

Secretary's Advisory Committee on Apprenticeship (ACA)

Pittsburgh, PA | September 12, 2024

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, September 12, 2024

ACA Meeting Kickoff

8:30 – 9:30 a.m. EST

Official Call to Order, Welcome, and Roll Call

- **Robert L. Cherry, CEO, Partner4Work and ACA Chairperson** officially called the meeting to order and conducted the roll call.

EMPLOYER REPRESENTATIVES:

- **Noel Ginsburg, CEO, CareerWise USA** present.
- **Melissa (Missy) Henriksen, Executive Director, Center for Energy Workforce Development** present.
- **Amy Kardel, Vice President, Higher Education and Government Strategy, The Computing Technology Industry Association (CompTIA)** (virtual) present.
 - **Richard Braden, Senior Director, Tech Apprenticeships, CompTIA** present.
- **Mario Kratsch, Vice President, German American Chamber of Commerce of the Midwest, Inc.** present.
- **Karmela K. Malone, SVP, Chief Ethics and Compliance Officer, The Hartford** (virtual) present.
- **Michael (Mike) Russo, President and CEO, National Institute for Innovation and Technology** present.
- **Kelly M. Schulz, CEO, Maryland Tech Council** (virtual) present.
- **David (Dave) Scott, Construction Industry Advocate, Encore Electric, Inc.** present.
- **Daniel (Dan) Serota, Vice President of Government and Public Affairs, Aon** present.
- **Randi Wolfe, PhD, Executive Director, Early Care & Education Pathways to Success** absent.
 - **Camilla Rand, Chief Strategy Officer, Early Care & Education Pathways to Success** present.

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LABOR REPRESENTATIVES:

- **Raymond (Ray) W. Boyd, Director of Education and Training, United Association** (virtual) present.
- **Daniel Bustillo, Deputy Executive Director, 1199SEIU Training and Employment Funds** (virtual) present.
- **Jamaine L. Gibson, Director of Apprenticeships and Workforce Development, Amalgamated Transit Union, AFL-CIO/CLC** present.
- **Stephanie Harris-Kuiper, PhD, Executive Director of the New Jersey Health Care Employer District 1199J, American Federation of State County and Municipal Employees Training & Development Fund** present
- **Janis (Jan) Hochadel, Vice President, American Federation of Teachers, and Connecticut State Senator** present.
- **Shannon McCann, Executive Committee Member, National Education Association, and Special Education Teacher** present.
- **Bernadette (Bernie) Oliveira-Rivera, Assistant Executive Director, LIUNA Training and Education Fund** present.
- **Anton Ruesing, Executive Director LMC/FTI, International Union of Painters and Allied Trades** present.
- **Todd Stafford, Executive Director, Electrical Training ALLIANCE** absent.
 - **Marty Riesberg, Director, Electrical Training ALLIANCE** present.
- **Liz Weiss, Deputy Director, AFL-CIO Working for America Institute** present.

PUBLIC REPRESENTATIVES:

- **Cristina (Tina) Barillas-McEntee, Director, Tradeswomen Building Infrastructure Initiative, CWIT National Center** present.
- **Karen Dove, Executive Director, ANEW** present.
- **Kate Kreamer, Executive Director, Advance CTE** present.
- **Lee D. Lambert, Chancellor, Foothill-De Anza Community College District** (virtual) present.
- **Shana Peschek, Executive Director, Machinists Institute** present.



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- **Todd G. Berch, Outgoing President, National Association of State and Territorial Apprenticeship Directors (NASTAD)** absent.
 - **David Polk, President-Elect, NASTAD** present.
- **Traci R. Scott, Vice President of Workforce Development, National Urban League** present.
- **Taylor C. White, Director, Partnership to Advance Youth Apprenticeship & Postsecondary Pathways for Youth, New America** present.
- **Orrian Elijah Willis, TechSF Manager, Office of Economic and Workforce Development, San Francisco** present.

FEDERAL EX OFFICIO REPRESENTATIVES:

- **David S. Langdon, Deputy Director, Office of the Secretary/Policy and Strategic Planning, U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC)** (virtual) present.
- **Amy Loyd (primary), Assistant Secretary, Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE), U.S. Department of Education (ED)** (virtual) present.
 - **Luke Rhine (secondary), Deputy Assistant Secretary, Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTATE), ED** present.
- **Betony Jones, Labor Advisor to Secretary Granholm – Office of Energy Jobs, U.S. Department of Energy (DOE)** absent.
- **Angela Ramirez, Deputy Chief of Staff, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)** (virtual) present.
- **Paige Shevlin, Strategic Advisor for Infrastructure Workforce Development, U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT)** (virtual) present.
- **Latonia Page, Deputy Associate Director for Talent Acquisition, Classification, Veterans Programs, U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM)** (virtual) present.

Agenda Overview & General Housekeeping

- **Mr. Cherry** mentioned having a special addition to the meeting and press conference to make an exciting apprenticeship announcement. He welcomed esteemed guests from the Department of Labor (DOL or the Department) Employment and Training Administration (ETA) leadership, the Pittsburgh Mayor's office, and Allegheny County executive office.
- **John Ladd, Administrator, Office of Apprenticeship (OA), U.S. Department of Labor (DOL or the Department), and ACA Designated Federal Official (DFO)** provided housekeeping notes, including a reminder to members to state names and titles for the recording. He spoke about the press conference occurring that morning, which will require the ACA to be flexible as they await special guests. He mentioned wanting to bring the Advisory Committee on Apprenticeship (ACA) out into the field to elevate and give visibility to issues and generate local press through these

efforts. Mr. Ladd outlined the agenda and thanked the team at DOL.

ETA Opening Remarks

- **Mr. Cherry** introduced elected officials and thanked organizers of recent site visits, including PIT2Work at Pittsburgh International Airport, Parkway West Career & Technology Center, Carpenters Pittsburgh Training Center, and Community College Allegheny County (CCAC). He emphasized the importance of system building through workforce connections at each stop, highlighting that it is the people, not the programs who make it happen. Mr. Cherry gave the example of a person they met who had dual roles at a career and technical education (CTE) center and a carpenters' union to ensure seamless transition between graduated students and the carpentry apprenticeship program, noting the importance of people who play these roles. Mr. Cherry then introduced Assistant Secretary Rodríguez.
- **José Javier Rodríguez, Assistant Secretary, ETA, DOL** shared that the Biden-Harris administration, along with DOL and the ACA, is focusing on workforce development. He said that Pittsburgh is highlighted as a key workforce hub, deploying programs nationwide. Mr. Rodríguez stated the administration emphasizes building the middle class through local initiatives. He mentioned that the ACA members visited apprenticeship sites where pre-apprentices and apprentices are learning various skills, including carpentry and mechanical engineering. He noted Pittsburgh is also offering tuition-free apprenticeships and expanding pathways in cybersecurity, becoming a center for workforce innovation. He then introduced Mayor Gainey and County Executive Sara Innamorato.

Welcome from Local Hosts

- **Sara Innamorato, Allegheny County Executive** welcomed everyone to Pittsburgh and highlighted the importance of apprenticeships in Allegheny County as a gold standard for workforce development. She emphasized the need for onsite childcare, better transportation, and other support systems to ensure success. Ms. Innamorato said that public investments in public infrastructure should leverage training opportunities and stressed the importance of strong partnerships with unions and industry groups. She expressed optimism about creating a more inclusive economy in Allegheny County and acknowledged the political alignment with Biden-Harris and Shapiro administrations.
- **Mr. Cherry** introduced Mayor Gainey.
- **Honorable Edward C. Gainey, Mayor of Pittsburgh** expressed gratitude to Mr. Cherry, Partner4Work, and other collaborators for their instrumental roles in various workforce development projects. He emphasized the importance of exposing children to better opportunities, the power of collective effort in achieving regional workforce development, and the impact of apprenticeship on individuals' lives. He also acknowledged the contributions of the Biden-Harris administration and stressed the significance of breaking down silos to help children thrive and the importance of climate change. He introduced Rachel Mauer and thanked everyone for their dedication to changing lives.
- **Rachel Mauer, President, German American Chamber of Commerce Pittsburgh Chapter** thanked everyone for attending and shared remarks on behalf of the German American Chamber of Commerce (GACC). She announced that the German Chamber has launched the first electric

vehicle (EV) automotive apprenticeship, made possible through regional partnership and support from the DOL. She noted the rise in demand for EV technicians due to the increasing adoption of EVs in Europe and the United States. Ms. Mauer stated the apprenticeship program was developed in collaboration with the GACC, partners of Allegheny County, and Partner4Work, includes 180 hours of technical instruction, 15 college credits, and a certificate as automotive technician. She emphasized the need for a significant skill set for EVs including high voltage curriculum. She mentioned the importance of the program in building career pathways and strengthening apprentices and their families. She expressed her excitement about apprenticeship programs, including the fields like polymer process technician, aerospace, healthcare, and more. She introduced Nate McAfee, apprentice of the year.

- **Nathan (Nate) McAfee, Polymer Process Technician (Third-Year Apprentice), VEKA Inc.** said that he is a 28-year-old with a wife and two young children and shared his journey of balancing family and career. He has been with VEKA Inc. for 10 years, working in various roles. Seeking career growth, he applied for the German Chamber apprenticeship program, which allowed him to work and train simultaneously at CCAC and VEKA. The opportunity helped him connect with colleagues and find a suitable job within the company. He shared that he completed a dual certification in February and is on track to earn an associate degree in about a year, all without incurring student loans. He expressed optimism about his future career and thanked GACC Pittsburgh chapter apprenticeship.
- **Mr. Cherry** thanked the diverse and committed Partner4Work board members for their contributions to success and invited honorary guests and members for a group photo before concluding this session.

Group Photo

ACA members and honorary guests took a group photo.

Apprentice Testimonials

9:30 – 10:00 a.m. EST

- **Mr. Cherry** called the meeting back to order and thanked everyone for their patience.
- **Mr. Ladd** highlighted apprentice guests, including Julia Corbett and Dom Ragghianti. He said Ms. Corbett recently graduated from Butler Senior High School and attended Butler County Area Vocational Technical School for heavy equipment repair. Mr. Ladd shared that Ms. Corbett hopes to build her career after her apprenticeship. He said that Mr. Ragghianti is a cyber analyst at GrayMatter hired through Apprenti PGH, Pittsburgh's IT apprentice program, a partnership between Pittsburgh Tech Council and Partner4Work. Mr. Ladd said Mr. Ragghianti is dedicated to protecting industrial companies from cyber threats. Mr. Ladd shared that the ACA is excited to have them share their experiences, starting with Ms. Corbett.
- **Julia Corbett, Polymer Process Technician (First-Year Apprentice), VEKA Inc.** expressed gratitude for the opportunity to speak. She shared her experience as a Polymer Process Technician, highlighting the diverse departmental work and career growth opportunities provided by the apprenticeship sponsored by GACC. Initially aiming for an internal apprenticeship, she was

introduced to this program, which also allowed her to attend college. She shared that in just two months she created a new position at VEKA, enhancing career progression for others. Ms. Corbett said she was excited about future opportunities the apprenticeship would bring.

- **Dominic (Dom) Ragghianti, Cyber Analyst, (Journeyworker), GrayMatter** shared his journey of completing an apprenticeship over a year ago and transitioning to a full-time role. He credited the apprenticeship, organized by Partner4Work and Pittsburgh Technology council, for providing the connections and his education path that shaped his career. He said he was uncertain about his career path before the apprenticeship program. He shared that he has earned numerous cybersecurity certifications and built valuable business connections since joining the program. He said that he has been able to contribute to critical infrastructure security. Mr. Ragghianti also said he spoke at the White House about skill-based hiring and apprenticeships. He said that before this, he worked in carpentry and struggled to find an entry-level information technology (IT) job despite having a bachelor's degree. He emphasized the importance of programs like his apprenticeship in providing opportunities for individuals to succeed in the IT field.
- **Mr. Willis** thanked the apprentices for their testimonials and asked what would get more young people interested in apprenticeships for suggestions on how to spread the word.
 - **Ms. Corbett** suggested visiting vo-tech (vocational technical) schools, such as those in Butler and Lawrence County, and participating in career fairs to recruit for specific apprenticeships. She emphasized that talking directly to students about opportunities and visiting sites of their interested field, like heavy equipment, can effectively spread the word about apprenticeships.
 - **Mr. Ragghianti** responded suggesting that social media would be a good way to attract younger people, highlighting that social media effectively captures their attention and shows them alternative educational paths.
- **Mr. Scott** asked how the conversation about the apprenticeship with their parents went.
 - **Ms. Corbett** said that she moved out at 18 years old and received support from her parents, noting that her mom was excited that she would be starting college. She said that she appreciated the combination of college training and hands-on apprenticeship experience, which suited her learning style. She said that her parents were excited and proud of her achievements.
 - **Mr. Ragghianti** responded that he left his family business, which initially upset his family. However, he said things have improved since then.
- **Wood Powell, Program Analyst, OA, DOL** encouraged Mr. McAfee, Mr. Ragghianti, and Ms. Corbett to explore [DOL's trailblazer initiative](#) and participate in National Apprenticeship Week in late November and hoped they will act as leaders to help spread the word.
- **Mr. Polk** asked about the apprentice's experience within their social circles, noting that most of their friends likely have not chosen apprenticeships. He was curious about how apprenticeship has affected their social interactions and whether they promote the apprenticeship opportunity within their social circle.
 - **Ms. Corbett** answered that she often discusses her apprenticeship with her friends, both at work and outside of work. She said one friend is particularly interested and is considering a similar apprenticeship after hearing about the benefits, such as avoiding student debt while

entering a career field. She said she believes that apprenticeships are a great alternative to traditional degrees and noted that many people are not well informed about them.

- **Mr. Ragghianti** shared his experience at Slipper Rock University, where his homeland security studies focused on government frameworks and security policies but lacked operational depth. He stated he faced challenges entering the Secret Service due to the unfamiliarity with his major. He shared that his former classmates discovered the program, and while he recommends it for its educational rigor and paid commitment, many prefer higher-paying physical labor jobs. He emphasizes honesty in advising those who are genuinely interested in the field.
- **Mr. Ladd** thanked Mr. Ragghianti and Ms. Corbett and transitioned to the panel discussion. He introduced Susie Puskar, the Chief Operating Officer at Partner4Work, who has over 15 years of experience in workforce development. He said in her role she has been able to connect people with work readiness training and collaborates with intermediaries to enhance the workforce development system, emphasizing data-supported, people centered solutions.

Panel: Pittsburgh Workforce Hub: Lessons Learned and the Role of Pennsylvania's Apprenticeship System in Connecting Workers to Good Jobs

10:00 – 11:05 a.m. EST

- **Susie Puskar, Chief Operating Officer, Partner4Work** welcomed attendees to America's Job Center and highlighted the importance of apprenticeships in the Pittsburgh region, which faces an aging workforce. She emphasized the need to remove barriers to reemployment and create a strong job pipeline. Ms. Puskar introduced several key leaders including, Ms. Mauer, who has developed an apprenticeship ecosystem in advanced manufacturing and EV technician training; Tara Lowe, who prioritized new sector apprenticeships in Pennsylvania; and Felicity Williams, who advocates for community-based workforce development. Ms. Puskar also noted the aging demographic challenges in Allegheny County and surrounding areas, stressing the urgency of these issues. She started with Tara Loew, asking her to discuss the Commonwealth's perspective on apprenticeships, the governor's support, and the role of apprenticeships in training and industry.
- **Tara Loew, Director of the Apprenticeship and Training Office, Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry** highlighted the significant progress in apprenticeship programs in Pittsburgh and Pennsylvania, emphasizing the importance of partnerships and the integration of different systems, such as the partners from the GACC and the CCAC. She noted the growing support from the Shapiro administration, which has increased funding and staffing for apprenticeship programs. Key initiatives include the creation of a pre-apprenticeship division, compliance division, and substantial investments in new sector occupations. She also stressed the importance of innovation, integrity, and integration in developing high-quality apprenticeship programs and the need for diverse recruitment. Ms. Loew discussed the collaborative efforts across various departments in the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Community and Economic development, HHS, and ED, to create apprenticeship opportunities that meet current and future needs. Notable initiatives include a dairy herd manager program, the first organic inspector program, and potential dual apprenticeship programs. She noted the importance of successful apprenticeship programs and emphasized the importance of partnerships, likening the apprenticeship system to a complex gear

system where each partner plays a crucial role.

- **Ms. Puskar** agreed that successful apprenticeship cannot happen in a silo and requires collaboration across different regions and government levels. She asked Ms. Mauer to discuss how to adapt successful international models, like those from the GACC, to fit locally to Pittsburgh, with a focus on understanding local adaptations and ensuring the right foundation and support for these models to work.
- **Ms. Mauer** emphasized the importance of partnerships in developing apprenticeships programs, drawing inspiration from the German apprenticeship model. Ms. Mauer shared her personal connection to the German system and efforts to adapt it to the Pittsburgh region including, leveraging local strengths, collaborating with workforce boards, and integrating existing programs like those at CCAC. She highlighted the need for high-skill, multi-pathway apprenticeship programs that appeal to both industry and apprentices, ensuring they lead to meaningful career opportunities. She also stressed the importance of community colleges, high schools, and technical centers in creating effective pathways for students.
- **Ms. Puskar** agreed that strong apprenticeship ecosystems that are built require groundwork to create career pathways for those unaware of these jobs. She asked Felicity Williams to discuss apprenticeship models built through collaboration with community-based organizations. She asked about the methods and lessons learned that could benefit the broader system.
- **Felicity Williams, Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of the Mayor Edward C. Gainey** emphasized the importance of community engagement and collaboration to address workforce needs in Pittsburgh. The mayor's vision focuses on making the city safe, welcoming, and thriving, especially for historically marginalized communities. Despite economic opportunities in some areas, she said minority neighborhoods remain with low to moderate income, highlighting a disconnect. Mayor Gainey, Pittsburgh's first Black mayor, brings personal experience from growing up in a low-income neighborhood to his role. Ms. Williams highlighted the need for partnerships between various stakeholders, including government, industry, and community groups to create effective programs. She highlighted the importance of building intentional pipelines to connect disadvantaged and historically disenfranchised groups to job opportunities. This involves understanding their needs and interests, breaking down barriers, and fostering trust. She shared that their goal is to create a holistic ecosystem where all parts are connected and aligned with the vision and mission of the mayor. Ms. Williams stressed the importance of honesty, transparency, and realistic expectations in these efforts.
- **Ms. Puskar** thanked Ms. Williams and opened the discussion for questions.
- **Ms. Peschek** shared that Ms. Williams highlighted the challenge community-based organizations face in not just participating but actively creating opportunities. She mentioned the lack of expertise in workings with communities and a need to step back. She emphasized her focus on building confidence in students, which is not a funded metric. She asked Ms. Williams how to address outcomes as valuable and needed when they are not traditionally funded.
 - **Ms. Williams** responded by discussing the approach to funding projects by aligning various funding sources, such as state, federal, and local funds as well as philanthropic and corporate contributions. She stated the importance of relationship building and starting small before scaling up. She highlighted the unique funding opportunity provided by the Biden-Harris

administration and commonwealth workforce programs, and the involvement of corporate philanthropic partners to fill funding gaps. She stated that assembling all partners and resources is possible to support workforce development and their community needs.

- **Ms. Oliveria-Rivera** asked Ms. Williams what type of effort others should undertake to ensure connections are made between different partners and how to sustain the connections.
 - **Ms. Williams** responded and discussed strategies for making connections between different parties and ensuring these connections are institutionalized and systemic. She emphasized the importance of agreements to ensure commitment and mentions the creation of the regional workforce equity agreement. This agreement involves public and union partners who are committed to diverse recruitment and workforce equity. She highlighted the need for engagement, information sharing, and public pledges to maintain trust and commitment. Ms. Williams mentioned the creation of a workforce hub made for partners to utilize and disseminate information to job seekers. She emphasized the importance of partners signing onto the Pittsburgh Good Job Principles to receive support from the mayor's office and commitment to these principles is necessary for a project or grant to receive endorsement from the mayor. She noted that institutionalizing these principles is a good practice and still ongoing.

- **Ms. Ramirez (virtual)** asked how efforts at apprenticeships in closely regulated industries are going such as, registered nursing programs, pharmacists, etc.? Additionally, she asked if there are best practices for lining up apprenticeship efforts with state requirements for these types of positions? She also asked what would you want the federal government, particularly HHS, to know about these efforts?
 - **Ms. Loew** responded and mentioned the ongoing efforts in sector strategy work, particularly in healthcare. She focused on how she is working on licensing options and bringing in subject matter experts, identifying key occupations, and addressing gaps to improve registered apprenticeship programs. She stated that she wants to make the process easier and more successful. She is excited to report future progress and mentions ongoing conversations with healthcare providers about regulatory issues and licensing requirements.
 - **Ms. Puskar** echoed Ms. Loew and pointed out the challenge of aligning healthcare apprenticeships with licensing requirements. She noted that many healthcare providers mistakenly view apprenticeships as a one-year program, similar to other sectors. She emphasized the need to adopt an associate degree framework to a four-year apprenticeship model. She said that this shift in thinking is necessary for effective training but requires a change in mindset for employer partners.
 - **Ms. Loew** responded and highlighted the importance of partnerships in addressing misconceptions about apprenticeships. She emphasized the need to adapt proven apprenticeship models to fit the healthcare field and acknowledged that programs will differ in other sectors.

- **Mr. Polk** mentioned Ms. Williams' discussion about the challenges faced by pre-apprentices and apprentices in Pittsburgh, particularly among the aging populations, underserved groups, and younger individuals. He asked Ms. Williams to describe what on-the-ground support is given to help these individuals overcome social issues and stay on track to complete their programs.
 - **Ms. Williams** responded and discussed the regional workforce equity agreement which is aimed at creating a committed centralized support system. She noted that this would be better

than having individual vendors and contractors set up their own support systems and would utilize existing resources like the CareerLink system at Partner4Work and career advancement program agencies. She highlighted how this approach would streamline support and ensure continuous assistance for apprentices and workers both during and after their training but presents a challenge of data sharing which is critical to case management. She said that the initiative is still in progress but is focused on identifying key partners to receive appropriate funding and eliminating duplicative work.

- **Ms. Loew** said that it would be great to hear from Ms. Mauer in response to Mr. Polk's question.
- **Ms. Mauer** discussed the pre-apprenticeship programs she has been helping run since 2016, focusing on overcoming various socioeconomic barriers in rural Pennsylvania. The GACC has worked with over 55 school districts and emphasized the importance of certified mentors and trainers. She highlighted the importance of counselors, teachers, and community members to support students and apprentices, to ensure they have the necessary resources and encouragement to succeed. Ms. Mauer noted the importance of addressing basic needs like transportation and food to help apprentices thrive and the importance of a supportive ecosystem involving schools, families, and community organizations.
- **Ms. Williams** emphasized the need to value and fund community roles and stressed that for community support efforts to be effective, these roles must receive proper funding and recognition.
- **Ms. Puskar** urged everyone not to underestimate Pittsburgh and highlighted the city's ongoing effort and progress. She invited the audience to thank the panel.
- **Mr. Russo** directed a question to Ms. Loew and asked about strategies for leveraging intermediaries and reducing fragmentation. He questioned how to systematically connect with intermediaries funded by the DOL and how to utilize existing infrastructure effectively.
 - **Ms. Loew** acknowledged that her current approach working with intermediaries is not perfected and is in the process of improving. She noted that encouragement of intermediaries to engage in discussions about systems will help develop a hands-off system. She stated that a new program analyst has been hired at her organization to create a more structured system for working with intermediaries, along with contracts and networking. She said she aims to replicate a system like in Colorado, which emphasizes the importance of involving local government boards and state apprenticeship agencies. She concluded by stating that these conversations are still developing and funding opportunities require collaboration with these entities.
- **Mr. Ladd** noted that progress is being made and thanked the panel. Mr. Ladd called for a 15-minute break.

ACA Committee Open Discussion: Implications for System Building Efforts

11:20 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. EST

- **Mr. Cherry** welcomed everyone back and introduced the next agenda item, an open discussion on the implications for system building efforts. He also encouraged members to discuss the previous

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day's site visits and invited people to share their insights.

- **Mr. Ladd** echoed and reflected on the rich panel discussions from earlier and acknowledged any questions that they have could be extended to this session. He emphasized that it is an open dialogue and invited committee members and co-chairs to start the discussion.
- **Ms. Henrickson** expressed appreciation for the team that organized the site visits. She emphasized the importance of seeing the collective of individual projects and experiences. She reflected on how rewarding it was to see the facilities and hear from talented, mature students and witness their work come to life beyond paperwork. She thanked OA for the enriching experience.
- **Dr. Harris-Kuiper** reflected on the amazing experience of the previous day but emphasized the need for better system integration. She highlighted the challenges faced by low-income, inner-city youth in North New Jersey, particularly in accessing sustainable career opportunities without basic skills. She called for the collaboration between various agencies, such as the DOE and (HHS) to address these issues. She shared the example of an advanced career in engineering requires math skills, highlighting the importance of improving math education nationwide. She stressed that without such integration of bringing the systems together, disadvantaged youth will struggle to find opportunities.
- **Ms. Scott** praised Mr. Cherry and his team for a well-planned narrative and the amazing programs in Pittsburgh. She suggested creating a toolkit or guidebook of best practices from the site visits to help other cities or entities launch their apprenticeship programs. She mentioned being impressed by the wraparound services and transportation initiatives in Allegheny County, but emphasized a need to involve city planners, ride-share companies, and community watch forces to address safety and accessibility, particularly for women working non-traditional hours and women with children. She urged everyone to think broadly about improving their efforts.
- **Mr. Rhine** shared that he is the deputy assistant secretary for career, technical, and adult education at ED. He reflected on the site visits from the day prior and emphasized the importance of integrating adult education programs in terms of preparation for apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs. He highlighted the need for these programs to be better integrated to serve community needs, provide essential literacy and numeracy skills, and are necessary to access workforce services and support individuals on an apprenticeship pathway.
- **Ms. Kardel (virtual)** thanked Mr. Cherry for hosting the event, notably the inspiring panel discussions and the importance of coordinated community efforts driven by leadership. She noted a takeaway from the panel being a concept of "over communicating" as crucial for effectively marketing the mission of apprenticeship programs to stakeholders, such as employers and parents. She appreciated seeing the apprentices, especially in technology fields, and expressed gratitude for the accessibility of the event for remote participants.
- **Mr. Ruesing** appreciated the site visits for providing a holistic view of workforce development, which he said has been fragmented across the United States. He noted the impressive skills being taught at the CTE program but was concerned about the lack of direct entry and articulation agreements for students. He emphasized the need to build a structured system to ensure continuity beyond relying on networking and personal relationships. He reflected on his past and acknowledged unintentionally excluding people from programs because of systemic barriers and he expressed a desire for more progress in creating inclusive opportunities.

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- **Mr. Cherry** agreed that the carpenter's program at the airport not requiring a driver's license removes a barrier for some individuals. He highlighted the potential for creating an articulation agreement due to the proximity of the programs from each other and the instructors' background as a carpenter. He noted that it is a process, but appreciated the issue being raised.
- **Ms. Peschek** emphasized that progress in system integration often depends on innovative individuals. She noted that changes in key staff can disrupt established relationships with employers. She appreciated the site visits and the importance of getting buy-in by showing the training center. She said that there was not enough time to discuss the important role of community-based organizations in addressing demographic questions and outcomes and noted that the answers were unsatisfactory to those questions.
- **Ms. Barillas-McEntee** agreed with Mr. Ruesing's concerns about the lack of direct entry into programs and offered a possible solution of involving trade unions in discussions to help build relevant curriculum for these programs. She explained that this involvement of unions could ensure that programs meet union standards and provide direct benefits to participants. She also raised a concern about the carpenter's program not requiring a driver's license and noted that while it removes an initial barrier, it could limit future opportunities if the apprentice leaves the program. She questioned whether there would be a better pathway to help apprentices obtain a driver's license.
 - **Mr. Cherry** confirmed that within the program they can assist participants in obtaining a driver's license and acknowledged the importance of this support. He appreciated the comment highlighting this need.
- **Mr. Ginsburg** said the programs were great, however he noted a lack of diversity in the training center, both in the leadership and within the students, which he noted does not reflect the demographics of the metro area or Pittsburgh. He emphasized the importance of having diverse representation in classrooms and noted these are great opportunities for young people they may be missing out on.
- **Mr. Scott** agreed with Mr. Ginsburg about the diversity in high schools and praised the training programs. He highlighted the importance of licensure and shared an inspiring story about someone who took two buses early in the morning to get to work, emphasizing the power of human spirit and drive.
- **Ms. Dove** spoke about the unintended consequences of not having driver's license requirements for apprenticeships, especially in construction, where transportation can be a challenge. She shared concern that this could lead to young Black men driving without licenses, getting pulled over, and facing legal barriers. She discussed the gaps in apprenticeship programs for women and people of color, and she said it is the committee members' and governments' responsibility to ensure direct entry opportunities to meet diversity requirements.
- **Ms. White** reflected on her visit to the high school, where many students planned to join unions, which she found surprising. However, she noted that this was not the case for non-unionized industries like vet tech and cybersecurity. She noted that students do not always have a separate entity outside of school that is organizing and recruiting in a coherent manner. She said that it may be necessary to better finance non-unionized industries to actively drive more young people to

these industries and training. She expressed interest in knowing how Mr. Cherry uses workforce innovation and opportunity act (WIOA) to address barriers to access and the involvement of workforce boards in apprenticeships.

- **Mr. Cherry** explained that most Pit2Work participants are WIOA enrolled, providing them with supportive services and funding. He shared that the goal is to help individuals overcome barriers to employment and advance through their pre-apprenticeship programs. He stated that while the program cannot provide everything initially, it helps participants reach the finish line. He emphasized that individuals must take the initiative to continue their programs and complete the job themselves. He shared that the program is focused on removing barriers to get pre-apprenticeship training and provide support to participants to successfully become employed.
- **Ms. White** asked a follow-up question about the apprenticeship ecosystem and wanted to know if providers are inquiring about WIOA eligibility of their participants or if the organization is referring participants to these programs.
 - **Mr. Cherry** answered and said that the airport programs recruit participants as an introduction to the trades. He shared that the program has a partnership with CareerLink, which refers individuals who are already processed and ready for training.
 - **Mr. Ladd** highlighted a national concern regarding WIOA and apprenticeship programs that employers and sponsors often question the benefits of WIOA, while WIOA faces challenges in measuring positive outcomes from long-term programs. He noted there are two systems, one with a lot of infrastructure and services, and the other with significant training leading to high-paying jobs, which are misaligned in terms of driving integration.
- **Ms. Kreamer** spoke about being a CTE advocate and appreciated the site visit to the high school and observing the different programs in place including public service roles like fire, police, and Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT). She noted the importance of different pathways to help students navigate and explore their options, although she emphasized it felt a bit disparate because the students sometimes could not articulate what the pathways looked like. She stated there is a need for clarity and support for students, especially regarding gender representation in different fields, highlighting girls in cosmetology and boys in cybersecurity. She said that it is important to have sustainable systems with effective programs, policies, and leadership that will last for decades.
- **Ms. Oliveira-Rivera** shared that she found the morning panel very informative and appreciated the discussion on the need to take a holistic approach to implementing registered apprenticeships. She highlighted the importance of bringing stakeholders to the table to ensure they understand their role to ensure accountability, and investment in creating living wage jobs. She echoed Ms. Scott's point about being appreciative for learning about successful models but stressed the need for sustainable and equitable career paths in agreement with Mr. Ruesing and Ms. Kreamer's comments. She echoed Ms. White's comment about there being an abundance of unrepresented sectors but noted that employer groups should invest in training centers, like union-run programs, to ensure long-term sustainability and accountability rather than relying on public dollars to fully support the system.
- **Ms. Schulz** appreciated the discussion on WIOA apprenticeships and funding mechanisms. She noted the lack of flexibility in WIOA guidelines for traditional workforce and apprenticeship services. As a former Secretary of Labor in Maryland, she mentioned that they used state funds to create flexibility. She suggested that nontraditional apprenticeships, like those in tech fields might benefit

from being separated from WIOA guidelines to allow states more flexibility. She thanked the organizers for allowing virtual attendance.

- **Ms. Barillas-McEntee** thanked Mr. Cherry and the organizers of the meeting and expressed appreciation for the progress made in addressing demographic challenges in Pittsburgh. She suggested discussing desired outcomes for the current ACA term and reviewing recommendations from the previous term. She highlighted the importance of encouraging young women to consider nontraditional career paths, such as unions, and emphasized the possibility for gender focused training to address gender diversity in fields. She said she was excited to hear about the success story of a young woman at Pit2Work and hoped to see more women receive similar opportunities.
- **Mr. Willis** highlighted a loophole in WIOA funding, specifically there is difficulty in paying for related instruction. He mentioned incorporating specific language into the procurement process requiring bids to score well and demonstrating that they have staff with experience in registered apprenticeship. He said he is starting to see positive responses to this new process.
- **Mr. Ladd** asked Mr. Kratsch to discuss the positive work being done by the chambers in the region.
- **Mr. Kratsch** thanked OA for the site visits yesterday, noting it was eye-opening especially from the perspective of someone who works for employers. He emphasized the need for a supportive ecosystem to make it easier for employers to hire apprentices, specifically starting from preparation in high schools to adaptation in colleges. He highlighted the importance of support services like transportation and childcare, which are often lacking and prevent people from pursuing apprenticeships. He shared that he was excited about the progress at the airport site visit and looked forward to discussion on how other regions have overcome these challenges.
- **Mr. Cherry** said he appreciated the feedback and acknowledged the challenges of building systems, which are iterative processes. He highlighted the importance of negotiations which help build partnerships. He said that negotiations include both successes and difficulties, such as lack of diversity in certain programs, specifically in the carpenters program the committee witnessed the day prior. He shared that improvement is continuous and mentioned the importance of regional equity agreements that he was glad to hear Ms. Williams highlight, which ensures economic opportunities for all. He thanked everyone for their contributions to the discussion.
- **Ms. Peschek** highlighted legislation in Washington State that allowed apprentices to remain on childcare subsidies for a full year regardless of their income. She suggested others look for similar state legislation as best practices that could be useful in other states to support apprentices.
- **Ms. McCann** shared that she appreciated visiting two public schools and was inspired to see students thrive. She mentioned that witnessing the system in the region was great and she felt heartened by the dialogue around the need for gender and racial equity and barrier removal. She suggested dedicating future agenda time to share successful examples and learn from efforts in various fields, including cybersecurity. She shared that her organization had a successful teacher residency program and a need for culturally focused recruitment. She expressed hope for continued dialogue and collaboration to enhance public education and career opportunities.
- **Ms. Ramirez** said she appreciated the warm welcome and virtual option for the meeting. She said she was excited by the group's energy and discussion, notably the discussion about integrating nontraditional workforces with wraparound services for transportation needs and food insecurity.

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She spoke about HHS's involvement in workforce training programs in hospitals, which partner with food pantries. She highlighted that the president requested HHS to the interagency council on housing, highlighting the issue of housing, healthcare, and workforce readiness. She said that the federal agencies would love to be a resource for any issues that are indirectly tied to workforce issues.

- **Mr. Russo** suggested engaging a broader population that is not normally aware of certain opportunities, possibly through the CTE network. He said using a systemic approach using apprenticeship ambassadors for these populations by providing them with communication and leadership training would be a possible way to market to individuals.
- **Mr. Lambert (virtual)** expressed appreciation for the morning's discussion, notably the conversation surrounding sector strategy and integration. He also apologized for not being able to attend in person. He commended Quintin Bullock and CCAC for their partnership and efforts.
- **Mr. Ladd** explained that during the lunch breakout, participants will split into sector caucuses (employers, labor, and public) to continue discussing system building. He encouraged participants to reflect on what they have learned from this discussion and to think about critical elements, components, and partners for a scalable, inclusive, and modernized national apprenticeship system. He explained that the task is open-ended, allowing for flexibility and creativity. He invited the co-chairs to share their thoughts on the task.
- **Ms. Oliveira-Rivera** emphasized taking a holistic approach about thinking of registered apprenticeship, learning from international models, partners, and considering best practices in the United States. She noted that all committee members are connected to the registered apprenticeship system and suggested following Pittsburgh's example to identify and connect key components to successfully build a strategic partnership. She highlighted the importance of strategic partnerships that are equitable and sustainable. She said that she wants to have a more focused conversation on developing a registered apprenticeship in the United States.
- **Mr. Ladd** mentioned that after completing the first task, they may have additional time for a task Cierra will present.
- **Cierra Mitchell, Acting Deputy Administrator, OA, DOL** discussed a second task if time permits about developing a list of outreach activities and potential partners to increase awareness about apprenticeship, especially for those who have been historically left behind. She shared that DOL is interested in hearing more about campaigns and strategies that would be effective on a national level.
- **Mr. Ladd** dismissed the members for lunch in sector caucus breakout rooms and requested that everyone return at 2:00 p.m. for sector report outs.

Sector Caucus Breakout Session and Working Lunch

12:15 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. EST

The members were provided designated spaces and technical support for breakout sessions and working lunch based on sector caucus representatives (employer, labor, and public) which were not recorded or open to the public but did allow for virtual attendance for members.

Sector Caucus Report Outs and Discussion: System Building Elements

2:00 p.m. – 3:15 p.m. EST

- **Mr. Cherry** called the meeting back to order and stated that the sector caucus breakouts had concluded.

Employer Sector Caucus Report Out

See appendix for employer sector caucus report out notes.

- **Mr. Ginsburg** remarked that the employer sector caucus had a robust discussion, with a key concern being siloing in the apprenticeship system, which causes inefficiencies. He added that they also discussed the importance of on- and off-ramps, transferrable skills, and standardization. Mr. Ginsburg also said his group discussed the value of establishing qualifications for supervisors. He also commented on the apprenticeship system in Wisconsin, commending its scalability. He concluded by noting that different sectors all taking their own approach to apprenticeship leads to inefficiencies, confusion, and an inability to scale.
- **Mr. Braden** reiterated the importance of standardization across state lines, noting that it is critical for companies that operate across multiple states.
- **Mr. Russo** discussed the importance of understanding the politics of standardization. He remarked that in some cases, programs cannot be awarded funding from a state if they are pursuing national registration, even if the funding originated from the federal government. He added that intermediaries working across states does not necessarily impede standardization.
- **Mr. Kratsch** added that the lack of standardization is confusing for both employers and career seekers, remarking that having a transferable credential would help in raising interest.
- **Mr. Ginsburg** clarified that while the goal of these changes is to make the system easier, it is important that they do not reduce the quality or safety of apprenticeships.
- **Mr. Ladd** asked if other members had questions.
- **Mr. Polk** asked about how national credentialing works across different states' licensing structures.
 - **Mr. Russo** replied that they can be connected if industry drives the database of competencies and skills required for a particular job. He added that this would feed into work process schedules, and once it is accessible to states and regions, licensing entities can connect to it.
- **Mr. Polk** expressed concern about how that works when different states have different levels of rigor or other requirements.

- **Mr. Russo** clarified that this could be solved by bringing apprenticeship standards up to what is required for a license or making the apprenticeship a component of the pathway to the license.
- **Mr. Scott** commented on challenges in the electrical industry, remarking that while there is one national code, there are many different requirements for licensure in different states.
- **Ms. Peschek** said she is focused on figuring out how to ensure competency assessments are not biased.
- **Mr. Ladd** asked the committee who should be the convener of this effort. He said that DOL has tried to create national occupational frameworks, but it has been challenging to get industry engaged and there has been very little uptake.
 - **Mr. Ginsburg** responded that one of the biggest challenges of industry is that it does not show up. He suggested that industry should figure out what the standards should look like, and then the government enforces them. However, he added that there is no funding or no structure to do that. He remarked that one solution could be to invest in the sectors that are willing to organize until they can build the financial models to sustain the work.
 - **Mr. Russo** provided the example of the semiconductor industry. He said his organization has engaged industry subsectors, evaluated the data for thousands of competencies, and narrowed those down to around 700-800 relevant competencies. He said that industry recognizes this database, which is continually updated by the companies using it. He concluded that this approach could be used across sectors, and that companies like it because they feel that they own it, rather than the government owning it.
 - **Ms. Oliveira-Riviera** remarked that quality needs to remain the priority, and to develop occupational standards while ensuring fairness and reliability will require a lot of time and money up front for development with broad stakeholder input. She added that the focus needs to be on what makes an acceptable standard, as well as including broad stakeholder representation.
 - **Ms. Henrikson** commented that sector strategies should be industry driven but supported by government. She emphasized the importance of this in sectors with new and emerging technologies, stating that without leadership, the result will be confusion and many different programs for the same job.
 - **Mr. Polk** added that he wants to ensure that the directors of NASTAD are at the table in development, since they are involved with execution on the ground.

Labor Sector Caucus Report Out

See appendix for labor sector caucus report out notes and graphic.

- **Ms. Oliveira-Riviera** remarked that the labor sector caucus discussed many of the same things the employer sector caucus did, such as silos. She said that they had discussed the importance of identifying all the stakeholders in the registered apprenticeship system and more clearly defining what their roles are and having performance standards that go along with those roles. She also said that the group talked about how to use and enforce the pre-apprenticeship system (i.e., there should be articulation from pre-apprenticeship to an apprenticeship program, so that those pathways are secure). Furthermore, she commented that the group discussed the value of intermediaries, particularly those providing sector-based support, as well as defining the role of

intermediaries, their quality standards, and how they are funded. She continued, stating that the group discussed the need to understand what registered apprenticeship is and its role within workforce development, as opposed to other training models. She remarked that it is important that all staff working on apprenticeship understand these distinctions and be thoroughly trained. Lastly, she discussed the group's conversation on ensuring opportunities for youth, stating that standardized testing has not been successful in measuring the knowledge and skills that employers need; the group recommended working with ED to shift the focus from standardized testing to different forms of assessment that measure students' ability to succeed in registered apprenticeship, and to otherwise eliminate barriers and increase opportunities.

- **Mr. Gibson** emphasized the importance of defining roles and that labor should not be an afterthought, remarking that it is important to engage unions from the beginning.
- **Mr. Ladd** asked if the committee had any questions for the labor sector caucus.
- **Ms. White** commented that her group talked about the opportunities to learn what the unions do well, but that in emerging industries, they do not have the same advantages. She remarked that if unions are willing to teach it, people are ready to listen. She added that there is a mismatch in the system between the percent of apprentices in union programs and the percent of union versus non-union programs.
- **Mr. Gibson** agreed, adding that his own union is still learning, and that they too could benefit from conversations with other stakeholders on best practices. He added that many industries do not like to ask the unions for guidance if they are not unionized.
- **Ms. McCann** said that her group talked about how to cross-pollinate model collaboration like Pittsburgh, adding that regional specificity may be needed in some cases while a national approach may make sense in other cases. She recommended that something like "sector tables" could be a solution.
- **Mr. Ruesing** suggested that a future meeting could have a labor panel, with participants talking about how the system is built.
- **Mr. Ginsburg** said that one reason that training centers supported by unions are so good is that there is a funding source, while outside of that, incentives are given to businesses; and the unions have enabled a high-quality training model.
- **Ms. Peschek** added that when her organization brings employers on, they pay per apprentice.
 - **Mr. Ginsburg** asked how much the employers pay.
 - **Ms. Peschek** replied that they pay anywhere from \$1,500 to \$12,500 per apprentice.
 - **Mr. Ladd** commented that those models have not always transferred to other sectors.
- **Mr. Gibson** added that the funding is there, and that better defining what pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship is would improve the government guidelines on who they give money to. He said that he has seen programs with funding but where apprentices do not come out with a living wage.
- **Ms. Oliveira-Riviera** remarked that funding is an important part, but only one component, and that

successful apprenticeship programs require labor-management partnerships, and a lot goes into maintaining that system outside of funding. She added that members of organized labor want to share the lessons learned.

- **Ms. Barillas-McEntee** emphasized that in any successful system, you need to be able to collect data and monitor the system.
- **Mr. Scott** agreed, adding that only training programs that connect participants with a job should be funded. He said that his programs' students know what is next for them, as opposed to some students in traditional educational tracks.
- **Mr. Willis** said that there are interesting analyses around pay for performance and that the primary indicator of a program's quality is if people are being hired, trained, and completing the program. He discussed a program in California intended to spur nontraditional apprenticeships, adding that they are seeing full gender parity and 90% completion rates.

Public Sector Caucus Report Out

See appendix for public sector caucus report out notes.

- **Ms. Scott** said that the public sector caucus began by discussing things that they like about the registered apprenticeship system, such as state sponsored apprenticeship innovation funds and supportive services. She also said the group discussed the connectivity of apprenticeships and college credit, with one supporting the other rather than it being an either/or choice. She added that the group likes apprenticeship utilization requirements in bids. She highlighted the work of Rhode Island, Delaware, and California. She continued, stating that the group likes the Swiss model of life-long learning, with curricula that are braided together. She also said the group discussed apprenticeship as a right, not merely an option. She remarked that the group also discussed the importance of more formal system alignment. Next, she said the group discussed the importance of having a gameplan for when potential partners decline to enter the system or there is a change in the environment. Finally, she said the group recommended simplifying registration and reciprocity.
- **Mr. Ginsburg** asked what is meant by "apprenticeship as a right."
 - **Mr. Cherry** replied that it is about perspective and how we think about our system. He explained that when we say we cannot adopt other countries' models, a lot of it has to do with how we view what you get and what is offered to you as a U.S. citizen versus how other countries view and build around that. He added that we should not be fixing a broken system or components but rather building a system that works for us and works for people.
 - **Mr. Scott** agreed with the concept, but said he wanted to avoid the downside to that, in that an apprenticeship should not be something to fall back on and apprenticeship is not secondary.
- **Mr. Polk** said in other countries the entire apprentice system is a socioeconomic structure to build up society, and it works because the union employers believe in the collective training of their participants. He said that differs from the United States in that participants pay respect to their bottom line, i.e., how does this apprentice make me money.
- **Mr. Ginsburg** agreed, commenting that apprenticeship does not have the same return of investment for employers in the United States as it does in other countries. However, he added that

it is not fair to say that employers only care about their bottom line; many care about their employees and want to invest in them. He concluded that the key is to build the bridges necessary for employers to participate.

- **Ms. Oliveira-Riviera** responded that the current apprenticeship system in U.S. is functioning successfully in many ways, and that to say the system is broken is disheartening for those involved in those successes. Instead, she said it is a system that can be improved upon and enhanced. While there are things to learn from other countries' systems, she added that every community is different. She continued, saying that she likes the idea of apprenticeship as a right, like public education; it should be a right to access. Additionally, she commented that there is much to learn from organized labor and community economic development, while unionism can be intimidating.
- **Mr. Kratsch** commented that an employer will not participate for the sake of participating but will do it because they need qualified people in 3-4 years. He remarked that an apprenticeship system should help an employer do it themselves and they need structured assistance.
- **Mr. Ruesing** remarked that we do know what the return on investment is for an apprenticeship, but the question is who pays for it. He said that while there are bad employers, there are a lot of good employers, and that if you had a group of employers to fund the system, where employers pay into a training co-op, reducing the cost per person, it would show the return on investment and increase participation. He concluded that many want trained workers, but no one wants to train them, it is seen as someone else's responsibility.
- **Mr. Gibson** reiterated the importance of system flexibility, such as in California, which has a two-tiered system, with federal and state apprenticeships, allowing the union to decide which level to participate in, with the state system offering financial incentives, albeit with more requirements. He continued, saying that this shows the importance for participants to understand the difference between their local and state workforce boards, particularly for receiving funding. He concluded by emphasizing the importance of flexibility and partnerships.
- **Mr. Ginsburg** discussed a policy recommendation whereby a small percentage tax on payrolls for large and midsize companies would be used for training, but if the companies did the training themselves, they would get it back, with the excess going to small and midsize companies to fund their programs, which is done in the United Kingdom.
 - **Ms. White** commented that Minnesota does that too, with a workforce tax, creating a workforce development fund.
 - **Mr. Ladd** added that Rhode Island does something similar.
 - **Ms. Weiss** said that D.C. does it too.
 - **Ms. White** clarified that they are much smaller funds compared to the United Kingdom, adding that there is not much research on them.
 - **Mr. Willis** commented that in California there is an Employer Training Panel, but it is not widely utilized, adding that many other states have it, but that employers do not realize they can use it for apprenticeship.
 - **Mr. Ruesing** commented that those programs should be employer funded and not coming out of a worker's taxes.

- **Mr. Ginsburg** agreed.
- **Mr. Cherry** clarified his previous statement, saying that the apprenticeship system as a whole is not broken, but there are broken pieces, such as the connection to the K-12 system, which are not working for people and do not reach out to people. He said the ACA is the body that brings forward suggestions to make it work. He continued, saying that there are major workforce development issues we face, such as in health care. He said that meeting these challenges will require systemic changes, such as having an apprenticeship program spanning K-12 and postsecondary education.
- **Mr. Cherry** called for a 15-minute break.

Ex Officio Report Outs

3:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. EST

- **John Ladd** discussed the report outs from the Ex Officio federal partners and introduced Mr. Rhine.
- **Mr. Rhine** shared two important updates. First, he shared that ED has released two information collection requests (ICRs) for public comment related to the [Federal Perkins program](#), which support career and technical education. He said these ICRs aim to gather more data on how secondary and post-secondary program students matriculate into the workforce, including the degree to which secondary and post-secondary programs connect students to apprenticeship programs. The goal is to have a more holistic view in terms of how states implement their [Federal Perkins program](#). Second, ED awarded \$250 million dollars through the [Disability Innovation Fund](#) to various states, including Colorado, the District of Columbia, Florida, Idaho, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Minnesota, Mississippi, Nebraska, New York, Oregon, Texas, Virginia, and Wisconsin. These [grants](#) are aimed to support development and services for individuals with disabilities, helping them achieve competitive, integrated employment by funding wraparound services.
- **Mr. Ladd** asked if there are any questions directed to Mr. Rhine.
- **Mr. Scott** asked if he could share a link to the resources.
 - **Mr. Rhine** agreed to send out links to the federal register notices for the two open information collection requests, a press release on the Disability Innovation Fund, and briefs of funded projects in various states to provide details on anticipated programming.
- **Dr. Harris-Kuiper** asked what strategies are currently in place to gather that information for the first data request.
 - **Mr. Rhine** answered that the current information collection requests do not specifically focus on tracking students' matriculation in apprenticeship or pre-apprenticeships programs after completing a CTE program and explained that this information is not currently collected.
 - **Dr. Harris-Kuiper** asked if there are any strategies in place to collect data on students' apprenticeship or pre-apprenticeship programs after completing a CTE program.
 - **Mr. Rhine** explained that states can help facilitate information exchange. He shared an example in Delaware, where a data sharing agreement between DOL and ED to share

information of the administrative records and the Rapids Data System. This allowed tracking of students who exited the K-12 system and had a registered apprenticeship, which also applied to secondary education as well.

- **Dr. Harris-Kuiper** said that the system seems to be connected to ED.
- **Mr. Rhine** said he hoped that the information collection request will help states create data exchanges, which would provide a more holistic view of outcomes for students exiting K-12 or post-secondary systems. At the present time there is no national data on these transitions, particularly for K-12 students who become registered apprentices.
- **Mr. Ladd** asked virtual ex officios for any updates or information to share with the committee.
- **Mr. Langdon** said that the DOC has awarded significant funds to the Investing in American Program, including technology hubs and workforce development initiatives, totaling hundreds of millions of dollars. He said many grantees are incorporating registered apprenticeships into their strategies. Specifically, the technology hubs program awarded \$504 million in funding for both infrastructure and entrepreneurship investments, and workforce development-related grants awarded to twelve communities, where six of these communities explicitly called out registered apprenticeships. He said about \$136 million is going towards workforce development, including program development and workforce training. Mr. Langdon also mentioned the Good Jobs Challenge funding opportunity is open, focusing on sectoral partnerships and worker training, closing on September 27th.
- **Ms. Ramirez** highlighted ongoing funding for various programs, including the National Service Corps and Nurse Corps. She said she is excited about the new investments, such as \$11 million for expanding medical residencies in rural communities and focusing on behavioral and mental health funding. She emphasized the importance of underserved rural communities and mentioned Health Resources and Services Administration as a key source of workforce training funds. She noted that an intersectional approach is being taken with different divisions, including the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration, Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Administration for Community Living, and Administration for Children & Families, with HHS convening across a variety of stakeholders.
- **Ms. Shevlin** discussed DOT's strategy for promoting registered apprenticeship. She highlighted two main efforts encouraging registered apprenticeship. She spoke about the Low- or No-Emission Grant Program and explained that the DOT has funding for transit agencies to move from their traditional diesel fleets to electric or hybrid fleets, and this program allocates 5% of its funding for workforce development. Further, she said over the course of three rounds, \$142 million has been awarded to transit agencies, although many have not started their programs yet. She mentioned that the pool of awardees had a good emphasis on registered apprenticeship, specifically mechanical workers. She highlighted a second effort in the construction sector, particularly in Milwaukee, one of the workforce hubs. The DOT has increased the apprenticeship requirement to 10% for public works projects and mandated that half of the apprentices come from certified pre-apprenticeship programs. She said that this approach in Milwaukee aims to improve recruitment from underrepresented populations and is part of broader recommendations from the [DOT's report on best practices for construction workforce](#).
- **Ms. Page** expressed her pleasure in being at the ACA meeting and provided updates focused on the executive order for registered apprenticeships. She announced that they had issued a report to

the President on September 2, 2024, which aims to explore and expand registered apprenticeship programs within the federal government. She said that this effort involved a cross-agency partnership with the White House, DOL, OPM, and other agencies. Ms. Page shared that since the report has been issued, they have begun the implementation phase alongside Deputy Assistant Secretary Manny Lamarre from DOL where they will co-chair three action teams. She explained these teams will prioritize actions, identify opportunities, and involve other interested agencies. One team will focus on informing, educating, and assisting agencies to expand their current registered apprenticeship programs and increase the number of participants in registered apprenticeship programs. Another team will focus on identifying and removing barriers for individuals who want to participate in registered apprenticeship programs. The third team will focus on assessing and measuring success, with an emphasis on identifying which tools or technology are available to help collect data on registered apprenticeship programs. Ms. Page stated the goal is to increase the number of programs and participants, ensuring the success of these initiatives.

- **Mr. Willis** asked about the high-level requirements and goals of the executive order, as well as the compliance measures currently in place to ensure that various departments meet these standards.
- **Ms. Page** outlined three main components of the executive order. The first component encourages companies that receive federal contracts to have an established registered apprenticeship program. The second component requires grant-seeking organizations to offer registered apprenticeship opportunities. The third component focuses on expanding the number of apprenticeship programs within the federal government itself. Ms. Page shared an example of this, in the pathways programs at OPM, a program traditionally for students and recent graduates, to include individuals in registered apprenticeship programs and service corps like Job Corps. She also mentioned OPM is working on tracking data to monitor apprenticeship representation and progress.
- **Mr. Ladd** mentioned that the executive order did not establish specific goals or benchmarks. He said the topic was discussion in various subgroups, and they are currently exploring the idea of setting a baseline and then establishing goals or benchmarks. He thanked the audience and concluded the ex officios panel and moved onto OA and NASTAD updates.

OA and NASTAD Updates

4:00 p.m. – 4:35 p.m. EST

- **Mr. Ladd** introduced Mr. Polk to discuss updates from NASTAD state partners.
- **Mr. Polk** introduced himself as the newly elected NASTAD president and expressed gratitude to Mr. Ladd, Mr. Berch, and Ms. Loew. He shared his personal connection to registered apprenticeship and highlighted his family's history in the plumbing trade and the impact of apprenticeship on his father's sobriety. Mr. Polk emphasized the importance of registered apprenticeship for generational change and discussed his role in representing 34 NASTAD directors nationally. He mentioned recent initiatives, including launching a [website](#) and a LinkedIn page for better access. He highlighted the importance of NASTAD, noting that most apprentices in the United States are under NASTAD directors. Mr. Polk said he looked forward to productive counterparts from OA, emphasizing the shared commitment to improving the apprenticeship system. He concluded by reiterating his dedication to registered apprenticeship and his eagerness for future discussions.

- **Mr. Ladd** thanked Mr. Polk and said he looked forward to working together. He moved onto providing updates on future committee activities and recommendations from the previous term. He pointed members to the bylaws and mentioned that the member handbook was available on SharePoint, requesting feedback if possible.
- **Ms. Barillas-McEntee** asked if there was a link for the SharePoint available.
 - **Mr. Ladd** responded yes and that it would be shared with ACA members.
- **Mr. Ladd** emphasized the committee's core purpose of expanding, modernizing, and diversifying registered apprenticeships to create expanded career pathways. He acknowledged challenges in planning too far ahead due to the on-going rulemaking, upcoming election, potential staff turnover, new priorities, and budget uncertainties. Despite these challenges, Mr. Ladd emphasized continuing to implement the recommendations from the prior committee and discussed the planning for future meetings, including a virtual meeting to decide on key issues and subcommittees. Mr. Ladd outlined a roadmap for 2025, focusing on developing specific recommendations through working sessions. He shared there will most likely be two to three meeting in 2025, the first meeting being committee members presenting drafts on issue papers, the second meeting being a more refined discussion with draft recommendations, and the third meeting being a more finalized set of recommendations to vote on. He concluded by inviting questions and feedback from committee members.
- **Ms. Barillas-McEntee** thanked Mr. Ladd for an updated hard copy sheet of the recommendations that have been passed and are being implemented. She had a couple of questions. First, she requested a list of recommendations that had not been approved to avoid repetition. Second, she asked considering the current election cycle, she was interested in the possibility of adjusting the language and working of recommendations to be more inclusive and open to different views, including those that are not pro-union. She emphasized the importance of language in the current context.
 - **Mr. Ladd** answered her first question and said that they will be reviewing the recommendations that have not been approved. Secondly, he explained that the committee was meant to reflect the values, principles, and priorities of the committee. He acknowledged the difficulty in planning the future due to the uncertainty about priorities of the next administration.
- **Ms. Oliveira-Riviera** asked a logistical question about whether the agenda would be set, and subcommittees created during the virtual meeting.
 - **Mr. Ladd** replied yes and explained that subcommittees often meet between committee meetings to develop ideas further. However, he emphasized that the subcommittees' decisions did not have standing on their own. He noted that the bylaws explain that any decisions need to be agreed upon by the full committee before being presented to the secretary.
- **Mr. Ladd** moved on to discuss the recommendations, acknowledging the challenge of managing 192 recommendations. He noted that most recommendations had been accepted or are in the process of being accepted. He explained that the recommendations have been categorized into broad guiding principles, open-ended actions, and specific discrete actions. He provided a list of [complete discrete and open ended recommendations](#). He also reviewed recommendations that were not accepted including, legislation providing tax credits and wage supports, DOL serving as an accrediting agency, and increasing Employment Training Panel funding for registered

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Meeting Minutes

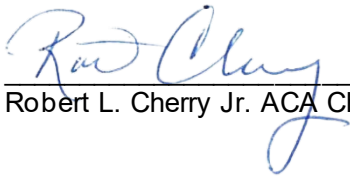
apprenticeships. He discussed the classification of recommendations and the primary methods of implementing them, such as funding, regulatory actions, and technical assistance. He provided a status update, noting that most recommendations were ongoing. He said that OA is committed to providing updates on completed recommendations.

- **Mr. Cherry** thanked everyone for traveling, participating in the site visits, and attending the meeting. He said he was appreciative of everyone coming to Pittsburgh and visiting the job center, highlighting the importance of holding the meeting at a place where people seek pathways to the middle class. He said he was appreciative of everyone's participation.

MR. CHERRY ADJOURNED THE MEETING AT 4:35 P.M.

CERTIFICATION

As the Chairperson of the Advisory Committee on Apprenticeship, I hereby certify the accuracy of the September 12, 2024, ACA Meeting Minutes.



Robert L. Cherry Jr. ACA Chairperson

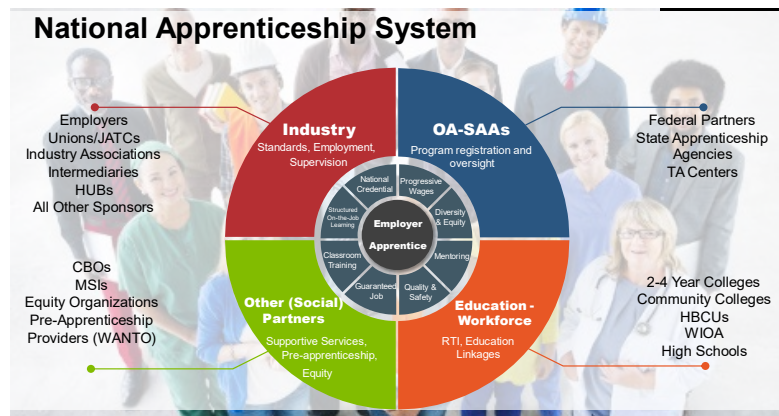
Appendix: Sector Caucus Report Outs

Sector Caucus Breakout Activity Instructions

Task

Key Components of Success: What are the critical elements that should be included as part of building and enhancing the National Apprenticeship System?

- **Task:** Using the graphic below as illustration, please identify the key components or critical elements that describe or represent what is needed to build a scalable, inclusive, and modernized National Apprenticeship System. The group’s efforts should focus on what core elements, infrastructure, and/or key stakeholders are needed for a modernized National Apprenticeship System to be effective and should illustrate how the key system-building pieces connect to the larger ecosystem.
- **Additional background:** We are looking for your insights on how to create successful and scalable apprenticeship models at both the Federal and State/local level. Reflecting on the discussions and site visits held at the June and September ACA meetings, think about what is needed for the National Apprenticeship System to meet the Secretary’s goals to modernize, expand, and diversify. Consider lessons learned from international models, resources available at the Federal level, and innovation and models that exist at the State and local levels.
 - **What’s working?** Think of an example of a system or components of a system that you have seen work. What are the frameworks that we can learn from or create to bring existing silos into one system?
 - **What can be improved?** What pieces are we missing in the current National Apprenticeship System? Where are the current gaps in the National Apprenticeship System? What frameworks or opportunities exist to help bridge those gaps?
- **Report out:** The report out could take the form of a statement, list, graphic, or any other format the group believes represents the views of the caucus. The intent is to begin the conversation and spur further discussion with the full ACA. Each caucus is free to use or design an alternative graphic or other format that represents what they think is most important to emphasize.
- **Example (for illustration only):**



Report Outs by Sector Caucus

Employer

- Siloing in the apprenticeship system is a key concern
- Importance of on- and off-ramps, transferrable skills, and standardization—especially across State lines for companies operating in multiple States
- Different sectors taking their own approach leads to inefficiencies, confusion, and inability to scale
- Transferable credentials could help raise interest and simplify the system
- Value of establishing qualifications for supervisors
- Politics of standardization can affect funding and implementation
- Goal of simplifying the system without reducing the quality or safety of apprenticeships
- Industry needs to actively participate in building the system (e.g., develop standards)

Labor

- Identify all stakeholders and define their roles, with performance standards for quality
- Ensure secure pathways (articulation) from pre-apprenticeship to apprenticeship
- Define role of intermediaries, with standards for quality (e.g., have or can leverage expertise) and resources/funding for sustainability
- Understand the role of registered apprenticeship within workforce development
 - In contrast to work study, internship, continuing education, etc.
- Work with the Department of Education to shift away from standardized testing and toward other assessment methods for youth, eliminate barriers, and increase opportunities (e.g., postsecondary credit)
- Engage unions early and learn from their best practices (e.g., labor-management partnerships)
- Look at how to cross-pollinate model collaboration (example: Pittsburgh) and consider where regional specificity is needed vs. what works nationwide
- Better define “pre-apprenticeship” and “apprenticeship” for purposes of Federal and State government funding to help ensure that programs receiving funding are successful and lead to living wages

See next page for accompanying graphic

Public

- Continue the practice of State-sponsored registered apprenticeship innovation funds for, e.g., supportive services (examples: Rhode Island, Delaware, and California)
- Strengthen the connection between registered apprenticeship and college credit: promote permeability (one supporting the other) rather than it being an either/or choice
- Apprenticeship utilization should be a requirement in bids
- Encourage lifelong learning with or through registered apprenticeship (Swiss model)
- Registered apprenticeships are a right, not just an option
 - Other countries view it that way and build with it in mind—we need to change the U.S. perspective on what we offer our people
- Need more formal systems alignment at State and local levels
- Develop a gameplan for when we encounter a “no” (e.g., from a potential partner) or are unsure

how to respond to a change in the environment

- Simplify registration and reciprocity

Labor Sector Caucus Graphic

