

Building Infrastructure for Good Jobs: Creating Opportunities for People with Disabilities in the Construction Industry

Transcript

04/25/24

>> Sarah: Good afternoon everyone, welcome.

On behalf of The LEAD Center, I would like to welcome everyone and we are so glad that you joined us today to learn to build infrastructure for good jobs, creating opportunities for people with disabilities in the construction industry.

Through the good jobs initiative, or GJI, the U.S. Department of Labor is focused on improving job quality and creating access to good jobs for all working people, including people with disabilities.

Today, we are going to look to the construction industry to learn how inclusive hiring practices including equitable workforce development pathways like pre-apprenticeship and registered apprenticeship programs, as well as labor-management partnerships, have benefited employees with disabilities and their employers.

Today's webinar is hosted by the Center on Leadership for the employment and economic advancement of people with disabilities or LEAD Center.

We are a workforce innovation and opportunity act policy development center.

The LEAD Center is led by national disability Institute and is funded by the Office of Disability Employment Policy at the U.S. Department of Labor.

Together we facilitate the adoption and integration of inclusive WIOA programs, policies and practices through research, technical assistance and demonstration projects.

Next slide.

My name is Sarah Loizeaux and I will be the facilitator for today.

I am a white woman with brown hair.

I have a black blouse on today with pink flowers.

My pronouns are she/her/hers.

I am also with the National Disability Institute and the LEAD Center.'

Next slide.

A little bit of housekeeping.

To ensure that everyone can participate fully in today's webinar we would like to take a moment to share just a few captioning and housekeeping tips.

Today's webinar is live captioned and the captions appear below the slide deck.

You also have the option to open the captioning webpage in a new browser and the links have been posted in the chat or will be, momentarily.

Once the captioning window opens on your own system, you can adjust the background color, the text color and the fonts using the drop-down menus at the top of the browser.

Also, this webinar is being recorded and will be archived along with supporting materials on the LEAD Center website under the recent and upcoming events page within 10 business days.

The next slide.

Now, we really encourage you to ask any questions you may have about the content that is covered today.

At any point, you can click on the question-and-answer button that is located on the webinars menu bar.

This will bring up the question-and-answer panel or window into which you can type questions for our presenters.

We will save time at the end were a question-and-answer period.

Also, use the checkbox if you are experiencing a technical issues or have questions for the technical support team.

Please type the question into the chat box.

So, to provide a welcome and opening remarks it is my pleasure to introduce Assistant Secretary Taryn McKenzie Williams.

She is the Assistant Secretary for the office of disability employment policy at the US Department of Labor.

In her position, she advises the Secretary of Labor on how the departments policies and programs impact the employment of people with disabilities and leads the office of disability employment policy employers in all levels of government to promote evidence-based policy that improves employment opportunities and outcomes for people with disabilities.

Previously, Assistant Secretary Williams was the managing director for the poverty to prosperity program at American progress.

Before joining American progress she worked at the office of disability employment policy for a variety of issues related to education related to employment policy.

Thank you so much for joining us today Assistant Secretary Williams. I will now turn it over to you.

>> Assistant Secretary Williams: Hello everyone I am Taryn Williams and my pronouns are she/her.

I am a black woman with shoulder length curly hair. I am wearing a lavender jacket with a floral scarf. I am so excited to be here today and to further the conversation on creating good jobs.

As Sarah mentioned I had the honor of serving as Assistant Secretary for disability employment policy and in that role I lead our office of disability employment policy or ODEP for short

It is something that I am so proud of.

It is the Department of Labor's focus on investing in all of America's workers and jobseekers. Our administration under the leadership of President Biden believes we must build an economy from the middle out and from the bottom up.

And put another way, acting secretary su's vision for the department is centered around increasing equity and access to good jobs with robust enforcement, with economic opportunity and ensuring that workers are empowered.

Equity enforcement and empowerment.

This means focusing the department's resources on advancing equity and opportunity for people of color, for women and for communities that have historically been left behind, including people with disabilities.

Congress established ODEP a little bit over 20 years ago to create policies, programs, federal agencies and with external stakeholders to promote the employment of people with disabilities and it is on behalf of ODEP and DOL that I welcome you to today's webinar, a follow-up to our webinar back in October on the good jobs initiative.

Our topic for today's webinar is ensuring access and equity in new construction jobs.

Made possible by the historic investments made by the Biden Administration through the infrastructure, investment and jobs act.

At DOL we have been focused on ensuring that good jobs created are accessible to historically underserved groups and that includes people with disabilities and those who are multiply marginalized.

And that is why we are so thrilled to examine these topics together.

Not only through the lens of employers but through the impact that these good jobs have on disabled workers.

I want to note that this year is in its own right, an historic year.

It marks the 25th anniversary of the Olmstead decision which was a landmark US Supreme Court case that mandates that individuals with disabilities be in the most integrated setting possible. As we all know good jobs are a critical factor in allowing people with disabilities to be independent and to work in an integrated environment and to thrive in their communities. So I am really excited to hear the stories from our panelists.

I want to thank The LEAD Center for hosting the webinar and also our partner, Paige Shevlin, representing the US Department of transportation on the webinar.

ODEP is so grateful to work with you and for our continued collaboration on advancing disability inclusion.

And with that I will pass it back to Sarah and I look forward to a great discussion.

Thank you.

>> Sarah: Thank you Assistant Secretary Williams very much.

To help set the context on the good jobs initiative, it is now my privilege to introduce Paige Shevlin who is the strategic advisor for the infrastructure workforce development. At the US Department of Transportation.

In her role she is responsible for implementing the bipartisan infrastructure law in a way that promotes high-quality jobs and greater diversity in the infrastructure workforce.

Paige has extensive experience in federal and local government with the focus on job training, higher education, and social insurance programs.

Paige was the economic development advisor to the King County executive in Washington state.

Paige was responsible for working with regional organizations to create economic and workforce development strategies for the county.

A principal focus of her work was reallocating workforce funding to reduce racial disparities and workforce outcomes -- services and outcomes.

Prior to her time in local government, Paige served in the Obama administration as special assistant to the President at the White House economic Council.

She was responsible for leading the development of labor market policies including the vice president's job driven training initiative and policy decisions relating to regulations of the workforce innovation and opportunity act also known as WIOA

Paige has also held appointed positions at the Council of economic advisors and the department of labor.

Prior to joining the Obama administration she was the assistant policy director at the Hamilton Project at the Brookings Institution and an assistant analyst at the Congressional Budget Office. Paige holds a bachelors of economics from Wesley College and a Masters of public affairs from Princeton University.

Paige we are so glad to have you here today. I will now hand it over to you.

>> Paige: Thank you for that great introduction. She said my name is Paige Shelvin.

I have long curly hair, I lose – use her -she pronouns.

I think I got all that out.

I am here to talk about the work that the Department of Transportation has been doing to foster the inclusion of all and representative inclusions in the construction workforce today focusing on the people with disabilities.

We recently put out a report from the department of transportation on this topic exactly. This was actually a request from Congress as a part of the bipartisan infrastructure law.

I think that is worth noting because it was actually part of the statute that DOT needed to address the barriers to entering the construction workforce for populations that have been underrepresented andThe statute actually did call out specifically people with disabilities as well as some other underrepresented populations.

And so, what we did at the Department of Transportation working very much in partnership with the Department of Labor, is that we found organizations that are doing a great job of getting underrepresented populations into good-paying, construction jobs.

And you will get the chance to hear from two of those organizations today.

We wanted to make sure that the organizations were, that we found organizations that have expertise around people with disabilities.

We also looked for organizations with expertise around people reentering from the criminal justice system, women, which are underrepresented in construction, and

opportunity youth. We put together a set of characteristics that are important for workforce programs that serve underrepresented populations as well.

We found eight characteristics overall and then we layered on top of those the characteristics that seemed important for certain population groups including people with disabilities.

And so, I wanted to share just a little bit about the characteristics overall that are important.

I think many of these will be familiar to you because I think they are also the characteristics that the Department of Labor would put forward good workforce programs overall.

Many of them are similar to the Department of Labor's quality guidelines for pre-apprenticeship programs.

First.

Strong partnerships between industry and the community-based organizations.

And with unions because construction is such a high union density -- has such a high union density.

It is very important to work with unions.

The second, individualized case management. The third, sufficient funding for supported services.

Especially access to vehicles and drivers licenses because that access to transportation is critical for construction workers who need to go from project to project.

Fourth, stipends for time spent in training. Fifth, mentorship.

Sixth, exposure to a variety of construction careers.

Seventh, that the training program, the curriculum itself is developed in partnership with industry. Not just having employer partnerships but also making sure that informs the curriculum and then the eighth tracking results.

Because otherwise, how will we know it works?

We would say they are important for all represented – under representative organizations. We look at the organizations that we're working with people with disabilities and what was unique about those organizations.

What we found were three characteristics.

The first is advocacy to employers about the skills that workers with disabilities have.

The second is support for employers on providing accommodations and the third is ADA adaptive technology training.

We have all of these in the report.

The one I want to touch on is the advocacy for employers and unions as well since unions play such an important role.

I sat in on some of the conversations with nonprofit partners that are doing workforce programs. Many of those workforce organizations don't have a great understanding of the spectrum of disabilities.

That was clear.

And just for context, in my personal life, I, one of my children has a disability.

He has an IEP in school and I do a lot of work for our committee on special education that informs the school board.

So, I thought about that a lot because the spectrum of disabilities is so wide. It goes from people who are arrow divergent, artistic or have ADHD.

People with chronic health conditions. People who have physical disabilities.

And many others which you all know and are aware of.

That was certainly not clear to the majority of organizations that we talked to. Even organizations that are serving people with disabilities, but they don't know it.

A great example there are people who are coming out of the justice system.

Many people coming out of the justice system have mental health impairments that would qualify as a disability.

But that is not the way it is seen by the organizations that were serving them.

And so when you ask employers and unions about do you work, do you have people with disabilities in your workforce?

Their answer is no.

That would be possible because it is hard labor and something like that.

They fail to understand the A-DA adaptations that are possible for physical disabilities which is what they are thinking of.

They are thinking of it with the disability lens.

They are not understanding the full spectrum of disabilities and how some of those may have no impact whatsoever on the skills that are needed for construction work.

So I wanted to provide that additional context. This is a really important topic.

One that I know DOL is focused on and it is really important to the DOT as well.

I would like to mention we have a wonderful disability policy advisor who is an amazing advocate for people with disabilities across the transportation sector.

Both Kelly and I and the whole department are very focused on this issue and looking forward to having the opportunity for all of you to learn from Able/disabled advocacy and adaptive construction solutions.

With that I will turn it back over to Sarah.

>> Sarah: Thank you so much, Paige.

I appreciate that. Let's talk about what we are going to learn today.

Throughout the webinar we are going to gain an overview of the good jobs principles and IAA projects which can serve as a vehicle for matching people with disabilities in competitive integrated employment opportunities in the field of construction and other infrastructure jobs.

We are going to hear some real-world examples from people with disabilities working in these good jobs in the construction industry today which I am really excited about.

Throughout this webinar participants are going to explore strategies that can assist employers in benefiting from employees with disabilities in the workforce including employee significant disabilities.

We are going to meet leaders in construction will hear the contributions that people with disabilities have made to the workforce.

So with that, it is my pleasure to introduce the moderator for today's discussion. Anupa Geevarghese.

She is the chief of staff at the office of disability employment policy at the U.S. department of labor.

She works closely with the leaders there to identify and implement strategies for increasing the number and quality of employment opportunities for people with disabilities/

In doing so, Anupa draws on years of experience in the public and nonprofit sectors.

So, Anupa, I'm turning it over to you and I can't wait to hear the discussion.

>> Anupa Geevarghese: Thank you, Sarah, for the introduction and thank you Assistant Secretary Williams for ODEP and from the department of labor's work in this space,

and a big thank you to strategic advisor for your work at D.O.T. to foster inclusion in the construction industry.

At DOL we believe every worker including workers with disabilities deserve a good job.

Disabled workers deserve a just days' pay for a hard day's work.

Disabled workers deserve to live and work in the community.

And workers with disabilities deserve the right to a good job free from discrimination.

And the Department of Labor's good jobs initiative demonstrates the Biden/Harris administration commitment to these principles By opening the doors to all workers to improve job quality and access to good jobs.

Our fundamental belief that good jobs change lives in forms our eight good jobs principles which range from recruitment to career advancement.

That benefits everyone including people with disabilities.

Today, we are excited to witness these good jobs principles in action in the construction industry. We have two very, very exciting panelists.

Our first panel includes a top of construction solutions, also known as ACS.

We will share how they solve work order challenges while transforming lives through expanding economic opportunities and mobility.

Our second panel, able /disabled advocacy also known as A-DA will show how they support youth, military veterans, adults with disabilities and others employment through vocational skills

programming and educational advancement.

I would like to introduce our first panel, A-DA the construction solutions. Doctor Marty serves as executive president at ACS.

He is from Houston/ Texas.

Also from Houston is Jonathan Rodriguez, an apprentice at ACS. Marty, the floor is yours.

>> Marty: Thank you I appreciate the good introduction.

It's been terrific to hear from the speakers so far any who I have had the pleasure to work with in my days in government but also to work alongside in the private constructor.

A-DA gives construction solutions and is excited to be a part of the solution. Good afternoon.

I name is Doctor Marty leathers.

I'm the vice president at A-DA Adaptive Construction Solutions.

I am a white male and I am wearing a black vest and I have a short beard.

Our mission is to expand economic opportunity with partnership with employers and provide life-changing opportunities through the purpose of work.

We do this by prioritizing a jobs-first focus that mitigates the failures of traditional train and pray models.

ACS has been apprentice sponsor since 2016 and served nearly 1600 apprentices across 23 occupations.

80 percent of our princes have identified as a veteran in 19 sent self-identify as having a disability.

While we work across multiple sectors, construction represents the largest of our apprentice. At ACS we serve as a leading expert for prevailing wage compliant and apprenticeship requirements under the inflation reduction act.

In addition to offering federal programs, as an ADA grantee, an HRP grantee and a CTO grantee.

ACS provides strategic leadership across the globe as a member of the global apprenticeship network.

We have served as special advisor to the international organization of employers in the international labor organizations.

Last summer for the 111th International labor conference, ACS served as special advisors for the passage of the recommendation for standards of quality apprenticeships.

The first time ever the quality of apprenticeship standards have been adopted globally and help feed policymaking here in the United States.

At ACS we don't just help our employers identify the outstanding accomplishments of individuals with disabilities, we make up an organization of people who thrive every day in the workforce.

When ACS All-Star is Jonathan Rodriguez.

I'm excited to introduce Jonathan to speak to us today.

>> Jonathan: You Marty.

I name is Jonathan Rodriguez.

I am a male with black hair and I am wearing a red shirt. It is an honor to be here.

I am an apprentice at A-DA Adaptive Construction Solutions.

I have learned skills needed to work in the construction field.

From learning the basics in safety in learning how to hand and power tools and how to use them properly. This program has taught me how the program works from the beginning to completion.

Fortunately, I have worked in several departments here at ACS like in recruiting, the plans and planning department.

Now since January 1, 2024, I started working as an apprentice administrator where we were work with employers.

Also the US public is one of the example -- one of the employees who worked with us.

I had helped since January 1, 2024, we have registered seven new apprentices on board to self-identify as having a disability.

Being an apprentice working for ACS has completely changed my life.

I have developed skills and I have used them in helping other apprentices.

To be able to help them in the apprentice it journey, even if it is a small part, has really affected me because I remember when I was just an apprentice.

And how I was inspired to grow and to learn everything they are learning.

I have accomplished a lot of great things like learning new skills, being more social, being more professional.

And I am proud to say that two years ago, thanks to what the ACS has given me I have accomplished one of my biggest goals, buying my first house for me and my family.

It is something that I accomplished and I could not do without ACS. I really appreciate that.

ACS has taught me a lot and I will always be thankful for Nate and Marty and everybody who has given me the opportunity here at ACS to show my skills.

Like I said, it is an honor for me to be here talking with you guys and learning from all of the experiences as well.

And now I will pass it on to Louis who will talk about more things.

>> Louis: Thank you, Jonathan, it's an honor to be on the floor with you. My name is Louis Robert.

I am wearing a purple shirt with a brown blazer, short, brown hair and a short beard.

I work for primoris as the director of labor compliance.

I am over our apprenticeship program and I work daily with ACS to ensure we are providing pathways and careers for all that are seeking an opportunity.

This is a response to the good jobs initiative.

I have several unseen injuries from my military service.

It is important for me that individuals have an environment with relationships of an acceptance and understanding as we all have life accommodation needs.

We have 127 apprentices and several of them have disabilities.

Along with one of our apprenticeship program staff members, also identifying as with disabilities. I was able to get a few statements from them.

PRIMORIS has a culture of accommodating people. It helps us do our jobs and show up every day.

The culture of laughs, giggles and joy, being vulnerable and not drawing attention to limitations and being treated as a human is one of the things that I like about showing up to work.

PRIMORIS is a leader in the construction energy segments.

We seek to make reasonable accommodations for any employee and we also have developed

an employee resource group for employees with disabilities so that they can inform the community and inform the company on how we affect them and how we can better

serve them. The good jobs initiative and working with ACS has brought an additional pathway and raised awareness of hiring individuals within all communities and with that I will pass it over to Nicholas with Adaptive Construction Solutions.

>> Nicholas: Hello.

I am Nicholas Morgan, president of ACS. I am a bald white man with a long, gray beard, wearing a gray sports jacket.

PRIMORIS has been a strategic partner for our organization and it's very exciting to see the growth of their apprenticeship program.

They build many of the nation's largest clean energy projects and they are building a site pretty much almost in every state across the country or plan to in the coming years.

At ACS we work with employers and the construction industry to implement and expand quality apprenticeships.

This includes leaders in clean energy industry like PRIMORIS.

As a social enterprise, ACS acts as an intermediary for employers in the workforce.

Mainly playing the role of the sponsor of the registered apprenticeship.

Over the years since we started in 2016 we found that by performing the administrative and compliance roles and responsibilities, ACS, in essence, hides the wiring to make registered apprenticeship programs easier to adopt within a business.

By taking on this role, ACS and our team like Jonathan, we find it easier for businesses, not just to scale apprenticeships, but to use as a model to reward high-performing individuals with career pathways within the organization and throughout the industry.

Now this also places ACS in a very unique opportunity which by making apprenticeships more accessible for underrepresented populations.

It also makes it easier for us to work with the broader workforce system. Working with persons with disabilities is a very personal topic for me.

After being wounded in combat in 2006 it wasn't easy for me as I transition back into employment.

Working to increase accessibility for people with disabilities isn't something we only do. It is who we are as an organization and in addition to the 19 percent of our apprentices self-identify as being disabled, 34 percent of our staff, which is nearly 80 workforce development professionals have self-identified as disabled.

For both ACS, there is, and our partners, there is a clear ROI for the people with disabilities. In the field our disabled or principal – apprentices have higher rates than those who do not. For ADS we have recognized that persons with disabilities have been critical in upholding our culture as we work to scale our business.

Our people and culture team report much higher retention across people in our organization who are disabled.

Passing the disabled persons act ACS was positioned to rapidly expand apprenticeships to employers while providing good jobs and offer family sustaining careers.

And today it has led to now ACS working with 12 of the largest, 12 of the 20 largest employers in clean energy including PRIMORIS.

A key strategy for ACS to successively promote employment for persons with disabilities has major that businesses understand that for them to compete in today's workforce, they need to focus on attracting staff that their competitors failed to engage.

And that will become one of the most key ingredients to their continued growth. Lastly, in my last minutes I would like to speak a little more about Jonathan.

He is partially a product of the entire work system.

He joined ACS in February 2020 through a reverse hiring fair through vocational rehabilitation group here in the Gulf Coast region.

And even though we were going through a paid internship supported by the workforce system during the pandemic it was critical to making sure as we transitioned to remote work with his IT background.

He was really key to making sure that not only he would have a job but the rest of our team. Today he is so proud.

It's great to see him grow.

I know he has seen financially; he is earning 2 to 3 times more than he did when he first started. We are really proud of him and really, is a testament to the entire work or system.

Especially Jonathan because he puts up with us every day. I would like to turn it over to my next panelist.

>> Elaine: I guess I am supposed to introduce myself.

I am Elaine Cooluris, executive director of Able-Disabled Advocacy.

Is our camera on?

>> Anupa Geevarghese: Sorry, Elaine. I've got you. I didn't have my mic on. So sorry.

This is Anupa.

Elaine: Anupa, do you want me to go ahead or do you want to introduce me?

>> Anupa Geevarghese: I've got you.

So sorry.

I was talking without my mic on. I wanted to first say, thank you to ACS.

Your work demonstrates a great example of how providing individualized support and training and collaborating with workforce system partners and employers can lead to Disabled People attaining the accommodations they need to effectively work in the construction industry.

ACS demonstrates the goods jobs principles of organizational culture and benefits.

You're create an environment where people feel comfortable to disclose.

This public private model benefits both employee and employer as well as the public workforce system.

And now, I would like to introduce our second panel able/disabled advocacy.

Thank you Elaine Cooluris for your patience to learn how they are using vocational skills training to help you with economic advancement.

Here with us today are Elaine Cooluris the executive director of A-DA and Denise Yoggerst, Youth program specialist.

>> Elaine: Thank you very much. I am Elaine Cooluris.

I am a white woman with gray hair and glasses.

I am wearing a white top and I am sitting in a red wheelchair with a big smile on my face.

Able -disabled advocacy was founded in San Diego, California.

Our mission is to provide vocational training, life skills employment and educational advancement opportunities for people with disabilities.

And to assist them in finding sustainable employment and overcoming barriers to personal and financial self-sufficiency.

To that and we have placed over 20,000 people into sustainable employment.

Today we currently operate programs that serve disabled youth with disabilities, and adults with disabilities.

Recently separated veterans and homeless veterans.

Since inception, A-DA has exercised good job principles in developing our training programs. We perform extensive labor market information research every year to identify growing occupations, wages, employers who provide health benefits who offer opportunities for career advancement.

We also conduct occupational surveys of employers for them to identify jobs that they currently have or foresee including wages, essential job duties, and descriptions.

That has been very helpful for us in developing our training programs.

We currently provide training for business services, information technology, and free apprenticeship training in construction.

88 was the first in our region to provide computer training for people who are blind, low vision and who had mobility challenges.

In 2001, we received – we were one of three recipients of President Bush's inaugural new freedom initiative award For advancing people with disabilities into employment through the use of technology.

We also, through a DOL grant the American apprenticeship initiative, developed the first registered apprenticeship program in computer support specialist in the state of California. We are currently developing a cybersecurity apprenticeship under our new H1-V grant.

Able-disabled advocacy group works with over 500 people per year and place graduates into well-paying jobs.

Since 1991 we have in place a business advisory Council.

Right now we have 20 members who represent the industries that we provide training in. They are owners, operators and human resource managers.

They meet quarterly and provide us with oversight, technology guidance, and labor market information.

They mingle with our program graduates, provide them with resume assessments and methods to include and improve resumes.

They do mock interviewing; they provide site visits and in some cases job shadowing. And they also hire our graduates.

Let's see.

Recently we became a post-secondary educational institution under the state of California. This helps us greatly in serving our veterans.

You have to be a registered school in order for veteran participant to get their housing allowances.

So that has been very, very helpful recently for recruiting more veterans.

The services that we provide to employers include no-cost background checks. We do drug testing in-house if an employer requests it.

We do advisement in available work opportunity tax credits.

We provide assistance with them getting accommodations and/or their request, help them with tailoring job descriptions which help it more feasible for a person with disabilities to perform that job.

We have been providing training in construction since 2005 when we received our first youth build grant.

We have had six consecutive grants since then.

I will now turn it over to my colleague, Denise, who will speak directly about our free apprenticeship training program in construction.

>> Denise: Good afternoon.

My name is Denise Yoggerst.

I am a white female was short blonde, grayish hair. I have a lavender and purple shirt on today.

My pronouns are she and her.

I am really excited to be here today to talk about the good work we are doing in San Diego to place youth with disabilities in jobs with the construction industry.

At the heart of our program are our partners.

We have community partners that refer people to us.

We have our employer partners who hire our pre- apprenticeships.

We have our pre-apprenticeships themselves that do all the work but most importantly we partner with the San Diego building trades -- construction trades union.

They are our partner.

Use their curriculum for our pre-apprenticeship program to ensure we are teaching skills that's up to the industry standards.

Most of the apprenticeships that we serve are ages 18 to 24 and they have learning disabilities, substance abuse or behavioral issues.

We offer a pre-apprenticeship construction program as Elaine mentioned. It is a blend of classroom training followed by hands-on applications.

They receive 10 to 12 weeks of training.

We start out doing a little bit of tool identification and then we do construction math with them. They learn about plumbing.

They learn about electrical, carpentry and landscape. We also teach them about building safety construction.

The pre-apprentice earn an OSHA 10 card and a Red Cross CPR card. We provide them with intense work readiness.

When they enter the program we have the first week have them identify a construction trade that they would like to enter.

We work with them throughout the training to help them apply for jobs for a registered apprenticeship program.

Sometimes it takes longer than anticipated for them to get into a registered apprenticeship. So we do place them in part-time jobs and provide our pre-apprentice with support services such as stipends, bus passes, tools, whatever they need to get into the construction industry.

We are proud that we have placed our pre-apprentice with the Allied trades which are the floors, glaziers and painters.

We place them with the electrical union and the labor union.

And with that I would like to turn it over to Jon Gosen who is the local coordinator for building and trades.

>> Jon: Thank you Denise.

I am Jon Gosen and I am with the San Diego building trades Council. My role on the Council is to oversee -- let me back up.

I am a white male with short blonde hair wearing a black shirt. Thank you.

I have the privilege of being able to oversee and strengthen and support ARP apprenticeship readiness programs that use the MC3 multicraft core curriculum throughout San Diego and Imperial County.

As Denise mentioned, we are, able-disabled is one of our programs and we have many in the colleges throughout the county with an emphasis in construction safety, construction math.

We really try to make sure -- we want to make sure we explained to all the participants, let them know -- build a solid foundation in the construction industry by introducing them to our 2022 regional construction union apprenticeships.

I will keep it short.

I do want to pass it over to one of our recent MC3 certification recipients. Eliana Gomez.

Thank you.

>> Elyana: Hello, everyone. Good afternoon.

My name is Elyana Gomez. My pronouns are she and her.

I am a Mexican woman.

I have on a white sweater brown hair and black rimmed glasses.

I want to thank you for giving me the time to speak about my story with A-DA. When I was going with A-DA I was given the opportunity to go into different parts of the union to understand the fundamental value of being in the union and working alongside other students who seek the same goal as me.

While in A-DA I was able to get my certification for my MC3 and my OSHA 10 and I was even able to get my CPR.

With A-DA, it is – has set forth a different journey for me.

Before entering A-DA I was at Summit college to get my welding certification which, thankfully. I accomplished.

With A-DA it gave me another set foot into my skill trade.

I was able to get the understanding of what a union can provide for me. A-DA has helped me along the way with getting my first car.

It is given me the resources to understand what the workforce, as for a woman, it can provide for me.

It has made my outlook on my journey more eventful.

A-DA has brought so much hope into my ideal sense of working.

Currently right now I am still in the process of looking for work. I'm thankful for A-DA.

I can always go back from day to day and check in with them and see what else they have for me.

A-DA has helped me a lot with getting the chance and opportunity to be in the workforce. So, for that I do want to say thank you.

I want to thank you all for giving me the time. I am also keeping it short.

There isn't that much for me to go along with my story but I do have to say that A-DA has really been a great place for people like me who seek balance in their work and want to get more knowledge and skill training -skill training.

For that, I want to say thank you.

And I hope you have a great rest of your day.

Thank you for giving me the time to speak about my journey.

>> Anupa Geevarghese: Thank you for that wonderful presentation. Thank you Jon Gosen and Elyana Gomez for sharing your story.

A-DA really showed us how they prepare and equip jobseekers to create apprenticeships and help graduates get placed in union apprenticeship programs.

This example from A-DA really highlights several of the good jobs principles and especially skills and career advancement and the importance of diversity, equity,

inclusion and accessibility principles. Like ACS A-DA is a great example of collaboration that helps both the business community and the employee get good jobs.

Thank you both, to our panelists. Sarah, I will pass it back to you.

If you can share if you resources shared by The LEAD Center to highlight the jobs rentals and success stories.

>> Sarah: Thank you, Anupa Geevarghese and with you I share an appreciation for the stories today.

We have a few amazing resources that I want to share with you.

One is we have created a fact sheet called people with disabilities and the good job principles. This fact sheet will share how the good jobs principles empower employers to intentionally recruit, train, retain, and promote people with disabilities in ways that are accessible to all jobseekers including those with disabilities.

We also have an this is brand-new; we have employment success stories page.

We have stories on there about employees with disabilities and other barriers to employment. Receiving support so that they along with their employers can thrive.

These stories that are on the website show the good jobs principles in action.

I encourage you to visit the page and read the stories and stay tuned because we will be continuing to add stories to the page.

We also have available on The LEAD Center web site the archived good jobs initiative webinar. The first one that was held back in October and if you haven't had a chance to hear the webinar I highly encourage you to go back and hear the recorded webinar.

In that we share strategies to support business and employees to ensure they have joint success and promote retention and opportunities for advancement. Again I want to thank the presenters that were here today.

We have a couple minutes I thought if the presenters don't mind and Anupa, we could at least go through a couple of questions.

I was thinking, they have so many questions we cannot get through them all. I think some of them that were entered were really good.

Someone asked, you work with the princes receiving disability benefits. I don't know if anyone can answer that.

>> Elaine: This is Elaine Cooluris.

Because we work with all disability populations, some of our apprentices might get SSI benefits because of a disability.

So the answer is yes.

Also, a lot of our veterans are on VA disability.

We are working with a lot of people who are receiving government benefits.

The point we made is we want to get them off those benefits and into financial and personal self-sufficiency.

>> Anupa Geevarghese: Another great questions we received was around accommodations. What kind of accommodations are around construction workers. Can you share?

>> Nicholas: At ACS we had an apprentice with a partial hand imputation. We were able to successfully place them in the telecom industry.

There's a lot of 5G upgrade that has been going on over the last decade. That work is done in two manners.

Sometimes it is out of lifts and other sites it is tower climbing.

That apprentice was very successful because he was on one of the crews that used the truck that had the lift to take them to do the install.

PRIMORIS, I believe, Louis that they had some other examples.

Louis was sharing, he was sharing how they've done different rescue equipment and other tools and PPE and gear to many of the apprentices as well as adjusting to travel accommodations for those individuals.

Most of PRIMORIS's work does require some of the workers to travel from project to project.

>> Anupa Geevarghese: One other question I see in the chat, do you receive it - a certificate after completion?

>> Nicholas: Yes.

At ACS, all of our apprenticeships are registered programs as I believe are those of my co-panelists.

They not only receive a certificate from the Department of Labor, they also learn a certificate whether it's from the national education center for research at the completion of the DOL apprenticeship is my favorite because it's not like a degree in the sense that it only shows that you have completed some academic requirements.

A registered apprenticeship shows you down the academic requirements, gained the skills and equally as important, you have the actual experience doing this job and that is why the princes, as they complete an apprenticeship, DOL states they will learn \$300,000 more in their career because they will be easier to employ.

When they go to the next job they will get the best wages because they have that certified experience.

>> Anupa Geevarghese: Thank you so much Nic. I think we are out of time.

I'm going to pass it back to Sarah to wrap us up.

>> Sarah: You so much.

I appreciate everyone again today.

Can you move to the next slide, please?

I just want to let you know to please check out our website at LEAD Center where you can find this event, recording and transcript within 10 business days.

We also have a very robust library of resources that we would love you to look at.

We also encourage you to sign up for our newsletter as it will give you information about future and past events and promising practices from the field.

Again I would like to thank all the presenters who joined us today.

Assistant Secretary Taryn Williams and Paige Shevlin and Anupa Geevarghese. Thank you so much for presenting with us.

Have a wonderful afternoon.