

February TA Peer-to-Peer Call: *Participant Outreach & Recruitment*

February 2, 2023

Grantees in Attendance

- Alaska Primary Care Association
- California Rural Indian Health Board, Inc.
- CommunityHealth IT (Florida)
- Governor's Office of Workforce Innovation (Nevada)
- Mary Hitchcock Memorial Hospital (New Hampshire)
- Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity
- Northwest Wisconsin Workforce Investment Board, Inc.
- Ohio Area 7 Consortium of Chief Elected Officials
- Pee Dee Regional Council of Governments (South Carolina)
- Tecumseh Area Partnership, Inc. (Indiana)

Participant Outreach & Recruitment Challenges

- Record low unemployment rates coupled with record low college enrollments make this a particularly challenging time to recruit candidates for training opportunities, especially unemployed individuals.
- One grantee shared that one of their three identified programs has very low participation, and they are looking to potentially add another occupation through a modification of their grant. Other grantees gave input into how they would approach this, including:
 - Look first at labor market data.
 - Verify labor market data takeaways with your employer partners.
 - Consider looking at in-demand certifications that can be added to a current healthcare workers license (incumbent workers).
- One grantee voiced challenges with engaging and enrolling opportunity populations. Other grantees shared their promising practices around this challenge (see below).
- While some grantees are seeing success in their numbers, their practice of co-enrolling with other grants has presented challenges with spending their money, requiring them to increase their enrollment numbers above their original targets. This challenge is compounded in the current resource-rich environment, in which there is a lot of funding available but fewer potential participants looking for opportunities.

Successful Strategies & Promising Practices

General Outreach

- One grantee has experienced success with a robust social media campaign for outreach and recruitment efforts.
- Some grantees have worked directly with their training institutions (specifically community colleges) to add the H-1B Rural Healthcare (RH) opportunity to their websites, specifically on web pages related to their targeted programs. They have seen remarkable success in doing it this way.
- Grantees are going directly to the training institutions to talk about the RH opportunity at orientations for their targeted trainings.
- One grantee stated they have worked at developing good relationships with the Dean of Nursing and similar positions (versus just working with Admissions, for example) to make sure they know about the program and have opportunities to meet with students. They stated it is important to get to the right person at the college to develop those impactful kinds of relationships.
- Whenever possible, one grantee stated they do orientations and enrollment right onsite: if the student heard about it through the college, they go to the college to do enrollment. If it is an incumbent worker, they go directly to the worksite. They don't make candidates travel any more than necessary, which becomes important in rural areas.
- One grantee stated their subrecipients have convened a healthcare consortium to better promote the grant opportunities.
- One grantee has received permission from the University of Utah to share a video, "[The Day in the Life of a Rural Nurse](#)," on their website for recruitment. The video shows how a rural nurse gets to use their entire skill set and have variety in the work they do.
- Several grantees agreed that close relationships with One-Stop partners have been instrumental in their outreach, and several mentioned that they co-enroll with other workforce programs through their One-Stop partners.
- One grantee shared that they attend job fairs to let people know about the training opportunities.

Specific Populations

- To increase diversity (which can be challenging in some of our rural areas), one grantee has experienced success working directly with Tribal colleges in their area. This has not been a practice in the past, and they are having to start with the basics, like getting programs listed on

the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL), which could have long-lasting impacts on partnerships with other workforce programs into the future.

- One grantee shared that they started meeting with high schools to promote entry-level health professions to get out-of-school youth engaged in the grant. They obviously are not enrolling the students while they are in school but letting them know of the opportunity once they graduate.
- One grantee shared that beyond working with just One-Stop partners, they have found it vital to work with community-based organizations to reach some of their targeted populations.

Incumbent Workers

One grantee has experienced great success with enrolling incumbent workers and shared the following strategies:

- Establish long-term relationships with employers. Like the grantee who commented on finding the right person at the college, it is important to find the right person or people at the employer who can help promote and organize incumbent worker opportunities. Sometimes this may include getting the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) involved, as some employers have cut back on tuition reimbursement. Sometimes it is the right person in Human Resources (HR), and sometimes it is department heads. You must work to build that relationship.
- Find “baby steps” with employers around incumbent workers and begin to build on those successes.
- Go onsite. Meet with potential candidates onsite, around their shift schedules. Don’t make it harder than necessary for them to enroll.
- Work to understand the employer’s needs and the internal pathways that make sense to them. Which job role are they looking to retain by upskilling? Where do they have gaps in tuition reimbursement (lower level versus more advanced positions, for example)? How can training their employees meet the needs they have?

Additional Challenges and Potential Future TA Topics

- Some grantees are beginning to look at sustainability and continuing to grow their programs and what that means for their grant, partnerships, etc.
- Some grantees are interested in future TA related to data and data collection strategies, technology solutions for data collection and management, etc.
- Some grantees are interested in learning more about strategies for leveraging and braiding funding.