

## **Transitions: A Final Learning Exchange Between the State Leaders Innovation Institute and the State Peer Leaders Network Webinar**

*July 2010*

**[Robb Sewell]** Good afternoon. This is Robb Sewell. On behalf of the NTAR Leadership Center, I'd like to thank you for joining us today for what will surely be an informative and enlightening webinar, *Transitions: A Final Learning Exchange Between the State Leaders Innovation Institute and the State Peer Leaders Network*. And joining me today is Maria Heidkamp, who is the director of the NTAR Leadership Center State Leaders Innovation Institute. Now before we begin, I'd like to take a few minutes to review some important information. For those unfamiliar with this particular webinar format, the presentation slides will appear on the right side of your screen. A chat feature on the left side of your screen enables you to communicate with me. Should you have any questions or encounter any problems, simply type your message and click send. You can also click Hide Chat to temporarily remove the chat feature and just click Show Chat when you want to restore it. Clicking full screen maximizes the webinar so that it occupies the complete width and height of your computer display. This webinar has been arranged so that during the presentation, the only voices you'll hear are those of the presenters. We have a lot a time after the presentation for Q and A. At that time, we'll provide you with information about how to ask questions. However, throughout the presentation, please feel free to forward your questions to me via the chat feature. I'll then forward the questions to our presenters during the Q and A. This webinar is being recorded. A direct link to the webinar including audio and web content will available on the NTAR Leadership Center Web site by noon, Eastern Time, Friday, July 23rd, 2010. The NTAR Web site can be accessed at [www.ntarcenter.org](http://www.ntarcenter.org). That is W-W-W dot N-T-A-R-C-E-N-T-E-R dot O-R-G. Finally, after you exit the Internet portion of today's webinar, your web browser will take you to a brief survey where

you can give us feedback about your experience today as well as provide suggestions for future webinar topics. Please take a few minutes to complete that survey. At this point, I'd like to turn things to Nanette Relave who is the director of the Center for Workers with Disabilities at the American Public Human Services Association. Additionally, Nanette is the director of the NTAR Leadership Center's State Peer Leaders Network. Nanette?

**[Nanette Relave]** Great, thank you. If we could move along to slide number four, I know that we have many listeners on the call who are familiar with the NTAR Leadership Center, but we may have some new folks joining us as well so I just want to begin by providing a quick overview. Our center was established in September of 2007 through a grant from the Office of Disability Employment Policy at the U.S. Department of Labor. And this center is housed at the John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development at Rutgers University, but it's also a collaboration of partners with expertise across a variety of fields including workforce and disability employment, economic development, asset building, and leadership as well. And we were created to help build the capacity and leadership at federal, state, and local levels to help facilitate change across workforce development and disability-specific systems that would ultimately help to increase employment for adults with disabilities. And if we could move to slide five, all of our work is really led by a set of guiding principles and they are all listed out on this slide. I'm not going to go over all of them so that I don't take additional time from the great presentations that we have because you're free to take a look at. And as we listen to our three states presenting today, we'll actually be touching pretty much on all of these guiding principles as they are being developed and implemented by the states in different ways. And if we can move to slide six, so, I'm really delighted that we have our three presenters with us today from the states that are participating in our institute, Minnesota, Connecticut, and Maryland. And these three presenters also joined us last summer to provide us with some information about how their

state activities were unfolding during the course of their participation in the State Leaders Innovation Institute. And as we begin to wind down the institute, it's wonderful to have an opportunity to hear from all of them again as they've now had a couple of years to really develop and begin to implement or to continue and build on existing initiative to support workforce development and disability employment. And so today, we are joined by Kathy Sweeney who is Special Project Manager at the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development or DEED for short, Joyce Barclay who is Assistant Vice President of Special Projects at The WorkPlace, Inc. in Connecticut, and Cathy Raggio who is Secretary of the Maryland Department of Disabilities. And as Robb said, I am with the Center for Workers with Disabilities. We provide technical assistance to states and I also help to lead the activities of the State Peer Leaders Networks, which is comprised of 21 states to participate with us. And so with that, if you want to move on to the next slide and I'm also going to turn it over to Kathy Sweeney to get us started. And Kathy, you'll just need to press star 7 to unmute your line and you should be ready to go.

**[Kathy Sweeney]** Thank you. Thank you so much. Okay, great. Well, thanks again for welcoming us to this call. And before we begin our presentation, I'd really like to thank everyone on behalf of our team for selecting Minnesota to participate in the State Leaders Innovation Institute. We have benefited greatly from all of the technical systems we've received. We've been able to pilot some very innovative work to further our comprehensive approach for applying Universal Design. And to really--as we say on our slides, to use this work to assist us and fully live up to the vision of the Workforce Investment Act with all four titles designed to help states to provide services to all of the persons in our workforce. So with that said, with that thank you, I'd like to get underway and do I need to indicate when it's time to change the slides or how do I do that?

**[Robb Sewell]** All you have to do is just cue me when you want to move to another slide.

**[Kathy Sweeney]** Perfect. Great. Although I think, what we'll do is move to the first slide. Okay, well, in this--as we see here, introducing our presentation today. This work has really aided us in fully living up to the vision of the Workforce Investment Act because it allowed us to really use each of the four titles of the Workforce Investment Act along with our Medicaid Infrastructure Grant and a number of other community partners to enhance our vision, which is the next slide, please Robb. And that is our Minnesota Value Proposition. We need everyone in the workforce for businesses to thrive and communities to prosper. Okay, we can move to the next slide, please. Okay, here are the key elements of our value proposition. I have found this work to be very valuable in helping us with unifying our efforts to link all four titles of the Workforce Investment Act. As you know, this is not something that has been easy to do across the country, but it's been something that we have found to be intensely and incredibly important and we have the advantage of Minnesota that titles I, III, and IV of the Workforce Investment Act, are here at the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development along with our 49 WorkForce Center partners across the state and many community organizations that assist us in our efforts. We also have, over the last several years, put together a very intensive coordination and partnership relationship with the Adult Basic Ed and that's title II of the Workforce Investment Act. Then, in addition to the first bullet, we've been working in particular in a project in the city of Duluth, which is our second client. And through State Leadership Innovation Institute and the grant we received in the SLII, we were able to take the work that we've been doing at SOAR to get another level and to really make sure that everything that's being done at SOAR fully is inclusive of all persons including all persons with disabilities. And because of the work we've done, SOAR has been able to really change their day-to-day business model to make sure that it fully

embraces and is inclusive of all persons. And then finally, Universal Design, this area of Universal Design covers such a big domain. It's the one that we've received the tremendous amount of assistance from this work and one that has really fit well with our philosophy and with our value proposition. We still have many ideas about how we can continue to use Universal Design to contribute to our capacity to live into our value proposition, but we'll talk a little bit today in our continuing presentation about how we've used the Universal Design TEA in Minnesota. So Robb, you can take us to the next one, please. Okay, so what we've been doing in the area of leadership in this project, we've been working with the SOAR Career Solutions project to make sure that we have developed an adult career exploration model that allows people to understand ahead of time before they go into skill training exactly where the best skill training proposition is for them and then to succeed in it. We've been working with linking employment with regional efforts to identify those jobs that are in demand and those jobs that will provide a living wage for people who are trained in them. Just on a side, I'm sure that many of you who are listening did read the article in The New York Times this week. It's been getting so much attention about how important it is that workforce training efforts provide skill training and jobs that are in demand in regional economies and that have the necessary credentials and certifications behind them to make sure that people really can use that training. And I would say that one of the characteristics then of the work we've done in this SLII work is that we've stressed the importance of having industry-based credentials and credentials that linked to the economy of the area in which we're providing training. We think that that's been an important principle of the training we've done through this work. And we're going to try and see if we can get some people to do some follow up articles like the one in The New York Times. But with a little bit more positive information in and about some of things we've seen happen with this kind of approach. And then finally, this last bullet not only have we been working closely

between all the different efforts here at DEED, but we've also worked with our partners at the Minnesota Department of Human Services, the Minnesota Department of Education in Minnesota State Colleges and Universities, State Council on Disabilities and as I just mentioned, very closely with our business partners. Okay, so the next slide focusing on the integration efforts we've had. We've talked quite a bit in earlier presentations about our work with Campus2Careers. This is a model that we've developed for providing career exploration for young people with disabilities in Minnesota, and we've been able to take this model and offer it in up to 14 communities after initially starting in just one. We've also been able to extend this model out to adults and to other groups of individuals who we had originally not offered the models until we found that it's been useful for many different kinds of customers. The Adult Basic Ed people, we've talked about that have been included in the model, also working closely with the Wagner-Peyser People Act, the WIA Title III people to make sure that we've offered those individuals that were trained all of the job keeping and job seeking skills that they need. And then as I've mentioned earlier, what we've been able to do is influence the way key community-based organizations provide services, so that they have been able to become fully capable of providing inclusive services to people with disabilities as well as to all the rest of the workforce programs that they'd had been offering in the past. Okay, so the next slide is one on Universal Design. We had a lot of help through this Leadership Institute from one of the vendors in particular Sheila Fesko working with Lisa Stern, and we mentioned their names because we couldn't have done it without them. They've provided us with excellent, excellent training materials. They came out and worked with a large number of people in Minnesota to help us learn how to actually do this kind of work and use the methodology that they offered us on our own. So they actually trained us so that we were able to incorporate this into our day-to-day work. And we piloted the Universal Design work as part of space planning process in one of our 49 WorkForce Centers. And you know

from your own experiences that thinking collectively and thinking with all the partners at the table about how to make sure that the WorkForce Center experience is the best possible experience for all of our customers and all of the agencies in a challenging conversation so there's lots of different things to think about and to consider. And we have 49 WorkForce Centers, we feel that they're all certainly meeting the letter of the law, but we want them to meet the spirit of the law and to fully live into the vision of the Workforce Investment Act. That's our goal. And I think that Universal Design has offered us a methodology that really helps us move beyond the minimums and into much more of the opportunities that exist in working in a full vision of the Workforce Investment Act. So Lisa and Sheila and Maria Heidkamp came out and help us with this too. We were able to look at specifically a couple of things that are often challenging for the local partners. How do you provide the kinds of space layouts that will take advantage of everyone's space so that at the same time maximize our individual needs for privacy with our individual customers. We've also looked at our online services and we'll continue to look at those. And that's why when you see on the slide, "virtual" WorkForce Center services, this is an area we're really interested in building out and looking at and continue to stretch ourselves in because there's so much we can do online, but there's a lot of challenges about doing online services to make sure that it's inclusive and accessible and available for all of our customers. So that is something that this work has helped us with as well. Okay, next slide. Okay, so as we've talked about and really practice our own principles here, we want to acknowledge and say to this audience how much we need these systems and the support of our federal Workforce Investment Act partners to implement the vision we have in the authority. How much we appreciate their commitment and their capacity to help us move forward this way. We know that they to be funding some strengths. And that each of our Workforce Investment Act titles has its own set of particular funding requirements, reporting requirements, et cetera. But, if we can

move to the next slide please. As we continue to find a way to link those key titles together to find a balance between specifics of each title and at the same, using a term we've all heard a lot in this work--blending, braiding, resources so that while we maintain the individual integrity of each title, we also take advantage of this energy and the energy that we get from working across all the titles. On page 15, we've listed a couple of specific efforts we've been working on that I know that those of you who are following along can identify with the fact that the needy greedy practice of finding a cost reimbursement formula that sustains the integration and collaboration of the WorkForce Center without disproportionately disadvantaging or causing a disproportionate payment issued by any one of the partners in doing this in 49 different offices so that it works equally well in each of the 49 is a daunting challenge. But we believe that we've had some good assistance in thinking about that. And then actually, the work we've done in the Universal Design was a really good background to bring into that room and into that discussion. And I'll just say when we're on this topic that we set up our WorkForce Center system in Minnesota about 15 years ago. And we've had a long time to--15 years is a long time to think about how to do this, but Universal Design and the training we had have given us some really fresh new insights and I meant to say some fresh new tools to bring to that discussion. Okay, and then we've got one more slide and that is the last one for us. And again, talking about how Universal Design is helping us to move beyond simply those rule-bound silos to a more flexible response. And a good example for instance would be the fact that every person that comes in to any of our services, whether that WorkForce Center is a community-based partnership, people who are not able to read, whatever the causes, we need to help people. Make sure that that is something that we help them address 'cause no matter what the cause, people need that help. And finally, we want to say that we're continuing to work with all of our WorkForce Center partnerships to make the point that when we design inclusive

spaces and services, we actually really do something very specific about living into the vision of the full use of all the Workforce Investment Act titles. So that's kind of brief overview of the work we've done. And again, we'll be open to talking about the specifics with anyone just one more time to say it to everyone. Thank you so much for making it possible for us to do this work. That's it for Minnesota for now.

**[Nanette Relave]** Thank you so much Kathy, and Robb, if we want to move ahead to the next slide, slide number 18. And I'm going to turn it over to Joyce Barclay from Connecticut. And Joyce, you'll just need to press star 7 to unmute your line then you'll be ready to start your presentation.

**[Joyce Barclay]** Well, hello, Nanette and to Kathy, and Kathy, it's great to be back with you again. And I too would like to express our team at Connecticut appreciation for all the assistance provided by the NTAR team because truly, you folks have helped bring us together and brought us resources that we didn't have perhaps, prior to this. And I also want to congratulate Minnesota on their accomplishments. I mean, a follow up on the New York Times article would be very beneficial to the workforce system. So go for it. We're looking forward to seeing that. Next slide please. Great. I'm going to talk a little bit about the partnerships, the goals and our accomplishments, and then what we've learned so far. But I'm starting by saying that during that last 12 months, there have been significant changes in the Connecticut team. We've had several commissioners and other key members retired. Last year, there was a golden handshake for people in service. Unfortunately, this year, we had one of our most key players, the commissioner of labor actually passed away very unexpectedly. And because of a lack of the state budget early last year, we were impacted greatly in our ability to continue contractual services and travel. So, now, we have a lot of things in the hopper, sometimes, we had to put on the breaks. And the most recent impact for our team came with the

resignation of the Governor's Liaison, Chris Tymniak. You may have recalled, I think, Chris participated last year on this same call. And he had a critical role in moving the Connecticut team forward and keeping activities and issues before the governor even during this year's difficult economic times. And so, we're really going to miss him and we're wishing him well in his new role in state government. Next slide please. Great. The partnership, key to anything, our relationship. And we began a few years ago just with state agency involvement thinking, "Okay, this is the State Leader Innovation Institute. Let's get a state leader." And we quickly realized that leadership in the state goes beyond just the agencies at the top. And we expanded to include all the workforce boards, the business community, and education with the community colleges primarily. And a lesson that we learned is that we needed to obtain the highest level of involvement possible even if they designated delegates as their representatives, but that they maintain their connection for policy decisions if those were needed, so we don't have to keep going back and forth. Their designates would keep them a pride and they're ready to make decisions when that was needed. Next slide. Our goals for this year have about, we started with very similar goals, actually, more of lofty goals and then we kind of dropped the reins in the last year. And I think we did a little more honing this year. We have greater emphasis on expanding collaborations and even more so on sustaining momentum and sustaining activities. Because we all know that once activities are seeded, it's only the activities that sustain those initiatives that keep them alive. We discovered that there really wasn't a need for strong leadership facilitation coming together on a regular basis as a large team as the agencies were now regularly collaborating, which as I said, it's key to sustainability. And Model Employer is lofty goal for us and not quite achieved. I think team Connecticut can say their actions speak louder than words. And that we are demonstrating that Connecticut is a disability friendly state through our collaborations and activities to promote the employment and advancement of

people with disabilities. Next slide please. Well, the first goal is to increase awareness and collaboration, and through our Medicaid Infrastructure Grant, which has really helped pull resources together, the Web site [connect-ability.com](http://connect-ability.com) was established. And it was created actually to be the state hub for disability resources for employers, for professionals, parents, students, teachers, the whole gamut, and of course, people with disabilities. And if anybody has seen the fantastic Think Beyond the Label campaign or if you haven't seen it, please do go to the Web site [thinkbeyondthelabel.com](http://thinkbeyondthelabel.com) because they've brought looking at differences. I'm not going to say disability. They've brought looking at differences to a whole new level and focusing on abilities in a new way. It's just it's very clever and I applaud the national campaign for doing that. Next slide please. Along with the awareness, of course, are events, and right now and actually on the next few months, we're looking at the second Employment Summit which actually was being held last month at the Connecticut Conference Center and ongoing activities like the 22nd Annual Postsecondary Disability Training. And you can see that these activities are clustered together and they are really scheduled throughout the year. We will be taking a look at--actually, I think, Robb, this is where we have the Connect-ability page put in. If you can bring me to the Web site, terrific. We're going to talk about Connect-ability and we're getting it up on the screen right now. So the last couple of years and we just want to give to you an idea of what Connect-ability is in Connecticut and why we really are so proud of it. Okay, as you can see, it has information and the class keeps changing. It has information about careers, information for employers, parents, educators, used transportation, and service resources. And if you look under News and Events, you'll see on the news, it has most recent articles and below that goes the event on the right column. And to the left, you can see that there are new initiatives like the Model Employer program, which is really terrific 'cause it focuses on so many different aspects of an employer. Robb, if you can go to the employer page? And what this will do is it will

show the different resources that are available for employers. As you can see, it gives information, there's a success story. Almost every page opens with a success story reading in a click and really get the full information. But it has information about building diversity and organizations all the way down to tips on hiring and maintaining people with disabilities. One of my favorite pages are the Myths and Facts because they really just tell a lot of negative ideas that employers have when thinking about people with disability. And again, it connects the employers with Thinking Beyond the Label and gets people interested in things like disability mentoring day. So there's a lot of fantastic information there. And I encourage you if you have the opportunity, since we can't go live to the site right now, to just take a look when you have a chance and go on to the media gallery because when you look at the "See the Ability," the slogan of Connect-ability is "See the Ability." See how we can work together. It has a dynamite job of bringing great little [inaudible] together that really hone in on that. And we've had a very large media campaign last year and then part of this year again, they contract with a little help on the media campaign for a while, but they're very effective. And according the Connect-ability eight-hundred number, there have been many, many calls not only from employers but people with disabilities speaking how they can connect to each other. Okay, if we can go back to the presentation. And the next slide please. This is another page that I wanted to really focus on 'cause to me, this is one of the keys. This is the resource locator for people with disabilities, where you can put in your ZIP code and it will actually plot geographically all of the resources in the area. And as you can see below the map is the name of the agency with its address and then you can get directions. It will be a MapQuest pop-up that comes up to give you directions if you want directions to get there and it also gives you more information. So while it's not fully populated right now, the infrastructure of the place, a new information is being regularly added. As I said, it challenges then the lifetime between contracts being able to keep the online work going.

But like any moratorium with the state travel, we couldn't have state travel. The contracting had halted for a while, but now it's back on task and it's being created and expanded again. Next slide please. We're doing a lot with increasing awareness and collaboration. Here's another collaborative, it's called the EPIC program, Employment Practice Improvement Collaborative. And this is also using the Medicaid Infrastructure Grant funding. And it's meant to promote statewide collaboration and a protest to increase employment training and education opportunities for customers that are mutually served by all of these different organizations. It's a brand new initiative like I said that will host its first inaugural collaborative information center open house next month. And it will demonstrate an ongoing commitment to the collaboration at a state level as it continues to bring more state agencies then to work collaboratively, serving the people that we all serve together, and also, expanding to include community-based and faith-based and grassroots organizations. So, that's why the open house is being conducted to bring in people from the localities and there's a lot of information going out throughout the state to get people involved. Next slide please. Another new MIG funded program is The HomeWORK project. As you can see, Medicaid Infrastructure Grant is making a huge impact in Connecticut. I mean, we started off really focusing on the Connect-ability brand new Web site. And now, all of the collaborations that that has brought about, all of the resources that it's brought about along with the ability to get together regularly through the State Leaders Innovation Institute it's really brought people together in a way that we hadn't done before. And I think people and not agencies because they are the relationships between and among people that are making all these happen. So, The HomeWORK project is a pilot program and it's being launched in the state's three largest urban areas and it will be supported by strong community-based organization involvement in each of those areas. The goals are very ambitious, as you can see by next year, 2011, 200 supported housing residents will become employed and 35 more will be

enrolled in educational programs. We're going to really be promoting the Ticket to Work initiative which can be very beneficial to all, especially the smaller nonprofits that can be involved in this Ticket to Work program as employment network, and we're really trying to get all of the resources and the community working together. Next slide please. The interesting thing about the HomeWORK project though is that the staff of the project won't be providing services directly to the tenants or the residents. It's actually meant to be a training to train them up, Train the Trainer model to build the capacity of the supportive housing staff to help their residents prepare for and obtain employment. And through the Train the Trainer model, the project can continually grow and go beyond to see money and be replicated in other cities around the state. Next slide please. The Board of Education Services for the Blinds known as BESB here in Connecticut, spearheaded the idea to use ARRA funds to subsidize employment for their customers, who are the hardest to place, those who typically are not given opportunities for employment. So, BESB collaborated with the Department of Labor to include information about this initiative and the employer mailings that were sent out by the Department of Labor. The program statement is also now included on all state checks to vendors and for those who use electronic transfer, the information is included on their mailed receipts. This way, it's really getting broad coverage and being made available to employers of all sizes in all sites in all locations of the state. That was a tremendous idea that actually happened at one of the State Leaders Innovation Institute meetings, where BESB was saying, "You know, we have this great idea. We just need to be able to get it out." And Department of Labor of said, "Well, we have regular mailings." And hence, the marriage was made. It was terrific. So, once the participants' employers see their abilities, noted by Connect-ability's tag line, "See the Ability," it's really great. Many of the placements have actually led to permanent unsubsidized employment, and we're hoping that even for those who cannot remain employed permanently, that once

the economy turns and those employers are now able to hire people full time because the economy has changed that those employers will have such a good experience, they will be more welcoming to people with disabilities as applicants. Next slide please. Our second goal was to increase the capacity within in our One-Stop Centers. Not all One-Stop career centers are created equal and I think, Minnesota kind of alluded to that too, including in the area of assistive technology, and that can be as far as the technology itself goes or to the depth knowledge of how to use it. But first, we needed to determine which One-Stop had what type of services, what are the services being used, the technology being used, and did staff even know how to use existing assistive technology. So with the commitment from our partners in the statewide inventorying process, we identified last summer the areas that were most utilized and practical and they were the best resources for the One-Stop Centers. And based on that determination, we purchased and installed the technology and are currently in the process of developing online training modules. And those online training modules will be accessible to not only workforce development professionals but also to the public through the Connect-ability Web site. We anticipate that the training modules will be completed by the end of the summer and that the training will roll out later this year. The training, the nice thing about this too is in the One-Stop Centers, a supervisor can require their employees to participate in the training and through the Connect-ability Web site, and of course with special log-in authorization, those supervisors will be able to track whether or not their employees are participating in the training. Some of the One-Stops are even considering requiring this as part of professional development activities and employee reviews. So really wanting to get the information to the employees, making sure it's understandable and that it's going to be used in the future. Next slide please. As you'll see in the left column, we have a listing of the 18 One-Stop Centers in Connecticut and the chart in the middle shows that technology before and after. We selected these six areas with

limited resources to make sure that whatever we put into place would be the most effective and practical. So as you can see, we have the different types of technology that was being provided and the processes on the right column of how we actually went about doing that. And the line at the bottom shows where we are right now. We're going to be conducting the training and probably, the later part of the year, and then promote the use of this to all customers. So we are hoping that when the training is complete that our staff will be able to know how to use the technology, not just for people with disabilities or customers with disabilities, but for all customers. And you'll notice that the Scan and Read software is for English and Spanish, and the next slide will help illustrate how we're going to be promoting universal access within the One-Stop. There we go. These are beautiful posters. They're huge. They are three by five feet, and once the staff at each career center know how to use that technology, these very large and prominent displays will be placed around, not only the One-Stop Centers, but will be given to key community partners, so that people who also access their services will know that they can come to the ConnecticutWorks One-Stop Centers to get the services as well. Now, I mentioned the Scan and Read software because that can help not only people with visual disabilities, but anyone who need someone to read to them. This can apply to people who may be functionally illiterate and unfortunately, we do see many people in our One-Stop that don't read beyond the third and fourth grade level and sometimes do need information read to them. So Minnesota, you might take note that the Scan and Read software, I don't know if you've explored it but it might be something that might help you in this situation that you were mentioning a little bit earlier. We're very excited about this and of course, though, we can't place these posters that our One-Stop Centers until our staffs are trained 'cause that would be horrible to have, "how can we help you?" And our staff saying, "I don't know. I don't know what that's about?" So we're not going to put the cart before the horse, we're going to make sure that staffs are trained and then

place these posters. Next slide please. So we were looking at Universal Design as well and we identified that we have key strengths in this collaborative to continue to identify areas in which Universal Design can be explored and implemented. One area that is currently under consideration is that of making labor market information more useful and more user-friendly. We have wonderful labor market information in the state, but if you're not a professional, you might find it very difficult to use. So looking at that is one area. And, we acknowledge that radical changes most likely won't happen very quickly. But if we maintain a commitment to Universal Design as we continually make revisions and redefine the way we do things, we will just automatically bring ourselves more close to that goal every time we do make some changes. Next slide please. And again, the State Government as Model Employer, we're looking to build upon the great work that's already been done in New England and other states around the country. Their experience shows that--a good place to start is looking at how the state employees, how their experiences when it comes to the state being a model employer. If they are someone with a disability, are they receiving accommodations? How did it work out? Do they feel they're being supported in their employment? And so forth. So once we've been able to survey--and this has been a long-term goal, we had hoped to get this done last year and it didn't quite materialize, so we're working toward it again this year. It would be actually to look into training especially for supervisors and it's really interesting to know that we talked about things like being Universal Design and that's practice for our supervisors to know how to work with people with disabilities. But if you talk with the president of our business leadership network, she'll say, "That's crazy. Large employers with the good diversity programs have been doing that for years because they know that supervisors will know how to work with people with disabilities, know how to supervise people with disabilities, just make better supervisors. They know how to listen, they know how to be attentive, and they know how to be proactive versus supervisors that don't." So it just

makes good business then for the state and every employer to become a model. As I mentioned earlier, we haven't made a lot of headway on paper but Connecticut certainly is demonstrating through all of the collaborative and initiative that it does have a commitment to promoting the employment for people with disabilities. Next slide please. So Lessons Learned, well, we've learned a lot of lessons along of the way. And some are, that we identified, people with passion in particular areas to serve on work groups. That yes, we need involvement at a high level, but then we also need people to do a lot of the group work. But if people have a passion when they're doing the work, but when we were inventorying the technology, it was labor intensive and then looking to decide what to order, ordering it, getting it installed, developing training materials. The people working on that are keeping that alive without direct State Leadership Innovation Institute facilitation because they have a passion for it. They know it will help their work and it will help the work of their customers. So this assures a continued momentum and sustainability of these efforts. These informal work groups will keep activities moving and provide ongoing results that will actually maintain the momentum of the entire larger group when they hear about these successes. And these collaborations must be ongoing until they become a habit, so that we don't have to stop and think about collaborating. That it becomes so ingrained at in us that we automatically just do it. And I love Nike. Thank you, Nike for that "Just Do It" because it is so important and that is where we need to be in order to make that happen. Next slide please. And again, the three Rs of relationship of collaboration are relationship, relationship, relationship, and this goes to sustainability as well. And we also learned that we can't have these lofty goals without breaking them down and being realistic based on the resources that we have. As I've mentioned, we have to start from [inaudible] because of budgetary constraints in the state. And it could have really impacted our ability to complete any of our goals if we didn't have them broken down into more doable pieces, more

doable chunks. So we could continue the work without selling a great investment at one time, financial investment or resource investment at one time by the state. So all in all, I hope I have been able to show that Connecticut has been very active in the last year and continuing to grow partnerships and really striving to meet our goals. That we've had some significant accomplishments, and we continue to learn as we go. And I thank you.

**[Nanette Relave]** Thank you so much, Joyce and I really love the Universal Design example that you gave and the materials that you shared as well were wonderful. Robb, if we can move to the next slide, slide number 37. And last but absolutely not least, we're going to hear from our colleagues in Maryland about their sort of final year of activities in the State Leaders Innovation Institute. And I'm going to turn it over to Cathy Raggio. Cathy, you'll just need to press star 7 to unmute your line and you should be ready to go.

**[Cathy Raggio]** Okay, very good. Well, hello everyone. I'm Cathy Raggio and I'm Secretary of the Maryland Department of Disabilities, and I'm ready for my first slide. Okay, Maryland pulled together a team that is being co-chaired by now, Eric Seleznow who's the Acting Deputy Secretary of our Department of Labor Licensing and Regulation and Executive Director of the Governor's Workforce Investment Board, and Eric had been a member of the team. And then when Secretary of the Department, Tom Perez, moved on to his new job as President Obama's Chief of Civil Rights within the Attorney General's Office, we asked Eric to be the co-chair of Maryland's team along with me. Next slide. And we've listed all the Maryland team members on this slide by title and our project was built around what's called the Base Realignment and Closure, and this is the shift in military personnel from one military base to another that is spearheaded by the federal government. And Maryland stood to gain a record number of jobs as a result of this Base Realignment and Closure called BRAC. I'll refer to it as

BRAC hence forth. And these guys were coming from Fort Monmouth, New Jersey and from the Defense Intelligence Agency in Northern Virginia and being shifted into a couple of different places in Maryland. So you can see that the first person we went after was our Lieutenant Governor's Executive Director for the Base Realignment and Closure Subcabinet. And then we also had on there other key players within the state, the Division of Rehabilitation Services, and the representative from the Department of Business and Economic Development, and also from the Department of Transportation and the Department of Housing and Community Development, two representatives there, and then from the private sector, the President of the Prince George's Community College. Prince George is one of the large counties in our state. And also, the Director of Adult Services from one of our mental health providers, and the Human Resources Manager from a key partner to the defense industry, Northrop Grumman. Next slide please. And so what we have been trying to do, we haven't stopped with our project is to identify and link job seekers who have disabilities to opportunities that are going to become available as result of BRAC. Some of the BRAC jobs had began to move in to Maryland already, but most will be coming during calendar year 2011. So what we set out do to with our project was to be ready when these jobs move into the state. And we know that not all of the people who are in the jobs now are moving and that has fluctuated as the economy has fluctuated. At the beginning only about 40 percent were to move with the jobs, and most of the other people were going to retire. But when much of their retirement savings were lost when stock market dropped. A lot of people decided to move with the jobs to keep their jobs. So it's more like 60 percent are moving now and 40 percent will be new hires. In addition to the military jobs on the bases, a lot of the contractors are coming to the areas so there'll be additional jobs with contractors, and then of course, additional jobs to fill in that through the service sector economy that surrounds the bases. We wanted also to enhance the skills of job seekers who had disabilities by

retooling or realigning the existing training programs and funds, and determine the work incentives and strategies that would ensure that work would pay for people with disabilities. And then here's our reason for involving the Department of Transportation and the Department of Housing and Community Development. We want to be sure that with the additional funding that was inevitably going to be going into the communities to develop the infrastructure that we were developing livable and inclusive communities that would benefit people with disabilities as well as everyone else. Could I have the next slide, please? And so again, this explains what BRAC is and I've already covered that. And in Maryland, we were going to experience the largest single employment gross activity since World War II, and that's why we saw this as a once in a lifetime opportunity. Next slide please. When we begin the development of our action plan, our team got together in a dedicated series of meetings and began reviewing what was happening in three areas--housing, transportation, and workforce development. And we look at the BRAC action plan that the Lieutenant Governor's Subcabinet had created. And we decided to go through those three areas and identify additional strategies that would need to happen in order for people with disabilities to come to the BRAC jobs table. And the entire BRAC action plan can be located at the web address that you see there, [www.brac.maryland.gov](http://www.brac.maryland.gov). Next slide please. So now, I want to cover the key activities that we've done to date. One of the recommendations that we made was to coordinate and increase cross-agency employer engagement and outreach. And so I think one of the things that we're most proud of is that we were able to bring to the Governor's Workforce Investment Board a resolution that the board adopted calling upon the local One-Stop Centers to adopt the principles of Universal Design. And so the GWIB did that, and then we were able, through the entire project, to access technical assistance for the Workforce Investment Areas that were willing to step up as volunteers. And several of them did, more than we had expected, and so that was a good

thing, and they are currently receiving the technical assistance. And we understand that it's going well, that they are in the process of identifying what their goals are, and--or rather they have done it already, and then they will be receiving the technical assistance according to the goals that they set for themselves, and that varies a little bit by Workforce Investment Area. Three agencies partnered with our department and those were the Division of Rehabilitation Services; the Department of Business and Economic Development; and the Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation. And they partnered with us to create an employer portal with resources that employers could access and they would they also be able to access qualified candidates for the jobs. And that Web site again is there, [www.mdworkmatters.org](http://www.mdworkmatters.org), and you know that's working out well. Next slide please. Also in the area of workforce development, we developed marketing materials to encourage the hiring of people with disabilities. And we have been working on promoting--oh, you know what? I would have wanted to go to the Web site on the previous slide.

**[Robb Sewell]** Just one second, I'll navigate over to the site.

**[Cathy Raggio]** Okay. Thank you. We built out the employment section of our Web site so that there would be information for employers. So, this is the employer portal, and we've got a lot of different information starting with building the case for why hire people with disabilities and what the innovative solutions are and strategies that employers can use in replicating best practices and where to find job seekers with disabilities and other resources and then, a lot of different information. All of Work Matters, fact sheets for employers can be accessed through this portal too. And then it connects with the Think Beyond the Label national campaign that has been developed by a number of states through Medicaid Infrastructure Grants. Okay, now I'm ready for the next slide. Okay, so wanted to facilitate the access to the BRAC jobs for people with disabilities and we did this through job fairs. We

funded some job fairs in local areas. We've done No Spare Marylander job seeking workshops around different parts of the state. But particularly, one was held at the Aberdeen Proving Ground region. And that's where a lot of the jobs are coming, all the ones from Fort Monmouth, New Jersey. We developed new fact sheets in our Work Matter series on topics that were specific to BRAC employment including security clearances and the importance of credit history, how to find BRAC jobs, and that sort of thing. We developed essential workplace skills webinars in partnership with the community college that is located in the area where the Fort Monmouth people or the Fort Monmouth jobs are coming. And some of those webinars were Communication of Accommodation Concern and how to communicate this, Effective Interpersonal and Communication Skills, Resolving Conflict for Job Success, Your Supervisor and You parts I and II, and Strategies for Overcoming Barriers to Employment Success, and How to Set Goals for Job Retention and Advancement, and those will be posted on our Web site for anybody to be able to access in the future. Can I have the next slide please? Under housing, we hosted a meeting on what's called Transit-Oriented Development that's going to occur in the BRAC areas and we invited to attend that the staff from the local commissions on disability in those areas as well as the local housing folks. And what we wanted to be sure was that everybody understood on both sides what Transit-Oriented Development was all about and how good it is for people with disabilities. It gets down on a number of times people have to get on Paratransit vehicles and that sort of thing and it makes it more likely that people are going to be able to work. We recognized that people with disabilities may start out needing or rent subsidies, so one of the things we were encouraging the housing folks to do. And then the reason for bringing the disability leaders in is that we don't have the capacity within our department to monitor the ongoing implementation of [inaudible] thereof with respect to placing some vouchers at the TOD sites. So, we wanted the commissions on disabilities to stay actively involved with that,

and understand where the new TODs are going, and the fact that they needed to continue meeting with their local housing people to assure that some project-based vouchers will be placed at the TOD site. And then, they'll benefit people who need them and people may be able to go to work and eventually, be able to rent without subsidies or they may continue to need the subsidies depending on their income level. We also hosted an Asset Development Summit recently along with our State Department of Human Resources. And one of our staff is actively working on strategies for asset development including looking at individual development accounts. We're in discussions with our State Department of Education about the Take Charge America's financial literacy curriculum and expanding that to include benefits-specific sections, which it doesn't currently do, and so that's going to have national impact. It would then be used throughout the state of Maryland and possibly by other the states--some of your states that--of the people who are participating in the webinar today. And it will include a benefits-specific section and the work incentives and that sort of thing. We had a recommendation to be sure that the listing service that the realtors use for housing would have information on accessibility. We found out that that is available to the realtors themselves but not to the public. So individuals will still need to state what their specific accessibility needs are in housing and then the realtors should be able to access the information on that. Next slide please. For transportation, I mentioned before, we hosted that meeting on Transit-Oriented Development and again, Transit-Oriented Development talks across both housing and transportation. So, we have it listed in both areas. Our Maryland Transportation Authority rather is in the process of developing materials on getting to and from BRAC locations to facilitate the use of public transportation. And they have identified the expansion of the number 17 bus line to Fort Meade, where the Northern Virginia jobs are coming as potential to ensure Paratransit access to the base. So we got it really specific there, naming the number 17 bus line, because as soon as the Sixth

Street bus goes to an area, then the transit provider must, under the ADA, ensure that there's Paratransit access to that area as well. So that's really huge. Next slide please. And what I didn't mention, if I can 'cause I wasn't sure if it's at the next slide or not. But we are endeavoring to set up a meeting with the other major mass transit provider in the state, and that's the Washington DC Metropolitan Area Transit Authority because right now, Paratransit does not cross the county lines over into Fort Meade. And we know that a lot of federal employees live in the two counties that are served by that transit authority. And they would be very good candidates for possible job promotions and want to take new better jobs in the Fort Meade area where the National Security Agency is located. That's where all of the cybersecurity jobs are going. I should probably add that at this time that since we've been working on this BRAC project, Maryland has received word that the new cybersecurity headquarters for the federal government will also be moving to the Fort Meade areas. So that'll bring a lot more jobs in. Okay, let me talk about what worked well. We have been receiving technical assistance. Thanks to our NTAR project leaders at the Heldrich Center on the following areas, social marketing and Universal Design, which I said before is going to our Workforce Investment Areas that volunteered to go first with the adoption of Universal Design techniques. We've also received it on asset development and continue to and on work for a data-driven administration. The governor is well known for having developed CitiStat when he was mayor of Baltimore and moving that concept to the state in what we now call StateStat. He also has created the delivery unit turned after the former prime minister of England's delivering unit, it's called the GDU, the Governor's Delivery Unit, that holds the various state agencies accountable to reach certain goals by 2012. And, so, we've pulled together an employment leadership team to make the disability field a little bit more data-driven, and we've benefited from intense technical assistance through the Heldrich Center on data. That was where we started first, so, that's been enormously helpful. And

we have an MOU in place to begin collecting data from our developmental disabilities administration to look at the number of people moving to employment as they move to an employment first initiative. Some unexpected opportunities came up. The Governor's Workforce Investment Board and the governor and his delivery unit launched the Skills2Compete initiative. Many of your states have this and what we're doing is upgrading by the year 2012 the skills level by an additional two years of either community college or an apprenticeship, that sort of thing. Some sort of industry should recognize the credential whether that's an associate degree or a certificate that makes people more employable and upgrades their skills. So, that's going on right now. The opportunity that we have through Skills2Compete was something that we've been working on our head brought up and had gotten too far with our higher education commission, and that is the data collection. And at that point in time when Skills2Compete was launched, there was no data available from higher education that showed or not yet available for people with disabilities through the higher education commission. So, the college and universities were not asked to collect that as part of their diversity data collection and reporting. So that's going to happen and it's being worked on now. So, that way, we'll know if we're making any progress. The Think Beyond the Label national campaign that I mentioned earlier was an unexpected opportunity. We haven't truly rolled it out in Maryland although the Web site is active and the Division of Rehabilitation Services is receiving contacts by employers who want to hire people with disabilities. So, we anticipate rolling that out in a much bigger way in the fall. And I'm sure we'll have even greater success than we currently experienced. But it's very encouraging that even though we haven't done that [inaudible] out that employers are seeing it and they are contacting DORS. The U.S. Department of Labor Longitudinal Request for Proposals, we, as I mentioned, were not capturing data well on people with disabilities in the outcome data, so the preliminary work that we did through the employment

leadership team has laid the ground work for Maryland's response to this RFP. So, that's an unintended benefit and we're really happy about that. We also had issued a Notice of Funding Availability for Housing and Housing Choice Vouchers in late March. And about a year ago, I had convinced the task force that brought together disability advocates who had spent a good deal of time learning about housing with seven largest public housing authorities in the state including the State Department of Housing and Community Development which serves as the Public Housing Authority for many of the rural parts of the state. So everybody who's ready for this NOFA from HUD and over 1,600 vouchers were requested through the applications from the state of Maryland. Now, we're not going to get anywhere near that, and we do hope we get some but there were only 5,300 available nationally. But we played a really active role in creating resource lists to support the applications as one of the requirements. And also individually negotiating with the various housing authorities to be sure that at least some of them in the major areas of the state were applying for what we call the category II vouchers, which would enable people to move out of nursing facilities and other institutions. It'll be primarily nursing facilities because now, it does not have many people left in its state institutions. So that was another opportunity that happens and we're keeping our fingers crossed about that. The role of our department has been critical. We were the first department of disabilities in any state, and a couple of other states have these things now, but they're not necessarily for people with all types of disabilities, which ours is. So we played that coordinating function. We don't have a particular ax to grind. We want to be sure that all of the departments are on board and pulling in the same direction and that that direction is consistent with what people with disabilities have said that they want and need. And so, because we're not bogged down with the delivery of direct services ourselves, we do some direct service programs, but they're fairly small. As a result of us not being getting bogged down with service delivery, we are able to do a lot of more

creative kinds of things and agreed up to play that coordinating role. We have used the funding available through this grant in conjunction with funding available through the Medicaid Infrastructure Grant. One of the important things that we did a couple of years ago was to request that the Medicaid Infrastructure Grant be moved from our health department and into the department of disabilities. And so, we've been able to use it to fund a lot of the activities that we want to see happen. We've been able to use it to fund the employees in the Department of Business and Economic Development and in the Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation to do employer outreach. So they shared staff and their part of the employment team that our department has meet on a regular basis. So that's what we've done with the MIG. Next slide please. So the challenges have been the economy, obviously. All of the departments had to do the cost containment initiatives and some of even the effective people with disabilities, but the direct services to people with disabilities. But regardless of whether it's been direct services, all of the departments have lost staff through position vacancies that haven't been able to be filled and that sort of thing. And also, we have concerns about employer's hiring. Maryland has a lower unemployment rate than most states because of our proximity within the federal government and a number of federal jobs in our state. But nevertheless, it's a higher rate of unemployment then. There was, when we started this project, and it's much higher than it has been in my memory. The other challenge is the length of time to do the sort of systems change that we want to make happen to this project is just not sufficient one and a half to two years is not enough time to do this sort of systems change. So, you know, hopefully, we'll be able to continue that going forth. And the limits of funding is a lot of, as I referred in the previous slides, a lot of what was accomplished was done through the use of our Medicaid Infrastructure Grant moneys and so we are really thankful that we have those. Next slide please. That concludes Maryland's presentation. Jade Gingerich, who I believe you all know, our

Director of Employment Policy is the contact person anytime you want additional information. And we close with the quotes from our governor, "No such thing as Spare Marylander." Thank you.

**[Nanette Relave]** Thank you so much, and I want to thank all of our presenters. I'm going to turn it over to Robb now to see if we have any questions. He will also let folks know how to submit questions.

**[Robb Sewell]** Thanks Nannette. As Nanette said, we're now going to be taking questions from our participants and essentially, you have two options to submit your questions. First, what you can do is you can click this Raise Hand button on your screen, and then I'll call on participants and provide you with instructions on how to ask your question. Secondly, you can submit your questions by using the chat feature on the left portion of your screen. Simply type your message and then click send. While we're waiting for additional questions to come in, I will relay a few that have been submitted while the presentations were going on. The first one is from a participant from Kansas who shared that this is actually for Joyce. Let me paraphrase this. She said that in Kansas, they've had technology in their workforce centers for several years. But they found that the turnover of staff is so high that new staff couldn't get training and were unable to help applicants with disabilities. And it's so carving the disability program navigators in these centers to ensure that the technology was current and ensure that staff knew how to use it. And she was wondering if you've thought at all about how you're going to keep your staff and technology up to date.

**[Joyce Barclay]** Okay, I absolutely agree completely and that's why we're going to this online system where a supervisor can say to a new hire, you must participate in modules one through six of whatever this thing is going to be called when it rolls out, and then can monitor to make sure that the individual has

gone through that. And unfortunately, the Disability Program Navigator initiative has not been refunded by the Department of Labor this year. I thought it was fantastic. And actually in the listening sessions, the Federal Listening Sessions, a lot of people advocated for it. So I was really surprised that it went away. But regardless, yeah, that was the one of the reasons that we did go to an Online Learning System because we've done on-site training. We did it when we started. We did it five years ago and we started our EveryOne Works assistive technology center. And exactly, all the staffs had turned over several times since. So this is the one way we hope we could keep it current and again, it's making sure that the supervisors are willing to really promote it. Initially, the Department of Labor, Jefferson, our director, had said that they're going to require that supervisors initiate it with their staff, and the workforce boards have also said they're going to require it in their contracts with their One-Stop operators. So it's the performance.

**[Robb Sewell]** Great. We have a question for Kathy Sweeney from Minnesota. You mentioned aligning disability employment efforts with the state's regional industry workforce efforts. This is not easy, nor natural to social service disability providers. How did you get your providers to understand this concept? And if you're not already unmuted, Kathy, all you need to do is press star 7.

**[Kathy Sweeney]** Okay. Robb, could you just say that one more time, please?

**[Robb Sewell]** Sure, essentially, you mentioned aligning disability employment efforts with the state's regional industry workforce efforts. This is not easy, nor natural to social service or disability providers. How do did you get your providers to understand this concept?

**[Kathy Sweeney]** Well this--I'm just pausing because it's really been a multi-layered activity to do this. And I'm sitting here kind

of thinking through all the different things we've done, and it would help me to have just a minute to think through that. But let me see, one of the efforts that we've been doing is something that we have across all of our Workforce Investment Act programs. We have business service specialists. And these folks really have been trained in how to be helpful to all of our customers, persons with disabilities as well as all of our customers, and to present the case to employers about why these customers would be of help to them in meeting their business objectives, and also, working with the businesses on how to look at the full opportunities for hiring talent and developing talent. I was struck by the comment that one of the presenters and I think it was Connecticut about the best companies in the country already have fully embraced the vision of full employment because they realized that they're talent-centered, they're talent-centric, and therefore, they know how to support a very inclusive hiring and retention strategies which of course includes persons with disabilities. And I think that that's what the business services specialists' initiative has been focused on. It's helping businesses to achieve that kind of thinking in the work that they do. The fact that we've got the title with the Workforce Investment Act I, III, and IV under one roof probably makes it somewhat easier for to us to achieve this kind of cross Workforce Investment Act strategy. We also, I didn't specifically mention the Medicaid Infrastructure Grant work, but the Pathways to Employment work here, which is the name of our Medicaid Infrastructure Grant that's produced in providing the Minnesota. That the Pathways to Employment efforts here have really helped us to push out this capacity as well. We did not specifically get into our state as a model employer work in this presentation. But that then, I think, another part of our effort is to engage our policy leadership in the various state agencies by having them fully engaged in state as model employer efforts. Having their level of leadership and having them basically walk the walk. And I think it's also been another part of showing rather than talking, doing rather than talking. I guess those are a couple of

things, but if it would be helpful, what we could probably do too is provide some additional information after the call about that particular part of our work because there's many different components and facets to it, and I feel like I would like to share the full picture with people, rather than the little bit that I've been able to kind of touch on in this call. So hopefully that answer helped somewhat but there's a lot more to say.

**[Robb Sewell]** Thanks Kathy. Another question we have is for Joyce. Despite the setbacks Connecticut has encountered, you seem to have accomplished a great deal. Is there anything that you would have done differently?

**[Joyce Barclay]** Oh boy, where to start? It's easy to sit back and say, this is what we should have done. We would have, could have, should have. It's really hard to say if there is any one specific thing that we would have done differently and to speak for the group, however, I wouldn't be speaking for the group, I'm just speaking for myself. Because we had signs that we should have had more involvement from the start. The first year, it was pretty much state agencies who participated in the Leadership Institute and we realized going in to year two that was very, very much not to the benefit of the project. Like I mentioned, leadership is not just located at the state level and even if [inaudible] are issued, it doesn't mean that they're carried out locally. So I think we would have gotten more local involvement much more quickly and started to have maybe more of local dialogues instead of just state level dialogues. Because even in a state as small as Connecticut, there are great disparities between the regions on resources, on activities, on collaboration, and looking at how things could be done smaller at the local level to support the initiative that the state level probably would have been helpful. So I think we would have gotten more people from the local level involved more quickly.

**[Robb Sewell]** Great, thank you so much. Another question--this is actually open to all of our presenters. If any of you were in charge of setting a national agenda to improve the employment of individuals with disabilities, what would you want to be included in that agenda?

**[Kathy Sweeney]** Robb, this is Kathy from Minnesota. We're ready to say something about that.

**[Robb Sewell]** Sure, feel free.

**[Kathy Sweeney]** Okay. Well, one of the things we would really appreciate having an opportunity to do is really have dialogue about the Workforce Investment Act and its potential to offer us the framework like this, and really a review of how we've done so far since 1998 until today, kind of a review of our current capacity to execute the vision across all the titles and to live in to the vision of the Workforce Investment Act. And then, we'll look at how we've done and then we'll look at where we need to improve with an action plan attached to it. And I think with agencies really in dialogue with one another, particularly, we would encourage that kind of action from our federal partners at labor and education. And that kind of effort would be greatly appreciated and I think would be good for everyone.

**[Joyce Barcley]** Hi, this is Joyce from Connecticut. I think we would actually recommend a relook at the common measures under the Workforce Investment Act because right now, it's not to a career center's advantage necessarily to work with people with disabilities because if you do very oftentimes, you'll be unable to achieve the core measures that are established by the Workforce Investment Act. I'm not saying that career centers go out of their way to avoid working with people with disabilities. That's actually not the case. But I think that there might be some reluctance. You know if you have a large population of people with disabilities in your area that you were working with, to enroll all of them because of the wage

replacement requirements, because of the full-time employment requirements, there are a lot of different things that just don't make sense when it comes to core measures when you're working with special populations. So it's not just people with disabilities. There are other special populations I would encourage that with as well. I had one other thing that I was going to say, but I didn't write it down so it's gone.

**[Cathy Raggio]** Hi, this is Cathy from Maryland. We would certainly support what Minnesota and Connecticut just said. And again, with the Workforce Investment Act, the idea of being able to invest in people regardless of their situations is so important. I mean, one of the things that we've gotten into in our state is the TANF population for example. There's a very high percentage of disability among individuals in a TANF population, oftentimes learning disabilities. And so, we don't see the willingness to invest the types of educational supports that would assure the success of these individuals. And so what we seek is recidivism so that, you know, people take a course here and they have take it again or other course, and they're really not increasing their skill levels because it's not done in a concerted, concentrated kind of way that purchases the supports that they need. And their disabilities aren't significant enough to be able to qualify for funding through the VR system when a state like ours is under in order for selection and only able to spend on people with the most significant disabilities. So, this result of the process is sort of like a great black hole because they're not eligible. Whereas if we invested in them, then the likelihood of people acquiring new skills that would enable them to get better jobs, higher paying jobs would be much greater. So we agree that that all should be rethought.

**[Kathy Sweeney]** This is Kathy again from Minnesota. I just want to say too that it's been so impressive to us to listen to the very articulate vision of Governor O'Malley about there are no Spare Marylanders. And I think that that level of leadership at your state in Maryland at the Governor's level and certainly at the

national level, coming from the president, coming from the cabinet members and so on. That same kind of thinking articulated is really that it has to be the foundation of why we need a dialogue on the Workforce Investment Act, all of its titles, all of its measures, and all of its brother and sister programs across the country because there are no Spare USians either, any where in the country. I mean, if we look at and we think about the kinds of issues that you just articulated about, the disconnects and the things that make it difficult for us to get the best thing for our book across all over the workforce investments, then we realize that we need this kind of dialogue. We need to update our thinking and we need to get the best possible outcome out of all the different investments we made. So I did say earlier, we ought to have a dialogue between the various titles in the Workforce Investment Act. In reality, the problem used to be a bit bigger than that. But we could start with that and it would certainly be, I think, in the interest of the country because those four titles in the Workforce Investment Act reside in the Departments of Labor and Education. And we could certainly start there, we could create, I think, quite of bit of momentum if we could make that particular conversation move ahead between those particular agencies at that level with the president's support.

**[Robb Sewell]** We have a couple additional questions. The first one is for Secretary Raggio. How have you persuaded labor and economic development agencies to focus on the employment of individuals with disabilities, especially given that poor economy? And how important was your position as the cabinet secretary to executing your vision?

**[Cathy Raggio]** Thank you. That's an excellent question. And it sort of answered itself. The first part of the question is answered by the second part of the question. That's how we were able to get them involved. And it begins with the governor's vision and his instructions to his cabinet that you will play nicely together. You will work together, you will work as a team, and we all

know that. And so, when I talk with the Secretary of the Department of Business and Economic Development or the Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation, we're all on the O'Malley Brown team and we all know that. And so when I ask them for something, it's completely unreasonable, they're going to do it. And you know, we just share that vision and we share the values that all people are important. So, you know, I think they would have the same reactions if--and I know they would, if it were the Secretary of Department of Public Safety and Corrections asking them to do something with his inmates to assure when they leave that they would be able to access jobs. So it's just the way we operate. And I thank Kathy Sweeney for sending kudos along to our governor and that has been very important and he is an excellent governor, and provides the leadership that's critical for getting things accomplished.

**[Robb Sewell]** Okay, thank you. Another question which is a really good one considering the fact that the State Leaders Innovation Institute is coming towards a conclusion, it's what are each of you proudest of under your NTAR work?

**[Joyce Barcley]** This is Joyce from Connecticut, and I'd have to say it is the collaborations that have been forged and the relationships that had been developed. We are not thinking of each other as contacting one another from agency to agency. We're starting to think in terms of who has the resources. I mean it doesn't matter what agency you belong to. It's I have situation, I have an idea, I have an initiative, a collaborative, a grant application I like to go after. It's just who do I know? And it's been working so well as demonstrated in the presentations that people are really starting to work together and not really giving a whole lot of thought because they don't have to anymore because those relationships have really been forged. So for Connecticut, I'd have to say it's relationships and collaborations.

**[Cathy Raggio]** This is Cathy Raggio. I would agree with that and particularly, as it relates to our Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation with the Governor's Workforce Investment Board being a part of that department. You know, we've forged a really strong relationship with that department and we're excited about that, and we're getting a lot accomplished.

**[Kathy Sweeney]** Well, this is Minnesota. I guess that we'd certainly echo the collaboration and relationship building and the opportunity to look more deeply what we've done and where we still need to go. We were talking earlier about that dialogue that needs to happen. And I think in many respects, this work has given us an opportunity that would dialogue here in Minnesota that a very productive one and it has opened up some possibilities for improvement and some ideas about--then how to address that. Because of the technical assistance, we've been able to leverage, and I think leveraging with technical assistance in a kind of this broader domain, where we're really talking about making the connections between all the titles and how to really make those come to life and how to give those full capacity, I think you know, including the work of the Medicaid Infrastructure Grants with this, it has been an important part of the broader look. I think also a business model that can be sustained over time and that gives us a toehold in one particular area, where we can spread that business model into other areas with that--a couple different things with that. The Camps 2 Career is the adult version of that that we've been able to pilot in SOAR. So those are some of the specific impacts that I think we would mention.

**[Nanette Relave]** Great. Thank you. Well, I think we have come to the end of our questions. And again, I want to thank all of our presenters so much for your willingness to share with us today. And also to really share about the opportunities and the achievements as well as some of the issues and challenges that you have faced over the past couple of years of participating

in the institute. And I also want to thank ODEP as well for providing us with funding and the guidance that have allowed us to implement this project. On the next slide is just contact information for several of us who staff the NTAR Leadership Center. So, for folks who are listening, if you have any further questions or just want to be able to contact one of us to ask about any of our activities, you're certainly welcome to do so. One of the concepts that we heard about of fair amount today is Universal Design. As all three of our states that are participating in the institute are certainly developing and implementing this concept in different ways and really impacting different life domains for people with disabilities. To folks who just might want to sort of--just to let you know that in early September, we are going to have another webinar. This one will actually be focused on Universal Design. And we'll hear from our technical assistance providers at ICI, the Institute for Community Inclusion, in Massachusetts. And they'll talk with us a little bit more about really kind of sort of the principles of Universal Design as well as how they've been working with a variety of states to implement Universal Design principles in practice. So I hope folks will join us in early September for that. And the last slide just again has the Web site for the NTAR Leadership Center. As Robb mentioned, this webinar at the archive and materials will be available from our Web site, and all the materials that we have for our project are available on the Web site. So with that, again, I want to thank our presenters so much for joining us and for your participation in the institute, and wish everyone a wonderful rest of the day. And again, please be sure to give us feedback once you get that little survey for our webinar. So, thank you so much and bye, bye.