

Administration for Children and Families, Office of Family Assistance

“Program Flexibility, Career Pathways, and Improving Employment Outcomes” Webinar

June 24, 2014 at 1 p.m. EST

[Operator]: Please stand by. We are about to begin. Good day and welcome to the Program Flexibility Career Pathways Improving Employment Outcomes for TANF Participants Conference Call. Today’s call is being recorded and at this time I would like to turn the conference over to Lisa Washington Thomas. Please go ahead.

[Lisa Washington Thomas]: Hi. Good afternoon, everyone. My name is Lisa Washington Thomas and I am the branch chief for the Self Sufficiency Branch in the Office of Family Assistance, and I want to welcome you to Program Flexibility Career Pathways Improving Employment Outcomes for TANF Participants. We are excited that you could join us today. As many of you know, moving low-income, hard to employ individuals to, with barriers to employment into workforce has been a long-time struggle of the Temporary Assistance with Needy Families, TANF program. Research has shown that investing in education and training leads to higher wages and lower unemployment and lower recidivism. And that developing a stable career pathway has a tremendous potential for moving welfare recipients closer to economic self-sufficiency.

Additionally, increasing access to a career pathways model of assistance can potentially increase earnings and employment outcomes for TANF participants and other low-income individuals with barriers to employment.

Under TANF, there is both programmatic and funding flexibility available to create innovative practices and federal regulations, innovative practices allowing states considerable discretion in designing their TANF programs to meet the needs of their participants.

Today’s webinar will explore the promise and potential of Career Pathways tailored to TANF participants and other low-income individuals and those with barriers to employment. Today you will hear from Liz Schott, Senior Fellow at the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, who will discuss TANF considerations and administrative flexibility. Vickie Choitz, Project Director at the Center for Law and Social Policy Class, who will provide an overview of class, Career Pathways Initiative, the Alliance for Quality Career Pathways. And Luann Hargrave, TANF Coordinator at the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education, who will provide innovative approaches and lessons learned from Oklahoma’s Work Prep Program.

Before we get started with presentations from the speakers, I wanted to take a moment to share with you OFA’s Career Pathways Catalog, A Tool Kit. The, the catalog is an online directory of free resources available for planning a Career Pathways Initiative. And although you are going to hear a lot of good information this afternoon, the tool kit is available on our Welfare Peer TA web site, on our Welfare Peer TA web site, to help you after the, the, the webinar as you want to look at instructions on how to start your Career Pathways Program. The Peer TA web site is www.peerta.acf.hhs.gov. In the, in these

tool kits, you'll find guidance on developing a Career Pathways model and work plan, selecting partners and creating shared ownership, analyzing local labor force needs now and in the future, building state-wide support for a Career Pathways Initiative, aligning training curricula and student and employer needs, estimating costs and tapping into available funding streams, and using data to continuously improve projects. The tool kit can be filtered by publisher, target population, intended audience, primary Career Pathway element, address and industry, so you can quickly find the right set of tools for your initiative. We invite you to check it out, and I also want to mention that in April 2012, the three departments, the U.S. Department of Education, Health and Human Services and Labor, released a joint letter endorsing the concept of Career Pathways as a promising approach to address the country's challenge of how to prepare workers of all skill levels to participate fully in the country's economic future. This challenge lies at the intersection of each department's domains of expertise, and no solution can become fully functional without engaging each department's constituency.

So, so we will move towards our presentations. In between each presentation, we'll have a brief opportunity to gauge your thoughts through our online polling feature. At the end of all the presentations, you will have the opportunity to ask questions through the Adobe platform. You can submit your questions throughout the webinar using the Q and A pod on the right side of your computer screen. If you have questions, if you have questions for a specific speaker or program, please specify that in your question. Also, right now you are able to download the PowerPoint presentation on the right, right side of your computer in the download section.

Following all the presentations, we will ask you to respond to a brief evaluation poll. Your feedback is very important to us, and helps us shape our delivery of technical assistance. Additionally, all the material from today's webinar will be posted on our Peer TA web site within four to six weeks.

Our first presenter today is Liz Schott, Senior Fellow at the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. Liz, the floor is yours.

[Liz Schott]: Okay. Good morning, at least where I am it's still morning and what I'd like to mainly talk about today is TANF recipients need access to education and skills training, and TANF policies need not and should not interfere with that. First slide please.

So it's really time to get past the old debates of whether we want to say, have a, continue to fight about work first versus human capital, the fact is, and the realities of this economy, some years down from 1996 is education matters. Education matters and, and changes in our economy have made it much harder for workers with only a high school education or less to earn enough to support a family, so the demand is for workers with more skills and it, and, and it's hard if you don't have skills.

Education and training programs have really changed over the last two decades to adapt to the changes in the economy, and they're much, they respond much more effectively to economic changes. And, the fact is that TANF recipients have maybe too often been left out of, left out of the changes, left out of the access to jobs in the new economy. The TANF law, as most of you know, limits when participation in certain types of vocational education, basic ed, job skills training, can count as meeting the work participation rates and, while states can allow TANF recipients to do whatever activities they choose, the

states choose to allow the pressure from the, what I think is an out-of-date work participation rate, often leads states to limit access.

So, next slide. There's a tension really between again, meeting the work participation rate, which has a fiscal penalty attached, and helping families achieve self-sufficiency. Although some of that tension I think is maybe unnecessary. States often have more flexibility to allow access to education and training than their own policies reflect. And I understand that not all of you are in, in the audience are TANF agency staff and so some of this you may be needing to communicate with and work with your TANF agencies to find out how, how some of what I'm going to talk about plays out in, in your state or in your local area and maybe to influence how, what the TANF policies are. But many states are meeting their target work rate, and they have plenty of space to allow participation in training even, even if that participation, even if that activity does not count towards the state's work participation rate. This, again the work participation is a rate that the state must achieve, but any individual can do whatever activity the state chooses to recognize as participation that it, that it recognizes as for that, for their activity.

So participation in education and training can count towards the work rate in many instances and as I said, state policies may be more restrictive than they need to be and more restrictive than the federal one. And, in addition, states can design their education and training programs in a way that maybe ensures that they do count. I'm going to go over each of these points in a little bit more detail in the next slide. And the next slide.

So, so as I said, states maybe have more space than their policies reflect. A lot of states are meeting their work rate. For 2011, three quarters of the states met their work rates by more than 10 points. That's plenty of space, I would say. And of those that didn't, that remaining quarter, half of those failed the work rate, so they have other issues, but half passed by a, by at least five points. So there is plenty of space for most states to allow participation activities even if they don't count. Now, I acknowledge that was 2011, that's the most recent work rate we have information on. Things are a little different maybe in 2012 in some states, if caseloads rose in response to the recession or are still high, they may not have as much space as they had in 2011. But, and, I also want to acknowledge that even when the state may have plenty of space, you need to see well where does this state policy come from? Is it something that the agency, is it really the policy? Is it something the agency created administratively, or is there a state law that needs to be changed? Next slide.

So, as I said, states may not be taking advantage of some of the restrictive policies may be actually not allowing the state to get as much credit as they could for what can count under the federal law. Stand alone vocational education can count for up to 12 months, and even beyond that if you're in a two-year training program, time beyond the 12 months could count as non-core job skills training and non-core training or non-core activities would be after the first, typically after the first 20 hours of, of what counts as a core activity could be met. Basic education, or education directly related to employment, can be a stand-alone or a core activity for younger individuals, those under age 20. And so one of the questions here is are the state policies again all the way, at least allowing as much as the federal law would allow to count, and could they go further? And, finally, one of the other federal law restrictions that some states may be concerned on is there's a 30 percent cap that, of 30 percent of all people participating

counting as participating no more than 30 percent can be engaged in certain education training, but most states are nowhere near that cap. It, the, nationally, the average is about 20 percent engaged in those education activities, and in some state it's less than 15 percent, and this cap does not apply to training that is non-core that's on top of 20 hours of other activities. So next slide.

So one of the things that states can do is to make it work even within the federal law constraints is that they can stack core and non-core activities together, and a number of states do this. In other words, you might say well gee, for the first year of vocational education, you can go to school as a full-time stand alone activity. We're going to count your class time and your homework time, and it's going to reach enough hours and, and we, we want you to be successful, so we want you to do that all the time, but after the first 12 months, we want to continue to count your participation for the federal work participation rates, so we're going to say you can, you can go to school if you also have 20 hours of other work, and one example, a good example of a state that does this is the Kentucky, is Kentucky with the Ready to Work Program, and what Kentucky does is they use a lot of work study so that the, the activity that's added on to the going to school is something that would be compatible with, hopefully related to either proximity wise, it's a job on campus so you don't have a whole lot of transportation, or maybe it's an internship in the field, and it's something where you're combining work and school. You count towards the rate, but you're doing it in a way where you're not hopefully too much sabotaging success at school. And there is a drawback here to the stacking of activities because there is research that shows that working and going to school together, if you're working too many hours, you can be interfering with success in school. So I think that stacking is an option, but it may also be something that you want to see. Do you really need to do this? I would not do it as your first choice, but maybe as your second or third if you really need to make people work 20 hours plus going to school. The research indicates that, you know, too much hours of work, including a less, 20 or less, can delay school completion and can interfere with school. So next slide.

So one thing that states can do, and that's why I said I wouldn't go, first option with stacking is, you can just take the hit with a work participation rate and allow folks to get the training and education they need to, to be able to get the economic self-sufficiency. Or you can avoid taking a hit to the work rate and they're sort of similar but different and, you know, first of all, taking a hit, for example, would be allow participation, allow them to do an activity, allow someone to do basic ed as a stand-alone activity even if they're 25 years old, because that's what they're going to need to get started, and, and an example here in Nebraska expanded access to basic education as stand-alone activity. Minnesota just passed a law this year that also expanded a number, access to a number of types of education activities as stand-alone activities and Nebraska, when they passed, first they expanded from age 20 to 24 for basic, allowing people to participate in basic ed, and then, actually a few years after that, they said well, we, you know, we're not going to limit it to people under aged 24. We're going to allow anyone who needs that do that, and what, what both Minnesota and Nebraska are doing is essentially what we require as sort of a core activity is going to be different than the federal core/non-core rules for what counts towards the work rate. Other states have let go of core requirements, the federal core requirements in, in other, in other ways. California has a family stabilization services program, and again, they don't require core participation. D.C., the District of Columbia, has kind of a tiered approach to

different activities, and for certain tiers in certain activities they don't require that, that they meet the core requirements. And, and another way to sort of avoid, so these are ways that states, the first two bullets were really where it said states just said we're going to let you do it even if we take a hit with the work rate, and this point, using solely state funded programs, something that's outside of the TANF and AMOE context, you're sort of using state funds, these are usually not very large numbers, particularly for post-secondary school. It's not for everyone. And, so some states have designed their, their, if you're going to college, we're going to, or other kinds of longer-term training that won't count in the work rate, we're going to fund you outside of the TANF and MOE structure. West Virginia and Nebraska are two examples, and this is a different Nebraska initiative. They have sort of one of the solely state-funded programs for post-secondary in addition within their TANF program, they're allowing access to basic education.

So the other thing finally I want to just wrap up on my next slide, is that there are other ways that you can create space, a state can create space in the work participation rate to allow education and training, and one of the reasons that Nebraska felt like it was able to, to make some of the changes it made was because it had, it was achieving a fairly high work rate and had a fairly low target work rate, so it had what I call space. And, and one, one example is, you know, making this space with your education and training programming, but there are other strategies. You can make space in other ways instead of serving the families who are in college in a solely state-funded program, you might want to serve other groups of families and, and many, many states do. They might have families that they have decided to exempt from work participation, maybe because a parent is disabled. Those could be in a solely state-funded program. Therefore, they're not essentially pulling down your work rate; you're performing better in your work rate as a state. You have more space to allow those who are participating in work activities to do the most appropriate work activity, even if it's something that doesn't count. You can also boost your work rate in other ways. You can, one of the biggest ways to boost your work rate is through unsubsidized employment. Get more credit for the unsubsidized employment that, that's already happening, and you can actually support the unsubsidized employment in this way, expanding earnings disregards, which almost all states have done under TANF, and a number of states further expanded in, in the years after the Deficit Reduction Act when that was enacted in 2006. A number of states, probably about a third of states also have some other kind of worker supplement program, a post-TANF, a little supplement that goes for a couple of months after TANF, or, or that goes to, let's say all working families on, on food stamps, on SNAP, and the idea here is these are working families and they're getting an MOE-funded supplement that counts towards the work rate and they're really not part of your cash assistance caseload, but because they're getting MOE funds, they, you get the benefit of counting them as, in the numerator, essentially, of your work rate. And so they help boost your work rate. And when you boost the work rate with these strategies, you're also boosting the 30 percent, the number of slots that would fall under the 30 percent cap, because you have more families counting as engaged in work, so you have 30 percent of that is also a bigger number, so you're really, in some ways, expanding access to education and training as well. There are other strategies and most states already use them to lower the target work rate with caseload reduction credit, and you can specifically use excess MOE, increased state spending above the mandatory minimum to, to help lower the target work rate. States don't have to achieve a 50 percent work rate. That 50 percent can be lowered, depending

upon the caseload reduction credit and the excess MOE spending, and finally, down the road, there are penalty release options. So failing the work rate is not the end of the story. States have opportunities to come into corrective compliance or get other ways of penalty release, and it, it, coming back down to how much do we want to allow TANF policies to interfere with access to Career Pathway programs, and I'll end it there.

[Lisa Washington Thomas]: Thanks Liz so much. We have one poll question that we would like to, to ask you.

[Polling question]: Would you like to hear more examples or stacking activities in order to meet TANF program requirements and client needs?

[Lisa Washington Thomas]: So if you will answer yes or no, and we'll, we'll give you a couple of minutes and then we'll move to Vickie.

[Female voice]: Did everybody get to see the poll results on the screen or just us speakers? It's very cool.

[Lisa Washington Thomas]: Actually, because my screen doesn't show the answers, I mean the poll, so some of us- the majority are saying yes, so great. Oh, okay. Allen was so gracious. So 70 percent would like to hear more examples on, on stacking activities, so we will get back to Liz on that issue during the question and answer period. Thank you, Liz.

So our next presenter, next I'd like to welcome Vickie. She is the project director at CLASP, and I'll just turn it over to you, Vickie.

[Vickie]: Okay great, thank you so much. I'm going to start with a little overview of what is CLASP, so if I can go to the next slide. For anyone who's not familiar with our organization, we focus on policy solutions that work for low-income people.

On the next slide we've got a little bit of information about what we do, which is develop and advocate for policies that improve the lives of low-income people. We have a center for post-secondary and economic success here that we launched in 2010, which specifically focuses on policies, investments and political will to increase access to education and training and workforce development for low-income, lower skilled individuals. Recently we managed the Shifting Gears Initiative, which was part of a Midwest initiative funded by the Joyce Foundation to make system changes that would improve access to post-secondary credentials to low income, lower skilled individuals, and that initiative was driven by the reasons that Liz gave as to why post-secondary credentials are becoming more and more important in this economy. And finally, our latest career pathway activity has centered on the Ten State Alliance for Quality Career Pathways Initiative. This Initiative started in 2012 with a Phase One in which we worked with 10 Career Pathways states and their local regional partners to create a framework that would define high quality Career Pathways systems. That framework is actually about to be released, so I think you may get some more information in the week or so after this webinar with the opportunity to sign up to get information on the framework, but just a quick overview, it has three parts. One is a refined understanding and conceptual model for what we mean by Career Pathways and the systems that

support them, and I'll talk a little bit about that in this webinar. The second part of the framework is a set of criteria and indicators for high quality Career Pathways systems. And we won't go too much into that; actually, we won't go into it at all at this webinar, but you'll, you can definitely see it if you sign up to receive the framework, but it's basically what are the important elements of a, a quality Career Pathways system in terms of the funding, the data, the partnership agreements etc. And then the final part of the framework is the first ever set of metrics for tracking the progress of Career Pathway participant, participants, and measuring and managing the success of the Pathways. So as I mentioned, we're going to be launching the framework very, very soon, and we'll actually be rolling into Phase 2 of the Initiative in which alliance partners, both of the state and the local regional level, will implement the framework and use self-assessment tools to see where they are and the quality of their Career Pathways System, and to start making progress toward using the metrics. So, again, more information will be available in the coming days and, a week or so after this webinar.

But in terms of this presentation, if you go to the next slide, this is our, my agenda for the next few minutes. We're going to define terms because we've learned that different people have a different understanding of what Career Pathways are, so we just want to make sure that, that we're at least on the same page for the next 15 minutes or so, and then we'll provide some examples of how TANF partners specifically have been involved in Career Pathways systems, and then finally we'll talk a little bit about how to make the case for making sure that TANF partners are involved in Career Pathways systems, because they're very important partners and, for the reasons that Liz gave, that we really can't leave anyone behind in this economy.

So on the next slide, we present the definition of the Career Pathways approach. So this is like the philosophy of Career Pathways, kind of a general understanding. It is, connects progressive levels of education, training, support services and credentials, so this is the integrated part of Career Pathways for specific occupations in a way that optimizes the progress and success of individuals with varying levels of abilities and needs. The one thing that we've learned in the alliance for quality career pathways is that Career Pathways benefit a variety of individuals, including well-prepared students right out, out of high school, as well as low-income, lower-skilled individuals. So we need to move past the days when the career and technical education folks thought that they were the only ones doing Career Pathways for their high school kids, and then, you know, low-income, advocates of low-income, lower-skilled individuals thought that they owned Career Pathways. That's confusing policy makers, employers and other stakeholders, and so we need to embrace each other under this one umbrella of a Career Pathways approach and recognize that the approach works for everyone, and recognizes that we cannot allow lower-skilled, low-income individuals to be left behind in this movement.

The second important part of the definition is that it helps individuals earn marketable credentials, that's very important, and engage in further education and employment as well as achieve economic success. The third important part is it ran deeply engaging employers. So employers are critical to the Career Pathways approach in that they not only help us understand where the jobs are in demand in what particular industries and sectors, they also help us understand what specific skills and credentials are in demand so that we are incorporating them into our education and training part of the pathway to increase the ability of individuals to actually get jobs at the end of the program. And they can be

invaluable in reviewing curriculum and providing internships and providing job fairs and job shadowing, so they're instrumental to the Career Pathways approach. And the Career Pathways obviously helps states and communities strengthen their work force in the economies.

Finally, this is not just a simply a new model, like, just a regular training model. This is really a system transformation strategy. When people say it's a new way of doing business, it really truly is, and that's why it takes a while to form these career pathways. That's why it's a little harder work than just doing a new model that you might plug in and, and do things a little differently. You really have to think long term when you're thinking about Career Pathways.

So that's the approach. On the next slide we offer what we mean by Career Pathways themselves. So these actually operationalize that approach that we talked about on the first slide. And in the Alliance for Quality Career Pathways definition, career pathways include three essential features and four essential functions, and then finally, before we go into those, Career Pathway programs may be linked and aligned along a career pathway in order to deliver services. So the career pathways themselves are, can be pretty extensive, and so we often see the longer-term pathway divided up into specific career pathway programs, or individual chunks that are linked and aligned along the pathway.

But let's quickly look at the three essential features of Career Pathways. So the first one is a well-connected and transparent education, training, credentials and support services. They're well-connected along that, that big Career Pathway era there. And whoever's running the slides, yep, just keep hitting that down arrow. So you can see the little blue dots are representative of programs, and this is all being informed by industry and employers, as we mentioned earlier.

The second essential feature is multiple entry points, and we talked a little about this for both well-prepared students as well as the specific target populations. So you can see when the red arrows fly in that there are different types of populations that can benefit from the Career Pathway at different points in the career pathway.

And then finally, the third key piece, the third essential feature of Career Pathways are multiple exit points. And these are aligned with the education part of the pathway. They are employment milestones, and each exit point is specifically aligned with the next entry point on the career pathway. So, for example, if someone earns an industry credential or a license and then they go and get a, the first job in the career pathway, they should easily and seamlessly be able to re-enter the pathway and earn a certificate or diploma, and then keep progressing in their employment, in their employment pathway.

So this is pretty similar to other definitions that you've probably seen about Career Pathways, but the Alliance has simply refined it and, and actually animated it here in this highly-animated slide.

So we'll go on to the next slide in the essence of time. The four essential functions of Career Pathways and any linked and aligned programs, any of those blue dots that are aligned along the career pathway, really should include four essential functions. Again, according to the Alliance for Quality Career Pathways. One is around participant-focused education and training. So this is the contextualized

education in terms of basic skills being taught in the context of a particular industry like health care, it's also delivering the education and training at times and places that work for the individuals.

The second essential function is around consistent and non-duplicative assessments. And the easiest example of this is that if the adult basic education provider in a Career Pathway partnership uses the, the TABE test to measure someone's adult basic skill levels, then the community college or the workforce partner should also use those results and not re-test the individual. These assessments are also about the assessments of an individual's support service needs, as well as the assets that they have available to them. So if they have a, a mother or grandmother who can offer child care, we want to make sure that we include those types of things in an intake assessment so that way we know the full picture of what the individual brings with them as well as what their support service needs are.

The third essential function is around those support services and career navigation assistance. So the support services include personal supports like child care. It also includes academic supports like tutoring and academic counseling, as well as in some cases, possibly mental health support or referrals, and then that career navigation is just essential.

And finally, the fourth essential function is around the employment services and work experiences. So this is everything from helping with job placement to providing access to job fairs, to maybe even providing an internship or a work study experience.

So those are career pathways, the operationalized entities of the Career Pathway approach. Excuse me. But those career pathways really cannot be sustained alone. They need supportive systems at the local level and the state level to support the scale-up and the sustainability of these career pathways. And, by what mean by systems are the supportive partnerships, the policies, the funding and resources, as well as the data and the performance measures, the shared performance measures across partners that provide the supportive, what I call quote unquote infrastructure for the operationalized career pathways. So you can see that in the, the figure that's on the screen now, and we also like to mention that there should be a feedback loop between the local/regional Career Pathways systems, the state Career Pathways systems, and the federal agencies, whether it be health and human services or the Department of Education or the Department of Labor, to make sure that everyone is speaking the same language and adjusting and revisiting their policies and regulations and funding to support Career Pathway efforts.

So on the next slide, the next two slides, we're going to present quickly a couple of examples of how TANF partners have been involved in Career Pathway systems. In Minnesota they have the Fast Track Adult Career Pathway program, which is basically a bridge program for low-income individuals onto post-secondary career pathways. And you can see the three key elements of those fast track programs around the integrated education, a focus on credentials, and providing those support services. Minnesota Fast Track has served thousands of individuals over the past four years and has had very high success rates, but what's most important for this presentation is that the state TANF agency has been intricately involved in this Career Pathway effort. They are a partner, a very active partner on the state level fast track team that cuts across post-secondary education institute, the agency, the workforce

agency, the adult basic education agency, and TANF is right there at the table with them, making decisions about funding to local regional Career Pathway programs, working on their own policies to try to make them more friendly to Career Pathways etcetera, and the state TANF agency has also contributed some of the TANF innovation funds to support fast track grants over the years, so that's one thing that, that, that TANF agencies can bring to the table. And then of course there's several examples of local TANF providers involved in local career pathway efforts.

The next slide shows the Minnesota Fast Track Model, and I won't go through this in detail, but it basically starts with education and the adult basic education system for individuals with skill levels as low as in the second and third grade, and it seamlessly connects them to different programs within Fast Track leading to an industry-recognized credential that is taught at a community or a technical college side-by-side with the adult basic education providers. And the whole thing is really fueled and supported by integrated support systems for those individuals.

The second example that we wanted to share with you is the Arkansas Career Pathways Initiative. Again, I would put the definition up there of who is eligible for that initiative, and individuals participating receive academic and support services as well as tuition. They have a counselor or a tutor that's assigned to them to help support them through the career pathway, and there's links to other agencies at especially the local levels such as the workforce system to help deliver other support services. This Career Pathway Initiative is funded specifically by TANF and administered in partnership with the Department of Higher Education, so it's a very fascinating partnership. And again, like Minnesota, the TANF partners are very involved in the local regional partnership.

So just, you've seen the definitions, you've seen some examples, now let's talk briefly about how to make the case or why TANF partners should be at the table when it, when we're talking about Career Pathway partnerships at either the state level or the local regional level. As Liz mentioned, there is high demand for post-secondary credentials and credential attainment is more important than ever, but a really important talking point that you should be using is that most state and local regional economies simply cannot afford to leave any worker or job seeker behind. Due to the, the demographics, there's been the, the baby boom, the baby boomers are starting to retire, and that leaves a vacuum of people who are available to work in the workforce, and so many states are finding that they need to rely on workers that they may not have had to rely on before and make sure that they have the skills available to fill the jobs the baby boomers are leaving.

As, as Liz described in, in very good detail that participation in Career Pathways can count as vocational educational training or the job skills training directly related to employment, and I am not the TANF expert on our team, so if you have any questions about that I suggest you, you point them towards Liz. And then another important aspect of why the TANF agency should be involved is that TANF providers have experience in assessing for barriers that individuals may need, that they have to participating, and TANF providers are experienced with those supportive services that are so important. Other Career Pathway partners in these partnerships aren't as familiar with those supportive services, so that's a really important role for TANF providers to play. And finally, TANF can be a very flexible source of

funding to support Career Pathway functions. And we've actually outlined some of those functions on the next slide.

And these are taken from, and you can just kind of go through them just, just, yeah keep them up, these are outlined in more detail in a resource that we created around how to break funding to support Career Pathways. And it's listed on the, the next slide, but we won't go there quite yet. So TANF funds can support curriculum redesign and incremental costs of some of the things that Liz talked about in terms of how to design your vocational training program to meet some of those complicated and confounding TANF rules, TANF can support that. The supportive services that we talked about can be supported by the TANF funds. Paying for the vocational training can, is an acceptable activity. The work study jobs such as the Kentucky Work Ready or Ready to Work Program that Liz described is another allowable source of, allowable activity, and then finally incentive grants to students and to institutions.

So on the last slide, we just included some resources that you might be interested in taking a closer look at in terms of career pathways themselves, what makes for a quality career pathway with the Alliance work, the tool kit that I mentioned, and then a couple of other resources written by our expert on TANF, who is Elizabeth Lowerbasch, specifically on TANF and Career Pathways.

So I thank you very much. I've included two additional bonus slides that I won't go through, but you can look at those when you, when you get the slides. But they're basically slides that help you understand how this is really becoming a movement and slides that provide evidence that you can point to to people in your state to make sure that they understand that Career Pathways is something to be investing in and focusing in on. Thank you.

[Lisa Washington Thomas]: Thank you so much, Vickie. And I appreciated, at one point you said that this is a movement and working with the interagency work group with the Department of Labor and Department of Ed, we see that and, and also knowing that philanthropic organizations are also interested in Career Pathways, that we see that this is becoming entrenched. It is even in the bill for re-authorizations so that, although it might have had different names in the past, but people are looking at ways to incorporate systems to help our American families become more economically self-sufficient, so I thank you.

[Polling question]: Our next poll question is, would you like to know more about the performance metrics that different sites have utilized in order to determine performance and outcomes? Again, our poll question is would you like to know more about the performance metrics that different sites have utilized in order to determine performance and outcomes? And I'll give you a couple of minutes.

[Lisa Washington Thomas]: Okay. So 90 percent of you would like to know more about performance metrics and we will address that question to Vickie during the question and answer portion.

Our, our next presenter is last but definitely not least is Luann Hargrave from Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education. It is a pleasure of mine to be working with you again, so we would like to hear from you. It's all on you, Luann.

[Luann Hargrave]: Thank you very much. Back in 1996, our department, which is the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education and the Department of Human Services entered into a contract that funded at first 22 programs across the state of Oklahoma. Currently those, we've lost some, they're down to 18 programs in about 28 technology center campuses. And at the same time, the Department of Human Services also entered into a contract with the regents for higher education in Oklahoma that funded every two-year college system in the state which there are 15. So the whole state is covered with programs designed for TANF recipients solely.

The first thing that we've learned to do was all of our students are different, and they, we couldn't have a cookie cutter program. We needed to make sure that we knew what abilities that they had from the very get go, what was their interest, were there any learning barriers, what was their grade levels if they were to be able to assess that, and so every eligible TANF recipient undergoes a battery of assessments. They use CAPS, COPES, COPS, TABE, to do this assessment, and then we also do key train, which is a way in which we can measure their career readiness so that they can attain work keys, which is very big in our state because we call that a workforce credential. So before they ever decide what direction the student or not the student but the TANF recipient will go, they have to undergo this assessment. They have a collaborate contract where these assessment providers are located all over the state, and go in and they not only do the pre-assessment, but they do a post-assessment as their competencies gain, they are able to go and do that. The nice thing about that is that the Department of Human Services has a place where all of their TANF recipients assessments are held so they can measure gains over the years.

Once that assessment is done, there is a meeting with service providers and those people include college programs, the technology center programs, workforce participants or workforce representatives can, the assessment, that person, the case manager along with the recipient, the TANF recipient, and that joint staffing takes place to determine what direction the TANF recipient wants to go. Some students or some TANF recipients do not want to go to school. They just want a job, and so they have some programs that they, not many, but there are a few programs that they can help them just do a job search. Otherwise, they have community development people located in county offices that work with them on creating work sites or just doing job search only.

So once the student has decided to come to a technology center based on their assessment, we will take them in the tech centers and we will do two weeks of concentrated career exploration, and people will, will go well why will you spend that much time? Well we find that once they learn more about what kind of careers are out there, if you were to go and do a career aptitude, assessment test on them, or a career interest, it changes. So they undergo two, two weeks of that, because we have a budget and we can pay for their tuition or we can help them get a pal, but we don't want them to get into the wrong program and waste that time and that money. We want to make sure they're in the right training program before we proceed with them. Many times we find out that they need a lot of remediation, even though they have a high school diploma, so there is a lot of time that we are able to provide that remediation and it starts in that first two weeks probation period.

The, one thing that we want to make sure we do, kind of looking here at my slides here, the Career Pathway is what happens at that joint staffing, that first step, and then once they go in there and they start that do plan or what they're going to do in sequence, so they might go through remediation. Some might go directly into a training program if, if slots available and it looks like they have the aptitude to be successful, we'll put them right into the training programs. So the Career Pathway is one of the outcomes of the joint staffing, and it is continuously reviewed and managed. That's in the next slide after the joint staffing.

That career pathway is complemented with the supportive service plan. The students a lot of time need additional help as far as dress. A lot of them do not have appropriate clothes to even go to school. We sometimes buy them uniforms or scrubs if they're in a health program. We also provide them with the essential tools that are usually having to be paid for by out of pocket expense by the students. We can pick those up. If they're not eligible for a Pell, we can pay for the tuition. We can help them in numerous ways with supportive services. Sometimes they need gas vouchers even just to get to the school. They might have a plan for getting there, but sometimes things happen and they need additional assistance and we can provide them with gas vouchers. Numerous things we can do when extreme situations, if they're behind on some kind of, like their energy, their electricity, we can provide some one-time expenses to help get those things going. The reason we do that, they can't sit there and concentrate if they're worried about what's going on at home. So we try to stabilize not only their environment at school, but also we try to stabilize their environment at home. Next slide.

You know, we do have to look at what we can provide under the TANF rules that were, were, we were talking about earlier. And one of the things, of course our contract is for vocational training, and of course we cannot exceed 12 months in that we can do a minimum of 20 hours of vocational. Most of the time when we do, we try to do 30 hours because a full-time program, it's an all-day program which is, by the time the week is up, is a 30-hour week. However, from time to time they want to get into a short-term program, and typically those short-term programs operate also concentrated time for six-hour days for several weeks. A lot of our students opt out of going to like a certified nursing aide program. It's short-term. They really feel the pressure of finding employment. We hope that they will come back to us and try to gain their CNA or maybe their LPN, and we have had some who had their Career Pathway plan as an end result of practical nurse. All of these programs that they had before the practical nurse are, we call them chunking. They chunk that curriculum, so they count that as an LPN student so they don't have to re-take anything. So they don't eat up their vocational time. So the CAN curriculum, all they have to do is say hey I have a CNA, and then they'll put them on the next level of the practical nursing program. So we do have some programs that operate that way.

The main thing is that if they're interested, they can become duly enrolled at our tech centers. That means that they can achieve college credit while attending our school because our coursework counts as college. If they were to leave us one year after completing our vocational program completely, then, and they had paid their tuition and fees for a cooperative two-year college, all they have to do is pick up their general education courses like English and History and so on, and within less than a year, they can leave with an associate degree. And so that's another opportunity they have beyond, because we know that right now the credentials are very, very valued by business and industry. But in addition to that, we

know that they'll gain more money long range or long term if they go ahead and attain an associate degree to complement those credentials. So the likelihood of promotion and salary increases and supervision and going into management is, is greater if they have that associate degree. The job search and job readiness, you know, that's also time-limited, and our, we try to make sure that that happens, concentrated time, not blended together with anything because one hour of that can count as a, a week. So in our job search/ job readiness, they, they learn how to do their resumes, complete applications, sought to do job search, they do mock interviews, there's numerous things that they go through so that they feel competent and they feel confident when they go out to do, seek jobs. While they're actively seeking employment, they have access to all of the equipment at the, at the Tech Center. There is actually, they have many cases some of the programs have a job search room where there's telephones and computers and faxes where they can scan, do online applications, and their schedule is supervised and structured. Even when they go out to look for a job in the community, everything is scheduled. It is structured, and they have to document so that they are supervised when and how and who they talked to when they went out there for that job interview.

Work site learning is something that really came into being when we realized that they had a lot of bad work history. And we'd send them out to that job search to find out that we couldn't get them employed because of the competitive workforce. And so what we did was we started working with employers and saying if you will help monitor the individual that we're sending you so that they can gain some competencies in the area in which you're employing, we will help you do that. We'll set up the curriculum with you. We'll provide you the evaluation tools so that you don't have to invent the wheel. We'll have those there for you, and we'll work with you and the student so that it is a meaningful work site experience. We can do that both, the one thing that we learned, though, is not everybody is ready for work site in a, in a private sector. We have put many of them first in a public sector to test the water of whether they're ready for a private sector, because many of the public sectors know the kind of recipients that we're working with or the students that we're working with, and so they help them kind of polish their employability skills to the level that they will be more successful in our work sites. So we might have them first in a public sector work site and then move them into a private. Many times, the private work site evolves into a job. But the very least it does is it provides them something to put on their resume as far as work history that they had participated successfully at this work site and we also have someone that can then provide them a recommendation when they have completed the work site successfully.

The next slide is a community service and that, too, is, you know, what I was talking about a little bit about the learning the employability services, our, how to, the employability skill sets that they need, again I talked more about that, but I want to move on to the adult basic education slide.

In Oklahoma, the GED has become more rigorous and, as a result, many students would like to, you know, not have to go through the GED process. We don't call our programs a GED program; we remediate. However, we're so good at it with the staff that we have, that it so happens that many of them are successful in attaining a GED. We will pay a GED fee for their test if they look like, according to our assessments, that they are going to be able to be successful in the GED attainment. So, again, we don't ever sell our self as GED training. We try to present our self as a vocational training program, but

we do have all of these other ways in which we can help that individual to be more employer and obviously, many employers still value that GED. They look at that as something that they want their employer, employees to have, so the best thing that they can leave with is not only a vocational credential, but they can also have a GED and a career readiness credential. And that's where we talk about key train, and in key train, that is a pre-test and then, in Oklahoma, there is a bronze, silver, gold and platinum level. And it, those are valued, assessment scores that employers respect and will add to their, to their ability to attain a job, we have some communities in Oklahoma that are what they call career ready communities. And that means every high school student, every college and tech center students that leave must leave with a career readiness credential. Employers have been profiled during jobs have been profiled to see if they have been measured to see what level of these credentials they need to have per employment position. And the good news is in those areas, there's been a great fit for the, all students to find good employment, and the employer satisfaction has been high as well. So more and more of our communities are looking into becoming a Career Readiness Community.

The special services provided, in the beginning I talked a little bit about that, we have done some dental, what we try to do is work with dentists in the community to reduce their fee and then we provide some services, DHS also provides some flex funds, and we try to work to attain, you know, some, it used to be they thought that, that teeth had nothing to do with employability, but I'm here to tell you, if you have a person who, whose teeth are so bad that they are sick all the time or that they're visually not pleasing, the likelihood of them finding employment is very minimum. So that's why we have dental as far as special services. Again, we do auto repair, gas vouchers, clothes for education, tools, books, credentialing fees, student organization dues, drug tests, other unique kinds of expenditures, and again we try to help them with, believe that driving is important, they have to have access to transportation and if the one thing that's standing between them and getting a good transportation and if they're licensed we'll help them reinstate their driver's license, so there's many things that we try to do to help them.

As far as financial, basically the Department of Career Tech and the Department of Human Services commit 3.6 million dollars annually. And, of that, the Department of Human Services provides the lion's share of the money. We've come up with a 20 percent match, and we allocate those monies based on number of students served per program. So programs that are small may not make, may not have any more than a hundred thousand dollars to operate, and that includes all other supportive dollars. Then they may in bigger communities like Oklahoma City, their may, their max is three hundred thousand dollars, and in those cases, that funds a coordinator, an employment specialist, a basic academic instructor and some part-time support staff. But they're dealing with a lot more students.

One thing has happened to us in the last two years which has really impacted our performance in that our state modeled Florida state in their adoption of a law that caused the TANF recipients to be tested for substance abuse if there was some kind of indication that the, of any kind of problem. In Oklahoma we've always done, a situation where if they were an applicant, they had to go through a SAFC assessment which was a written assessment where they voluntarily described their issues in a survey, and from that indicators they could determine whether or not they might have a problem with any kind of substance abuse. At that time, they would then help them provide mental health providers so that

they could get the treatment that they needed for them self, what, we did this a couple years ago, the new law says if we find, after we've done this assessment, that you have a problem, then we report you to Child Welfare, which could cause them to lose their children and to the police officials that could have incarceration. So our numbers from, in the beginning, we were serving 2,000 people, and in 1996 the numbers had dropped because, as the welfare rolls diminished, then we were getting a constant about 1,300 TANF clients up until this law changed, and then it has dramatically harmed us. We're down to 900 clients served. We have recently approached two legislators and one has, at this point, agreed to do a study, interim study, which is a state interim study, to see how this law has impacted TANF applicants, and we're hoping that we can make some changes in this because we know that our long-term impact is going to be very harmed to justify the continuation of programs if our numbers keep diminishing. Even so, our performance measures, 80 percent is what our goal is, and as far as completing their program, and we typically hit that, our wages are typically eight dollars an hour. I know that's not good, but we have so many people that are interested in short-term programs like CNA where those wages are not that great. But of, if we could factor the CNA group out of our numbers, our, our wages would be a lot better than eight dollars an hour. The training-related placement is 75 percent and again, we make the, those measurements most of the time I'd say 90 percent of our programs meet those standards, those minimum standards.

So, we have on the web site, you go to your next slide, you'll see the links to a web site that shows our design of the, our model that we use, you'll also find a map of where our programs are located, and then we have the guide book posted that has all the content of how we operate. It contains the annual continuation application that programs must complete. Those continuation applications are jointly approved by the Department of Human Services and our agency, and then they're funded in that way. Annually, our partnership, which means that the Department of Human Services' representative and I go out to the technology centers that are funded, and we do on-site reviews. They are part of our five-year evaluation process for accreditation. There's, so we have a lot of contact. They're, we also provide all of the in-service training from the time, we do a summer conference, we do a, a employ, employment specialist conference. We also do a partners CHS conference, and then a workforce conference. And all of those workshops, presentations, our people are invited to and participate and benefit from.

So with that, I have my contact information. I would be happy to visit with anybody individually if you have further questions. Our, wanted to mention three of the things, the work sites that are going, I just want you to know that we don't just send our students out to find their own work sites. Our staff is involved in making sure that the work sites are a good fit, that they will provide the kind of experiences that are beneficial to the student, and that they will make sure that they are properly monitored and evaluated. So that's one important thing. And the other thing is, all of our staff, the employability specialists and if it's a one-soul person at the program, the coordinator/employability specialist know who their community employers are and often times can either pick up the phone and find out about potential jobs or the employers themselves will pick up the phone and call them for our students. So we've got a good/great relationship with our community employers, and we feel like it, the programs really, really work. Thank you.

[Lisa Washington Thomas]: Thanks, Luann. It was great to hear how you have implemented Career Pathways in Oklahoma and they, hear your practical experiences and lessons learned.

[Polling question]: Our polling question in regards to Liz's, in regards to worksite learning, what would you like to know more about? Developing a work site or engaging the employers? Again, what would you like to know more about? The, how to develop a work site learning program or how to engage employers? I'm going to give a couple of minutes.

[Lisa Washington Thomas]: Okay. So about 80 percent of you would like to know more about engaging the employer. So we're going to, I want to thank again, we want [side conversation with another participate], want to thank again Liz, Vickie and Luann. We're going to move into our question and answer phase. I'm going to turn this over to James Butler, a program specialist in the Office of Family Assistance Self-Sufficiency Branch.

[James Butler]: Hi everyone. So at this time we invite you to submit your questions for our presenters through the Adobe webinar platform. You can submit your questions by using the Q and A pod on the right side of your computer screen, enter your question into the text box and press "send" or your computer's return key. If your question is for a specific speaker or program, please specify that in your question. So while you're doing that, what we're going to do is go ahead and go with, back to the first question which most of you responded to your poll that you wanted to hear more examples on stacking activities in order to meet TANF program requirements and clients' needs. And that would be for Liz.

[Liz Schott]: Okay. I think I'm unmuted here. I wanted to go back to the Kentucky Ready to Work Model, because what they do is they use work study a lot. And they've designed their work study, a lot of times you're not allowed to do more than, in some states it's 16 hours of work study, and if you're trying to stack to get 20 hours of core activities, you need to either boost the work study up to 20 or allow 20 work, 20 hours of work study. So, in Kentucky, they allow 20 hours of work study and, and one of the good things about using work study to complement, to complement training is that it's wage paying. So while they may be a TANF cash assistance recipient, they're also taking home pay which then would be partially disregarded and budgeted against a grant, but in general, the family would have greater income. That's another reason to use other kinds of paid employment, maybe sub, subsidized job. Work study is really a type of subsidized job. You could use another type of subsidized job. You could, you could create a stipend for an internship.

The other thing that they often use is unpaid activities. It doesn't bring more money into the household beyond the, the TANF benefits, but it, again, you, you hope that it could be something related. It could be an internship, an unpaid internship in an unpaid position that relates to the field of study so that, the bottom line here is you want to use stacking in a way that is beneficial, that you're boosting the income to the household or you're boosting the value of the education and experience, and you want to make sure you're not using stacking in a way that's detrimental to, to completing education. And I'd say if, if the stacking is detrimental, do you really need to be doing it? Does the agency really need to have this policy that's making you do something to interfere with, interfere with success in the education

program. I'll stop there. I could go on, but I'll stop because there are probably more questions by now for other people.

[James Butler]: Thank you, Liz. So we'll, we're going to go ahead and move to the second poll question, which was for Vickie.

[Polling question]: Vickie, if you could talk more about the performance metrics that the different sites have utilized to determine performance and outcomes.

[Vickie]: Sure. And this fits perfectly in with the third part of the Alliance for Quality Career Pathways framework, which is around Career Pathway participant metrics.

So for a year and a half, we did research and worked with our 10 Alliance states to better understand what metrics they are using in their Career Pathway programs, and we came up with a, kind of an aggregated list that will be features in the final AQCP framework, and it basically has three categories. One is the interim outcomes that Career Pathway programs use to measure early gains. The second group is education and training outcomes along the pathway, and the third group is labor market outcomes.

So to give you a couple of examples of each one, and then, as Liz did, I'll move on so that way you can answer other questions. Interim outcomes are, are traditional outcomes that you may see in the adult education performance measure rubric, which include educational level gains, so the skill gains that individuals get from one level to another, attainment of a high school diploma or equivalency, but it also includes other types of milestone measures that aren't used at the federal level but may have been used in other states or local performance systems such as how many credits does the participant accumulate on the pathway? And Washington state has two markers of this. One is around 12 semester credits and a, a, a traditional post-secondary program, and then the other one is 24 semester credits. And then, one thing that we've added in the Alliance framework that's not used regularly but we feel is important, is earnings progression. So what is the earnings progression of the individual as they are going through the career pathway? Because the beauty of this model is that it allows individuals to proceed along an educational pathway and parallel to proceeding along their employment pathway.

A couple examples from the second group around education and training outcomes would include things like licenses or certificates or associate degrees that are, are assigned to the pathway in terms of what an individual would be expected to meet, and of course you have to design the pathway before you can determine what are the most appropriate metrics for that pathway. And then finally, the labor market outcomes group are the typical labor market outcomes that we see in many federal programs and other programs. And did somebody gain initial employment? As Luann mentioned, was the employment in a targeted industry sector, what are the initial earnings of an individual and what are their earnings changes? So, you can get a better sense of all of these metrics and the specific definitions and the full framework.

[James Butler]: Thank you, Vicky. And we are, just, a little short of 10 minutes for the webinar, so we do want to allow time for a couple of questions, so Luann, if you could briefly just talk about how you engage the employers.

[Luann Hargrave]: Basically, we are really in a great place when we have technology centers because our teachers have a performance goal of helping their students find employment. So a lot of times our teachers are a guide to employers when they are providing for, when their, our students have credentials. They'll say, you know, this, this particular employer is hiring now. So they're a very great asset for our programs.

Another thing is many of the communities have come together and they do job fairs, and so attending those job fairs, just went to a program last week and the students were coming back, they were all elated because they were able to fill out applications or find out about potential jobs at the job fair that they just attended, and those go on throughout the year.

The other thing is many of our programs will take their students to the local workforce One Stop and have them register there at that One Stop to see whether there, you know, what other kinds of jobs are there and, and who they can contact in the community for employment. Technology centers typically have job boards, so any jobs that are open, the board's there that lists the employers and the contact person for the employers. They do business in industry tours to learn about jobs and when they do that they of course interview the HR person at that industrial side or maybe a manufacturing company, whatever the work site is, they try to meet with the HR person, and then lastly, the employment specialists do cold calls, and what's really difficult for them to do is balance between billing our student as competent, credentialed employees with "please hire our TANF recipients, and here is an employability incentive if you do." Because there is an incentive that employers have a right to apply for if they do hire a TANF recipient, and TANF/DHS pays for that. So it's really hard to say, "hey, we've got this great competitive student here," and then at the same time, "oh by the way, they're TANF and you can receive an incentive if you employ them." So that's always one of those hard things to do. We encourage our employability specialists not only to make a cold, cold calls are just one time. After that cold call and you've established a relationship, then, then it's just a basically "I know this employer. I know what they want. I promise not to provide them with a, a bad fit for an employee. I don't want to recommend anybody that's going to cause a problem with my reputation or my program's reputation for other students as they try to find employment." So the, another key thing is make sure the student is ready for employment before we endorse that student.

And the other thing is, again, we try to lose the term "TANF." Programs do not go by TANF, they go by work prep generically. Some have their own names and so the student is either a technology center student or they come for that particular program. They don't, we don't advertise the students to employers as TANF recipients.

[James Butler]: Thank you, Luann. And this sort of leads to our first question which is to you, Luann. How do you handle criminal background checks for certain occupations?

[Luann Hargrave]: DHS is supposed to run criminal background checks on our students that are interested in any field that is, like, for example, the health field. They cannot receive a license. We will not put them any kind of training program that is prevented from employment based on their criminal background. We also can run those criminal checks if we get into a tight space and we don't have enough time to get it run by the Department of Human Services. We will run a criminal background check on them as well. Too many of our students and go through complete assessment and get in their joint staff team and then we, and they, we paid, started paying tuition and only to find out that they had a criminal background. So lesson learned is we do criminal background checks when we know that they're going into an employment or training program that that's going to be a problem.

[James Butler]: Thank you. And in the interest of time, one, the final question for Vickie, Vickie, if you could talk about how do you offer some, could you offer some insights on hiring and training effective job developers?

[Vickie]: Can the individual provide a little bit more information? I'm not, just in terms of the hiring and development of job developers themselves? Is that the question?

[James Butler]: So, so you can speak it based on your experience with the program alliance.

[Vickie]: Mmm hmmm.

[James Butler]: Yes.

[Vickie]: So what we've seen in the Alliance Career Pathways is that, I guess if this is the, the question, for job developers, it's really important to be able to speak the language of employers and, and really understand what they're looking for, and, some of those, some of this answer will kind of reads like what Luann was talking about in terms of being able to walk the fine line between talking to employers about your particular population, but making sure that you're not furthering any sort of stigma that employers may, may feel towards that population. It's a very important role in Career Pathways, and I think it's really important for people to be creative as well, so, in Alliance states they don't just do the traditional help with job placement and job fairs, but many of them get really creative in terms of offering job shadowing or even designing some of the education and training to be more like job stimulation so that way the individuals in the training can practice some of those work skills and are even more prepared, then, for when the, the job developer can help connect them to a job.

[James Butler]: Thank you, and we are out of time for questions. What we will do is we will review the remaining questions and respond to you directly with any answers that you may need or, or get in contact with the presenters to get back with you for answers. So at this point I'm going to turn it back over to Lisa Washington Thomas for closing remarks.

[Lisa Washington Thomas]: Thanks, James. On behalf of the Administration for Children and Families Office of Family Assistance, I would like to thank everyone for your attendance at this webinar and your thoughtful discussion, and I especially want to thank Liz, Vickie and Luann for sharing their experiences and knowledge on Career Pathways and program flexibility. A transcript and audio recording will be

made available for everyone within four to six weeks. We welcome your feedback, and a webinar evaluation will pop up on your computer screen in a separate window momentarily. Please be sure to provide your feedback on this survey so we can continue to improve our webinars. Once again, we would like to thank all of you who, for participating, and have a great afternoon.

[Operator]: Once again, this does conclude today's conference call. Thank you for your participation.