

TANF
Equipping Refugees with Skills for the Workforce
Office of Family Assistance/Office of Refugee Resettlement Webinar
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TANF 614 Task 3

Ms. Gillissen: Welcome to “Equipping Refugees with Skills for the Workforce,” ***, (*unclear - 00:05*) Office of Family Assistance, Office of Refugee Resettlement webinar. My name is Jennifer Gillissen and I am from Kauffman and Associates. I will be your moderator today. I would like to start with explaining a little bit about the webinar interface. You should all see the first slide of the PowerPoint presentation and a Q&A box to the right of the slide. We will be answering questions at the end of the presentation. You can enter your question at any time into the Q&A box. If you need technical assistance during the webinar, please enter a question into the Q&A box. Please note this webinar is being recorded. The presentation, as well as the full webinar, will be available on the PeerTA and ORR websites in the next few weeks. I will now turn it over to Ms. Lisa Washington-Thomas.

Ms. Washington-Thomas: Good afternoon and thank you for joining today’s webinar. My name is Lisa Washington-Thomas. I’m the Branch Chief for the Self-Sufficiency Branch and I first want to thank you for your time and apologize for our delay. We were having technical difficulties and we could not... We tried our best to get it rectified as soon as possible. Again, you’re at, um... You’re joining the “Equipping Refugees with Skills for the Workforce,” and we are happy to have a great lineup of peer programs to discuss this important topic. I will be facilitating today’s webinar along with Ken Tota, Deputy Director, Office of Refugee Resettlement. As you can see on your screen, our presenters today are live on video camera. We’re looking forward to sharing a bit more about what they are doing in their states, localities, and their programs to help prepare refugees for the workforce. The work that you are doing at

the state and local levels is amazing and helping needy families, whether they are TANF, ***
(unclear - 1:53) for needy family participants, TANF eligible, or refugee families. And through your programs, you're helping these vulnerable populations maximize their potential by linking them to critical education training and re-credentialing workforce development opportunities and wraparound transportation, child care, mental health, housing, and other supports. The peer programs that we have invited to share information about their programs with you today are focused on helping refugees enter the American workforce through the development of English language skills, on-the-job training, self-skills, job search, and job preparation program opportunities for re-certification, re-credentialing, secondary and post-secondary education, and also connecting them directly with employers. The format of our webinar today will be for each of our five speakers to share an overview and highlights of their programs for approximately 5 to 8 minutes. Then we'll have a Q&A. Our speakers today include Lorel Donaghy, Program Manager of HIRE, a project of Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services; Sarah Kate Peterson, Chief State Refugee Coordinator, Office of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance in Washington State; Mollie Murphy Dale, Refugee Contract Analyst, Utah's Department of Workforce Services; Mark Priddy, Full Circle Exchange in Boise, Idaho; and Gina Finley, Senior Employment Associate Global Talent Idaho. Throughout the presentation, you'll have an opportunity to ask your questions through the chat box in the bottom left corner of your screen. We encourage you to ask questions and if your question is for a specific presenter or program, please be sure to specify that. If we did not get to everyone's questions, we will provide a Q&A that will appear on all of the peer TA websites, along with a transcript and audio recording of today's webinar. During the webinar, there will also be a series of polling questions that will appear on your screen. Please answer each by clicking on the radio button next to your selected

response. Doing so will not only help us guide the discussion, but will also share additional information that may inform your practice. Now I would like to turn this over to Ken.

Mr. Tota: Thank you. Thank you, Lisa. Thank you so much. I just wanted to say how excited, really, we are about the webinar today. ORR and the Office of Family Assistance have really been working closely together to see how we can really inform our perspective networks on models and best practices to enhance services to TANF recipients and refugee populations. The timing is actually quite interesting, as I just returned actually last...from last week from Idaho and I was actually able to visit the Full Circle Exchange and meet Mark and really look at them and see what an innovative model this has been...and developed in partnership with the TANF office in Idaho. And I just really think it's a very exciting model that builds upon their resilience and strengths of refugees, and I think it will be, uh...really serve as a really great best practice looking forward. Um, I also had the opportunity to meet with Global Talent and meet Gina, and really look at some of the work they're doing about building career ladders for many of our more skilled refugees. And this has been sort of a challenge I think, in many ways, and really hope that this may provide an opportunity to build upon some of their work they're doing throughout the networks. So I'm very excited about the webinar and certainly the partnership, and hope that we will be able to really look at other opportunities for the future to build upon some of the collaboration that we have started today. So thank you.

Ms. Washington-Thomas: Thanks Ken. We're going to start with our first polling question. And the question is, "Are you currently partnering with or working with your state and local workforce development partners?" Your answer is based on if you are a TANF refugee or other social service agency or entity. Again, the question is, "Are you currently partnering with or

working with your state and local workforce development partners?” And the answer is based on who you are, yes or no.

(Pause.)

Ms. Washington-Thomas: Okay. Okay, we’ll give you a couple of more seconds. *(Pause.)*

We encourage you to share any collaboration that you all are doing with us in the text box or email us at peerta@acf.com. Okay. I’m look... Now we’ll go to our first presenter. Our first presenter today is Lorel Donaghy former manager of HIRE, LIRS. She brings 6 and a half years of progressively responsible refugee employment program experience with Caritas of Austin, Texas; a CHEP site and a member of the USCCB Affiliate Network. Previously, she worked for the non-profits internationally in training, assessment, organizational development and field office management. Lorel has her MBA from Thunderbird, the American Graduate School of International Management. She speaks Russian and Spanish and served in the U.S. Peace Corps. HIRE, a project of Lutheran Immigrant and Refugee Services, builds and connects the diverse community of employment professionals, employers, and neighbors who support refugee and immigrant self-sufficiency as a technical assistance contractor funded by the Office of Refugee Resettlement. Lorel, the floor is yours.

Ms. Donaghy: Thank you very much. So that was a great introduction. I will just quickly explain a little bit more about HIRE. We are... The slide you see now actually explains it exactly the way we see ourselves. And I just have to say that it is *** *(unclear - 8:34)* White House Task Force on New Americans, which is a document that I think everybody is aware of. It is, more and more, guiding our conversation about what we can do to help our clients not just start well, but survive and thrive and to keep long-term integration so they, and all of us, benefit. We are ORR Training and Technical Assistance Partners supporting refugee employment across

the country. So everyone who is doing this work can benefit from the resources that we offer. I'm going to explain those in a little bit, but what I would like to say, really, is that my presentation will present some general trends, some things we see across the country, and some of the resources that everyone can benefit from; but all of my co-peer presenters really give the best examples of what can happen *** (*unclear* - 9:29) diverse work. Everyone does it differently. Everyone lives in a different place, sees a different mix of clients. So I think we're really fortunate to be able to see quite a strong cross-section of what works to do some of the different things that we all know are important for our clients. Really quickly, this is a snapshot of job seekers from a refugee background: our clients. Um, in 2013, 87,000 work-authorized individuals were assisted from all different programs. Twenty percent of them are between the ages of 18 and 24, and that's going to be especially significant when I talk a little bit later about WIOA, the federal workforce legislation. And there are 340 plus refugee workforce development agencies across the United States, and at 180 days last year, our national job placement rate was 76%. And that is very high and something that we should all be proud of. That infographic is available on our website and the URL is included. What we think we do well is provide national best practices and individual connections, and I wanted to quickly highlight four of the best practices that we see across the country, and you'll definitely see these reflected in the programs that you hear about a little bit later. It's important to provide some level of services support job upgrade, career laddering, and long-term career development. Create intentional separation of duties and dedicated time for job development, which means working with employers, creating those partnerships and pathways for refugees to find meaningful work. It's important to move toward some form of standalone job readiness class-based training. And it's increasingly...increasingly what we see as success in engaging and training volunteers and

mentors to provide employment services. We also think that we are good at bringing forward front-line reality, the national trends. Clearly, when you look at that slide, I'm not quite as good at formatting PowerPoint. I apologize for that, but the important thing is that there are two national trends that we see increasingly shaping our landscape and our conversation. The first one is WIOA, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act, which is the first federal work choice legislation in more than a decade. And if you didn't know about that, there are so many resources available to do so. But why that's important for us, I believe, is that it creates faith for us to strengthen collaboration with the federal workforce systems so that refugees can benefit from all of the resources that they can access there. The second trend we see is some really innovative work happening around job development, working with employers. The states of Colorado and Nebraska have piloted this work and it really takes the sales approach and, again, acknowledges the fact that it's really important to partner with employers and offer them services that make things easier for them, solve their problems, and present our clients as a win-win in that context. Now I'm going to quickly go through some of the resources that you can access for free from HIREES programs. The first is an online *** (*unclear - 13:14*) Institute, which is nine right now. We hope soon to add three e-learning training courses that were designed specifically for our work and our client population. They're available for free online and people are using them for a range of purposes in their job readiness activities, as part of their volunteer orientation, as part of volunteer assignments. I know you can't read all of that well, but I have seen those PowerPoint slides will be made available soon and you'll have that list. This is a series of screen shots from those courses. Five of them are for refugees and four of them are for employment service providers. You can access all of them at the URL that's included in this slide. And we created a special access pass for any of you that would like to get a username and

password and investigate the courses. You can see the URL and you can also see a username and password and if you use that, you'll be led to a short screen of information and then will be able to begin taking and exploring those training rooms. We welcome anybody to do that. We offer three ways to access information and it's a wide range of information—current and evergreen—curated specifically for our work. We have a very dynamic website that is updated every day that includes a range of resources and has a really easy-to-use search feature. So if your work that is a particular day, it means that you're looking for information about experience, about job readiness, about working with employers. Type in the search function and you'll get a range of information that can help you. We also offer a weekday broad feed 5 days a week, Monday through Friday—new information, success stories, resources, highlights of various parts of our work—and we collect the best of those posts in a bimonthly e-newsletter. Those three ways to get information are interchangeable and we welcome you to take advantage of any or all of them. This is just a really quick example of the kinds of client populations and topics that are included in our website: skilled professionals, older workers, Syrians, older youth, illiterate clients, or special immigrant visa holders. And again, assuming that you'll get the PowerPoint, there are links that you can use to see more about all of those kinds of clients. We have a really exciting, we think, annual opportunity coming up. Every year, we offer a 2-day national refugee employment workshop that is real time where people come together from across the country and learn from presenters, but more importantly learn from each other—share peer resources about what's working, what's exciting, and what solutions people have found. It's coming up November 4 through the 6, and there's still spots available for that. That's the last of the formal presentation I wanted to make. I've seen that there will be questions. I'm happy to answer them,

and more importantly, I'll turn it over to the next presenter so you can learn about what's happening in the field. Thank you.

Ms. Washington-Thomas: Thank you, Lorel. Our second presenter today is Sarah Peterson. Sarah joined Washington State's Department of Social and Health Services as a State Refugee Coordinator in August 2014. Most recently Sarah comes from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, where she spent 15 years working with refugees and immigrant communities, including being a foster care social worker serving unaccompanied refugee minors, managing a program helping individuals granted asylum, and directing a refugee resettlement program. Sarah, it's on you.

Ms. Peterson: Thank you; thank you so much. So, first of all, I just want to say thank you for the wonderful opportunity to be with all of you today. There are many people on this panel and in the audience who have experience and expertise around engaging refugees in the workforce, and I'm looking forward to the time that we get to spend together. Today I want to share with you the integrated approach that Washington State takes providing refugees help in engaging in the workforce. I'll take a little bit of time about the specific challenges that refugees face here in Washington and then share a couple of case examples to highlight the range of programs we implement. Washington State invested about \$8.3 million in blended federal TANF funding and federal ORR, as well as general State funding. And our focus is to provide employment services, skills training program and English language program to refugees and low income immigrants. By marrying our funding, our contractors can provide customized service to help each client gain the skills needed and remove the barriers to be able to achieve self-sufficiency and cultural integration. Many of the things that I'm going to talk about today may seem familiar to all of you, and I just want to share a little bit about what our experiences are. So while all refugees have faced the trauma of fleeing their home country and are now embarking upon a new journey

to come to the United States and restart their lives, refugees are a dynamic group of people with a broad array of needs. And to give you an example, every, uh, in state fiscal year 2015, Washington resettled nearly, or has resettled nearly 3,000 refugees representing more than 30 nationalities. On this slide, you'll see that in the federal fiscal year 2013 and federal fiscal year 2014 the largest numbers of refugees are coming from similar groups; but what you'll also notice that they're...is they're very diverse and each group speaks different languages. There may be minority languages that are spoken and also there may be transition. So you'll notice from FY13 to FY14, the fourth largest group moved from being the Nepali-Bhutanese to Afghani. Most of our providers really focus on having close ties to ethnic communities and they hire refugees who are able to provide services in the native language that the clients are facing. They share cultural backgrounds. And many also share the refugee experience, that they're able to help the client's walk-through and address their needs. In addition, we see that people have a broad background of work and educational experience. And here at the Department of Social and Health Services in Washington State, our service providers test everyone's English language abilities using the *** (*unclear - 20:46*) test. And on an average yearly basis, we test more than 3,500 people. And you'll notice that in the state fiscal year 2014, 30% of all of our clients tested at the lowest level of ESL1, ESL level I, and you'll see that that's a pretty consistent trend. And 73% of all of our clients tested at the lowest three levels of English. Similarly, one of our community colleges that provides ESL services to those with the lowest level found that 32% of the classes had no formal education at all. They had to teach them how to write a...use a pencil. Thirty percent had less than 6 years of education and only 20% had a high school education. Now we also know that there are refugees who fall in the other end of the spectrum; who may be proficient in English. They may have a professional degree. And our challenge is really being able to serve

each group and each client in the best way possible, in a customized way. Now I would like to share with you... So what we know is that one service type does not meet all needs and that each client needs some customization. I'd like to share with you the clients, a case of a client named Ang. And so, for the sake of this presentation, all of the client names have been changed for their privacy. Ang is a refugee from Burma who arrived in 2013 with his wife. And originally, they received refugee cash assistance and were referred to the Limited English Proficient Pathway Program. Since 1999, Washington State has implemented the Limited English Proficient Pathway Program, or the LEP Pathway program and part of our TANF workforce program, and it serves refugees who are receiving TANF, refugee cash assistance. Or, because of general state funding and ORR funding, we're also able to serve refugees who are not receiving any type of public assistance for up to 5 years. Now Ang successfully received his first job, and about 2 years later, he found himself that he, um... His job was downgraded to part-time, and then eventually he lost it. He knew he could return to his LEP Pathway provider who would be able to help him. Now he was eager to find full-time employment, but he wasn't able to go very far on his own because he was unfamiliar with all of the different employment options and locations. So the LEP Pathway provider was able to help him complete the complicated application for Walmart, which was a desirable job at a relatively high wage, but it required 63 online questions. They also helped him deal with being able to respond to the cell phone inquiries. He had challenges responding to his cell phone. And so when Walmart called him for an interview originally, he missed the first interview because he wasn't able to navigate that system. So the LEP Pathway provider was able to help navigate the system with him. They worked with the Walmart management and they were able to get him an interview and he is currently in orientation to attend, to start his second job in the United States. Currently the LEP

Pathway serves approximately 4,500 refugees and immigrants every year and 80% participate in employment, and 80% participate in employment and ESL. In 2013 DSH had expanded our LEP Pathway to include skills training and an intensive ESL program. The skill training programs are delivered by a community-based provider with a curricula that was... It's based on the needs of the employers in the local area. These trainings currently offered, include warehouse career, electronic assembly, commercial truck driver, home care aide, and customer services. The classes provide an outcomes-based contextualized approach that allows participants to increase their English skills quickly and also gain workplace-specific content areas for their ability to transition to professional/technical programs or a job placement. So one example that I would like to share with you is about Omar. Now Omar is a refugee from Somalia who arrived with his family in 2009. He was originally resettled in Iowa. And like many refugees they find themselves on the pathway to self-sufficiency needing to access services in many different points. And so the integrated approach that Washington State offers allows refugees and immigrants to enter and exit the career pathway services at points that are really important for them, but also to help further their progress towards achieving self-sufficiency. So Omar originally resettled in Iowa and he moved with his wife and three children to Seattle. As a TANF recipient he is, as well, was referred to the LEP Pathway and began doing job search activities. He was offered the skill training opportunities for a commercial driver's license training, and after successfully completing 3 months, he started a paid training program that offered 20 hours of service. And eventually, the Swift Transport company hired him as a full-time truck driver. Similarly, our intensive ESL classes are able to provide limited English proficient refugees the ability to really focus on only learning English and life skills. And one example is a Sudanese woman who came, and she had been a nurse in her home country, but

really needed assistance in gaining level gains to be able to become credentialed in the United States. So, the intensive ESL class really focused, for a 6-week time period, on life skills and helped her to gain two to three levels of ESL so that she could enter a program to start the credentialing process. Similarly in 2013, we were able to expand our program to include subsidized employment program. And our subsidized employment programs have been really helpful for Mohamed. Now Mohammed is an Iraqi refugee who arrived in the United States in December of 2013 with his wife and four small children. He enrolled in TANF and received cultural integration and job search activities through his resettlement agency, which is also an LEP Pathway provider. After about 6 months, he was referred to our community jobs program where he was placed with the Salvation Army and received 20 hours of subsidized work and continued to attend his ESL class at about 12 hours. So while he was doing his community job here at minimum wage—I think at the time was about \$10—similarly from the time he started his community jobs program, he was at ESL level I. And in 2 months, by participating on the worksite and gaining on-the-job skills, as well as English training, he... In 2 months, he was able to progress to ESL level III. He received an opportunity to interview for an employer who was really impressed with his abilities and they really wanted to offer him the position, but it required *** (*unclear* - 29:20) as well as certification. Our LEP Pathway provider was able to work with the employer who utilized another career jobs program, called Career Jump, which helped Mohammed offset the classes of mandatory training and certificate, also subsidized the initial training program, and the employer agreed to cover the cost of the interpreter's services for the training. So by marrying these two different programs together, the employer received a savings of almost \$2,500 in subsidized wages being paid to Mohammed and he also gained a capable and reliable employee. And Mohammed... So during the time of his training, the LEP

Pathway provider works very closely with the employer and helps to communicate and mitigate any training issues. He was permanently hired on in September of 2014 and his monthly average earnings increased by over \$1,000 a month for his family. Lastly, I would like to talk to you about our ORIA BFET program. So Washington State has developed a nationally recognized Basic Food and Employment Training, and it's funded through the USDA SNAP Employment and Training program. ORIA is able to allow our LEP Pathway providers or community-based organizations, resettlement agencies, and mutual assistance associations access to this program by carving out a portion of our general state fundings with a 50-50 match. So we're able to draw down 50-50 match, and we and the ORIA basic BFET program have been able to provide job search and training, educational workforce and skills program, and then...as well as to help clients reach self-sufficiency. So for refugees who are no longer on TANF and are receiving food stamps, they're able to access this program, as well. And so I just really, again, want to say thank you so much for the unique opportunity to provide information about what we're doing in Washington State, and I look forward to hearing from the rest of the presenters.

Ms. Washington-Thomas: Thank you, Sarah. Our third presenter is Mollie Murphy Dale, a Refugee Contract Analyst at the Utah Department of Workforce Services. Mollie began her career teaching English at a small university in Jeju-do, South Korea. Since that time Mollie has focused her profession on cross-cultural work and has over 17 years of experience operating programs that focus on building self-sufficiency and sustainability in refugee communities. Her experience encompasses all areas of refugee program development and management. This includes working hands-on in mental health interventions in the Afghan community, to writing grant proposals, as well as overseeing all aspects of award granted. Mollie holds a bachelor's degree in intercultural relations from the School of International Training in Brattleboro,

Vermont, and is proficient in Spanish. She graduated with a bachelor's degree in teaching English to speakers of other languages and Spanish. Mollie currently oversees a \$5 million plus program and federal funding. Mollie, please begin.

Ms. Murphy Dale: Hi, thank you everyone. It's a pleasure to talk to you and to have the opportunity to share some of the best practices and many innovative activities that we are currently working on for refugees in the state of Utah. So I would like to give you a brief overview of what we'll talk about here for the next few minutes. I would like to briefly touch on some of the activities that are happening statewide in terms of accessing services that, or having services that refugees can access for employment; and then to talk to you about specific strategies that the Department of Workforce Services is conducting, or DWS; and then also, just some of our thoughts more recently about how can we use data in all aspects of our work and how could we use that data to help promote employment, as well. So first of all, outside of the Department of Workforce Services, we partner with many, many refugee-serving agencies, and they provide a lot of support and a lot of innovative programs around the state—anything from vocational counseling, job coaching... We have *** (*unclear - 34:20*) clubs where refugees can get together and learn about the culture, learn about, you know, “what's life like in Utah? How do I get a job?” We have some really creative microenterprise development projects going on, in particular, that I think are interesting. We have an incubator kitchen where refugees can get together and learn the skills needed to be entrepreneurs themselves and learn the skills needed to open up a small restaurant. We have a goat project where refugees are able to, you know, hone in on their animal husbandry skills. And another project is the *** (*unclear - 34:59*) project, which is...helps refugees, you know, work on skills like for small *** (*unclear - 35:05*) farming. So there's a lot of really wonderful and interesting activities across the state. And I just want to

highlight that a lot of these can be coordinated through monthly meetings that we hold here at our office. And we also have an Employment Subcommittee that's a part of our Refugee Advisory Board Committee. So they should meet on a regular basis and coordinate the services that everybody is working on. So again, I just kind of wanted to throw out there, just such really broadly, some of the other activities that are happening in state. And then, moving on to the Department of Workforce Services: so we have a very unique team of eligibility and employment counselors that are very multicultural, very multilingual, and serve only refugees in our offices. So, for refugees who come to the state of Utah, they're able to come into our office, understand eligibility information and receive employment counseling without having to call in over the phone or do that online, which is what most of our customers do. So I think that's a really unique, innovative way that we can really work with refugees towards their employment goals. We also have additional staff that support employment and employers. So for example, we have a job developer. He is a refugee and his job is to reach out to the employer community, educate them about our customers, about refugees, and then build those bridges. We also have an employment program specialist whose previous role used to be more along the lines of working with our contractors and those contracted services; however, we're shifting her role so that she is able to be a bridge, again, with more employers and her focus will be on bringing employers to the table, educating them, supporting them, you know, building opportunities for refugees and working with refugees so that they understand the work culture that is expected of them. Lastly, for the Department of Workforce Services—and this could be a presentation in itself of everything that is happening here—but this summer, we opened the Utah Refugee Education and Training Center. We offer a lot of different classes and short courses, as well as trainings. So for example, we have job readiness courses, Dress-to-Success, basic technology

classes. And all of these are really created to serve refugees at the levels and needs that refugees have. So for example, class sizes are smaller. The contents might move more slowly. There's a lot of progress betterments that are incorporated into each one of these classes so that refugees know where they are headed and the skills that they are gaining. We have some interesting partnerships that we're developing with colleges and other employers. We are looking at a warehouse training with Salt Lake Community College here. They have a training in place, because we know there's a huge need, those jobs are in huge need in Salt Lake City, and so we're working together with them to take a look at the curriculum to make it more refugee friendly. Same idea with the aerospace industry. There's a lot of partnering with current training programs that we can then bring into the center, the refugee center, and make those accessible for refugees. In the center, we also have life skills, life skills classes that we're developing. I think these may focus around parenting classes, drivers' education, as well as, you know, how to keep up a home and things like that. These were ideas that were indicated to us by refugees. We also hold job fairs and other skill building activities for refugees, as well. And all of these are coming out of our refugee center. Then I just wanted to talk really briefly... We are trying to focus really heavily on data. You know, we really want to know, "How long does a refugee need training to move from a \$9 an hour job to a \$12 an hour job? What does that take?" So we're actually building in systems currently to first identify outcomes; what are employment outcomes that we are interested in. Secondly, make sure that those outcomes are incorporated into our programs and grants and contracts that we support, and then work with all of our providers to collect data around outcomes. So in this example, we would be interested in outcomes around employment. So then, how can we use that data that we're learning about to improve our programs, reach out to and empower refugees by letting them know their progress and their life

in the states, and then also use that data to bring that to employers to a, you know, reason and justification to be working with refugees. So, there's a lot going on in the state of Utah. I just wanted to give you a really brief overview and thank you for your time. And we can move on to the next presenter.

Ms. Washington-Thomas: Okay, thank you very much Mollie. Our fourth presenter is Mark Priddy, CEO and Founder at Full Circle Exchange in Boise, Idaho. Mark is the cofounder, along with his wife Jeanette, and CEO at Full Circle Exchange and is responsible for the development of his global strategy and network. Full Circle Exchange is a nonprofit, social enterprise dedicated to empowering women and communities to rise above poverty through training, education, and sustainable economic opportunities in the U.S. and around the globe. Full Circle Exchange creates an exclusive collection for retailers, such as Walmart, Macy's, and others. Mark has been a visionary leader in a market-based approach that creates new dimensions of innovations and taps into ideas that transform lives and shapes a more sustainable world. A lifelong entrepreneur, social impact investor, and community development catalyst, Mark has been an innovative leader in the creation and expansion of numerous private and nonprofit enterprises. Mark was the founder and CEO of Richardson Labs, where he developed one of the most successful nutritional supplement companies in the U.S., selling his products to over 55,000 retail stores nationwide. The success of Richardson Labs led to a highly successful merger with Rexall Sundown in 1998, a public NASDAQ 100 company. Mark, the floor is yours.

Mr. Priddy: Thank you so much. I really appreciate it. Again, thank you everybody for the opportunity to spend time with you. I know we have to race through this pretty quick, so first, I'm going to kind of talk about our overall background as an organization very quickly, because you will see that our global initiative intersects with our job readiness program in Idaho, which I

will be sharing about. I'll move to that job readiness piece in a second. And then third, we'll watch a video and we'll just kind of close it from there. So, first of all, let me just start with... Full Circle Exchange is a nonprofit, social enterprise that empowers women locally here in the U.S., particularly in Idaho, and globally to rise above poverty through education, through training, and through economic opportunities. But at the heart of our organization is really about improving lives. We provide opportunities for women to move from dependency to self-reliance and to create a better future for themselves, their families, and their community. As a social enterprise, we look at poverty reduction through a different set of lenses, and what I mean by that is we focus on poverty reduction through a market-based approach that's rooted in the dignity and the creative capacity of each individual that we come alongside of. So, instead of us asking the question, "How do we reduce poverty?" we asked the question, "How do we create economic activity?" So instead of viewing the poor or the marginalized as recipients of charity, we acknowledge them as agents of change with dignity, with capacity, and with creativity. It means in viewing them and partners, not standing on the outside looking to see how they can fix it, but rather joining with them together in networks of productivity and exchange. One of the things that we have a real sense is, I think, all of us know that it's important for us to have a sense of dignity. It's that kind of dignity that says, "I matter. I have purpose. Somebody values my services. Somebody values my life." We have been working globally for about 5 years and we have partnered with Walmart and Macy's and other companies to provide this market-based approach, which... We create products to put into their supply chain, into their retail outlets. And we've employed about 2,000 women over the last 12 months—trained and employed 2,000 women. We've created about 2 million handmade products and each one of those handmade products are signed by the woman that actually makes them. And we work in over 12 different

countries. And again it's important for me to kind of lay that out, because I will walk through a little bit how we work globally and locally to create those products that flow out of our job readiness program. So, a little bit about our job readiness program. That came out of an entrepreneurial kind of endeavor for our team. We knew there was a big need in Boise as it related to the refugee community and we had a real heart to contextualize what we were doing globally and to do that actually locally in Idaho. And, so we got together with the great state, we got together with all of the agencies with the Department of Labor, Department of Commerce, mayors, and so forth, private nonprofit organizations to really ask the question, "How can we create and pilot a job readiness program that was deeply entrenched in community?" So out of that conversation, we had the opportunity to create about 250,000 greeting cards as our pilot program. They were handmade greeting cards that the women would make and they would sign on the back of it. So, for us, the job readiness program was really about a stepping stone to self-sufficiency. So, Full Circle Exchange helps refugees and women transition, uh, reclaim their life by providing stepping stones to self-sufficiency in a safe and supporting environment. We work in collaboration with each agency. We have a great group of agencies that all work together and we've got candidates that are best fit for those programs. We conduct pre-and post-assessments to identify key areas for the short-term and for long-term success of each of the refugees that we work with. Our program is about 3 to 6 months and it's...depending upon where the woman is at in the program; sometimes we roll that person from 3 months to another 3 months. And we integrate that program through job pool and vital-enrichment opportunities, validate the environment where women can grow, learn, and overcome barriers to employment. And you'll hear me mention a lot about the validating environment. Our structural job readiness training program occurs with the contact at our on-site social enterprise, through the production of

greeting cards, packaging gourmet chocolate-coffee gift boxes, jewelry, accessories, and other items. For instance, right now the group that's currently enrolled is working on handmade ornaments that they're making and we're producing 40,000 of those ornaments and we are selling them nationally to Walmart. So it's a wonderful opportunity that, here we have these incredible refugees who are able to use their skills and their hands to create something very beautiful and, as a statement of their empowerment, they're able to sign it. And now it goes on to shelves across the nation in Walmart and other retail outlets, as well. In addition, we're working with a great organization. It's called Scentsy. They produce wickless candles. And I bring that up because we're producing a product that comes from India through some of our women that are in our program there. Those aprons that we produce come to the U.S. and the women in our job readiness program actually quality control that. They fit them. They put them together and it was really wonderful to watch them go over to Scentsy in Idaho, which is a beautiful complex. They do over half a billion dollars a year and they were able to put their badge on, walk through the door, and work in the warehouse, and to begin to package this product for Scentsy. The significance there is that they're learning to actually do some of these same things that people on the line at Scentsy do. So eventually we'll feed, when the program is over, those women over to Scentsy for part-time and full-time enrollment or part-time/full-time jobs. The program is broken down approximately to 25 hours of state job school and 15 hours of vital-enrichment classes. Our aim is to lower the barriers of employment and to stabilize the lives of women refugees by providing the skills and support needed to enter entry level positions, upwardly mobile employment, and educational pathways. And since the launch of our job readiness program in 2014, we have graduated over 100 women refugees in 10 different countries. Ninety-nine percent graduated programs; approximately 78% have transitioned to

full-time or part-time employment. We go about our Pathway to Empowerment through four pillars. I will go through them really quickly. The first is transitional income, as I mentioned, a dignified job that promotes self-esteem and confidence. The second is job readiness training and job placement, stabilizing, removing employment barriers; thus, providing soft skills, training and production, quality control. The third is education and financial literacy. We partner with the colleges here in Idaho, as well as the several banks, to provide literacy programs, oral language about work-related vocabulary, and so forth. And the fourth is emotional health and mentorship, which is something really important to us because we believe that, as a creative community environment of family and belonging, our therapy uses therapy to really create an area of healing and connection. I'm just going to show you a quick video and we'll go from there. Can you guys see that?

(Video begins with soft music playing in the background - 51:10.) “One night I was in Congo; I see bad things. They kill my family, my sister—all has died. I leave my country because of war. My name is Linda *** *(native name - 51:34.)* I'm from Congo, DRC. I'm here in Boise. To come into Boise, I was something scaring, because our person where I'm moving—I'm from Congo—because they are as dangerous; they kill the people. I was, think, even in Boise, they are bad person. But now I see, no, it's not like that. It's nice person. Americans care about the refugee. If you have the problem, they help you. I will be working to Full Circle 6 months. They teaching me and what they teaching me, when I go to do the interview, I applied and they helped me to get the job.” “My name is Susan Raymond and I'm working with the English Language Center of Boise, Idaho. Refugees only get 8 months of federal help and, after that, they're expected to be fully independent. Well, if you come illiterate and not speaking English, what are your job opportunities? Our goal is to teach them applicable English; things that are

relevant to their lives. It's both because it's useful to them and because it makes it fully engaging." (*Linda speaking again.*) "So, I'm so happy to work the Full Circle. Yeah, because they changed my life. I will go to do the interview to Goodwill." (*Goodwill Manager speaking.*) "When Linda came in for her interview, it was really obvious that she was confident and ready to learn new things. I felt like she was a great fit for our, for Easter Seals-Goodwill, because of some of the things that she had learned at Full Circle Exchange." (*Linda speaking again.*) "My daughter is calling Belinda. She have 6 months all now. I want my daughter to grow in good. I don't want to tell her what happened to me. (*Sound of emotion.*) I'm sorry. Because of Full Circle, I have a job. Having a job, I can fit in my daughter." (*End of video - 54:37.*)

Mr. Priddy: So I just want to thank you if you can still hear me. Linda has been an incredible young woman who has just done a, who's just done so much with her life. And we are gifted by every single refugee that we get to come alongside of and sit at the table and break bread with. And they're there not because of charity, but they're there because they have something to offer and they have something to be able to put to all the things that we're all trying to dream about and to accomplish in our lives. So thank you very much.

Ms. Washington-Thomas: Thank you, Mark. And our last, but not least, our present... Our last presenter is Gina Finley. She's the Senior Employment Associate at Global Talent Idaho. Gina, please begin.

Ms. Finley: Thank you. So I'm just going to dive right in. What I would like to go over today is to take you through a few things, you know, why Global Talent Idaho started. It's a pretty new organization, just over a year old, where our value proposition is... Share with you some of our outcomes and then talk about, a little bit about regulated professions and, kind of, the work that we're doing with regard to those professions and, you know, how, where there are TANF

interactions, sort of, all on the way. And then I'll end with a recent news story here in Boise about Global Talent Idaho. So like I said, Global Talent Idaho really was founded, maybe, back in May of 2014. We really, kind of, officially started taking job seekers—and really working with them one-on-one—in January of this year. And so, “Why did Global Talent Idaho start?” So if we look at... You know there's about three million open jobs in the U.S. right now due to a lack of qualified workers. So the employers just can't fill the jobs with the skills that they need. And then if we look at just Idaho, about 1,000 refugees are resettled in Idaho every year. With... About 20% of those refugees being settled in Idaho come college-educated with a...and at least a couple of years of professional experience and often times 10, 15, or 20 years of professional experience in their home countries. Just to give you some perspective, last year in Idaho, the average annual income for newly resettled refugees was about \$8.55 an hour, which equates to just under \$18,000 a year if they're working full-time. So really Global Talent Idaho was started to help these folks really navigate through the challenges of the U.S. professional employment landscape, because without that guidance we have highly skilled workers whose experience and brainpower is really wasted despite a lot of demand that is out there for their skills. The value proposition of Global Talent Idaho is kind of threefold. So we know, just based on the slide we just looked at, that employers really need that skilled and diverse set of folks to compete in the global marketplace. There is a high demand for some fields, particularly IT or the STEM field; however, employers are really kind of unaware of this sort of hidden talent pool of really high skilled, well-educated immigrants and refugees in our communities—so right in their own backyard. Immigrants, on the other hand, and refugees are coming into our program. We pre-screen them. They're fully and permanently work authorized. They're all very highly skilled across a number of different professions, but unfortunately, they're either unemployed or

underemployed. But they demonstrate a powerful interest to get back into their field, rebuild that career, even re-frame their career here in the U.S. And then Global Talent Idaho, we're really working hard to work with job seekers to really provide them the knowledge and the skills and the training to really overcome those barriers that have prevented them from tapping into those positions that the employers are in high need of filling. So that's really, kind of, the value proposition, kind of, three brief, free life for that skill, if you will. Just to give you a sense of Global Talent Idaho's outcomes, so far, over the past 9 or 10 months: we're currently working with about 60 job seekers, you know, and that spans across a number of different professions, from medical doctors, accountants, engineers, HR—many of them, you can see them all listed there spanning across 16 different countries, really spanning Asia, including the Middle East; the Americas; Africa; and Europe. So far, we've placed 18 folks back into their field, and that includes IT professionals, video editors, pharmacy, teaching, accounting, *** (*unclear - 1:00:23*) professionals, folks in different areas of the medical field, and engineering. To give you a sense of that impact of those 18 placements, the average annual income of those 18 placements is around \$30,000 a year. And that may seem a little bit low depending on what part of the country that you're from, but just to give you some perspectives, the first slide shows you that people are really making... Newly resettled refugees who are working full-time are making about \$18,000 a year. Many of the folks who come to us are either severely underemployed or they're not employed at all. And the minimum wage in Idaho is around \$7.25 an hour. The average wage in Idaho, the median wage, excuse me, in Idaho in 2014 was right around \$31,000 a year for an individual. So for those 18 placements, these folks have an average annual income gain of \$22,000 per year. So that's additional income that they're generating, improved their quality of life and the quality of life of their families. It's additional tax revenue generated in our

community, which, then consumer spending goes up. Of course, white-collar diversity in our community increases when these folks, skilled refugees, are getting professional-level jobs. So often times, I get the question, “What about regulated profession? What about people who are civil engineers, who are doctors, veterinarians and they require a very specific kind of life? What happens with those folks?” And that’s a great question and it’s... We work a lot of things in parallel and so the intent of this slide is really to kind of give you a sense of when someone, when a refugee, new to the country... They’re working very closely with their resettlement agents, typically, for that first 8 months. And the resettlement agency is focusing on a wide variety of things, primarily self-sufficiency, which includes housing, their very first job, and for highly skilled folks, that usually tends to be a survival job for that person. Making sure their healthcare needs are taken care of, English, driver’s ed... The resettlement agency is helping with many, many different things. In parallel to that, if someone is a highly skilled person who’s resettling and working with a resettlement agency, Global Talent Idaho can work in parallel with that person to really provide those more professional-level job search readiness knowledge and skills. We really provide a lot of training around developing a U.S. professional resume that’s really tailored to an immigrant or refugee experience, where the bulk of the education and work experience is outside of the U.S. Helping people understand the importance of how to market yourself in the U.S., interviewing for jobs, networking, the importance of networking and establishing those professional connections here in the U.S., because that’s one of, so often, one of the, really, biggest barriers for professionals, is they’ve lost all professional connections when they’re in a new, unfamiliar place. Helping people understand how to write really effective cover letters and then, of course, English is also a component of that. And so right now we’re actually working with Boise State University to pilot a program of English classes really targeted

at highly skilled, new Americans called Advanced English for Professional Purposes. We'll continue, kind of, figuring out what those needs are for highly skilled folks. We're also doing a lot of coaching, providing a lot of one-on-one guidance, a lot of one-on-one interview practice, *** (*unclear - 1:04:39*) soft skills, matching them with a mentor in the community with someone who is a professional ideally in their field that can help them establish professional connections throughout the community, help them tailor and maybe write their cover letters, more so from the perspective of their own profession. And we really provide a lot of guidance around re-licensing. And for many professions—like doctors, veterinarians—that re-licensing process is very long and it's very expensive if they want to practice at the same level they were in their home country. So in addition to that guidance on re-licensing, we're also helping them map out alternative career pathways, which, hopefully, if they really want to re-license—they've decided that's something they really want to do—they can transition into a career pathway that's complementary to that re-licensing process. In addition to that, we are also partnering closely with the Idaho Department of Labor. They're helping to provide additional work-based skills training. And then opportunities really take all of the things they have learned from the resettlement agency and Global Talent Idaho and their resume and their interviewing skills, put that into a practical experience through an internship or an on-the-job training that's work, really, back in their field. Or in some cases, we recognize, you know, this person has all this experience and all this education, but they've been out of the field a little while. So they have some knowledge or skills gap. And so we'll help. We'll work with the Department of Labor identifying what those are and help. Folks can get appropriate training to close those skills that are a gap. (*?unclear - 1:06:30*) The Idaho Department of Labor is also actively helping guide on re-licensing and some different funding pieces of that on a case-by-case basis. And then the

other piece is really, “What about regulated professions?” And so, you know, like I said, for medical doctors, veterinarians, lab techs, civil engineers, nurses, sometimes accountants—if they really want to be a CPA or that’s part of their long-term goal, IT professions, there are re-licensing or certification that comes with that. So we’re helping all along the way with that, as well, in terms of providing guidance on credentials, evaluations, and validations. We’re in the process of writing a step-by-step re-licensing guidelines to help really layout for someone, step-by-step: Here’s how you would go about re-licensing in your profession. Here’s how long it will take. Here’s the cost. Something for you to really consider an alternative while you work towards that. And sort of all along the way, there is possible TANF interactions throughout many pieces of that. And so now I would just really like to end with... You know one of the things we also do are quarterly career summits. So every quarter, we do a full day of really intensive interview training, really covering, “How do you market yourself? How do you answer behavioral-based interview questions, really, in a powerful way? How do you have that discussion around salary when you get an offer? What’s the salary negotiation, um, should be like and what that looks like?” So the participants spent nearly half a day in a really intensive, full, in-person training. And then, the second half of the day is taking that, taking kind of everything they’ve learned all along the way and doing some mock interviews with professionals in the communities and practicing their networking skills. So here’s a recent news story from our latest, from our Summit. There’s probably going to be an ad at the beginning of the video I’m guessing. I apologize for that, but this was a local news story here in Boise and... Okay. I’m not really sure why it’s not playing. If I can go back to the video... I think it’s just taking a minute to load here I apologize.

Ms. Washington-Thomas: Ken, while we're waiting for the video to load, I just want to remind people that we're going to start our question and answer session after the video. So please submit your questions at the lower right-hand window on your screen, the lower right-hand window. Thank you.

(Silence - 1:10:10 - 1:11:20.)

Ms. Washington-Thomas: Gina, do you mind if I ask a couple of questions that came in while your video is loading?

Ms. Finley: Is the video not playing?

Ms. Washington-Thomas: I don't see it.

Ms. Finley: Oh no. Okay. I'm sorry...

Female: It's just going to take a minute or two for it to come up; if we can go ahead and do the Q&A.

Ms. Washington-Thomas: Okay and then we'll stop for... So the first question I have, "How..." And this can go to any of the presenters. "How do you help refugees identify and, how...like, the strength that they bring to the employers?"

Ms. Donaghy: Should I just jump in. This is Lorel Donaghy. I think the question is asked, when you communicate with employers about the value that refugees bring to the workplace? Am I correct?

Ms. Washington-Thomas: Well...

Ms. Donaghy: So...

Ms. Washington-Thomas: Yes, that will be a good. *** (*unclear - 1:12:24*) as you are giving...providing case management to the refugees, how do you provide a strength-based assessment and interview skills to help them as they interact with employers?

Ms. Donaghy: Sure, yeah. Actually one of the things I did mention is that we were partnered with, actually, a national organization called Upwardly Global. They've been doing the same work that Global Talent Idaho is doing, but on a much larger scale. They have their main offices in San Francisco, Chicago, New York, with satellite offices dispersed around the country where there's high levels of immigrants and refugees. And so we leverage a lot of training from them. So a big piece of the training is online training that's really tailored to immigrants and refugees, and then follow it up with in-person, one-on-one coaching, really sit down... We have, you know, a list of behavioral questions that we really focus on, seeing people through those and it's one-on-one. And we provide feedback as we, really, go through those questions in terms of how to make answers more effective and how to, really kind of, put your best foot forward in that regard. Let's see; what was the other piece of the question?

Ms. Washington-Thomas: Uh, that was good. And I would like to go back to something Lorel said. Lorel, you re-framed the question to say, "How do you help employers to see the benefit of hiring someone from the refugee population?" Can you...

Ms. Finley: Yeah, that's a great question. And so that's a big piece of what Global Talent Idaho does, is we're really working to develop relationships with employers. And so a lot of that comes through volunteers who sign up to participate in our career summits, tapping into their employers, and working with them or that volunteer to really champion on their behalf. So for example, we're having our next career summit here in just a couple of weeks at Hewlett-Packard here on the Boise site, and really sitting down—whenever we can get a chance to sit down—with the different employers and really take them through Global Talent Idaho: what the program is about, the background of some of our folks, sharing resumes...and then really continuing to nurture that relationship. The other piece of it is through the Department of Labor. And so in

our partnership with them, as Global Talent Idaho goes out and has built some of those relationship... And we're doing that in partner with the Department of Labor so that we can also position job seekers—maybe do an internship funded through the Department of Labor. So that way, employers can experience this person's skills, their capabilities, their global perspective, and the value that it can bring. But it's really very low risk for them, because the Department of Labor is paying the salary of the job seeker while they're in that internship. And another opportunity is the on-the-job training where the company really agrees to hire that person and then it's kind of a tiered, you know. The employer is paying the part of the salary and the Idaho Department of Labor is paying a part of the salary up to a certain number of hours. And so then, as we kind of move through that, then the employer could come back and say, "You know, this person is really great, but I've seen these sort of areas" and then, in which case, if it applies, we can go back and help close some of those gaps that the employer has identified, as well. And so those are some of the primary ways that we're really helping get job seekers in front of employers to really recognize the value of this talent pool.

Mr. Priddy: Do we have a...

Ms. Finley: ...*** (*unclear - 1:16:45*) place folks. Um, just to give you an example, you know, not everyone is wildly successful as the examples I'm going to give. We have an IT guy for example, and he was placed and he... Actually, two of our IT guys who were placed in kind of a more entry-level IT role...and both of them, within the first 30 days, separate employers, were like, "Oh wow! Okay, we need to really tap into your knowledge more." And they both were promoted within their first 30 days after the employer could really see what they were capable of. And then one of them has now been promoted a second time with a raise, as well. So if we get more of those success stories, you know, the word will kind of spread and employers will be

more open to taking on something that, right now, they kind of view as a little bit of a risk, but we're working through that.

Ms. Washington-Thomas: Great, great. Thank you. Um, Mark, do you have any... Um, one, Mark are you back on line?

Mr. Priddy: Yes. Yes, I am. Can you hear me okay?

Ms. Washington-Thomas: Yes.

Mr. Priddy: Um, yeah. I think just real quickly, again, our model is a little different where we... From a social underprice (*?unclear - 1:18:04*) standpoint, we have these incredible women for 40 hours a week, and so we're cultivating a community where their gift can actually come out. So there's many touch points for us, whether it's in quality control, whether it's in a leadership position. I'll give you an idea. One of our beautiful gals, she had a real engineer's mind, no formal education, but she really took up the leadership role in creating better practices as it related to how quickly to fold a gift box. So one of our impact partners came in and was just kind of watching what we were doing, and we all noticed very quickly that she had a real talent to kind of tinker and to figure things out. So her best work, posing the women throughout the week to a lot of touch points and their gifts, their talents, which there are very many, actually just kind of emerged naturally.

Ms. Washington-Thomas: Thank you, Mark.

Mr. Priddy: For that... Yeah, and then in that, we will actually go accompany them to our *** (*unclear - 1:19:19*) partners to try to get them into a *** (*unclear - 1:19:23*).

Ms. Washington-Thomas: Okay. Thanks Mark. Mollie, do you have anything to add?

Ms. Murphy Dale: Not at this time. Thank you.

Ms. Washington-Thomas: Well, thank you. We are over time. I'm sorry. This was such a great conversation. I just want to thank Gina, Lorel, Mollie, and Mark for the fabulous presentations. I think we learned a lot about how we can work with refugee families and partner with our workforce colleagues. So we're now going to do the last polling question and this final polling question is, "What federal technical assistance would be most helpful to you in understanding and implementing new strategies to support refugees in entering the workforce?" Again, "What federal technical assistance will be most helpful to you in understanding and implementing new strategies to support refugees in entering the workforce?"

(Pause.)

Ms. Washington-Thomas: Okay. I'll give you 30 more seconds.

(Pause.)

Ms. Washington-Thomas: We're almost done. Thank you and thank you to everyone who participated in today's webinar. I want to thank our presenters again. We learned so much this afternoon. Please remember to provide your feedback on this webinar using the survey that will appear in a separate pop-up window when the webinar ends. Thank you very much and have a good afternoon.

(End of webinar - 1:21:34.)