

## **Connecting Parents with Apprenticeships Program: Building Foundations for Economic Mobility**

Anna Lovejoy: Hi, good afternoon! Thank you for joining us today for the next installment of the Building Foundations for Economic Mobility webinar series. Our theme today is Connecting Parents with Apprenticeship Programs. And, we're just thrilled to have everybody with us. And, thanks to those of you who played along with our lobby game and shared a little bit about your experiences with apprenticeships, either yourself or others you know. And, we're going to spend some time today exploring what we mean by apprenticeships and why they could be helpful to families in your program.

So, my name is Anna Lovejoy. I'm with the National Center on Parent, Family, and Community Engagement. I haven't been with this webinar series in a while, but I'm back and ready to host today. So, looking forward to our conversation. Again, we're going to be talking about apprenticeship programs, and a few things that we hope to explore with you today include how apprenticeship programs can support families' goals as you help them set them in your program; some of the challenges that your families may face when trying to access job training programs like apprenticeship programs; and effective approaches that Head Start and Early Head Start programs can take to connect families to apprenticeship programs and similar opportunities in your community.

Before we get started into our topic though, I always find it's helpful to, sort of, remind us why we come together in this webinar series. Basically, we hope that it's helpful for us to produce this series to highlight research information and best practices in support of the Head Start and Early Head Start two-generation mission, and which is also in line with the Head Start program performance standards. So, the series specifically explores family economic mobility, which is a core aspect of family well-being, which is one of the seven outcomes -- the seven family outcomes in the Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework. So, working with families as they build the foundations for economic mobility is a key component of the work that you do whether you're a Head Start or Early Head Start program director, a manager, or a direct service staff.

And, there are many things that your program is likely already doing that can inform and support a focus on family economic mobility. So, cheers to you all for what you're already doing. Helping families take steps toward financial health begins with the family partnership process, which you all probably know. And, it presents a valuable opportunity for building trusting relationships with parents. These trusting relationships are so critical and they can have ripple effects throughout the program and contribute to achievement of other family engagement outcomes and children's school readiness.

In the Family Partnership process, you know that you partner with families as they set and work on family goals with you in partnership. Families may not reach their goals by the time they leave their program -- it's important to understand that and remember this -- but you can ensure that they leave with the skills and knowledge they need to keep moving forward toward their goals once they leave you. And, of course, I would not want to have a conversation about the goal-setting process without reminding you about the resource, *The Family Partnership Process: Engaging and Goal-Setting with Families*, that is available on ECLKC. So, we can post -- we'll post a link to that in the general chat in a few minutes, but just wanted to remind you that that resource is available to support your efforts in partnering with families.

So, let's dig into today's topic. What is an apprenticeship? An apprenticeship combines job related technical instruction with structured on-the-job learning experiences. Apprentices work and are paid as they complete training and earn more as they develop more skills. They're an important strategy for Head Start and Early Head Start programs because they offer an opportunity for families to earn income while they are working toward a credential in a high-growth industry. Apprenticeship programs may

offer on-the-job training, classroom training, or online training. There are many different types of apprenticeships, though not all are available in every community. Where different options for apprenticeships exist, workers and apprentices can select the type of training program that is the best fit for their interests, learning style, and schedule.

In 2017, an executive order formed the task force on apprenticeship expansion. This federal task force wanted to expand apprenticeship opportunities by bringing together government, business, and public service stakeholders to work on regulations, attracting business, and credentialing. So, today, we are excited to support the aims of this expansion initiative by sharing important information about this pathway to career opportunities for Head Start families. So, there are a couple of types of apprenticeships that are available or may be available in your communities.

The main two are the registered apprenticeship program and an industry-recognized apprenticeship program. And, there are just some important differences between the two that we thought it would be helpful to point out on today's webinar, just so you have a better understanding if you come across these different terms as you're researching apprenticeship opportunities in your community.

So, a registered apprenticeship is an employer-driven model that combines on-the-job learning with related classroom instructions that increases an apprentice's skill level and wages. It's a proven solution for businesses to recruit, train, and retain highly skilled workers. It is a program that is validated by the federal U.S. Department of Labor, or could be also by a state apprenticeship agency, and it provides a nationally recognized credential. Apprenticeship is not just for the private sector. Many federal government agencies including the U.S. Military have apprenticeship programs. Head Start and Child Care programs sometimes have apprentices -- apprenticeships.

And, in Head Start, these are typically avenues for parents to become Head Start staff. An apprenticeship is a flexible training strategy that can be customized to meet the need of any business. It can be integrated into current training and human resource development strategies, and apprentices can be new hires, or businesses can select current employees to join the apprenticeship program. Apprenticeships are a good way to reward high-performing, entry-level employees and move them up the career ladder within a business. Apprenticeship is also an earn and learn model. Apprentices receive a paycheck from day one, so they earn wages while they learn on the job.

More than 500,000 apprentices participate in registered apprenticeship programs across the country. The Department of Labor identifies five key components of a registered apprenticeship. So, I'll just run through what those are quickly. The first is Business Involvement. So, employers are the foundation of every apprenticeship program, and the skills needed by their workforce are at the core. Businesses must play an active role in building the program and be involved in every step in designing the apprenticeship. Every program also includes structured on-the-job training.

Apprentices get hands-on training from an experienced mentor at the job site for typically not less than one year. On-the-job training is developed through mapping the skills and knowledge that the apprentice must learn over the course of the program in order to be fully proficient at the job. Apprentices also receive related instruction that complements the on-the-job learning. This instruction delivers the technical workforce and academic competencies that apply to the job. It can be provided by a community college, a technical school, or an apprenticeship training school, or by the business itself. Education partners collaborate with business to develop the curriculum based on the skills and knowledge needed by apprentices. All partners work together to unify how to pay for the related instruction, including the cost to the employer and other funds that can be leveraged.

Apprentices also receive increases in pay as their skills and knowledge increase. They start by establishing an entry wage and an ending wage and build in progressive wage increases throughout the

apprenticeship as skill benchmarks are attained by apprentices. Progressive wage increases help reward and motivate apprentices as they advance through their training. And, finally, every graduate of a registered apprenticeship program receives a nationally recognized credential that they can take and use to seek employment in that field with any employer anywhere in the country.

So, there are several benefits of a registered apprenticeship, both for businesses and for workers. They - one of them is that apprentices, as they work and complete training, their starting pay averages \$15 an hour, which is above the federal minimum wage. For Head Start and Early Head Start parents, the immediate pay while earning a credential allows the parents to build skills and meet current financial obligations at the same time, which, as you know, is very important to the families that we serve and partner with in Head Start. So, the other type that I wanted to mention is an industry-recognized apprenticeship program. So, that is a customizable model of apprenticeship that has been validated by a proven industry accreditor. So, they can be developed or offered by entities such as trade and industry groups, companies, nonprofit organizations, educational institutions, unions, or joint labor and management organizations. These IRAPs, as they're called -- industry-recognized apprenticeship programs -- have many of the same features of a registered apprenticeship, but only registered apprenticeships, those that are registered with the Department of Labor, come with the backing of the federal government. Registered apprenticeships are required to meet certain guidelines, deliver approved curricula, and -- and meet other requirements that provide a level of quality assurance and accountability for both employers and apprentices. So, that's not to say that industry-recognized apprenticeship programs are not a good option; it's just I wanted to make sure that we're clear on the differences between the two.

And, apprenticeships are common in many different types of industries. Most commonly, they are in high-growth industries, including advanced manufacturing, construction, energy, finance and business, healthcare, hospitality, information technology, telecommunications, and transportation. Child care development specialist is actually one of the top occupations for registered apprenticeships according to the Department of Labor, as well. And so, that might be something that Head Start programs may want to look into. And, there are some resources -- or there were some resources available from the Department of Labor that I think will be coming back into circulation soon, so you can keep an eye out for that and we'll also try to keep an eye out for resources that would be helpful and highlight them in our webinar series and our newsletter.

Some of the benefits of apprenticeships for Head Start families, in particular, include the fact that they are programs that are typically available in industries that pay above the minimum wage, which I mentioned before, and significantly. So, once an apprentice achieves the -- completes the program and achieves what they call a "journeyman" status, or that sort of master craftsman level, wages -- of course, depend on the industry and the participating employers -- but typically they start at may be 50 percent of the journeyman's wage with incremental increases as apprentices complete more of the program.

Apprentices do not -- the apprenticeships do not usually guarantee employment upon completion of the program, but because they're typically offered in high-demand fields, the chances of securing employment are typically high once someone is able to complete the program. They are -- they do tend to be longer term, so minimum a year, sometimes two years required to complete a program. So, they do require a commitment by the participants. And, some of the barriers to completion that as we've been talking to different apprenticeship programs around the country that we've heard, of course, it depends on the industry, but a clear -- clear barrier across the board is -- particularly for working parents who are apprentices -- is access and availability of child care.

Other barriers include the requirement to work nontraditional hours or to attend classes during nontraditional hours, during which child care may not be available or other aspects of an individual's life

may cause them some conflicts. Travel and transportation is another barrier that we heard several times as we were talking to programs. And then, another one is many apprenticeships require a certain level of proficiency in English, in math, or other skills and knowledge that if an individual does not have them, they would be, you know, prevented perhaps from even starting the apprenticeship, let alone being able to complete it and finish it. However -- There are many instances out there of what are called pre-apprenticeship programs.

So, depending on the needs and goals of the families in your program, you may want to inquire whether there are any pre-apprenticeship programs available in your community. They typically offer students training in basic skills, in soft skills, like interviewing and resume writing, as well as more contextualized education courses in which they learn trade vocabulary and applied math that is specific to that industry. And so, it provides more relevant -- immediately relevant training and education. They're typically shorter than your average apprenticeship programs, so maybe like a six-to-eight week commitment as opposed to two years. And, they don't include employment as part of the program. So, participating in a pre-apprenticeship program would not usually include work that would enable a participant to earn wages while they're -- while they're engaged in the program. They're really just intended to prepare students for an apprenticeship.

So, how can you connect parents to apprenticeship programs? Well, one thing you can do is learn more about apprenticeship opportunities in your area. So, on the screen you have links to a couple of ways you can do that. One is to reach out to your Employment and Training Administration's State contact. The Department of Labor provides a contact list of the person in each state who is responsible for overseeing apprenticeship work, and that person, that program coordinator can be a resource for you or for parents themselves looking for apprenticeship opportunities. If you are looking for a specific type of training, such as welding or trucking in a location that works for you, the CareerOneStop's Apprenticeship Finder provides information on apprenticeship programs by occupation and zip code.

And then, the Department of Labor also has an apprenticeship finder tool that you can use. Right, so the Department of Labor's website has a lot of information about apprenticeship, and they have actually -- well, they're undergoing a revamp of the information that's available, so we continue -- every time we go back, we continue to find more things on their website. So, we encourage you to keep checking back to see what more they have because this is a really important focus for the Department of Labor at the moment. Let's see. They also -- the Department of Labor also offers a toolkit on registered apprenticeship programs that provides clear information about apprenticeships that anyone can use to learn more, though it's written specifically for businesses that might be interested in participating and offering an apprenticeship program.

Another thing you can do is reach out and network with existing partnerships -- apprenticeship partnerships in your area, because the more that they are aware of your existence, the more they may be willing to, you know, recruit and enroll parents in your program, if that's something that meets the goals of parents that you are partnering with. So, here is something you can say to make the case for why the apprenticeship partners would want to keep you on their speed dial. One is that many apprenticeships are in fields traditionally dominated by men, perhaps with the exception of child care and early childhood education. But things like welding, and construction, and carpentry.

For programs with large number -- Head Start programs with large numbers of moms, whether they're single parents or otherwise, Head Start programs offer a good recruiting pool to help diversify participation. Head Start also provides child care. Right? So, parents can participate in the apprenticeship, which, as I mentioned before, child care is often quite a barrier for working parents to successfully complete a program. And, you also provide additional support and referrals to other resources in the community to help families overcome potential barriers to their completion. So, in

other words, by virtue of the fact that Head Start is a two-generation program, you are an ideal partner to ensure the success of apprentices.

So, whether that be entering into a formal partnership with organizations that are offering an apprenticeship or just being a source of referrals to opportunities, there are really good reasons why you are relevant to those who are offering apprenticeships in your community. Our next presenters are going to share their story about how they're providing a pre-apprenticeship type opportunity for Head Start parents. Before they tell their story though, I want to make clear that their offering is not a traditional apprenticeship in the way that I've already discussed by talking about the key features of an apprenticeship. But what they're doing -- there are some features that are similar to an apprenticeship.

And, I wanted to highlight their story in particular for a few reasons. One, it is an innovative story and a model of a successful community partnership, as you're going to hear. And, in particular, it is a model of making a particular industry that is traditionally male-dominated more accessible to more women. So, they're going to share more details about what that is. Another is that, you know, there are many points along the continuum of the workforce and training -- workforce training and employment landscape that you as Head Start and Early Head Start programs can explore. Whether or not there are apprenticeship programs in your community that match the goals of parents in your program, there are a range of ways that you can partner with others to provide opportunities for families.

And finally, many Head Start and Early Head Start parents may not be ready for a full-on apprenticeship program. So, there are things that you can do to provide them with baseline skills and knowledge that can help them prepare if that is a long-term goal that families choose. So, for those reasons, I'm delighted to introduce Latoya Orr, who is the executive director of the St. Clair County Head Start in Pell City, Alabama, and her partner, Kay Cochran Potter, who is the director for the Center for Workforce Education at Jefferson State Community College.

Now, those of you who have been with us for the past few years as we've been offering this webinar series may remember them from a previous webinar in which we featured their efforts to support Head Start parents to earn their pharmacy tech certification. And, we are delighted to have them back to tell us more about what they're currently doing now. So, with that, I will invite Kay and Latoya to join us. And, the first question that I'm hoping that they can respond to, and we're just going to do, sort of, a casual back and forth, and apparently these -- these two individuals are quite the dynamic duo, so they may just take off and run away with this presentation, which would be great, as well, because they have a lot to share. So, we'll just kind of treat this as a dialogue and just look forward to hearing from them. And, that is, you know, what motivated you to engage in this partnership? What was it that you agreed to do? And, why did you do it?

Latoya Orr Threatt: Hello! Latoya Orr Threatt here. We are so excited to be a part -- we are so excited to be a part of this webinar series. What motivated our Head Start program to get engaged in this partnership was our desire to have a real life application of the Parent, Family, and, Community Engagement Framework within our program. We are a small, rural, single-purpose Head Start only program in -- in the -- centrally-located in Alabama. We do not have a huge endowment. We do not have a vast campus and facilities. We have one center. And, we wanted to find a way to leverage our desire to implement the Parent, Family, Community Engagement Framework with tangible results for our family. So, the first thing we did is we adopted our PFCE goal, and we adopted one of the first goals of improving our families well-being. And, we learned that a lot of our parents had a desire to obtain further education but did not have the means to do it.

So, with this collaboration, Kay Potter, who is definitely my partner with this collaboration, she reached out to us and wanted us to be a part of a collaboration that was sponsored by The Women's Fund of

Greater Birmingham, who is the actual funder of our program. And so, when we found this opportunity to have someone to help fund the collaboration that we had with Jefferson State Community College, First United Methodist Church of Pell City, and St. Clair County Head Start, we were more than happy to do the groundwork so that we could become an active partner in helping our families obtain credentials and work skills so that they could go and get a job that was paying more than minimum wage. Kay?

Kay Potter: Yes. Hi! I'm Kay Potter, and I echo Latoya's "thank you" for allowing us to share our story. And, it really has been a wonderful few years. And, I always say that it's absolutely some of the most rewarding work that I've ever had the pleasure of doing. Again, I'm the director of the non-credit department at Jefferson State Community College. We are, I think, the second largest community college in Alabama. We probably have about 10,000 credit students, and I have about 1,600 non-credit students. But non-credit in Alabama, as in most -- as in most communities is self-funded. So, that means there's no federal financial aid for non-credit programs.

Kay: We were approached initially by the, again, as Latoya said, by the Women's Fund of Greater Birmingham, because they have a grant cycle every year, and they actually adopted the two-generational approach of moving women and children out of poverty that has become fairly well-known from the Aspen Institute. So, because -- because federal financial aid doesn't cover my programs, I'm constantly looking for resources, scholarship, money for my students. So, that's how I first learned about the two-generational approach. And, we found Latoya and the Head Start program, and we have expanded it now. We also offer this program in Jefferson County, which is a much larger Head Start program, JCCEO here. We've worked with some small not-for-profit schools, as well -- preschool programs. So, it's really expanded over the years. But Head Start is just the absolute perfect environment to offer these programs has been our experience so far.

Latoya: And, some of the key features -- and I know from my Head Start directors that are on the call -- What are the nuts and bolts of the program, and what exactly are we doing? We are offering certifications for single mothers to gain a certificate so that they can get a job working in a well-paying field. So far, we've been able to offer classes for pharmacy technology, dental assistant, certified medical assistant, welding, and currently we have a class in session for computer technology.

The goal was to give our mothers and our families an opportunity to get a certification with a fairly quick turnaround. So, unlike an apprenticeship that could last up to two years, this was an opportunity that over the course of maybe 10 to 16 weeks, these young ladies could have a certificate and they could go and get a job. The classes are held here at our Head Start program in our conference room. They are doing their actual book work. Their lab is held -- for example, we don't have parents welding on our campus, but they would come here for their actual class and book work, and then they would go to our local Jefferson State Community College campus, to their technology labs, and do the actual in-class training that they needed for that.

The funding that we mentioned that comes from the Women's Fund, typically, it would be a grant for \$25,000 for each class that paid for the course work, their books -- and I also mentioned that some of the barriers -- we also tried to help eliminate some of that. We had stipends for transportation. We provided child care. We also -- for some that needed child care for younger children -- we tried to help facilitate that. And so, overall, the key features of the program, the nuts and bolts of it, were those classes that we had. The other key feature of our program and our success, because we've been offering these classes since 2013, has been the pure collaboration that we have had with all of our partners. We, at this point in our collaboration -- our MOUs are in place. Everyone knows their role. Everyone fulfills their role. And, when we come to -- if we have an issue, all of our collaborators in our group, we just try to -- we figure it out and we work it out for the success of the classrooms. Kay, did I miss anything on the features?

Kay: I think you did a great job. I would say a little bit more on the nuts and bolts. We do, in addition to the skills training, which was, you know, the hands-on on training for the most part. We do some soft skills. Usually, when the -- when the financial support is there, we try to also do some resume writing, interview skills, that kind of thing, as well. And, of course, we all know every grant is different. In some grants, we're fortunate enough to be able to cover that cost. And, sometimes, we aren't, but we really try to include those soft skills, as well.

Latoya: Kay, can you discuss some of the results?

Kay: Yeah, sure. Okay, sure. Sure. Well, we have -- Oh gosh! For every class that we deliver, usually, within the first two weeks, we lose one or two moms. They decide it's just not for them. It's more challenging, their life -- for their life situation and they'd just not be able to go to school for a while. So, we usually just lose a couple immediately. But after that, our completion rate is extremely high. I mean, at least 80 to 90 percent. We've had some classes where we've had 100 percent completion of the programs. Most of the women -- I don't know the exact numbers -- but most of the women are able to very quickly find jobs, usually within just a few months.

And, of course, I will say that's also a challenge -- that the results also equal some of the challenges that we face. For many of these women, they're going off as state and federal assistance for the first time, or maybe for the first time in many, many years, and that's very, very scary, especially when you're a single mother. So, there's a lot of fear involved in that, and a lot of coaching that we have to do sometimes to help them make that move from -- to an -- to actual employment. We also -- I mean, it's also very, very challenging for employers. Generally speaking, employers are not always single-mom friendly. A lot of these programs, women can get jobs, but it's shift work. And, if you're a single mother, working second or third shift is not always an option. So, those are also some of the challenges. But I would, you know, say we've had very, very, very high completion rates and very, very high employment rates. And, it's also difficult to stay in touch with a lot of these women after they leave us also. So, I don't really know a lot of their long-term success. Latoya, why don't you add to that?

Latoya: I will add to it. One of the most profound results is that we know for a fact that 80 women -- at least 80 women have completed our program and they have been able to obtain a certification for free. I see Kiesha -- for free because of the scholarship. That's the most profound result. And then, we have all of those outliers that we have to work with to help them to be successful. Those that are extremely motivated, they are able to find employment as soon as they finish the program.

We've also had some instances where women have been hired while they were going through the certification in some industries. And, we've had some partners who were willing to hire them to help them finish. For the most part, we'll have about -- can be 10, from 10 to 16 women in each session. And, most of them do complete. We have at least a 90 percent completion rate. One of the most profound stories -- and I'm going to say this, Kay, real quick -- of the results and the impact that it's made in the community is when you see these young ladies, many of them -- because I used to be a high school administrator -- many of them were students I had when I was an administrator at a local high school. And, when you see them able to come to Head Start, learn how to be emotionally supportive and productive parents. And, on one particular day, I was going to a pharmacy, I'd had a hard day and needed my blood pressure medicine.

And, I go through the drive-thru of my local pharmacy that I've been going to for years, and one of our parents, she served me that day. I had tears in my eyes. She had tears in her eyes. And, I was so proud because this young lady is still employed there, and she was one of the first graduates we had back in 2013. So, oftentimes, the results of the classes -- we have difficulty, and that is one of the challenges, is being able to keep up with our graduates after they leave us, after they leave from Head Start. But what

we know as a program is that we're giving them the skills, and we're giving them the motivation, and being able to show them the long-term effects of having these certifications and pursuing education can have on the overall well-being of their families.

Kay: Well, and I would say -- I would add that we do survey Latoya's teachers. at the conclusion of every program, and every single time, the teachers have reported that the students, the little children, are more engaged in learning, their attendance is better, and that parent participation in the classroom is better for those children whose mothers are involved in this program. I see someone

asked: How do you determine who teaches the classes? They -- they are the college's part-time instructors, and it's -- so, it's the people who teach my classes on my campus -- on our campus, as well. And, they're experts in their field. If we're, right now, the class we have going on right now is A+ certification. It's an IT class, a computer program class certification. And that one, of course, is taught by someone who has that certification, that works in -- this as an industry. For pharmacy technician, we had a pharmacist who taught the class. So, each one is different, but the instructor is always someone who is an expert in that field.

Anna: Hey, this is Anna. Can you -- Do you have any estimate for how much, you know, this would -- if this had to be a tuition-based program, you know, if you weren't able to offer the scholarships, how much would it cost per student do you think?

Kay: That's a really great, great question. And, of course, each program is slightly different. But I'm going to say generally, it would be between \$2,000 and \$3,000, and that would include your books, your certification exam. If it's a -- if it's a medical assisting program, for example, the students have to have scrubs to go do their clinical practice in. So, it varies but usually, \$2,000 to \$3,000 for everything.

Anna: Right. Great. Okay. Yeah, that's a pretty significant burden, financial burden for families. So, it's great that you're able to access resources that can help provide scholarships. You've already discussed many of the barriers and challenges certainly that the participants face, but have you, just in your partnership over the years, any other challenges that you've had to overcome along the way that, you know, as you're speaking to other programs that might be interested in pursuing a partnership like this, you know, would be helpful for them to hear about?

Kay: Well, certainly all partners have to share the vision of the two-generation approach and really need to believe it. And, particularly, I was going to say the Head -- the Head Start. Latoya is hands-on. She is not just sitting in her office while the college is delivering these programs. I mean, she's going into class, talking to these parents. Every day they're walking through her hallways, she's asking them how it's going. If somebody doesn't show up, she's checking on them. So, I will say I know that Head Start directors are busy, busy people. And so, this will add something to your already full schedule, because it is very, very important that all the partners are very hands-on and involved.

Latoya: And, I would say also to make sure for us, I do -- I help with -- with the grant writing with Kay, although she she does most of that part. But our parent and engagement manager, she is responsible for recruiting, helping get word out to parents. She does the follow-up for absenteeism. I was -- I was quite intrigued today because she was expressing her concern about one parent we had that didn't show up today, and she was telling me the things she planned to do to follow-up with that parent. So, we really do have a great relationship with our parents. They know that we are -- we're invested in their success. And then, there are some that they -- they're just not able to finish the program. I would say one of the greatest barriers or challenges is to keep, sometimes, to keep them motivated. When it comes to the health-related classes, we have had to make sure we added the element of support with math skills, in particular, for the pharmacy technology curriculum.



We also learned along the way that having a career coach was paramount to making sure that the class was successful, making sure that the students have the soft skills that they need because they have certifications, but oftentimes, some of them have never been in a professional environment. And so, you have to do a lot of, in some cases, one-on-one counseling, encouraging, giving them examples of how to dress, how to present yourself. One very genius element that Kay added to our welding class is the CEOs of some of our local businesses and our industrial part, they came and they talked to our welding students. And so, those students had the opportunity to build mentorships with actual CEOs that were in the industry that they wanted to work in.

And so, for different classes, we've learned different innovations and the support that they need. Some of the suggestions I would have, because some -- I know there are some Head Start staff that on this -- that are on this call that are trying to figure out where in the world do we start. The first thing is getting your partners. If you can get your partners and get your model in place, it will not be difficult to recruit -- recruit your parents because after a while they'll see. And now, as we have such a reputation that parents that enroll in our program, that's the draw. One of their draws is that they are interested to see if there'll be an opportunity, is there going to be a class. And, trying to find more diverse funding sources for -- Because now we, I have fathers. I had one who was a mason and he said, "This is a great program for the mothers." And, he said, "You know, I'm a single father and I would be interested, as well." So, trying to find more opportunities for different funders is also a challenge, but we believe eventually we'll be able to do that, as well.

Kay: Let me try to answer a couple of questions I'm seeing here. If that's okay? Someone is saying, How do you select -- How do you select candidates? Do you have a waiting list and an interview process? Because our Head Start is -- Latoya, would you say it's relatively small? I'm not sure how you would describe your enrollment. I'm not familiar with it.

Latoya: We are -- for my Head Start family -- we have a funded enrollment of 217 children, which is relatively small in the world of Head Start. And, we -- we select candidates or we recruit candidates as parents are completing the enrollment process. And so, at the beginning of the school year, we already have a waiting list of parents who would be interested. Kay, you know, often you'll let me know if funding will be available and if we're going to apply. And, Kay does the research for determining which class we're going to offer based upon what the demand is in the community for pharmacy technicians or what have you.

Kay: Yes. And, typically, I mean, it's really been interesting. We really haven't had to turn down people. Usually, it's about 10 to 15 women every year who want to do this with us. So, so far, we really haven't had to turn anyone away. And, we don't do interviews. We just -- we just offer it, and it's first come first serve for completing a scholarship application. But so far, we have been able to serve everyone who has wanted to be in the program.

Latoya: I will say one of the basic requirements for them to participate is to have a high-school diploma. So --

Kay: Or GED.

Latoya: Or a GED. So, that definitely is a springboard for the program. We do have an application process. For some of the health courses, there have been -- towards the end of the course, there have been drug testing that have been a requirement in order for them to get their certificate.

So, there are more standards that that go along the way, but as far as having applicants, we typically do have -- we do have applicants. We research. We can tell from the number of applicants what type of waitlist we're going to have. And, depending on if they are returning parents, then we know if we'll have

the population for another course. And, we don't do this every semester, but it's kind of based upon when funding is available. There have been times where, you know, Kay has called and asked, you know, "Well what -- do you have parents?" And, there have been some times when I've had to say, "No, I don't think I have enough," or we could not get parents -- enough of committed parents for a particular course. So. But for the most part, we do have a high demand.

And, when I say parents, I mean parents that I feel will have the work ethic and the motivation to complete the course. I'm located in St. Clair County in Alabama and the name of my Head Start program is St. Clair County Head Start.

Kay: Let's see. Great question: How do you go about establishing these partnerships with the local -- local community college? I assure you your community college that, would love to do this with you. It's the mission of -- it just goes to the heart of the mission of what community colleges have been created across the country to do. Again, I work in non-credit workforce development. So, you could just go on your local college's website and look for words like "non-credit training," "workforce development," "workforce education," "career technical training." All those are where you would begin with those deans, probably a dean that's perhaps a director of one of those programs.

Anna: Great! There are so many questions coming through. Thanks so much for scanning them and answering them as they roll in. Wonderful! I know I just promised that I would post a link to a webinar that we did on partnering with community action agencies which typically administer community services block grant funds. Thank you to Lakiya Parks for mentioning that it sounds like a great opportunity for partnering with them, and I absolutely agree. Have other questions come in that we haven't addressed?

Latoya: Anna, can I answer Christy Mullen's question real quick, because I'm sure plenty are asking. Where can I start looking for funding or grants? I notice you -- you posted the cab agency information. We partner with the Women's Fund of Greater Birmingham, which is -- it began as a subpart of the Community Foundation. And, it's my understanding most major cities have what is called a Community Foundation. They have various names. Ours is the Community Foundation of Greater -- of Birmingham. Do some research with the largest city that is near you and see if there is a Community Foundation locally. And, I'm sure there is one in your state. And, we fell under their service area in St. Clair County. That would be a great start to try to find some funding because that's who we funded with, and because the Women's Fund Organization -- they focus on eliminating poverty for single mothers in particular -- they were a great fit for our program.

Anna: That's great. That's really, really helpful. Kay, anything that you wanted to add, or have any other questions come through that we haven't addressed?

Kay: Sure. I would just say just to be clear this is not an apprenticeship program. This is not a registered apprenticeship program. It's -- it's similar. And therefore, we decided it was worthy to share, but it isn't actually an apprenticeship program.

Anna: That's right. That's right. And, there are -- there's a lot more that we can explore in this topic of apprenticeships, so it's possible that we will come back -- come back around with another webinar, where we can explore something else related to this, in which case, we'll feature, you know, an actual registered apprenticeship. But, you know, I think for now this is just a helpful example of, you know, a place to start or, you know, a way that, you know partnerships can happen. We only have a few minutes left. I think we've answered all of the questions that have come through. It's just really exciting to see everybody so engaged and asking these questions. I hope that our presenters feel like they, everybody appreciated what they were hearing, you know, based on the questions we were receiving.

So, thank you so much for sharing your story with us today. And then, I just wanted to mention our next webinar is actually coming up fairly soon. It's on March 21, and we will be talking about the Implications of Tax Reform for Head Start and Early Head Start Families. And, we are excited to be hosting a representative from the Internal Revenue Service who's going to be here to answer all the questions that you may have about what the tax reform has in store for families. So, we hope you can join us for that. The e-blast with the webinar invitation should be coming out shortly, so keep an eye out and stay tuned for that. As always, we want to remind you that we do have a Economic Mobility Learning Community in MyPeers.

It's open to anyone, so if you just want to go, make sure you have an account registered with MyPeers, and you can join it. We've been posting a lot of new information and materials there, so go check it out if you can. Of course, we have our past recordings of past webinars on ECLKC. There's a quick link to that. And, thank you very much. We will keep the -- well, we're going to be shutting down the audio now -- but we will keep the chat room open for anyone if you want to continue to ask questions.

We can at least answer them in chat form. We'll keep that part open for a few minutes. And, one person just asked about the certificate for this. Basically, you will receive an email with a link to the evaluation form for this webinar. Once you've completed the evaluation, then you will receive your certificate.

So, thank you for responding to that. And, we look forward to seeing you all at the next one in March. Thank you so much to our presenters, and to everyone who's helped make this a success.

So, thanks for joining us today, and we'll talk soon.