what else do you need to know? Your understanding of the H-1B performance recording definition is integral to the assessment and evaluation process. What are the reporting definitions that could inform your analysis? Also keep in mind that the QPR aggregation rules are informed by specific data elements and the code value inserts for each data elements.

OK. So now we have a polling question. Please answer: we review our performance data. Do you do it every week? Biweekly? Every month? Quarterly? Or never? OK. Seems like we got a few that says every month and one person biweekly, so no one, never. So that's good. Very good. All right. Now, I'm going to turn things over to Kristen to talk about the data that you have reported to date.

KRISTEN MILSTEAD: Thank you, Monica. We're going to take a look at some of what you all turned in in aggregate. This is the SWFI grant performance to date. And this is a little bit about how we look at it every quarter. One of the things that Monica talked about is looking at who you were serving.

So let's take a look at what that looks like in an aggregate. Total SWFI grantees have served 2,760 participants as of the quarter ending 9/30/2018 out of those serve almost half were youth or young adults, age 17 to 29. 2,415 or almost all of those served have been low income. Then there were 137 who has limited English proficiency and 260 with criminal records. As far as employment status at participation goes, 1,603 are unemployed, 959 are underemployed and only 19 are incumbent workers.

This slide shows the racial and ethnic background of the participants. As you can see, the three largest demographic groups are in order, black or African American, followed by white, and then Hispanic and Latino participants. We can also do the demographic breakouts for Asian, American Indian and Alaskan Native, and Native Hawaiian or other Pacific islanders and our 37 participants who categorize themselves as more than one way.

As far as education status goes, about two thirds or 66% have a high school diploma or GED, 15 percent has started some type of education post high school, but haven't completed any credentials, 5 percent have completed a certification license or certificate or some type of credential that have not a degree, 14 percent have completed at least one degree.

That would be an associate's, a bachelor's or an advanced degree. So if you look at the yellow pink slides combined that would be 19 percent of the people being served already have at least one credential or degree. So combined these three slides tell us a little bit about who is in the SWFI program right now.

Now let's take a look at how the participants are doing so far and compare their progress against the targets you set for them. This chart shows the total number of participants served, the total number that have begun training, and the total number that have completed training as of September 30th, 2018 in each of the blue bars. You can compare those numbers against the year three targets which are represented by the orange line.

Let's see the data shown in this chart reflect to what was reported in that 9/30/2018 quarter which is one quarter into yours. So you think about that. That means there's still three quarters left to achieve those targets that are shown in the SWFI orange line. I've mentioned earlier in the presentation, this would be grants have served 2,760 participants to date.

You can see here that the target for the end of year three is 6,128 – 1,626 participants have begun training to date and 2,795 is the target to achieve by the end of year three. Let's see what's happening with employment data.

So 593 participants in SWFI have entered employment to date. You can compare this against the year three target of 2,453 you can also see that 343 of the employment placements were training related. No target was established for those. However, reviewing that information can still be useful for other purposes by comparing this outcome against the participants that can be counted in it. It can provide you with information about whether a program has been successful for participants and where improvements can be made.

So for example, by comparing this number, against the number of those who entered employment, you can see how many of the employment placements were training related. For 50 percent of those who entered employment or 343 out of that 593 entered training related employment.

This slide shows how many grantees have achieved certain percentages of their targets – serve for year – served – for the third year with one quarter lap. So this one is looking at the grantee participants served. Two grantees are already within 75 percent of their year three targets with only one quarter elapsed. For grantees are within 50 to 74 percent of their target served for the third year. And seven grantees are 25 to 49 percent of their target served for year three. So again, there's still three quarters left in the third year. As we look at this snapshot. So no grantee is behind on their target served.

And this is a slide that everyone finds interesting despite can give you a sense of where you fall compared to the other SWFI grantees for the percentage of year three target achieved for participants began training. It's important to know that this represents percent of target for years three and that's the – remember the data is only through September 30th, 2018 so there's still three quarters left of year three to achieve the targets. This chart is organized from highest to lowest on the percentage of participants who began training. The range on that outcome is 11 percent to 115 percent and what that means is for having a target of 115 percent is that OAI has already exceeded their target for year three for participants begun training.

The average here is 43 percent as you can see at the bottom total and eight grantees percentages fall above that average. So remember this just shows one outcome target. You likely want to check your own progress on met on all of the targets against – or yeah. All the outcomes against the grant targets. So this is all the data that we were going to show today that we have ready for you today, but there's so much more you can do with it and I'm going to turn it back over to Monica to talk about some tips about how to look at your own data in ways that can help you monitor your progress and make some more informed decisions about your program.

MS. ANTONIO: OK. Thank you, Kristen. So before we get to the next section, we want to have another participant polling question. After reviewing this performance data, I am not surprised, I knew exactly where we are meeting our target outcomes, surprised I didn't know where we stood, or not sure I need more information. OK. So the majority of you are saying that you're not surprised. We have some that are surprised.

OK. Very good. All right. So now we're going to go ahead and move on to using this data. So all of this information can seem a bit overwhelming at times, so what are some questions you can ask when looking at the outcomes of your data?

First, what is happening with this data? By reviewing the data that Kristen provided, we can see that there is a large gap between the targets and the actual numbers for SWFI overall in some areas, but how does this look for your grant project? How close are you to your training completion target? Keeping an eye on your data to determine where you may be falling short can be important, so learning about what areas you might need to improve.

For example, when listing active relationships between all of the outcomes as well as who the program is serving and whether their needs are being met, you can provide clues or you can be provided clues about where resources can be targeted to better meet the needs of the participants and meet the target. Is there a reason why participants either haven't completed yet or are not completing the program? Are they still enrolled? Are they dropping out? What do they need to be successful?

How would you address these areas for improvement? What have you done or what will you do to resolve it? You might want to ask yourself questions such as what supportive services are you providing? Are they targeted to participants at the right times in the program so that they can successfully progress through to completion? What additional barriers might participants face that can be addressed? These are a few of the many questions you may start to ask yourself about how to address areas that need improvement.

Once you have looked over in your own data and found areas where improvement can be made, you can begin to devise a data informed solution for how you will resolve the issue. We just talked about a targeted analysis based on your grants data. So when you are making program decisions, there are additional factors you can use to learn how program design is affecting your participants.

For example, do you need to expand your outreach and recruitment effort to increase your program enrollment? Is the length of your training program appropriate for the length of the grant program? Would you still be able to capture credential outcome? Will participants be able to complete the program within the life of the grant?

Will you be able to effectively track employment outcomes for participants? And beyond that, some of the external factors that could be influencing your data are challenges to obtaining employment and then the evolving economy or market challenges and H-1B industries and occupations that could affect your program design.

Tracking your participants over time to see how your decisions have made an impact is one way to learn if you need to make course corrections early on. So based on your unique needs, there could be several strategies used to change course as a result of making these changes to the way you manage your program, you want to see if there are ways to improve your systems and processes in your program design. Here are some examples and again you choose the strategies that work best for you.

Perhaps you can make changes to your recruitment, outreach, and intake processes to attract and retain participants. You could make changes in the way you manage your grant program, which would involve your organization's leadership, program staff, and other stakeholders. And then there's always making changes to your statement of work. A modification to your statement of work takes careful consideration and should be discussed with your federal private officer or FPO. Now I will turn it over to Timmy who will provide information on tools you can start using immediately to track and analyze your data. Timmy?

TIMMY DUDLEY: Thanks Monica. As Monica said, I'm going to talk a little bit about performance data progress indicator tool that can be used to track your data. As mentioned earlier, all grantees have outcomes targets that were set forth in your statement of work and many if not most grantees have internal targets as well. Using spreadsheet software like Microsoft Excel and others, you can create a tool to track this progress problems. The following tool is an example of this and how this can be used for data driven decision making.

As you can see here, this is the input for the tools. What you will be able to do is you fill in the cells below. It's not necessary to fill in every cell. However, for more cells that you fill in, the more useful the tool will be. You'll enter most – your most recent cumulative aggregate participant data for the grant into the current cumulative results cells and then based on data reported, and this is based on data reported in your quarter – progress reports quarter – every quarter, which includes the from your H-1B QPR form.

But it also can be data from your narrative report or internal grantee records. In addition, the data that you enter for the grants is the column days projected goals from your statement works or it can be goals there from your internal grantee records as well. Once data's entered in the input tab key ratio results reflected in an output tent.

All right. All right. And when you do that, your data will be visualized with the numbers you're able to use these visuals optimization techniques where your QPR outcomes would your targets. Here are the three examples that I'm about to go a little bit deeper into just the outcome progression charts, your process indicator table and then also your credential attainment employment outcomes.

For your outcome progression charts, the participant progression chart shows the number of people that have achieved each type of grant funded service in blue and the number of additional participants needed to reach the target, the target goals of the grant indicating the new grant statement of work, and they'll show those in green. Blue is what you've actually completed outcomes and the green is what your target goal is. This can also be used for target populations as well with those outcome goals.

OK. Here we have the process program indicator tables, the table in the middle includes two process indicators which are used to measure outcomes for the number of participants who complete training after starting training and who've attained the credential after the completing trained. To look at the current ratio versus the target ratio columns, for each of the indicators to ratios are provide.

The first is titled with the current ratio and represents the percentage of participants that have successfully moved in the first service listed to the second. The second is titled – (inaudible) – represents 10 percent of participants who are targeting the grant statement of work or the grantee's internal records successfully moved from the first service listed to the second service listed.

Because the grants are still operating, the data present in the current ratio is likely to be lower than it actually the case of your current data, it's just because we report from the previous border. Takes time for the data to be collected and reported and effort must be made to check the information for accuracy. It also takes participants time to move from one service point to the next. For example, training may take place anywhere from a few days to several months and also takes participants who have completed training several weeks to find employment.

Now look at your credential attainment and employment outcomes chart. The first three of these charts at the bottom compares the percentage of participants who completed training both with and without receiving your credential. The chart comparison number – the next chart compares the number of participants who are employed workers at the start of the program and who has advanced into a new position as incoming workers.

The next chart compares the number of participants that were employed when they entered the program, subsequently obtained employment. And then finally the final chart is grantees who use this chart and formats to track progress or other targets that you set in turn. So looking at these four outcomes, we can be used for other outcomes that are in your QPR. So as was mentioned earlier, this file is actually shared. So if you want to take a deeper look into this tool, please do. Thank you.

MS. ANTONIO: All right. Thank you, Timmy. Now we will hear from SWFI grantee OAI who will discuss how they will – how they use their data to inform their SWFI projects. Starting with Molly Dowling. Molly?

MOLLY DOWLING: Thanks Monica, Christian, Timmy and the entire SWFI DOL team for asking us to participate in today's Webinar. We're really excited about the topic of data driven decision making and are happy to talk a little about our experience implementing it at our organization.

Again, I'm Molly Dowling, Executive Director here at OAI. First I want to share with you a brief background about OAI. We're headquartered in Chicago and serve job seekers and incumbent workers across the country. We're a nationally recognized pioneer in job training and economic development. Our work opens career pathways, fields business success, promotes health safety and the environment and supports community development.

And for more than 40 years we've been delivering real economic benefits to an individuals, employers, and communities across the country. You can learn more about our work on our website that is listed there on the slide and we'd be happy to talk more about everything we're doing with anyone of you. Please reach out.

So five strategies define our approach to all of our work. Number one, we identify and target employer needs in key growth sectors. Number two, we developed high quality training that leads to marketable skills and credentials. Number three, we provide services that close the gap between wanting a job and getting one. Four, we partner with communities and organizations to build on strengths, avoid waste and increased impact. And five, we measure that impact in real terms, credentials earned, skills learned, placement, retention, and promotion, wage growth.

We capture this impact through our database system and make strategic decisions about program evaluation and management based on our outcomes data. So also by way of background, our SWFI program is operated out of our Chicago Southland satellite office located in Park Forest, Illinois. We are targeting the healthcare manufacturing and IT sectors for the SWFI program and constantly recruiting and serving customers from throughout the region.

The tracking data is incredibly important to our organization for this program and for all of the initiatives we lead. I'm going to now hand off to our senior director of operations Amanda Alan to describe the data management evolution here at OAI.

AMANDA ALAN: Hello everyone, this is Amanda Alan. I'm going to talk a little bit about where we have started with our data management, where we are in a couple next steps or some things we're working on. So from 2002 to 2017, we used an Access-based database which was customized and we called it the OAI track. And at the time it was wonderful and it did basically what we needed.

But in 2017 we realize we needed to switch to a cloud-based system we needed to do and be able to pull reports and dashboards and just be able to make better decisions on our programs based on our data. Using the Access database, we weren't getting all the information we needed in a visual way. So in 2017, we put out a bid to work with different contractors to help us customize the system. And in the end we chose the Salesforce database. Now there are so many different CRM systems you can use.

That's the one that worked best for us. And while we were looking for a system, there were a few components that we knew we needed. And so if you're looking for a system or wanting to implement something, some of the things that are important to us with something that was customizable, we have – at OAI, we have three different departments and we serve incumbent workers and those seeking employment.

So we needed something to work for both needs, we needed something cloud based that can be accessed offsite. We needed full integration for grant management, participant information and tracking and then also putting in all of our courses and our goals.

Reporting and dashboarding was very important and something we wanted to be able to do easily and something we could start using and meetings, which we'll talk about here in a little bit. And then an app feature was not – there was like the lowest on the list, but it's really a great feature for some of our job developers or some of our case managers when they're out onsite, they can pull up the app on their phone and look up contact information and training information and all of that.

So we ended up going with a Salesforce system, it took about six months to customize, and then probably I would say about three months after that to really get working in the training and onboard. So right now the dashboarding and reporting that we're using, we're going to talk about here in a minute, but it's – it has helped us be able to tell our story and make decisions in real time and be able to report back to funders with accurate information.

So some, the next step things that we're working on at OAI is to optimize the reporting and data collection. So really cleaning up our system, creating new reports that can look at the overall picture of our organization. We're also looking into potentially bringing on a fellow for the University of Chicago to help us with some data analysis and take our information further to do things like impact studies, the return on investment studies, and then our other wishful hopeful down the road thinking is to put on our enrollment forms and evaluation forms online.

So we redo some of our data entry and our actual trainees would be entering the data via online as they come in. So that those are where we're headed. And next I'm going to introduce Doctor Sandra Stacia Gore and she's going to speak about how we use some of our data in our meetings and our reports to make programmatic decisions and to impact our programs. Sandra?

SANDRA STACIA GORE: Thank you, Amanda. Thank you, Amanda. Good morning everyone. My name is Sandra Stacia Gore. I'm the director of OAI Chicago Southland. And I'm the one also responsible for the SWFI program over this. So we have viewed the Salesforce data very effectively in informing the work that we do with SWFI in the Southlands. So we've – the data is retrieved from Salesforce. We use it in several ways, very intentionally to inform out work and then checkout performance benchmarks.

We on a biweekly basis have have a SWFI program meeting where each benchmark is addressed. For instance, we would pull out the number of participants enrolled in an LPN program – (inaudible) – those in manufacturing. And then we would analyze the data to see if what's really happening and if we have more OCR agreements with manufacturing companies. For instance, we can make the determination that will probably need to enroll more welding people in welding class as opposed to more LPNs. So we make those kinds of decision on a biweekly basis in terms of just operations of the program.

Then on a monthly basis, we also use the data from Salesforce. And to do a finance meeting with top management dive, Molly, Amanda, the financial people. So they tell me where how much money was spent, where we add those benchmark on time timeline for the grants. So that tells us what we should do first and with child care we need to – and we have enough money left to spend on childcare? We capture all of that data in Salesforce and we're able to retrieve it in real time to make those kinds of decisions.

So also, very importantly, we use this report to not only tell the story to our funders, we also use it to do some reporting with the board of directors meeting. And I do have that right here. This is an example of how we have used the data to tell our story. This particular case is one where we told the story to our board of directors in the last board meeting, if you look on there, we pulled the chart from the dashboard of Salesforce and we put it on there and we told the story of what's happening with SWFI in terms of number of enrollments, number of people trained, number completed, and such like that.

So that is how we intentionally use the data from Salesforce. So at this point I'm going to send it over to – now I'm going to pass it on to to Sue Gilbert who is responsible for actually doing a whole lot of inputting the data into Salesforce for SWFI. All right. Sue, thank you.

SUE GILBERT: Good morning everybody. My name is Sue Gilbert. I am the program coordinator with OAI. And Sandra was explaining, this is our domain database that we are using on this. When you guys see where we enter our participants into our CRM, this captures everything from their address, phone number, their race, their gender and a bunch of – a lot of stuff that we report on them.

And here, once we've entered the participants into our CRM, we use – we assign grants to the participants. We show the date that they were enrolled and we also track all their supportive services, whether it be gas cards or uniforms, suits, whatever the participant may need. And this allows us to track this in real time as well. Once again, we enter their training sessions, we track their credentials that they've earned, the date, and whether they completed their training successfully or not.

We also enter the employers into this database as well. We attach them to their placements once they completed their training and started employment. There's also a track their retention should will give us their 30 day, 60 day, and 90 day mark and so forth. So we just go in there and check it off and you know that they've been – their exact dates for their retention. And all this comes down to the reporting that we use for DOL.

So we're able to use Excel connector within Salesforce, which transforms all the information from Salesforce into an excel spreadsheet they we're able to upload into DOL. And these are the reporting, the pro elements for the pro. So they give us the information right there. It's just kind of what the spreadsheet will look like, send reports to the DOL and uploading. Thank you.

MS. ANTONIO: Thank you, Molly and Sandra, Amanda and Sue for your very informative presentation. I'll turn things over now Timmy to go ahead and talk about SWFI policy and performance FAQs.

MR. DUDLEY: Thanks, Monica. We wanted to take this opportunity to go over some of the performance Frequently Ask Questions. Obviously we have the office hours every quarter, but this is also a good opportunity just to go over a few of them that really come up quite a few times.

In regards to a request to change the definition of performance outcome measures on the QPR, these outcome measures were set forth in the funding opportunity announcement and grantees were scored on those responses.

Since they're required for all the H-1B grants, we need to maintain consistency for all of those grantees so we don't offer the opportunity to change those on your QPR. Participants served versus participants who began training. I think a lot of grantees are really understanding this pretty well now overall but participants served are those who are eligible for the program and also receive grant money services.

Now please do understand that this goes past the initial tried to understand whether or not they'll become part of the program to become someone who's a participant served. So it does have to go pass that. For participants who began training, they have to actually be involved with a training program.

Understand there's two different data elements to record these so they don't have to be the same number because you can have somebody who was served but the not become train. And you can have people obviously who were a part of both. For recording grant funded services, we've gotten quite a few questions just about when to record records assessment services, the case management service, in your funding opportunity announcement.

This goes into a lot of detail about what are the specific difference between those different funding services. But also in our recent October Webinar, performance Webinar 3.0 we went into detail about a lot those. So if you are having some confusion about what falls into which category, please do take another look at the Webinar from October – the performance Webinar 3.0.

For reporting participants exiting the H-1B program, please do understand that they all won't show up immediately once they exit the program. If you put the date down, it does take 90 days past the date that you put down that they exited the program to show up to date exit the program. Now if if you're not sure if someone has exited the program or not, they they will count as extra wants 90 days have passed from their last grant funded services they received and then you can record them within your CSV file as have exited the program.

Also for reporting credentials and measurable skills gains for each participant you are allowed to report up to three credentials and this doesn't have to be one credential for each training program. All three credentials can't come from one part of the training program and for measurable skills gains you can record up to two for each participant and do understand that these credentials and measurable skill gains can overlap. So it's not – it is possible and that is fine. Do you have further questions about these? Please do let us know. We can go into detail if you have any specific instances that have actually occurred within your program.

All right. Now we want to talk about one of the more recent pro data elements that we added for the reporting quarter ending 9/30/18 and that's a pro 18/13 date completed during program participation and education or training program leading to a recognized post-secondary credential or employment.

Well, we do want for grantees to understand is that this pro data element is used to report program completion for all participants that complete all the required training components. Now it does mention credentials and then also employment within the data element. But we do have separate data elements to record credentials as was mentioned, 1800, 1802, 1804 and then we do have some other data elements for employ which was 2118 and 2126 which are date entered employment and then also inter training religion employment.

You can please refer to the H-1B training activity outcomes diagram, which kind of shows a flow chart of how this goes from participant served to participants trained to credentials and then also all the way down to completed the program per 18/13. But the key thing that we want grantees to understand is that for 18/13 they did not have to have received a credential or employment even though most grantees will have received one or the other. They don't have to be recorded for 18/13, all they have to have done is completed all of their obligations for the program; OK?

All right. I'll give it back to you Monica.

MS. ANTONIO: All right. Thank you, Timmy. This portion of the program, we're going to take a pause and give participants an opportunity to ask questions about anything that we've discussed so far. If you can, if you have questions, please enter them in the chat window. It's in the lower left of your screen. You can continue if you don't have questions right this moment, we will have another opportunity to ask, but if you have some now that you'd like us to address, please do so.

I'll pause just for a minute and not seeing any activity, I will go ahead and move on. Again, if you have questions that come up while we're doing the next portion of the presentation, just put them in the chat box and we should be able to have time to address them either at the end of the presentation or we can definitely do that offline as well.

All right. So now I'm going to move things over. I'm turning it over to the evaluation team and starting us off. We'll be Jen Daly. Jen?

JEN DALY: Thank you. Good afternoon everyone. We are your last presentation of the day but we hope you can hold on because we're going to share with you some important information about how the data you're already collecting can be used for evaluation purposes and also how it will be used for the evaluation of your SWFI grants that is currently being sponsored by my office, the Chief Evaluation Office, which is at the Department of Labor. This evaluation is being done through a contract with the research from Westat.

The director of the evaluation and some of you may know is on the Webinar, Joe Gaspar. And he will be talking to us in a few minutes to share some updates on the evaluation. And most of you know, the – we're evaluating tech hire as well. But today obviously we will talk to you about how this is relevant to your SWFI grants.

And we would like to talk about the differences between performance data and the evaluation data and explain how and why you would want to leverage your evaluation for your continuous learning goals. Lastly we'll explain more about the evaluation you are currently participating in including some of the immediate, next steps.

We thought it was important to start with some common definitions so that we are all on the same page. When we talk about performance measurement, we're referring to the ongoing monitoring and reporting of program accomplishment, particularly progress towards any pre-established goals. And performance measures can help address the type or level of program activities conducted, the direct products or services delivered by program.

What was the results of those products and services? You're already familiar with performance data through your requirement to submit quarterly progress reports with your grant. And of course, program evaluation is a systematic collection of information about the activities, characteristics, and outcomes of programs to make judgments about that program, improve program effectiveness and/or informed decisions about future program development. Some types of program evaluation include implementation, which is part of your evaluation, outcome evaluation, impact evaluation and cost benefit, cost effectiveness analysis.

In this table we highlight some of those differences for the reevaluation and performance measurements when considering issues of coverage, information costs – such as information, sorry. Cost and utility. These are general descriptions of differences and are not meant to indicate that this is always the case. In terms of coverage, evaluations are often done on only a few programs or certain program components; while performance measurement can cover more aspects of the program. In terms of coverage, evaluations are often done on only a few programs or certain program components.

The depth of information for evaluation is greater since the focus is often on getting a better understanding of the process for determining the reasons before or good performance. Performance measures only help to tell the score and not why you're seeing the results that you're seeing. Costs or evaluations, may be high for each study while performance measurement costs tend to be spread out over time. And finally, when looking at the issue of utilities, program evaluations contribute to major program decisions while performance and measurement is used for continuous program improvement.

Again, these are – your performance measurement is answering a different question then a question in an evaluation might want to answer. Here's some examples. For example, while performance measure may ask what percentage of participants completed program services compared to last quarter and evaluation would ask how does the completion of training vary by participant characteristics?

Or performance measurement is asking what is the employment status of program completors evaluation may ask, what is the employment status of training completors compared to those who did not complete the training? Again, it's important to remember that performance measurement is more about monitoring progress of a certain program. While evaluation is more concerned with the dramatic results of the program.

There's a lot you can do for your program and the future program design and implementation using your evaluation results. You can refine measures and definitions or clarify links in the logic models of your existing programs, because an evaluation can also be used for interim changes during your program and you don't necessarily have to wait to the end to incorporate the results into your program planning and implementation.

You can share your results widely with partners, grantees and policymakers who would be interested. You can further improve your applications and designs or similar objectives the populations served and integrate with other evidence for learning and program recruiting on the ground.

Again, something that can be iterative. And you can use the final results and findings of your evaluations as a way to advocate for further funding or grant applications that are tailored to what you did or did not learn from the evaluation of your program.

Increased focus on evidence based policy making also emphasizes the need for continuous learning and program improvement on the ground. It's really important to build evidence where it does not exist and continue to build upon what we already know. For those programs that we don't have evidence on, we want to compare the experiences of the fields as evaluations that build knowledge. It's important to test theory and practice in the field to understand its impact on those that we serve.

Competitive grants program, grant solicitation, oh, sorry, I thought I didn't get there. I have for you, competitive program grant solicitations and more frequently including evaluation and evidence based components. Participating in as you are right now and having experience with evidence based continuous learning activities could assist you not only in improving your program but also in the grant making process. Evidence based tier programs – grant programs are one example of how evaluation is currently being integrated into grant solicitation.

Higher grant amounts can be provided for evidence based applications and rigorous strong evaluations. Grant solicitations also encourage the adoption of proven evaluation strategies and support new innovations that require rigorous evaluation.

You can see here some examples of evidence based grads that DOL has funded including yours. And now I'll turn it over to my colleague Christina Yancey to talk more about the metaphysics of participating in the evaluation.

Christina Yancey: Hello, everyone. My name is Christine Yancey. I'm from the Chief Evaluation Office with Jen Daly and I'm overseeing the National Evaluation for Strengthening Working Families Initiative and TechHire.

And I just wanted to emphasize before I turned over this portion of our talk to the director of the national evaluation, the real time value I think you can get out of being participants in this evaluation, your program data number one is directly being used and integrated with data that Joe's team is going to be collecting to inform an impact and implementation evaluation of your particular grant program.

And while the results from this study won't be finalized for a couple more years, we do anticipate having some interim findings. But more generally I think it's – it will be helpful for all of you to keep in mind that as these results are come to bear, this will improve the ability to communicate about your program models in terms of an evidence base structure. And we'll go on to the next slide just to provide some high level overview of exactly what the nature of the evaluation will be and what type of evidence we will be building related to your particular programs.

And Joe, we'll go ahead and walk through the specific ways that your program data will be combined with other data so that we're able to answer evaluation questions, which tend to allow us to look at results over the longer term.

We also are able to look at the differences that you may observe with those that are receiving your program services and compare them to individuals that don't receive those services, that we not only can look at the improvements for the people that are receiving the services, but to be able to compare those to similarly situated individuals that are not receiving the services and support.

So I just wanted to emphasize that not only will this be a value I think for you to consider in terms of being able to communicate about the evidence base around your specific programs, but I also just wanted to express our appreciation for your participation in this.

I know this is something that is required as part of your grant agreement, but so far we have found that all of the Strengthening Working Families grantees have been exemplary participants and collaborators on this evaluation; particular those that have already done a great deal of work with us on the randomized controlled trial portion of the study.

But we appreciate your supporting contributions now and as we move forward to the next phase of the study, which Joe's going to walk through. So Joe, I'll pass this over to you now.

JOE GASPAR: OK. Great. Thank you, Christina. Well, I wanted to just take a moment to talk about some of the concrete ways in which we plan to use the program data in the evaluation. We plan to link the program data with external data on employment and earnings in order to better understand the employment outcomes of program participants.

And the data source we're going to use is the National Directory of New Hires and NDNH, which is sponsored by the office of child support enforcement within the administration for children and families. And that is a database that collects quarterly earnings from state unemployment insurance wage records and it holds earnings for up to eight quarters.

And a number of interesting research questions can be examined by linking this data with the program data. For example, we can examine whether employment and earnings are different for training leaders that for those who didn't complete. We can also examine whether participants actually work in the H-1B industries for which they were trained using using industry codes that are available on the UI data.

One advantage of using this data is that it augments the program data by allowing us to follow individuals over a longer period of time, both before and after they receive training. So it examine – it allows us to look at the extent to which participants are retained in employment one and maybe even two years after they've completed training. And then it allows us to also track the trajectory of their employment and earnings from before they entered the program to after they enter the program.

he Department of Labor has established an agreement with ACF to access this data for the Tevaluation and link it in a secure manner. I wanted to give an update on the overall progress of the evaluation. I know that the evaluation team interacts regularly with the two SWFI RCT grantees, but it's been quite a while since we had an opportunity to speak to all of the grantees.

And when we last spoke, the evaluation was in the very early planning stage and a lot of progress has happened since that. So since we last spoke, the evaluation team reviewed all of the grantee applications and had an opportunity to have calls with all 53 grantees, which includes both the SWFI and the TechHire grantees to understand the program.

We finalize the evaluation design and perhaps most excitingly, we started random assignment with the five grantees, two SWFI grantees, and three TechHire grantees that are in the RCT. And that random assignment began between April and August of 2018 and then just in January we began the six months follow-up survey with the program and control group members who enrolled in the RCT earlier last year.

In terms of the upcoming data collection schedule, I want to point out a couple of activities that we'll be approaching for all of the grantees. The next key event is in – will happen in May when the evaluation team will be fielding a grantee survey on the web, which will collect information about program operations and implementation issues. And I'll talk a little more about the next steps with regard to that in the next line.

And then in June we'll be reaching out to grantees to get contact information for partners to complete a partner web survey. And then later in the fall we'll be following up on those surveys with some telephone calls with all of the grantees and a subset of the partners. In terms of the RCT, as I mentioned, random assignment has begun a first round of site visits to observe implementation is actually occurring right now with the RCT grantees and we expect a second round of those to happen early to mid-next year; and then an 18 month follow-up survey will actually be starting with RCT study participants early next year.

So in terms of the immediate next steps to keep on your radar, as I said in May, we'll be starting the grantee survey. And at that time all grantees will receive an email from Westat inviting them to complete the survey online.

And then in June, all of the grantees will receive a second email for Westat that contains a form that lists all of the information for your partners that we've gathered from either speaking with you or from reviewing your applications. And we're going to ask you to us to check that information update it and add any contact information for partners that we currently don't have. And then in July we'll be reaching out to your partners via email, inviting them to complete a web survey.

I want to take a moment just to update on the progress specifically for the RCT and to take a moment to acknowledge the RCT grantees. So the RCT – the two RCT grantees and SWFI are Vermont Technical College and Community College of Aurora. And on the TechHire side, we have LaGuardia Community College, Daytona State College, and Career Source Tampa Bay. The RCT grantees have put it in an incredible amount of work to get the RCT up and running over the past year and year and a half.

And they'd been busy with a variety of activities including completing human subjects training, incorporating the research procedures into their enrollment procedures in some cases, hiring new staff to focus on recruitment, changing their recruitment materials to take into account the RCT and of course meeting with us the evaluation team on a regular basis to review progress.

And as the result of that, RCT grantees have already enrolled over 500 individuals in the study to date. And that's pretty exciting that one grantee, a TechHire grantee has already met its enrollment target for the RCT and has stopped random assignment and it as a measure of overall progress, the RCT is about one third of the way to meeting its overall sample size for the evaluation. So I just, I just want to pause, ask, are there any questions about the evaluation?

MS. ANTONIO: OK. Again, any questions about evaluation or any of the things that we talked about? And again, if we do not have any – if you have any things that bubble up later, you can definitely send your questions to the SWFI email box at swfi@dol.gov and we'll make sure that the appropriate person answers them.

We do have some questions coming up at this point. One of the questions that's come up, "Are grantees required to do their own internal evaluation?" And the answer I am giving is that there's not a requirement for it, but some do as part of their own evaluation process or just to take a look at, again, the effectiveness of their individual program. But there's not a requirement to do your own internal evaluation.

OK. So as we close out, I want to just make sure that everyone is aware of the H-1B performance resources we have available for you. There are a number of resources that have recently been updated and there are link here in the – here in the slide for you to take a look at. The amended PIRL for H-1B grants.

There's an updated H-1B grant performance reporting handbook and with supporting guidance, a sample case management and data files, H-1B training activities and the outcomes diagram. H-1B WIB tips and WIOA primary indicators of performance learning module for you to learn more about WIOA. Also, please continue to utilize the office hours that we have with performance that those happen quarterly. And again, if you have some form of questions, let us know in the SWFI mailbox and the performance team will answer.

And here you can see again what our mailbox is swfi@dol.gov and this is to reach the DOL National Office as well as your technical assistance providers. If you have questions, always remember to copy your FPO in your correspondence as well.

And at this point I just want to say thank you to all of our presenters for all of your hard work and thank you to our participants for listening and for all of the hard work that you do. I'm going to turn things over to Laura to close us out.

(END)