

Derek Shields: Hello and welcome to today's EN Essentials session entitled "Marketing Tactics to Promote Your EN." My name is Derek Shields and I'll be serving as today's moderator. If this is your first EN Essentials training session, we welcome you. The sessions are designed to cover content that helps ENs around both performance and compliance, and today's session will definitely get into the performance area. And the learning events build upon the EN Foundations training, and we try to feature new resources and strategies for your consideration.

This event is the second of two sessions featuring information on marketing. Today, we focus on implementation and the execution components involved in marketing. And we'll highlight some popular marketing tactics and feature a panel of EN leaders who are going to be sharing with you their strategies to build Ticket Program awareness, to also increase *Ticket assignments, and importantly, to develop relationships with employers and partners. The session builds off of last month's session, which was entitled "Spring into Marketing and Start with a Plan," and that, of course, focused on marketing, research, and planning.

Now, let's review our agenda and some housekeeping items before we dive into today's content. Today, we'll start by covering some helpful logistics, and then I'll introduce our presenter and tell you who our panelists are. Next, I'll review the EN Guide for Marketing and the companion workbook that we published back in May. And then our presenter is going to cover the implementation phase of marketing and she'll be looking at channels and tactics and modern media and much more, but we'll leave that to her to get into as part of her presentation. After about 20 minutes of that content, we'll then transition to these EN representatives we have with us, five individuals that will have an exchange and we'll close with our customary audience Q&A.

Now that we have our agenda covered, let's move forward to our logistics slide, please.

First, it's important to recall that TPM is, or the Ticket Program Manager, is recording and capturing a transcript from today's meeting, and we'll make that available on the Your Ticket to Work website in the EN Essentials Learning Events area. For questions today, please feel free to ask questions in the chat. We appreciate your questions and comments there. If you have additional questions or comments that you would like to send us, please use our email address, enoperations@yourtickettowork.ssa.gov, and we'll make sure to route that to the appropriate individuals for responses.

Importantly, we have closed captioning, and it is available for participants who join using the MS Teams application or by using the closed caption link provided in the GovDelivery email announcement for today's call and also in chat. To turn on closed captions in MS Teams, go to the three ellipses at the top of the MS Teams window. There, click on *more* and scroll down to the language and speech section and turn on *live captions*. When using the link option, paste that link into your own internet browser and it will open a separate window to view all of the closed captioning. And please remember at the bottom here that per the Ticket Program

Agreement, Part 3, Section 11, Subsection I, EN staff are not permitted to record this meeting nor capture the transcript. Next slide, please.

Okay. As I mentioned, I'm serving as the moderator. I'm Derek with the Ticket Program Manager, and I'm joined today by Jayme Pendergraft. Jayme is the Director of Communications and Outreach for Social Security's Ticket to Work Program. Jayme agreed to come back for the implementation session to share more of her experiences and recommendations with us, and we'll have her take over this session shortly. But first, let's also share with you who our panelists will be who will join us after Jayme's presentation. Next slide, please.

Today we have five speakers from four ENs joining us, and they'll fully introduce themselves when we begin the EN panel in just a little bit. But I'll mention them now so you can know who's here. From Ability Beyond in Connecticut, we have Kevin Cooper. From AHEDD in Pennsylvania, we're being joined by Lori Tyndall. From the Hawkeye Employment Network and the Hawkeye Administrative EN in Iowa, we have Caitlin Blau and Brenna Schaefer. And from the Workforce Essentials EN in Tennessee, we'll be joined by Portia Williams. We had a lot of fun planning this session with these five individuals and we certainly appreciate their time and joining us for our EN panel. Next slide.

Okay. As I mentioned with their agenda, we want to start out by reminding you of a couple of new resources and to ensure your awareness of the EN Guide to Marketing. It's a new resource to assist the ENs in marketing services to clients and to partners. And the guide builds upon the Ticket Program EN Foundation's learning modules that you're all familiar with, Part One and Part Two on marketing. It's really a useful public relations framework for developing a marketing plan, along with sharing dozens of practical strategies and best practices that you can use to market your services to a variety of segments and partners. Assuming most of you all have established a mission and have determined that you can be successful with the Ticket Program, the document really dives into suggestions that ENs can use to revisit, refine, or enhance your mission along with your marketing operations. And on this slide, it covers the content, marketing concepts tailored for ENs, step-by-step guidance for developing a marketing plan with the different components, and strategies and ideas for implementation, along with content and resources developed by and for the Ticket Program to aid ENs in marketing work. And those last two, of course, is really what we're going to focus on more today. Let's move to the next slide.

On the next slide, we cover the companion workbook. The marketing guide has a workbook with in-depth information, examples, and templates. And we really want you to be aware of these. Perhaps this isn't new, but these tools can help you refresh or revisit some of the original marketing planning work that was done. And it could help you go through these critical areas, including audience identification, situational analysis, your mission statement, importantly, value proposition, brand identity, and goals and objectives. These are key areas in research and planning, which we covered in the last session. So, the workbook tools are really designed for those first two phases of the marketing process. So, make sure you're aware of these. If you haven't checked them out, we encourage you to do so. And at the end, we'll show exactly where

you can access those again. So please consider the EN Essentials section of the training event site to get those. Okay. Next slide, please.

All right. As I mentioned, today we're focused on implementation. And for now, for this section, I'm going to introduce Jayme Pendergraft, who's now joined us. Jayme is the Director of Communications and Outreach for Social Security's Ticket to Work Program. She's also a skilled strategic communicator and project manager and provides direction and thought leadership in the research, planning, development, and implementation of multiple communication efforts across a variety of channels and platforms. This is a complex marketing effort on a national level, and she's been doing this through several different positions with the Ticket Program since 2007. Jayme has also focused on partnering, community engagement and relationship building for various other federal programs. And with that, I welcome Jayme back to EN Essentials and turn the session over to you.

Jayme Pendergraft: Thank you so much, Derek, for that kind introduction. I'm so happy to be back with you all for Part Two of our EN Essential series focused on marketing and outreach. If you missed Part One, you can view it on the Your Ticket to Work website under training and events. During Part One, I covered research and planning. Today we'll get into some of the fun stuff, implementation. How do we take what we learned during our research and planning phase and make it happen? There's still more to learn as we strive to reach Ticketholders. Next slide, please.

First, let's talk about marketing channels, which are broad categories of marketing activities to promote your services and engage with your audiences. Remember, you probably have a couple of different audiences, including Ticketholders, their friends and families, other organizations, and even employers, so which channel you use may depend on who you're trying to reach. There are several channels listed on this slide. They include website, social media, email marketing, events, media and public relations, print collateral, and partnerships and collaboration. We'll get into more details on each of these, but all of these channels serve as an introduction to your organization and need to be planned thoughtfully as you think about your marketing strategy. Next slide, please.

So, what are marketing tactics? They help you execute your overall marketing strategy and are concrete actionable steps you can implement within each channel. We talked about setting goals during last month's presentation and here's your opportunity. For example, you may decide you'd like to blog weekly, send emails monthly, and host webinars quarterly. Stick to your schedule and don't forget to see how it goes and adjust accordingly. Here at TPM, our goals are to blog weekly, and I'm sure as you're all aware, we do send email messages more frequently than in this example. But for our public audience, we email when there's a new blog post, success story, or other timely information that may be of interest, like a WISE webinar coming up. By coordinating these tactics, we see success with our marketing activities. Next slide, please.

Every EN is required to have a website or web page dedicated specifically to Ticket Program efforts. You should make this your hub for your online activities. It helps you create awareness,

promote your services, educate visitors, and prompt interest in the Ticket Program. As I've said frequently, and I'm sure many of you have heard it, you can post any materials available in the Ticket to Work Service Provider Toolkit on your site. The resources there include the logo, fact sheets, graphics, success stories, and more. Try and make it easy for you to grab fresh content when you're looking for it. And if you ever have any feedback on anything there or are looking for something else, please do feel free to reach out to us and let us know what might be missing or what could be a little different. One key thing regarding websites, remember to update it. If you have updated info on your website, you will miss out on clients. If your site doesn't look good, you will miss out on clients. Try to think of some websites you like and determine why. Is it the color scheme, graphics, a font? Work on your site until you're satisfied and then remember to keep working on it. There are a lot of freelancers out there who can help with this. There are several different resources you can use to identify someone who might be able to help you build a website if you don't have those capabilities yourself, and there are also several different programs that can walk you through how to do it as well. So, I encourage you not to be scared of working with your website, but just to jump in and see what you might be able to do and then supplement that with some extra help if you need it. Next slide, please.

Social media has become the primary source of information for so many people and it's important that you are active and engage on your social media platforms. I'm not going to get into too many details about the different platforms, but they include Facebook, X, formerly Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, and YouTube. Depending on your audience, you may choose to focus on different content on different platforms. For example, your Facebook and Instagram may be more Ticketholder focused, while LinkedIn could be a chance to connect with employers and other organizations. I'll give you a couple of tips from our experience on social media. We publish a career fair blog post the first week of every month, and those posts tend to do very well. Think about what your audience wants to know, and then share the content about that topic. Most of your audience is likely looking for a job so feel free to share our career fairs posts along with info about how you can help. Our webinar announcement posts also perform well. They're published early in the month and again you're welcome to either create your own posts or simply hit that share button. And really see what does well for you and then lean into that type of content. Your audience may be a little different from ours and other posts might do better for you. Next slide, please.

The next topic is events. By hosting or co-hosting events, your EN can promote your services, establish your credibility as an expert on certain topics, attract more leads, build relationships, and educate your targeted audiences. Co-hosting events with partners and organizations with common interests can help offset costs as well. Events can bring together key audiences such as beneficiaries, disability partners, and employers for learning and collaboration. You might even consider an online event since so much is online now, but it's still good to have those partners available to help if you need them.

A personal story or a work story. I attended an in-person WISE event in Indiana a long time ago. I think it was probably 2008 or so. And I was amazed about the number of organizations represented there. This event really showed me the employment team that's ready to help

Ticketholders on their path to financial independence. And if you have the chance, we strongly encourage you to get all those partners in the same room or in the same online event if you can because it shows how much support there is out there for Ticketholders. Next slide, please.

Media relations and public relations are two distinct things, but both are important for building awareness, credibility, and a positive reputation for your EN. Public relations can encompass many strategies, including media relations to tell your story and build a positive image with your key audiences and the public. Media relations focus specifically on delivering news and current events through journalists for radio stations, television channels, online news outlets, and newspapers. Both of these activities are essential to getting the word out about your organization. If you provide the tools, you can make sure your message is coming across as you want your audience to receive it. If you have the opportunity to jump on a local morning show or to get some sort of free PSA on the radio, go for it. You never know who you're going to reach. It's always great to seize those opportunities, even if it's something you're a little bit uncomfortable with, like appearing on TV possibly. I encourage you just to go for it. It's good to get the word out. Next slide, please.

Print collateral refers to the use of physically printed materials to reach your key audiences. This includes tactics such as sending direct mail, advertising in publications, creating signage, or disseminating printed materials or promotional products in a variety of ways. Everybody loves the free pen. Next slide, please.

For those of you who joined last month, and you've already heard a little bit about it today, that relationship building is key. Forming relationships with Ticket program stakeholders, related government agencies, and organizations with similar interests can significantly expand your reach, resources, and impact. Collaboration allows you to leverage shared audiences, strengths, and capabilities. ENs need to understand what other stakeholders do, their priorities and mutual interests, how they're funded, and where they each fit in the continuum of disability or employment services. Marketing your organization successfully with the right partners can expand funding, service options, and employment opportunities, and it contributes to initial and ongoing employment success for your clients. Remember, these don't necessarily have to be disability organizations. Build relationships with your local community college, library, or any other organization that job seekers might encounter on a regular basis. In doing some research and having conversations with some Ticket service providers. I tend to mention libraries a lot. That is one of the number one places that people go to look for a job. Especially for folks who may not have the best computer access or internet access in their homes at this point. And the ENs and other providers I've talked to have said they've had so much luck talking to the local library, getting a flyer in there, or even hosting an event in one of the libraries free or relatively inexpensive to rent rooms. So never rule out any organization just because it doesn't have to do with disability. Next slide, please.

So how can we help? We have lots of tools and resources available to help with all of these activities. The first one we'll talk about is the Find Help tool, which you all are listed in. But we do encourage you to add a description on the Find Help tool to draw in potential Ticketholders. This is a really good opportunity to grab the attention of a Ticketholder searching for services. You

want to basically describe what your EN offers, what sets it apart from other ENs, and how it could benefit Ticketholders. Make it catchy. Make sure the Ticketholder is going to see that you stand out in your Find Help tool description. If you'd like to add a description to your EN listing on the Find Help tool or to update the one you have, you can email enservice@SSA.gov with a description of 250 characters or less about what your EN offers. And again, what sets it apart from other ENs, and how you can benefit potential Ticketholders? So maybe this is where you call out that you have bilingual services available at your EN. I know that's a part of the guided search on the Find Help tool, but you might as well put it in your description too if it fits and if that's a big thing you want to push in your community.

The next program we do have is if your EN is interested in reaching out to Ticketholders directly, the Marketing Business Program may allow you to receive a list of beneficiaries in the area or areas you serve, and you can learn more about that program by contacting data.marketing.poc@ssa.gov. We have another program that we manage here at TPM, and that is our text marketing program. We'll send information and resources about the Ticket program via text. If you're interested in signing up for this, you can text the word "ticket" to 1-571-489-5292. You can opt-in, and we encourage you to share this program with your clients. While standard messaging rates may apply, folks can opt-out at any time. And we do try and plan our texts around what we're talking about during a particular month. So, for example, this month our WISE webinar is about what will happen to my Social Security disability benefits if I go to work, and we're texting out information about that particular webinar.

A couple of months ago, we published a volunteering success story and how volunteer skills can lead to work skills and we texted about that so we do try and plan as I talked about last month and align our each activities together for a month. And I mentioned this a bit earlier, but the service provider outreach toolkit provides customizable cost-effective marketing materials for your EN, and the resources are branded and ready to use. Some of them are basically fill-in-the-blank. You can change them and update them to include your information. There are a few things that are available to print just as they are. But I do encourage you to take a look at that toolkit and see what you can use. And lastly, we do regularly send GovDelivery email communications that can include information for your newsletters, blogs, and social media posts. You can use this information to repurpose current content provided by the Ticket Program. So, we're going to email you every time there's a WISE webinar or a new success story, and in those emails, we include information about how you can share. We basically provide the content you need to just copy and paste and put into whatever platform you'd like to use, be it a newsletter, social media, or even a blog post. You're always welcome to share content from our social media accounts just by logging in and clicking share. You can write a lead in and say something like check out what Ticket did, here's how my EN can help you to kind of personalize it towards your organization. Next slide, please.

This slide shows all of the places you can find Ticket Program content. We're putting the links in the chat. And as I said, feel free to like and share anything we make available. We do publish about four success stories per year. If you have any success story leads for us, send an email to stories@choosework.ssa.gov and we'll be happy to discuss it with you. As I mentioned, we're



pretty active on social media, on X and Facebook. And I talked about the WISE webinars a couple of times without really getting into what exactly they are. But WISE webinars are a national online free accessible opportunity for Ticketholders and their friends and family members to learn more about the program. And sometimes we will have a special topic. We do talk about things like how work will affect Medicaid and Medicare, we've talked about self-employment, working from home, and of course, we're always open to ideas if you have any. But the way that I see those WISE webinars as a good promotional opportunity for you all is that you can promote the webinar, get your Ticketholders some basic information about the program, and then get down to more specific questions afterwards. So, you don't have to handle all of that. What is this program? What are we talking about today? Because we'll be able to reach out to a larger audience and get more people in the room. And then you can do the one-on-one following.

We do also have the Choose Work blog. As I mentioned, we publish posts weekly. We do try and align our content with our theme for the month, which is often related to the webinar. We also will discuss updates on success stories. We will post about monthly observances and a variety of other different Ticket and employment-related topics. Then lastly, we do have some fact sheets and resources. This is where you can find all of the resources that we've published. There's information there, like presenting your best self to employers, or what is Ticket to Work, along with a bunch of other more detailed fact sheets that you're welcome to print out and hand out, put together in an email, or really just kind of lean on if you need some additional help with some of those questions — with related questions. Next slide, please.

So, this is kind of a bit of a wrap-up slide. It's very important to make time on a regular basis to revisit your marketing plan and evaluate what is and is not successful. You should adjust your strategy based on your outcomes and resources. You might want to shift your resources around, but here are some tips that will help you succeed across all of these channels. You should remember to feature your mission statement prominently. Tell people who you are, what you do, who you serve, and how you get results. Tell people how to engage with your EN. Make it easy for them to find your contact info and what their next steps should be. There's nothing more annoying than having to scroll through several pages of a website to find a phone number or an email. Make it easy for the people who come to your sites or social media channels to know how to reach out to you. You should also ensure that all of your content is accessible and consistently reflects your brand identity.

So that's where we get back to our mission statement, our logo, our colors. You want to make sure that your content is on-brand. We also encourage you to use person-first language, and this is when referencing a person with a disability or instead of saying something like disabled person, there are many trainings available online out there about how to use person-first language. We also encourage you to adapt your tone and messaging for your different audiences. Your Ticketholder and more public audience might have a bit of a different tone than your employer audience. So just remember when you're doing different types of outreach to vary it because employers don't need to know what Ticketholders need to know necessarily and vice versa. We always encourage you to use that content offered by the Ticket Program. And

when a marketing activity is complete, evaluate what your efforts achieved to determine if it was a successful activity. Remember, success doesn't look the same for everyone. If you gained one Ticketholder or 50, your marketing activities still matter and support financial independence for beneficiaries. Sometimes there's just an opportunity to grow and learn from what you've done. Now I'd like to hand it back over to Derek for the real stars of today's show and our panel.

Derek Shields: Thank you so much, Jayme, for going through the implementation content. It really sets our foundation for today's EN panel. And at this time, I'd appreciate if our panelists can turn on their cameras and their microphones. And Alicia, if you could drop the slide deck and we'll see everybody. Yes, thank you. And here comes Portia as well. So welcome, EN panelists, to the marketing show. We appreciate your time and really want to take some of the promises of implementation tactics that Jayme was talking about and hear your stories about how implementation actually works for you in the field. That could include some of the success strategies but also some of those lessons learned that you've had along the way with growing your ENs. To start, what we'd love to do first is to have you all introduce yourself, so we get to know you a little bit more and folks know your name, your role at your EN, your EN name, and a little bit about the size and operations of your EN. So, we're going to popcorn this around. We're going to start with Brenna and then Caitlin with Hawkeye, and then go to Portia and then Kevin and wrap up with Lori. So, Brenna, please kick us off.

Brenna Schaefer: Sure, hi everyone. I'm Brenna Schaefer. I am the workforce coordinator at Hawkeye Community College. We have two business model Employment Networks here. We have a traditional and an administrative EN, both of our models are national Employment Networks. And although we do have the capacity to provide services on a very large scale, we found that focusing our efforts by region, specifically in the Midwest and within specific communities that we serve has been the most successful in terms of being able to provide quality services to our Ticketholders who are a good match for our program. And Caitlin is my counterpart here at Hawkeye.

Caitlin Blau: Hi, everybody. My name is Caitlin Blau, and I am the Disability Resource Coordinator for Hawkeye Employment Network. We are a traditional EN that serves local and nationally for Ticketholders. And a really interesting aspect of our organization that differs from the norm is that our program is placed within a community college and part of the workforce division of that college. So, this allows us to access the Ticketholders who are already pursuing training or educational programs, as well as it allows us to connect Ticketholders to training programs if they're interested in that career path. It's just been a big asset to our EN and a great resource to market to our local Ticketholders as well. And I will turn it over to Portia.

Portia Williams: Hi, everyone. My name is Portia Williams. I'm the Regional Disability Coordinator for the Ticket Program at Workforce Essentials here in Tennessee. We are located inside of an American Job Center where we service the state of Tennessee as well as Kentucky because we do sit on the border of Kentucky. And we're a smaller EN because we are a workforce, but we do have the privilege of having a bilingual staff member, so that's a major benefit to us. Even though we don't service a particular population or cater to any specific

disability, we do kind of get a variety of everyone. We have the privilege of being inside the American Job Center. So, I will turn it over to Kevin Cooper.

Kevin Cooper: All right. Thank you, Portia. Hi, everybody. I hope everyone is having a great day. My name is Kevin Cooper. I am the Ticket to Work Program Manager, also a Certified Work Incentive Practitioner at Ability Beyond. Ability Beyond is a nonprofit agency. We're based out of Bethel, Connecticut, and actually started over 60 years ago by a group of families in the Denver area who couldn't find any appropriate services for their loved ones. So, they started that agency literally in their living room. And now we have grown to become one of the larger nonprofits in Connecticut, providing residential and day and work services to roughly over 3,000 individuals. Our Ticket Program, we're a traditional model. We've been participating in the Ticket to Work program for over 14 years. We serve an average of about 150 individuals a year. We have three full-time staff. And I also work with clients on a one-to-one basis. When we first became a Ticket EN, we were just serving Connecticut and New York. Roughly about five years ago, we decided to scale up the program to become a national Employment Network. And our goal is to continue to grow the program. So that's why we've really gotten deep into the new marketing efforts here. So I appreciate your time. Next, I believe we have Lori Tyndall.

Lori Tyndall: Thank you, Kevin. It was great hearing about all of your backgrounds. I am the Vice President here at AHEDD. We are in Pennsylvania, but we're a national EN. We are also an administrative EN. We currently have three partner affiliates, if you will, providing services in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Missouri. What sets us apart is providing employment services is our singular focus. We provide in-person services. We're across the state of Pennsylvania and nationally, of course, you know, we cover the country. We have been doing this since 2001, so we've been involved in the Ticket to Work since the inception, so I guess that's 23 years or so. We've been around as an organization since 1977, so we've been doing this for a little while. We still have much to learn, so I'm excited to be a part of this group and offer some advice and learn some along the way. So, thank you for having me. Derek, back to you.

Derek Shields: Thank you so much, Lori, and for everyone to introduce yourself and share a little bit about your EN story and development and who you serve or where you serve. We have a bit of a mix and that's good to find out some different marketing stories for different sizes and geographies too. So, let's dive into it. We have three specific questions that we've been planning to talk with you each about, and we're going to start with the first one, and it really gets to the key. How do we identify potential Ticketholders to serve? Without that, we're not going to be able to sustain our operations, so we want to ask you each what outreach methods are working for you, and kind of walk through some of the key ones that you would like to share with everybody today. And to start this off, we're going to go to Portia to hear about Workforce Essentials and what's working for you. Portia?

Portia Williams: Hi, again. So, the number one thing that works for us is boots on the ground. We are trying to be as active as possible within the community. So that mostly includes attending all job fairs and resource fairs. We set up our Ticket to Work booth. Even though we aren't offering any jobs, we offer a plethora of information. We find that being at those fairs where people are going to come who are looking for employment, we're able to debunk a lot of

myths by being there and giving out factual information about how the program works and answer what we can on the fly about the Ticket to Work Program in general. We give out a lot of cards and information there. So even sometimes people don't always -- they're not always on any type of Social Security benefit. However, they have family members, they have friends, and they take our information back to them. So that has been our most effective way to reach out to beneficiaries and Ticketholders. We recently even started attending housing fairs. So, the HUD fairs, we attend those, and we didn't used to have as much success, but lately we actually have been having much more success with getting calls after and being able to get information out there at those fairs as well. And probably something that we've always done that we see a big push on is reaching out to parents who have children with disabilities and explaining to them, you know, what an age 18 redetermination looks like. And answering the questions, it kind of eases their mind, eases those fears about their children going into employment now that it's time for them to start earning some money of their own. So those connections are usually long-term and beneficial as well.

Derek Shields: Thanks, Portia. This is Derek. So, one thing I heard you say is we, and we do these things. Describe to us how many people is the "we" like, is this a large team? Is this you?

Portia Williams: It's very, very small. It's usually me and my one counterpart Ruby. It's very small, but we try to be present everywhere we can. We mostly travel within the 13 counties in the Upper Cumberland area of Tennessee. And we try to be at everything that we can. And with AJCs, there's job fairs happening every week. But there's two of us, so we're usually running.

Derek Shields: Thanks, Portia. This is Derek again. I think it's important to understand some marketing teams are very small and you have large geographies to cover. And yet, you have three really great strategies to find Ticketholders, and I love the last one, parents and other influencers that can get messaging to Ticketholders as they're transitioning at 18 or other ages as they look to careers and work for to fulfill their dreams too. So, thanks for that. Lori, let's go to what's going on at AHEDD in regards to what's successful.

Lori Tyndall: Thank you, Derek. So, when I was posed this question, I had to think about internal marketing to our own team. When I say we cover Pennsylvania, that's about 60 employees across the state in various regions. So, it's an ongoing process to onboard and continually training our own staff about looking for candidates that are getting Social Security benefits, referring for work incentive counseling, talking about the Ticket to Work, and not just to our staff, but to the other funders who make those referrals. So, we don't necessarily just sit and wait for referrals to come to us, but we've been doing this for a little bit. We do have a presence in various communities in the state. So, people that are already known to us, known to have disabilities, we just need to go a little bit further in discussing, well, listen, there's this program that really shows a long-term commitment. There are so many benefits to you as the Ticketholders. So really, it's a challenge sometimes, but, you know, we don't just have one person speaking to all of the people that we work with because we are 50, 60 employees deep. So just really working with funders and, you know, partners that we have that make recommendations and make referrals and continually talking about the Ticket to Work to enroll people and to go from there. It's one way.

Derek Shields: This is Derek again. Thanks, Lori. I'll follow up for you there. So, Portia was looking at external outreach, and you bring up the importance of internal outreach and getting the right messaging to a larger team that's doing this work so you can have some consistencies. Kind of like using the toolkit Jayme was describing, but how do we bring that brand out so AHEDD is consistent? I kept on hearing referrals and the importance of those relationships. Can you share at least some examples of these funders that you're receiving referrals?

Lori Tyndall: Well, we are a vendor with the Pennsylvania Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, so VR, and we do have an agreement with our state VR for Partnership Plus, so that's of course very helpful. The Department of Human Services, the Office of Developmental Programs, specifically working with individuals with intellectual disabilities, autism, we have several agreements with mental health organizations, school districts, you know, we're also doing all that external marketing, but our reach, you know, really is diverse. It's starting as early as age 14, but realizing Ticket to Work is 18 and above, and really across all disabilities, so that's just a little sample for you.

Derek Shields: This is Derek again. Thank you. That's really helpful for me to connect and somewhat follow the money. There are streams coming out from the federal system into the states. These are where your potential Ticketholders are, and maybe they're younger at the start, but if you develop those relationships, yeah. Very helpful. Thank you, Lori. All right. Let's move now to Caitlin. Caitlin, your thoughts on successful outreach efforts?

Caitlin Blau: First, I also want to start with that we are a team of two, so this is like Portia, similar to Portia's story, because we are, you know, spearheading everything. It can be difficult, but—and I also want to piggyback Portia. We also try to get career fairs, job fairs, anything going on in our community that we can be at, that we can table at, we definitely try to be there. And if one of us, the two of us, you know, are unable to go to any type of events, we, our department, the workforce that we kind of are under, they're so familiar with our program that they have no problem taking our flyers, our information. So that is like super helpful because two people can't always be in the same place at the same time, you know. But so that's gone really well. We work with our department. We work with other programs amongst our department. And we really advocate, I think that anytime we can advocate for one another, that can get the word out about Ticket, we can get the word out about their programs that has been super helpful for referrals as well. But because we are also a national EN and not everything is local, so regarding local—or excuse me, regarding national marketing and how we can get referrals or get Ticketholders, I've done a lot of different things, mostly flyers and postcards we've done, and they can be effective, especially for the out-of-staters. If they have that postcard with our information on it, they send it to somebody else if they don't use it. So at least it's floating out on someone's kitchen table, but it's there, right? Our name's getting out, which is the main, you know, the purpose of this.

But I've also noticed when we do the marketing for Social Security when we get our file, we're fortunate enough that we have a text messaging system so we can push out, you know, hundreds of text messages at a time to reach hundreds of people. We just finished, wrapped up one, and it was probably our most successful one in the two years I've worked on this. And I

switched up a little bit of the text messaging. And I wrote this down. The last message we used was 30 words. Prior, we were using, on average, 55 words. I've got more responses from the smaller message, and yes, these are all SSA-approved, by the way. Get it approved. That the smaller one, we just got so much more feedback. It was so much more simple. It didn't have too much information where you just lose the -- I'm thinking about the average person when you get a message like that, right? When it starts to get super wordy, you're like, "What is this? This could be a scam." It's short and simple. And then when they respond, you say I'm, you know, Caitlin. I'm from this organization, I work with the Ticket to Work Program, let's schedule a call. And I used to say when's a good time or when are you usually free? Now, I start, "Are you good on Monday at 1 p.m. Does that work?" No. Then they'll usually say, "No, let's do Tuesday at 11. That works for me." I try to be a little bit more direct with responses so we can get people on calls and start talking to people. So that's been a big game changer.

And then regarding like the flyers and postcards that we send to our affiliates out in, you know, we have Nebraska, Minnesota, Wisconsin, I try to think about their demographics. The Midwest is, you know, there's a lot of rural areas, right? I might not be familiar with all of those rural areas and what they offer as in jobs and employment. So, I try to cater it to a more rural demographic of people, thinking about where they're from. Here, where I am personally, I live in, and we work in a very diverse industrial manufacturing area. So, when I send out flyers more locally, I'm going to switch that up a little bit to show, you know, different opportunities are going to be different. So, I might switch up my messaging, my marketing pictures, content on each flyer or a mail, or a postcard. So that's been kind of like a couple for us and it's hard. It's always going to be a hit or miss too. By the way, I'm not saying I'm super successful, but I found more success in the last six months, switching things up a little bit and really trying to reach a larger audience.

Derek Shields: Caitlin, thank you so much. This is Derek again. I appreciate these examples. Let's go back to the first one, though. Did you say table up?

Caitlin Blau: Oh, I was probably talking fast. Tabling. So --

Derek Shields: Tabling, yeah.

Caitlin Blau: Tabling, yeah. I call it tabling. I don't know if other people call it tabling. But, we just had our -- well, you guys, take advantage of the summer because everyone has their town. You know, we have My Waterloo Days, which is a three-day event that the town puts on. And then every, all of these little rural communities have their, you know, strawberry days. You bring a table out there if you can if you have the resources. So just this -- on Saturday, they were tabling for Hawkeye. And, you know, I was able to go down there, experiment, and just talk to people. So, there are so many different events, but tabling's important, even if it's not necessarily a career event, but if it's a community event, go to it.

Derek Shields: Yep, well, I love it. Caitlin and Portia have the same mindset, and I think others might be out there. Also, just to re-emphasize, your learning around keeping it simple and short and making it easy for people that reinforces we heard from Jayme earlier as well.

Caitlin Blau: Yup, 100%.



Derek Shields: So, thanks for that. When you were talking about the text messaging program or the Marketing Business Program, there was another comment in chat to discuss that. I just want to emphasize, today we're not going into the details of the program, but if you want more information, please email data.marketing.poc@ssa.gov. You can get more information about how to participate there and appreciate Caitlin's response. So, let's move now to Kevin. Kevin coming out of Connecticut, a smaller EN, grew over time. You've got a lot of experience in outreach successes, probably some failures along the way too. What would you like to share with everyone around some of the strategies that have worked for you?

Kevin Cooper: Yeah, Derek, a lot of trial and error, and some great ideas from the panelists today. We have actually had our best success utilizing the EN directory on the choosework.ssa site. It is definitely beneficial that we start with A and we're first up and people are just scrolling. But we leveraged that handy marketing statement early on. And we just wanted to kind of set ourselves apart and give people a brief description of the services that we provide in our mission statement, which is basically we discover, build, and celebrate the ability in all people. So, we really tried to project those values into the marketing statement. And for the most part, for 13 years, that exclusively sustained our program.

But as I mentioned earlier, we want to continue to grow the program. We've hired an additional full-time staff. So, it's really forced us to look at additional marketing tools and strategies. So, about a year ago, we jumped headfirst into the EN marketing demonstration as well. And again, a lot of trial and error. And I would agree, simplicity, brevity is definitely probably your best strategy with that. We typically will get a file of about 5000 beneficiaries, typically in the Northeast area where we have a more established network of employers. We text and we've got a whole list of approved texts, and we always play around with which one is more effective, which one has the most response. We play around with the time of day and when we send them out, a lot of different variables. We've also tried like a general call to action to find out general information, which we've found pretty effective, but we've also tried the webinar and used the texting as a way to advertise webinars. And, you know, we've done the general overview of the Ticket to Work Program and available work incentives. We've tried to specialize in helping people who are struggling to write an effective resume that covers gaps in their work history. We're really just kind of using the spaghetti approach to throw it all in the wall. And we've had decent results. You know, we're still figuring it out. We're a year in and I feel like we can improve, but it's definitely driven some additional traffic into the program.

I also want to say that I set aside at least an hour every day to respond as quickly as I can to any and all inquiries because we find that, you know, in such a competitive environment, people with limited attention spans there, you know, we want to catch them when they are reaching out to us. So, we're very aggressive with our response. And we think that's hopefully reflective, too, of our responsive services and just being, you know, professional and meeting people where they are.

Real quick, we have also been lucky enough to be awarded a Google Ad Grant, excuse me, for nonprofits. So, we've been able to use this to do some more creative advertising and with that, we're always trying to use our success stories and our vlogs and it's not just the Ticket to Work

program but our full agency and the range of services that we provide. And this does give us a lot more creative ways to outreach the potential clients. We also have dabbled with Meta ad campaigns and it's surprisingly affordable. I think it's just a few hundred dollars a month. There are algorithms that will hopefully project our message and reach the right audience due to their clicking on things for, you know, services for people with disabilities or adaptive equipment. However it works, I don't really understand, but we do get a good response from that, which has been really exciting. Another nice thing about those marketing tools is that they've got some pretty advanced analytics. So, you can like really track who opened them, when they opened it, and then follow the whole lifespan of that person to click on the link, attend the webinar, and then right through the intake and placement, we can see the whole trajectory of that person in the program, which is really cool.

And then finally, we also have partnerships with our Partnership Plus. We have connections with the state, Connecticut, and New York Voc rehab agencies. And we also have additional supported employment teams funded through Connecticut and New York, such as the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, Bureau Rehab Services, Department of Development Services. So those are time-limited services, and we can link with them fairly easily as they're transitioning successfully into employment. We can pick up their case when they're discharged, provide ongoing job coaching, and benefit counseling.

Derek Shields: Kevin, this is Derek, you got a lot of in your marketing mix there and I appreciate all these ideas that you shared. Reinforcing the first one, using the Find Help tool statement to drive your brand and then responsiveness. When you have an inquiry, part of your marketing is to show up and be there quickly. We've got to move forward, but we'll be back to you with another question. Brenna, let's go back to Hawkeye. Again, from your perspective, outreach, success, what kind of strategies would you like to add that maybe Caitlin didn't cover?

Brenna Schaefer: So, to touch on our admin EN, we have used that model to help our program grow and extend reach to more Ticketholders. Our intention when we started the admin EN was to provide administrative EN services to other agencies like our own in the state of Iowa, who had been past WIOA providers. Some of you may be familiar with the DEI grant, where Ticket to Work was a key part of that grant. So, when that grant ended, we saw that there was a need to continue services — continue serving Ticketholders in Iowa and agencies who had the qualifications to continue doing so. Then we quickly found out that there was a need for admin EN services and Ticket to Work services outside of our state. There are quite a few service desert areas where there's a high number of Ticketholders and no service providers. So, we try to target those areas as well to find admin EN partners who will reach out to these Ticketholders and reach, you know, more people that way.

Derek Shields: Brenna, thanks so much. I appreciate all of these strategies. I've been taking notes. I feel like we have a bit of a cookbook of best practices that we might be able to put together as a follow-up tool as well. We're going to keep going to our next because we want to make sure we get through all of these ideas, but a lot of great outreach strategies to identify new Ticketholders for being your customers there. Thank you so much.

Let's go now to our next question, and we're going to talk about how your EN effectively does outreach to employers and other partner groups. And we heard some dashes about this here and there in some of the responses before, but not a lot around employers from each of you. It was more, hey, we're finding Ticketholders through other referrals or from tabling in some other direct efforts. So, let's think about what those outreach methods are for working best for your EN. And we're going to go back to Portia to start with this one. Portia.

Portia Williams: Hi, Derek. So, one of the things that we do that may be unique to us is that we have partnered with different temp agencies. And I can't take all the credit for that because a couple of years ago, a temp agency actually reached out to me first and it was just a light bulb moment. And so, we partner with them for a couple of different reasons. So, one of those is that they usually have jobs, and they send out text messages or email messages every day with jobs that may just be for that day or the next day or maybe clean-up jobs at different sites. So sometimes I encourage people to try those out to see, you know, if they're able to do those things. And we're able to constantly have a flow of jobs with those temp agencies. And then the second thing is now that I have a partnership with those temp agencies, they actually refer people to me who may have questions about their benefits. So as a benefits counselor, I'm able to connect with those people who, you know, go straight to the temp agency because they want to get back into work, but they don't quite know how it's going to affect them. So, they have my information. So, a lot of the temp agencies within Tennessee and some in Kentucky will contact me or they'll just give out my cards and give out my information. So, I do get a lot of referrals from them. So that's a major plus.

Now a major benefit of being inside of the American Job Center is the partnership that I have with my state agencies. The state workforce partnerships are amazing. We have the WIOA partnerships inside of my building. I work very closely with our state VR. Local organizations and charities are also located within our building. So, having those connections and those partnerships, they ask us questions, we're able to ask them questions, we're able to send somebody right down the hall whenever they come in with questions for us. And even if you are not inside of an American Job Center, if you are not a workforce, I advise anyone to connect with your American Job Centers if there are some in your area. Just make that connection with them so that they have someone, you know, to send people to if they have questions. They're not just going and Googling stuff, and then we have to come back and clean up that mess later. I advise everyone, if you have the opportunity to partner with an American Job Center, with anybody inside the state workforce, those WIOA programs, those state organizations, those local charities, they always have questions, they always have people, and building those connections have been probably the most valuable to our network.

Derek Shields: Thank you, Portia. Appreciate those tips from Tennessee and your successes in reaching employers and other partners. Well, the previous person that talked about referrals was Lori. You just talked about referrals here. Lori, we'll transition to you to see what you have to say about finding other employers and key stakeholders. Some might be new funders as well. Your thoughts?

Lori Tyndall: Sure. Well, that's key. We have to have employers if we're trying to find jobs for people. One of the benefits that we have at AHEDD is that we are the Pennsylvania affiliate for the National Disability IN program. So, each state has a partner affiliate if you go online and you look at Disability IN and there's different employers that are connected with each state. There are different employers that are National Disability IN members. We have often used that just as a network. It's about networking and developing relationships with employers who are already invested because they're part of this group. It's employers talking to other employers about, you know, including people with disabilities in the workforce. So the other, I guess, thing that we try and do is really keep up with technology. We recently updated our database where we track not only our work with participants but our networking with employers and adding little features in, you know, where you can get a list of employers that are interested maybe in doing mock interviews. And you're just getting to know them. And that's an offering that they might have for some of our Ticketholders, you have others who are ready to hire and we're doing the outreach, we're, you know, talking with employers in our communities, we're looking at national employers. We really start with what -- obviously what the individual is interested in, but networking and just trying to pull, you know, from any particular group or network that we have and then track those is really helpful for our staff.

Derek Shields: Thank you, Lori. The key mention there of technology investment to help manage the relationships and make it easy to stay in touch with people. Sometimes the old-school way makes it hard, so that's an interesting addition there. Kevin, let's go back to you. A couple of thoughts on employer and other partner outreach.

Kevin Cooper: Yeah, I mention that we're doing the Google ad and the Facebook Meta advertising. The nice thing about that, it has the dual function of not only connecting with our potential audience of Ticketholders, but also really just amplifying the message to employers and the general public about best business practice. Hiring people with a disability is good business. So, you know, we find that that's a really great method. We do a lot of old-school "roll up your sleeves", "boots on the ground" to, you know, just getting out there, networking with employers, leveraging all the tools, such as LinkedIn, and every job board that has verified job leads. And one nice aspect of Ability Beyond, we do have a for-profit venture called Disability Solutions. They are contracted by all kinds of different employers who are working to improve their diversity initiatives and our team comes in through Disability Solutions, works very closely with their HR team and their leadership to identify potential barriers that people with disabilities might have through the application and onboarding process. So, they try to work out the kinks to make it much more friendly and accessible to people with disabilities and empower them to compete in a very competitive job market.

Derek Shields: Thanks, Kevin. Interesting, Lori has the disability and affiliate employer partners. You all created a division of another entity that's a for-profit that has employer relationships and can funnel some job openings. So, a couple of different strategies there, but both getting relationships with employers. Brenna, let's go to you and Hawkeye. When you think of employer and partner outreach, what's been working best for you?

Brenna Schaefer: Well, I'm going to echo what our other panelists said. Our focus on outreach for both our traditional and our administrative Employment Network is primarily on local employers and local companies. The key to successful outreach is to get in the community, go to the companies, meet face-to-face with someone and find ways to establish relationships that are mutually beneficial. We do track our contact to make sure that we are on their radar all year round and they're on ours, and we've developed, you know, various referral processes just to ease the communication so that agencies know how to contact us, we can get in contact with them quickly. And we found that by being flexible with these different agencies, and instead of giving them our process to follow being flexible has opened a lot of doors. And we encourage this to our Admin EN partner affiliates by giving them our processes for how we do our community outreach locally here so that they can replicate that in their areas as well.

Derek Shields: Interesting, that's the second kind of internal training around your marketing model specifically around how do you develop and maintain relationships with employers and other partners. Thanks for bringing that up. It sounds like it's been successful as you continue to grow through your two models. I'd like to loop Jayme in. Jayme, probably can only ask one panelist right now so we can stay on time, but do you have a follow-up question to this around employer and partner engagement?

Jayme Pendergraft: Sure. Let's go ahead and talk a little bit more with Portia, I think. I know that you mentioned some of the staffing agencies. And just really, how do you work — can you elaborate a little bit more on that and how you develop those partnerships, how you find new ones, and also any experience with non-staffing agency employers?

Portia Williams: So, the number one thing is just to be consistent and stay on it. They have turnover in their staff just like anyone else. And so, I'm always reaching out to them if I haven't heard from them. There have been times where the text messages have stopped and I'm like, I haven't received anything. I know there's jobs out there. And I've had to reach out and then they say, oh, they're not here anymore. And then they give me, you know — get me in contact with the person who took over for their position or if somebody's temporarily holding the position. I try to go if they have events. Sometimes I just go there if they're going to do like a big staffing push for something at those temp agencies and just be present. And I also keep their information as handy as possible. So even when I meet with someone to do an intake, I'm able to say, well, look into this, because even if I can't assign a Ticket for whatever reason, I still like to leave them with resources. And those temp agencies are good places to start, especially in rural communities, because we have a lot of warehouses. We have a lot of jobs that are seasonal here, and so people are always looking for, you know, places. Tennessee seems to be a place where people like to come and start over or refresh themselves. So, they're always looking for new work and so a temp agency is a good place to start because a lot of those places will continue their employment. But basically, just making sure that I'm consistent and I tend to have the gift of gab. So, I'll just go in there and talk to everybody, introducing myself and make sure that they know who I am and have a little bit of information about the program to take back with them.

Jayme Pendergraft: And I think that's something you can emphasize, too. You say go in there. You really do a lot of in-person work, right?

Portia Williams: Yes. Yes.

Jayme Pendergraft: Lots of travel.

Portia Williams: Mm-hmm. I have my limits though, not too far. But if I can get there and it's reasonable, I try to go there. Luckily for us, there's a lot of temp agencies and they have multiple locations. And I think that's really good for the consumer because people are on the bus system, or they need people to drop them off a lot of times and so there's a lot of different offices for us to visit along the way.

Jayme Pendergraft: And I think that works for a lot of employers too, not just temp agencies. Go make your presence known and make sure they know what you're doing out there in the community or nationally and just get info about Ticket out there. That's what I would encourage you to do. Thanks, Derek.

Derek Shields: Thank you, Jayme. Thank you, Portia, for the follow-up there and I think we've heard it a couple of times, kind of know your regional culture, and part of that's being friendly and having a conversation, then we get to know each other, and we can build trust and marketing needs to build trust. So, appreciate that. All right.

So, we're going to switch over to our final question for the panelists now, and we're going to talk about marketing materials. Jayme mentioned in the training kind of the creation of things. We've heard it come up a couple of times, Caitlin actually mentioning flyers and, you know, somewhat of a digital postcard type thing. What we want to hear from a few of you is about how you make or adapt marketing materials and what marketing tools or resources, perhaps provided by the program that Jayme mentioned earlier, do you use, or would you recommend to other ENs? And to do that, let's start out with Caitlin. Caitlin, you mentioned flyers earlier. What are your recommendations here?

Caitlin Blau: Yeah. So, this is definitely directed to smaller ENs who don't necessarily have big staff, a marketing staff or a marketing department or you know, I don't know, content creator, someone that works with social media. But I will tell you, and I'm sure a lot of you are familiar with Canva, it's something that I have utilized immensely in the past, probably three or four months, as we're kind of starting to get our social media up and getting the word out and developing our brand in a way. But Canva has been such an excellent tool. I have created different flyers, templates. The way I started was thinking what kind of content you want to put out, what's your messaging? I think Jayme emphasized it earlier about, you know, setting goals. And I think that is really the right way to do it. Get very organized before you want to kind of dive into this, because it can be quite time-consuming and you might not have the time to create all of this type of content. Canva is such a beautiful thing because they have set up basically a content calendar that is one of the tools there where you can access templates of all different sorts, whatever you want to put out, and then change it to whatever information. So, right now I have a template that is just for webinars. And all I do is change the time and, you know,

whatever — whoever's putting on the webinar. I have a template for Ticket to Work facts, just very simple, straightforward facts, not like a ton of crazy information, but it might spark them to, you know, contact us because they think that this fact is pretty cool, or they relate to that. And then I have one for success stories, events, things like that.

And Canva is great because it will tell you this month is, you know, Pride Month, July is Disability Pride Month. May was Mental Health Awareness Month. So, if you can put out templates and, you know, promote those type of events and causes, it's going to bring a lot of traction, right? And it's great content, it's free. So that's another thing, Canva is free, utilize it.

Once you figure out some of the tools and things like where you can make a template for Facebook cover pages, Instagram squares, they do all the formatting, which for me is a lifesaver. Instead of trying to format it into the right dimensions so that it looks proper on a phone when you're scrolling. Because that is another thing you want to like look out for is most people are going to be on their phone scrolling, not on a computer or a laptop necessarily. So, what Canva does is that it formats it perfectly for whatever outlet you want, whether that's Instagram, story, cover photo. And that's amazing. It's so helpful. And the last thing I use it for is branding where I have all my logos uploaded into my brand on Canva, including my color scheme or our colors for our organization. I can take any template, choose my brand, and it will turn that template into my color scheme. And then I can just add my logo on there. So that's been helpful, but it takes a lot of planning. So, if you can put that time in, then it doesn't take too much time after that, right?

I can schedule posts. I already have some scheduled out for July. So, that's great. I don't have to mess with that anymore, but it takes a little bit of time to get all of that together. But once it is, oh, man, it is a quick tool. It is connected straight to our organization's Facebook page. So, it posts from Canva. I don't have to go through different apps.

And I will tell you it is free for nonprofits. So do look into it if you don't have the budget because this has helped our budget. We don't have a huge budget either. So, that's been really nice. It's free — go use it. I've created many flyers, postcards on the whim if we need it. For an event that day, I've created a flyer for it. So, it's been really good and gotten the word out. It's kind of fun too.

Derek Shields: Caitlin, thank you so much for bringing Canva to our attention, C-A-N-V-A. People are asking for how it's spelled. Great tool and helps you kind of do the work once and then customize and republish.

Caitlin Blau: It can customize. Yeah. Take advantage of it. Yep.

Derek Shields: All right. So, we have two responders left on our panel and we've got about two minutes to stay on time to get to our Q&A. So, I'm going to switch over to Kevin now. Kevin, I'm going to ask you to stay within a one-minute guardrail, if possible, please.

Kevin Cooper: You got it. So, as I said earlier, the EN Directory has been phenomenal for us, leverage that brand statement, the marketing statement. We have used the service provider

outreach toolkit with great success, pushing the WISE events, and also just making sure our website is updated so that it has accurate information, looks fresh, and is resonating with our target audience. And just be open and really, you know, willing to try anything and see what works.

Derek Shields: Thanks, Kevin. I appreciate that, using your website as your landing page and keeping that fresh and easy for folks to get where they need. Really important point. And with about a minute to go, we're going to go back to Portia for some thoughts on marketing tools or repurposing the tools from the Ticket Program. Anything you'd like to call out Portia?

Portia Williams: One thing that we do, like I mentioned, we do go to as many job fairs and resource fairs. So, something we take with us is the fact sheets. We print those fact sheets off the website and we actually staple our business cards to them. So, if they have one, they have both. And so, we lay them there. We do use Canva quite a bit to create things just to pull people's attention. I have a couple that say, "Are you receiving disability benefits? Do you have questions?" And I just kind of stand them up in plexis to draw people over. And then, when they get there, I hand them those fact sheets, and our business cards are attached. So, that's one of the main things that we use in terms of material.

Derek Shields: Fantastic, thanks. Sounds like tabling with some printed materials and an old business card still works and we use some of that and we also use some of the modern media tools that are out there too. This mix is doing well for the four, well five EN models that are with us today. So, at this point, what I'd like to do is switch over to our Q&A, and to do that, if Alicia could bring back up the slide deck, we want to get some information about how to participate in the Q&A. If we could go to the next slide and one more. So, on this slide, we just have a few tips about how to ask questions. So let me go through those. You know, we encourage you to ask, and many of you have been participating in the chat. If you do prefer to ask a question via phone, it's a two-step process. Press star five to raise your hand and our team can unmute you. Press star six as the second step to speak. Again, if you're with Teams and you want to ask a question out loud, you can raise your hand and we'll unmute your mike and then you can ask your question. Do ask it. You can limit your questions to one per person. And if you prefer to send a question or comment to us, you can do so at enoperations@yourtickettowork.ssa.gov, as Ana has posted in chat. And so with that, let's go to Brittany first to see if we have had some questions in chat that haven't been answered. Brittany.

Brittany: Hello, Derek. Yes, we do. I have one question from Cynthia. She was asking, "As a National EN, how or what is the most effective way to reach out to clients across the country in addition to Partnership Plus? How do clients find us if they are not local to our EN?"

Derek Shields: Thank you, Brittany. Well, we have a couple of National ENs with us. Does one of our panelists want to share how you find Ticketholders from a national perspective?

Lori Tyndall: I can take just a little bit of that if it's okay, Derek.

Derek Shields: Yeah, please.

Lori Tyndall: Of course, the Choose Work that Kevin has spoken about and how you present yourself. I think for us, too, it's becoming an administrative EN because that expands your reach and, you know, you can have more resources to put on your website. You know, on occasion, we're getting emails or questions about our EN. They just kind of come from word of mouth. And very recently, we — it was a disability advocacy organization in the US Virgin Islands and reached out to a number of ENs and they're putting a round table together. And, you know, I think the more that you just respond to questions that come in, perhaps have an email address that is specific to Ticket to Work. We have Ticket to Work at ahedd.org. That certainly has helped us, too. We have one person who does the responding to that email address. So, it might be a little bit of a passive approach, but it certainly, once you do it a little bit, then it grows. So that was just one thing, one way.

Derek Shields: Thank you, Lori. Any other panelists want to share?

Kevin Cooper: I would just say if you do have a budget, you might want to try the Meta advertising and just make sure you're pushing all the available social media content. Jayme puts out great stuff, it really sells the program. And those success stories I think really are impactful. So, if you can really, you know, relate to someone's situation and the challenges to returning to employment and, you know, just really demonstrate the success stories people have had through the Ticket to Work program, you know, that's the magic right there.

Derek Shields: Thanks, Kevin. A few ideas here. Use the Find Help tool to connect through that because, as you know, a lot of us are pushing people to explore the Find Help tool to find an EN. And then you could use some tactics around using more of a customized internal approach to communications with the Ticket to Work email address. And then look at possible social media and advertising and looking at that algorithm that was mentioned before, but instead of a locally driven one, you could change your parameters and looking at the targeted people that you're looking for. So, a few good ideas there. Let's switch over now to Katherine. Katherine, it looks like we have a raised hand. Could you help out?

Katherine: Hi, Derek. Yes, we do. We have Lindsay. Lindsay, you are unmuted, just click your microphone and ask your question.

Lindsay: Hi, thank you all for sharing your experience. This has been really valuable, so thank you for that. A quick question, I mentioned it in the chat, but with the new FCC one-to-one explicit consent requirements, we found texting to be, you know, super easy and helpful for us to connect with people using the Marketing Program. But now it doesn't seem like the list that we get, is there a way that potentially Social Security can assist us with establishing that required consent because, I mean, as a small business, a fine of \$500 to \$1500 for every text message I send, you know, it's been a little bit concerning enough to, like, have a stop our texting strategy? Just curious if anybody else is — you know, how people are working through that because, again, texting, you know, we get so many more people replying back than any other methods that we've tried in the past.

Derek Shields: Thank you, Lindsay. This is Derek. So, let's take this in two parts. Let's ask if the panelists have any experience. And then for the second part, I think we'll take that back to Social Security for a follow-up. But when it comes to consent and, well, really with all engagement, but when we specifically look at text messaging, do any of the panelists have any suggestions from how you're gaining consent before reaching out to individuals?

Lori Tyndall: Isn't it — this is Lori. Isn't it that if in your text message put, you know, reply stop if you want to opt out of these text messages, then that kind of covers what the FCC regulation is? We had participated in that marketing campaign at one point as well, and that was the guidance we had gotten. So, there might be more to it, but I think that's a step that you're getting that option to stop.

Lyndsay: No, I don't want anybody to think that — that's not unfortunately the case. I used to think if we were getting it that Social Security is having consent to share the list, but it needs to be direct to each business, and it's prior to sending the first text message. And that's the piece where if there is a way to kind of work with Social Security because at the end of the day, these rules and regulations just started in 2024 and, you know, it's really impacted our ability to connect with Ticketholders.

Derek Shields: Thank you, Lindsay. Thank you, Lori. So as mentioned, we'll take this back to Social Security. Lindsay, we'll get back to you specifically, but if we can create some other content to share with everybody, we'll of course do so. We have time, just enough time to get one more question and I believe, Katherine, we have another raised hand.

Katherine: Absolutely. Cheryl, you are unmuted. Go ahead and unmute yourself and ask your question. Hi, Cheryl. You have access now to your audio. If you'll just click your microphone up top and just ask you a question.

Derek Shields: Looks like Cheryl's having a barrier in unmuting the microphone. If you prefer, Cheryl, you can put your message — a question into chat.

Katherine: Okay.

Derek Shields: Thanks for trying there, Katherine. Circle back to Brittany. Brittany, do you have any other -- I'm sorry. Well, we had hand raises and hand lowering. Brittany, any other questions in chat as we go to wrap up?

Brittany: Yes, I have one more. I know we heard from Portia about temp agencies, but Sandra was asking, are there any other options, or a way that we can start or create an established network of employers for job listings.

Derek Shields: The employer relationships for job listings, we heard a couple of things around ideas to establish partnerships with employers. Any of our panelists want to comment about specifically around connecting with employers for job listings?

Portia Williams: I will. So usually if I go into a business, I have my cards with me; if I'm going to go do some outreach, I usually just ask to speak to the manager. It's very simple. It's nothing

fancy. I just ask if the hiring manager is in, and I speak with them. I tell them a little bit about what I do. I leave my information with them. I tell them about the positions at their particular place of business. Mostly I look for stocking positions for a lot of my people, so those 5 a.m. or those late-night stocking, I kind of tell them what I'm interested in, so I've done a little research of my own on their organization before going in to them. And I just leave my information and I ask them if it's okay if I add them to a list, and then I create my own based on things local in my area. Based on the time frame that they, you know, do stocking shifts or catering shifts or greeting shifts, those types of jobs that I think that a lot of my clients will be interested in. And I just kind of make my own and then I just check in with them from time to time. So, it does take a little bit more boots on the ground work, but I also know of agencies that can go in and, you know, you can call them. Ask to speak to the manager. Ask what their name is. If you don't have the resources to actually go there, just make those phone calls. And it can be time-consuming, but once you get the list built, you just build on it each year and just remain consistent.

Derek Shields: Thank you so much, Portia. So, we're going to try to get one more question and the last question from Selena. Katherine, if you could unmute Selena, please. Katherine, if you're talking, you're muted.

Selena: Hi.

Derek Shields: Go ahead, Selena.

Selena: Can you hear me?

Derek Shields: Yes.

Selena: Okay. So earlier, you said that we can get a list of beneficiaries or people that is on disability in our area. Can you explain to me again about how?

Derek Shields: Yes.

Selena: Explain to me again how I can get that list of disabled people in my area.

Derek Shields: Yes, thank you, Selena. Thank you, Katherine, for turning that off. Ana, if you could provide Selena the email address in the chat so she could inquire to Social Security for how to participate in the Marketing Business Program, that would be very appreciated. Well, it is that time. If we could move to the next slide, please.

I would like to extend, on behalf of our clients and team members of the Social Security Administration and all of the Ticket Program Manager team members, thank you to our panelists today. It's a delight to have you with us to share your experiences and successes, and in some cases, help all of us learn about what's working and the tactics that you suggest. One of them is consistent, and it's keep trying. What we learn and what we do, we evolve. And so sometimes things will work, and sometimes things won't. Some things are traditional marketing tactics and others are on the edge of understanding social media advertising and text messaging. So, we appreciate that mix and a special thanks to Kevin, Lori, Caitlin, Brenna, and Portia, and your ENs for giving up the time that it took from your business to join us today and share. I'd like to

thank our presenter, Jayme Pendergraft, for joining us for two marketing sessions, including today's on implementation. If we could go to the next slide.

A couple of resource links here, you can access both of these on the Your Ticket to Work website, the EN Guide to Marketing, and the EN Guide to the Marketing Workbook. These are under the Training and Events EN Essentials location. We encourage you to check them out. And to our last slide, please.

Here we have some upcoming events for you. On June 18, that's Tuesday at 1 p.m. Eastern Time, we have our next All EN Call. That agenda, I believe, will be coming out on Monday. Please pencil that onto your calendars. Then our WISE webinar on June 26, "How Will Work Affect My Social Security Disability Benefits." We encourage you to share that in your networks. As per our panelists' recommendations, figure out how to repurpose the content and get it out there in your channels. And our next EN Essentials will be on July 10, when Lore Lee from the Job Accommodation Network will be our featured speaker talking about requesting and negotiating workplace accommodation. We encourage you to join Lore from JAN to learn more about reasonable accommodation. This is all on our website at the 2024 calendar of events.

We appreciate your time in joining today's panelists and Jayme to learn more about implementation tactics. If you have any feedback on the session or ideas for future sessions, please email us at enoperations@yourtickettowork.ssa.gov . We appreciate your time. And this does conclude today's session. Thank you.