[Please stand by for realtime captions.]

 [Captioner Standing By]

Hello, everyone. Welcome to the LEAD on promoting competitive integrated employment: What can do do. This is Rebecca [Indiscernible], project Director of the LEAD and joined by [Indiscernible] I nstitute, public policy LEAD for [Indiscernible]. I want to go over some housekeeping details.

[Captioner Standing By]

The audio for today's webinar is being broadcast through your computer. Please make sure your speakers are turned on and headphones plugged i n. You can control audio broadcast the audio broadcast panel. If you accidentally close the panel cup you can reopen by going to the communicate menu at the top of the screen and choosing, join audio broadcast. If you do not have sound capabilities on your computer or prefer to listen by phone you can dial 1011. The meeting code is 664-40-3971. You do not need an attendee ID.

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For those who may be new to the LEAD center we are the National Center on leadership for the employment and economic advancement for people with disabilities. We are a collaborative disability workforce and [Indiscernible] empowerment organizations led by National Disability Institute with funding from U.S. Department of Labor Office of Disability Employment Policy. Our mission is to advance sustainable individual and systems-level change that result in improved Competitive Integrated Employment, and economic self-sufficiency outcome for individuals across the spectrum with disabilities. We provided our website link. We encourage you to visit are website. We have lots of great information. With that, I would like to turn it over to the Moderator, Michael Moore to introduce the panelists for today's webinar.

Thank you cost Rebecca, and thank you all for joining us from across the country. Today's webinar, the topic promoting competitive integrated employment: What You Can Do, was brought together for -- have brought together four Palace, [Indiscernible] advocacy for center of public representation, and that Shea, policy and Program Specialist at the Administration for Community Living, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Sharon Hancock, Disability Resource Coordinator at workforce essentials in Clarksville, too the city, and Karen Lee, Executive Director of seeking equality power and community for people with developmental disabilities. Before turning it over to the first panelists, let me ask that Christopher Button, Supervisor, workforce systems policy at The Office of Disability Employment Policy, U.S. Department of Labor, provides us all with a few opening remarks.

Thank you, Michael. This is Chris with Office of Disability Employment Policy. On behalf of ODEP and Department of Labor I want to welcome everyone to today's webinar on this very timely and important topic. We have brought together some of the strongest national advocates and leaders on board today to speak with us. Because we live in the U.S. we really all have the opportunity, and I would say even the responsibility to educate key leaders about critical issues that impact adults with disabilities. Leaders at the federal level, stay, and local level in the public in the private sector. The topic we will discuss today is certainly one of these critical areas. It's at the forefront of systems change or increasing competitive integrated employment for people with disabilities. And, again, we have some of the best leaders on our webinar today. Again, welcome.Thank you to our colleagues and partners' product the LEAD center, at the National Disability Institute for organizing this opportunity for us. Special thanks -- special thanks to all the speakers for taking the time to join us today. Back to you, Michael. I am looking forward to the discussion.

Thank you, Chris, before I turn it to Allison, and just looking in the chat box, we now have reached over 400 participating lines from across the country. That's exciting. Let me turn it next to Allison bark off, Director of advocacy at the Center for Public Representation. Many of you know her from prior work at the Justice Department, as well, and appointed member of Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act advisory community on integrated employment for individuals with disabilities. Allison?

Great. Thank you cost so much, Michael, and I really appreciate the opportunity to be part of this phone call today. Really, what I'm going to share with people is people would not be on this call if they were not interested in advancing opportunities for people to work in competitive integrated employment. There are so many ways that all of us can get involved. I am really going to highlight a number of ways that people can get involved in their own communities, on the ground, in advancing federal policies and translating that into practice in their own states. I want to start off by talking about, I am Assembly myself. I have been part of the disability community for a very long time. When we talk to people with disabilities themselves, they really talk about a vision that they want to be able to have opportunities to live their lives like people without disabilities. Sometimes people need supports to do that. That this is really the NORTH STAR that our disability system should be focused on. And we're looking at making sure that people have opportunities for true integration, Independence, making choices about what is important to them, and self-determination in all aspects of life. For a long time we focused on inclusion and where people live, but we have, they fully, moved to realizing it's equally important to think about inclusion in how people spend their days, and how we can make sure are systems support people being authentic members of their community. Finally, when we are talking about systems change, we have really over the last decade changed in what we think about as important pieces of looking at the quality of services. I really important piece of measuring outcomes is looking at, are people getting supports they need to help them achieve the goals that they themselves have identified through real person-centered planning. Of course, employment is key to reaching that vision, as probably most people on this call know from their own personal experience. Helping people work in it -- in Competitive Integrated Employment helps people access the greater community and experience community life. It is one of the ways you can build real relationships with people without disabilities and co-worker relationships are so important. For all of us, employment helps us build new skills, are self-esteem, and a life without employment means a life with benefits, and benefits means a life with poverty. We know from the data helping people get a job helps them use less other formal supports and services. Most importantly, for all of us, a job helps define Who we are and provide meaningful ways for us to spend our days. It's really important for all of us to get involved in Disability Employment. I cannot emphasize enough that when we have behind our back in terms of policies, and the real need for us to continue to educate our communities and State and federal policy makers about the importance of employment. On one hand, we have some great federal policies that have been passed and our starting to be implemented at the State level. I am going to talk a little bit about the Workforce Innovation and opportunity act passed in 2014, and the home and community-based service settings rule that was also propagated in 2014, and how you can get involved in your own states. We need to continue to educate and engage as federal policies that impact employment are being considered, both on State and federal levels. Finally, I am briefly going to touch on opportunities at the State and local level that people have to advance Disability Employment, including employment first policies, and policies around transition from school to work. I'm going to start by talking about the Workforce Innovation and opportunity act. And what you can do to make a difference in your own community. WIOA was important to setting the employment vision.Some of the really critical parts of WIOA is that the statute prioritized, and really set as a national priority increasing the employment opportunities for people with disabilities in Competitive Integrated Employment. And a statute or the first time defined Competitive Integrated Employment. I always say when I am out speaking at conferences, we are one of the few communities that have spent decades really talking about, what do we mean when we talk about work and we talk about employment, and going back to the principles that I talked about at the beginning, really in a common sense way Competitive Integrated Employment means a job that looks like a job that a person with a disability, a person without a disability would have. We look at work that is that or above minimum wage, and comparable in terms of wages and benefits to a coworkers without disabilities would have, and provide for full integration in working together with workers with disabilities. Both competitive in terms of wages, and integrated in terms of working together with coworkers without disabilities. The statute also really prioritized making sure that people had real opportunities to experience competitive integrated employment, and limited the use of subminimum wages that are allowed under section 14 see of Fair Labor Standards Act. WIOA requires transition age use to have the opportunity to track competitive Competitive Integrated Employment, and experience of that before being placed in a subminimum wage setting. No longer able to contact with subminimum wage, providers and people currently in subminimum wage settings being offered opportunities and real experiential opportunities to try employment. Finally, we know that many systems have to work together for many people with disabilities to make employment a reality. The cross-agency collaboration that is emphasized the statute is really important. We're starting to see at State-level, and, hopefully, all of you are seeing in your own states WIOA is starting to make a difference in the lives of people with disabilities. We are starting to see that interagency collaboration is happening through memoranda of understanding between different State agencies, and, has successful as that has been there are certainly more work that needs to be done to make sure that all agencies are included. We have seen sometimes the intellectual and it does and disability -- on a par. We are starting to see the impact of the ritual at -- regulations Section 511 of WIOA that really requires outreach and engagement of people currently in subminimum wage settings for transition aged age youth. We are seeing people are very interested in track Competitive Integrated Employment, including people currently in sheltered workshops, but we have more work to do to make sure that there is real experiential engagement, real opportunities to go out and see what Competitive Integrated Employment is, and and then when people express an interest, we need to make sure there is more opportunities for follow-through. How can you impact WIOA implementation in your State? States have to develop and get approved by the Federal Government plans for implementing WIOA. They have to be updated every two years. This is an incredible opportunity for State stakeholders to make their voices heard. Now, look at and comment on, what are the areas that are successful in your State? And what are areas of needed improvement? For those involved in systems change that is happening at the State level, it's really important for those initiatives to be aligned with, and locally, I would say baked in to the WIOA plan. If you have Employment First initiatives, if you have homestead planning that is happening in your State, as you are implementing HCBS settings rule, that I will talk about in a minute, taking about Hall does how all of that work can be aligned and made part of that WIOA plan is really important. At the State level, it's really important to continue to educate both your State and federal representatives about the importance of WIOA and Competitive Integrated Employment, and lifting up some of the success stories about the positive impact of the law. I'm going to bed now to talk about another opportunity for State implementation of a federal rule called, the Medicaid home and community-based services settings rule. This rule was passed in 2014. These are Federal regulations that insure anybody who is receiving Medicaid-funded home and community-based services receives the full benefit and opportunities of community living. Right now, states are in the process of developing what are called, statewide transition plans that have to be submitted to the Federal Agency that oversees Medicaid called CMS. These are plans about how states are going to implement the rule. These statewide plans have to be submitted and approved by the Federal Agency, CMS, by March 2019. And states have until March 2022 to fully implement. The most important thing is that these plans require input from stakeholders. This is a really important opportunity for State stakeholders to make their voice heard, and to really raise up the importance of Competitive Integrated Employment. A couple of key requirements in the HCBS settings rule is that any setting funded as a home and community-based under HCBS funding has to be integrated in, a people have to have access to the broader community. People must have autonomy, Independence, and choice in their daily lives. The rule specifically talks about people having opportunities to seek employment, and working competitive integrated settings, and that people must have a choice of the types of services that they are provided, including what is called non- disability-specific options. So, settings not only for people with disabilities, but settings that have people with and without disabilities like a mainstream job. The settings rule absolutely can and should be a game changer in your State, and an incredible tool for increasing opportunities for Competitive Integrated Employment. This rule applies to all home and community-based services settings, both residential, meeting where people live, as will is nonresidential, meaning all types of day services. I will touch on a couple of parts of the rule that I think a really some of the best tools for increasing opportunities for Competitive Integrated Employment. As I mentioned, the rule requires states to make sure that people have a choice of a non- disability-specific setting. What that really means in the day context is opportunities for Competitive Integrated Employment and other integrated day a ctivities. As the Center center for Medicare Medicaid services, CMS, has been working with states around their plans, they have said that states need to look at what their current capacity is, and what steps they need to take to increase capacity so that everyone has a real and meaningful choice for non- disability-specific settings. In most states know the vast majority of funding goes to congregate disability-specific day programs. Most states less than 20% goes to Competitive Integrated Employment. This is a really important opportunity to encourage your State to do some rebalancing in terms of capacity, because, again, people can't have a choice of something that doesn't exist. Now, other opportunity in HCBS settings rule I encourage State stakeholders to think about is, it gives states flexibility to think differently about how do we deal with kind of our current settings, and what is our vision for our system moving forward. Using what CMS calls tiered standards, states can now set different standards for existing settings and new settings. What that means is, effectively State can close the front door to settings that models that may be outdated, and really not aligned with the vision of where the State is going, and on the capacity, all new providers would be in a different type of setting. What we have seen is many states are using tiered standards to really shift their capacity, and work with providers to move from facility-based day programs to focus on Competitive Integrated Employment. Again, it's important to emphasize states must get public input in the development of these plans, and this is an important place for you to make your voice heard. First, everyone should absolutely take the opportunity to comment, and to push states to think about how they are addressing employment in their State plans. Also the same alignment I talked about with WIOA plans should be happening with State transition plans around the settings rule. What are activities happening in your own State like Employment First initiatives, WIOA plans, or homestead planning, making sure that those are aligned and included in as part of you're statewide transition plans. I am next going to pivot to flag some federal policies that are being considered around Competitive Integrated Employment, and these are real opportunities that people should keep abreast of, and really use as opportunities to educate State and federal policy makers about the importance of Competitive Integrated Employment. There are a number of bills in Congress related to disability

 employment, and I think I would really encourage people interested in disability employment issues to keep track of those. There is a Bill called, transitioning to integrated and meaningful employment, the time a ct, which is a Bill that proposes to phase out subminimum wages for people with disabilities over the three-year time period. There is another Bill called, transitions Independence act, which is a pilot that would provide enhanced funding to states to really do some rebalancing in their capacity to move from sheltered workshops and other types of facility-based day activities to Competitive Integrated Employment. There is the way jacked, which would set a national minimum wage, and also includes a phaseout of subminimum wage. And finally, there is a Bill that has been introduced to amend the definition of Competitive Integrated Employment in WIOA. The name of this Bill is the workplace choice and flexibility for individuals with disabilities act. This is a Bill that would change the definition of integration and Competitive Integrated Employment to move away from looking at coworkers with and without disabilities working together to broaden it to include a direction with any person without a disability. Customers, vendors, supervisors, and would allow any ability one setting or State used contract for Competitive Integrated Employment, so long as they pay minimum wage. Right now that is a Bill that only exists in the house. As you can see, there are some bills that are really looking to take what is in WIOA and move that forward and advance it. There are, certainly, some other bills that are looking at ways to make changes to WIOA that do not advance Competitive Integrated Employment in the same kinds of ways. We also know that the conversation about how we define Competitive Integrated Employment has been happening at the Agency level. Again, there are opportunities for people to get involved in public comment with agencies. There has been related to the Congressional conversation about the definition of Competitive Integrated Employment, there has been members of Congress, and some providers have reached out to the Department of Education about the potential of reopening the WIOA regulations. And, again, focusing on the factors for integration, again, too focus on coworkers. The Department of Education in M ay 2018, at the first formal step for doing more rulemaking around the WIOA regulations by placing it on the unified agenda. When a regulation is on the unified agenda, that means an Agency can do more rulemaking on it. If it shows up on the agenda, it doesn't necessarily mean the Agency has two, but just last week the regulation was listed again on the Department of Education's agenda with a January 2019 estimated date. If the Department of Education does reopen the regulation, this is another opportunity for stakeholders to get involved. The first step in changing any regulations is a Public Comment process. Again, this is a really important place for people to make their voices heard. The kinds of things that people can consider commenting on and talking about what Competitive Integrated Employment has been in their life, how WIOA is making a difference, and expanding opportunities in their states. And, certainly, we will make sure that people are aware if and when those regulations are open. I think the most important piece I want to emphasize about these public opportunities across all of these federal policies, whether it's WIOA plan, HCBS settings rule, or these regulations if they reopen is you do not have to be a policy expert to comment. If you are a person with a disability who works or wants to work, if you are a family member, if you are a provider, you have really important experiences to share that are really helpful for your State to hear, for federal agencies to hear, and that's very important. I think it's also really important that people continue to educate federal policymakers about -- and stay policy about employment. Sometimes we have that employment is only for some people. And so, I think it's really important for us to tell the employment success stories, and really lift up the stories of people who may have more significant support needs to show that it is an option for all people with disabilities, and I think talking about that -- thank you for calling seek seeking polity quark -- for people with developmental disabilities. You may dial the extension of the party you wish to reach at any t ime. Dial by name. Dial pound one. For the Staff Directory, dial pound two. For our address, dial three. For our website information, dial four. Implement opportunities, dial five. For communication --

Okay, can people hear me now?

Yes, I can hear you.

Again, I just want to make sure the point I was trying to make in all of these federal policies, the most important thing is to keep abreast of them, take advantage of opportunities to make your voice heard, and to know that every single one of the 468 people who are participating in this phone call have something important to share and to say. And you do not have to be a policy expert to get involved. The last thing I want to touch on our State and local opportunities to advance Competitive Integrated Employment. I think we will hear more about that from some of the other speakers, but I just want to remind people while so much is happening at State implementation of federal policies, there are State and local policy opportunities too. We know that so many states have Employment First policies, but there are a lot of opportunities for you to work to help translate those into reality. So, taking the vision and working to align policies and practices, making sure that the actual capacity in the providers are there to help people, working Competitive Integrated Employment, and working with local businesses. Transition youth is another great opportunity, not a State but really at the local level. That is really where the rubber hits the road, and there are opportunities to collaborate through so many opportunities like school districts, Special Education PTA, inclusion Task Forces, working with Teacher trainings and Special Education Advisory Committee's. Finally, I will mention that as part of this webinar, I worked with the LEAD center to put together a white paper on five ways you can help expand opportunities for Competitive Integrated Employment in your community, and for each of the topics I covered today, we have a lot of resources to help you get engaged and involved. And also on this slide is resources about the HCBS settings rule, and WIOA. With that, I will turn it over to the next speaker.

Thank you, Allison, and now let's turn our attention too [Indiscernible], policy and Program Specialist at the Administration for Community Living, informally with the center of Medicare-Medicaid Services. And that, take it away.

Hello, thank you. Thank you, very much, for the opportunity to talk with you all today. If you go to the next slide for the agenda. Thank you. I am going to walk through key policy drivers and initiatives at the federal level, which translate into stronger system supporting employment at the State and local level. Their intent is too ultimately maximize an individual's employment potential. Hopefully, it will also demonstrate to everyone who is listening today that the work that you do, that we all are doing our aligned. There are aligned with HHS and ACL values mission and priorities, and your work adds value to the work that we do.

Next slide.

We have heard it before, work is more than a paycheck. It offers individuals, but with are without disabilities a sense of purpose and belong in their communities. It provides a pathway to the American dream. It's worth reading through this vision, individuals with disabilities will not need to choose between healthcare and work to live successfully in the community. We know in many instances we will are suppressing their income to gain or maintain access to community-based supports they need, and we seek a world in which people do not need to do that.

Next slide.

Recently, the Health and Human Services system Secretary and ACL Administrator, Lance Robertson, established five pillar areas which target key priorities for the Administration for Community L iving. Expanding employment opportunities is one of them, and next slide will provide more information about what the goal is, and the purpose for the employment pillar. It is to identify set of short- and long-term activities, which will take bold steps to expand employment opportunities for people with disabilities of all ages. I am the Chairperson for the employment pillar workgroup, and so, stay tuned. Hopefully, you will be hearing some more information about that s hortly.

Next slide.

I think it's important to inform folks who may not know, and remind folks that do know that neither is a part of the ACL family. Health and Human Services is very fortunate to have them as part of the Department because you may recall, they transition from education to HHS a few years ago, and their mission is outlined here. It outlines well with our initiatives.

Next slide.

What kind of research does [Indiscernible] fund? Employment is one of [Indiscernible] three target domains. Because it was identified as something very important for the lives of people with disabilities as they achieve their community living goals and live successfully in the community. Next slide.

I would encourage folks to sign up for the [Indiscernible] announcements, and to take a look at their website. There is an extensive amount of research products and findings, which help make the business case for certain strategies and approaches. And it's something you may find useful in you're everyday work and some other initiatives you are working on at the State and local level.

Next slide.

The Administration on intellectual and developmental disabilities has some projects of national significance. The [Indiscernible] grants are five you're grant awarded to 14 states from 2011, 2012, and 2016. They aim to enhance collaboration across Existing State systems, including programs administered by State developmental disability agencies, State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies, State educational agencies, Medicaid, and other entities to prioritize employment as a first a preferred option for youth and young adults with developmental and intellectual disabilities. This has some of the outcomes of these grants which have included: Memorandums of understanding across those entities at the State level, which are then translated into better collaboration at the local level. Cash currently provides technical assistance to pie grantees. The Lewin Group conducted an evaluation of the pie grantees, and AIDD also established a Community of Practice on employment at the end of pie. There is a link to those initiatives.

Next slide.

Highlighted here are the impact in deliverables from the AIDD employment work, educating legislators improve support to families, changing employers attitudes, and providing support for employers.

Next slide.

Some other noteworthy items is how WIOA impacted ACLs work. There is a new course -- core service for the centers of independent living which focuses on transitioning -- transition for individuals re-entering the community from a facility, as well as transition age youth. We envision opportunities to support and promote implement at these intervals. Medicaid is also a critical support for individuals in the community. ACL partners with Medicaid with regard to ensuring policies and programs are not a barrier to employment, and successful community living. We also are a Medicaid liaison for community groups and states, and as Allison spoke sensibly about ACL support for successful implementation of the HCBS settings rule.

Next slide.

The centers for independent living play a critical role in the community. I have mentioned their position with regards to transition, and how important planning for employment and career pathways is essential. The [Indiscernible] also offer other services and regarded as model employees, and have been a springboard for many folks successful career paths. I would encourage folks to remain engaged with their centers for independent living community.

Next slide.

I now will focus on the Medicaid [Indiscernible] program. There are 46 states currently with the Medicaid buy-in program. We know that without it, workers with disabilities face difficult decisions when they need to keep their income low in order to gain or maintain access to Long-term services and supports only offered by Medicaid. What can you do? If your State has a buy-in, become informed about the policies within it. Are the policies barriers to earnings? If your State doesn't have one, what would it take for them to consider or move forward with establishing one?

Next slide.

This slide highlights why states need a Medicaid buy-in. I'm sure there are other pathways supporting employment like 1619 B, whoever that is Personal Security beneficiaries a may encourage folks to suppress their income to stay under State specific guidelines, as well as remain on Social Security in institutes when perhaps they do not need too. I have listed the challenges which exist among states. 6019 B is a viable, where the option for many folks, but it's always best to have more options for people with disabilities to have earnings.

Next slides.

This five provide some information about what we would consider earnings promoting policies within the buy-in. Yes, there are states with no income limit and no asset test. As well as states with them higher income limits, and earnings friendly policies. TMS does CMS have been important estate ideas and strategies on the buy-in. Often people are surprised when they hear about how State can be promoting earnings in Medicaid enrollment simultaneously. The physical business case has been made for these State leadership. On average, Medicaid buy-in enrolees, Medicaid costs are less the Medicaid enrollees with disabilities on other Medicaid categories. It's a win-win situation for the State and for workers with disabilities to have a buy-in program as part of their portfolio.

Next slide.

What's next?

ACL partners with ODEP, and a soon, along with support from LEAD center, we will be releasing Q&A document, and along with CMS, which we expect will help folks like you in the field better understand the buy-in, including individuals, families, advocates, and State Leaders. We're also planning to release a narrative brief which pictures the earning policies I described in an earlier slide.

Next slide.

I now am going to provide a few examples of individual stories. I asked a few folks who have been successfully employed, what it took for them to get there. And what has helped them to maintain their career status. Here is Steve's story. I tried to capture in his own words is much as possible. Utilized personal care attendant services, and actually became active in his community.

Next slide.

This is more information about Steve Howard. He was able to buy a home. Interviews that to implement. He got married, has a family, and he attributes a lot of his success to the fact that the independent living centers we're emerging at the time when he was becoming fully engaged in employment. His last quote is very telling. It's all about leveling the playing field. Just because I have a disability doesn't mean I should be excluded from the American dream. Work is part of the American dream.

Next slide.

David's story is a little different. He is an older adults. He is actually -- I think he is close to age 80 but has maintained an active lifestyle in the community and has been working successfully. David attributes Centers for Independent Living leaving a Medicaid buy-in to his successful career.

Next slide.

Here are some quotes from David, and the rationale as to why access to community-based Medicaid services have been so important for him. As his last quote, the Medicaid buy-in program has been and continues to be a lifesaver, and I trust every effort would be made to maintain and even expand it so that even more of us can be income-producing, taxpaying citizens, living in the community rather than [ Indiscernible]. Those are his exact words.

Next slide.

Mary's story is the final story. She talks about the important role of having a Mentor in her life, and also the idea of a role model, someone like her. As she was transitioning into adulthood, working in the community, it helped her envision her own successful career path. Having exposure at a young age to people like her, people with disabilities being engaged in employment really was very motivating for her, so it just is another reflection of how important it is for us to have a diverse employment community.

Next slide.

Finally, I tried to capture Mary's own words. How education was important for her success. Medicaid is actually helped her stay healthy enough to work. She celebrates 51 as a significant milestone in the Medicaid buy-in helps her live and work successfully in the community.

Next slide.

Finally, I am sharing a couple of pages of links to information and resources, which go beyond what I have talked about, including some examples of promising practices of employment Provider Transformation. This speaks to what some of the active -- some of the activities going on under WIOA, is Allison talked about. In the last slide is my contact information. I would like to Thank you, very much, for listening. I hope this has been helpful, and you will remain passionate and engaged about this. Thank you.

Thank you, and that. We will now move from Washington DC at the federal level all the way to Clarksville, Tennessee. I will turn it over to Sharon Hancock, a disability and Resource Coordinator of the [Indiscernible] workforce development area [Indiscernible].

Thank you all for having me. I'm really glad to be here today, and what I am going to talk about as far as -- it will basically be some of the things we have been doing regarding using the example that Allison talked about, the white paper called the five ways you can help expand opportunities for Competitive Integrated Employment in the community. That is the document I am going to refer to some examples of what we are doing of these areas in Tennessee.

Next slide, please.

Under the five ways starting with number one, which is WIOA implementation, we are currently working as an employment network in the Ticket to Work Program. We are serving adults and youth with disabilities. We also provide typical training under WIOA within the American Job Centers. Discovery for youth adults, veteran. We also do have adult education within our career centers, which is managed by One-Stop shop operator. And also Competitive Integrated Employment are some of the different things we are currently working on. Three was in the community working in the community improving transition students with disabilities. The program called, Pre-employment Transition Services, or [Indiscernible] for short, we have contracted with our vocation rehabilitation program in the State of Tennessee to be a provider to go into the high schools, or students can come into our Career Center to provide them with a preemployment services. Some of those, there are five list of which is job exploration workplace learning, postsecondary education, Workplace ReadinessTraining, and self-advocacy. Really, all of those things that are available to be used -- to the youth, actually, students, is what we call them because they are still in school. They are things we naturally do in the American Job Center anyway, so one not provide that service to students that are still in school? That is between the ages of 14 and 22 years of age in the State of Tennessee. The added benefit as far as doing that particular program is that any use who do not wish to use the services of Vocational Rehabilitation can be enrolled in the WIOA youth programs after they graduate from high school, and if they do want to stay with VR, they can be co-enrolled in our program, along with Vocational Rehabilitation.

Next slide.

Hello?

[Captioner Standing By]

Thank you.

One more back. You went to far.

Okay.

The second at one is to get involved with State implementation of HCBS (inaudible) rule. In Tennessee, we do have what we call employment in community first choice program. I did provide the link there, which talks about how the program works, and one of the cool things is for those individuals who are going through the employment services part, they can actually get served through the American Job Center, and because of the different things that are provided through Medicaid, they will be able to have transportation assistance, job coaches, and other types of services available to them, which is very helpful to us, because this is a lot of the things we do not necessarily have ready access to and would have to [Indiscernible] or another Agency in order to provide that. These folks already come along with those services and support. Basically, we are giving all we can to help them and get a job for t hem. Also we have in the State of Tennessee under ESS (inaudible) or Employment First to department of intellectual and developmental i s -- disabilities program, we also assist with that wherever we can, working with are I/DD and [Indiscernible] counterpart, serving their clients coming into the Career Center. One of the things we also have through that is our employment Roundtable, which is one of the organizations that works to that. This is a list of all of the different agencies that provide services to individuals with disabilities and their clients in the State, including the Department of Labor, and how we can work with policy, and make individuals work better with the Competitive Integrated Employment. Also the Tennessee works, which is one of the earlier talked about [Indiscernible], the pie grant, that was a result of a pie grant Rick it has been sustainable, and we do, as an organization attend those regularly on a quarterly basis to continue to improve working with youth with disabilities, and also working with adult also to work with those. This has expanded even more into working more with the Department of Education teaching teachers and educators how to work better with their students with disabilities around employment. And we also have the Council on Developmental Disabilities, who is kind of the overseer of the employment Roundtable. What I did was invited that group to come out to the American Job Centers that we run here in Clarksville. We gave them a tour of the different types of services that we provide, as well as the programs that we have, how we work with individuals with disabilities. They were very excited and blown away. They did not know we had all of the wonderful things here we have available for individuals seeking employment. One of the things there currently working on is they have created a subgroup to the employment Roundtable, which they are actually working on now to work on something that is going to help some staff in the career centers how to work better with their clients and their customers with disabilities.

Next slide.

Lastly, this is as far as keeping updated on the federal legislation and regulations impacting Competitive Integrated Employment, things I doing keep up with, along with our Tennessee area, and Department of Labor and workforce development. We keep track of different things that are going on. I definitely get involved with everything that I can related to CIE. Sharing success stories helps a lot. Definitely, partnerships has been aced -- has been extremely beneficial, because we are definitely better together. We can't know everything. We cannot do everything. By working with others and other agencies, other departments, other providers, community partners, what have you, we are much better together in getting things done. That's basically what I have.

Thank you, Sharon. To round out this panel, the next speaker is Karen Lee, Executive Director of seek, supporting employment equality and community in the State of Maryland.

Sharon?

I want to apologize to e verybody. My transformer hurt does the transformer blew out of our office and I heard you got to hear the untrue -- into -- intro to are voicemail. Thank you everybody for being on today. I come from a different perspective of a provider, and I think that we all have so many stakeholders, and Sharon just talked about a lot of the participation and the relationships she has with stakeholders. Can you advance the slide?

I am going to talk a little bit today from a provider perspective, and not only is SEEK an organization that provides Competitive Integrated Employment and supports people in their journey, that I also work with a lot of folks, a lot of providers from around the country. And people come here to seek, visit, and learn about some of the great leadership and the skills of the people here at SEEK, and our vision. I've had a great opportunity too meet people from around the c ountry, and I came up with this little wheel of what our kind of high-performing organizations that really look at providing Competitive Integrated Employment. I really like this kind of wheel because it really encompasses everything. It means that we have to look at not just one component of the regulations or the laws, but we have to look at the whole picture of what is provided. We look at the high-performing workforce, and how critical that is that we have high-performing staff that are able to actually implement employment support. It's not just something that is separate. It's definitely something that is a huge part of the whole component. We have to have person-centered planning and looking at one person at a time, and a things we hear so often from our colleagues out there who are just now transitioning into Competitive Integrated Employment, and the idea around that is, what do I do about transportation? What do I do about my building? There will come a time to answer those questions in a big way, but really, one person at a time. I will go into each of these a little more, but will we answer the questions one person at a time, we come up with some really great answers we would never be able to come up with, with 20 people at a time. Organizations have got to have an infrastructure to implement that. That is the policies, the procedures, the management systems, technology. These socialized management is a very different way of providing management and leadership than when a step person is just 20 feet away from you and you can answer the questions all of the time. Technology as a part of infrastructure, how do we communicate? Do we have and MIS system? Our using some sort of ADP or online system so people don't have to fill out timesheets when they come in that can be tracked asked next is modalities which our kind of strategies and approaches to Competitive Integrated Employment. There are multiple, multiple modalities out there. I don't think one is right. In the organizations I have seen that have been highly successful in facilitating Competitive Integrated Employment, use multiple m odalities. I will talk a bit about that next. In addition, we have wraparound supports. People are not linear. They do not come to us for one thing, and we will talk a little bit about that some more. Finally, the last when I see over and over again in organizations that have been successful at increasing were building capacity around Competitive Integrated Employment is they believe that everybody works. Everybody can work. Everybody can do something. We just have to figure out, and if we do not believe this, we have so many opportunities to fail.

This is my modality, or as an that said, the strategies Rick these are some strategies that we use here at SEEK, and not just one-size-fits-all. We have different folks that need different kinds of support. For example, it supported employment, Phil came to us and said he needed to [Indiscernible] CVS. He did not want us to do discovery or discuss anything else. CVS is what he wanted. He had worked there before and wanted to work they're again. We helped him to find a job at a CVS and provided support. I really think when I think about supported employment, I think about that off the shelf job description, maybe helping people to do some negotiating for a job. Maybe they need some training and support around the specific job. But it's somewhat of a job that is already out there defined. Project search is a national model that started at the Cincinnati Children's Hospital. That is another modality that we use. For as, really a specific group of people thrive that there. I think transitioning use who have not had a lot of opportunity in high school to do things like ride a public bus, or have relationships with people outside of their school peers, and do not do things like, you cannot take somebody's food out the refrigerator if it's not your food. Just little things that some students may never have had an opportunity to do before, travel independently, make a phone call to say that you will be laid. Some of those really specific training things the young adults may not have had the opportunity to do as they transition. I think project search is a modality that works for folks having the experience. Customized employment I think is a great modality. And some people need it, some people don't need it. Some people want it. The discovery, the time that we tend to really get to know somebody. I like to think of it almost as a cone that, it supported employment you spend last time getting to know what a person can do, and a lot more time supporting them in the long run. Customized employment, we spend a lot of time getting to know people so that in the long run we don't have to spend as much time to support them in the long run. That modality is sometimes exactly what people need. And maybe others have not done as well in them and recognize that is a modality that we want to use. Wage jobs versus nonweight jobs, I think so optimal we talk about work we say, we believe in Competitive Integrated Employment. So often, people think, my son or my daughter cannot sit behind a desk in a cubicle doing data entry for 40 hours. We often think of wage jobs is kind of traditional work as being very, very defined that way. And that is not necessarily the right way for everybody to think. We dokah back Competitive Integrated Employment. It doesn't define specific kinds of jobs. Small businesses, I think about relate has her business she does on the side. Jeff has some pottery that he s ells. It may be cottage industries. It may be something like Allen's lawn care service. Or maybe something formal like, Scotties service business, SOS, where he goes into businesses and does scanning and shredding for them. That's a formal business. Or it might be something on the side. How many of us have small businesses on the side? Doing something such as b abysitting, or quilting or something like that cottage industry. Competitive Integrated Employment doesn't call for a singular way of helping people. I also think many, many states these days are looking at the State as a model employer, using that as a springboard for people to get into other jobs, once they learn some of those skills in the State of the model employer situation.

The next component is this one person at a time. I have to tell you, I heard this, one person at a time step four years, and it is really hard to do, but it is absolutely so critical that when we saw problems for f olks, we solve them one person at a time. We help people to tell their stories. I do not think there is one modality for doing that that is the best. I have given (inaudible) too a lot of these are things on my resource page. It might even be just sitting down and having a cup of coffee with someone, but getting to know, it's all their barriers to employment one person at a time. And when you have a place that is so filled with folks waiting in line to get a job, or I am next, it's so overwhelming, and we think we can never accomplish that. Sharon said something so critical. That is the sharing of the stories. Once we share stories, really ignites information in our heads about somebody else. Again, it's about the building of the relationships and sharing of the networks. I think that that can happen if we do it one person at a time. We may find out when working with one person that is brother a lways -- his brother owns a store and always wanted to work in. But we never asked the question. When we do this one at a time, if I people in for dialogue, instead of having my resources, with the resources of a job Developer, or implement consulting, all of a sudden now we have the resources of everybody at the table. With everybody we can do more.

This is a really difficult one. Not every State offers this opportunity. I think this is critical for states to look at is, how do we complement work Rex I will give good examples of why I think we need way more supports and organizations that have really increased their capacity and success on helping people to be successful in Competitive Integrated Employment, have done so with the help of wraparound support. For instance, these are all different ways that people can be involved. I think about Caroline, who worked at a store part-time, very part time, and she did not have the stamina to work a whole day. As she took fitness class, and outside of our work time, we supported her in that fitness as an athletic trainer, she stopped taking diabetes medicine. She was able to stand longer, and as a result work got to be a bigger part of her life. We can think about somebody like Donnie who has had really good with her hands. She is doing some janitorial work and on the side taking a sewing and cooking class. Now, she's trying to work on getting a job in a bakery because of those outside things that she did where we supported her. Working part-time and wild to -- and will working part-time now makes purses. Or [ Indiscernible] who was a photographer but worked in an office setting part-time. On the side he took some photographs classes hoping to become a professional photographer, which is a real dream Rick I think that we can think about how organizations and this is something to make sure in the transition p lan, something that can be added to your home and community-based waivers as a complement to employment. I certainly think it's critical.

This is -- sometimes it helps to see pictures of people and Jeff has allow me to share with you his story. He is somebody who has a wage job who has some volunteer time. He is a conductor at a local park where they are trained. He has a small business, and the takes off for vacations. He is incredibly engaged in his community. This is work is the center, as Allison talked about, so the opportunities he has for some of his friends who do not have jobs, or do not have an opportunity too meet people while they are selling there pottery, his life is so rich as the result of work being at the center and everything around it. And Sharon stories is like Jeff -- and Sharon's story is like Jeff. Next we will talk about the highly performing step. I think as an industry called the disability industry is struggling around workforce development, and I think that it's being supported in some of the ideas around workforce development in what we needed to do, I think the Department of Labor right now is looking at making this a profession of supporting people with d isabilities. That's a really important educations opponent that we need to do in regards to having this become a true profession. Another way the professionalization of staff, we've got to build these letters and latitudes in organizations so that staff see a way up, and a way of being able to be promoted. These are some really phenomenal tools that are out there, certification, potentially, increased competence. Staff Woodfill really good about what they are doing, the competent and confident in what they are doing and absolutely more able to perform and network and support. I have resources for us at the end of this.

These are some of the resources, and when you download this PowerPoint, all of these are active links. They are all resources that you can use. There are so many wonderful resources out there. The other piece I would like to talk about later, possibly, is the idea Sharon talked about, the collaboration, so both for practice and for policy. It's how do you educate as a collaboration? How do you work together on best practices as a collaboration? Together we are so much stronger. There you go. Thank you, very much.

I think we have one more slide, Karen.

The last slide is also more resources. These are resources for people to take a look at. They support kind of the whole idea of organizations being successful with all of these components together.

Great.

Great, thank you, Karen. I know that we now have some time for some questions, and let me go to those and I can direct the individual members of the panel. Maybe to Karen, I will start with you.

But others, please, join him.

-we better prepare individuals in residential day programs for the changes that have been going on and are going to continue to occur in the future regarding competitive integrated employment?

Wow, that is such a great question. I was having a conversation not long ago with somebody. They said, the success of us being able to support people to live in the community and to be involved in independent integrated employment is it so often hedges on how we, together, work with people who do get residential support that doesn't necessarily need a way too, or have an obvious link with Competitive Integrated Employment. Again, I go back to the one person at a time. I think the preparation happens when we are talking about Jimmy. And when we are talking about what is vision is, what is a dream is. It's so critical they are not a separate organization, or a separate dialogue, but that we are together. When we are talking about Tim, what he wants to do, what he's good at, and we're checking in and have milestones that we are discuss i n -- discuss the. And person-centered planning is supporting them residentially. Maybe a parent, a neighbor, maybe someone from his church or synagogue. Our critical it is we're all part of that again. I think the only way we are going to do that is if we are at the table together. Don't think of ourselves as siloed or separate organizations, or siloed or separate functions. You are his residential, is [Indiscernible] implement. We think about Tim and how we support him, think HCBS settings has really open the door for us to do that, looking at person-centered planning and recommending that.

Great. I'm going to rather than go to the palace, get more questions it. This one coming to Annette Shea. We often get this question. Where can we find the most updated account of state-by-state where they are with Medicaid buy-in information? Is there a single place on the Internet that is continuing to update state-by-state Medicaid buy-in information?

This is Annette. That's a good question. I am glad you asked it Rick I wish there was something centralized -- asked it. I wish there was something centralized like too point to. I think at this point where you can get your own State information is through your State Medicaid P rogram. That's one of the reasons why were trying to produce these materials that both describe what can be done through the buy-in, and then what is being done to promote employment in earnings, and features certain states that we think our on the end of that to try to fill in the knowledge gap. There is something Kaiser produced about ten years ago that is ten years old, and it's not coming from CMS. I would encourage you, if you don't have access directly to your State contact, you can reach out to me through my contact information, and I will provide you with the right link.

Okay, thank you.

Here is a question, bubbly, maybe each panel member may -- probably, each panel member may want to speak too. Collaboration is clearly the key. Any suggestion on how to help agencies and organizations, both public and private trust each other better, and as a result, work better together? And maybe I will start with Sharon as ADRC, disability resource ordinator. You certainly have done quite a bit of this. How would you answer the question?

I think now, especially with WIOA is that any hand that is helping that individual is going to get credit. It used to be where we were siloed and, no, you cannot touch my customer. This is my client. This is my job seeker. Everyone was sort of out for themselves. Now, it's like everyone gets c redit. So, if one Agency does something, or [Indiscernible] does something, or Workforce system does something, we all get credit for serving that individual. And as far as partnerships, you got to get out there. You got to find out what these other organizations are doing. If they are having a resource fair, go to the resource fair. Setup a table, talk about your programs with other people and learn about what the programs are. I drive my Director crazy and she is sitting here now by the way. A driver crazy bringing her stuff all the time, hey, staff needs to learn about this. We need to learn about that. If we do not know, we cannot help the customers we are going to be serving. Under WIOA, we are supposed to serve those with barriers to employment, and that is including individuals with disabilities.

Great, Allison, what our your thoughts on just improving collaboration both across public agencies, and also between the private sector, not for profit providers?

I think this is one place where I want to maybe touch on the business side where as a disability advocate who has done a lot of systems change were, this is they want type of disability service we do not control everything. We have to have partners in the business world. In my experience working on the ground, some people haven't had experience with working with people with disabilities, and almost every time that someone does, it ends up being a very positive experience if they had those supports. I think when we were part of the WIOA Advisory Committee, we really did a lot about, not just educating policymakers and State agencies, but to really educate the broader public and the business community about the capacities of people with disabilities. I think there is still a lot of stigma and misinformation there. We need to do better going outside of our own community, and really lifting up those stories of what it looks like, in and the value that people with disabilities bring to a workplace. It's often those individual connections that end up convincing a business, hey, I've had a great experience with this person, and I would like to hire more people with disabilities. I think also, I know other speakers have spoken to it, the cross-agency collaboration that WIOA focuses on is so important, and it kind of comes together in an individual person. For to long it up into siloed between, are you a person getting support from Vocational Rehabilitation? Or from a Medicaid Agency? Or through special education system? And people fall off Cliffs as they go between those systems. I think WIOA really creates the table were kind of at the service level, people can come together and make it work for people, and it really have a unified vision as people cross through different phases of their life, that, unfortunately, maybe crossing into different State systems.

Let me quickly get one more question in. That we have a few more slides. This question is about minimum w age.

Is there a movement to set a national minimum wage Rex is there also aim movement to address limits on earning related to someone being a public benefits? For some individuals raising minimum wage means they decide to work less, so benefits will not be negatively impacted. That is about three questions and one but let's take a imported a time.

Is there a movement to set a national minimum wage Rex I will answer that by saying, there certainly is members of Congress who have pushed for raising the national minimum wage. The minimum wage has been raised at a city level in cities like Seattle and others across the country, and there are states who have moved to raising minimum wage. But what about the question, too address limits on earnings related to someone being a public benefits, which then could affect their eligibility? Allison, you are probably in the policy arena. How would you answer that?

I would say back in one of my slides one of the things I did talk about was a push around bills to raise minimum wage on a national level, and include Pisa with -- people with disability ask -- with disabilities. And as Michael said it's happening at the State and local levels. In terms of, I think many people who have worked on employment policy are very concerned about the connection between healthcare and employment, and the fact that people sometimes are faced with choices, because, Medicaid, unfortunately, is both the only source for many Disability S ervices, and is a poverty program that requires people too meet very low-income thresholds. The medical buy-in program that and that presented on is certainly one solution that has been out there, but I think as part of the broader healthcare conversation that is happening in our country, the conversation about universal healthcare, that's disconnected from income limits it's certainly happening. There are some universal healthcare bills happening in Congress, and I will just point back to the WIOA Advisory Committee report, which pointed out, again, the unfair choices that people with disabilities often have to make in terms of the amount of hours that they work, promotions, and being able to access services. It's all part of a conversation. I think clearly nothing is passing on either of those fronts in this Congress, and probably in the next Congress, both of those issues our ones that will continue to be discussed in a very robust way.

Thank you. Let's go to the next slide so that we can get the next two slides and. We have yet another webinar coming from [Indiscernible] and the LEAD center, sponsor but ODEP. Getting power, make the most of your job and improve your financial security, building Financial Solutions for people with disabilities on Tuesday, O ctober 30, from 3:30 to 5:00 Eastern time. You can go to a link that is on the screen related to [Indiscernible] ODEP webinar. We want you to also know that you can connect with many, many resources that were mentioned on this webinar, and others to help move, too help move to more effective strategies, too result in Competitive Integrated Employment. There is the LEAD center .org website. There is the drive website with information on every site -- stay. There is the LEAD center news. The LEAD center is also available on Facebook, [Indiscernible] and you too. For more information or additional questions, reach out to Rebecca so long, budget Director. Elizabeth Jennings, Assistant Project Director, Alano, Project Coordinator. I do want to take us to the final two slides, which is about still pending right now from ESF LN to be, provider voice, visionary opportunities to increase Competitive Integrated Employment. Let me take it back to Chris b utton.

Thank you, Michael. We are really excited that right now we have an open opportunity until November 162018 for states to apply to become part of our Employment First State leadership mentoring program, which the title has been extended this year to provider voice. It is EFSLMP for provider voice which stands for visionary opportunities to increase competitive integrated employment. As I said, the application period goes until November 16. You can see a link where you can actually find the State application to the application process respective states can request technical assistance. Then they kind of decide what they want, and what they need so they can apply for Core State a ssistance, Vision Quest assistance, or both. This year we are going to be recruiting eight core states and eight BQ states. These states will be offered on policy consulting, support, mentoring in a variety of ways which you will see in the bullet point there. Next slide, please, Michael.

States do have the option to become either a core State and get some training and technical assistance, or a vision Quest S tate, or both. The core states will get up to 200 hours of TA. The vision Quest State get up to 100 hours of technical support to develop I don't -- policy guidance. And in order to apply for Core State TA, their must be buy-in documented from the six systems that are listed here. That includes Vocational R ehab.intellectual developmental disabilities, but to help the Workforce investment, education, and Medicaid, and [Indiscernible], cost a mental health Agency must agree to either be the LEAD Agency for the State team, or participate as a co- State lead. That is because we really increasing are focus on policy alignment and technical Technical Assistance to increase employment for people with mental health disabilities, including disabilities that are co-occurring. That could be intellectual developmental disability and it will help disability, for example. States get access to arrange of really superior -- to a range of subject matter experts to help them do what they decide needs to be done in advance aggressive employment, competitive grant -- competitive integrated employment in their State. We hope the folks listening today we'll check out this link, get coordinated in your State, and turn in an application by November 16. Deck to you, Michael.

I think we have come in right on time. Again I want to thank the palace and Alice embark off, Annette Shea, Sharon Hancock, Karen the for your insights today. I do recommend you take a look at Allison's paper, five ways you can help expand opportunities for competitive integrated Employment in your community. It is available on the LEAD center website under resources. You will find it, along with many other resources. Thank you for joining us today. Please, consider joining for the [Indiscernible] webinar on the connection between building financial capabilities and employment, and to visit are LEAD Center website in the drive portion of the website for individual State information. Continue to stay active and persistent, policies that were discussed today, and different strategies that improve the power of collaboration and coronation between public and private sector agencies are certainly critical to future success. Thank you for joining us, and have a great day. Take care.

[Event Concluded]