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Transcript, Webinar on Universal Design and Workforce Development Competencies, June 28, 2011

The webinar will be to talk about the competencies and what practices we've seen in play in different environments. And how the competencies are being demonstrated.

We can go to the next slide. Thank you. As all of you have been involved in some aspect of the Workforce Development System and you're familiar with the variety and complexity of people in the development system and the people that you're supporting may bring. As in all opportunities and all situations where people are interacting there's such a wide variety of diversity in the Workforce Development System and all of you bring the different elements of our lives into our job search processes.

Part of how we have traditionally looked at it in the Workforce Development System tends to be siloed around specific populations. So we talk about recipients of specific kinds of services, like people with disabilities accessing services through vocational rehabilitation as kind of its own separate section and silo. Same with the other kinds of programs like that. What we think is important for folks to remember no one lives within a silo environment. People with disabilities are veterans. A lot of the veterans programs, and disabilities. There are patients that have child care issues. Folks who're older workers who may be dealing with issues of literacy. Some of the variety of population we experience and the complexity within the lives that people bring to their work experience, we need to think about folks in that whole concept that they bring. That combination of both different kinds of population perspectives but the complexity that their lives -- that they bring into the workforce environment and job search. How do we respond to this diversity of customer and looking at the broad spectrum of the needs they might have?

The other customer we need to look at is the business customer. Because as diverse as our job seeker customer is businesses see customers that are equally diverse. Part of our role of workforce development and that is significant is the job seeker. So different industries are represented. What sort of services or kinds of jobs that they have are all as varied and a variety, and one -- just as one approach towards people who're job seekers is not going to be effective it's going to be the same issue with businesses that having one strategy that one

size fits all is not going to work as we do outreach to business. We need to know how do we think of the broad spectrum of needs that people have and respond to that variety within that. And that's how we started thinking about those concepts of Universal Design or specific business types or specific individuals. Designing things that are applicable across broad populations, and very broad industries.

The original concept of the Universal Design is based on a architextural perspective. This is work that was developed through the University of North Carolina originally about 20 years ago thinking about how do we create physical environments, physical access for people with disabilities but in a way that is responsive to the needs of all of the community. So rather than setting up a special kind of service or strategy to respond to a physical accessibility issue that someone has, there are a million of examples of Universal Design in our environment all the time that folks are not aware of or thinking about at all. That's the wonder of the Universal Design. It should not be a separate stand alone concept. Look at the Universal Design piece. It should be integrated into the environment. You should be cognizant of it.

An important access issue with people with disabilities who have mobility impairments or use a wheelchair it is equally important for parents who have a stroller. People like skateboards. I do a fair amount of travelling so I carry around a roller luggage. It's much more convenient to go through the curb cuts than have to deal with going up and down with a curb.

Really simple access that we have -- I had another example of universal access and design and that sort grew out of this initial effort out of North Carolina is closed captioning. Closed captioning is the text that can run below a video and while that's representing every word that's being spoken in conversation so as I'm speaking the closed captioner is typing down every word. People get that confused with the ticker that runs on the bottom of the screen with information being presented -- the commentator is speaking. Closed captioning is an exact representation of what I'm saying. How closed captioning is being used is one of the things that really, while originally intended as a communication strategy for folks with hearing impairments that is presented over different media options, what you're finding is that the environments that people use closed captioning are very different than was originally intended. If you live in Boston we're interested in our sports here. We care what's happening with our teams. If you're out in a restaurant or bar you'll frequently see whatever game, and there's closed captioning. And that's an environment we use a lot here in Boston to keep up. But in gyms or in airports a lot. You'll be able to follow the news without hearing the background noise. The number one use for closed captioning is individual homes particularly where one individual wants to go to sleep, and

other person wants to watch television. So the person that wants to watch TV can put on the closed captioning and the person can be following it and the other person gets to sleep.

From the Universal Design competency environment started to look at this environment as it relates to learning. Creating a inclusive curriculum that everybody can benefit from.

The way that people take in information is so varied. We're going to talk about learning styles but the extent which different people are dependent on visual information help to understand that concept versus language based information. Creating learning environments that allow for all of those different sorts of interactive experiences, that information is visual; they're hands on opportunities. All of those are very important for everyone in the learning environment to be able to benefit from that. We'll be talking about that a little bit as we think about how to integrate this within training and workshops that happen within the workforce system.

And how the information is imparted is very critical. How do we think about the learning, and environment. When we were doing our work with ODEP because this was my ah-ha moment with Joe Carbone who is a director of a workforce investment board in southern Connecticut. We were talking about some of the issues as it relates to people with disabilities. He said every day somebody comes into my office and says you need to think about this population. We need a special program or activity around folks re-entering from the criminal justice system or for your senior workers, and people with disabilities. There are so many populations that are wanting services I can't respond to that, and respond to the broad need of that. Saying, you're right it doesn't make sense for us to have the different approaches for different populations. We need something that is responsive to all of the special interests that you're working with and all of the wide variety of people you're working with in the Workforce Development System.

If you click on to the next slide that first sentence is work that we have developed at the ICI in conjunction with the national collaborative workforce for youth who're looking at these same issues. How do we think about design of environments, products, and communication practices as well as the delivery of programs, services, and activities that meet the needs of all customers of the workforce development system. We're talking about all customers.

Second is that we are talking about not just physical access to the environment. While that's critically important, we are talking about access to programs and to services and any activities that happen in the center, how do we create

environments that everyone is able to benefit and engage in them. One of the goals that we like to think in the context of these issues is that ultimately getting One-Stop services that are accessible to the greatest number of people without the need for separate or disparate basic services. There will be -- Universal Design is not intended to eliminate the responsibility that programs have for reasonable accommodations for people with disability, but the goal is that in the vast majority of cases if things are appropriately designed in such a way that there's less of a need for an accommodation, that services are accessible and people are able to engage in them. They don't need something separate and different. There are going to be some cases where the nature of someone's needs are different and they need a specific accommodation. In trying to think broadly, and being proactive is the goal of the Universal Design for the Workforce Development System.

I'm going to stop my piece with this. Cori is going to start walking through a little bit more in terms of how do we start to apply these skills as they apply to staff, and competency. Cori, I'm going to pass off to you.

If we could jump on to the next slide here. Really as Sheila had referenced we came to realize the importance what do our staff know? What are we equipping our staff with in terms of their knowledge, their capacity, their skills, the different issues that they're confronting, and we just realized the staff competencies issue is a key part of everything that we consider as we were talking about the Universal Design of our environments, our services, the way we work with our customers, the way we work with our business customers.

So the way we put a lot of focus on this, and began to break down all of the various components that staff do have these key competencies to allow us to work as well as possible, perform as well as possible, provide the best possible services to the wideest range of individuals who're coming through our doors without having to think about separate programs, separate policies, separate services, separate demographics.

So this really is one of the key things and one of the first things we're going to talk about is that is the Universal Design staff competencies really come down to understand the needs of our community, understanding the workforce that we're going to be working with, understanding the business we're going to be working with, and crafting our services, and customer services that's going to best meet the needs of our community.

The first thing is the first step whenever we're thinking about serving anyone is marketing and outreach. How do we market our services outreach to the community and to businesses about our services, in a way that we're going to

have the widest possible range of folks. The most diverse range of folks coming through our doors, access our services, using the One-Stop career centers. The first thing that rang true is the need to understand our communities on a number of different levels. The need to understand the various cultures in our community. The different cultural demographics as well as the general culture of our community. What kind of town are we in? Are we right in Manhattan and Times Square, or Glasgow, Montana which is a different kind of culture. We need to craft our services and be prepared to work with folks who're representing those different cultures as well as representing in many cases an array of the different demographics and cultures that exist within our communities. Certainly understanding the socioeconomic circumstances of our community. Where are we working -- what is the prevalent skill level of the folks we're working with? What are the industries that are working with us? What is the rate of unemployment? What is the attitude of work in our community? And this -- a lot of these issues extend beyond community to looking at broader regional concerns. Thinking about these things in terms of the region that we're in. If in fact, we're in a One-Stop center in Greenwich, Connecticut we need to understand western Connecticut and what's happening in our backyard. But presumably if we're thinking how to do workforce and economic development in a place like Greenwich, we want to understand what's happening in New York City because that's where a lot of folks are commuting to do their jobs. Finally, of course, it really comes down to understanding the businesses in our community. What are the prevalent industries? This is about understanding labor market information on the more technical side. What are the growth industries, who's in our community? What companies are coming in? What companies are growing? What companies are perhaps going to shrink or closing down or moving out of our community? That impacts the kind of skills we're training for. That knowing how those businesses work beyond knowing the skills that the business require, knowing what kind of culture those businesses support. Are we talking about a sort of up and coming tech company where everyone shows up in the morning in casual attire, and has a casual collaborative workspace or are we talking about a more traditional Wall Street based firm where everyone is in pinstripes? And how we speak to our career seeking customers? What sorts of job environments they might want to work in. What their expectations should be in those environments and how they can prepare to perform in those environments.

The next thing is, this is a great example how we use -- we think about marketing and outreach not just using it purely for purposes of doing outreach but thinking about broader service delivery needs and broader needs of creating the right mix of partnerships to present the best One-Stop Career Center as a whole but I don't see that community necessarily represented in the One-Stop Career

Center. I don't see them coming to my center to use our workforce services. There are some and that I can talk about that.

The first to identify in the community who're the groups that represent these folks. Who're the groups if they're not coming to the One-Stop Career Center. There are community non-profits, different political entities that might actually represent these demographics. If I go to speak to that agency or that organization or a representative individual maybe I can get the word out of our services through them. It's broader than a marketing issue. That's going to help me when it comes time to start providing services to folks. Maybe I'm going to run into some issues that I've never had to encounter before. Maybe working with my colleagues I'm going to realize providing services to this population requires some skills that we don't have. Requires some services perhaps to use the example of an immigrant population perhaps that needs English as a second language services. Perhaps it requires understanding a culture that our staff has never had to understand before that we need to provide some education and some support. Well, now I've already got this partnership with a community-based organization. They've helped me get the word out about our services. Now they can help me insuring they're the right services and designed in the right way for this demographic I'm trying to reach out to.

And now this sounds extremely simple but I it's one of the most important points, not insuring that we're doing the right kind of work around marketing and outreach. We're designing a One-Stop Career Center, and an experience for our customers, and for the businesses we're working with that's really going to suit their needs. I think we have to recognize most One-Stop Career Centers are not putting commercials on prime time television. The main way we're getting the word out to our community is by word of mouth. Certainly if we'd access someone through a community based network the word is probably going to spread through that community based network pretty quickly how effective our services were. So we really need to recognize that our performance and the way that we treat people, the professionalism of our environment, the customer service mentality that we have with all of these things are going to play against the image that is spread about the One-Stop Career Centers in the community. If I as a new customer walk into the One-Stop Career Center and I'm greeted cordially, I'm treated with professionalism, if I happen to have a question and I just happen to ask some person who happens to be wearing a name badge that represents that agency for some additional assistance and they're helpful, and they're responsive, and they're supportive of me, all those things are going to create a very good impression I'm going to take back to other folks that I speak with about the services. Of course, on the flip side if I do not encounter a professional environment, if I'm not treated with that level of professionalism and respect, if there's not that emphasis on customer service, then I'm going to take

that message back as well. That's not only not going to impact how we outreach and effectiveness of bringing people through the door, that's going to change the way people think about the services and the center. It may change folk's impression here's where I develop a career. I've got to get this need or form filled out but I want to get in and get out as quickly as possible. That's not the kind of place I want to be there. I might not have been there before.

It applies to the business services where businesses operate in the community. Businesses know one another. And they will talk about the good and bad services they receive.

I want to reference a research I just saw on job seekers who had identified their process in terms of referral and 65% of the people said they had come to the Career Center because of a friend or family member. It's that word of mouth. You can spend whatever you want on brochures or overt marketing thing. For the vast majority of the people what was bringing them into the door was what they had heard from other folks. I think that's very common. Certainly when folks are in a situation where they're under a lot of pressure. If someone is looking for work, they're already under a lot of pressure. They want to know to know they're going to a place that will help you move your career search forward. And insuring all of our staff model that model, a sense of professionalism and customer service in working with all of the career seekers and our business customers.

We can jump on to the next slide here. Now this is a very interesting example of sort of a large marketing activity that went out. As we look at it and we review this website I think it gives us a sense of all of the different pieces of information that's helpful to understand for our staff individually, as they're trying to understand their community. They're trying to understand the business community, the career seeker demographics in the community, the skill demographics in the community.

This initiative, the www.marcgreenworks.com jobs portal started with a collaboration between the Commonwealth of Virginia, District of Columbia and the state of Maryland who're right in the Mid-Atlantic region. They're a very tightly intertwined economic region. When things are going well in one state that's going to have a good effect on D.C. it's going to have a great effect on Virginia. And vice versa. The economic trends affect all three states in a pretty intertwined fashion.

Recognizing leadership, folks from these three states came together and tried to understand and harness the trends that were happening between the three states. This is a regional consortium when you total it up it represents over 14

million residents, and 329,000 businesses and organizations with multiple employees. So this is a very, very big region. A high population, active economic region. So what they did in forming this portal is work with the U.S. Department of Labor to understand the labor market trends that affected that region to try and understand as best as possible what were the skills that businesses were looking for, what were the career seeker services that residents were looking for and the support they would be required to enter into this economy.

So when we look at this www.marcgreenworks.com we see a range of services that again reflects the range of different knowledge and competencies and capacities that we want to have when we think about the communities and the regions that we're in. I mean we're seeing everything on this site from realtime labor market information for D.C., and Maryland and Virginia. This is a green emphasis initiative so green businesses, environmentally friendly, and environmentally encouraging businesses so it compiles regional green job postings across the three states not only for career seekers but also so that other employers understand what kind of talent are my collaborators and potential competitors looking for, and how should I be crafting my job descriptions and my searchs so that I'm going to remain competitive and get the right talent.

It has an online realtime directory of post-secondary green training sessions. Very helpful if I'm a business or a career seeker this is going to help me find what resources are available to me, and what I can do to build my own capacity or build the capacity of my staff or build the capacity of folks I'm potentially looking to hire. So again, this is just a really great resource that represents a wide range of different concerns we want to be thinking of as we're trying to understand our community, the businesses in our community, the seekers in our community, and even beyond in our region, and really thinking how do we speak to those needs. How do we bring them into our center, and meet those needs once we've done so.

So we can move on to the next slide. And this takes us to the issue of customer flow. Of course if we've been effective in bringing someone through the door where it's a career seeker or a business customer, we then need to think about how are we going to assist these folks in navigating these systems. When we're looking at One-Stop Career Center I don't care whether we are in Boston or Austin, Texas or Juneau, Alaska wherever, a One-Stop Career Center is going to represent a wide range of different services, a wide range of different eligibility rules, a wide range of different contact information, a pretty complex network of information that for a customer entering for the first time it's going to be intimidating. It's going to be a lot of information to take in. It's going to be more information than someone can pick up, and look at a brochure, and be set and ready to go. How are we supporting our staff as they support career seekers and

businesses and in navigating the system and really getting the most of the various services and supports that are through it. One of the first things we want our staff to be able to effectively make referrals to is a variety of services. We want our staff to understand of course on the basic level what are the different services that are available through the One-Stop Career Center? What are some of the services outside of the One-Stop Career Center? If perhaps someone needs something that is not strictly related to the Workforce Development System maybe it's related to housing or transportation. Those are going to be essential for someone to have those needs met prior to really dedicating themselves to a career search. We want to understand the different resources available to customers and we want to make accurate referrals to those services so that we're not referring -- building up someone's expectations, and perhaps referring someone who would not be eligible for a service to a service that they might expect to take advantage of. Even beyond that, even beyond making the effective referral, we want to insure that we continue to maintain contact with a customer. We want to continue to provide services to a customer when it's appropriate, even after we've made those referrals.

I think sometimes we see a trend of mistaking the idea that referrals are referring someone away from me. Okay. I've been working with you now for a few weeks. We determined that you want to get into this training program that's being operated by an outside provider, we'll get the forms all set. I'll get you enrolled in that. That's all wonderful. Everybody is happy. Now I regard it as I'm referring you away. I'm referring my customer away. You're no longer my customer. You're the customer of this training provider. I think we're going to find that it makes for a much better customer experience, a much better customer service model for our career seeker customers if they have a consistent single point of contact, if they have someone they can come back to even as they're going through the training provider they can still come back to me. We can discuss their long-term job process, and they're dealing with someone that has that overreaching arc.

Another skill that's important, another resource that's important for staff to be able to take advantage of is really to be able to create a resource map of the various resources that are available to us, to our customers, to our business customers as we're looking at providing them with some support and meeting their various needs. So again, I want to be sure to have enough knowledge of the community that I can really create this map of these services, understand the various services that are available to folks, and really understand how to get folks from me to the services that they need.

Now very often, just to be clear, this doesn't necessarily mean I as a staff person need to understand every nuance, every sort of intricate policy that dictates

how that other service is provided. Often what I most need to know is how do I make the referral accurately? What is the point of contact there? What is sort of a basic description of the services that are being provided, and what is a basic sense of the eligibility so that I'm not referring folks to services that will turn out they're not eligible in the first place. It's important to have the basic knowledge and to be able to really contact other folks, other colleagues, that are going to know what some of these resources are, and get folks to the point of being able to access them.

This leads us into how do we craft our partnerships. It's quite another stratgey of how do we build a network of collaborators in the community that I can call upon to help me as the person providing the services, that can help me help an individual navigate these various services and supports that are available. So it's important that I as a Workforce Development professional understand how to develop a network. I understand how to maintain a network of collaborators that can assist me as I'm helping folks in their career search. How do I provide the right information? How do I provide sufficient information to career seekers and businesses to help them understand the range of services that are available. This is an important line we need to tow because of course we can often provide way too much information. If we tell everyone everything about every program that's available to them that can be intimidating. That can be confusing. What I need to know is how do I understand this customer? How do I understand their needs and how based on that understanding, then go on to really provide them with the right information so that they're able to respond to me, and say this is what I want. No, that's not going to meet my needs. I've never done something like that before. I've tried to get involved in that and it wasn't for me. It wasn't the right thing. It's about knowing how to put the information in the right way so our customers are able to make the best choices themselves about the services they're going to access.

Now this is an absolutely wonderful example of some work that's being done on this very issue, this very complex issue of customer flow through the One-Stop Career Center, and this is something that started with the folks in Iowa who piloted a model that was absolutely fantastic and folks in southern Maryland were able to take some of the information, and sort of create their own version of this model that was very helpful to them, and insuring their staff was able to provide assistance to their career seeker and business customers as they navigated through the systems. There's a lot of work behind this and I'm not going to represent it with the depth that's really there. Essentially what it came down to in both of these areas the One-Stop Career Center leadership pulled together teams on the staff level, not leadership teams, but teams on the staff level who came from multiple agencies and who represented multiple points in the customer service flow. So I might have a front desk person who's funded by

Wagner-Peyser, a case team from WIPA, a case manager from the veterans services and someone from my business resource team. They might be sitting together thinking about these issues. They put together three teams that they felt represented the sort of key moving pieces in terms of how their services were laid out.

The first team was the membership team. This is really thinking what's the starting with the first 15 minutes of someone's experience in the One-Stop, how are we greeting our customers? What information are we providing to our customers? What information are we taking from our customers to understand them, to understand their needs, and to understand where they might be going. Again, this applies to both career seekers and to businesses to some extent. This is really about understanding how do we think in broad strokes, how do we think about the most basic customer services elements of our customer center, and recognize how we're engaging the customers who're coming through our door, and the customers who have not come through our door yet.

Second team, staff driven team was related to the more in-depth aspects of folks career search. Once they've accessed core services, once they've gotten a basic sense of the Career Center, how do we provide our case management and how do we refer folks to intensive services and training services. How do we work with someone as they move through acquiring a career? How do we work with them to support them once they're in that career? That's really the next phase that these teams were thinking about, of the One-Stop experience. And insuring that was put together as well as it could be.

And then finally there was a specific team that was dedicated to looking at the business aspects of the services. How were they attracting businesses? How are we working and collaborating with businesses? How are we making career seeker referrals? What other services and supports could we be providing to our business customer to make sure that they were treated as equal from the business side of the system. What staff participated in them? What changes were made as a consequence of these teams' activities?

But what I'm talking about regardless of the names of the teams and how it's all structured, is that these two Workforce Development areas went out of their way to get a structure for continuous quality improvement in their One-Stop Career Center that was going to be driven by the folks who were doing the work on the ground. Who were going to be there performing an intake for someone. Who're helping people in core services. Who're going to be providing case management. The folks who roll up their sleeves and are doing this work. They're the ones who're really making recommendations to management and leadership about how to structure these things in the most efficient and

effective fashion so that we're meeting the needs of the wide variety of folks that are coming through our doors so it doesn't matter whether I'm in southern Maryland or Iowa or Texas or Alaska, these are the folks that understand the communities and career seekers and businesses and understand how we need to fine tune our services to really meet their needs in the best possible fashion.

So I'm going to hand this back over to Sheila. One of the things I just want to raise with folks, I know as we're talking about these strategies, they particularly in this economy, there are so many people coming in the doors at the Career Centers. What we talking about is we're different organizational structures. It's not different from what you did. It's how you do your work. Do that collaboratively with your partners, and thinking across the spectrum. The amount of time that people spend with a customer who's unsuccessful in negotiating the environment and goes through different kinds of training programs without success, that's a very time-consuming for the job seeker and the staff.

We're going to spend a minute doing an exercise. We are trying to practice what we preach of being more universal how you think about information. A webinar doesn't give you a lot of flexibility. You can present information auditorily and visually. We're going to do a little bit of exercise with folks to find -- get you to do some work. One, we would like to build in an opportunity where you don't have to hear from us but the nature of a webinar is you have to. I want you to think about this. This exercise is looking at learning styles. And we've got two series of letters up in that slide. And I'd likes folks to take a minute and take a look at those series of letters, and memorize each of the group. The first line try to think how do you keep that information in your mind? I'm going to give you 30 seconds of silence to think about it.

That probably wasn't 30 seconds. But silence feels very long when it's hanging out there. So folks have had a minute to look at that. What I'm going to ask folks to do, and just think about this within yourself in terms of how you approached this task. There are different ways people may have tried to memorize this. But depending on the way that you take in information or how you remember information is going to be how you approach that. There's a number of ways folks may have looked at this. One is phonetically, and so if you would take that series of letters like the AAYSA. And for some folks they would memorize a sound. I joke about my mom was my grade schoolteacher and I swear I never learned phonics. My capacity to sound things out like that is never the case. She swears she taught me it. That's not the way I think I can remember stuff. For other folks and folks can identify or was it the visual pattern. Did you look at those letters and memorize they're two A's, and YSA, and memorize what those letters stood for?

Another approach that people may have used to kind of help them think about it and tricks people use in terms of how to learn may be make a pneumonic phrase to take those phrases, and remember something that represents it. In this exercise that we found what they came up with the first one -- it's so odd. Is that an artists annoy your sour aunt. Once you've used that pneumonic it's easy to remember the sequence of the letters. For the second line it was smart mice jump past the cat. For folks who're going to remember that kind of full phrase that may be more language based learners they're going to remember the whole phrase and help them remember the sequence of the letters.

What we're trying to convey is what we've talked about the diversity of different kinds of job seekers. All of us bring in a lot of different ways of accessing information. And how critical that is going to be in the process. I'm going to show you one more trick for this which I thought I was more of a visual learner. But once you've learned it this way it is very easy to memorize. If you start in the lower right-hand corner at the C and go up and down AT and then pajamas. You can work that sequence diagonally. It's different tricks how people remember and take in information.

The reason we're talking about this at this point in thinking about assessments we do with individuals and how those tools are just as the importance about the different way that people learn is really critical in terms of assessments. If you have somebody who may have a learning style but it's very hard to take in information through written material they may have limited English proficiency, and you have a very language based assessment tool, you're not getting a good understanding what that person's capabilities are. And so the critical nature how staff think about and use assessments as effective tools rather than some of the obstacles that some people experience with assessments at this point.

One of the important things is the importance of understanding both, there are formal and informal assessments. Partially to an extent we are always doing an informal assessment with job seekers, and making judgments what we think their potential is. Be mindful about those informal assessments and are there ways to do something more practical to try out an element rather than making an assumption on an activity that may be less related. It's important for staff to know how and when to use an assessment. There are a lot of resources, assessment kind of tools. It's easy to give somebody, and hey go work on this themselves. But if it's not part of a broader plan or a thinking kind of process, and that information, if that's not used effectively with somebody, they may be disrailed with their job search.

How you plan on using assessment is really critical. We want you to how to think about using assessments to improve service delivery to help you make better decisions, not to use tools to screen out service provider options. A lot of service trainings have certain requirements to be able to pass certain requirements to perform in a job. One has to be mindful ii the assessment you're doing, is that in any way predictive of the person to be successful in the training program or being successful in that job? There are times where we can use that as a mechanism to identify who we think is the most likely but we don't necessarily know because we haven't looked at how predictive that tool is.

We asked them why they were making decisions about using different assessment tools. That's the tool everybody uses here. So they weren't able to get the most effective information they could. That's the critical part in terms of having an understanding of a wide array of assessment tools.

Again, people have different learning styles. It's going to be important -- not every assessment tool if it's all paper and pencil tasks, a lot of folks with very good skills and very good capability are not going to be successful in that kind of environment. Same with activities that are completely auditory. Some folks are not going to be successful. Thinking, are they experiential and maybe you can try out an environment to give you a better judgment about their capability. Somebody relying on an informational interview of you is an assessment. It's an opportunity for you to evaluate how well are they able to interact with the employer? Are they able to ask appropriate questions? Those kinds of things create opportunities.

The critical need of being able to understand and interpret assessment results and provide that information back to career seekers in a way that's productive. We have -- assessment results is a part of the picture. It needs to be considered within the context of the other skill set that the individuals has, other experience. You need to be able to work and interpret that. And you need to be mindful that you're not restricting access to different kinds of opportunities for folks because the tests that you're using. Are the assessments you're using creating a bias that don't make it inclusive for that individual?

I'm going to go to the next slide and we want to make sure to save time for questions. I want to highlight an example in terms of how assessments are being used effectively in the reemployment and eligibility assessment initiative.

What strategies address those barriers, and developing an employment plan to address that. As part of that process doing more of an informal assessment with the individual that -- sometimes it's difficult for folks to be able to identify what their barriers are. Being able to interview them, and customizing services to

respond to those needs is a much more responsive strategy in being able to customize and work with somebody to move them quickly back into environment.

Cori, with service delivery.

As we're thinking about delivering -- getting to the stage of delivering services directly to our customers. Of course this harkens back to a lot of the other issues we've been bringing up. This really begins again with the same question we had with assessment. A similar question is what we're first doing in intake, it begins with the idea of performing a thorough intake. That really will do two things. That we're speaking to a customer. As we're gathering the information for the first time we're going to be able to identify that customer's needs. What services and supports are they most likely to be able to take advantage of and are they going to most want to be able to use in pushing forward their job search. And it's also about knowing what are the services and supports that we're going to speak to them about. Again, the same issue of really crafting the best possible message to them to make sure they get the best information about the wide variety of services they have available to them so that they can get their needs met as quickly and as efficiently as possible by putting them in touch with the services they really need, and take advantage of.

This is about understanding how the cultural difference that folks are going to have impact how they view work in general; how they view the career development process and to provide the right support and encouragement so we're working with a lot of folks. They've been out of the labor market for an extended period of time. In some cases we're working with folks that are entering into a career for the first time. We need to think what do we need to do to orient this individual what it means to have a career in the first place. What are some of the things they should be thinking about? How should they be crafting their aspirations, and their idea of a career ahead of them? Just the idea of a career in the first place can be intimidating.

And we can move on to the next slide. So this is really the other major piece or one of the most important pieces of understanding service delivery is really about understanding the kind of basics of job development. And this comes down to again understanding the relationship between the skills that a customer comes through the door with, the skills we can help them build through various trainings and support we can provide them, and what it is our business communities are looking for in terms of human resource talent. How do we make sure we're building up the skills to make them competitive? As we're making referrals to the career seeker to a business where we're creating the right match. We're putting a career seeker where they're going to be doing the

work they want to do, they're going to be doing the work that's in line with the goals they have for their career search and that's going to meet the needs of the businesses that we're referring them to. So this is about more than just understanding the sort of tag words that we see on a resumé or a job posting. It's about understanding what does this skill mean? What does this knowledge, how does this knowledge translate into someone's performance in the career marketplace? And even beyond that, even beyond these kind of technical skill elements, what does someone require to be competitive in the marketplace or in a given business.

We want to understand sort of the various soft factors for how someone might perform within a business. Is this someone, whatever their skills, is this someone who is going to be good and be happy relating to people on a day-to-day basis? Is this someone who's going to work on a team, and working with customers? Is this someone who's going to be on the phone with folks a lot or is it someone who just -- that's not what they want to do. That's not their preference. They want to be doing their job, doing their work but in a self-directed, self-focused fashion. Even things like there's somebody who's going to work outside or someone more accustomed to a casual environment or more envision themselves in that kind of Wall Street pinstripe suit environment. What are the soft features that insure the culture of the business matches the cultural expectations of the individual in question.

And there are some formal assessments for these things. It's really about understanding who our customers are and understanding where they're going to fit in and feel comfortable. Beyond just the issue of their technical skills, the skills that they bring to the table.

And we can move on to the next slide. And now this is a great example and this kind of also calls back on these ideas how do we coordinate the various partners that are working within the One-Stop? How do we bring to bear all the knowledge, all of the services, all of the different pieces we have. Out in Oregon the folks have put together -- there are a couple other places where we see this -- integrated resource teams. So this is a service delivery model that brings multiple public and private people to the local One-Stop community services. This is all of our folks within the One-Stop and other providers in the community come and sit on a collaborative team, work together in some cases. If there's a particular career seeker who's having a particularly difficult time in their career search, groups like this will bring that seeker's case before the group and see what are some of the other services available for that. On a general level, over and above an individual case, the communication that we have between our various partners in it improves the extent to which our partners understand one another, understand the services that are offered, understand the

circumstances under which maybe I as a WIIHA worker have insights. It helps us as professionals understand the range of resources and supports and work that's going on.

We actually got an e-mail from the one of the participants. They made a very good point. Up in Vermont they've been using this model as well. And they had managed to -- were bringing in businesses to speak to this group as well. So the business concerns, business goals could be represented in this group, and that the folks on this group could better understand what the business community was looking for as they were coming to the One-Stop looking for human resources related talent. It's a great model for insuring that as we're looking at all these different services, all of the different pieces that make up our local One-Stop and Workforce Development System we're aligning those pieces in the best way, and providing our customers with the best range of services that's going to effectively meet their needs in their career search. Sheila.

So we can move on to the next slide. And this finally -- we've mentioned business throughout the course of this webinar as we really want to tell you all of our staff to be thinking of businesses as a customer as themselves. We're not here to serve career seekers. If we're understanding what kind of talent they're looking for, we're going able to be able to serve the various career seekers we're working with because we're going to insure the highest possible rates of placement and retention if we're serving both of these customers equal. So this begins with things as simply understanding labor market trends that impact our area and how these affect the hiring trends in our area. If we're in an area that's an tourist destination, we're going to see the recreational industry, and hotels being an area where there will be some Workforce Development opportunity. Understanding beyond just the bounds of our own community, are we in a community that is in fact a suburb of a much larger economic engine that folks are often going to be not getting jobs within our community. They're going to be jumping on the commuter rail and going into a larger urban area to go to work.

We need to understand our own community in the regard. We need to understand the business trends that are prevalent throughout our region that might impact where our customers are going to be going looking for work.

This also comes back to understanding the diversity and talent in our community. As we're speaking to our business customers are we accurately representing to them who're the folks that are in our community who're the career seekers, what are their talents. What's available for them in terms of the human resource talent they're seeking. So if you'll excuse me -- they know the product that's being delivered to them that we as the One-Stop Career Center represent.

This is very much in line with this concept of Universal Design is the burgeoning trend in the business community called flexible workplace strategies. Some of these are not going to be appropriate for every kind of business. Telecommuting is a very, very popular strategy. If we look at the District of Columbia metropolitan area there's huge pressures on the public transit system, on the traffic system, on the highway system, to accommodate all of the people that are coming from Maryland and Virginia heading into the District of Columbia every day, and anyone who's ever tried to drive into the District of Columbia at 8:30 on a Monday knows that there are a lot of folks moving and going into that city to do their work. So a number of businesses in that city and in a number of the others have looked at telecommuting as an option. Maybe it's not necessarily I have to be at my company's headquarters location to do my job. Maybe my job is talking on the phone and communicate via e-mail, and pulling together products that I can do basically anywhere. By employing these strategies, by allowing telecommuting for my staff, I'm going to be more efficient because I need less office space. I'm putting less pressure on the local transit system. I'm likely in many cases going to be having happier employees because they didn't arrive at work after sitting in traffic for two hours. That's not the best first experience every day which is extremely frustrating, the fight they have to go through to get to work every day. They're going to be more engaged, happier, able to continue to work for the company for a longer period of time because it's just a better experience for them.

That opens the door to, well, if I can have someone telecommuting from 20 miles away to avoid the commute maybe I can have someone telecommuting 200 miles away. So I can open my doors from human resource talent from all across the country. There are other examples of flexible workplace strategies. It means flexible management strategies that allow my staff to refocus their job duties. Maybe they have a particular interest in one area and maybe we allow them to focus about 20% more of their time on one particular focus of their job, and really develop that aspect of it, and we're just sort of flexible in terms of how we staff responsibilities and roles and our teams, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera.

And I think as technology evolves, as we get more into this environment, so many business are built around technology and highly responsive strategies we're going to see more flexibility within our business.

For our staff if we're providing services to businesses, for our staff to be able to talk about these strategies with businesses that allows us to offer services beyond just matching them with human resource talent. That allows us to be a resource in thinking how they manage people generally. How the human resource talent capacity of the business is dealt with. Also on the most basic level, it's very important that our staff are able to really articulately represent the goals, the

culture, the operation procedures of the businesses that they work with. If we're really trying to make the right match between the career seeker and a business, if we're working closely to build their human resource talent, we need to know what kind of talent do they need.

Of course that's essential, but we need to kind of know what business they are. Are they are a highly formal business, the pinstripe suits or the whole deal or are they a casual IT startup where people kind of come in whenever they want, and end up working until 9:00 at night. We need to know those things to insure we're making the right match between our career seekers and our business customers. It's more than a talent match. It's a match of the right sort of the cultural values.

And if we can move on to the next slide. Sorry to interrupt. I think we'll pass on the example on business services. Just to be able to build some time in in terms of questions. Of course. I'm going to ask Robb if you can move on to the next slide.

To give folks kind of a sense of what's happening with this process. We've introduced the concepts around Universal Design and what that means in terms of staff competencies. And especially addressing these issues. What we're going to be doing is working in conjunction with the NTAR training facilities, certification for Workforce Development System professionals, Career Centers staff, folks from the Department of Labor to have -- calling it a Universal Design and workforce development professional competencies roundtable. And get some feedback about how to think about integrating these ideas into the practice, into the understanding of the Career Centers into the skills that staff begin to understand. So that will be one process.

We're also going to be fine tuning this process getting input from the field. We would love your feedback, and actually I think in a slide in a minute or two. We'd like what works, and what doesn't work e, and how do we roll this out in terms of implementation and training.

So Robb, if you can do the next slide. There is information on www.onestops.info. We are in the process of expanding that site and renovating with some of this material. There's already some good resources for you. Keep looking at it. That's going to be updated probably in the fall with more detail, more of this material as well as the national collaborative on youth and disability, www.ncwd-youth.info, and the NTAR leadership center. And just Cori and I have my contact information. We have phone numbers, and e-mails.

We're going to take questions in a second. If folks want to give us feedback we're really interested. This is kind of a work in progress. We want to hear from you in terms of what works, and what doesn't. What makes sense.

Robb, I'm going to put it back to you. We have had a few questions that have been sent via the chat feature. Essentially all you really need to do is submit your question via the chat box, and then I'll relay your question to Cori and Sheila.

One of our participants asked you to clarify the connection between Universal Designs like closed captioning with the business services model. They needed a little more clarification of that. They weren't sure of the connection between the two.

Can I jump in for one second. The closed captioning is what we're -- that's a strategy that relates to environmental kinds of variables. It's a way of designing things so we're thinking of the broadest audience. The business services then is how do we think of business interests so that we're using closed captioning. How do you think about those approaches as you start to think about business, to think broadly about design?

I think that's absolutely right. And where the connection for closed captioning comes in across the spectrum. Everything from specific technologies like closed captioning, all the way over to the general way that we as workforce professionals think about it and think about the way we work with our customers, et cetera, et cetera. As we're serving our business customers I think we need to really be prepared to pat ourselves on the back a little bit about the level of knowledge we have about serving a very diverse range of customers. And imagine if you were a retail shop that got as much foot traffic and was able to adequately get good customer service marks for the number of people that come through a One-Stop Career Center every day. I guarantee that is in many of the cities one of the One-Stops. And I think that what that means is that we really can speak to businesses about listen this is the community that you're in. If you want to sell to this community, if you want to really want to pull in a very diverse range of customers, and every business wants a very diverse range of customers. Diversity means more customers. If you want to reach this group, if you want to serve them well and also to have a diverse staff with a range of different backgrounds, here are the things you can do to structure the products and services and the way that you sell them, but also structure the way that you operate as a business from a human resource perspective, from a marketing perspective, from a simple operations perspective. All these things come into play, and I think we as Workforce Development professionals we know how it is to run a big busy business that has a lot of different people with a lot of different needs. Those are the valuable skills we can talk to our business customers about.

So that again we're more than just the place. That a business is going to send the next job opening -- well I'll send this over to the One-Stop. We want our businesses to say, you know what, I'm struggling with how I structure my human resource capacity. Generally how do we have our managers working with our employees. I think that the folks at the One-Stop has the insight to help me with that well. It's the skill that they know is represented in these One-Stop Career Centers that they know they can access.

We have couple of other questions. What is the best way to introduce this concept to the One-Stop system in collaboration with the state workforce agency?

Can you repeat that question.

What is the best way to introduce this concept to the One-Stop system in collaboration with the state workforce agency?

Cori and I have worked a long time together. I actually think in communicating about this I think that the staff competencies concept is a really effective way to talk about these issues because sometimes when we talk about the Universal Design kind of specific things that people do, it begins to be a new activity or a new thing to lay on. When we talk in conjunction to staff developing skills that serve a broad range of customers we start to think about building the strength of the One-Stop are the staff. That is what drives the process. So I think part of introducing how do we think about bringing staff to a point where they are most effective to responding to the diverse needs of their job seeker and business customer.

To piggyback to the marketing idea. How we talk about this. Not here's a new program. We're going to start doing Universal Design in our One-Stop. This again, is about how do we serve the customers who're already here as efficiently and effectively as possible knowing it's already a diverse range of customers. They already have a diverse range of needs. How do we structure those to meet those needs as effectively and efficiently as possible?

Do you have a learning style for customers prior to giving them an assessment test? If so, what assessment do you use to determine their learning style? I know there is such a thing. There are different tools you can use. There's a lot of learning style information out there. And so partially I would be a little cautious about sort of pretesting testing. There may be some simple exercise. Just that little thing, you're just checking out a little bit how people respond to information, how people take in information. I think it's helpful just to have a conversation with somebody about -- and there are simple guides. It's a

checklist that says is it more helpful for you to see a picture of something or does it help you to have somebody to describe that. Maybe they've got to visually see something. Those kinds of questions may help give you the context for that. There are -- and maybe this is something we can post in the thing.

There's a couple of the really simple little tools on those kind of questions what's your learning style, pieces that you can use with somebody if you think that's going to -- there's something they're going to struggle with in terms of trying to access the assessment.

At this point we just have one more question. Like I said feel free to send in your questions via chat. The one remaining question is are all staff expected to work with business? Are they trained to do that? Is that the single point of contact system used in dealing with business?

I'll start that off Sheila. I think there are many different models how we serve the business customer as there are different Workforce Development Systems out there. In some cases we see One-Stops that has an actual business team that's put staff brought in by multiple agencies. This is what they focus on. They think about businesses and businesses needs. They're out there. They're in business associations. They're at businesses doing site visits, understanding what's going on. In other cases we see as more of defuse capacity. Perhaps it's not every One-Stop staff person who winds up talking to a business. We have staff, for example, if they're really focused on the placement aspect of the customer flow process, that they're working with the customer at that last stage just as they're being placed, that that customer is able to -- excuse me, that the staff person is able to speak to both the career seeker and the business and understand how that match is made. Now of course I think it's very rare that you see one stop Career Centers where every single staff person is trained to be a business service representative as well as doing whatever other duties that they have. But I think that can be designed in a number of different ways. Either focusing purely on building a specific business services unit all the way over to deciding who're the staff that are most likely to be working with business where it's most important that they have that business connection and insuring those staff are well trained and well equipped to be working with the business community.

Can I just jump in. Cori covered that question. But there was a question that you sent me, Robb, a disability navigator grant with the Department of Labor, and somebody had a question in terms of that. And how those activities are very similar to what we've been talking about. I think that's absolutely true. And I think that the disability navigator, that a lot of the Career Centers in terms of helping people access all these things. I think part of what we're trying to think about is how do we think about having that kind of support so that all staff is able to

access. Because they have limited English proficiency. It's basically the same kind of challenge, whether or not the person has a cognitive disability and can't read it. It doesn't matter how they read it. How do we make that information available to that person in multiple different ways. So yeah, I think it's a great model for folks to think about, and engage it and how do we think about it in populations.

It doesn't look like we have any additional questions. I want to thank Cori and Sheila for this wonderful program.

There will be a short survey at the end when you exit this webinar. So I do ask you to fill that out, complete that survey. If you have do have questions, please use the space on there and then I'll relay the questions to Sheila and Cori and share that with all of the participants on the call.

On behalf of the NTAR Leadership Center I want to thank you all for participating today. This webinar will be archived, and it will be available by tomorrow at noon. And there will be a link on the NTAR website with the webinar archive. Thank you so much and have a good afternoon.