**WorkforceGPS**

**Continuing the Conversation: Competency Models Around the Country**

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GRACE MCCALL: We'll have that chat up throughout today's webinar for your questions or comments that you can type in at any time. Welcome to "Continuing the Conversation: Competency Models Around the Country."

So without further ado, I'd like to turn things over to one of our moderators for today, Pam Frugoli, O\*NET/CareerOneStop/Competency Assessment team lead, U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration. Pam?

PAM FRUGOLI: Thank you, Grace. And welcome, everyone. We have a number of really interesting speakers today. And I'm looking forward to hearing from them. And with me is Sydney Callahan, who's an analyst at Maher & Maher on the team supporting the Competency Model Clearinghouse technical assistance project. We'll be co-moderating.

And I see a number of you have already answered the poll. But if you haven't yet, please go ahead and enter your responses now. And I will try and summarize the responses. Great. So 72 percent of you want to hear about upcoming competency model initiatives. And 21 percent want to learn about takeaways from the peer learning group.

I just want to emphasize that we'll be able to do all of these things in today's webinar, so that's great. And today's agenda we're going to hear from peer learning group members from Truckee Meadows Community College in Reno, Nevada, and from the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry. And we'll also learn about several nationwide competency model initiatives, and then provide an opportunity for you to provide feedback on future peer learning activities.

And today's speakers are Cynthia Pierrott. She has worked in adult education for 20 years, and is the director of the adult basic education program at Truckee Meadows Community College in Reno, Nevada. She works closely with employers to serve the literacy needs of their workforce.

Kathleen Gordon is the program consultant with the Minnesota PIPELINE Program at the Department of Labor and Industry, focusing on information technology and health care. Kathleen has extensive experience with project management, higher education, supervision, and partnership building.

Dan Solomon is a PIPELINE program consultant also from Minnesota who focuses on the industries of advanced manufacturing and agriculture for their Department of Labor and Institute Workforce Initiatives.

And Katie Hall directs the work of the Competency Project, which is a center within the Corporation for a Skilled Workforce, or CSW. That project is dedicated to the acquisition, recognition, and exchange of knowledge and skills in the global economy, with a focus on preparing for the future of learning and work.

So before we get to our speakers, I just want to do a quick review. I know this group doesn't need a full introduction of what a competency model is. But if any of you do want more background, there are earlier webinars in this series that are available online for review to obtain that information.

I just want to quickly highlight that the broad use of competency models are shown here in the bubbles around a circle on this slide, show how competency models fit into the bigger workforce picture. And with all of these possible uses of competency models, we wanted to bring folks together to hear more about how individual states and organizations have been using the models and are using the models, which is how the peer learning group got started.

It was launched in February 2019 to provide participants with more awareness of competency models, how to use them, and to facilitate peer-to-peer connections, because we really find that we learn the most from examples of real world usages.

SYDNEY CALLAHAN: This is Sydney. And one thing we also wanted to note that was really special about the peer learning group is that we were able to do it in a smaller setting. So sometimes on larger webinars, you lose the ability to connect with each other and hear from voices around the country.

And so we were really excited that during the course of the peer learning group, we were able to bridge some of those connections between states with regions and hear from folks who are using competency models, and also folks who may not have used competency models in the past and were looking for ways to do it in the future. So we'll hear some great stories today.

But as Pam noted, you are able to access all of the recordings and material from the previous peer learning group calls on the U.S. Department of Labor competency model peer learning group website, which is available in the web links pod at the bottom of your screen. So definitely feel free to go back and review those materials if you weren't able to join us for some or all of the calls.

Like Pam mentioned, during a peer learning group, each of the calls were focused on topics that were identified by participants back in February of this year. You'll see some of those topics noted on the screen here. So we kicked off with business engagement in April, continued on to career pathways in June. We covered curriculum development in September.

And most recently, we talked about apprenticeship development this past November right after national apprenticeship week. Again, feel free to go back and review the material. It's really great to dive deeper into these topics based on what is most of interest to you. And if you have any questions about the peer learning group or about future activities, definitely feel free to reach out and we'll be happy to get in touch with you.

But with that, I want to hand it over to hear from some of our peer learning group participants themselves. We'll hear from a couple speakers today. But the first I want to kick off is Cynthia Pierrott from Truckee Meadows Community College. Cynthia?

CYNTHIA PIERROTT: Hi. Thank you, Sydney. So I just wanted to start off by giving everybody a little bit of context about our project and what makes it a little bit different than some of the other organizations that have used the competency model. So as Pam stated, we're based out of Reno, Nevada.

We're a local service provider of adult education and family literacy under Title II of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, or WIOA. Truckee Meadows Community College is our fiscal agent. So we're part of the college's non-credit programming. The project that I'm going to be describing is being developed for English language learners, which make up about 75 percent of our student population.

What I learned initially was that the peer learning group, it's not a very exciting story, but I saw the email from WorkforceGPS announcing a webinar about the competency-based clearinghouse.

And I've always appreciated how competency models acknowledge the value of personal experiences, which I fortunately was able to experience firsthand through my graduate course work. I had to take a class on human resources. Yeah, fun. But I was able to finish this class in two weeks. So I used my personal experience and applied it to my exam, where I was able to demonstrate full mastery. So I do appreciate understanding competency models.

The topic was very timely and I signed up. That initial clearinghouse webinar got my wheels turning. So I decided to sign up for the peer learning group so I could hear more about what other organizations were doing. So after listening to a couple of the first webinars, I essentially connected the models to the framework of our program curriculum, which followed the principles of andragogy.

So I wanted to hear more about the organizations or experiences, hoping that I would find a way that I could translate the model into programming for English language learners that would provide flexibility, personalized instruction, and would build on their personal experiences. So that led to launching competency-based ESL workplace curriculum.

We initially started with hospitality, because we had already been working with one of the local casinos here in Reno. So I approached the casino and I asked them about their thoughts of using this type of programming and embedding it into our current ESL curriculum at that workplace. And they were excited.

Our teacher wasn't as excited primarily because essentially I was just asking them to add yet another layer of standards -- or competencies in this case -- to what was already expected to be covered in that class. But she gave in, so we were going to move forward and just combine the hospitality competencies with our traditional ESL curriculum.

However, the casino was not able to find enough employees to offer an onsite class. So at that point, we put a hold on moving forward with any sort of curriculum for this project. And then I participated in the curriculum development PLG. That's really where I had that initial aha moment where I decided to take a different approach to the curriculum.

So I asked my dean what she thought about the idea of actually developing training models using the actual competencies for incumbent workers and market workplace ESL classes to employers. She thought it was a great idea. So that's where we moved on to our next project. And we decided to develop training modules centered around the first three tiers of the building blocks model.

As you can see here, it's the personal effectiveness competencies, academic competencies, and workplace competencies. And so we hired a curriculum developer with industry experience to translate those competencies into ESL training modules. I approached a different employer -- so this is in food manufacturing now.

We had already discussed offering classes to their employees using just our traditional ESL classes. I approached them again then with this model -- and I actually used that employer -- the worksheet where they then look at what are their needs, their priorities, based on all the competencies.

And they were really excited about all of the competencies that we would be able to cover. And they actually wanted us to do all of it. But I explained to them that once they completed that worksheet, they would probably identify certain areas that the employees were in need of more so than in other areas.

And then some areas they actually wouldn't need the competencies because they already had that level of mastery. And so since they were eager and excited about using this model, we will be launching these classes in the spring for primarily with this employer.

But then we have -- our marketing department created this flyer for us where we are going to then market this to any employer here in this area where we can then tailor those initial -- the three tiers into what they need for their employees, and then hopefully from there, build on to the more specific industry and technical competencies that they may need for their employees.

MS. FRUGOLI: Thank you very much, Cynthia. Now we will hear from Kathleen Gordon and Dan Solomon from the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry about a state-level project. And we'll have time for Q&A afterwards. Take it away, Kathleen and Dan.

KATHLEEN GORDON: OK. I'm just going to say about my motivation for joining the group. It was really to connect to other people who are kind of in the same work. And we've been doing this type of work for a couple years. And we don't really have a whole lot of connections with people who are also doing it in other states or different areas. So that has been super helpful. And we wanted to know if we were consistent with other places and states. And just to see if we could get some best practices to do our work to its fullest, that really was our motivation.

DAN SOLOMON: So Minnesota Dual Training Pipeline is a state initiative in our state. It's often considered a gateway to apprenticeship. It exists to support employers in meeting their workforce needs through employment-based dual training. And we focus on four industries, which are advanced manufacturing, agriculture, health care, and IT. We joke, but it's the truth -- it wouldn't be a government program if PIPELINE wasn't actually an acronym that stood for something. So it stands for Private Investment, Public Education, Labor and Industry Experience.

What it really is all about is employment-based training. So we work with companies who are either using this a tool to hire new employees, or to incumbent workers in a lower skilled position, and through dual training, have them advance in their careers. And the dual training piece is pairing structured on-the-job training with related instruction. Typically, that's at a community college, although it doesn't have to be. But it results in the completion of a degree, a certificate, or an industry-recognized credential for the employee.

MS. GORDON: And we have a number of occupations that are identified for our four industries. And for each one of the occupations, we have built competency pyramids or competency models. And they are really structured starting with the very basic personal effectiveness skills. And then as they go up, they become more focused for that specific occupation.

The top occupation specific competencies really are what we consider what a person would learn on the job through on-the-job training. And we really get that information; we are guided by the employers that we work with. And they are telling us what competencies the person needs within their company to be successful in that occupation.

And then the next tier down is the industry sector technical competencies. And those are basically learned through the related instruction through their education. So we work with a lot of different partners -- whether it's the employers or the education partners -- so that we are really putting together a competency model that is going to be as effective as possible for that person in that occupation. Next, we have our list of occupations that have been identified by industry. All of the occupations in the first three are basic job titles.

In information technology, we have moved from occupational titles to pathways, because the titles were changing so rapidly within the industry that we really had to move to pathways to really encompass every type of IT job.

So that's kind of the way we did that. And this is a living document for us, so we're constantly adding to it. We are actually currently in the stage of adding new occupations. So we're right now working on some new competency pyramids that we'll be putting up within probably the next month or two.

MR. SOLOMON: I was asked, how do we get employer's buy-in for this in order to do this work? We do that in a couple of different ways. One of the really important pieces is that we host at least three times a year, but more commonly, quarterly industry forums where we invite employers from all of the four industries we work with to come in and share with us, what are their needs, what are their challenges?

And how can we help support them through the creation of dual training and these competency pyramids? As we're adding these occupations and writing these pyramids that we sort of refer to as a road map for training, we always take time to engage with the employers.

And before we would ever post anything on our website or sign off on or finalize anything, we would make sure that the employers have weighed in and told us that this makes sense for that given occupation. The other things we've got planned is we're doing community conversations on workforce throughout the state.

We were just on the Iron Range of Minnesota yesterday morning. And we'll plan that over the next month or so. As Kathleen said, we're adding additional occupations and continuing to meet with employers, as well as using data from our own state's Department of Employment and Economic Development and other national organizations to help inform our work as well.

MS. FRUGOLI: Great. Thank you, Dan. So now we have time for a few questions and answers. And one question we got was, where can I find the employer analysis worksheet? So those are available on the competency model clearinghouse website. We'll show you that link again later. They are customized for each model. There are 26 industry competency models. You have to go to the page with the model on it. And then above the pyramid image, there's a hyperlink that says, "Download the industry model and worksheets in several formats."

And when you click on that, it takes you to another page where you can get the entire model. But you can also get the worksheet format. Employer analysis worksheet is the third one. But there's also a credential competencies worksheet, a curriculum analysis worksheet, and a gap analysis worksheet.

So for each model, there's a link to get to those worksheets. And then we had a question that I think is for Kathleen or Dan. Are you distinguishing between competency-based education and mastery education?

MR. SOLOMON: I think what we would -- (inaudible) -- is that it's at a competency-based approach. And we encourage the employers we work with to be finding education opportunities that align with the competencies identified in the pyramids.

MS. FRUGOLI: Cynthia, can you tell us what challenges you faced when you were initially getting started with your efforts?

MS. PIERROTT: Primarily, translating the competencies into ESL curriculum, because it wasn't necessarily built for that. So it was trying to align it to adult education services and how we could use them to serve our community. So it was going back and forth to how to use that. But the PLGs really helped in turning essentially ideas into what we ended up doing, which was the moving into the food manufacturing arena, and then looking at specifically Tiers 1, 2, and 3.

MS. FRUGOLI: Great. Thank you, Cynthia. We have a question about whether we've done any competency models for social services or human services. And we do have a section called health care and social assistance. It's a little more focused on health care. But the long-term care supports and services sort of covers both home health aides and personal care aides. But that's sort of the limit of it.

And then there's a question about how do you handle push-back of using the competency models versus the DACUM approach to curriculum development? Kathleen or Dan, do you have an answer for that?

MS. GORDON: I am not sure. I'm not familiar with the DACUM approach.

MS. FRUGOLI: Yeah. It's just developing a curriculum. It usually starts with job task analysis. In some ways, it's very similar. It just can get very detailed. But you're saying that employers have been accepting of this competency-based approach, right?

MS. GORDON: Yeah. Definitely. It's really employer-driven for us.

MS. CALLAHAN: Thank you. And, Cynthia, did you have anything to add about the DACUM approach? I know you're just getting started with this, but anything to add related to taking the DACUM approach versus the competency-based approach?

Megan Law (sp) says, yeah. But if you turn back in, no worries. Another question that we got from our participants today -- I think this might be good for Kathleen and Dan -- what were some of the biggest barriers on the part of the business? And were they resistant to creating the programs with you?

MS. GORDON: You know, I have to say that it's really relationship-based. So we had to really develop relationships so that there was a little bit more buy-in. And also, one thing we really like to do is connect employers with other employers who are familiar with dual training so it's not just coming from us at the Department of Labor and Industry, it's also HR to HR or whoever, CEO to CEO, so that they can hear it from one of their peers is very helpful.

MS. CALLAHAN: Thank you, Kathleen. That's really helpful. We're going to take one more question at this break. And then we're going to come back for more Q&A at the end. So if you have more questions that you'd like to ask and we can't get it at this time, continue to put them in the chat. And we will capture them at the end of the presentations today.

But I have one more question. I want to ask this for Cynthia. We had this one come through. Participants want to know, did you develop your own curriculum for teaching the workplace and personal effectiveness competency component of your ESOL curriculum? And is that curriculum available to share?

MS. PIERROTT: We're in the process of developing the curriculum. So we're taking the very specific competencies and then translating that into ESL curriculum. It's not currently available to share because we're still in the process of developing it.

MS. CALLAHAN: Perfect. So TBD, essentially in the next month. And again, we're so excited to have Cynthia on the call today because she really started from having very little knowledge of the competency model approach at the beginning of the peer learning group and has been able to do fantastic work; and even more exciting work coming in 2020 with the introduction of the curriculum to the employer. So it sounds like we might need to do a Where Are They Now in 2020.

So we'll wrap up our Q&A for this section. But if you continue to have questions, please put them in the chat and we'll capture them at the next bucket. But now we want to talk a little bit about some of the national competency model initiatives going on.

And first for this, we're going to hear from Katie Hall, from Corporation for a Skilled Workforce. Katie, take it away.

KATIE HALL: Great. Thank you. Hi, everyone. I'm glad to be here presenting on this webinar today and learning from my colleagues, the other speakers. And I know many of you in the audience have been doing this work for a long time and are evangelizing this approach as well.

So our interest in being part of the working groups is really to make sure that, as a national workforce and economic development nonprofit, we are anchored in what is happening at the practitioner level on the ground as far as competency models at specific institutions or at the state level.

Some of you know CSW, the nonprofit that I work for, headquarters in Ann Arbor, Michigan. We're about 30 years old. We've done work in several different focus areas over the evolution of the organization -- competencies and quality credentialing. Competency-based credentialing has been a focused area for us for 10-plus years now.

We've been part of this conversation in trying to figure out how to better understand credentials; how do learners understand which credentials are valuable; what about the learners and workers who have no credential at all -- how do we convey their value in the labor market; and then helping employers, educators, policymakers contribute to this transparency and make sure that we're getting closer and closer to this common language, which we believe should be competencies as we sort of head into what we know will be a rapidly transforming labor market, or digital economy, as some folks are calling it.

We're very much at the high national level making sure that we get the stuff into the DNA, as my colleague Larry Good likes to say. And so I'll show you one specific tool that we've built as part of our work on competencies through the competency project, which is the center at CSW that's focused on this work.

So I'll spend most of my 10 minutes today on the demo of the tool, but just wanted to have a couple quick slides by way of background. So as you can see here on the screen, these are the four things that the competency project tries to do at the national level -- thought leadership, research, collecting data, and making the case for the use of competencies, helping all stakeholders understand what the problem is.

So showing employers that there is a better way to hire potentially, that competencies do matter, and that while they're talking about skills and higher Ed is talking about learning outcomes, we're really all sort of experiencing the same problems and the same gaps. So let's figure out how to work together on that. So these four buckets are snapshots of the type of work that we do as part of the competency project. And the tool that I'll show you fits into the technical innovation bucket of work that we do on our team.

So a little bit of the economic context that I talked about, most of you on the call are familiar with the challenges that we've been facing and the challenges that will come as we increasingly are working alongside machines and competing with machines for work.

So we think the shift toward granularity and work and learning is really important and a driving force between competencies being value units in the digital economy, so learning in short bursts, self-paced, competency-based education, continuing to learn on the job, and up-skilling your employees. So these smaller bites of work and learning are key to keep in mind as we discuss competencies as the value unit of the digital economy.

Being able to understand credentials is, of course, key and is CSW's reason for driving this work is that we want all learning and all experiences to count, even if you don't have a credential. So competencies are a way to communicate human value, regardless of whether or not you have a credential or any formal education. And so we think that's really important.

Of course, competing with machines I mentioned -- there's a lot of talk about that right now. And we're trying to be one of the active players in not just worrying about the future, but also helping lay the groundwork to make sure that people don't get left behind.

So the only other thing I'll mention on this slide that I think is important is we are in discussions about competencies and their ability to give learners and workers more control of their own data. So this is connected to the blockchain movement, of course, making sure that work and learning skills, credentials, travel with people across borders, across careers, and across education.

And so these smaller bites enable new solutions for giving people control and power over their data so that it could continue to work for them. So here's the tool that I'm going to demo for you in a couple of minutes, given technology cooperates.

I know some of you who are on the call, some of the attendees today and also a couple of the presenters, are familiar with connecting credentials ,which was the predecessor initiative to the tool that I'm going to show today.

As part of connecting credentials -- which was a Lumina Foundation funded national campaign we engaged in over the last two years -- we built a competency framework for the U.S. that was meant to be a meta-level; you can apply the competency framework to a job description, course or program, industry certification and come up with levels for knowledge and skills, especially personal and social skills, which are the ever elusive but most valuable bundle of skills to employers.

So this is the digitized version of the framework that was built as part of connecting credentials. And I'll tell you a little bit later once we wrap up how you can get involved and what we'll be doing next. But I just wanted to quickly demo the tool now. I think I just need a separate window and I will share my screen here. We'll back into how the tool works.

As I mentioned, the competency exchange is really the main focus of the digital suite of tools that we have built along with my colleague Larry Good, who many of you know, and Susan Loopo (sp). We've been spending most of 2019 turning the framework grid and the process that we've been doing with organizations in the room to help them profile whatever it is they want to profile.

We've basically digitized that process, and that's what this tool is. You can see here that this is sort of a snapshot of what the back end of the tool looks like. So we took the eight-level grid of competency statements and used that to build the back end of the profile builder and competency exchange.

So those are the two front end pieces. So you can see that as you go through the levels of the framework, there are various domains on personal and social skills, knowledge, technical knowledge. And you can assign levels based on foundational, applied, integrative or advanced. If you go up in levels 1-8, you increase the level on autonomy and creativity --

MS. MCCALL: This is Grace. I am sorry to interrupt again. I think some people pointed out we're also still waiting for it to load right now. So currently people aren't seeing what you're sharing. Just give it a little second. There it is. I can see it. Right now the screen has 1-2-3-4-8 levels. So we can see it now. The other people are saying they can see it too. Carry on. Just wanted to tell you before you go too far into it.

MS. HALL: I appreciate you jumping in. I have lots of things open, so I thought we were good. I've just given you a little intro, and now you can see what I just gave the intro on. So thanks, Grace. And thanks for those who jumped in making sure I know what I'm doing on the technical side here. This is just a snapshot of the calibrator, as I was talking about, built on our framework.

So this is available online right now. You can peruse it as you like. I just wanted to show you that the framework which some of you are familiar with became the back end of the site for the tool. Here is a dashboard, which is what you will see if you go to compXchange.org once it's operational, which will be in early January.

What you're seeing right now is a dead site. This is currently being built, but almost finished. So if you're going in to build a profile or search the exchange, which is a collection of competency profiles, it'll prompt you to create an account and a login. And then it will walk you through the process for searching the exchange or building a profile.

You can see on my dashboard here that I have built a few different profiles from different industries. And I also have two in-progress profiles. So I'll just jump into one of those quickly and just spend the next couple minutes looking at what the process is so that if you're interested in experimenting with it -- and we encourage you to -- you've gotten sort of a super quick overview of how it'll work.

The exchange is a collection of profiles and it's searchable. And we'll show you the exchange next. It's also helpful to point out at this stage that, as opposed to just creating a profile from scratch, you can start in the exchange and choose a CNA profile for example, duplicate that, and then use it to build your profile.

So you don't have to start from scratch when you're building a competency profile. You can build from one that's already in the exchange and then publish it as your own with updates, which I think is helpful. So let's just quickly look at the software engineer profile that I've started.

As I mentioned, you can use the builder to profile a course or program, a job description, or an industry certification at this time. And so this is a software engineer profile that I started. And essentially, the software will take you through how to build a profile based on the information that you have. And so you can see that these pins come up, and they tell you a bit about the step that you're on.

I think what is helpful to point out here -- and I won't go through the whole tour -- is when you create a new profile in the builder, you can choose to go through the tutorial, which will tell you the difference between learning outcomes and competency statements, for example, or job tasks in competency statements. And it will walk you through how to do that.

So here is the first page. I've just selected software engineer. And I'm referencing a Google job description, as you can see, and pulling data right from the publicly available job description. So if you go into a job description, it will ask for the core functions, which is often how job descriptions are written. This would be learning outcomes if you were in the course profile. And then essentially, what the builder does is it gives you hints on the left for how to convert job tasks or learning outcomes into competency statements.

So if I were to say that I need someone to code in Python, I would enter that. And then at this next stage where the mouse is, it would say, a competency statement is an active statement of work that someone will do on the job that includes context and knowledge. Please translate coding in Python into your competency statement.

So I think that's really fascinating. You'll be able to see a lot of detail in the tutorial, but the headline is that the software will give you hints for how to translate what you're working on into the new language.

And then just lastly, here's a snapshot of the exchange. So this is where all the profiles are stored. You can sort them by profile or individual competency. If you're looking for project management or coding or any health care competency, you could sort by that.

I searched communication here because I was interested in returning all the profiles that have something to do with a communication competency. You can also sort by the type of profile or sector. This is the last filter that we built in. This allows you to sort by the level of knowledge and skills. And we found that that's quite helpful for industries, for example, who are looking for a specific level of technical skills.

So I will just show you a profile, and then I will wrap it up on my end. This is what a finished profile looks like. You can download it as a PDF. You'll see there's also an API back end here. So we'll be connecting to credential engine and several other data infrastructure initiatives that are underway.

It also allows you to pull the back end code if for some reason you have a learning management system that you'd like to connect the profile to or to a job posting. It will take you through and it will tell you the average proficiency level of duties and tasks, competency statements and functions. And then it will also give you the breakdown of knowledge, personal skills, specialized skills. This is what it looks like in the app. And you can download a PDF.

We'd encourage you to get in there and play with it as soon as it's live in January. Of course, I can answer follow-up questions after the webinar today. But I appreciate the opportunity to tell you a little bit about it.

With that, I can wrap up my screen share. Here are the next steps for CSW, an app, as I mentioned. The dev-site is live. The tool will be live in January. And we'd love for as many people as possible to go in and use the profile builder. I think someone is wondering about the URL. It will just be compXchange.org. I can put it in the materials. That'll be the URL once it's live.

And then, of course, our vision for the future is that we would next enable batch importing of job descriptions, courses, and certifications so that you don't have to individually add competency statements but you could add 20 or 30 at one time. And the tool would be smart enough to make recommendations on competency statements or levels. And it would sort of be a heavier duty assist of building a competency profile so that we can all get closer together on this competency language that we're all trying to speak. And with that, I will turn it back to Pam. Thanks, everyone.

MS. FRUGOLI: Thank you, Katie. That was very interesting. I think we're all waiting with bated breath for when the site goes live. I was just going to give a quick update on work our team is currently undertaking in collaboration with SEMI, S-E-M-I, the semiconductor manufacturing association.

And we're excited because SEMI actually reached out to us with an interest in updating the advanced manufacturing competency model and then building a tier 5 semiconductor model, because they say that is the foundation for a larger workforce initiative that they are undertaking. So they are doing a comprehensive program to attract, develop, and retain the talent critical to the worldwide electronic industry's continued innovation and growth.

So the process of developing the competency model and getting it validated ensures linkage to the industry because they're engaging over 20,000 members of SEMI who are small, medium, and large companies in that industry.

And then their next steps in 2020 are to use these new models to develop a comprehensive curriculum that they would endorse to the credentials that they would also endorse, a skill assessment tool, and they will also make a web portal available to make these resources known to employers in the industry.

And in addition to that, they will be using all of these things that they develop in three pilot projects around the country that will offer the courses and credentials, so three community colleges and then local employer groups there, including it's led by State University of New York Polytechnic Institute.

And so this is just a recap of the history of the advanced manufacturing competency model, because that was in fact the first model ever developed under this competency model clearinghouse initiative. We released it in 2006. We updated it in 2010. And now we're in the process of updating it in collaboration with SEMI and other stakeholders, and plan for release in spring of 2020.

We just wanted to highlight and provide a reminder of DOL resources around competency models. Basically, you go to the competency model clearinghouse website, which is at: careeronestop.org/competencymodel. This is the home page. But you can see there's information on how to get started, other industry models. You'll find that we have the 26 models. And when you go to the models, you'll be able to download either the entire model or the worksheets, the models in the worksheets.

Then there's also models in action is examples of real life applications just like the ones we're sharing in this webinar. But we also have write-ups of them so that you can go back and find lots of different examples that might give you ideas. And there's also a number of how-to guides.

And finally, there's a tool to create your own customized competency model. Like you start with one of the 26 models, but you can customize to your heart's content -- take things out, add things in, change the words. Some people have even done a first specific model starting with one of our models. Sydney, I believe you're going to talk about the Convening Guide.

MS. CALLAHAN: Absolutely. Thanks, Pam. And as a reminder, if you have questions about anything that Katie covered or what we're covering here with some of the available resources, you can type those in the chat and we'll take those in just a few minutes. So like Pam said, another tool that's available on the competency model clearinghouse is actually called the Customizing Competency Models through Convening Guide.

This is an interactive and kind of all-encompassing guide that shows a three-step process for taking one of the DOL competency models and then convening industry partners to customize it. So you'll see when you go to the link. And all of these links are located in the bottom right of your screen under web links.

But if you go to the Convening Guide website, what you'll find is that it breaks it down into three steps. So it talks about taking the LMI and building data. It talks about convening partners. And it includes a tool for doing that, so sample agendas, tips for coming up with questions to ask the partners that you convene, lots of hands-on resources there.

And then finally, it shows some of the tasks that you can take after you convene partners, so things that we talked about during the peer learning group, like career pathways, apprenticeship, and curriculum. There's write-ups and real word examples throughout the guide.

As another quick note, there will be new features being added in 2020. And so we'll be looking for peer learning group members to review them before they get posted to get your feedback. So if that's something that you're interested in, you could type in the chat, "yes," and we can reach out to you about getting involved in reviewing materials and being involved in the ground floor. So that's one resource to highlight. Another resource that became available this year is the "How to Crosswalk Competency Model to Develop Curriculum" video series.

This video series was initially launched to the peer learning group and is now available for everyone. But it consists of six videos, four of which are available now. And two will be coming in early 2020. And these videos can be used for a variety of things.

But really some of the uses that we've heard so far are around explaining competency models to folks who may not have used them before, hearing about real world examples that are happening around the country, and really having these short snippets if you're not able to spend a lot of time poking around the competency model website.

So the link is provided here. And, again, at the bottom right of your screen, you can find this video series. None of them are longer than four minutes, so they're pretty quick and digestible if you're interested in learning more. And some of those topics are available on the screen.

But as we wrap up our section on Department of Labor resources today, I do want to move us into another opportunity to ask questions about these resources and ask questions for all of our speakers. I'll hand it back to Pam to facilitate some of these questions. And I'll jump back in in a minute.

MS. FRUGOLI: OK. Great. Thank you, Sydney. Yes. One of the questions we actually had from earlier was, do we have any recommendations for where you can access free or open educational resources competency-based curricula?

In case you aren't familiar, there is a website called SkillsCommons.org. Skills with S and Commons with an S at the end, dot org. And that's hosted by Cal-State MERLOT Center. But much of it is populated with curriculum that was developed under the Department of Labor's Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College Career Training grant and then an additional curriculum as well. So there are lots of different curriculum resources on that site. And they're free and downloadable. So that's one thing that we can provide.

MS. CALLAHAN: Another question that we got in the chat earlier today was for Cynthia. And so, Cynthia, someone asked, can you describe the kind of ESL classes that were available prior to developing the competency model based curriculum, were they not workplace focused?

MS. PIERROTT: All of our classes, whether they were traditional classes or in the workplace, we followed the college and career readiness standards. And so those are primarily with an academic focus. And we weren't really meeting the needs of the workplace when we offered ESL classes there. So now we'll embed the competency specific to that industry with some college and career readiness standards, primarily the English literacy proficiency standards.

MS. CALLAHAN: Perfect. Thank you. That's very helpful. Another question that we have coming through the chat is for Katie. So it's actually a two-part question. The first one is, is there a cost associated with creating a profile on the website? And then the second part of that question is, can you tell the audience how the profiles are used? So I think you started to touch on that, but we'd love to hear a little bit more.

MS. HALL: Sure. Great questions. No, there's not a cost with building a profile in compXchange right now. So it's free and open. And we're just trying to drive the use of competencies. And when people come in and they build a competency profile in addition to using it for their specific purpose -- which I'll get to as part two of the question -- they're also giving us data on the specific competencies that they're entering. They're helping to build the exchange of competency profiles.

And so as with any software tool, the more data we have and the more profiles that are in the exchange, the more valuable it is for all users.

So our intention is that it's free and openly available, and so hopefully value add for the overall process at a high level and the big national discussion, but also value added for the organization and the person building the profile. So no cost at this time. We are considering building out a suite of tools that could potentially have subscription fees associated, access to a data dashboard or analytics, for example.

And we also do custom workshops where we still bring our team on site to help build a suite of job descriptions or transition a course or program into competencies. That has a cost associated because it's still highly customized, and it requires our team to be on site as well as the digital tool. That's part one.

Profiles are being used in several different ways. The digital version is new obviously. But over the last three years, we've been using the framework to help organizations with several different applications.

Some are employers who want to translate their job descriptions into competency profiles to see how they align with local colleges or vice versa. So a college will profile a course or program and see how that lines up next to the job that they hope the students will be hired into after the course or program.

So as a mechanism to connect those two things together, we've seen profiles used to align credit and noncredit sides of the house at community and technical colleges, so kind of translating both offerings into competency statements, seeing where the gaps are, and also with the leveling differences there.

And people are also using profiles to build pathways. So what's the difference between two steps and a pathway? Maybe it's a CNA to an LPN. If you profile both of those as one a level 4 and one's a level 6, for example, how do we build pathways intentionally using the profiler? So those are a few specific applications.

MS. CALLAHAN: Fantastic. So clearly, Katie, you've been hard at work this year. I can't imagine how much goes into that on the back end. But thank you so much for sharing that with us. That was incredibly useful. And I know we're all excited on this end to get into the live site in January and start playing there. So thank you so much for that.

We do have a couple other questions that we wanted to get to today. I think we've got time to handle one. Just as a final question to Kathleen and Dan, someone asked, do you think that certain sectors are a better fit for competency-based training? Or could it be developed for any?

MR. SOLOMON: That's a great question. I think in many ways, this could be more and more expanded to other industries. Our initial interest was primarily in manufacturing, but health care and IT are getting more and more interest every day. Ag has some unique challenges going on in the industry, whether it relates to training or not. So it's hard to say if it's because of the competencies issues or other things going on.

But I would say that, yes, this is something that could absolutely -- we've talked about that in Minnesota potentially somewhere down the line looking at expanding this to the energy sector or transportation or some other fields. So we'll see on our end if that happens in the future. But the long and short of it would be, I would say, yes. Absolutely this has the potential to go into other industries too.

MS. CALLAHAN: Absolutely. And that's what we've seen as well. Well, thank you to all of our panelists for their great feedback and answers to all of our questions today. Before we close out, we do want to highlight an opportunity for everyone on the call to give feedback on the next iteration of the peer learning group.

So we did experience high interest this year in the peer learning group, and we were really excited to connect with folks around the country. And we're looking for version 2.0 in 2020.

So if you look on the screen today, there is a link to a quick survey. It'll take no more than three minutes to fill out and you can do it completely anonymously. You can give us feedback on what your outstanding training needs are, what industries you're most interested in, and what sort of peer-to-peer connections are most meaningful to you.

So in your state, what would be most helpful to you in your competency model effort? This link is at the bottom of the screen. It's labeled as feedback survey. I want to thank everybody for joining today. And I'll hand it over to Pam to close us out.

MS. FRUGOLI: Thank you. I just wanted to thank each of our speakers today for their valuable contributions -- Cynthia Pierrott, Kathleen Gordon, Dan Solomon, and Katie Hall. And I want to thank all of you who joined us today for this webinar and those of you who are going to view and listen to this in the future. Keep up the great work and share your great accomplishments with us through the peer learning group. Now I'll turn it over to Grace.

MS. MCCALL: All right. Excellent. I'd also like to thank all of our participants and presenters for today's webinar. And if you could please stay logged into the room for just a minute longer to provide us with some feedback, it would be most appreciated.

You'll see a feedback window where you can let us know what you thought of today's webinar. Please take a second now to share your thoughts. Let us know what you liked or what we can improve on. There is also an additional topic window where you can let us know what you'd like to hear in future webinars.

A recording of today's webinar as well as the transcript will be made available on WorkforceGPS in a few business days. Also, to better connect with your WorkforceGPS colleagues, please take a few minutes and sign up for the member directory on WorkforceGPS. That link is located at the top of the feedback window.

Thank you to everybody for joining us. And with that, have a wonderful day.

(END)