**WorkforceGPS**

**Transcript of Webinar**

**The Role of Partnerships in Sustainability Planning and Implementation**

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Again, I want to welcome everyone to today's "The Role of Partnerships in Sustainability Planning and Implementation" webinar.

And I'm going to bring up our poll, our first poll of the presentation. So it's asking, "For America's Promise I am the –" and you can select which role you play. So take a second now. I know I had this up as you logged in, but if you haven't selected a response yet, please do so now. Looks like we have mainly program directors and managers. But again, if you haven't done so already, please take a second to fill out the poll. I'll leave it up for just another couple seconds if you haven't done so.

All right. Let me take this down and I'm going to pass it over to the moderator today, Gregory Scheib. He's a workforce analyst at the U.S. Department of Labor, Division of Strategic Investments, with the Employment and Training Administration. Greg, take it away.

GREGORY SCHEIB: Thanks, Laura. Appreciate it. Thank you all for being with us here this afternoon. Obviously, it's strange and anxious times for all of us at times, and we here at DOL are really appreciative of all you guys are doing to keep your programs and your institutions moving forward as best we can. I know every day brings its own set of new challenges.

We also got some questions about grants and things like that, and we are trying to get some information out to everyone, hopefully soon. But we still want you to reach out to us, reach out to your FPOs if you have anything immediately that we can help you with, and we'll try to get you the best information we can.

In the meantime, in this current environment where everything's changing so fast, partnerships and sustainability really may be evolving quickly and you may be rethinking about what your immediate future looks like and what the long-term future looks like.

And so hopefully you guys will find that this discussion today is useful as you kind of think through these things in the upcoming months. And of course, at the end of this webinar today we'll have a chance for some sharing and some questions. So if there's anything we want to talk through a little bit, we're happy to address some of those issues.

Today we have a great guest speaker who's going to be sharing some insights on partnerships and sustainability. And we also have two of our America's Promise colleagues to share some of their own personal – (inaudible) – around building and managing partnerships with sustainability in mind.

So really, I really do appreciate all the work you guys are doing right now. Because again, if we can help out with anything, please let us know.

I'm going to at this time just pass things over to Mike Laidlaw. He's one of our experienced TA coaches who's going to be facilitating today's discussion. So Mike, if I could just hand that over to you.

MICHAEL LAIDLAW: Thanks, Greg. And thank you, everyone, for joining us today. None of us know what the final results or community impact or duration of the coronavirus will be. What we do know is that millions will be impacted and many displaced workers wondering what to do next. And that's where you guys, the workforce development professionals, the project directors, and grantees, actually come in.

You are well-positioned to know where the jobs are, who are – (inaudible) – the folks who are looking for these jobs, what career pathways are available, and what's the most effective way to partner with colleges and other training providers to get the training and certification that's necessary.

You've also worked with community partners to ensure that you're working with those individuals to get the targeted population in the right place and to also do your due diligence as far as eligibility and following up with those individuals as case workers.

You and grant managers already have an infrastructure. You have roles and responsibilities. You have policies and procedures to ensure effective operation. Your programs are well-designed and you've subsequently modified some of your programs, made them even more effective. You've collected a lot of data on your participants on performance, and you've asked to be provided reports to different entities, whether it's your host or to DOL, that shows how you're moving towards meeting your goals.

Now the challenge and opportunity will be, how do you translate that into a sustainability plan where donors and grant makers will want to fund and support those initiatives? A lot of what you're doing right now is going to play a great role in impacting your local community because you guys have the resources and the partnerships – whether it's with employers, community-based organizations, those individuals who are providing training and certification – you know what their issues and concerns are and you know how to be a friend to them.

But before you move into developing partnerships, there are a couple things I would recommend that you consider. Looking at the program overall and evaluate parts of the program specifically. What worked and what didn't work with your partners, subgrantees, with your partner employers, and with also the community-based organizations. And then determine, what portion of that particular part of the program I want to stop, I want to continue, and what are the new initiatives that I want to start? And then look at some of the options that's available.

As you guys have noticed – and I'm sure a lot of you are also doing the same thing – a lot of folks are going online. And so to mitigate some of the budget issues, one of the things you can do is determine can some of the courses that we're providing be done online? And will we be able to reach more of our participants, those who may be impacted by transportation issues or those other concerns? So I think this could be an opportunity and – (inaudible) – role position to have a real impact.

So those are some of the things you should be considering. But now we're going to talk about how do you partner with different aspects of the program to actually make that happen? The individuals are going to be key partners.

Our discussion topics today are organizational capacity, which is the building blocks of sustainability. Clarifying the new or revised partnership roles. Many of you guys will not have the same partners and some of you will. Also ensuring accountability in achieving outcomes. No grant-maker or grant partners or donors want a program that's not really clear about how you'll be holding partners accountable and how you're going to be achieving outcomes and what your outcomes are going to be. So that level of clarity is going to be necessary.

And we have the pleasure of two of our grantees, our peers, who will be providing their experience and their efforts – (inaudible) – and their sustainability plan.

At this point we would like to take a minute to ask you to complete a poll. And so please, all that applies to your sustainability plan. We do realize that there are some individuals, some grantees, who maybe start further ahead than others. Some maybe haven't even gotten started yet. But we just want you to let us know which ones of these apply and how we can be of best support to you guys in developing your plans. (Pause.)

Well, so far seems like everyone's planning on continuing some portion of the program. Now it's dropped to – (inaudible) – percent. (Pause.) (Inaudible) – realize that one of you guys are considering modifying your MOUs and your agreements. Some looking at what you're going to measure and what the outcomes are going to be. (Pause.) Oh, great.

So majority of responses are individuals who are planning to continue all or most of the current program elements. That's great. That's really what we were hoping that will actually happen because this grant has really had a major impact in many communities, at least with the grantees that I've been working with. They've actually seen the value and the outcomes and realize that they're actually transforming lives. Thank you.

Our grantee partners and presenters today, Mason Bishop; he's our consortium director from West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission. And we have Greg Goloborodko; he's our senior project manager. Greg, I hope I didn't destroy your name. He's the senior project manager with Worksystems Inc. in Portland, Oregon. Thank you, gentlemen.

And our subject matter expert and main presenter today is Mr. Tracy Johnson. He's the director of training a technical assistance. Mr. Johnson is the founder and managing partner of TTJ Group. He has over 29 years of experience, nonprofits, small businesses, universities, and community-based organizations in the areas of strategic – (inaudible) – community organizing, and sustainability strategies. Mr. Johnson also worked with the Illinois Workforce Development Board in Stephenson County on its youth council. Mr. Johnson? (Pause.) I'm going to turn it over now to Mr. Johnson.

TRACY JOHNSON: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Laidlow, and appreciate the opportunity to be a part of this. Thank you all for being a part of this and we do appreciate it. So let's get started.

One of the things I want to talk about today with you all in an abbreviated way is intentional sustainability. Intentional sustainability, it just says there, is that framework or that roadmap for really being intentional about your efforts to sustain what you have planned and what you have implemented terms of your project.

Intentional sustainability also includes assessment and evaluation, leadership and collaboration, adaptability and flexibility, organizational capacity, clarifying new and revised partnership roles and responsibilities; as well as systemic measuring, documenting, and aligning your project process and its results.

So when we look at – with intentional sustainability, we must look at assessing the success of your project after your DOL funding, after you're not having your federal program officer or your coaches, when they are no longer around. So what are the partners we need to continue the success – the wonderful success – of your program? And how are you measuring the success and/or the progress of your outcomes towards the success? Such as program outcomes, example, as well as the number of participants who may find employment.

So are you monitoring the progress and reporting? And to who will the report be going to? What about your partners? Who will continue to hold them accountable to the project? Then have you outlined what the expected program outcomes will be and what will be the impact to your targeted community?

For example, your new program may be different in who you serve, such as maybe in the IT area you may be serving different genders or more specific genders. Or within the health field you may have a more increase in serving minority populations.

So as you look at intentional sustainability, one of the focuses should be that leadership will be different for each grantee, and how you identify that leadership as well. In any form of leadership, you should be asking yourself, is there truly a need to identify new goals and new strategies? Based on the survey that I've seen earlier, many of you are looking at changing some of your goals and strategies.

So we know that good leaders ask or know or want to know certain things, such as there's a demand in the industry. Health, information technology – which of course you're seeing an increase in need for workers now more than ever. Or in manufacturing, particularly advanced manufacturing – (if that still exists ?).

Do you see things in the current times based on what's happening to our country now with the displacement of our workers, because of COVID-19? Do you have adequate supply of talent with your targeted population? The supply of talent has rapidly changed and increased, particularly during what we're going through are challenging times of the COVID-19 crisis.

Such an example could be national hotel chains, I've noticed, are experiencing occupancy – a very low occupancy rate, between 5 and 8 percent. So many of the folks that they've laid off – so there may be a new set of talented pool of people out there who will be looking for possibly changes in their careers. So you should be asking, how will that affect your targeted area that you're serving?

Within intentional sustainability, we know that there needs to be an effective real effort at collaboration. And in many of my talks I say true collaboration, not "co-loboration." I'll say that again. We say true collaboration, not "co-loboration." It's about achieving goals and objectives through the right people and the right partners.

For instance, we want to know how do we take the strategy to identify and then put them to (punctuality ?) so we can get the true results that we want? Our true outcomes that our program is seeking, that your project is seeking.

We looking for individuals in other organizations in the following areas, such as serving the targeted population, maybe in the health field. This could include looking at senior and rehabilitation organizations where people may want to come. Manufacturing, this could be maybe intern programs in related vocational fields.

We also know that this also display – what do our partners – do they display success? End users, like in the information technology field, where you were maybe looking to – where they may be looking to fill immediate positions due to the increase of more people than ever before who are needing online services and demand is higher because of the situation we are in nationally.

Also areas we may want to ask and look at collaboration is the skilled workforce. In fact, does our local economic development entities and those who are looked for trained participants to fill the personnel needs, they may be a full collaborative partner you may be already working with. So we know this collaboration will help improve, ultimately, the local economy; so impacting your community.

Those who are successfully providing community outcomes in other industries, we want to know and work with those collaboratives that have that reputation of success. This could also lend a substantial credibility and impact to your program.

We know also that change is going to be constant. We know, no matter how well-developed our plans are and your plans may be, there will be change, as well as there will be opportunities. With your partners it's really important to be adaptable and to be flexible. Collectively as a project, you have to perform things – what we call an environmental scan, to assess that new landscape so you can determine what program additions, deletions, and resources will be needed.

This scan really looks at all aspects, including those that are listed here on your screen. For example, in our current situation, advanced manufacturing, you can notice – those of you in advanced manufacturing, you've noticed how General Motors, as well as other industries, are retrofitting to support the demand, such as ventilators, hand sanitizers, and masks to the medical fields.

Our country with this current COVID crisis has impacted the economy of some industries. And positions have been at a stand-still, while others, like those in the health care field and the IT field and advanced manufacturing, can make significant impact during this time of our country on the positions that are now needed to stir our economy and put it back in place.

So there's a need for technology. Although many citizens may not use it for their day-to-day lives in the past, now individuals and organizations are using it with many of – many of them for the first time. So there may be opportunity that this crisis may offer more career changes and chances, for example, in the technology field.

And then your local data will change every month, especially now, having both positive and challenges, especially where we are. As we know – as we can see the changes nationally, we realize there will be potential changes for your own industry and your own work industries and environment.

This also means your ability to offer the types of trainings and certifications may possibly change. For example, in IT the need is more and more – there is more and more need because of the need of online technology because more people are using it and it really changed in the past four weeks. So we see that we must be anticipatory and ready and prepared for change.

So now let's look on intentional sustainability and look at how it relates to organizational capacity. Intentional sustainability incorporates organizational capacity in a way that is a tool for your program to really achieve sustainability.

We also know as you move your project forward you may want to ask the question, what's the new organization going to look like? What is our new project going to look like? And what systems will be needed to sustain those things that have been very successful? Once your current funding ends, identifying the new structure of your project as well, as what and who can support you as a partner for this newly designed project or changed project, is an important question.

So as the Department of Labor and your other supportive groups, like your coaches and your FPO, will no longer be available for you, you may want to start identifying what will that structure or format be, since they will not be available? Having formal partners who will be productive to ensure engagement is important. Also, having a plan with goals and involving your partners will also be important.

A plan which has goals and which has strategies similar to your current project, as well as new goals to match the new changing partners and what they bring to the project, is really important in intentional sustainability. You may want to make sure you have written documents which outlines the needs, the tasks, and who's responsible. And know that some partners who you are currently having in your project and may carry on to the next one, may be some of the leads of some of those tasks, while others may be supporting those leads in those tasks.

We also know once you identify gaps in these for your new program, you really want to begin looking into – to reach out to current and prospective partners and really starting to leverage their expertise and their resources and their experience in moving forward.

Because so much is changing so rapidly today, having a plan and really assessing it – assessing these changes – is really important to intentional sustainability. See, some of the current partnering organizations, as you know, will leave – in your survey – some will stay and new ones will become more involved.

Because things do change, making sure that there is an easily accessible and agreed upon communication process with all your partners, even possibly using technology as the ideal vehicle, is important.

In other structural areas of organizational capacity, similar to your current program, your new program or your new project that you transition to will also – your new program will also be part of what you do in your day-to-day operations, which you will need to be placed – which need to be in place post your DOL grant. So what do your day-to-day operations look like now and what things will you keep in place then?

Some of the project operations obviously will change because the project goals will change. Other (issues ?) will impact the normal operations, which includes asking and sharing with your new partners on what the infrastructure is going to look like, including what I call the three P's. What are your policies? What are your project's procedures? And what are your project protocols? What's the new organization of the project going to look like, and then when systems will be needed to sustain it?

In addition, we know some of those three P's – policies, processes, and protocol – during funding will change under this new project as well, although some will remain, depending upon the need.

As we look at capacity, we also know that resources are very important as we look at intentional sustainability. And having that organizational capacity is critical in understanding where you want to go beyond the funding of your project. So looking at resources and spending time over your current – over this current grant structure will really help you identify what new partners you may need to recruit.

Or do you have to change any facility designs or facility locations? Or you may even – because of the current times, you may even want to go virtual, like many of us have to do today. And then you may ask the question, does your staff change? And what about technology? Does this also need to be changed?

We know in IT, we know in health, we've seen the changes in technology happen and how that – that the technology field can support – (inaudible) – support the health care field in doing this. We've seen in the advanced manufacturing and how they plan to use – to make changes – to do things differently and using technology to help support that advanced manufacturing is important.

So expertise from existing projects you currently have in place or what new experts are needed for moving forward is important to know.

And then you may have to ask the question, do you maintain some of – (inaudible) – in your survey some of you said you would maintain some of those same wonderful partners that have been really helpful for the project.

As a current grantee, you didn't have to delegate your project management. But in the new current, or I would say post-DOL and the team that has been supporting, what is that leadership going to look like? Where do you make changes to ensure you are progressing toward your identified goals?

And when you're making modifications, there are always modifications needed in programs and projects. So in your current grant when you make modifications, I think you send your request to either your federal project officer for approval. But in your new project moving forward, after your funding is over with, the structure of how you do project management will have to make sure that the decisions for any modifications will be done internally. So having that project management process in place is critical.

And that's also for leveraging partnerships and relationships. You should be, in my opinion – I mostly tell my team when I talk with folks on sustainability, you should be reviewing what are the gaps? Who's missing as your partners? Who can help you sort of leverage your project to fill your partnership gaps and really make sure the project can leverage both new and existing partnerships?

So when we look at intentional sustainability, we also ask – we expect that you should look at clarifying those new and revised roles. As these changes come – and they're coming because your program is ending – intentional sustainability really includes clarifying any new or maybe revised roles for your partnership.

So I'm going to take a few moments and take the time to hear from you all on the phone call here. Here we're asking you to select all that apply. Things like do you have good relationships with your existing partners? Do you know your projects and maybe key people which really likes your project and want to support it?

Maybe you see that the roles that you currently have with your partners really help the outcomes. Take some time and take a look at it. And answer all that apply.

I'm starting to see that your current relationships with your partners are really, really going well. And that in fact you all work towards the project outcomes. In addition, it's awesome to see that the champions for your project are really identified. And really, that the roles of your partners are specific and they are clear. Thank you all.

But definitely as we look at – (inaudible) – thank you very much for doing that. We know that you all will continue to have your current relationships and they all work towards your goals.

So when we look at relationships, relationships are integral in forming what the role and the responsibilities of your partners will be. Understanding and assessing what they bring is important.

In many of my trainings, when I talk to folks about intentional sustainability, I tell them about the WIFM. And when you know – when you're trying to identify your partners, you always have to understand what's in it for them, what's in it for me, when you're talking to your potential new partners and your existing partners. And what does that look like?

And when you look at those partners and those relationships, you want to look at those features that they bring to the project. You may want to ask, what does the partner that is current or that we may bring on – can offer to your project in a very strong, operationalized format?

You may want to ask the question, what strengths and what skills and what – that they're filling and the gaps that they're filling in this project? Because as you move forward in information technology, you may need more folks who know how to do different types of technology that is useful to the changing demand in the field.

As well as in advanced manufacturing, you may see that there may be some folks who can fill the gaps, who come to the table with skills that can really support the advanced manufacturing fields that are needed in your target area.

Even if you just had one service provider partner or one trainer as a part of your team, you may want to say, should I have multiple people who can really help in those areas, who can really help increase my sustainability of my project?

So the key is, how flexible are your existing partners? And I'm sure you've all done that and reviewed that. But also, a feature of the partners that they bring is being flexible to your project demands, and that's really important. So understanding that key and that feature that they can bring to your project.

And then knowing the benefit that your partners can – or new partners will – bring includes what I call intangibles, things like relationships with community leaders who may be instrumental in expediting something that the project may need. Or the benefits of some of the provider – possible providers in your community who may want and need things like online self-paced courses. Maybe that's the benefit that new partner can bring that you maybe not have but that you're looking for.

But we know, in any instance, we realize that no relationships are always perfect. So we know there's challenges. So you want to be clear what type of partner you want and know that there may be inevitable pitfalls, which may happen. So sort of to – keeping that and dealing with that challenge, you may have to lay out a plan.

But you should put a sustainable structure in place that will help you deal with your partners when issues do arise. Because when you look at – (inaudible) – projects when your project ends, you used to go to either DOL or your federal program officer, I'm sure, or your coach to help you resolve problems. But now, internally you have to be able to be the one to solve those problems.

So as you begin your new project with your existing partners and your new partners, you want to ask the question, will I be able to work through any challenges? And you want to be prepared for what those challenges may be.

Also in clarifying new or revised partnership roles and responsibilities, as you get closer to beginning that new life after DOL, if you will, and your team – supportive team – you want to look – and I noticed in the survey many of you already identified champions.

And I call those – those are individuals or organizations who I see as tangible – such as your mayor, your county chair, your local councilmember, community member, who really are visible leaders. They don't have to be formal, though. But they help to advance your project and your goal and they really take on that sort of leadership – quasi-leadership role to do so.

But then there are those champions who are intangible. And many, such as donors, especially in the current environment, many of the intangible donors don't want that attention but they do provide resources and connection to really good, key potential partners and help your project in a very quiet way.

And then there's those roles and responsibilities. Since you area already a resident expert – you all are resident experts about your project, with the knowledge of what the project does, you can really help evaluate the current role of what you have. And also it helps you kind of know what your – (inaudible) – will need to be.

So you should look at which roles you're going to carry forward that really work well, and which roles will not – you will not. Some may be relevant to some of the contracted partners moving forward; some will obviously be different and really require a different responsibility.

MR. SCHEIB: Tracy, this is Greg. I'm going to – Tracy, this is Greg Scheib. How you doing? We're going to – we just want to make sure we get enough time for our speakers here. So we're going to kind of move this along a little bit. And I really appreciate your thoughts and the points that you had to share.

Mike, are you on and can you go ahead and – (inaudible)?

MR. LAIDLAW: Sure. Thanks, Greg. Our next presenter is Mason Bishop. He's a West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission and he's the consortium director. Mason?

MASON BISHOP: Thank you, Mike. Thanks, Greg. Real quick, let me give a quick description of our project and then move right into the slides on sustainability.

So the grantee is actually Eastern West Virginia Community and Technical College. And just to give you an indication of some of the challenges right upfront is, when the application occurred, Eastern didn't have its own DUNS number, so it had to do business as West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission.

And that really gets into some of my remarks, that in projects like this and others, so many of the community colleges that win these grants, this is their first experience managing a federal grant. So the idea of sustainability sometimes is passed over upfront because they're so concerned with getting implementation right and basics of the grant.

But in our case, we really worked hard on sustainability. So let me talk a little bit about our project. It's the America's Promise 220, which is a project that involves three community colleges – Eastern in Moorfield, West Virginia; Allegany College of Maryland in Cumberland, Maryland; and Dabney S. Lancaster Community College in rural Virginia.

The idea behind our project right from the very beginning was we were going to be a tristate regional consortium that was going to look at how do we serve participants in a mainly rural and very small-business economy? So that in and of itself presented some unique challenges.

But in doing so, we defined sustainability right upfront as the program – we use P's as well – the program's policies and practices developed during the grant project that are incorporated into the ongoing business of the community college after the grant project ends.

This is very important to us because sometimes what you see with these federally-funded grant projects is, unfortunately, they become a little bit of a silo unto itself and – (inaudible) – sort of being – work is being conducted and it gets disconnected from the regular business, so to speak, of the community college.

So what we tried to do right away is focus on integrating the project into the ongoing work of the college. And as part of that, it becomes really important for us – and I think overall for these projects – to get the immediate buy-in and constant communication with college leadership.

Again, I've seen with this grant and other grants, if you do not have that buy-in and that constant communication with college leadership, these projects tend to, like I said, be kind of mini-project silos within the college. And then when folks don't know what's going on when you get time to talk about sustainability, there's really no commitment to those programs, policies, and practices; or even the identification of them.

So let me then move into the areas that we'll be sustaining as a part of AP220. First, of each of our three colleges are going to sustain all of the training programs that were either modified or developed during our period of performance. This includes basic mechanical systems and mechatronics, machining, welding, and health-care professions. All of those pathways will continue and students will be able to take those even when AP220 ends.

We also implemented new industry credentialing with our partner, the National Institute of Metalworking Skills – or NIMS. NIMS is providing us with machining and industrial maintenance credentialing and that's become very, very important.

Our staff and faculty positions are also going to be maintained. And particularly in a couple of the colleges, our AP220 positions have really become sort of a means by which – and again, very small, rural-type community colleges – they've been able to bolster a workforce – (inaudible) – status within those colleges. And so now they'll be almost a more enhanced workforce division opportunity to work with employers and community members.

We've obtained a number of new employer partnerships or relationships. And those have not only been broad, but must deeper than they were before AP220. This grant has really, really allowed us to deepen those employer partnerships.

As I mentioned, we're a tristate region and so the whole idea of cross-state college relationships became very important, specifically because we actually had in the middle of our grant period a big surprise which is Verso, with a TAA layoff.

As I mentioned, these are the three colleges in our consortium. And here are employer partners and how we've sustained them. And I can answer more questions if we have time for that.

But very specifically, we tied our training pathways to specific employer needs. In the case of Eastern with Pilgrim's Pride, we actually ended up going onsite, onto Pilgrim's Pride, and from about 4:00 to 5:00, 6:00 in the afternoon, Pilgrim's releases employees to come train in their training room using our equipment and our faculty who are paid through the AP220 grant. So that's one very deep example of an employer who Eastern was not even working with prior to AP220; they're now doing training onsite.

In terms of partners being included in our sustainability planning, again we focused on sustainability as a consortium from early in the project. It wasn't a college-by-college activity; it was something we've been focused and worked on. In every one of our consortium meetings, we talk about sustainability.

We also defined right early on what that means. I gave you the definition early so we're all on the same page. As I just mentioned, we have aligned training specifically to skill needs by employer, so pathways and courses have long-term viability. And I think in terms of sustainability, that's a really key point, that employers value the training and they're hiring people and paying good wages to those people.

And then finally, we did take a regional economic and workforce development approach. We looked at this as a tristate economic and workforce development project. We opened channels of communication and services between higher ed, workforce development, and economic development.

And as I mentioned, with our TAA layoff in Versa, this became key because we had workers laid off from multiple states, with multiple workforce system, in multiple community colleges. But because of AP220, we already had the relationships in place in to streamline and make that process work.

So with that, I will turn it over to Greg.

MR. LAIDLAW: Thanks, Mason. This is Mike Laidlaw. I want to introduce Greg G. He's the senior project manager with Workforce Systems, Inc., and he's in the Portland, Oregon area. Greg?

GREG GOLOBORODKO: Thank you so much, Mike. I appreciate the opportunity to get a chance to speak to this group today.

I'll just get right to it. So just to give a little bit of context for our project, for our grant, we are in the Portland metro area. We encompass a three-workforce board region. So we actually have the Portland metro area; we have Clackamas County, which is all the way on the east side of the Portland metro side; and we also have Southwest Washington.

So we are actually a collaborative of three workforce board systems. So we get to navigate three community college systems. We have close to – I believe it's five or six health-care systems that we have to navigate within, all of whom have workforces that travel across county and state lines.

So for this grant, some of our challenges really were just to make sure that we're aligned to meet the workforce needs of not just those of our employer partners, not just the jobseeker – the actual participants – but also that of our states' requirements to make sure that we're doing our due diligence to record the data, to capture the performance metrics, and really make sure that we are covering all of our bases with respect to what deliverables we have contracted for.

If we could go to the next slide, please.

So our partners – so we are focused on the health-care system specifically in our region. We have several health-care partners within our area, such as the (big ?) health-care systems. So Oregon Health and Science University, Providence Health, Legacy Health System, Kaiser Permanente, and Peace Health, which is up in Southwest Washington area.

We have – all of our partners have already fulfilled their requirements on the incumbent worker side. All of our hospital partners, the program that we actually ran with them was that we would upskill their incumbent workers that were in the food and janitorial sciences. And those individuals, because they were already in the health-care setting, they had a basic understanding of what it meant with respect to HIPAA, with privacy, with patient care, et cetera.

We had a program that we developed in conjunction with these hospitals in order to provide those individuals an opportunity to move into more clinical setting roles. And as a result, those individuals were then trained by the hospitals, utilizing some of our training staff, some of our resources.

And we were then able to get those individuals trained, certified, credentialed, and move into clinical roles, providing upward mobility for them on the income scale, but also providing a viable career pathway for them to then also stay within that employer.

As a result, the – part of the agreement or part of the collaboration also included that those positions that those individuals had left from, that those positions would be backfilled utilizing part of our workforce system. So some of the applicants that were considered then to actually provide the backfill positions were out of our worksource centers, which are our One-Stop Job Centers.

What we ended up finding was some of our employer partners actually requested that we didn't actually need to use our fund in order to provide some of that training, Kaiser I think being one of the biggest examples of that. They actually utilized their own training fund in order to provide more individual training to their staff and to bring in new workers. So it actually was a situation where we were able to save some of those funding streams and funding sources.

We looked at – obviously having those partners involved with us from the get-go, we wanted for them to have input on the program development, on the sourcing and recruitment side. And then we also have a collaboration with them where they're actually reporting their performance metrics to us via career coaches that are actually embedded within the hospital system, in order to provide additional one-on-one mentoring and career coaching to those participants to make sure that they are successful.

For sustainability, we've actually seen where some of our hospital partners have invested their own funds. They have went (sic) out and sought other resources, other funding streams, in order to sustain these efforts.

And that to us was really, I think, one of the biggest turning points and one of the biggest "a-ha" moments, so to speak, was when these hospitals started seeing the value-add that these programs can have and the opportunity that existed within that workforce and really partnering with our system at large. That really afforded us the opportunity to build out the relationships.

We do have a health-care sector lead; she is a counterpart of mine. Her name is Sabrina. She actually holds an industry panel where we actually convene all of these hospital partners, long-term care facilities, and all other clinics that are connected to our programs.

And we also bring in our CBO partners. We bring in our training agents, such as the community colleges and some of the for-profit training sites. And we really look to have a very collaborative conversation with them, very inclusive conversation, around how we can continue to provide these services even beyond the program timeline.

So what we are currently in the process of is really re-engaging with them. And obviously, given the current scenario of what's going on in I think all of our markets right now, obviously sustainability is going to be very critical. However, more of our hospital partners are really focused on the immediate need that they have, which is protecting their current employees, making sure they're safe, that they have all the necessary PPE available to them.

So we haven't had too many conversations around which elements of these programs will be sustained further. That is something that is on our radar. That is something that we will be continuing to have our conversations with them around. I think we're just trying to adapt in this current climate right now and figure out how we can best still provide services to our participants, to our hospital partners, and the like.

If we can just go to the next slide, I believe. Oh, that was my point. Thank you so much. (Chuckles.)

MR. SCHEIB: Thank you, Greg. (Cross talk). Go ahead, Mike. You go ahead, Mike.

MR. LAIDLAW: Yeah. Thanks, Greg. Thank you, Mason. Thank you, Greg. Do you guys have any questions? I know we're running out of time, but if we don't have an opportunity to address your questions today, just want to let you guys know that we do have Greg and Mason's contact information.

But if you do have a question that – a burning question that you think would be helpful for the entire team, just type it in the chat box for us so we can actually respond to that question. But again, we have Mason and Greg's contact information and we'll actually provide that.

I don't see any current questions. So again, we will provide that information to you guys and we'll also have this information available for you in a few days.

So we do have some housekeeping notes here. We want you guys to save the date – I'm going to move on – save the date. There's going to be a peer-to-peer call that's going to be hosted by one of our coaches, Amanda Cosky (ph), and she will be talking about sector strategies.

But I'm sure there'll be opportunities for you guys to also bring up some of the questions that you guys heard today and – some of the questions or concerns that you may have heard about today and also ask some about the individuals who spoke – the peers – to ask them to probably further address some of the things that they're doing as far as sustainability planning.

And so April 21st we'll have the first of the three sessions; that will concern health care. April 22nd we'll have the session on information technology, and April 23rd we'll have advanced manufacturing.

Guys, I would suggest that if you have the time to attend all three, because there are usually some best practices and some great strategies that you can actually extrapolate from one sector to another. I actually attended all of the sessions last month and it was very helpful because I was able to see what was consistent, what was different in all of the sectors. So again, there can be great opportunities there for you guys to actually get some ideas and also ask us some questions and share with your peers.

Before we go, I just want to thank Mr. Johnson. Thank you, Mr. Johnson, for all of that information that you provided. We realize that there's a lot to try to cover in that short period of time, but we'll also again have this available for everyone to actually view. And we'll also have Mr. Johnson's contact information, should you want him to provide any additional information.

We also want to say a great shout-out, just a great thank you, to our two grantees who provided a lot of relevant information. And hopefully you guys can see why it's so relevant to actually develop a sustainability plan, especially in this timeframe where opportunities may come through anywhere through diverse sources, whether it's state grants, federal grants, or even from personal donors.

So if you haven't started, please go ahead and start your sustainability plan. Contact us – (inaudible) – contact your coaches so we can help you develop that so you can help your community.

Again, thank you everyone for attending, and we really appreciate your time and efforts. Have a great day.

(END)