**WorkforceGPS**

**Transcript of Webinar**

**YouthBuild Series:**

**Building a Construction Career Pathway at a YouthBuild Program**

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LAURA CASERTANO: Again, I want to welcome everyone to today's "Building a Construction Career Pathway" webinar. And I'm going to turn things over to your moderator today, Mark Smith. He's a workforce analyst with the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration. Mark, take it away.

MARK SMITH: All right. Thank you so much. Again, my name is Mark Smith. I'm here at the Department of Labor. I serve as a national liaison for the YouthBuild program and I'm going to be your moderator for the day.

And to assist, we have Rossie Cherry. He's the Department of Labor YouthBuild technical assistance coach. Does an excellent job at that.

And we also have today's speakers, Joanna James, she's the executive director of Project REBUILD; and Brian McMahon, deputy director of Operation Fresh Start. So they're going to be going through a lot of content today.

And some of today's objectives are going to be to clearly define career pathways according to WIOA; identifying six elements for development of career pathways and how they can apply to YouthBuild construction career pathways; understanding the need for employer-driven competencies of construction career pathways for the implementation at YouthBuild programs; identifying promising practices for administrative planning, partnership development, and program implementation at local YouthBuilds.

So I'm going to pass this off to Rossie to take us into a poll about today's content. Rossie?

ROSSIE CHERRY: Yes. Thank you very much, Mark. I appreciate it. So today's poll question will be, "How would you –" sorry. "How would you describe –" I'm sorry. Excuse me. Let me move the poll here for my screen. "How would you describe –"

MR. SMITH: Sorry. It's kind of loading up slow.

MR. CHERRY: Yeah. Read that question for me, Mark.

MR. SMITH: No problem at all. So it's kind of loading up. So the first question we have is –

MR. CHERRY: Yeah. "How would you describe your level –" oh, go ahead. Sorry.

MR. SMITH: "How would you describe your level of engagement with building construction career pathways at your program?" So the first answer we have is, I'm just learning about construction career pathways. The second is, I'm familiar with construction career pathways but am not currently planning or implementing a model. My program is committed to a construction career pathway approach and is in the planning stages. And my program is currently implementing a construction career pathway.

So if you have an opportunity, we'd like you to just chime on in. Looks like we have "I'm learning about construction career pathways." And this is a great webinar for you guys to join because we're all about learning here. So looks like that one's kind of leading off.

Rossie, you all set?

MR. CHERRY: Yes.

MR. SMITH: All right.

MR. CHERRY: OK. Thank you very much, Mark. And sorry for those technical difficulties. I appreciate it. So first we want to define what are career pathways so we have a baseline of understanding.

So we took the WIOA definition of a career pathway. So basically, aligns with the skills and needs of industries in the economy, the state, or regional economy involved. Prepares the individual to be successful in any of a full range of secondary or postsecondary education options, including registered apprenticeships. It includes counseling to support an individual in achieving the individual's education and career goals.

Includes, as appropriate, education offered concurrently with, and in the same context as, workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster. Organizes education, training, and other services to meet the particular needs of an individual in a manner that accelerates the educational and career advancement of the individual.

Enables an individual to gain a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and at least one recognized postsecondary credential. Helps an individual enter or advance within a specific occupation or occupational cluster.

I wanted to start with that because I wanted to make sure that – there's different definitions of career pathways. And so here it's talking about career pathways as value-added to your YouthBuild program.

Career pathways programs make it easier for people to earn industry-recognized credentials through avenues that are more relevant. It provides opportunities for more flexible education and training and to attain market identifiable skills that can transfer into work. These comprehensive education and training programs are suited to meet the needs of working learners and non-traditional participants.

Career pathways programs are designed to serve a diverse group of learners, including adults, youth, dislocated workers, veterans, individuals with a disability, and so forth. Career pathways systems and programs have been defined in multiple ways.

So why career pathway? Why construction? Right? And so building and trade construction is one of the fastest-growing industries in the country. Construction is projected as – to be a high-demand industry over the next 5 to 10 years, and in some parts of the country even longer.

The YouthBuild model has the infrastructure – education, hands-on training, supportive services and career planning – and historical partners that are construction focused. YouthBuild programs already use industry-recognized credentials established by the industry to build off of, and there are many registered apprenticeship programs with which to align. Entry points align with technical skill level of most youth completing a YouthBuild program.

Here's some of the data. I won't go over it in detail, but it gives you a snapshot of the national data around construction – (inaudible) – and it was to hire people for the next 5 to 10 to 15 years. And there's a link at the bottom if you want to click on that later on to review it.

So here, the career pathway system and how it works. So high school diploma or equivalent is where it's starting point, or adult basic education program. These systems now go back even to middle school now. Schools are going back to middle school preparing young folks for the workforce and so we start at that point.

And one thing about a career pathway system is that it must have multiple entry points. So here you see workforce training, university, community college, organized labor training/apprenticeships, all postsecondary education activities. And they all include strategic partners in order to move the students along this path.

So from the high school diploma/adult ed programs, with the partners they move into the secondary part, the workforce training, the universities, community colleges and apprenticeships, into the workforce and on to their cluster.

And something about construction here is so we're talking about a variety of different pathways that they can go into.

As you can see, sample of some construction clusters. A lot of times in YouthBuild we think that we build homes and so of course our folks will be – (inaudible) – folks on carpentry and some of those around residential construction. But you see there's a variety of things that young folks can go into, a variety of clusters from cabinetry, millwork, and woodworking pathways; engineering and heavy construction pathways; mechanical system installation and repair pathways; and residential and commercial construction pathways.

Opportunities as far as boilermakers, ironworkers, bricklayers – (audio break) – painters, glaziers. There's so many opportunities for folks to find – (inaudible) – diverse the field is – (inaudible).

So here are the keys. The six elements of the career pathway are: building cross-agency partnerships and clarifying the roles of those partners; identify sector or industry and engage employers; design education and training programs to fit the needs of YouthBuild participants, identify funding needs and sources; align policies and programs; and measuring system change and performance. We'll review those in detail now.

Element number one, build cross-agency partnerships and clarify roles. Comprehensive career pathways systems require full engagement at many different levels from employers to community-based organizations, from LEA to school programs to industry partners for (PSE ?) activities.

So we're looking at how do we engage cross-agency partners and employers? To establish a shared vision, mission, and set of goals. How do you bring about change so that all the partners, no matter what level they're on or what role they're going to play, all see the vision and mission and set of goals that they can align with and agree to perform?

And then clearly define the roles and responsibilities of all partners. If they're employers, where are they going to participate in the career pathway development? CDA, CBA, what are you going to provide as far as supportive services? WIOA. What are you doing as far as workforce development in those areas?

And then develop a work plan, right? Put it in writing and/or an MOU to make sure the partnership is formal and it can be looked back upon in order to modify or to add to or to – (inaudible).

These are key partners. Workforce development boards and American Job Centers. Local building and trades councils; and please emphasize youth, female, and disadvantaged workers during these discussions. Construction employers that are local; review the entire construction cluster that was discussed before. Boilermakers, painters.

Look at the field and are there any big projects that are happening in your community? Believe me, on those big projects there are multiple career clusters or trades that are in that – involved in that big project. I know here in California they're doing the big Ram stadium and there were so many facets of construction being done from – the painters are going in at a later date, ironworkers went in earlier. There were bricklayers. All those folks had a role at different timeframe during that project. And so there are many opportunities for us to engage different types of employers in this work.

The HUD Section 3. Not sure what that is? Just go to hud.gov. What it basically talks about programs that require – (inaudible) – certain HUD financial assistance to contract with developers in the community to the – (inaudible) – and they're feasible, to provide job training, employment opportunity, and contract opportunities for low- or very low-income residents in connection with their projects and activities.

So what's it's basically saying is that if there's a big project in your community and it's low-income folks living there, that priority is hiring because the contractor or developer is probably getting some kind of HUD funding from that project. So therefore, they want low-income folks in that community to be hired first, if possible.

Now, the challenge has been with YouthBuild is that they always say there's not enough qualified folks from that pool in order to pull from. Well, you have those qualifying folks in YouthBuild. We have to – (inaudible) – message that to our contractor and developer and they'll say the HUD Section 3 here and we can support you and help you achieve your HUD Section 3 goals.

Another one is postsecondary – community colleges, apprenticeships, trade schools, your alternative schools in the community for – (inaudible) – workers and supportive service client agencies.

And here's just a brief chart to show you an approach to how you engage some of the partners around workforce development. Kind of pathway here, it's talking about the industry requirements, talking about rigorously collecting data around – marketing data around what's good – (inaudible) – community, especially again those clusters.

Don't just think you build a house. Don't just think – think is there a masonry company out there that needs support? Like, what set of skills and requirements are necessary for each job or each project, and how does YouthBuild program fit into that niche?

And then verify that employer competency model, what they're looking for as far as technical skills, employability skills. Can it provide work-based learning opportunities for your participants at that project or at their training site? Right? What recognized credential are they going to offer in return for that support and using their curriculum? And what universal global standard do they want as far as skills and competencies that are necessary?

And then who do we engage? Registered apprenticeship program once again. Ask them about how they use contextualized learning as part of the process. Talk to CTE schools around integrating education and training.

And so there's so many ways that we can learn and we can grow our pathway around YouthBuild so that we can provide meaningful workforce development opportunities for our students in the near future – or our – (inaudible) – in the near future.

Now I'll turn it over to Joanna James. Joanna James is assistant director of Project REBUILD. Joanna?

JOANNA JAMES: Thanks, Rossie. Good afternoon, everybody. I just want to build a little bit on element one. So Rossie did a good job of explaining the elements and how we build cross-agency partnerships and clarify roles.

I think the most important thing I want to stress here is this is a partnership, not a placement. And partnerships take work. Sometimes placements can be easy. Partnerships are a little bit harder and you need to kind of go into them understanding that.

So first of all, understand the definition of a partner. So your employer partner, your community partner, whatever that partner looks like need to understand your mission, they need to understand your vision, and they need to understand the goals that you are trying to accomplish.

I think the other important thing when you're creating partnerships is allow for involvement at all different levels. So sometimes I think there's a tendency that leaders of organizations will create an MOU. They will kind of lay out what they think needs to happen. And in theory, everything sounds great. But don't forget about the direct supervisors of that young person. Don't forget about the hiring managers. They also need to understand what that MOU looks like and they need to have an opportunity to be engaged with your organization also.

One of our best partners has kind of that spirit of mentoring, which we love and it fits well with our YouthBuild program. So it's one of those things where they get it and I think that's really important.

I think it's also – with partners, sometimes you have to share the good, the bad, the ugly. So this is not a customer that you are necessarily trying to get something from; this is a partner that is going to work with you, work with your young people. And they need to understand some of the challenges that may be faced as you go through this partnership. So be very realistic.

Again, I think sometimes things sound really good in theory and then kind of the real world kicks in and everybody's kind of sitting back going, oh, I didn't expect that; I didn't know that was happening. Usually, you, coming from the YouthBuild program, have an idea of what some of those challenges may be as you get further on in the partnership. So be realistic.

As you're creating that MOU and kind of creating that partnership, just make sure that everyone understands the defined roles and the responsibilities. Again, you don't want to be sitting back, well, nobody talked about that. I didn't know I was supposed to do that. It just kind of makes things a lot smoother as you go through the partnership.

And then finally, just review those plans, review those MOUs, review that partnership on a regular basis. Have those conversations again at all levels of the organization. Make sure that everybody understands what's happening, talk about the challenges, those types of things.

So with that I am going to turn it over to Brian.

BRIAN MCMAHON: Thank you, Joanna. Good afternoon, everybody. Yeah, I just want also to provide some very specific steps to supplement the guidance from this webinar that we took at Operation Fresh Start when we began this process of building out our construction pathway.

We also got together as staff and specifically – set a very specific goal. We wanted to help our young people enter registered apprenticeship. And so as we began this work our approach was really two-pronged. First, we needed to develop relationships and partnerships with those involved in this work. And second, and simultaneously, we also wanted to build a progressively rigorous training model that made our YouthBuild graduates undeniably competitive for these positions.

So element one, building these cross-agency partnerships and relationships. What we did is we scanned our community, our environment, and kind of identified those that were really involved in this work. We learned that there was a large network of employers, CBOs, government officials, the Construction Workforce Diversity Alliance, that was meeting regularly to work on the effort of diversifying the trades.

We joined that meeting regularly. We got involved with that, meaning staff. Joined a subcommittee around outreach and recruitment. And eventually was pivotal in developing – kind of developing this youth pipeline to the trades in our community. And there's, I would imagine, a lot of other YouthBuild programs, there's other organizations interested in this effort.

Another thing we did is we also identified another CBO with the – who had a specific mission of helping women and minorities – helping more women and minorities enter the apprenticeable trades. We partnered with them shortly after that. I was asked to join that board of directors and now monthly I'm able to – I, Operation Fresh Start – is able to sit down with these co-board members, one of them being the local president of our building trades council, along with apprentice coordinators and business managers representing the carpenters, electricians, laborers, plumbers, ironworkers, to mention a handful.

So once a month Operation Fresh Start is at that table and getting to share with this group what our organization is doing around our construction training, getting feedback on that from them. But just as importantly, if not more importantly, also able to hear some of the labor market projections from the different trades represented there, some of their challenges and some of their needs. And take that back to our program and adjust some of our construction trading modeling.

These relationships didn't start then with those monthly meetings either. They carried on outside of those meeting rooms. So we continued communication and developed relationships with local apprentice coordinators and business managers that are still there today. In fact, our carpenters union is now coming in to provide our OSHA 10 instruction and we look to partner on different training opportunities to expose our young people to all the different trades that Rossie had mentioned earlier.

One thing I did want to mention is that this work takes time. So a few years into this we were – word had gotten out that some of the young people, the YouthBuild graduates coming out, where strong candidates. And we were then able to engage Findorff, which is a large regional construction firm in our area, in an employment training partnership.

Through that partnership, we were able to set up one week a quarter our young people were able to go out and job shadow with a journey level worker in their preferred trade in a commercial work setting. So it's – sky's the limit where these things can go. But those are just some very specific examples of what we did.

And I will hand this back to you, Rossie. (Pause.)

MS. CASERTANO: And Rossie, you might be muted.

MR. CHERRY: There you go. All right. Thank you. So there's a question asked about HUD Section 3. You can go to hud.gov. There some variety of information around local hiring and priority hiring that you can look at. I know there's been some changes that are being made to HUD Section 3 so I don't want to put anything out there may change, but please go to hud.gov and look at that information there.

And so I think one key point that Brian made was that this does take time. This is a process, right? Engaging employers, the right employer with the right fit for what you're trying to do takes time, takes a lot of communication, a lot of interaction, a lot of trust that's built up.

And so one of those things that we have to do is our homework prior to those discussions with employers. And once we identify the sector we want to focus on, like I said, we look at across the board at what construction clusters are there in your community and – (inaudible) – thrive and also where there are gaps.

For example, I can tell you that in California solar was this big thing coming about for years and everyone thought there'd be solar panels on homes. Well, that boom never really happened. But what did happen was that solar farms became a big industry. And so a lot of different trades were (given to ?) the employer into the solar farm industry. And it didn't matter what trade it was; there were electricians.

So we understood that and so we asked some employers, what do we need to do in order to support this process? And they needed entry-level workers who were willing to get out there in the heat, get out there in the sun and do this work. And so having those kind of context and in-depth analysis of your community is a very, very important part of this process, understanding what's going on and how that works. And your market analysis and your data can really target where the high demand and the need for workforce is at.

Survey and engage key industry leaders from targeted industries and sector partnerships. One thing we also – we addressed and we engaged our local building and trade council. They know where all the unionized jobs are in that region because they're under that council. All the trades are associated with about – for the most part, with that particular council. So contact your local building and trades council as a means and resource for what is in high-demand as far as specialty trades.

And then once you engage them, clarify the role of employers. We need to be clear about that. I know we keep saying that, but that's very, very important. A lot of times I think that we see our employer partners as just placement partners. They can be so, so, so much more. They can be partners from curriculum development, from recruiting. They can be partners in supporting you in providing work-based learning opportunities; partners in providing you with a really good understanding of how they teach match, like teach their science, like teach things to young people.

And so identify existing training systems that they use within the industry and how that works and how – (inaudible) – into your program.

Identify which skill competencies that they really want to focus on, right? And so like I said before in previous presentations, we were working on the OSHA 30 thinking we were going to prepare our young folks to be really, really ready to go. And they were like, we don't need that. Just do OSHA 10; they're going to have to take OSHA 30 over again once they come into the trades.

And so that informed us that we were to focus on other areas, employability skills. And they said we need them to learn certain technical skills that we're going to really need them to focus on during this process, make sure that those skills. So having a really good employer partner can really drive your agenda and move this path forward.

Once again, talking about labor market. And the intent of career pathways is to train our young members into the needs of employers. What are the needs? Be specific about those needs? Ask them, what do you need us to work on? What do they need to excel in? Not only to help you drive your curriculum, but it'll also help retain those people into those trades once they get there.

Effective employer engagement. There's steps in that career pathway progress, right? That progression. And so once again, skills, competencies. There's a really good competency model out that I know Mary and Stevie (ph) and the team have been using. It's a pyramid. That's great competencies I think that are industry – universally-recognized by all the construction trades. Look at that.

Talking about where the path to career advancement. So they're going into a registered apprenticeship program. When is their pay increase? When they can they become a journeyman? What does that look like for them? If they're not in a union, just a regular employer, what does their pay progress look like? What does their benefit package look like, right? What skills do they need? All those things are relevant to messaging a construction pathway to our young people also.

Another one's organizing competencies and teaching methodologies to create a curriculum and content for a course. Don't just say we use the HBI or MC3, NCCER; take that as your foundation for a curriculum and build on it. Build in the skills and the competencies that the employer needs in order to strengthen the relationship and the partnership and increase opportunity for hiring.

And then the last one is create a series of courses, right? It should be a sequence of events that occurs. Construction math – like construction math 101 and then they go on to a higher level math 102. Not only will it help with their learning, but it also helps them to be able to adapt to what's going on and apply that knowledge to the trade itself.

Here just briefly, once again, the roles of employers and how important that is. And having them become stakeholders and not just a partner on the back end of your program time is very important. And making sure that there's work-based opportunity for young people; have them advise your curriculum, what that looks like. All of those things are very important in a relationship.

And then once again, write it down. Write it down so you know it happened and write it down for the accountability on each side for how you move forward in that partnership.

Here's another document that gives you an idea about the alignment of curriculum and how you engage employers, how you can make sure that – identifying what tools that you need, national for young people. So all these things kind of give your staff an idea of questions to ask employers around developing your career pathway at your location – (inaudible) – program.

And then defining an internship or work experience description, what that looks like. How you get your young people on – (inaudible) – worksite for work experience or internship opportunities. What needs to happen? What skills do they need and what other competencies do they need to address in order to make that happen?

And that's a very important too because I think sometimes – I know some employers will hire folks who are – young people who are 16, 17 years of age with no diploma. And so at YouthBuild we kind of don't want that, right? We want them to have a diploma before leaving our program.

And so we have to negotiate with some of our employers by saying, look, support them in our high school diploma process or our HiSET process by offering the opportunity to do work experience for you in the meantime, with the promise of a job at the end of their diploma. That will motivate our young people and get them on the path.

And employers have no problem with that because that was a better opportunity for them and they had a better motivated worker when it came to the program. So sometimes it's OK to ask those questions or to ask them to modify some of their eligibility processes if they need that workforce.

On the other hand, we've got young folks who were going to be three months out getting a diploma, but they really needed to be on a worksite. And so the employer says, I'll give you three months on our worksite, but ready diploma within that three-month time period in order to be still on our worksite. Once again, it motivates young folks to really work hard and really push, but it didn't close the door and opportunity for them at that time.

An example of embedding education academics into the workspace and competencies. For example, most construction programs there's the material and there's safety worksheets, there's inventory sheets, there's time sheets; we can use – all those things can be a part of any class, a part of a literacy class or a literacy course. While they're learning to read and – (inaudible) – reading skills, why not learn the vocabulary around the construction field that's used most often, right?

And so those are things – one thing to try to focus on. Immerse them in your pathway. Don't present it; immerse. Not a presentation about construction, but immerse them in what it could be in a career pathway for construction.

There's opportunities. Allow them to job shadow someone who's a journeyman at a worksite or a supervisor at a worksite. You'd be surprised how much weight that carries of learning as they walk alongside someone doing the job itself.

Once again we're talking about skill gaps, identifying those skill gaps. Identifying the challenges employers may face with the workforce they currently have so you don't run into those same problems with young people. And so those are good talks to have with employers about expectations, about challenges, and about strengths that – (inaudible) – bring to the table.

And now Joanna?

MS. JAMES: All right. Thanks, Rossie. So I'm just going to kind of piggyback on a lot of what Rossie said, because that was a lot of really good information.

I think that when you're thinking about career pathways – Brian has said it, Rossie has said it – it takes time. It takes a lot of time and it takes a lot of being honest and realistic with yourself and your young people and your program in order for it to be successful. So just know that the bulk of the work is on that front end.

So as you're starting to identify and engage employers, I think that you need to understand your organization's capacity to engage employers. For a long time I think our organization has understood that we need to engage employers, but there were times that we really did not have the capacity. And before you start to spend a lot of time and effort and energy on engaging employers, you also need to be understanding and able to service them. Because again, as we're creating partnerships, it takes a lot of work.

So you need to be really realistic with yourself and what you can handle. You don't want to engage with those partners and then not be able to nurture them and kind of continue to build the relationship.

You also need to know your young people, again, before you spend the time and energy creating partnerships. You don't necessarily want to disappoint a partner by getting them all excited and then maybe you have young people that are not interested in that career pathway at all.

Rossie mentioned a couple slide ago about the opportunity to try out or to job shadow. We're really fortunate that we have a board member that kind of took this on several months ago and has – unfortunately, before the pandemic set in – but engaged our board. And he has kind of come to our young people and said, tell me three careers that you think you might be interested in. And then he is kind of taking the lead and setting up some job shadowing opportunities for your young people.

Because a lot of times they're not sure what they want to do. And like Rossie said, they need to see it. And it's really valuable to give them the opportunity to kind of be in that space and be with that person and see how comfortable they feel.

I would also encourage you to do career assessments and do them often. We know that our young people's needs and wants and desires change during the time they're in our program. So don't just do your career assessments and mental toughness and think that that's going to be your path for the next 24 months. Update those.

And then finally, just kind of know your employer needs and your capacity to meet those needs. Rossie has mentioned kind of your building trades. I think as you're identifying sectors and industries that are in need in your area, the building trade associations are a really good place to start. They also know those employers. They know what those employers are looking for and they can help you make connections to those employers.

And then also the One-Stop partner. Again, they have relationships with employers and they are more than happy to help you make connections to those employers. So understand – have a good relationship with them and be able to use those.

All right. With that I'm going to turn it over to Brian.

MR. MCMAHON: OK. Thanks, Joanna. Yeah, so we – as I mentioned earlier, the second prong of our approach was really developing this rigorous and challenging tiered program model, that when our participants – our YouthBuild participants – were done, we felt confident that they could hit the ground running in this registered apprenticeship commercial work setting. Or really any high-end construction career job.

So we focused on really kind of identifying some of those skills gaps that Rossie was talking about. And we came up with this idea of an advanced construction training crew. And we developed the OFS Grad Crew program.

So this was a program for YouthBuild graduates who had identified the trades as a career that they wanted to go into, had a vested interest in it – they've already completed their path curriculum, their OSHA 10, their first aid/CPR, obtained that driver's license, really chosen that they wanted to make the career – construction a career goal. They then had the opportunity to apply and it's competitive to apply to this OFS Grad Crew program.

One of the things that we had heard from employers in terms of what they were looking for from the relationships that we developed, from the meetings that we were going to – some of the things we heard is they were really looking for four things. And at first I thought I was going to hear, yep, we need this very specific technical proficiency. But that was not the case.

Time and time again what we heard from union employers and other construction firms was we're looking for someone who's going to be dependable, someone who's going to be hardworking, someone who's going to take pride in their work, and someone who's going to show up with a willingness to learn. And those are a lot of the things that we focused on on that Grad Crew program.

We internally – (inaudible) – refer to it as our AAA ball squad. It's competitive to get onto that crew. Once you're on that crew, we do focus on really kind of replicating that industry pace and some technical proficiency, but really honing in on those four things. And employers are saying those are the hard things that are hard to teach.

They are the craftspeople of their trade; they will teach those skills. But it's hard for them to find and teach those four that I think YouthBuild in general is really set up well to do with our coaching and mentoring components built in. So Grad Crew is kind of advanced level of that.

Another tool we use to help ensure readiness is with Findorff we developed an apprenticeship readiness evaluation program. So when our young people go out and do that week-long job shadow, the superintendent or the foreman or the journey level worker that the young person is paired up with is filling out an evaluation and giving that back to Operation Fresh Start staff to speak to those four areas I just mentioned, plus in some technical proficiencies.

A lot of times what happens is they get that kind of look at them at the end of the week and if they're meeting those readiness standards, they often get picked up. And like that AAA ball squad, we call it "going to the show." They go and then we're able to recruit kind of from our applicant pool for the next person to enter Grad Crew.

So it works well with the industry also understanding that often times these construction positions are on-demand, meaning that these construction firms need someone this week or tomorrow. The Grad Crew model is – we built it that way because we understood the needs of our employers, that they could go on-demand and stay and then we can backfill internally to provide that next advanced training opportunity for a YouthBuild graduate.

Another theme that I know all YouthBuild programs follow but we really – we push hard at OFS – is just that continual improvement. We looked – we continue to develop our YouthBuild program. We were able to obtain a Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards pre-apprenticeship training provider certification. So the state of Wisconsin Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards has certified our program as a pre-apprenticeship carpentry program that aligns well with RA and gives a real kind of gold seal of approval.

The other thing is constantly communicating with employers, regional workforce development board, anyone about the workforce needs, the labor market projections. And have them take a look at your curriculum and your training models and continue to tweak it to make improvements.

And Rossie, I'll hand it back to you. (Pause.) Rossie, you might still be on mute.

MR. CHERRY: There you go. So this is the very – that was a very, very important part about capacity and then Grad Crews. Just to build off of that a little bit from what Brian and Joanna explained is knowing your capacity is very important.

The first year or so it's about building a sound infrastructure to build a really good career pathway program off of. This is about aligning to employers, figuring out curriculum, and really understanding what the region around workforce is really about.

Also, the Grad Crew is a great idea. I know we had – in California we started a general contracting business because we couldn't find work experience opportunities for our young people. So we created a Grad Crew, a lot like what Brian did. Actually, Brian inspired me to do that.

And so we did that, we started doing a (bakery ?) project, we started doing small projects in the city that were construction-based. And our city really loved the idea so our city funded that crew for the next two years, which was great. And so I think when you start being innovative and creative but still stay within your scope of the work and your mission and your goals, funding opportunities will come about for you.

I think a key piece of this, though – and element three talks about design your education and your training programs, right? And how that's going to look. And so when your employers are asking, well, how are you teaching A, B, and C, and D, you explain to them, well we use the HBI PACT or MC3 or we're using another recognized credential, what that looks like.

And then ask them to come in and help you and help train your trainers on how to be better instructors. Train in the way that they would normally train their trainers on how to do certain things. That's very, very, I think, I important as far as this process is really getting them to support you in education.

I mean, one of my employer partners has said that he didn't really understand math in high school. But once he got to his construction worksite with an instructor who understand how to use that math in a related field, he came to love math because now he saw the value of it, how it added to him being able to do his job much better. And doing his job much better meant that he was able to of course make more money and be retained long-term on the job itself.

So think about that. Education and training programs provide a clear sequence of educational courses and credentials. Young folks should know that if they do step A and B, they're going to be going to C and D. And what's that look like for them in order to achieve their goals. And employers should know you're using those steps also.

It should be a seamless support system for young people how to go from one skill level to the next skill level. And then on your Grad Crews, as Brian will tell you also, we kept doing the skills. We identify that so young folks will come in late, they didn't have transportation, and that gave us three to six months of a little bit more time to transition them to be better employees down the line when they went to a permanent workforce situation. And so those are very important also.

And then aligning your skills and competencies with PSE – or postsecondary education, right? So if you can, talk to colleges and apprenticeship programs about how you align and that they can be co-enrolled and get dual credit and some of those things. How do you – (inaudible) – to help support you in a way where you feel like you have a gap in your delivery of the curriculum itself?

And I think the key here is don't have business as usual. Think outside the box, right? Think outside the box.

And also, another thing is contact your local career educational program. They are – (inaudible) – CTE program within the school district, within the state. There's some very good information out there, some very good activities, very good ideas you can build off of when it comes to creating a career pathway. Because a career tech education course is exactly where we want them to be at.

Here again we're talking about engaging – identifying and engaging educational partners, target populations, understanding the needs of your young people, what that really looks like, and what their barriers and challenges may be and addressing that within the curriculum itself. That should begin at mental toughness, addressing competencies, expectations, and all those things.

How you recruit. Who you recruit and how you recruit is a very important part of this process also. And then also not being – Joanna mentioned about having a career assessment, right? And not just doing it at the start of the program, but at the start, in the middle, do it again. Because things change, young folks change. They learn more. They become more confident and become more motivated. You want to go back and say, how do you feel now about this career? What do you think about this now? What about this piece here?

And so be willing to modify and be willing to add to or innovate down the line when you find out that young folks really may like this trade other than the one you thought might be a better fit for them.

And then just have a logical sequence of opportunities to learn, the curriculum. Embed your work-based learning projects. Embed your common core standards for the education. Embed the employability skills all into a sequence of learning so that they feel like they've totally been immersed and are getting a well-rounded, comprehensive education and exposure to the trades itself.

If you want to make construction relevant to young people, we have to make it a priority and we have to message it as a priority on day one.

Here there's just a quick diagram of employability skills framework here that I know – please print it out. I think it's a very good tool to use. But what it does is it talks about applied knowledge, right? Applied academic skills, critical thinking skills, talking about workplace skills, information that is used and given, how to do resource management, communication skills, systems thinking, technology use. These are all skills that employers have addressed to me in the past about necessary for young people to have coming to the worksite.

And there's also the effective leadership – relationship and leadership skills around personal qualities, interpersonal skills. Those are very important also. Just again, that pyramid model competency that was passed out and has been around. I believe there's a link to that also. It's a very, very important tool.

I always say to embed those competencies, especially on the interpersonal skills as you move up the pyramid, are very, very important to add to your program. The bottom part of the pyramid talks – is accomplished on – and as you move up the pyramid through the program, you add in more competencies that they can address some of their challenges with.

Work-based learning. Very, very, very important part of this process. And this requires really gaining the trust and really promoting that to your employer partners. An opportunity may be for your – I think Joanna mentioned your One-Stop or WIOA partner may be the fund gap for you on the back end of the program. In our program, our WIOA partner funded I believe it was eight weeks of our workforce development at – (inaudible) – partners project site.

And so doing that project site – (inaudible) – program, we created assessment tools with our employer. We got feedback every day that our job – (inaudible) – would go to the website itself and drop in to make sure everybody was showing up on time, that if there were any issues or concerns they would be addressed at that time.

But the greatest part of that was feedback from the employer, what they learned about how we instructed, what our focus was. They came back and said, look, some young folks, they said, they weren't on time due to transportation issues, so you're going to need to resolve that for us. One young man wasn't very interested; he didn't want the work – (inaudible) – trade. How do you resolve that piece?

So employers can be a really good part of it and provide feedback if we can create a really good work-based learning opportunity or work experience learning opportunity for them to go into.

I'll turn it over to Joanna now.

MS. JAMES: All right. Thanks, Rossie. So again, a lot of really good information. So element three, designing your education and training program. I think the first two steps were understanding your program, your capacity, what employers need, what the industry needs. And now it's all about taking a really serious look at your program and how you do things and making sure that everything that you do as part of your YouthBuild program is leading towards a young person being successful in that career pathway.

So as YouthBuild programs – Rossie has said it, Brian has said it – we do so many of the things that we need to do to prepare young people for success. I'm sure that most of you have had employers sit across a table from you and say, I will teach them the technical skills. Just like Brian was talking about. You teach them the soft skills; you help them with accountability and being on time and quality and all of those types of things.

So as a YouthBuild program you already should be doing that. I would also encourage you to think about the visuals and to think about when somebody walks into your site or into your worksites, is it clear to everybody that we are working on career pathways?

I will reference again that competency model pyramid. There is a link to it. That teaches a lot of things and I know that we have kind of built our first couple phases from that Career One-Stop pyramid.

Progressive milestones and the bar of expectation rises. So our program is broken into phase phases. Essentially it's mental toughness, zero to three months, four to six, and seven to nine months, and then months 10 through 22. As young people move through those phases, that bar of expectation rises. The program gets a little more robust, the expectations get a little more challenging for them, and that's OK. That's what we want them to do. Again, we kind of follow that pyramid and we start towards the bottom and then we kind of work our way up as those phases of our program go up.

I think it's also important to understand our young people and have opportunity for make-up time and have opportunities for refreshers. Because many times they're going to forget some of those things that we learned in zero to three when they're in month 10 and all of a sudden their work experience has kicked in and some of those things just didn't retain.

I think the current world we're living in with this virtual world, is forcing a lot of us to go online. I would encourage you to get as much things online. We're doing a lot of videos, with the expectation that once we get back to being at REBUILD and training in-person, we can also reference some of those videos and say, for whatever reason you had to miss today; go to YouTube, check out this video, and do the lesson assigned to you. Or go into Google Classroom and do the lesson assigned. So make sure that you have that opportunity to kind of back and do some refreshers with them.

Consider other certifications. Rossie talked about OSHA and the fact that a lot of employers, a lot of trade organizations, a lot of apprenticeship programs, they're going to put them through the OSHA that they want them to go through. So you need to know that. But I think just kind of having that very basic OSHA 10 needs to happen.

Consider some of the certifications that some of your employer partners can bring in. We have a partnership with Benjamin Moore and they do some paint training for our young people. Look at skill-specific trainings. If I go back to creating those partnerships, this is a great opportunity to get some of your employer partners into your site to start getting to know your young people.

So bring some of those block masons or cement masons or ironworkers or carpenters or whatever those trades are, bring them into your program and allow them to work with the young people one-on-one as a part of your training. Again, it kind of starts to build that relationship at all levels of the organization.

And then I would also encourage you to think about your community partners. These could be your community partners, your educational partners, and other programming. So we have a couple educational partners; they offer some certifications that we don't necessarily have to because our young people are getting them there. So make sure that you're thinking about what those community partners are also teaching and make sure that you're capturing that on the young person's résumé, in a young person's elevator speech. They need to be able to talk about that.

In our program, we're somewhat of a small staff, so it's finding other people that might be able to do things that we don't have to spend the time and the money on. Our WIOA One-Stop partners since we've been in this pandemic, they go live every Thursday, they do an online training, and then they put it in their YouTube video. You know what? We link to those trainings and we allow our One-Stop to kind of do some of those trainings for us.

So I would absolutely think about those community partners because they're bringing a lot of that work readiness into – they can bring a lot of that work readiness into your program. And there's some things that they may be doing that you don't even know about that you need to capture so that you can help your young person talk about that.

All right. And with that, I'm going to turn it back over to Brian.

MR. MCMAHON: Thank you, Joanna. Yeah, one of the things when we started this career development pathway, we also wanted to kind of maximize the educational alignment with our project-based learning platform, the worksite. And we refer to the worksite as a classroom.

At OFS, our supervisor and teacher are in constant communication. One of the things that we really did is we – I'll use an example of math. A lot of our YouthBuild students have that aversion to math. And we completely revamped our math curriculum into a construction math curriculum to maximize – we kind of contextualized that learning experience.

And one great example is always the Pythagorean theory. Any time you get into algebra, that A, B, C, you start seeing our – when we start seeing our participants' eyes start rolling back in their head. It's hard for them to conceptualize that. But because the supervisor and teacher are in such close communication, they're applying that.

That supervisor is then maximizing the house to say, OK, remember that A, B, C thing? That house there is A; B is this form that we're installing for this driveway concrete for what we're going to do later this week, and we've got to make sure it's running square into that house. And C is where we're going to pull this tape measure and put this stake in the end so that this form goes in square. And through that example, it starts sticking to the back of our participants' heads and they start understanding that math.

So we did that really in a lot of aspects beyond just math, of trying to maximize the educational alignment with our work platforms.

We're currently going through the process of crosswalking our entire high school diploma granting program. We have a local partnership with our school district where they're able to earn their high school diploma through our curriculum. And we're crosswalking our entire curriculum; it's going to be a summer-long project. But we've just begun that.

The other thing is once you build your pathway, we use – we recently got the pre-apprenticeship certification. You can apply this to other industries. We had a successful model with our construction pathway and we used that for our construction-plus pathway. Our construction-plus is conservation and urban forestry.

We also – I was able to work with a local person who's head forester for our county and also the president of the Wisconsin Arborist Association, which represents a network of nearly 100 employers. We were able to work together simultaneously while he was developing a registered apprenticeship in the state of Wisconsin for arborists. I was working – we were working on our pre-apprenticeship to make sure there was good alignment, good connectibility there. We were able to get those – both paths certified, Wisconsin being the first state in the country to get the arborist apprenticeship certified.

We also then kind of, after that process, then went to our local tech college and helped encourage them to start an urban forestry program in our region. So local people have the opportunity to enter that program and they receive that training locally. We're able – based on our pre-apprenticeship that was written, able to get – YouthBuild students are going to be able to get credit for prior learning. And we've just had our first two students enter the urban forestry at Madison College.

Through that partnership, relationship, good program design, Fresh Start was also asked to join an advisory committee around the arborist program development at the college. And we were able to work with that group to help set up a flexible schedule offering where students were able to work and go to school at the same time. And pull some of those employers in. So you can really, really build some neat education design and training opportunities.

Lastly, I'll just mention one of the things which we all do, that Joanna talked about, this comprehensive approach to providing training for our young people. We notice, at least in Wisconsin, they had removed driver education from the public school system. And we were seeing a large equity issue in those who are able to get their driving license.

So we partnered with the local driving school and have started essentially our own driver's education program where they can receive that education plus behind-the-wheel trainings. And we also obtained a vehicle for our young people who don't have legal – access to a legal vehicle to take their behind-the-wheel test, to help even more of our young people leave with a driver's license in the end.

And I will now pass that back to Rossie.

MR. CHERRY: Thank you, Brian. So as we look at key element four, I want to just quickly talk a little bit about identifying funding needs and sources. I know this is always our big – our elephant in the room thing, is like how do we fund these activities? And those are legitimate concerns.

I always tell folks to think and dream big. Create this huge budget based upon everything you would like to see happen. And then have a funding development plan around that and then figure out how you can make that happen.

For example, when we started doing our YouthBuild program we were a very small program. And our city liked some of our idea. They said, hey, we'll give you some money, help you rehab – building new house. I was like, look, we're not even a year in; we cannot build a new house. And so we had to – (inaudible) – our capacity was there yet to do that. But I said, but we can do is we definitely can be support workers on the worksite itself and do some of those things.

That began a long-term relationship where the city now provides with HOME funds every year. And so now we get ($54,000 ?) a year to – (inaudible) – rehab money – (inaudible) – in order to impact affordable housing. Now our organization owns four multi-family housing facilities that we – that our students rehab with city funding, with HOME funding.

So funding can occur. It can come. It may not come on day one. It's a long journey. This is not a track meet; this is not a sprint. But it can happen if you have a plan on how you're going to do certain things – certain parts of this program and pathway in order to build out funding opportunity.

Remember, funders like success. Funders like organization. And I think as Joanna said before, when employers walk in the door they're very visual. I've had many construction employers walk in and just basically say, I don't like the way this is set up; this is not a real construction-type environment.

And so I think it's Quantum Learning -- a saying that says "everything speaks." So if you walk into a YouthBuild program or a construction worksite, everything speaks to the employer about who you are as an organization. Very, very important. There's your training lab, the tools you use, all those things speak to what school you are and what you leave as an organization. Very, very important part of this.

And so thinking about funding as you move towards a career pathway program, you think about Perkins loans can be a part of this process once the federal government identifies you have a CT, or career tech, education program with a career pathway, meeting these six elements of a component.

CTE funds from your state can happen. Workforce development funds from the WIOA can happen. You can become actually a worksite training partner for your WIOA partner. And also what we did is that we came – (inaudible) – our city's affordable housing plan, we became a community housing development organization -- we became a CHDO.

They gave us funding to developing housing and to operate those housing funds that we have. So we have tenants now in those buildings that we operate and we have rent for.

So those things I never dreamed that would happen, but they came only because we started doing this work first. So thinking about some of those elements of it.

And then you want long-term sustainability with your partners. Now we're in our city's budget for the affordable housing piece of it. We're in our WIOA – (inaudible) – seek budget for workforce experience partner. So these things can occur, but it all begins with a really solid plan of creating a fund development plan and create an ideal budget for yourself to work off of.

I'll turn it over to Joanna now.

MS. JAMES: All right. Thanks, Rossie. So yeah, as far as funding, I think it's important to know that this is going to vary with each partner. You need to get creative.

So one of our employer partners, the arrangement that we have with them is they pay us an hourly rate, a flat fee, and with that then we compensate our young people and we keep our young people on worker's comp and insurance and all those types of things. So that's one way that we work.

I think Rossie mentioned earlier working with WIOA, because sometimes, depending on how that relationship works and what kind of programs that they're offering, you may be able to use some WIOA funding for some of that work experience.

I would highly recommend you get creative. And again, part of this is thinking about who else has money that they may be able to use to provide a work experience. So probably one of the most creative ones that we had a couple years ago was working with the city of Canton and some of their CDBG funds and the Canton City Police Department.

And the police department had a need that we had homeowners in our community that would have windows broken or doors broken or doors kicked in or something like that, as a result of criminal activity. So the police department, in their community policing efforts, wanted to be able to provide a service that someone would go out and replace a window or replace a door and those types of things.

So the police department went to the city, got some CDBG funds, and then essentially kind of hired us to go off and do those things. So that was an opportunity for us to have our young people get some work experience working on some homes that weren't necessarily our worksites.

Recently we've been working with the city of Canton and have just found out in the past couple weeks that we have been awarded funding again that's going to be funneled from building violations and code violations. So our city has increased their code violations over the past several years. And as a result, we've been a nonprofit that gets calls saying, I need you to help me because now I have this building violation.

So now we're going to be able to use some of the funds that are coming as a result of those fines and be able to go off and help those homeowners.

So sometimes it just gets creative. It starts to think about where the money is and is there a way that we may be able to tap in or partner with somebody that already had the funding?

And then finally, don't forget your community partners. Again, sometimes they have funding and they need some help meeting their outcomes and their guidelines. I would say that some of our nonprofit sites offer really good work experience opportunities, so don't forget about them. And if they're nonprofit worksites, then they also have the opportunity to possibly earn some AmeriCorps hours.

And then our community partners also teach a lot of really good skills that can be put on a young person's résumé. So again, it will vary and get creative.

With that I'm going to turn it back over to Brian.

MR. MCMAHON: Thank you, Joanna. I'll try and be brief. I know we're running out of time here.

WIOA is I believe a real good fit. We, like a lot of other YouthBuild programs, started under the case management program model. And that was challenging in some ways. Recently, with this career pathway model, we moved to being a funded training provider under WIOA, and that seems to be a very strong fit, which helps support our construction pathway and our conservation urban forestry pathway.

The other thing that we – sometimes even looking at the needs of our young people and identifying those. We did a community resource mapping exercise locally here around that driver's license issue and really identified a gap in our community. We know this is a – it's not just a credential to drive a vehicle. In some ways, even more, it's a necessary employment credential.

And so we really started banging that drum in our community about this need and the community really showed up. So it's really provided some – the city, the county, and other local funding sources have helped support our driver's license program at Operation Fresh Start.

And then lastly I'll mention for those that are interested in trying to replicate that Grad Crew model, it can be a revenue generator. It took a while to build up, but I'll just mention quickly where – last year a Grad Crew was involved in a big project, InnovationOne, helping build out portions of Exact Science's corporate headquarters.

There was a general contractor building a healing house, which was a medical respite center to house homeless people with children recently coming out of the hospital. This year we're looking at partnering with Findorff, the company I mentioned, on a couple other large projects. CUNA Mutual, their major renovations to their corporate headquarters. And Essence for Health, assisting in building a new hospital in our community.

Rossie mentioned Section 3 before, some of the benefits of that. Our Grad Crew is a Section 3 certified business, so there's some incentives to partner with that crew on some of these projects. And so it – these are large contracts and can be – a lot of years sometimes you just break even. It's a lot of work but it can be a revenue generator for programs.

And I'll pass it back to you, Rossie. (Pause.) And you might be on mute again, Rossie.

MR. CHERRY: I'd like to talk about what Brian and Joanna said about being very creative in your approach, especially when it comes to funding and building a funding opportunity for your organization.

We just purchased a few years ago a big building with a lot of big huge lots on the side of our building. And one of our trade partners – (inaudible) – pay – (inaudible) – area -- we don't have a training site in your area. (Inaudible) – your area for a week. So that turned into now four years.

And so they pay us to utilize our area – (inaudible) – facility. And also, the great thing about that is our young – (inaudible) – began to -- we have a lot of young people going through that training because it's there. It's readily available to them.

And so that was an opportunity we didn't think about having or being able to pursue, but now we do. So now, basically they pay us rent to be at our facility. And then the benefit of that is our young people gets placed into that union for long-term success. It's a true partnership there, identifying their needs with our needs and merging those two things together.

So also here we have element – key element five of the six here. So we're winding down. This is about aligning policies and programs to make sure that you are – (inaudible) – and forms have been revised to align with what we said, the career pathway system. Making sure your internal org policies aren't a hindrance to what you're doing, but also that you have the capacity to do what you want to do long term.

I've got an example of that. (We brought in ?) HOME funding from our city – (inaudible) – and in order to – (inaudible) – you have to have low-income residents on your board. And it must be one-third of your board in order to – (inaudible) -- get these funds. We were like, wow, that's a huge policy alignment, program alignment there. And so we had to have a big discussion about if we were going to do that. Of course we did because it made sense to have those folks on our board and also it benefited our young people.

And so I'm just saying, those are things that come about from study, you have to think about as an organization. Sometimes funders have these policies they want you to implement. And it may impact your bylaws, may impact your organization culture and how you do things. So really have an understanding and be sure of what you want to do and what it's going to look like for you long term. Stay to your mission and vision for your organization as you do that.

So identify state and local policies necessary to make career pathway systems. Identify and pursue needed reforms, which is a state and local thing. And so like locally, we had to address our city about getting funds to our program and what that looked like. I spent a lot of time at city council meetings and some of those things to advocate on behalf of our projects.

Then any administrative policies that you have that might need to be modified in order to meet your new partnerships. Those are very, very important pieces to consider and to look at as you move into this career pathways system.

Now I'll turn it over to Joanna, please.

MS. JAMES: All right. Thanks, Rossie. So I will keep this brief. So as far as – a lot of this just goes back to understanding your employers and understanding what their expectations are. And then trying to make sure that your policies are going to encourage that.

So I think one of the biggest things for us is the drug policies that a lot of our employer partners may have. So if there's a really robust and strict drug policy or safety policy at one of our employer partnerships, then we need to make sure that we are preparing our young people for that policy. So our policy needs to be strict and robust and kind of mirror what those employers are going to expect.

And then just kind of think about your individual program policies. So your schedules; most of our employer partners don't necessarily take spring breaks and summer breaks. So our program is modeled for 12 months a year.

And things like your supportive services policy, so giving bus passes or helping with transportation. If your – if the expectation is that that young person gets to the employer on their own, does your policy cover being able to give them enough bus passes for that day?

So again, this is just understanding your program and understanding how you are going to be able to service those employers. Brian?

MR. MCMAHON: Thank you, Joanna. And that's a really good point is understanding those. And sometimes even the policies – punctuality is big, staying on task is big.

But also, we also try and teach some of our young people some of the unwritten rules. We have a saying that – at OFS that if you're not 15 minutes early, you're 15 minutes late. And especially true in the construction industry. You want to be getting there early, drinking coffee with that foreman. You don't want to be that joker hopping out of the car or truck at 5:59 if you're starting at 6:00 a.m., pulling those boots on. You want to be there 15 minutes early talking about the work, so hammers are swinging right at 6:00 a.m.

A couple of – just staying in tune with what those employers are doing. We noticed a lot of the local trade unions were moving for their aptitude tests to the ACCUPLACER. We changed some things to help implement more ACCUPLACER test prep and a testing requirement for young people in our program.

The other thing, as I mentioned, in our state they pulled – in our region they pulled driver's education out and a lot of local employers are starting to see the effect of that, screening. Like, we need people and we need people with their driver's license. And we took that opportunity to be an innovator and begin our own driver's instruction program.

Back to you, Rossie.

MR. CHERRY: Thank you. Thank you very much, Brian. So we look at element six just talking about data. We all know the importance of measuring system change and performance. How are we doing that? We have our basic standard data tracking system, or are we tracking numeracy/literacy gain, we're tracking attendance.

Let's try to look at how are you more innovative and creative to track things that may impact success for young people in the end of our program and in the middle of our program. For example, how are we tracking barriers to retention once they get to an employer? We asked our employers, what are our students struggling with? Are we documenting that process? And then are we saying how we change that within our program so those things can be removed during the hiring process or during the employment opportunity later on down the line?

Identify the data needed to measure system, program, and participant outcomes. All three of those things should be measured. How we instruct, how we recruit, success of – student success. And how our program – as far as our staff. Are we giving our staff feedback and helping develop a better service of people?

How we implement a process to collect, store, track, share, and analyze data. When you have five or six partners that can be very challenging; I experienced that in (Florida ?). So what tool are you using in order to do that? How are you collecting data? Is there one person in charge of that data? And then are you analyzing that data in an authentic way?

And then design and implement a plan for reporting system and program outcomes. We know we all report our DOL data and our DYB data, but it's very important also to have some internal partnership data that you're working on and a plan for how you're utilizing that data in order to benefit everyone at the table.

Joanna?

MS. JAMES: All right. Thanks, Rossie. So measuring system change and performance. Again, I think this needs to – you need to start thinking about this early and it needs to be included in your MOA.

So your plan for monitoring. How often are you checking in with the employer? How are you checking in with the employer? Who is checking in with the employer? How are reviews and assessment being done? Are they written? Online? What do those assessments include?

And I think it's also important to allow your young person to do an assessment on themselves, because sometimes they think everything is great and you may be hearing something different. So again, assessing progress.

The technical skills, how are you measuring? For example, with the police department it was really easy to measure that in the beginning it took us this long to install a window and six weeks late we had that down to half the time. So are you assessing technical skills, attendance, breaks, taking initiative, all of those soft skills?

And then I think it's really important to have a plan in place when an intervention needs to happen, or of course change. Who is going to initiate if something is going wrong? And how is that going to be addressed with a young person? And what is your role as the YouthBuild program and as the mentor and the teacher and the trainer of that young person in that intervention?

Just kind of in summary, that young person is still your young person and your support doesn't stop. You know them a lot better than the employer knows them, so you need to continue to mentor and support them as they go through the process.

Brian?

MR. MCMAHON: Thanks, Joanna. Yeah, we measure – track and measure. So we – going back to the two things – the two-pronged approach, the two things that we wanted to accomplish is we wanted to build good trust and relationships with our partners, and we also wanted to make sure that we design a rigorous program.

So we have our pre-apprenticeship curriculum competencies that we are measuring the progress of that skill achievement. Our eight-week participant one-on-ones are really measuring those four things that those employers are looking for: dependable, hardworking, take pride in their work, and that eagerness to learn. Plus a lot of the obstacles and barriers that they're up against, that apprenticeship readiness evaluation tool.

And it all comes together in retention, right? Either it's going to be a win-win-win, most importantly for our participants who are well-prepared, they've been able to enter this great career in an apprenticeship position and move up to that journey level status; or it can be a lose-lose-lose. We don't want our young people getting blown out of the water. We don't want our referral partners to be disappointed.

And it's just following up. Following up with that young person and the employers to hear how it's going. So you're really building that bridge where you're meeting – and ideally you're meeting halfway on that bridge and you've got an employer partner that sees the value that you're bringing, that's helping onboard those participants into those positions.

And with that, back to Rossie.

MR. CHERRY: Thank you very much, Brian. So quickly go through our ideas for next steps. Joanna and Brian have given some great examples of implementation of these six elements. And so quick ideas around planning, curriculum and instruction, technical skills implementation, employer engagement, and youth engagement.

So we're looking at your planning piece. Really assessing the construction program, once again, in your local region or community for needs and partner participation. If there's another program around your area, they may have some good ideas about that also. We really found that YouthBuild programs that resource share, resource map, and work together – especially within a region – can be a very powerful workforce bloc in construction industry.

At – (inaudible) – California we did that. We had 20-something sites in the Los Angeles-Southern California area. We had some really good opportunities that came about through the Compton program, Canoga Park program, some other programs that were a part of our collaborative. And so sometimes those regional partners, planning with them can pay dividends because you can resource share partnerships as well as employers as well as curriculum and best practices.

So really think about that in your program management and planning and curriculum, sharing ideas to build those things out to serve employer and youth needs.

And once again, if you're using MC3, HBI PACT, or NCCER in your curriculum, please figure out how you can build it out to include more employer-driven specific skills or competencies to that curriculum itself.

Once again, some professional development. Really a lot of times our trainers, they come in and do the grunt of the work at the worksite and then instruction classroom. You have to put a lot of work into supporting them and to be their instructors. A lot of them are very motivated, very willing, very able. Support them in having some of that capacity, building that out.

And also around our facilities and equipment. Before I mentioned about funding for tools. We did a donation for tools in our community. Home Depot was a big partner of ours. They do these big community service blocks of community service programs every month. They became a partner and gave us donated goods. So once again, we identified a partner who wanted to help and support, so that's a good way of doing that.

And as you're figuring out, think – I think that Brian mentioned about creating an advisory committee, even doing one for your organization. Create your own with employers and really get good ideas about what they know, who they know, and how they can be supportive of what you're trying to do.

Curriculum and instruction. Once again, peer integration and sequencing. I know we already talked about all the components should be all integrated as one. And really figuring out a plan to do that, really having the construction trainer work with the math teacher, the English teacher, or whatever you're doing as far as your HiSET.

Really getting other learning courses into the construction lab itself, and vice versa. It makes doing projects that blend in all those things from education to hands-on training to supportive services, that really helps out – (inaudible) – once again immersing young folks into the construction as a career pathway.

Technical skills, hands-on training, and work-based learning, very, very important part of that. Like I said before, we're talking about really trying to figure out how do we get young folks to worksites and create a really good experience and put hands onto a project to get the real-life experience as best as possible.

Employer engagement, placement, placement, and more placement. That's what we want at the end of the day. But we want to do a retained placement. We want retention in our placements. So that requires all the planning work to be done, employer partnerships to be strong; there be trust and credibility there. So we understand when a problem arises, where we know ahead of time, we can address that with employers instead of letting young folks be removed from the jobsite itself.

Youth engagement. Develop a clear and flexible plan of study. I think plan of study is very, very important. A lot of times we develop these individual action plans, development plans, they're very supportive service driven, which is fine. But make sure we add in a lot of academics, a lot of construction career pathway training in there into their studies. Planning their study, they understand that we expect them to know and learn these things in order to be on the jobsite or with a career in construction itself.

Identify internships that can possibly be involved with job shadowing, set tours with construction project sites during the training at your apprenticeship schools. All of those things that are part of the full immersion process that is involved in the construction career pathway.

Sequence learning, flexible plan of study. Making – (inaudible) – as I said before, academic skills, technical skill, employability skills, supportive service needs, and other relevant areas. All those should blend into their plan of study.

And here's an example of that. I know this is more of a school-based one for those who have schools. But it gives you an idea of embedding some of these things into their plan of study.

So what's next? Look at these six elements and to assess where you are with your career pathway and begin to design and develop – (inaudible) – at least six elements as your kind of stepping stone to implementation to make it happen.

I won't review them. We went over them extensively so we won't review them now.

Closing thoughts. Be intentional. Leave no stone unturned. Understand local labor market information. Understand the clusters that are within those markets, especially trade. Understand needs of employers. Ask the tough questions; there are no dumb questions with employers. Understand and meet the challenges with YouthBuild students – participants.

Revisit your curriculum and see how to improve it to a sequence that's integrated appropriately. Provide supportive services that are consistent across the program to every young person in the program. And are there any employers or agencies you think you need to strengthen the gaps in service delivery with?

So are there any questions? I think that we're going to have questions now if possible. I think Mark?

MR. SMITH: Yeah, absolutely. Well, thank you so much, Rossie. And I'd also just like to take a minute to thank our other presenters, Joanna and Brian. That was a lot of great information and you guys did a great job explaining it.

So I know as we were kind of going down the presentation there were a few questions that chimed in. And I know that Lan (ph) and Jim kind of chimed in and answered some of those as we were going along. But if you had anything that was kind of pressing, we'd like you to type that into the box below and have those questions answered.

I know Emily, you had a question a little bit earlier about suggestions for funding for tools for your on-campus workshop. Can you press the \*3 maybe, Emily, and maybe just expand a little bit?

MS. CASERTANO: If you're dialed in it's \*6 to unmute your line.

MR. SMITH: Oh, I'm sorry; \*6. I apologize. \*6, Emily. Maybe give us a little bit of background on that one?

If not, maybe type in a little bit. Well, maybe from Rossie, do you have any suggestions for funding for any of the on-campus workshops that they may be having?

MR. CHERRY: Well, yeah. And I said before, we try to get some of our employer partners to support our tools. We let them know that in order to have young people really experience and handle the tool they want us to have, trying to get those tools from them. And so we did a lot of that.

But as far as funding, I know when you're a CTE program you can get a capacity-building grant and that can be built – (inaudible) – utilize some of those grants from the state, allowing career pathway development for construction. So that may be an opportunity also.

Your CTE at your local community is very, very – they're doing a lot of work and a lot of – (inaudible) – funding network. And what we're doing is part of that. So please look into that also.

MR. SMITH: Excellent. Excellent. OK.

MR. MCMAHON: In addition to some of the comments that Rossie mentioned, I'll just mention that we've had some success at Operation Fresh Start reaching out to specific providers – builders of tools, Milwaukee, Makita, DeWalt. Sometimes you can send them a message directly telling them about your program, the mission, and we've seen some success in tool donations.

MR. SMITH: Excellent. Thanks, Brian. That's very helpful. All right. We've got – we are a little bit over, but we do want to make sure that we answer any questions that you may have. So again, if you have any questions, feel free to go ahead and type those in.

And OK. Well, I'm not seeing anything. So we definitely do want to make sure that we provide you with some resources, so here's some additional resources.

So this is the career pathways toolkit, Apprenticeship Guide for YouthBuild Programs, apprenticeship resource page. There's a resource for implementing building, trades, multi-craft core curriculum, the NCCER, and the HBI. So all of these are different links for building construction careers pathways and also directly to some of the trades providers – trades training providers.

We'd also like you to stay on the line for a little bit after we give some of this contact information for a quick survey. Just to kind of give us some feedback on how you think the presentation went, if there's something that you like about it, something that we could have done a little bit better. Please let us know.

And our contact information is here. My contact information is listed here. Here's Rossie's contact information. And our wonderful presenters, Joanna and Brian.

So we'd like to thank you and I'd like to pass it back and have us – and close us on out for the day. Thank you so much for joining us. A lot of great information and we appreciate you guys tuning in for us. Have a great day.

(END)