**WorkforceGPS**

**Transcript of Webinar**

**Learning and Leading: Effectively Leveraging Experiences in the Pandemic to Promote Recovery**

**Wednesday, November 18, 2020**

*Transcript by*

*Noble Transcription Services*

*Menifee, CA*

LAURA CASERTANO: Again, I want to welcome everyone to today's webinar, "Learning and Leading: Effectively Leveraging Experiences in the Pandemic to Promote Recovery." And we're going to turn things over to your moderator today, Kimberly Vitelli, the administrator of the Office of Workforce Investment at the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration. Kimberly, take it away.

KIMBERLY VITELLI: Thanks, Laura. And hi, everyone. Good afternoon and welcome. Thank you so much for joining our first in a series of ETA's learning and leading series on economic recovery. The public workforce system has a role, an important role to play in supporting job seekers and businesses as state and local economies recover and move through the various stages of reopening and readjusting following initial closures in the pandemic.

Today's session will set the stage for our future economic recovery by sharing ETA's vision for marshaling our various resources towards recovery and our recovery efforts, hearing from the Federal Reserve on the current status of the economy, and learning from our state colleagues about steps they have taken since the beginning of the pandemic to maintain service deliveries, and to address the current challenges of getting job seekers back to work.

Our feature speakers today include our assistant secretary for employment and training, John Pallasch; Mark Giannoni, the senior vice president and director of research for the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas; and state colleagues from the states of Colorado, Michigan, and Utah, who I'll introduce more fully later on.

Before we hear from our presenters, we would like to find a little bit out about you. We have a poll up. So I ask you to complete the poll to tell us what type of organization that you represent. We've got a few options here, state workforce agency or board, a local agency or board, one stop operator, American job center operator, workforce development provider, or other. Go ahead and fill those in.

Looks like we've got lots of folks from state and local areas. Thank you so much for responding. It's good for us to know who we're talking to in the audience. And I can see in the chat that we've also got some folks from partner programs, from community colleges, Job Corps, I saw somebody from voc rehab, Title II. Thank you.

Now tell us a little bit about how you feel about how well your organization has adapted during the pandemic. Your options are things like very well, you surprised yourselves with your ability to adapt, if you feel like you've adjusted pretty well, if you've adapted but face some challenges, or if you're struggling. It looks like our reactions sort of span the gamut which is not surprising with lots of people sort of feeling in the middle and a couple people on the edges. It's good to see how many of us were surprised with ourselves about how well we were able to adapt. That's encouraging. OK. Thanks. That's really helpful for us to know how we're all feeling about what our challenges are now and what our recovery looks like.

To begin our session, it's my pleasure to introduce our assistant secretary for employment and training, John Pallasch, who's been working hard at setting out a vision for the employment and training system and the workforce system to be able to follow, has been laying a path for economic recovery. John?

JOHN PALLASCH: Thanks, Kim. Glad to be with you all today. Doesn't look like my picture's coming up. I want to thank Kim's team from the office of workforce investment, and Leo and his regional team, for their efforts in putting this on. I also want to recognize and thank Mark from the Federal Reserve, and our colleagues Joe, Stephanie, and Elizabeth, from Colorado, Michigan, and Utah, respectively, for their presentations today.

As we are all aware, 2020 has been anything but normal. Before the virus, we were all looking at an unemployment rate of around 3.5 percent. That rate included the lowest rates ever for African Americans, Hispanic Americans, Asian Americans, and those without high school degrees. It was the lowest rate in 65 years for women.

Throughout 2019 and the first few months of 2020, the future of work was a popular topic. Everybody was talking about where the economy as going, what the future of work would look like, what role automation and AI would play in that. To that end, according to IBM, as many as 120 million workers surveyed in the world's 12 largest economies may need to be reskilled or retrained because of AI and automation in the next three years. So that's where our focus was. Our focus was on reskilling, retooling.

Then unfortunately the virus hit. Countries shut down, the economy shut down, in about 72 hours, unlike anything we'd ever seen before. That obviously set a shock wave through the workforce system. As you all know, you all were forced to adapt, you all were forced to go virtual. You all were forced to try to figure out how we can continue to provide services to our customers in a virtual environment.

And that's a challenge we have at the Department of Labor. We've been trying to reopen our Job Corps program. And inherent in that is a distance learning and a virtual component. So I understand the challenges that you all are going through, and the fits and starts of trying to move from an in person service to something that's much more virtual.

However, thanks to the leadership and quick and decisive action taken by this administration and congress, the economic recovery from the virus is well under way. Americans are going back to work. And states over the past six months have seen precipitous declines in their unemployment rate. The unemployment rate is already down to 6.9 percent nationally. And it's lower in a majority of the states.

So we see real positive growth in the economy. The Bureau of Labor Statistics told us that there's about 6.5 million job openings right now posted. So although there are millions and millions on unemployment insurance, there's also signs of growth. There's signs of businesses reopening, folks going back to work. But there's still more work to be done. And again, the virus is surging. And we know the future of work for many will look very different in the future as a result.

That's why we've been trying to create additional flexibilities for you and your work. Some of those flexibilities include the industry recognized apprenticeship program that we announced in May. This is a program designed to build on the success of the registered apprenticeship program.

Apprenticeships are widely recognized as an extremely successful model. We all know that about 94 percent of apprentices are retained by the employer that they trained with. And the average starting wage for an apprentice is about $70,000. So that's really a tool that we want to make sure that we're taking advantage of as we look at ways to restart and continue the economic growth that we're seeing.

One other thing that I'd like to talk about today is something called One Workforce. This is an idea that we've been talking about since I got here in July, and quite frankly something we were talking about when I was working on the ground in Kentucky. How do we bring together, how do we coordinate and collaborate effectively across federal, state, and local partners. This idea of One Workforce, we want to encourage states and locals to work together, to coordinate, and maximize the resources and technical assistance across all of the funding streams that come from the federal government as well as from the private sector to support training, employment services, supportive services, all with the goal of increasing access to employment opportunities for all Americans.

We hope that One Workforce will create a coordinated approach to helping state and local governments, working in conjunction with business and community leaders, to prepare that skilled workforce that we know we're going to need coming out of this crisis.

To that end, I recently had the privilege of announcing along with assistant secretary Lynn Johnson from HHS and deputy undersecretary Brandon Lipps from Department of Agriculture, an initiative called Engaging as One Workforce for America. And this was an effort that I'm confident will result in effective partnerships with key stakeholders for years to come.

Together our three agencies have joined forces with a small number of states initially to pilot the program. But really what we're trying to do is create a cross-program strategy that'll help more Americans impacted by the virus assess reemployment services, training, and social services, to help them enter, reenter, and remain in the workforce.

Later this week or early next week, the department will be publishing a TEGL, or a training employment guidance letter, on the priority of service, and the emphasis that we at the Department of Labor place on making sure that the workforce community is serving those most in need, answering the call of WIOA. So you should e seeing that guidance coming soon from the department. And that's exciting for us. Because again, it's focusing our emphasis on those who need us most. And unfortunately that population has grown significantly over the last nine months. So we've got to be prepared to serve that population.

On the grant side the department continues to roll out funding opportunity announcements. We recently announced two what we call FOAs, for up to $200 million in grant funding to fill critical shortages in economic regions. One of those is the One Workforce grant and the other is a rural healthcare grant.

So these are just a few of the ways that we are trying to create additional flexibilities, create additional opportunities for you at the state and local level, to better serve customers. There's also an exciting announcement we'll have next month with regard to a training provide results website, where we're going to be able to publicly display the results for training providers across the country, so that customers can make informed decisions about the training that they want to seek, with regards to graduation rates, wages, placements, all of the important things that folks think about when they come to us for training services.

So I promised Kim I wouldn't talk too long. I probably already talked too long. But I want to thank everybody for joining today. We do have a Herculean effort in front of us. But with a coordinated collaborative approach, folks on the phone, and our other state and local partners, there's no reason that we can't bring the economy back to the economy that we all saw back in January and February.

So I want to thank Kim and the – (inaudible) – team, and our colleagues from Michigan, Colorado, Utah, as well as the Federal Reserve for joining us today. So Kim, I'll turn it back over to you.

MS. VITELLI: Thanks so much, John. Before we turn to our state colleagues to see how they're implementing the One Workforce vision that John talked about, we're going to hear from Mark Giannoni from the Federal Reserve. You all know more than anyone that the economic impacts from the pandemic are unprecedented and left many of us wondering what we should expect for a recovery. Mark's going to cover a lot of ground in a short time, to provide a very comprehensive overview of our economic situation, to help us understand our current reality and future economic opportunities. Welcome, Mark.

MARK GIANNONI: Thank you very much, Kim. And thank you for having me. It's really a pleasure to be with you all today somewhere in cyberspace. I wish we could all meet in person, but I guess the times are such. So my presentation will be focused on the national economic update for the U.S. economy. And I'm an employee of the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas, as Kim said. And so it's important that I communicate these disclaimers here that the views expressed here are my own and do not necessarily reflect the official position of the Federal Reserve System or the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas.

Before I talk about the current economic situation, let me just take first a long wind perspective on the U.S. economy. As I'll illustrate shortly, the U.S. economy has experienced three important changes over the last several decades. First, there has been a notable decline in the growth of U.S. real gross domestic product output, by which I mean the total amount of goods and services produced by the U.S. economy. Second, we've also experienced over the past several decades a significant decline in overall inflation, that is the growth rate of the general level of prices of goods and services. And third, the general level of interest rates has also declined notably.

So we have been operating now for several years in an environment in which we face low economic growth or relatively low economic growth, low inflation, and low interest rates. So the question here is really whether this is a temporary feature, or maybe a somewhat more persistent feature, or whether it really reflects a new normal.

So this chart here shows in its black bars real U.S. GDP growth from 1950 to 2019. The red horizontal lines show the average GDP growth during each decade. As you can see, U.S. real GDP growth was running at around 4.5 percent per year in the '50s and '60s. And it then declined to about 3 to 3.5 percent in the '70s, '80s, and '90s, before declining to around 2 to 2.5 percent since the turn of the century.

So the big question is why. And answering that question is important as GDP growth really determines how rapidly our standards of living are increasing, and how sustainably our public debt, and how many resources we will have in the future, and we can distribute throughout society. So to shed some light on that question, I will decompose GDP growth into some of its key drivers.

So one way to recognize that is to really see that output growth is the sum of the growth rate of output per worker, that is productivity growth on one hand, and the growth rate of the number of workers on the other hand. So now the growth rate of the number of workers depends of course on many other drivers. It depends in particular on population growth, it depends on the extent to which population is part of the labor force, as well as the extent to which those in the labor force are being employed.

So this chart here decomposes the five year average GDP growth here shown with this black solid line into the components I just mentioned. The first thing to note and that should attract your attention is that there's a lot of red on my chart, which present the contribution from labor productivity to output growth.

And so labor productivity here indicated in red again means that year after year reflects – (inaudible) – ability of workers to increase the amount of production that they can produce. And so this feature is really crucial in our ability to raise standards of living. However as you can see in this chart, the productivity growth has been declining over the years. It amounted to about 2 to 3 percent in the 1950s and 1960s, and has been falling to about 1 or 1.5 percent since the year 2000.

Another key driver of growth is the labor force participation, as shown here in orange. This labor force participation rose from the '60s to the '90s in part due to the greater involvement of the female population in the labor force, but has been declining from 2000 to around 2015. And so population growth has also contributed to the decline in GDP growth. Indeed, the working age population here shown in blue was growing at around 2 percent per year in the '70s. And it's now growing less than 1 percent per year.

And finally the employment rate shown here in green, that is the fraction of employed individuals in the labor force, that employment rate is more cyclical. It tends to fall in the recessions and grows again in expansions. So really the three key drivers here for the decline in GDP growth that we have observed in recent years and couple of decades has to do with reduced labor productivity growth, labor force participation growth, as well as reduced population growth.

So then the obvious question is, why has productivity slowed. And so we could spend a lot of time discussing this. I will just say this year it is still very much an open question. There are essentially two views. The pessimistic view is that all the big impact innovations like penicillin, airlines, personal computers, and so on, have all been made.

(Inaudible) – spend a lot of energy coming up with new innovation, but they are more marginal than the previous innovations. So that's a pretty pessimistic view. The alternative I think more optimistic view is that we – (inaudible) – very important innovations, but innovations come in waves. There's time for – (inaudible) – to be realized, especially for the more general purpose technologies like – (inaudible) – in recent years.

In fact on this, COVID-19 may have forced people to adopt new technology and – (inaudible) – technology. In any case, the difference between the productivity growth of 1.7 percent per year, as we experienced in the '80s and '90s, and more 1 percent per year like we experienced since 2010, that has a huge impact on our long run wellbeing. It's really determined if average living standards are going to double every four years, or going to take – (inaudible) – years or so for them to double.

All right. So I mentioned before, so the labor force participation rates, that is the fraction of the population that's part of the labor force as you all know, as I said that labor force participation has declined since 2000. And this reflects in part aging of the labor force. Indeed if you look at this chart, the red line which shows the prime age workers, so those between 25 and 54 years old in red, you see that their participation has increased again over the past few years as the economy was recovering from the 2008, 2009 recession. However, there's been very little improvement in the overall labor force participation, shown here in blue, until the beginning of this year. And that's because the 16 to 24 year olds, or the 55 plus year olds, have not really increased their participation since the previous recession in 2008, 2009.

Another important change that took place, as I mentioned before, refers to inflation. And U.S. inflation rose sharply in the '60s and '70s, as shown here by two different measures of inflation. And then it fell dramatically in the 1980s. This is in large part because the federal reserve at the time under the chairmanship of Paul Volcker, put in place a very restrictive – (inaudible) – reducing inflation in the U.S. economy. And so it has essentially kept inflation around 2 percent since the mid-1990s. And indeed the Federal Reserve adopted a 2 percent formal inflation target in 2012.

Interest rates have also declined dramatically since the 1980s, as you can see on this chart. The figure plots three different interest rates. It has the federal funds rate which is basically the policy rate set by the Federal Reserve. And then the returns on treasury securities, the three month or 10 year maturities.

What I'd like you to see is really that these rates, they were all at around 15 percent or above that in the early 1980s, and they've trended down since, and they are now below 1 percent. This reflects both the low inflation I just talked about, but also lower real or inflation adjusted interest rates. The lower rates are themselves due to other factors and they are in fact closely related to the facts that I mentioned before, such as low productivity growth and aging population that are also responsible for the decline in overall economic activity growth.

So in fact, these lower interest rates that are now so low and indeed close to the so-called effective lower bound on interest rates, that poses a significant challenge for monetary policy. The – (inaudible) – here is that with interest rates close to the – (inaudible) – is that it leaves very little room for monetary policy to stimulate the economy in the face of a downturn. And that's why following the previous recession as well as in this year in response to the pandemic, the Federal Reserve has had to innovate and use a lot of unconventional tools, if you want, in order to provide accommodations in terms of monetary policy.

So in summary, on the long run overview of the U.S. economy, I would say that there are really these three very significant changes that took place. One is in terms of real output or growth that has slowed significantly over the past several decades. That reflects this aging population as well as productivity growth. We've seen inflation much lower now than it was 30 years ago. And then interest rates also looked lower than they were about 30 years ago, partly reflecting that lower inflation, but also the other drivers that were responsible for lower output growth and therefore lower real interest rates.

So these patterns are not unique to the U.S. economy. And they are likely also to be with us for some time. They really reflect more structural features of the economy than temporary cyclical features. And so they may indicate that we are really for some time now going to operate in a new normal. So I wanted to put that as background before I turn to more frequent higher frequency indicators and really talk about where the economy is now.

So on that part, let me make a few key points here. Now I'll try to illustrate that with a few charts. First of all, COVID-19 and the associated containment measures that followed caused a huge shock to the U.S. economy, as you all know. As a result, employment and output contracted at record levels in March and April of this year. Monetary policy and fiscal policy responded very strongly early on in March. And then since April the economy has really bounced back very rapidly, but it still remains very far away from a full recovery. And I'll illustrate that shortly.

Growth in employment and economic activity thus far has been very uneven across sectors of the economy and segment of the population. And it has affected really disproportionately sectors of the economy that require close person to person contact. So the path of the economy is highly uncertain. And it really depends on the degree of the fiscal supports, as well as whether the current wave of the pandemic ends up reducing economic activity in a significant way. And I'll say a few more words on that.

So let me just review quickly the path of the pandemic in the U.S.. You all know that because you hear about that on the news every single day, so I'll be quick. But I think it's important to realize really that, as we are painfully aware, that the daily COVID cases are rising very, very sharply again. We are registering over 150,000 new cases a day nationwide. And that keeps increasing.

The figure for new daily deaths, which is on the right of this panel, is also very disturbing, as the number of deaths is unfortunately also rising very sharply. And it's very unfortunately going to continue on that trajectory for some time, given that deaths tend to follow the path of the new infection with a lag. And so all the new infections that we have recorded over the past couple of weeks have yet to really show up and give rise to increased hospitalizations. And ultimately a fraction of those will dramatically pass.

And the problem is especially acute when the hospitals are reaching capacity. The one thing that distinguishes really the current wave from the previous ones is the fact that it takes place all over the country at the same time. Whereas in the past, in March and then in the summer, it really took place in only parts of the country. So the fact that now the rise in COVID cases tends to happen all over the country, tends to put even more strains on our hospitals and health services.

OK. So as the number of COVID cases really soared in March, what we saw is that people reduced considerably their movements, whether they were in regions that imposed restrictions or whether they did so voluntarily.

And so what this chart shows is the mobility and engagement indices constructed by my colleagues at the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas for the U.S. in blue and for all metropolitan statistical areas in gray. These indices really track the change in mobility of U.S. residents based on the geolocation data that we get from millions of mobile devices daily. So they really capture a combination of social distancing, the extent to which people are working from home, and the implication of these lockdowns.

And so as the number of new deaths started coming down back in April and May, the mobility started recovering again. And it has been remaining fairly stable at a relatively low level since July. So interestingly these mobility and engagement indices are very strongly correlated with economic activity, and in particular with the consumption of services which require close person to person contact, like restaurants, and hotels, and travel, and so on. So the path of that mobility and engagement index is really consistent with a collapse of economic activity in March and April, and a very strong recovery in May and June, and a slower growth after that.

What is disturbing though is that the – we see the mobility and engagement indices decreasing again in the hard hit regions of the U.S., such as for instance here I just show Milwaukee, Wisconsin, El Paso, Texas. And you see that mobility is really, really falling there, which is going to be associated with a decline in economic activity. And given the recent worsening in COVID cases and deaths around the country, it's plausible that mobility and engagement will decline in other parts of the country as well, restraining economic activity.

So I've talked about economic activity, but I haven't shown you that. So let's have a look at economic activity. This chart shows U.S. real GDP from 2006 through the third quarter of this year. So real GDP shown in blue was close to its potential shown in orange when COVID hit. And GDP contracted more than 10 percent in the first half of this year and rebounded very strongly in the third quarter. That said, we expect GDP to continue to recover in the fourth quarter, but at a slower pace. And so with that, the rebound is not going to be enough for GDP to return to the pre-pandemic levels. We're still quite far from normal.

Now in response to that collapse in economic activity in March, there were very strong monetary and fiscal responses. So I'm not going to go through the details of that, but just to highlight a few points, monetary policy really provided support to the overall economy by bringing short term interest rates down to zero or very near zero.

It restored market functioning and provided access to short term funding for a wide range of financial players, as well as companies and households as well, by providing very significant purchases of treasury and agency securities, and also by setting up liquidity facilities aimed to small firms, medium firms, and large firms.

It provided also credit supports to households, businesses, and communities, a range of credit facilities. And it further then loosened financial conditions by continuing asset purchases and enhanced forward guidance on the path of future interest rates, to really provide a loose financial condition, to induce firms and households to keep expanding their activities. On the fiscal side, the CARES Act involved about $2 trillion of assistance, direct assistance to households, businesses, state, and governments.

So let me just illustrate this very quickly. On the monetary policy side, the left chart here shows the policy rates that got lowered down to zero. The longer term rates such as the treasury, 10 year treasury yield also came down significantly in response to that. And that likely contributed to increasing the amount of investment in residential investment and other investment in capital expenditures by firms and households, and sustained economic activity in that way.

The right side here shows really the increase in the balance sheet of the Fed, meaning the asset purchases done by the Fed, which raised essentially the U.S. Federal Reserve holding of treasury securities and agency securities by about $3 trillion. So that put further pressure down on interest rates to stimulate the economy.

In terms of the fiscal policy and the CARES Act, it managed to really sustain economic activity by providing significant transfers to households and very rapidly. And as you can see on the left side of this chart here, the left panel, personal income of households in red rose very sharply in April. And this is essentially due to government transfer. Absent these transfers, income would have fallen and pretty significantly. Consumption has collapsed because people could not really spend much of their money during these various lockdowns in the spring. And as a result, the personal savings rate, which is shown here on the right, really surged in the spring.

But – (inaudible) – the pocket of household really allowed them to keep to using resources to spend further in the later months of this year, and could continue to spend even after some transfers such as the additional $600 unemployment benefit expires. Now the big question is, how long do we have until this savings really come back to normal and households start cutting down on their consumption again.

All right. Let me just dive in a little more in some aspect of economic activity. As you can see here, services – I mean this is – this shows you basically different components of consumption. The black line shows overall real personal consumption expenditures by household. And you can see the collapse again in April and then the rapid recovery later as the year unfolded.

This recovery is largely driven by an increase in consumption of goods. But the services have not improved as much. And this relates to what I was saying before, that services consumption is very tightly linked to people's mobility and engagement with the economy. So if people stay home, they are not going to their haircutter, or they are not going to the theater, they are not flying. This fear of traveling is basically keeping services down.

And you can see that particularly in sectors very closely related to the person to person, close person to person contact such as hotel occupancy that collapsed and recovered fairly slowly, and restaurant reservations that did somewhat similar. Now the concern here is that the latest data points south again, suggesting that we may see further contraction in that sector.

All right. You know a lot about the labor market, so I'll go very – I will be very quick. I think these figures are just striking. Let me just point out here, payroll employment – (inaudible) – collapsed during the pandemic, falling by over 22 million jobs. It recovered very rapidly from May to October. What we have here is roughly half of the drop has been recovered. But we are still really far away from where we were, still over 10 million jobs short of where we were. And now the pace of improvement, the pace of recovery is really slowing down. And that's a significant concern.

John talked about the unemployment rate before and talked about how low the unemployment rate had been just before COVID hit. The unemployment rate literally spiked to 14.7 percent in terms of the headline number. It came down significantly and very rapidly, more rapidly than in previous downturns, over the next few months, following months. But again, we are very far from normal and very far from any estimate of the normal or natural rate of unemployment.

This unemployment rate spike, it applies to the headline unemployment, but it also applies to the broader measure of unemployment like the famous U6 measure. And that measure now shows an unemployment rate at about over 12 percent at this point. And John also talked about it affected different ethnic groups and race differently. The spike took place for everyone, but it affected especially African American and Hispanics also to some extent.

A worrying sign here about the labor market is that we – I showed you this big drop in the unemployment rate now. And this is all great news that we are – the labor market situation has improved pretty quickly until now. But once you exclude the temporary layoffs, you see really a significant rise in more permanent unemployment. And I think this is a worrying sign. It's probably going to get worse before it gets better. It's really something that you'll probably all be dealing with for many, many months to come.

I won't have much time to talk about wage and compensation measures. But just to say that people in the media have made some noise about the fact that some measures of earnings, average hourly earnings in particular have gone up very much during the pandemic, and pointing out the fact that maybe it was difficult for firms to find jobs. When you compare to other measures of labor compensation, this is really unusual about the average hourly earning.

And what that reflects is really a change in the composition. What it really reflects is the fact that all the low – the lower earners, lower wage earners, lower income individuals, were disproportionately affected by the downturn, and left the labor force, and therefore left employment. And therefore the resulting wage, the compensation that remains, is actually quite a bit high.

All right. So the decline in wages overall more broadly, once you account for compensation, contributes in part to lower the cost of firms, but also firms have faced a big reduction in demand for their goods and services. So that as a result, they've been actually reducing their prices or reducing at least the pace at which they increase their prices. So inflation has come down notably from the beginning of this year. And so that suggests that really the shock, this COVID shock that we faced, has more of an effect on aggregate demand, and restrains aggregate demand, rather than imposing supply constraints on the economy, which would be tending to result in higher prices.

OK. So let me conclude, I have only a few seconds left for this, as I mentioned before, COVID-19 and the associated containment measures really caused a huge shock to the economy. Output in employment contracted very, very sharply in March and April. And we had very strong monetary and fiscal policy responses. They have been very aggressive. And they helped facilitate a strong recovery in Q3, so in the third quarter of this year. That was led by very large rebound in consumption, but also an improvement in really construction, and housing investment, equipment spending, once you exclude all the aircrafts. It likely was stimulated also by lower interest rates, as well as the prospect of an improved outlook.

But looking ahead, I mean for the current quarter, growth is likely moderated. Looking ahead, the first quarter of next year is going to be really, really tricky, because of just the rising cases now. And we see indications that mobility is reduced again, especially in the areas that are strongly affected by new cases. So there's a lot of uncertainty at present. And it will be with us certainly for the next several months here until we finally can deploy the vaccine and have people becoming more immune to that disease. So with that, thank you very much for your patience. Sorry for the technical glitch in the middle. And thank you very much.

MS. VITELLI: Thank you so much, Mark. And I can see that there are some questions in the chat. I'm afraid to say we won't have time for those answers. But Mark, I wonder if you can type into the chat any online resources where people can go to find out more about the information that's available at the Federal Reserve. I know that you all have put together a lot of useful resources and papers that people might find interesting.

So we're going to shift here to the state panel dialogue. As everybody digests Mark's presentation and what these economic trends mean for your state and local economies, I would like to welcome our state colleagues. And as I do that, I'm going to invite them to turn on their cameras. I'll do the same. And we're going to see if we can have a roundtable where you can see us.

So let me welcome Joe Barela, the executive director of the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment; Stephanie Beckhorn, the director for employment and training at the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity; and Elizabeth Carter, the workforce development program and training director at the Utah Department of Workforce Services.

And it looks like everybody is up online. So thank you. This is an exciting turn in our webinar. Thank you all for taking the time to share your experiences with our state and local colleagues. As our country shifts its focus on economic expansion to responding to the economic aftereffects of the pandemic, your states were all ones that were able to pivot fairly quickly from providing on site services to being able to provide virtual services.

And I wonder if you can take a few minutes to describe the steps that each of your states took to ensure the continuity of services. Stephanie, can we start with you?

STEPHANIE BECKHORN: Yes. Absolutely. Appreciate the opportunity to be here. I think the first thing that we really had to recognize is that coordination and collaboration at the state and the local level was critical. That is the only way to truly have successful impact. And so this was our local American job centers, which in Michigan is our Michigan works agencies, our unemployment insurance offices, our health and human service offices, and then the state led workforce program, so vocational rehabilitation, veterans, and our migrant seasonal farmworkers.

We had to very quickly come together, get the shape of the landscape around us, and really understand the significant number of individuals that were impacted. We had to be able to first connect with them, right, which technology became challenging for individuals who maybe didn't have access. Because as our doors closed for all these federal workforce programs and local offices, we needed to help them understand that there were resources available. So connecting virtually with our job seekers became paramount. And that took different shapes depending on the location in the state, whether it was at the local level or the state level.

We very quickly had this interesting dynamic too, as we had hundreds of thousands, and eventually millions of individuals losing their job. We had significant number of employers that were also saying, wait a second, I have increased need for workers. And so that was a very interesting dynamic. And very quickly our labor market information became very stale. So we had to quickly pivot and tap into local labor market information, direct conversations with industry and with employers, and again really working with our Michigan works agencies. So if you want to go to the next slide.

So one of the key things we did is, again at both a state and a local level, pivoted to virtual services, really working with the key partners in putting together a return to work playbook, really helping individuals to say, you know, let's get your resume up to date, let's help you search for jobs even if you think there might not be jobs, let's brush up on your soft skills, your interviewing skills. And we put together this virtual playbook. And really then in listening to the labor market information and listening to employers, we really put on specific resources for jobs in demand in Michigan. So IT, healthcare, food assistance, hospitality. You can see the list there.

And so there were online resources, most of which were free, getting a credential, getting a certificate, understanding who is demanding what in order to obtain the job, and saying here's what an employer needs to hire you, here's how you get it from your home, in most cases because at least at the beginning, educational entities were shut down as well. And then really taking it a step further and saying, you know, for our adult ed population, our individuals with disabilities, we felt it was very important to not leave individuals behind until really also on our playbook really had very specific resources for them to tap into.

Again, talk about not having good timing, if there is such a thing. But just when the pandemic hit, we were in the – we were in the throes of putting together our summer young professional program. And this is where our local workforce areas served thousands of youth throughout our state.

They used local formula dollars, but we also commit – we committed $2 million from our state reserve fund. And so they very quickly had to pivot. And I have just a couple examples here on the screen where the city of Detroit, again they relied as they always do, but even more so, relied on community lead agencies.

They had these significant number of youth monitors. And they were still able to pull together and support over 8,000 youth in a virtual young professional. So the student completed an assessment. Based on the outcomes of that assessment, they were assigned a career path. Again you see the ones listed there. Those were what's in demand. And then they went through 90 hours of career exploration and career pathway. They had kind of internship that they followed. And then they went into very specific kind of self-directed and instruction-led services.

Similarly in Oakland County, again very quickly had to pivot. And they really again focused on industries in their area. They provided youth with a free laptop computer if they needed access, because that was a barrier that was identified. And the summary on professionals program is now not just in the summer, but this goes through December.

And again, it's at the end of the training there's an incentive to complete it. There's a credential at the end of completion. And again, this is really important to us because this program at the end of the day put money into the pocket of a youth, and we know the family that really depend on these summer youth programs. So just had to really pivot very quickly.

The last thing just on this front is our futures for frontliners. So this is a governor initiative, where it basically said if during March and June you were deemed essential, you left your house at a regular basis to go provide essential services so the rest of us could stay home and stay safe, we are going to provide you with a free industry credential or a two year degree. And this is for individuals who don't already have a post-secondary degree.

They could have a post-secondary credential, but if you don't have a degree, even those without a high school diploma, we'll help you first address the high school diploma, and then on the post-secondary. We had over 80,000 essential workers apply for this program. And they have till the end of December. It launches in January. In February it'll go to the broader audience, not just essential workers, but anyone in the state.

MS. VITELLI: That's incredible work. Joe, can you tell us how this played out in Colorado?

JOE BARELA: Sure. Thank you, Kim. And great stuff, Stephanie. I'm going to steal some of those ideas and put in place in Colorado. So just want to – am I moving my slides? Oh, they're up. So I just want to talk real quickly about how resources and flexibility helped us respond quickly to the recovery efforts.

And so real quickly, in March we were in the process of applying and getting awarded – (inaudible) – grants. And in Colorado we quickly diverted those to really look at how we could respond to disaster recovery, as well as an employment recovery. And so a lot of those resources were through the state, funneled to our local workforce boards, to really look at in the first – the Colorado respond, looking at wage benefits supplanting, and then putting that to work in temporary employment, to get people who were dislocated in hospitality, retail, service industry, into occupations on a temporary basis that were mostly to healthcare or humanitarian assistance during the COVID crisis.

So looking at rapid response testing sites support, tracers, investigating samples, checking attendance. So a lot of that worked up. It's helping, continuing to help, as we continue to go through healthcare crisis, with temporary wage and benefit replacement. Also with Recover Colorado, again trying to work with dislocated workers in looking at offering training that were in demand or growing industries when they were displaced because of the pandemic, really helped us put together some opportunities for those impacted workers that this include unemployment assistance at that time.

The next thing is we were able to get another grant with Pathway Home Award. They really focused on our prison populations, our justice involved individuals, returning back to the work environment. So this allowed – (inaudible) – to work with them prior to release, and then once they're released to really look at a heavy focused case management career navigation approach as they get reacclimated into the communities.

I also want to mention that we were able to pull our 10 local workforce boards in Colorado and ask them what do they need to be more responsive to their customer base, as we were all pushed into closures of our public workforce centers, our American job centers, and look at things they needed.

We were able to make available $2 million to give out to those local workforce boards for innovation in customer service delivery. And so that helped them with the response, with the resources that they needed to buy virtual tools, virtual software, and also increased broadband, not only for a lot of their customers, but for their workers as well.

The other thing that we took advantage of is our ability to ask U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training for waivers. We asked for 10 waivers and I think we were granted four of them, which really helped us with on the job training flexibility, ability to work with incumbent worker training, and also serving our youth population. So we took advantage of that ability to ask for waivers. So thank you, U.S.DOL and the regional office for helping us with that.

The next is our Best Vortex program, really an opportunity to organize our veteran state grants, our JBSG programs, to allow them to have a virtual hub, to work collectively as a group across the state, to design programs and look at curriculum, but to share it statewide rather than to look at local areas or regional approaches.

But it really helped with seamless integration of the tools that they need to do their jobs virtually as we shifted over. And we found out that this really helped not only with access to our veterans, but also increase the numbers that we were serving, 'cause a lot of our veterans were really amenable to accessing their services through the JBSG program virtually.

Next I want to talk a little bit about the discretionary funds and the capacity to build our system, to quickly divert to virtual systems. I think the technology on the virtual rooms we had for a lot of our workshop and programs was already there. The template was built. But we found out that it really caused a lot of our local workforce boards to come together, and why did they have five different workshops on interviewing or resuming writing. Could they open it up to the universe and let people from all over the metro Denver area, Colorado Springs, Fort Collins, attend workshops throughout different workforce regions.

And so they collaboratively are working together and a lot of those workshops are shared. So not only do you have invitations or open enrollment of those programs from one local area, but it's opened up regionally so that people can take advantage of multiple workshops, not only because they live in Denver, but maybe there's a workshop that someone in Fort Collins or an employer that wants to participate in a job fair in Denver, but has jobs in Pueblo or Fort Collins, that the new world allowed them to look at talent outside their local areas.

The other initiative I want to talk about is remote work initiative. I think prior to the pandemic, Colorado was promoting location neutral jobs as a way to open opportunities primarily to our rural residents. We were finding that the opportunities for good career paths for our rural Coloradans was limited to basically service some light manufacturing, but it wasn't opening up what was coming available in the financial services, the IT, the cybersecurity, the insurance industry, that many people who chose to live in our larger cities in Colorado were being able to attend training and be placed in those occupations. And so we really looked at how can we make sure that not only were there opportunities where we knew companies didn't care where their workforce lived, it was just availability to access the internet and do their jobs remotely.

And so we really put some effort into making sure that we were putting those available jobs on our job boards and our Connecting Colorado system, but also making sure that our workers were aware of those, and that we had training available for people that lived in rural areas, to meet some of the needs, the credentials, or industry recognized certifications that these employers needed. So I think that really was – put us a little bit more response ready as the pandemic hit.

And we moved towards, hey, everyone's working virtually now, it doesn't matter if you live in rural Colorado. You can work for a company in Denver or you can work for a company in Tokyo if you have the right skillset. So it was ability to open up the available jobs that were not in hospitality, service, or retail, for people who could quickly upskill and be qualified for some of those online virtual job employers.

I do think the ability to make sure that those location neutral jobs were available and part of our Connecting Colorado system, I think this graph shows you where we were as far as the monthly available jobs throughout the year, but more importantly I think where we are in November. As you see that's slowly continued to tick up. And we really think it's going to be something that as we get through this healthcare crisis, more and more employers will realize that virtual talent is equal to in person talent. And some of those opportunities will not only remain, but will grow.

I think the next slide talks about -- (inaudible). We know that remote work is a part of what the healthcare crisis has caught all of us, not only in the private sector, but even in public sector. And so we are working with our partners, with the Colorado Department of Higher Education, Colorado State University Global, and we've come up with an employer – remote employer certifications.

And so we have a curriculum that is on both sides of the demand and the supply side, where we want people to realize that as an employer you've been certified to work with with remote employees. And you know some of the skills and competencies needed to be a good employer in that venue. And then as well on the demand side – I'm sorry, the supply side, the worker side, the same credential. There's a credential that you can have or a badge or a -- (inaudible) -- that shows that you've been certified as a remote worker.

And so we do think it will help make you more competitive as you now have to compete in the virtual environment for your not only job application, your interview process, but your work environment. And so those are things that we're rolling out. We're excited that in January we believe it'll be a training that is offered as an employer to all state employers, but also all our state employees will be able to receive that training free as we look at a more virtual workforce in state government. And so that'll be rolled out to the private sector beginning of 2021. We're excited about that.

The next thing I want to talk about is a partnership that Governor Polis, the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment, and Bitwise, and several – I think there's about 10 states that are part of the Onward USA site. Onward Colorado was really something we stood up very quickly in April. It was ancillary help to deal with not only impacted workers, but the healthcare crisis, and also the need for safety net programs. One back, I think, on the slides. There, Onward Colorado. Thank you.

But really put in one place a hub for our unemployed claimants. The minute they applied for unemployment, they were referred to Onward Colorado, which gave them resources for if they wanted to go back to work and were able to go back to work, what companies, what industries were hiring. And also if they needed access to safety net programs in their communities, the resources listed for healthcare, as well as food assistance, shelter assistance. And then a labor exchange site that was complemented by our own Connecting Colorado site, that looked at jobs in their communities, but also training providers that could provide them the training that would make them more relevant or more qualified for those positions.

So to date we've had about 85,000 people use Onward Colorado. And they register, and we find that the registrants are using that very often, since they registered on the average of 10 times to look at resources, but also to see – and these are specific to their county. So where they live, they can drill down for the information specific to their communities, not statewide resources. So we thought that was a very resource – it will come down once the healthcare crisis, we thought we'd bring it down now in December. But I think we're going to extend it as we see in Colorado, as many states across the country, are seeing a rise in their cases.

So the next thing I want to talk about is we are very fortunate that we have a well working labor market information system in Colorado. And we use this quite extensively since the get go of the crisis, where we were diving deep into what our employment, unemployment insurance claimants' demographics look like, and how can we pinpoint responses that were responsive to women, people of color, who were being displaced from certain industries, and how can we intervene quickly to get them retrained and with the skill they have back into jobs that are actually growing and in demand as we go through this healthcare crisis.

So I think just want to make sure that I'm sure all of you are using this tool to its full capacity. If not, please do so. Our governor actually uses the labor market information as part of his recovery and resiliency cabinet, to make sure that he's putting resources as we start thinking about how Colorado can quickly recover, specifically as we look at equity in the recovery, and how can we make sure that our low income, our low wage workers in those industries, that we know probably will never get back to 100 percent, and encourage people to look at upgrades, or retooling, reskilling, as they think about going back to work during the pandemic.

So those are a few of the things that in Colorado I think really helped us move through the recovery and thinking about returning to work for many of our impacted workers. So thank you. And I'm going to turn it back over to Kim.

MS. VITELLI: Thanks so much, Joe. You've been very busy in Colorado. Liz, can you talk to us about how Utah handled the shift to virtual services?

ELIZABETH CARTER: Yeah. Thanks, Kim. And thanks to my counterparts, Joe and Stephanie. I think Utah was really well-poised going into this to sort of pivot to virtual services. We'd done a lot of work ahead of time. We had a lot of things already available online. But very quickly we were able to create a resource page for people who had been impacted, a coronavirus webpage.

And it had sort of a holistic view. We had our childcare division, childcare resources there from them. We had unemployment insurance information. But we also had reemployment information. And we did that right off the bat, so that when people went there, they not only had other resources, but they were also focusing on what we can do to help them get reemployed.

And one of the things we did really quickly was stand up virtual rapid response workshops. And because so many people were being laid off and there was such a strain on our unemployment insurance call system and chat system, there was high attendance at these virtual rapid response workshops.

We were able to talk about how they could connect, things that they needed to do, but also really talk about the services that we could provide to help them reengage in the workforce. And that was a really good opportunity. We had really good opportunity. We had really good engagement from job seekers in our chat and really attending those. And we ended up doing those twice a day for several weeks to accommodate all the people. We were able to deliver some of those in Spanish as well as English, and then also ASL thanks to our vocational rehabilitation partners. So we were able to get that up really quickly which was really helpful.

I think we were also really able to shift to more online workshops. We did a virtual job fair within the first month that people had been laid off. And we were also able to just really sort of pivot to a statewide model of being able to deliver these services because they were virtual and because people could access them anywhere in the state. So even though our staff were being shifted to other – to help out with unemployment insurance, we were able to handle a larger capacity of customers just because we were able to shift into this virtual statewide model.

We also used sort of like our telework resources that we had put out before. So we had telework jobs in our system already. And we had resources for employers and job seekers on what it takes to work in that type of an environment. Of course we have to adjust those a little bit because parents had kids home while they were trying to work. And so that added a whole new element that probably wasn't something we would typically talk about when we talk about telework. We'd talk about getting childcare, right.

So I think just the other thing that I think we did really quickly was partnering with our local chambers and with our governor's office to get the information out, so that as they were doing press releases and connecting with employers on the ground, the information was getting to those who needed it, so that they could know where to come to get those resources to help just really reengage back in the workforce quickly, and know what resources we could get taken care of. So focusing on taking care of those immediate needs of income, what am I going to do immediately, and then hey look, look at this, now that we've got your application done, what can we do to help you get back into the workforce, and here's all the resources we have available.

MS. VITELLI: That's really helpful. Thanks, Liz. We know that our typical customers changed as unemployment rates rose. Can you each take about one or two minutes – we're going to actually – we're going to run through 4 p.m. today. Can you teach take one or two minutes to explain how your states provided integrated services to UI claimants as their numbers rose and other job seekers that were in need of employment? And I wonder if I can turn back to Stephanie to hear how this went in Michigan.

MS. BECKHORN: Yeah. Certainly. I think first and foremost again, we just had really strong support from our local workforce areas. We had over 400 local staff kind of step up and provide services to unemployment claimants. And they joined not only the traditional UI staff, but also staff, state staff from WIOA Titles I through IV. We had wage and hour staff. We had MIOSHA staff. So it really was all hands on deck. And not only was it to help UI claimants, but they were also trained in work share, so that they could also help educate employers how they could potentially tap into work share resources versus laying individuals off.

I think as was mentioned previously, the virtual job fair platform, we had continued these. And you can see over 800 employers and over 4,100 individuals to date have participated in our virtual job fairs. They can be regionally based, industry based. And we provide support – (inaudible) – so if we're going to have a virtual job fair in Detroit, we pull unemployment claimant information from the Detroit area.

We send them a notification saying there's a virtual job fair coming up, you should check it out. Hey, and before you log into the job fair, why don't you go over to your local workforce area and maybe get your resume up to date, and maybe pick up some skills there. And so and don't forget your state as an employer. Our state employs almost 50,000 people. This has been incredibly successful with state departments as well who are also looking for individuals.

Next slide just very quickly, I just want to say it's really important to that it wasn't just UI claimants. As unemployment data goes up, so does access and requesting public assistance through the TANF program and the food stamp program. And so we really have – we have an integrated data system on the HHS side, it's My Bridges. It connects with our workforce data system.

And if individuals, as they're filling out requesting public assistance, if they indicate that their wages have changed or their employment status has changed in the last 30 days, they are referred over to the local workforce area saying, hey, there's an opportunity for someone to help you here, not only with public assistance benefits, but with employment assistance. And we're expanding that to veterans and rehabilitation, depending on how they answer their public assistance application. It may be pushing them into other services.

MS. VITELLI: Joe, I know you spoke about this a little bit when you were describing how Colorado had approached this. But is there anything more do you want to add about how Colorado delivered integrated services to UI claimants?

MR. BARELA: Thanks, Kim. The only thing I would add is that as we looked at in Colorado the ability to be a little bit more innovative with the job search mandate with unemployment insurance, is we really stretched as far as we could the definition of employability enhancing activities, and encouraged all of our UI participants to think about is there a chance your job may not come back even though you are on temporary furlough or every indication is that you will return to work. It is now the opportunity to take this time and upskill or update your LinkedIn profile or your resume. Take advantage of our virtual services from the American job centers, Colorado workforce centers.

And so we wanted to expand what was available as far as we know you're attached to employment – (inaudible) – temporary, and maybe you don't want to do a job search. But are you focusing on what's important in your employability and how you stay relevant. And so really works with our local workforce board and our American job centers to make sure that their services were tilted towards people who were looking at career coaching, opportunities to take the skills and competencies they have, and redirect them with labor market information, where they were growing opportunities, to put those skills to work.

And so I just want to emphasize how important it is that as we look at coaching and the important role they play as people come out of the pandemic, it's critical that a lot of people can self help themselves with online tools, but they still need a person to – some people do need a person to help navigate through the complexity of that. And so I think that's real important as we think about tools that we allow coaches, assessment specialists, to continue to work with our participants in a virtual environment.

MS. VITELLI: Yeah. And Liz, I know Utah did some really exciting work here. How did this happen in Utah?

MS. CARTER: Yeah. Thank you. What was interesting is like many states we deployed a lot of our workforce development staff to help with unemployment insurance increase just in workload. But something interesting that we did is that our labor exchange and case management system actually built the pandemic unemployment assistance program application into the labor exchange system.

And we did that partially to just help with the workload that was happening on unemployment insurance. But also it was a really good way to connect people right off the bat to work. Because they were registering for our labor exchange system in the process of getting to the application, to fill out the application for pandemic unemployment assistance.

And so just really trying to start that conversation early with people about that there are other jobs available. We also have our staff are making outreach calls. So they're actually calling claimants and engaging them in work conversations, which has been really interesting. We've had a 40 to 50 percent callback rate on that. And I think partially because unemployment – or individuals who have applied for unemployment insurance, they're not talking to staff very often because of the increase in workload, it's so large. That when we're calling them, they're ready, and willing, and excited to engage in those conversations about work.

And that's really given us an opportunity to one on one just connect with people who are interested, and just talk to them about the services that we provide, and really talk them through their situation, and do they need to think about a different industry. And if they do, here's some resources for that. If not, here's some resources that will help you find a job. And it's just been really neat to see those engagements happening over the phone.

The other thing we did was we partnered with industry and local chambers to find out what were their pain points, what are their needs as far as hiring. And then we created a hot jobs webpage that we're able to direct people to. So not just the labor exchange where we have thousands and thousands of jobs for people to look at, but also just saying, hey, if you're interested, these are the hot jobs in Utah right now. And you can go here to this one page, and you can find these hot jobs. And then if you're not skilled to get into one of these jobs, then we can help you get skilled. And if you are, great, here's a way to connect with these employers.

I think again just the virtual job fairs that we used, we created a separate pavilion just for telework jobs, so that people could connect to those jobs where they could work from home, which all of a sudden became more appealing I think to a lot of people than it had in the past. I think we started to see more people interested in telework than we have in the past just because of the circumstances. We also partnered with higher education and tech colleges to create a work and learning Utah model, where they used our labor market information to create very short term programs that could help people move from jobs that weren't available right then to jobs that are available now.

And so just a variety of those things we were able to very quickly – and really when John talks about that One Workforce, I think that's really what happened, is everyone came to the table. And we're all in this together and we're all going to figure it out together. And sort of this is the result of some of the things that happened.

MS. VITELLI: That's terrific. Let's do one sort of lightning round question. I want to get the last bits of wisdom that we can since we have you. What do you think – think of an innovation that the pandemic spurred that you can tell us about in under a minute. What kind of fascinating things happened as a result of the pandemic? Stephanie?

MS. BECKHORN: I think first and foremost, I think it just demonstrated that coming together and working collaboratively, that One Workforce as Liz and Assistant Secretary Pallasch said. Boy, we demonstrated that under very intense circumstances, that we were able to accomplish great things. And just think about applying that mentality when there's not a pandemic going on. Because at the end of the day, what we really saw is that individual, they didn't care if you work for the unemployment insurance agency, you were a local or a state rep, if you work for health and human services, if you administer food stamps or not. All they cared is they needed someone to provide them, even someone just to talk to and provide resources.

So I think really what it spurs is that we do have to collectively work together each day, each week, and we can accomplish really great things. And the other thing I think that we continuously need to remember is we need to meet people where they're at. Everyone – we have no idea what an individual's barriers and challenges they are. And we can't assume that everyone is on ramping at this one spot. So really coming together and meeting people where they're at to address their specific needs is something that we are going to carry on long after this pandemic ends.

MS. VITELLI: Awesome. Joe, hit me quick, what is an innovation that was spurred by the pandemic in Colorado?

MR. BARELA: I would say in our unemployment insurance system, the ability to use technology and to be more responsive, initiative callback features rather than having to answer every phone, our virtual bot technology that was able to answer questions as it learned what the questions were from our customers. And I think the ability to make sure that our workforce was tech enabled really is going to help us be innovative moving forward.

MS. VITELLI: Awesome. Liz, bring us home. What's an innovation in Utah?

MS. CARTER: I think I'm going to adjust just a little bit, because I think what happened is we had a lot of these innovations available, but I think people were not as quick to use them. They wanted to come into a center and talk to someone. I think what we're seeing is now that they've experienced being able to use these online tools, these online workshops, these online job fairs, online connecting, I think they're more ready to use these tools in the future.

So I think before our usage of those tools wasn't as great as it is now. And I think that's something that will continue into the future, which will allow us to continue to roll more things out online in an online forum, just because I think people are more ready to receive that.

MS. VITELLI: That's a really important point. I just want to thank the three of you so much for the preparation and thought that you put into this, and sharing the innovations and hard work of your states with everyone here. I know a lot of people got a lot out of it. I know I got a lot out of it. Let me tell everybody that's listening about a few resources that are available on Workforce GPS to assist you in your recovery efforts.

The department's compiled a couple of resources on our pathways to recovery community of practice. And you can see the different categories that we've organized those into here on the screen about service delivery and LMI, partnerships in infrastructure, and the site also includes a quick start action planner than be used to aid workforce system stakeholders as you're thinking about whether or not you want to shift your services, and preparing for sort of the next phase of economic recovery.

And let me ask too, everybody here in the audience, what areas of technical assistance would be helpful to you? Go ahead and type it into the chat box that I think is available on your screen. Now this is a kickoff – go ahead and type while I'm talking. This is a kickoff here that we're doing today to a webinar series. And we plan to host a couple more webinars over the next two months. We've got some ideas on what we'll cover there, but we also want to hear from you what topics you would like us to focus on, working with employers and OJT, virtual training, virtual work experience, skills, testing, case management. Tell us what you want to hear about.

I can see that some people are already typing into the chat, which is good. I'm going to tell you some additional information while you go ahead and keep typing. So thank you everybody for your participation. We saw a lot of good questions in the chat that we weren't able to get to. But it helps us also know what you're interested in. We hope that this webinar provided some new information or sparked some ideas that you might be able to use in your community.

So I want to let you know what we've got planned for TA in the short term. We have a training and employment notice with a couple different types of information that we'll be publishing shortly, some of which we covered today. We've got some webinars that are coming up soon, one of which is excellence in job seeker services that's already scheduled for December 16th, and another on national dislocated worker grant recruitment, recruitment for job seekers into those grants. And we've also got some upcoming podcasts that you can see on the screen.

And we talked a lot about technology today. So I want you to know that the Workforce Information Technology Support Center, WITSC, which is hosted by the National Association of State Workforce Agencies, also has a lot of really good information. And all states have access – anybody can look in there, but states have really deep access to see some of those tools. We look forward to hearing from you and seeing you participate in future activities. You can also communicate with us through the email that's on the screen about any additional questions that you have.

Thank you all so much for joining today. And thanks again to our panel, and to Mark Giannoni, and to Assistant Secretary Pallasch. Thanks, everyone.

(END)