

Revisiting the American Job Center Job Listings/Bank for Federal Contractors  
1 – 2 p.m. EST

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Felix Stump: Thank you very much (Frank) and hello everyone. Good afternoon to most of you, good morning maybe to a couple.

My name is Felix Stump. I'm the Deputy Project Director for Ticket to Work Project, Operations Support Manager. And welcome again to this is our third Community of Practice conference call around the Section 503 Regulations.

Today we're lucky enough to have Kevin Nickerson who's representing the National Disability Institute. And he's going to talk to us about the American Job Centers and how and whether or not and how ENs can engage with your local AJCs to help support ticket holders.

Before I turn it over though I'll just remind you that we do have a chat room feature available for today's call, that link was provided in an email that went out promoting the call but if you do not have you can go to our web site, [yourtickettowork.com](http://yourtickettowork.com) and click on the Community of Practice Section and you should find the link to the chat for today's call and for the rest of the Community of Practice calls as well.

And lastly I'll just remind you all that these calls, these Community of Practice calls really are intended to be open dialogues. We will get to hear from Kevin and his colleagues just a little bit but most of today's call we hope is going to be hearing from you and allowing you to dial

in, ask questions, provide answers where appropriate and really just kind of talk back and forth as much as possible.

So it'll be a short presentation. But we really looked to you all to provide most of today's content.

And so with that I will go ahead and turn it over to Kevin.

Kevin Nickerson: Well thank you Felix and thank you folks for joining today. Hopefully you're enjoying some nice weather after that very, very long winter we've had.

So Felix alluded to this but I just want to start out by saying, well and first of all you can see the title of the training today, we really want to talk about how we're doing in engaging our American Job Centers for the benefit of our ticket holders.

But as Felix alluded to today's Community of Practice will really be a combination of sharing information they put together, followed by some discussion opportunity.

So I'll be counting on your participation on today's call.

WE can go to the next slide.

These are some of the things we hope to cover today. We want to look at some of the resources offered in the Job Center. And I will say too that for many of you, you know, that have been on all these calls that we've been having around this topic and others, I've shared some of this information before and I feel it's important to review it again.

So we're going to talk a little bit about the AJC resources. We're going to explore AJC staffing or folks that we think you should really know in our centers.

And I think it's important also to give you a bit of a history lesson although brief about the AJC's involvement in serving people with disabilities.

And at that point we'll break for a discussion opportunity with a couple of questions I'll pose to you. We'll move on again and discuss partnering in AJCs, some ideas around that and I've identified some next steps that I'd recommend, again followed by a discussion opportunity.

Lastly I'm going to discuss the use of SAM and (D-net). That's a System for Award and Management in the National Labor Exchange to identify federal contractors by region.

And I'd be remised if I didn't give credit to others who have also talked about this. I know Pam Walker has reviewed this on a former COP. It might be that even (Susan) did. Those were the first two sessions that we had.

But I'm going to take and look at this in a little more detail and in a way that I think is very useful for us so we'll dig a little deeper into that and see how that can be beneficial for us in finding contractors in our local areas.

Next slide, so in short let's look at sort of an overview of what American Job Centers are. And I should say and this is probably still coined as one stops and One Stop Career Centers in many states including my own. I should say also that I'm located in New York. But it is now officially referenced as American Job Centers.

So hopefully you all know what these centers are but, you know, in short let me just say that these are located across the country and we are here to provide a variety of services to not only employers but all job seekers. And when I say all job seekers I say that because it includes individuals with disabilities.

Some of the services that you can count on, you know, at AJCs regardless of where you go and there will be variation depending on which state you're in and even across localities.

But these are some of the things you can expect at our AJCs and that's workshops that focus on a variety of topics such as basic job search, interviewing skills, basic computer skills. A lot of our centers use products like metrics and/or Prove It which are great resources to help people hone basic skills.

I put SSA Working Centers in there. Yes, that's right. Believe it or not especially in light of the new disability employment initiative projects that we have in multiple states with a focus on ENs which I'll talk about. We also have now in many of our centers workshops on (Security) Working Centers. Sometimes that's through collaboration too with our (WIPA) Projects.

We have training funds in our centers known as individual training accounts and that is based on eligibility and availability of funds. Certainly resume development and information about the Labor Exchange. Well the Labor Exchange System is actually a way that our job seekers get matched electronically with job leads that employers provide us and each state has that.

On the job training funds also based on eligibility, certainly can find labor market information there.

And connections to employers which is why this is so important resource for our ticket holders and if you're wondering and, you know, I have to assume that folks - there's folks on the line that know a lot about this and there's some folks on the line that probably don't.

So excuse me. So we put a locator in here. It's called the service locator. And this is how you find your AJC locally so you can click through that and just put in your area and figure out which AJCs are in your local area.

Okay, next slide.

Excuse me. So here's some staff that we think you should know. And also, you know, the titles of each of these staff are not necessarily the same across states and/or centers. But generally speaking these are the categories of titles that we have in each of our centers.

Certainly for the purposes of today's discussion and something I've talked about in the past we have Business Service Representatives or a BSR Teams at each of our centers.

And that's the staff or our AJC single point of contact for businesses. And, you know, I got thinking about this person too in terms of what we're trying to accomplish here.

And I want you to know that this person often organizes events locally. You know targeting employer training needs and so forth.

So when I think about that I think about things like the new Section 503 Amendments. And this may offer an opportunity for you to suggest such an event if something hasn't happened and maybe even help in planning that.

And also we have WIA case sets, Workforce Investment Act Case Managers. And these folks oversee the services of customers who are enrolled in intensive case management services and/or short term training. So in other words that's the person who would help customer's access WIA training funds. I know that's kind of elusive and some folks - a lot of folks have asked me questions about that. And the best advice I can give you is to get to know your local center to see where they're at in terms of available funds and eligibility.

Next is an employment counselor. And I remember years ago when I first really started to inject this more heavily into our center where I worked for a decade, I recognized right away that as caseload grew there was no way, you know, I could do this alone.

And this is a person that I leaned on heavily in our office and for good reason because this is a person who's really able to assist customers that are developing a career path through the use of a variety of

assessments. I wouldn't even tell you which ones because that's also going to vary based on offices.

But it's very helpful for our ticket holders to connect with this person who might be entering the workforce maybe for the first time or maybe they are - because of their disability looking at a career change.

And so this person much like a vocational rehabilitation counselor without the focus on disability can help folks really kind of re-tool based on skill sets they have where they might want to go in the future.

In terms of targeted populations and this is where most of my life in the center I worked resided. Our offices have dedicated staff that serve customers with specific needs such as veterans' reps. And we have multiple programs for vets. Older Worker Program, Disability Resource Coordinators and that's where I fit in for many years. Actually prior to that the Navigator Program I'll talk about.

And these are located currently in pilot regions of states that have DOL Disability Employment Initiative Grants.

And if you're wondering what the heck that's all about, that's okay because when we move to the next slide we're going to talk about what those grants are all about. That was my queue.

Thanks folks.

So over the years, you know, and we all have a different history in terms of our centers and our, you know, use of the centers and our perception of the centers.

But U.S. DOL has supported the expansion of services for customers with disabilities through many targeted initiatives since the inception of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998. I've actually left one prior to DPN off of here because I wanted it to be a brief history lesson.

But I want you to see that U.S. DOL has done a lot to really further the services for people with disabilities in our centers. And I look at the primary initiative being the Disability Program Navigator Initiative which ran from 2003 to 2010.

And that really was my entry, actually almost. I was involved with our center prior to that. But that was when I entered our system and spent years as a Navigator so it was really an eye opener for me coming from a private rehabilitation agency background.

But this initiative was really designed and focused on access. If I was to look at one thing it's really about access. And I can kind of break that down into different access points and that would be sort of programmatic access for folks with disabilities, physical access looking at, you know, the actual structure and then a big one was really attitudinal barriers that got in the way and that was as important as others.

And we also saw the beginning of some Employment Network efforts under the Disability Program Navigator Initiative during these years although it was not required of this grant. Where we're at now is under the Disability Employment Initiative which started in 2010 and runs presently. This really did build on the lessons learned from the DPN Initiative to, you know, to further promote and integrate services for

folks with disabilities. Plus it does require that state DEI Projects in pilot sites to operate as Employment Networks. So this is a key distinction and definitely important for today's conversation.

Also of note is that DEI Projects have to hire a Disability Resource Coordinator to be located in each of our pilot sites.

And this is a three-year funding window.

I'll also note that under DEI there is a strong emphasis on partnerships and collaboration, also an interesting point to make for today's call.

And many of our projects have committed to getting DRC certified as Work Incentive Counselors.

Lastly I'll say about DEI is there has been funds and a focus on improving and/or adding to the assisted technology available in our pilot sites.

Next slide; so this next slide shows you that since 2010 there have been four rounds of funded grants covering a total of 26 states. At this time the round one projects are over. Some recently over because there was some extensions provided that brought some of our round one projects into the beginning of 2014.

But they were slated to end and most did in 2013. Then we had round two and I won't list, you know, read these states but this is going to be available for you to review later and of course round three and round four.

I have a note here that the DOL is in the process of publishing a solicitation to fund a fifth round of grantees. But that actually changed since the time that I put the PowerPoint together. And it was released last week.

So you can find information on the round five DEI solicitation online easily. Also I provided a link that provides you more information about the Disability Employment Initiative if you wanted to research some of that.

The next slide shows you sort of a map that I think is useful to kind of get an idea of where the states are that are involved and also shows you that interestingly some of the round one projects that were involved also received funding under round four and those are in those orange with lines visual there.

So I didn't put this on this slide and I should have for you. But if you wanted to find this map and look at it more closely rather than through the PowerPoint you can certainly go to our site at [www.dei-ideas.org](http://www.dei-ideas.org).

And so that's the brief history lesson. Let's move on now to an opportunity to talk with each of you and this is one of those discussion opportunity points.

And my talking point is that AJC's services include listing customers in a statewide database. We talked about that, including job matching services to qualify candidates once they're registered.

And so therefore my questions for you to ponder are, are ENs registering all ticket holders for these services because of that connection to the job match?

And what has been your experience in assisting ticket holders in general when utilizing AJC services?

So let's start there and I'm going to turn it back and let's see if we can get some folks in the queue to have some discussion.

Operator: Ladies and gentlemen if you would like to register for a question please press the 1 followed by the 4 on your telephone. You will hear a three tone prompt to acknowledge your request. If your question has been answered and you would like to withdraw your registration please press the 1 followed by the 3.

One moment please, for the first question.

Kevin Nickerson: Thank you. I will say I know some of you out there are using these services. And I hate to call names but I will if needed.

Operator: We do have a question on the phone from the line of Susan Webb. Please proceed.

Susan Webb: Hey Kevin.

Kevin Nickerson: Hey (Susan).

Susan Webb: Hi. You know it's - I have a question about your number one there. What - I've been on there. We're encouraging our ticket users to post their resumes there to do job search.

What is happening from the employer side? Do they really use the Job Exchange to find people?

And how do they specifically know if someone is a 503 eligible candidate?

And before you answer that I do know that in Arizona one of the things that our Job Exchange is doing is they are putting a field - adding a field to the profile where a person who puts their profile on there, a ticket user, can show a referral source.

And if they show that referral source then an employer can tell that that person is 503 eligible.

So what do you see happening in that regard? Are employers - is it - I know it's one thing for us to have our ticket users post and to look for jobs. It's quite another to see if employers are using it from their end too to recruit people.

Kevin Nickerson: Well as always I can count on good questions from you (Susan), often questions I can't answer.

But let me just say I think that yes, employers use this and when there are matches and they get candidates they certainly often choose from some of those candidates, folks to employ. So yes and in terms of the

first general question, yes. It does get used and those matches do result in real jobs.

In terms of your second question I almost don't dare to answer it because that's going to be so variable based on not only each state but what within the state each center is up to (Susan).

So if that's something that a center has one, permission to do and which I don't think is a bad idea by the way. You know I wouldn't know how to answer that in terms of where we're at nationally. You know because it's going to vary.

So I'm actually pleased to hear that you've had some experience where you're seeing that happen. And maybe others know more and want to chime in too.

Susan Webb: Okay. And then if you have any stats on that in terms of how many people that have posted to the Job Exchange have actually been recruited by employers directly instead of the other way around that would be really good.

Kevin Nickerson: So how many that post actually got recruited.

Susan Webb: Yes...

Susan Webb: That the employer contacted them. Yes, that if they do post, what is the incidence of employers actually contacting them as opposed to those who apply themselves and go through the normal...

Kevin Nickerson: I hear you.

Susan Webb: ...application process.

Kevin Nickerson: I'm actually going to make...

Susan Webb: Okay.

Kevin Nickerson: ...it two questions. And I will look into that for you. So not only that actually got contacted but then of those maybe how many got employed too.

Let me see what I can dig up for you at least in states that I think would be willing to work with me on that. Okay?

Susan Webb: That would be great. Thank you, Kevin.

Operator: We have another question from the line of Cynthia Swenson. Please proceed. Ms. (Swenson) your line is open. Please proceed with your question.

Cynthia Swenson: Hello?

Kevin Nickerson: Hello.

Cynthia Swenson: Yes. Hi. My question is that how do I - how would I have my clients access the Labor Exchange?

Kevin Nickerson: So first step is to get your customers to the centers themselves. Are you...?

Cynthia Swenson: Okay.

Kevin Nickerson: ...using your local Job Centers to get folks...?

Cynthia Swenson: No.

Kevin Nickerson: ...registered?

Cynthia Swenson: No. This is my first time hearing about this.

Kevin Nickerson: Okay.

Cynthia Swenson: So.

Kevin Nickerson: Okay. Well that - then that's what I said upfront was this is for all folks.

Cynthia Swenson: Right.

Kevin Nickerson: Folks that know a lot and folks that this is new for. So that's the first step I'd recommend.

And if you look at that slide that I gave you that has the locator...

Cynthia Swenson: Mm-hm. I have that.

Kevin Nickerson: So click through. Yes. Click through that and try to find out...

Cynthia Swenson: Okay.

Kevin Nickerson: ...where your local center is. And then go get to know those...

Cynthia Swenson: Okay.

Kevin Nickerson: ...folks and say look...

Cynthia Swenson: Okay.

Kevin Nickerson: ...you know I serve a number of folks. And when I was in our center sometimes I would coordinate with providers to even have folks come in groups.

Cynthia Swenson: Okay.

Kevin Nickerson: To help orient them to our center and services. So I would just get to know...

Cynthia Swenson: Okay.

Kevin Nickerson: ...folks in your center although you can just go in and get somebody registered. You don't need an appointment for that.

Cynthia Swenson: Okay. All right, and then I have another question. And I have a statement then a question.

Okay, as a licensed certified Rehab Counselor, Vocational Rehab Counselor, a lot of the services that the centers are providing I do (there) including I can do a career assessment based on my credentials.

So my question is when I go in and one of my (test) clients sign up, do they have to go through all of these steps, like the workshops, etcetera?

Kevin Nickerson: No. No. That's a good question.

Cynthia Swenson: Okay.

Kevin Nickerson: I think I'd play devil's advocate to myself even and say, you know, what's the value-added if you can do a lot of these things, right?

And I'll just point out that...

Cynthia Swenson: Oh yes. Yes. Okay.

Kevin Nickerson: So I think it's a fair question. And I think my answer would be that, you know, the one thing you don't have access to comes back to the question (Susan) just asked is, you know, you don't have access to that database unless people are registered necessarily in terms of the matching that occurs.

Cynthia Swenson: Right.

Kevin Nickerson: See we - if we have a customer internally that matches a job lead that's available, staff will actually match that person to the job and that goes to the...

Cynthia Swenson: Okay.

Kevin Nickerson: ...employer directly. So it's an...

Cynthia Swenson: Okay.

Kevin Nickerson: ...advantage to your customers to have that available to them.

Cynthia Swenson: Absolutely, and...

Kevin Nickerson: But will you be - oh I'm sorry. Go ahead.

Cynthia Swenson: No. You go ahead and then I'll - I have another question. Go ahead.

Kevin Nickerson: Well I - to your point about being able to do the assessments, you're probably right. You'll probably do a fine job with that and you're really in tune with your customers so I don't think especially maybe with your background, I'm guessing serving folks with disabilities that you might have an even better handle on that.

Cynthia Stevenson: Okay. And then also because of my credentials I also can write the letter of certification that somebody has a disability.

And so my question is that when I write that letter would that go with my client resume in the Labor Exchange System?

Kevin Nickerson: I don't think that would be the best place to attach it honestly.

Cynthia Swenson: Okay, all right.

Kevin Nickerson: But it certainly could come in handy in other ways. But I don't think that's...

Cynthia Swenson: Okay.

Kevin Nickerson: ...where I would lead with that but...

Cynthia Swenson: All right.

Kevin Nickerson: ...you know just to clarify for folks though, if somebody discloses internally that doesn't go to employers. That's internal for internal use for us to identify services and resources for folks, okay.

Cynthia Swenson: Okay so then...

Kevin Nickerson: And.

Cynthia Swenson: ...when I - oh go ahead. And I have another question (to ask you about).

Kevin Nickerson: I wanted to answer your - I want to answer your other - I never did answer your question. Do folks have to do all the things that I mentioned? And no, folks that - there are folks that are required to come to our centers because maybe they're on unemployment insurance and so forth. And there's folks that can come in and use what's called self-service which is basically, you know, voluntarily you're going in to use this resource because it's a good resource.

And so the answer is they don't have to do those things, the things they don't need. They can just choose to be involved in the things that'll be beneficial to them.

Cynthia Swenson: Okay. And my last question, piggyback on my other question is so the letter of certification, would that be something that the AJC would want for the client's packet?

Kevin Nickerson: Well, you know, disability in our centers is voluntary.

Cynthia Swenson: Okay.

Kevin Nickerson: Okay. And we don't really get to the level of detail asking specifics about disability, okay.

Cynthia Swenson: Okay, I was just thinking...

Kevin Nickerson: You know self-application...

Cynthia Swenson: I was just thinking like a scenario.

Kevin Nickerson: ...is all they need in our centers.

Cynthia Swenson: Okay.

Kevin Nickerson: To move forward.

Cynthia Swenson: Okay, great. That's all I have. Thank you.

Kevin Nickerson: I appreciate your questions. I think they were good ones. Thank you.

Cynthia Swenson: Thank you. And you clarified a lot for me.

Kevin Nickerson: Awesome. I'm glad you're out there helping folks.

Cynthia Swenson: Thank you.

Felix Stump: And hi. This is Felix. Before we take the next call from the queue I just wanted to draw attention to a couple questions that came up in the chat.

Kevin, Susan Webb about halfway through your last conversation, mentions in the chat that she says I already provide all those services in EN. What I need to do is to give our ticket users access to the state Job Exchange to post their profiles and search for jobs.

Do they actually have to register with the One Stop in order to do that?

Kevin Nickerson: So in terms of I think (Susan)'s talking about the National Labor Exchange. And certainly anybody can go and take a look at jobs there. To be registered within our state database, you know, or a state database I would say that the person would have to be registered.

Felix Stump: So in order for the beneficiary to post stuff there...

Kevin Nickerson: Yes.

Felix Stump: ...you know they would need to register with their AJC.

Kevin Nickerson: Yes.

Felix Stump: Okay. And the - I'll let (Susan) maybe dial back in or post a chat if she wants some further discussion on that.

And then immediately following there was a comment that goes a little bit I think to something that you - it came up in the last conversation. The comment from (Misty) about her - she uses to phrase One Stop. Our One Stop is a ticket to working in and they want the beneficiaries to un-assign from us and assign their ticket to them.

Do you have any...?

Kevin Nickerson: Well that's...

Felix Stump: Go ahead.

Kevin Nickerson: Well that's a little bit open-ended. I'm not - I think that's...

Felix Stump: Yes.

Kevin Nickerson: ...missing a little context for me to move forward with that response.

Felix Stump: Okay. So (Misty) why don't you dial into the queue and maybe say some more about that online if you're willing to do that, if not, we can just kind of - I mean I think that this is Felix. I think there's always - as much as we try to promote collaboration I think there will be these instances where sometimes it kind of turns into a competition. And it - I hope that does not happen at all really and certainly not for the most part.

I think the entire point of today's call is to encourage ENs to collaborate and to partner either formally or informally with their local AJC and even if those AJCs are ENs. And I know - I can't. I trust that that comment is valid. And I know that that happens sometimes.

But I would hope that given the fact that, in a lot of cases each - while there is some overlap of course in the services provided, there's certainly also some services that each entity provides that the other does not.

And if that's the case that you could kind of work together collaboratively to serve that client and I think from each organization's standpoint you end up benefit. Whatever you might lose out on in revenue for that one client, if you decide to split it somehow or come up with some arrangement where you're sharing the revenue you'll end up benefiting in the long run I think because you'll be able to work with that AJC to provide or arrange to provide a menu of services beyond what you might have been individually capable so.

Kevin Nickerson: I agree with that Felix. And I think I would also say as an example, you know, I can't remember who commented that you already provide a lot of those services, I've been a Benefits and Work Incentive Counselor for 20 years. And I've been to many trainings and, you know, I'm sure folks on this call have been to many of those trainings too.

So I would challenge you to think about have you been to a workshop with presenter A and then went to a similar workshop with presenter B and learned something new. I certainly have over the years have learned so much from many.

So I think that, you know, what you're talking about Felix is really let's use the resources we have and that's how I feel about this too and really why I wanted to talk about encouraging partnering with our centers and really this is about best services for our customers (unintelligible).

Felix Stump: Right. And all I'll say, this is Felix, all I'll say before we go back to the phone lines is that to your point (Misty), we are encouraging as Kevin says. We are encouraging ENs to partner with the AJCs.

We are also encouraging the AJCs to partner with the ENs. And we are encouraging AJC ENs to partner with ENs.

So there's learning that should take place on both sides. And it's - and certainly it's a two-way street so I'll...

Kevin Nickerson: You know Felix.

Felix Stump: Yes.

Kevin Nickerson: Maybe we should move ahead and I'll share a little more. These are great questions folks. And I appreciate that you're involved, you're engaged and this is great.

But maybe if I threw the next couple slides up and open the lines again. I mean if people have questions, and you'll see in the next discussion opportunity, I've left an opening for similar thoughts to be discussed too.

Felix Stump: Okay. And one thing I'll really quickly point out is Paul Liuchow made a really great comment in response to (Misty) in the chat. He's with - he's in Albuquerque and they - when they have cases like this they alternate the assignment from one client to the next. And it sounds like it kind of averages out in the long run and that's working out pretty well.

So there are different ways to approach this. But yes, Kevin I'll go ahead and as you say move to the next slide.

But before we do...

Kevin Nickerson: Okay.

Felix Stump: ...(Frank) how many questions are dialed up in the queue right now?

Operator: So far we have one question.

Felix Stump: Okay. Why don't we go ahead and take that one Kevin and then...

Kevin Nickerson: Yes.

Felix Stump: ...we move on. That way we can...

Kevin Nickerson: Yes.

Felix Stump: ...not leave this one...

Kevin Nickerson: Sure.

Felix Stump: ...hanging.

Kevin Nickerson: Absolutely.

Operator: We have a question from Ann Austin. Please proceed.

Kevin Nickerson: Well hi (Pam).

Ann Austin: Hi Kevin. How are you?

Kevin Nickerson: Good. How are you doing? I'm glad you're on the call and I appreciate you getting in the queue.

Ann Austin: Thank you. I have something you can probably unravel for me. Here in Colorado we have our statewide, you know, Job Exchange Connecting Colorado and then also out there there's America's Job Exchange also advertising jobs in Colorado.

And that one says, you know, that the people, the jobs that are on there with federal contractors. Like do those two things talk at all and is it - and if an employer is on the American Job Exchange are they truly all federal contractors or is it a mix?

And that would have 503 implications.

Kevin Nickerson: Yes. That's a great question. And I forgot to preface by saying that I'm only taking simple questions from this point forward.

I'm going to talk a little more about the National Labor Exchange and how we get leads there. You know the truth is in terms of the technology and how all that interplays, I don't know (Ann). I'll be

honest. I don't know how that gets exchanged with the other databases. I know they do talk to each other, some of them do.

And I'm going to give you the National Labor Exchange as an example because they pull leads from - well I'll tell you that in the next slide. It kind of pulls information from different places to make sure it's up-to-date.

In terms of your question I don't know specifically if Colorado is doing that.

Ann Austin: Okay. And I do - for me I have to enroll a person in Connecting Colorado to get services at a Workforce Center which is - which I'm doing. And it does work well and I can get them access to some of the stuff you talked about like Prove It and that is really working for my ENs. So thank you.

Kevin Nickerson: So you're using some of that stuff to help with...

Ann Austin: I am using some of that.

Kevin Nickerson: ...basic skills updates and so forth. I always was a fan of Prove It and metrics because the menu was so extensive. People had plenty of choices.

Ann Austin: Yes.

Kevin Nickerson: So.

Ann Austin: Thank you.

Kevin Nickerson: That's good to hear. I appreciate it (Ann). Thank you. I wish I could have been a little more helpful on that question for you. We'll have to do some research.

Ann Austin: Okay.

Kevin Nickerson: All right Felix let's move forward and give some more thoughts and see what other difficult questions these folks have for me today.

So in terms of partnering with AJCs and when we talk about EN operations, and I thought I'd just, you know, go right for the most difficult point and looking at what if both the AJC and community-based organization and in general is what I'm - CBO are EN.

So what if the private organization and the AJC are ENs? How do we get around this because I figured, you know, if the - if one or the other is not, it becomes a lot easier, okay. So I thought we'd just talk about that.

In fact you talked about (Paul). I had him in my notes here for this slide. Because I think they're great example of how this can work.

So anyway first and the reason why I provided some of the history if you have to understand where the AJC is coming from and what they've done already in serving customers I think before you approach them so you have some sense that, you know, they're either, you know, needing a lot of help or they've had great success.

And some of those links I've provided you can help you get there.

I can tell you that I really believe this requires a shared vision between you and your partner agency and an alliance that draws upon really your collective skill sets.

And I - Felix talked a little bit about that too where you have different skills that CBOs have versus our AJCs and vice versa.

And when you combine the resources of both that can be pretty powerful. And I give the example of Work Incentive Counseling because while I said there are some centers that have that, I don't think that's the rule. It's more the exception at this time.

Also, you know, I think this requires specific agreements with the AJC likely, you know, in the form of some MOUs or something like that.

I think you have to really be careful in spelling out how if there is revenue sharing and, you know, as well as timing of ticket assignments and un-assignments and that's where I think very much of (Adalante) and (Paul)'s arrangement there in New Mexico.

And I'd be happy to hear his comments on that. That's your queue (Paul).

And it's also possible that revenue will support the shared vision of the CBO and AJC. For example maybe it's just about what the revenue does, not who gets which part of the revenue. For example and this goes back to an agreement I have - had my hand in and putting in play in our center years ago that really had the vision of keeping that person

in play that provides disability services. And to this day that person, there is still a person there focused on and that using this revenue.

So those are some thoughts around a, I think a more difficult partner arrangement. And we'll get - after this next slide we'll get to another stopping point to maybe talk about this further. So we can go to the next slide.

So in terms of steps I think that you have to take to even get this started and some of you have not only got this started but you've got agreements and have really advanced your purpose with your AJC effectively.

But I think first you have to develop some process for referrals, right, both ways, both to your centers and to the community-based organization if it's not already established.

You also and most importantly and I think this is really the foundation of partnering is relationships, right. And I think that starts in my opinion, you know, I would recommend that you speak with your AJC management manager so your center manager and then you'll also get to know the (WIP) Director.

And discuss those processes really for accessing leads, right, from the Business Service Rep. We talked about that before.

But I think that's really where you start that relationship. And then you move onto getting to know the others in the center.

Again you could explore either formal or informal partnerships but you should know and remember that, you know, some AJCs will not be familiar with the Ticket Program or EN operations and it's also possible some are not familiar with Section 503 Amendments.

So, you know, the solution is to really go prepared to give your little elevator speech on the Ticket Program and what you do and who you serve in your role as ENs and also on Section 503, not that you have to be the expert but, you know, hey there's this, you know, new amendments or increasing the hiring of folks with disabilities especially federal - you know so forth.

So just a 30 second elevator speech so you're prepared.

And the next slide is an offering for you to think about some questions. And we have also talked about this a number of times partnering with AJC.

So really what I'm hoping to see today is and I think one of these is duplicative but let's look at some of these questions.

Have you identified the AJCs located in your service delivery area?

And I know one caller had not and that's fine. And that's why we're talking about this today. So that's, you know, the first step. Maybe some of you have and you want to talk about where you've gone from there.

Other thoughts, has your EN been accessing supports? We've talked about that. We can continue that conversation.

Have you connected with the manager and/or the Business Service Rep?

Are there examples of functional partnerships? And I know there's somebody out there that could tell me about that.

Are there examples of accessing job leads like (Susan) is trying to get to very specifically and/or utilizing services for ticket holders you're serving?

And basically are there examples of progress or experience you've had with these kinds of partnerships?

So any of those talking points you want to share with peers, it doesn't even have to be a question. You could talk about things you've done. And maybe we can learn from you as well today.

So I think with that I'll turn it back to see if we can get some folks in the queue and we'll talk a little more.

Operator: Thank you. Ladies and gentlemen as a reminder to register a question please press the 1 followed by the 4 on your telephone.

We do have several questions so we'll start with a question from Craig Dolan. Please proceed.

Craig Dolan: Yes. I'm just curious. And when we're talking about partnering with the AJCs, is there a statewide listing that would be available to determine who all the Employment Networks are in a particular state?

Kevin Nickerson: Oh well that's an excellent question. And I'm going to let Felix answer that.

Felix Stump: Absolutely. There's a directory on web site, chooseworkttw.net. Their Find Help Directory will let you pull up a map where you can pick a state and you'll see all the ENs, in fact all the providers. It includes (WIPA) organizations, ENs, VR offices, and I think that's about it, maybe (unintelligible).

Thank you.

Craig Dolan: Could you repeat that site?

Felix Stump: Yes. It's choose work, C-H-O-O-S-E W-O-R-K, chooseworkttw.net. It's a web site, the primary audience for that web site is beneficiaries. And but it includes a Find Help Directory. And that's where benefit - one of the places where beneficiaries get a list of ENs serving their area.

And you can search by state, by city and zip code so if you want to narrow that down. Do keep in mind that what that will do is give you a list of ENs serving that area, not necessarily ENs physically located in that area. We do have some organizations that serve nationwide and so they will appear on every search.

And then others that serve regionally across many states or single state. There are even some ENs that serve just select zip codes within a city.

So smaller ENs with a smaller footprint it may show up if you search for ENs near your house but not show up if you search for ENs that serve your office location where you (will) go to work. So it can get as narrowed down as that.

Kevin Nickerson: Great question (Craig). And that's also known as a Service Directory.

And did - was that - does that answer your question?

Craig Dolan: Yes, that's great. Thanks a lot.

Kevin Nickerson: Okay, thank you.

Operator: Our next question comes from the line of Paul Liuchow. Please proceed.

Kevin Nickerson: Hey (Paul).

Paul Liuchow: Hey Kevin. I responded to your prompt here.

Kevin Nickerson: I appreciate that. I appreciate that.

Paul Liuchow: Yes.

Kevin Nickerson: Maybe (Paul) can give us some insight into what I would look at as success in partnering with his center there.

Paul Liuchow: Sure. Sure. First of all I want to thank Kevin because when we started looking at this partnering relationship here in Albuquerque he was one

of the people that we talked to and got input and advice and, you know, recommendations on.

So he had a big hand in what we wound up doing. And basically the way we have this set up with our AJC is that they are an Employment Network and we're an Employment Network.

And we share responsibilities in terms of tickets. And they supply us with and since they're an Employment Network they've been through suitability so in terms of the information on people in their database they can share that information with us and we with them.

And so once we find - once they give us the information of the folks that have registered in their system then we screen those individuals to see who are ticket eligible and then we follow-up with contacting them.

And we have a revenue split based on the input and work that we provide to the whole process compared to what they provide. And it's working out really, really well. It's getting better all the time.

I wouldn't - it took a while to do. I'm not going to, you know, sugarcoat that by any means. It took a lot of effort. You need to - if you're interested in that you need to get to know your AJC people and find out what they're interested in and what they would like to see accomplished. We established a great relationship with them but it's taken three or four years to do. And but it's been well worth it.

And I'd be glad to answer any questions from Kevin or anybody else on what we did so I think I'll stop there.

Kevin Nickerson: Well (Paul) that is an excellent overview. I think that there's - I would have to guess there's people out there going wow, I guess it can work.

So I think you're a trailblazer that way. Thank you for sharing that with folks today.

Paul Liuchow: Glad to.

Kevin Nickerson: And if folks have follow-up questions for (Paul) maybe put them in the chat because of how our call in system works here, we wouldn't be able to get another line open but thank you (Paul).

Paul Liuchow: Yes. And on - in the chat I put my phone number if anybody wants to call me to discuss it.

Kevin Nickerson: Excellent, excellent.

Paul Liuchow: Thanks.

Kevin Nickerson: Thank you (Paul).

Operator: Our next question comes from the line of John Places. Please proceed.

John Places: Hi. How are you doing today?

Kevin Nickerson: Hey (John). How are you doing?

John Places: Okay, great. Listen I was part of that DPN Initiative as well. I was a Navigator working with the Disability Program Navigator. And we were from the beginning through start we trained the (Career Staff) staff and we got services in there that they were needing for people with severe disabilities, the deaf, the blind and so forth.

And as an Employment Network now what - the only issue that I see that, you know, as a problem that would go into the AJCs is that we have a Vocational Rehab Counselor that is stationed in our Career Centers. So basically if someone come in with a disability and they're needing some assistance as an Employment Network we really have to coordinate with the Career Counselors because, you know, the location. We have counselors been in the Career Centers stationed there.

And we don't necessarily have to be there presently all the time. However I've seen a great partnership by them being there because we're able to send some of our consumers in there that maybe needing (some vocational) rehab services and they're able to access those services immediately.

But also, you know, the - getting that relationship on the job or resume link and get enriched on the various services that employers are looking for has been very successful.

So I find that the Career Centers are useful tools and especially with the counselors being there as well a great partnership.

Kevin Nickerson: Well (John) I appreciate those comments. And I have to agree having lived in AJC for a decade. I do see the value of that.

But, you know, I also think that it's more than just the center. It is about people accessing multiple services and it isn't maybe just our center or a private organization or even just VR, right. So I think your points are well taken. And I appreciate it.

John Places: Okay. Thank you.

Operator: There are no further questions at this time.

Felix Stump: This is Felix. Kevin there's a question from (Alana) in the chat where she's asking as a Workforce EN, how would we proceed in partnering with other ENs to share clients?

Are there any standard Ticket to Work forms that are used for this type of partnership?

How do we proceed in partnering with other ENs to split payments?

So I guess we've talked a little bit about how an EN might proceed. But from your - from the AJC standpoint but is an EN how do - how might they...?

Kevin Nickerson: Sure.

Felix Stump: ...start to reach out?

Kevin Nickerson: Well, you know, I think it - there's two things we could talk about here. Maybe I'll let Felix talk about, you know, if you're talking specifically about split payments. That's one way...

Felix Stump: Sure.

Kevin Nickerson: ...to do business. Or you can really develop an agreement locally as that AJC or the CBO and arrange, you know, so I think let me just reread this a second Felix, so with another EN, right.

So, you know, like (Paul) shared I think (Alana) this is a good example because in his situation it was the same. You've got a Workforce EN. You got a Private EN. And so what they did is they would alternate the assignment of tickets.

You could develop an arrangement where say you, the Workforce EN, actually assigns, you know, maybe tickets for a period of time. And you have a written agreement where you maybe pay for certain services and/or split payments so that's more of the local agreement that you could work out. You could get more formal and just have a payment split. Actually OSM can do that and I'll let Felix address that.

But there's a lot of different ways and there's no difference if you start this conversation from the seat of the Workforce EN or from the private or CBO EN. It can be done either way.

But maybe Felix can shed some light a little bit on the split payment process.

Felix Stump: Sure. Sure. Before I do that though I'll say one thing, (Alana) you asked whether or not there are any standard Ticket to Work forms that we use in this type of partnership. Beyond those related directly to starting payments the answer is really no. There aren't.

However I think and the reason for that is that I don't know that we'd be able to create a form or a template that would account for all the various possibilities of how a Workforce EN and a Private EN might collaborate.

And so I'll - it may be that there are folks on this call that do have these types of relationships that might be willing to share their Memorandums of Understanding that they've created or shared at least some of the details of their agreements.

So I'll let those folks chime in or kind of let you kind of touch base offline if you like.

I mean (Paul) just put his phone number right out there so you might want to give him a call.

But to the question about split payments, one of the ways that you can arrange this is that if the ticket is - one way is to handle that split totally between the two organizations. That's to say that if you as the Workforce EN are going to have the ticket assignment and they're going to maybe get services from a local - a Private EN that you can't provide and you'd be paying for that maybe that would be a way to split the payment. You'd receive an EN payment or use those EN payments as a way to offset the cost of the services you're purchasing from this local EN.

But if you're going to have and even if you - the ticket is assigned with you and then you kind of hand off, do kind of a hand off situation where the ticket moves to this local EN directly then the ticket is assigned to

them. You could still agree that, you know, that there's some sharing of the revenue going on.

But if you don't kind of want to have that hassle we can split the payment for you on our side at the Operations Support Manager as we're making the payment, create some kind of a split. In order to do that the ticket does need to be a situation where it was assigned to one of you and now it is assigned to the other. It wouldn't really matter which one was first and which one was second. As long as it was assigned to one and then assigned to the other we can split any future payments.

The original entity maintaining the assignment would only be able to receive - they'd receive payments of course prior to the ticket movement. The second EN would only be able to get a portion of the payments that were for claims months after the ticket moved.

So if you want to split all the payments both before and after the tickets move from one or the other you need to do that kind of on your own internally. But if you do want it to split we can do that and there are standard forms we use for those payment splits.

In fact in any situation where we are running or we're processing a payment and we see that that ticket was previously assigned to another Employment Network we contact both entities and with a form that they can fill out.

And we encourage the entities to work together to decide on a percentage split. Usually that's a percentage split of any ongoing payments. The rationale being that the work that the first EN did has

had some lasting impact and has had some contribution to the sustaining employment the beneficiary has.

In cases where there isn't a partnership and there isn't collaboration we then make that split determination internally based on your service records.

But what we're talking about today is you would then work together. Decide okay, well we're going to take a 50/50 split or 50/40 or whatever you decide what it is or we could even do, you know, the next two payments are going to go to the one EN and then all the other payments will be split. However you want to do it let us know that on this form that we would send you and we would do that split moving forward on our side so the money would just be directed thusly to each of your accounts.

But that's just one of the ways that you can share revenue or partner.

Kevin Nickerson: Thank you Felix. And (Alana) I would definitely take up (Paul) on that offer because it mimics what you're asking there. But certainly I have another agreement I'd be willing to share too if you were to contact me offline. My contact information is at the end of the PowerPoint.

Felix Stump: And just for clarity sake that will be taking up (Paul) on an offer that Felix made on his behalf.

Kevin Nickerson: That's right. Okay, well (Frank) are there any more questions?

Operator: There are no further questions at this time.

Kevin Nickerson: Okay. Well let's move onto the next slide then and talk a little bit more and expand upon what was discussed in the last COP. Again by Pam but I was really intrigued by this and looked at it more closely.

And this is the System for Award and Management. And it really is a site created to combine and I pulled this from their site, Federal Procurement Systems and the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance into one system.

But what it really means is that if - federal contractors have to register this on this site when they're doing business with the government just like we do as ENs in order to be paid.

But what's interesting about this site is that it can be used to search for federal contractors within a geographic region. And below is where you actually find this site, pretty simple.

So the next slides I put together show you really how you can use this site though for the purposes of what we're trying to get to today. The first thing you should know is that when you go to that site and there's a - it's pretty obvious, okay, of how you get to this. But you need to choose the Advanced Search feature.

Now in this picture it didn't show exactly, I don't know why, the entries that I put in here. But where it says city so the first - on the left there you see it said Location. I clicked that box. And I checked off location and then I chose Ithaca and New York which is where I work.

And then I also made sure that the registration link at the top says Active Registrations.

So once I did that if we go to the next slide, this is what it gave me. Then oh I'm sorry. There's another piece of the puzzle.

So also you have to - well you don't have to but I recommend that you check the entity type. And so you might have to scroll a little bit down on your screen to see the whole slide here.

But what I was real interested in just curious was, you know, what entities were in this area that are other than government entities. So I chose other type of entity. And I actually checked off limited liability company and, you know, it's so small to see, I can hardly see it, but manufacturer of goods was another checkbox that you can't see there unless you scroll down. But those were the choices that I made. Okay.

And we can move on.

So just remember choose active registration. Now out of that what came out of that was all this information. How interesting is this, right? So now we've got a way to use SAM not only to get paid which we like but also to find folks in our area that would be having to register because of having federal contracts.

So here's a partial list. You could see in this case there was 35 records in here. And there's also that click. You can click on where it says View Details. It tells you a little bit more about that entity.

But regardless now you've got sort of a business name, you know they're active in this, right, because we checked that.

And you know where they're located. And from that it's pretty easy then to dig into, you know, where - you know how do I communicate with that company.

So that's just an interesting way to use SAM for our purposes to find folks in our areas that are handling federal contracts.

Also the National Labor Exchange is another way. I've played with this a little bit. And so, you know, what it is this sophisticated electronic Labor Exchange Network and I got this right off their site as well that it was created in 2007. It is a partnership between the National Association of Work - State Workforce Agencies and Direct Employees Association.

So, you know, some facts about this, it is - it does make it pretty interesting and seamless. It does make sure that these are unduplicated and currently available jobs.

And the next bullet talks about how it collects and distributes openings exclusively found on corporate career web sites and state job banks so maybe that does help part of (Ann)'s question.

It does not spider third party sites. So these are unique job leads. And they're refreshed and shared with states daily.

I took those facts from the web site where there's a link here at the bottom. That's the home page for the National Labor Exchange and that's where it can be found.

And if we go to the next slide the reason I'm showing you this is I think you can use this to some degree with some success I think to find - another way to find folks that are federal contractors in your area.

So again what I did is I just put in some keywords in the search area there, federal and contractor, right. And again I looked in Ithaca and I just left within a 25 mile radius.

And when I did that search you can see at the bottom where I have a job lead circled and its close by and that's definitely within that radius. That inventory taker. So then I clicked on that.

And then the next slide shows us what - well I didn't show the whole job lead here but what I did show you is what is most important for you to be looking at to see if you were successful in finding somebody who's a federal contractor.

And there, sure enough using this basic search just using the federal contractor and the geographic location can often yield search results that will help you find those federal contractors.

And what I have circled there is important for you to look for, so (VERA) and federal contractor, right.

So that's just an interesting way and I know this has also been talked about by others. I know (Susan) and Pam I think both talked about this as a resource. Is it perfect? No.

But this is just another tool in your toolkit that you can use to find, you know, employers in your area. And then, you know, get on the horn and call those folks.

Now with that and we will open up the lines again in a moment for questions. But what I'd like to do is call upon a colleague of mine who I have in the wings and who I prepared some questions for.

And her name is Lynn Paige. And Lynn is the Employment and Training - is a employment and training professional and former DPN, now the EN Specialist in Ticket to Work Advisor with CSS Workforce here in New York.

And Lynn is recognized as a possibility thinker. I love that. Who provides innovative solutions that enhance opportunities for job seekers, navigating systems and a process and processes, I'm sorry, with a goal of identifying and preparing obtaining and maintaining the most meaningful employment possible.

And I have known Lynn for many years under Navigator and I can tell you she is a busy lady and has done many good things with folks in helping them look at, you know, federal jobs.

And with that I'm going to - Lynn are you there? Are you on the line now? Are you on mute?

Lynn Paige: I am here Kevin and thank you so much. You know I just want to...

Kevin Nickerson: Oh.

Lynn Paige: ...tell you. I'm excited and I am challenged to hear the questions and also practices that are working for other folks.

Kevin Nickerson: Well these are challenging folks. I mean they ask challenging questions is what I meant to say.

But seriously Lynn I'm just going to, you know, not pretend here. I walked - I provided Lynn a series of questions that I thought would intrigue you folks today. And I'm going to pose these questions to Lynn and let her respond and then from that I'm hoping that there'll be a little bit more dialogue from you, our audience today.

So Lynn I would like you maybe to first address how did you make connections with some federal contractors in your area?

Lynn Paige: Well actually at the beginning it was really by accident. And now it's definitely intentional.

I started out by finding contacts right from the USA Job postings. When you find a position and you open that up you're going to find agency contact information and those folks have always been really helpful.

And they are decision makers so it would be really good to build some relationships with the folks that are on as the agency contact information on the USA Job.

Kevin Nickerson: Interesting. Okay, thank you. I know this has come up in the past. We've talked about this.

But how engaged is your Business Service Rep would you say with you in parsing out leads?

Lynn Paige: My Business Services Reps, I really engage, I'll have to say I think in a little different fashion. I really engage with my Business Services Representatives to gain insight into local business item agendas such as forecasting growth trends, development demands, occupational demands, skill set demands, contact information for companies such as what is the communications style and the leadership style and folks in management or recruiting and hiring or decision making so that I can build relationships even, you know, with those businesses.

Kevin Nickerson: Awesome.

Lynn Paige: I think the better for myself in region and I can cover five, you know, I'm going to say One Stops. I'm still New York State.

But with the American Job Centers I actually worked out of five centers. So I really build strong relationships with the functional supervisors or the center managers. They really need to know who you are and the services you provide that can benefit the folks that they serve in their center.

Kevin Nickerson: Okay. Well that sounds like it's, you know, a similar point and that you agree that really making that connection to the center manager is a good first step then. Yes.

Lynn Paige: Absolutely, absolutely.

Kevin Nickerson: Okay.

Lynn Paige: You know and it's been said, never underestimate the power of a conversation. Conversation is both ways of providing information and also listening to them and what their needs are of that relationship.

Kevin Nickerson: Good point Lynn. I can't agree more with that.

So in terms of the BSR how much do you think that your Business Service Rep really might know about Section 503? And I'm not trying to be unfair here but just in general, you know, I mean it's kind of new. Do you think - where do you think they're at with that?

Lynn Paige: You know certainly in my area I do think and again sometimes I do better with facts than evidence. But I think the facts and evidence are there.

But I think that the BSRs are knowledgeable and I think that really can be proven in the fact that they actually do reach out to me and they also conduct referrals to me.

However if you think the BSRs are not knowledgeable in your area this could be a topic to build or solidify that relationship with them engaging in a brief conversation, how you've been educating yourself on the new regulations and offering services or reminding them of the services you provide to job seekers with disabilities.

Kevin Nickerson: Right. So don't assume but it's good to again have built relationship and find out, right?

Lynn Paige: Absolutely, absolutely.

Kevin Nickerson: So, you know, this came up today but I'd like, you know, kind of your perspective Lynn because I haven't mentioned this yet.

But we will as we get more into this because Lynn's very much engaged in Employment Network services too.

But how do you think your BSR and/or center manager would respond to a Private EN coming in and asking to share contract release and/or, you know, talk to the Business Service Representative about what they do and what they're trying to accomplish with their customers?

Lynn Paige: Well actually I would have to describe the CSS Workforce as a - I guess I will say a standalone EN. And we actually really work well together. I think it's all about relationship and again reflecting back to the functional supervisor or the center manager. They need to know who you are and what services you provide.

I am very engaged with the staff and partners in the local American Job Centers.

And actually they do. Again they reach out to me and it all comes down to being a choice for the beneficiary.

And I'm kind of getting my - ahead of myself on that. But when you have that relationship with the - again I keep wanting to go back to say

that One Stop Center but the American Job Centers. When you have the relationships and they know that you're going to provide the best service and if you feel there's another EN that's going to provide better service you're going to be conducting that referral to that other because it's one thing to provide services to individuals with disabilities but it's truly another to be an expert.

Kevin Nickerson: And you know back to (Paul)'s point, I got to believe Lynn that didn't happen overnight that you played so well in the sandbox together in your area.

Lynn Paige: I started in 2006 as the DPN traveling and navigating through all five centers building those relationships.

So when we became an Employment Network I had those relationships established. It does take time particularly if you're traveling to five. But what a person can do in a week at one One Stop it would take me nearly six weeks.

Kevin Nickerson: Right.

Lynn Paige: So over a period of time building those relationships and being trusted by all of the career center staff they know that I am going to be doing that referral to whoever can provide the best service because I can pick that ticket up at the end of their time to continue services.

Kevin Nickerson: Exactly. Well these are good responses Lynn. I do remember from the DPN days you having the most centers and I always felt for you because that is a lot of effort to have coverage in multiple centers. And

that was often the case with our Navigators. But you had the most that I recall.

So in terms of, you know, how do you handle partnering?

And we talked a little bit about this today too. When there's a Private EN and a Workforce EN in the same region of coverage so you sort of alluded to some of this but maybe you can expand on that.

Lynn Paige: Absolutely. Once again it's - you know it's about choice for the beneficiary. So it's connecting the right people, you know, to provide the right services for the best outcome for the beneficiary.

I braid my services with other ENs and state agencies again for that reason that it's one thing to provide services to individuals with disabilities but it's another to be an expert.

And sometimes I may need the expert and sometimes I may be that expert. But I'm going to get that beneficiary to the best services.

I may also need the signature authority. I know someone on the call was talking about their signature authority. I may at times need that signature authority for Schedule A hiring. But it's only going to benefit the beneficiary.

Kevin Nickerson: Well and I'm latching onto something you said Lynn that I agree wholeheartedly with that, you know, it's really about what's best for a customer.

And so that often helps to sort out I think, you know, in my opinion some of these issues of, you know, having multiple providers in an area because, you know, I'm going to back to the DEI and thinking about how we handle this. And we always looked at the customer needs.

And if it was somebody that was better served primarily by another partner agency and then having us as a partner that was fine.

So I appreciate that you feel that way too.

So Lynn you alluded to Schedule A. Can you tell me a little bit, you know, maybe more about how have you done helping folks acquire federal employment through Schedule A? And maybe people just don't know what that is.

So maybe you could just talk a little bit about that.

Lynn Paige: I have achieved great success in the Schedule A hiring. It's actually one of my passions. It is - Schedule A hiring, the federal government gives additional considerations for individuals with disabilities for positions that are posted as well as they have special appointing authority for persons with disabilities in which they could obtain a position without competing with other applicants.

So in that with that Schedule A hiring you would really - it would really benefit folks to know who is in charge of the Schedule A hiring with the federal agency that's in their area.

Kevin Nickerson: Okay.

Lynn Paige: And one of the things I definitely have found that when a beneficiary goes from dependency on benefits to self-sufficiency by obtaining a federal position it really becomes life changing for them.

Kevin Nickerson: I can't agree more with that Lynn. I think that's pretty exciting stuff. I don't know. I mean I got to believe there's people out there that are wondering what the heck is this all about. This might be new to some folks. I don't know. Maybe it's not.

But Lynn these are - this is a great segue to provide people the platform to ask more questions.

And I'd like to open that up now if we could not only to me or to OSM but to Lynn if you want to, you know, pose a question.

So I think we should open it for a few minutes and see what folks have to say about this.

Lynn Paige: Sure.

Operator: Thank you. Ladies and gentlemen if you would like to register for a question or have a comment please press the 1 followed by the 4 on your telephone.

Kevin Nickerson: Don't be shy folks.

Felix Stump: (Frank) are there any questions?

Operator: There seems to be no questions at this time.

Kevin Nickerson: You've left them speechless Lynn.

Lynn Paige: I have. You know I want to share - let me share one more thing with this federal hiring. I am in the process of preparing and submitting a (Pass) with a customer that's a ticket assignment who lives in close proximity to a federal facility.

So, you know, we're just imaging, you know, what potential this actually has for that beneficiary and for our Employment Network.

Kevin Nickerson: Well that's exciting. I'd like to know more about that as that progresses if you don't mind.

I do see a question Lynn in the chat that came in from (Gordon). And he said what would be a good source for learning more about Schedule A.

And my personal belief would be to talk to Lynn but I'm sure you can give people some more information Lynn. Do you have any suggestions for (Gordon) where he would go next?

Lynn Paige: Absolutely. If you just simply go into the USA Jobs they actually have quite a bit of information in there on Schedule A hiring.

The - a contact person that's connected with that federal job would also be able to share with you a little bit more information on the Schedule A hiring and what that process is for their facility.

But again it gives great extra consideration for individuals with disabilities.

Kevin Nickerson: Awesome. Thank you, Lynn. Felix I guess at this point if there's no more questions if you could move to the next slide just to show folks some of the resources that are attached to today's PowerPoint materials.

Operator: (Unintelligible).

((Crosstalk))

Kevin Nickerson: These are all - go ahead.

Operator: Pardon me for the interruption. We do have a question from the line of Susan Webb. Please proceed.

Kevin Nickerson: (Susan)?

Susan Webb: Hello? Hi.

Kevin Nickerson: Hey (Susan).

Susan Webb: You know earlier in the call Felix said something about what is being done to prepare the AJCs for us?

One of the problems that we're seeing in rolling this out is that nobody seems to be paying attention to Employment Networks. There's a lot of initiatives like the OFCCP is doing a lot of stuff to educate contractors. VR is all over the place because they're used to them.

The AJCs have always been a source of place for contractors to post their openings.

So the AJCs and the VR agencies have already got an inside track. The new rule specifically named Employment Networks as a bona fide referral source.

So we are in this game but it seems like we're kind of being - I feel like we're being just kind of ignored and sort of (unintelligible) really, you know, we've been involved with this and, you know, with (SSA) on a the national level and it's very frustrating.

And I actually have tried to do some outreach with our One Step Business person. And again I felt like I was just kind of blown off. I'll pursue that some more when I get a moment.

But it just seems like we are not being presented enough out there. And I'm just curious when Felix talked about what is being done to prepare the One (Step) for us, what does that entail? Are - is there like a national training program that the AJCs are getting?

And are they understanding who we are and that when we call them that we are bona fide and that we're not a bunch of flacks and you need to listen to us?

Kevin Nickerson: Well I'll - let me respond quickly (Susan) and then I'll let Felix respond.

But I will say because I'm part of the training and TA Team for the DEI states, yes, absolutely we're doing things to let the DEI Project sites that are ENs understand that other ENs exist, certainly. And we've encouraged the same level of partnering that we're talking about today.

But I just want to put that out there that yes, of course, we're talking about that. We're not in this game alone. In fact we are the majority of the ENs represented.

So we're kind of the new kids in the - on the block to be truthful so Felix maybe you have other thoughts on that.

Felix Stump: Thanks. Yes. I think (Susan) to be honest when I - as I said that earlier I realized I - as Kevin just said with his work with the DEI. With our - in our role just we ourselves or the Operations Support Manager, we are of course our scope is to promote this kind of thing to workforces that are ENs, right.

Susan Webb: Right, yes.

Felix Stump: So I know that - so to that - and answer to that question is yes. And we have the - we have training material for workforces that are ENs and, you know, and we talk about partnerships and we can do all what we can similar to this call.

But we've - I can't speak to - we of course aren't engaged in any direct kind of promotion to workforces, AJCs or workforce entities in general outside the subset of them that are ENs or even considering to be ENs. That's kind of - we can talk a little bit in that regard. If they're coming onboard or considering we can talk about partnerships.

So I - but I don't want to speak for some of our colleagues over maybe in DOL who might be able to talk a little bit more about what they're doing with communication out to the entire workforce system, not just those that are ENs.

I - my impression is that that sort of thing is being conducted. And we work very well with some folks there.

But I don't want to speak for them without them on the call so we can try to maybe pull some information together if appropriate and share some of that perhaps later on.

And at the very least share your concern that that sort of outreach if it is not being conducted that it should be and that or if it is maybe there needs to be more of it or whatever. We can just share the concern that that sort of message needs to get out about the ENs, who they are, their availability to partnership, to partner even with those workforce entities that are not ENs.

Susan Webb: Well that's the point because most are not as you know.

Felix Stump: Right.

Susan Webb: And so that's my concern. I think the ones that need the partnership with ENs more, ones that are not ENs. And that's the majority.

And so that was the reason. I always seem to give you guys homework which is great. I - you know you can consider me your source for job security.

Kevin Nickerson: It's great (Susan). And it's really great.

Susan Webb: But I do think that a conversation with DOL about that issue that they need to - you know some kind of information blast or something to explain the role of ENs and that we are a good resource for them to partner with.

And there's all kinds of different partnerships. We've talked about several of those today. So I wouldn't want to dictate specifically what those would be.

But just to make sure that the - all of the American Job Centers in all the states, not just the DEI states and not just the ones that are ENs, that they all understand what Employment Networks are, what the Ticket to Work is and what kind of value we can bring to the community.

Kevin Nickerson: (Susan) this is Kevin. Let me - I'd be remised if I did not address that U.S. DOL has keen interest in the Public Workforce Development System engaging in helping ticket holders.

And there's actually a Training and Employment Notice that went out to all the centers that talks about Employment Networks, what they do and, you know, how to get involved.

So they are definitely involved and they have their eye on this. Also I want you to know that it isn't just DEI state projects that have access to the trainings that we provide through the National Training and

Technical Assistance Center. It is for all of the Public Workforce Development System.

So we're not really isolating DEI. We're trying to engage the whole system.

But to your point I think there's still more that needs to be done, okay. But I just want you to know that there are things that have already been done and there's messaging that's already been put out there and continues to be put out to the system at large.

Susan Webb: When you send those messages out - I don't want to take all the time here. But when you send those messages out does - is there a target for those Business Services Reps? Because they seem to be the lynchpin here for us that those are the ones because I really loved your idea about partnering with them on events particularly because of the kind of 503 Events that are being done but we are so similarly being left out of all of those. We're just not there. We're not invited even when we ask to be on it. It's like oh I'm sorry the agenda is full.

Kevin Nickerson: Well, you know, I spent half my career on the other side of the fence. I was tired of the system (Susan). So I get it.

Susan Webb: Yes. Well that's why I asked you the question because you're the man.

Kevin Nickerson: Yes. I think that, you know, it really requires something that Lynn said and I agree with it which is us to step us. And well maybe it feels planted but I think that's really what we have to do and show that look, hey, we're the folks with the expertise here. We should be involved in this.

And we've seen some of those events occurring and I mentioned because I like that idea. And it kind of showcases the community-based organizations' skill around this and knowledge and participation.

So I think that's one way all of us could get more engaged.

Susan Webb: So you're telling me I need to do a better job.

Kevin Nickerson: I'm telling you. You got to get out there (Susan) and do what you do.

Susan Webb: Yes. Well I'm...

Kevin Nickerson: And you do it well and...

Susan Webb: ...obviously not doing it right. I'm not doing it right. And I'm certainly one of the more involved ENs in the country as you know.

Kevin Nickerson: I do know that.

Susan Webb: So yes.

Kevin Nickerson: And maybe it's - maybe, you know, it could be, you know the folks that you work (unintelligible).

((Crosstalk))

Susan Webb: Maybe it's just Arizona.

Kevin Nickerson: Well no. I didn't want to say that (Susan).

Susan Webb: You know I'd be interested to know if there...

Kevin Nickerson: But...

Susan Webb: Well, you know, but I would be interested in others on the call and whether they're kind of getting that same thing. Maybe it is just here. So I put that out there.

Lynn Paige: Kevin can I share?

Kevin Nickerson: I missed that last comment somebody made.

Felix Stump: I think that might have been Lynn.

Lynn Paige: Yes, Kevin this - could I share...?

Kevin Nickerson: Sure. Lynn go ahead.

Lynn Paige: ...a little bit on that?

Kevin Nickerson: Yes.

Lynn Paige: I really believe that in building those relationships I never marketed the Employment Network. I totally marketed my expertise and became a resource and the EN just comes with it. But I've never marketed as an Employment Network. But I have marketed as an expert and a resource.

Susan Webb: Okay.

Kevin Nickerson: I think that's a good point. I think, you know, Lynn's in a system but and (Susan)'s not so to her point it's a little more difficult breaking in. (Susan) I get what you're saying. But I do think, you know, and I've seen this happen especially in Lynn's area. That's why I invited her that there's a great partnership with the Private EN.

So I think it's possible. I don't know. You know so it varies based on regions obviously and the players involved so it could be a little bit of that going on.

Susan Webb: Okay, well thanks.

Kevin Nickerson: Thank you (Susan).

Felix Stump: So we...

Kevin Nickerson: Felix I'm going to turn it back to you.

Felix Stump: Oh thank you. So we are at just about call stop time. I know we started a couple minutes late.

(Frank) are there any other questions in the queue?

Operator: We do have another question.

Felix Stump: Just one?

Operator: Yes sir.

Felix Stump: Okay, let's take that one last one and then we'll have that be the end of the call.

Operator: And we have a question from Paul Liuchow. Please proceed.

Paul Liuchow: Yes Kevin. I just wanted to add to some of the things that (Susan) was just talking about because she and I have communicated about this difficulty for the last several months actually.

And one of the things kind of on - we've been participating in our Industry Liaison Group here in New Mexico.

And I don't think that's been mentioned today. But that's something that Employment Networks and others should be connecting up with those organizations because they're made up of federal contractors. The Human Resources people in the companies that are federal contractors.

And we've made - we were part of a panel presentation a couple weeks ago here in New Mexico on the 503 Program.

And it also included the (site). I was representing Employment Networks and it also included VR and Commission for the Blind and the AJC and a couple of other entities.

And it went really well. We were invited to participate via our Industry Liaison Group who we started to develop a relationship with over the last nearly year or so and they were very appreciative of us being there to reinforce what (Susan) was saying about the lack of awareness.

I posed the question to the 33 employers that were in the session and only one of them was familiar with Ticket to Work out of 33 which was not very encouraging. And kind of backs up with what (Susan) said.

I have contacted the ILG on a national level. They have their National Conference in August. I haven't heard back from them and it might be a little too late to do anything.

But just seeing if we could possibly get invited in some way, shape or form to that -- it's in DC -- to be involved in some way, shape or form. And I don't know if the Department of Labor is going to that conference or not. But it would be nice if they would and the OFCCP if either one of those or both of them could bring up and educate people on the resource that Employment Networks can be to their 503 compliance needs.

And that's all I wanted to say.

Kevin Nickerson: Thank you (Paul). I put a link there too for folks to dig into that more.

Paul Liuchow: Right.

Kevin Nickerson: And I think you're right on track.

Paul Liuchow: Mm-hm.

Felix Stump: Well thanks very much everyone. Kevin, any closing comments?

Kevin Nickerson: Well I appreciated the dialogue today. It's interesting to hear perspectives from folks around the country and, you know, things vary of course in different areas.

So but I think and hope that you glean some information from today's discussion and that you'll continue to try to force those new relationships with Job Centers in your area.

And I appreciate you all attending today.

Felix Stump: I'll second that. Thank you very much everyone for dialing in. Have a great day.

Operator: Ladies and gentlemen that does conclude the conference call for today. Have a great day everyone.