

CHICAGO COOK WORKFORCE PARTNERSHIP
INNOVATIVE BOARD MEETING

Report of proceedings had at the Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership Innovative Board Meeting held at 401 South Plymouth Court, 9th Floor South Hall, Chicago, Illinois, on the 12th day of December, 2025, commencing at 10:30 a.m.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

BOARD MEMBER SPIGNER

JUAN SALGADO by Proxy Connie Rutledge

BOARD MEMBER ROBERT REITER

BOARD MEMBER DONOVAN PEPPER

BOARD MEMBER PAM McDONOUGH

BOARD MEMBER RAHNEE PATRICK

BOARD MEMBER ADAM HECKTMAN

BOARD MEMBER HARDIK BHATT by Proxy Omowale

Casselle

BOARD MEMBER JENNIFER FOSTER by Proxy Michael

Thompson

BOARD MEMBER MATT JOHANSON

BOARD MEMBER MICHELE SMITH

BOARD MEMBER XOCHITL FLORES by Proxy Michael

Thompson

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT (continued):

BOARD MEMBER DR. LISA BLY-JONES

BOARD MEMBER MANNY RODRIGUEZ by Proxy Jackie

Gallo

BOARD MEMBER JOSHUA DAVIS by Proxy Stephen Taylor

BOARD MEMBER TRENITY DOBBEY

CO-CHAIR ROBINSON-IVY:

CO-CHAIR ROBINSON-IVY: Let's welcome everyone and do roll call.

MS. SHAW: Thank you everyone for taking time to join us today. I'm going to go through the attendance. When I read your name, please say that you're here and if you're here for a -- like, if you are joining us as a proxy for one of our board members. I'll be reading through the list of our board members here. When I get to your name, please say present and verify if you're here in person or joining us online. If you're here as a proxy for one of our board members, you can say that you are here when I read that board member's name and just identify yourself as the proxy. When we're doing our votes today, we'll be doing the roll call before each vote to make sure that we maintain quorum throughout the meeting.

So starting off, Jason Spigner ...

BOARD MEMBER SPIGNER: Here online.

MS. SHAW: Thank you.

Juan Salgado ...

MS. RUTLEDGE: Proxy for Juan.

MS. SHAW: Your name?

MS. RUTLEDGE: Connie Rutledge.

MS. SHAW: Robert Reiter ...

(Inaudible.)

MS. SHAW: Thank you.

Donovan Pepper ...

BOARD MEMBER PEPPER: Good morning. I'm present.

MS. SHAW: Thank you, Donovan.

Pam McDonough ...

BOARD MEMBER McDONOUGH: Here.

MS. SHAW: Carrie Thomas ...

(No response.)

MS. SHAW: Rahnee Patrick ...

BOARD MEMBER PATRICK: Present in the room.

MS. SHAW: Adam Hecktman ...

BOARD MEMBER HECKTMAN: Present.

MS. SHAW: Hardik Bhatt ...

MR. CASSELLE: Omowale Casselle, I'm proxy.

MS. SHAW: Thank you.

Jennifer Foster ...

MS. THOMPSON: Whitney Thompson as proxy.

MS. SHAW: Matt Johanson ...

BOARD MEMBER JOHANSON: Good morning. Here.

MS. SHAW: Michele Smith ...

BOARD MEMBER SMITH: Here.

MS. SHAW: Lisa Stark ...

(No response.)

MS. SHAW: Xochitl Flores ...

MR. THOMPSON: Michael Thompson, proxy for
Xochitl Flores.

MS. SHAW: Dr. Lisa Bly-Jones ...

BOARD MEMBER BLY-JONES: Here.

MS. SHAW: Thank you.

Manny Rodriguez ...

MS. GALLO: Jackie Gallo for proxy.

MS. SHAW: Victor Dickson ...

(No response.)

MS. SHAW: Joshua Davis ...

MR. TAYLOR: Stephen Taylor, present as a proxy
for Josh Davis.

MS. SHAW: Thank you.

Trenity Dobbey ...

BOARD MEMBER DOBBEY: Present.

MS. SHAW: And Ms. Jacki Robinson-Ivy ...

CO-CHAIR ROBINSON-IVY: I'm here present.

MS. SHAW: Thank you.

We do have quorum.

CO-CHAIR ROBINSON-IVY: It's a little difficult
to hear in this room speaking. It was weird on the
screen, I didn't hear so well. Could we turn those up

maybe a little bit, Nicole?

MS. SHAW: Yes, I have.

CO-CHAIR ROBINSON-IVY: And those of us in the room, I guess we'll just have to speak really loudly.

So let's call to order the minutes from the September meeting. Can we have a motion to approve?

BOARD MEMBER McDONOUGH: So moved.

BOARD MEMBER HECKTMAN: Second.

CO-CHAIR ROBINSON-IVY: All in favor?

(Chorus of ayes.)

CO-CHAIR ROBINSON-IVY: Motion passes.

Let's go directly into the CO remarks.
George, do you have a microphone? Are you going to go to the -- Are you going to test it?

(Brief pause.)

BOARD MEMBER WRIGHT: Good morning all. I'm George Wright, CO, for the Partnership. And the first thing I'd like to say is holiday greetings. Some of you I may not see as we move into the new year; so with that, I would like to share with everyone a happy holiday season. Hopefully, you'll spend some time with your loved ones away from work.

So as we continue, I guess if we think about where the Partnership is now, we're at the

halftime so I call it kind of the halfway mark. Obviously, we are in the fiscal year. The Partnership fiscal year runs from July 1 to June 30 so obviously in the calendar year it's the halfway point of our efforts. As we think about managing the Public Workforce dollars, the WIOA dollars at work for Cook County and City of Chicago, we are, in fact, the largest workforce board in the country managing funds we always set. I guess I could actually have a lot of -- (inaudible) -- this year. All of us has been a year of opportunity, uncertainty and in many times turbulent. And while we close out the calendar, I thought it was important for me to actually talk about a couple things.

Number 1, what is my job and what is the job of the staff fundamentally as we lead this large organization managing our dollars, our taxpayer dollars and what are the things that we need to accomplish as we move forward? And so as we think about it, and I'll reflect on it, there are a lot of things I have to do as a person who is leading this organization for and on behalf of all the residents of the City of Chicago and Cook County as we manage our dollars. There are two fundamental things that are

most important. The first one is that we have to exceed every single one of our goals, every single one. There's 15 key point indicators and the Partnership carries the same in terms of its performance, how the Partnership goes, the State goes. If we don't meet and exceed all our goals, there isn't enough activity in the other forces of the State to make up for that so we have to not only meet, but exceed. I am happy to report that the Partnership continues to exceed every single measure. Not meet some of them, not exceed some of them, but exceed them all. Now, some people can exceed all their goals, but they're not doing it in a safe and sound manner.

So my second job is to make sure that as we exceed every single KPI, that it then goes up to the State of Illinois and goes up to the federal government, that we actually do it in a safe and sound manner and so I'm happy to report to this group that all of these WIOA dollars, that every single audit that we've had, it has been unmodified and we have not had a single significant finding. In fact, the Partnership has undergone a record number of audits. As an example, the Partnership has been audited twice in a row and this year by the federal government

Office of Inspector General. In the previous 13 years, that organization audited the Partnership one time and once again we have exceeded every single measurement and have passed every single audit with flying colors.

(Round of applause.)

BOARD MEMBER WRIGHT: Now, as a person who spent almost four decades in financial services, to me this is tablesapes. You don't get extra credit for meeting your goals and passing your audits, that's how you keep your job. But in this particular issue, it's not usual for people to meet, actually exceed all of their goals. There's always sometimes people come in and have suggestions in terms of audits and this is not something that I've done and it's hard for me to make this recognition public because once again I can look at an industry where you don't get to stand up and say I'll take a pause for meeting goals. Once again, it's tablesapes; but in this particular instance, the people that actually, many of them are sitting in the back of the room, and fight for every single -- (inaudible) -- the Partnership to stand up and recognize.

And so with that, I'll move to the next

portion of my comments which is what's on the horizon for the coming year -- for the coming calendar as well as the rest of the halftime as we move into the second half again. So there's a couple of things that I'm going to ask some of the members of the board to do and certain circles across the country as I go and talk about things nomenclature about these is WIOA talks about outcomes and for me the Public Workforce has been always focused on the outcomes. In fact, those are our measures, the outcomes; but really in my opinion when you talk about the impact, not just the outcomes and so as we talk about the thousands of people that we interact with, the number of them that are delegated and our partners we have to deal with, what is the impact of that and so people have coined me the outcomes to impact person because I talk about it ad nauseam and so this leads me to point to other things as I see opportunity for the public system which is to move away from transactions and move into strategy.

The uncertainty that we face as the Public Workforce systems is rooting around and there is a strategy. Some of us may not agree with the strategy, but there is a strategy. This is not a transactional

situation where we come and talk about what the transactions are embedded in the results of once again exceeding every single measure. Those are your outcomes, but the strategy of how we actually talk about these, these items and how we get and we must pivot and change, I think is where the Partnership and all of you play an important role and so I'm going to mention three things. And at the end of those three, I'd love to have the call to action to WIOA members to really focus in on how you help us in strategy conversations, not just asking us about transaction. So as we embark upon some of the biggest three things that we have to do one of those RFP, the request for proposal, I actually made a decision as CEO working with our senior team to delay that from last year because I had that opportunity within -- to push it to this year. I have no wiggle room we have to engage in RFP process as we select new partners in American job centers, delegate agencies as well as our sector cities. And as we think about the RFP process, once again moving away from a transaction to a strategy, how do we engage our WIB members to help us do that to engage in conversation and talk about the strategy of an RFP versus just talking about the transactions of

how many proposals and how many do we actually approve those are transactions. We need strategy.

The second thing we -- actually set in is the foundation for now is MOU process. MOU process is simply transaction process at its core. It says how much are your partners going to kick in, put money in the kitty, if you will, and share those resources and those costs; but there should be a strategy behind it. It's not just a transaction. It has to be a strategic decision that Partnerships coming together as an example if we came together not just talking about the money, but what about the operation of the strategy as we move into a different paradigm where SNAP recipients are going to come to these locations in droves saying what work requirement and how do we take our partners in a collective and develop a strategy not just asking me about report out.

The third thing that we're going to do as an aside from the MOU and MRE is we're going to actually have to update our local WIOA plan. Now, this plan is a four-year plan, but the regulation actually requires that we actually update that plan every two years. When I joined the organization as CEO as serving on the board for eight years, the first

thing that I had to deal with was the local plan which goes up to the State plan and so we tried to implement a process by which we invited our Partners to come in and have strategic discussions with us about the plan. It's simple, it's simple for us to develop a plan and write the plan, but how do we actually take that and make sure that it exceeds and it's implemented a strategic collective manner. As so as we update our plan as required in two years, 2026 comes the two-year plan where we have to update the plan based on new economic conditions that actually require us to think about new ways of implementing this in a new paradigm becomes increasingly important for me to invite you to join us in strategic discussions.

So what is the ask? The ask is that we have committees. These are not going to be committees ad nauseam. They're not going to be committees that we actually go on for time. They're going to be committees that actually have a time served that we want WIB members. We want you to join us in strategic discussions. You have your choice. You will see as we actually send this information out to all of you who have those three, if you will, and I would like to have every single board member on board at least for

some limited period of time to help us with the strategy. Once again, you will be a fish out of water if you come in and start talking about transactions because these discussions require strategy. This administration once again is dealing in a strategic level, not a transaction level and our responses must be. So as I think about closing out, once again you have the responsibility in and you're sitting on \$62 million of WIOA dollars that you have oversight, \$62 million that you have oversight. 90 days ago when I addressed this group, no one here knew if the Partnership was partners that actually see those dollars are even going to exist. There was no way that we could know that \$34 million which was advanced was going to come through because we wouldn't have known that until the government came back to work and actually did affirm that now we can draw those dollars down. Now we have a hurdle. The hurdle comes -- a hurdle that's going to come really focus in and slash when we are alerted or notified if we're going to get based funding for next year and there's a bunch of pundits that are saying that is a time a couple of shoes could drop and that makes it even more important that we talk about strategy now versus some

transactional or outcomes report outs that you're interested in.

So the state of the union is fine. We've had exceeded all of our measurements, we've passed every single audit. Now it's time to engage you in more than just coming to a board meeting, but asking you to engage with us as we think about the strategy moving forward. Thank you. Once again, I wish you the happiest holidays. I may not see many of you all until 2026. Have some time, relax, I plan on doing that, spend some time with your family, don't eat too much and join the gym. With that Madam Chair, I can entertain questions or ...

CO-CHAIR ROBINSON-IVY: Questions? I see one hand.

BOARD MEMBER JOHANSON: There are questions online.

CO-CHAIR ROBINSON-IVY: Can you all put your hand raised up so Nicole can see you?

BOARD MEMBER JOHANSON: Good morning. This is Matt Johanson. George, so we can expect an e-mail to us requesting which of these task force committees we'd like to serve on?

BOARD MEMBER WRIGHT: That's exactly right, and I

think you will receive that before the end of the year from a time-line perspective. Many of these initiatives obviously we laid some ground work already, we knew it was coming so it's actually a perfect time for -- now to join because now we have something to report and something to add to strategic.

Lisa ...

BOARD MEMBER BLY-JONES: Dr. Lisa Bly-Jones, Chicago Council. So I don't have a question more so than just wanted to make a statement and a show of appreciation because I think one of the things we talked a lot about is wanting to think about strategy and I think the timing is significant right now as you talked about the RFPs, the MOU process and then the local WIOA plan. What I hear is Partnerships and I hear engagement and I hear transformations so if we're going to talk about opportunities in this time of uncertainty, it's exciting to actually be thinking about strategy and how we can be proactive with those dollars. Thank you.

BOARD MEMBER WHITE: Thank you, Dr. Jones. I would also add that we've tested this with a recent call-out to some of our WIB members as well as some of our partners here with regard to how we analyze and

how we actually evaluate the effectiveness of some of our partners and so I notice that as we thought about the way that we actually evaluate a partner, we have a stagnant approach where we weighed everything, every variable listing and when I ask why do we do this, the answer I got was that's the way it was always done and I know it as well as you all know it, that's the way you've always done it, you get the same results and so we invited our partners to come in in a strategic discussion with us to determine whether or not those variables that we were actually weighing the same makes sense from a strategic perspective, right. What's important to us and what should we give a 20 percent weight versus something else gets a 10 percent weight where previously we were weighing everything 10 percent and so we had that conversation, it was strategic in nature, and to your point, it was transformation because for the first time, members were saying we're inviting into a conversation that was just giving piece of paper that was reporting out, we had a discussion around how we can get better and so the system in my opinion has not been broken, it's not dysfunctional, but anything can get better and it can only get better with your collective efforts and

it can get better with our collective measures focused on the right thing which is strategy, to your point, and once again I'm going to say it for the 50th time, not transaction.

CO-CHAIR ROBINSON-IVY: Could I just say one thing real quick? Point of privilege, I just want to say to everyone as you think about or as you inquire about these RFP committees, think about the strengths that you all bring to the table. So, you know, I often say, you know, my place of work, you don't want me running hedge funds because that's not what I do. So if there is something that you know that you have a strength in, for example, mentioning the RFPs, if you review RFPs and you do those type of things, then lead into that because we certainly need that help. George is campaign about moving to strategic flows versus transactional is -- he's been on this --

How long have you been talking about this?

BOARD MEMBER WHITE: (Inaudible).

CO-CHAIR ROBINSON-IVY: Before he was chair, I mean, before he was CEO, he was in this seat and he's been talking about it. So as you think about where you might want to help out, where you might want to

be, please think about those things and those areas to where you add your strengths and your talent. So sorry for the -- Thanks.

BOARD MEMBER WHITE: Thanks, Jacki.

Yeah, as WE talk about strategy development, a lot of time strategy is indicated by -- (inaudible) -- that implicate strategy around WIOA is the re-authorization of the federal legislation laws. So there are two competing legislation are -- (inaudible) -- Make America -- (inaudible) -- again is the Partnership participating in a lobbying efforts to promote particularly stronger workforce for America access that will maintain level funding for -- So with regard to the question around the lobby, the Partnership and my stance has historically been the same. We use historical lobbying in industries to lobby force. I have been to Washington, D.C., three times, I plan to go back in February on Capitol Hill business, but they will be in concert with those people who lobby as a industry, not lobby for a Partnership per se and so our attack to this, if I can use that word kind of loosely, because sometimes there is an attack here has to be coordinated with a national effort to make sure that we understand the

implications of MASA, ASWA or some block or lack thereof, you know, some elimination of fund and how that impacts the organization. That's the long goal that -- and the longer gain and I think that's important and thank you for mentioning that. But the short-term strategic goal is I have got to -- I've got to do an MOU starting in January, I have got starting in January and so having those discussions now at a strategic level will give us great practice to have the longer-term discussions around the re-authorization of WIOA if that's possible. So great question and we've got to do both.

BOARD MEMBER McDONOUGH: I just want to make a comment in terms of your strategic strategy, George. In my experience with construction and manufacturing, workforce is a 50 percent issue and the more we can tie ourselves to economic impact and economic development as a role for this organization, I think the more successful, you know, getting the message across how vital it is in Washington because if we can't train the right people for the right jobs, you know, we don't have successful businesses and it's an integrated approach. I think typically it was government that would like to bifurcate and I think

the more this gets rolled into an economic impact discussion and strategy, I think the more successful we'll be nationally.

BOARD MEMBER WHITE: I couldn't agree with you more, Pam. I think that the Public Workforce system at large has been sadly in my opinion and I'm going to use that we're pigeon-holed it into social service. This is not social service. Social service work, quite frankly, often is transactional. Economic development is strategic and so as an example to your comment, I'm glad you said that, is we start initiative one again asking WIB members to engage with us and members we actually partner with, many of which are in the room, to think the landscape about internal investment and how we use the social of success to be the benchmark that we can make the case to this administration and to others that this is more than just being a nice person, that this has real economic benefit to the people and community that need it the most. That's a strategic direction and intentionality that me in my opinion have to move away there this notion just kind of doing good work. We are going good work, but what's the impact of that work on community that --

BOARD MEMBER McDONOUGH: One of the other things is our people have to be able to translate when they're talking to businesses because when we do the -- when we do social services speak, we're not communicating with businesses. I think the more we're able to translate what we do and how it helps them is going to make us much more successful, George.

BOARD MEMBER WRIGHT: Totally agree.

Dr. Jones ...

BOARD MEMBER BLY-JONES: I just wanted to speak to Michael's point about lobbying and I'm going to use the term advocating and educating instead of lobbying but I also think it's through some of these strategic conversations that we can develop our agenda whether that is here for the state advocacy in educating or for the national, I think it's also an opportunity through those strategic conversation to help build that agenda as well. So I appreciate that you can get some of that from those conversations too.

BOARD MEMBER WRIGHT: And it gives us to your point a good -- (inaudible) -- and good practice too. Listen, I understand what I'm asking is not easy because the public role system by definition is mostly transaction, it's by definition. So I know I'm asking

something out of the ordinary for us to think more strategically, but these type of strategic discussions, I believe will take us, Dr. Jones, not only practice what we preach, but then take it to the national level as we educate and advocate. I probably went over my time, Madam Chair.

CO-CHAIR ROBINSON-IVY: We have more questions. This is important enough that if we need to spend more time on questions both on the screen and in the room. I think this is -- this is why we're here so, you know, we get together once a quarter, if there are more questions and more comments that need to come out, now is the time so I'm willing to go over a little bit if we need to continue the conversation. So I think we had another comment over here on this side of the room. Matt, did you have a question?

BOARD MEMBER JOHANSON: I do not.

CO-CHAIR ROBINSON-IVY: Okay. Am I missing someone?

Nicole, do you want to check and see if there's anybody on the line?

MS. SHAW: I don't have extra comments in the chat.

CO-CHAIR ROBINSON-IVY: I so with that, I am

always the person after the meeting and I go why didn't I say that or I meant to talk about whatever, you know, how to reach George, George will be the person to say just pick up the phone and call me. So I think all of us have either been in a situation or sent an e-mail or something and he'll say just call me. If you end up 20 minutes walking home back to the office from this meeting and you remember something, then pick up the phone and call George, I hope you don't mind me saying that, but I do think this is important. This is what we do and this is important enough that we have this discussion. So if there is nobody else, last call, I look forward to the e-mail that George is going to send and we can pass it back to you for closing.

BOARD MEMBER WHITE: And operation-wise because that's always where -- if you have something, my phone number is (215) 485-1828, (215) 485-1828. Jacki, thank you for that comment. I was 40 years in corporate. Our first point of action is not to put something in writing, send e-mails is pick up the phone. We can have a lot better discussion, an honest consideration whereas conversation versus someone misinterpreting some e-mail that's sent out. So once

against (215) 485-1828, call me any time, my phone because I take it to the beach when I'm on vacation. Thank you all.

(Round of applause.)

CO-CHAIR ROBINSON-IVY: Thank you, George.

Let's move directly in to the committee reports. Jose, is it going to be you or -- Thadius. It looks like Thadius is coming this way. Are you going to the podium, Thadius?

MR. ELLIOT: Yes.

(Brief pause.)

BOARD MEMBER PATRICK: I just want to recognize Carrie Thomas has joined.

CO-CHAIR ROBINSON-IVY: Can you repeat that with the mic?

BOARD MEMBER PATRICK: We should recognize Carrie Thomas is now here.

CO-CHAIR ROBINSON-IVY: Thank you.

MR. ELLIOT: Good morning. Thadius Elliot, finance & grants manager for the Partnership. I will be your finance -- I'm known to have a soft voice, I better speak up a little louder than Jacki and everyone else. First and foremost for the PY25 this year funding received \$62,283,830 to spend contract on

July 1, 2025, to June 30th. The breakdown of that budget will be 10 percent spent to admin, 31 percent will be dislocated worker; youth out of school, 23 percent; and adult 32 percent. That's the first quarter. Obligations for adult is 44.25 percent, dislocated is 40.47 percent and youth is 85.3 percent. Currently, we're at 44.25 and dislocated because of first quarter limitations and we expect that to rise as we receive the budget for the year. (Inaudible). It will be done by June 30, 2026.

Next slide, the direct training. We're currently at 50.3 percent. For the dislocated worker, we're at 21.6 percent and combined we have 26.4 percent. These are first quarter expenses. (Inaudible) -- fluctuated based -- (inaudible). As you can see, we are at 6.4 percent, we are 50 percent -- June 30, 2026 meet that obligation at 50 percent.

Next slide, work based training. We're at 20 percent to be met currently. So once again as you can see that 11 percent threshold of first quarter we plan to meet that obligation by the end of June 2026.

This is our summary page. Summary total expenses for the first quarter so far are \$13,442,267

and that's 17 percent of the total use. Industry standard is 15 to 20 percent, so we're right there with that threshold percentage. This is little breakdown of each of the funding stream that we have. Dislocated, just to show a little bit of the -- (inaudible) -- on ITA and IGTs, right now they're coming in on a slow rate, but we will have that pick up. Some of our funding we will use for cover some of the expenses that we already have. So that was the financial.

CO-CHAIR ROBINSON-IVY: If someone does have questions, you need to raise -- many of us have seen this for a third time at this point; but if you have questions, you need to raise either on the screen or say something because again this is a big room.

(No response.)

MR. ELLIOT: Thank you all.

CO-CHAIR ROBINSON-IVY: Thank you, Thadius.

BOARD MEMBER McDONOUGH: George, I think we need to do a motion to invite the virtual board members into the roll call.

MS. SHAW: So we will be doing the roll. If you were not here earlier, I'm going to call out everyone's name. If you're here as a proxy, you can

state that you're here when I read out the name board member that you are attending for. If you're attending online, please state that you are here virtually. So going through, we have Jason.

BOARD MEMBER SPIGNER: Present online.

MS. SHAW: Thank you.

Juan Salgado ...

MS. RUTLEDGE: On the record.

MS. SHAW: Thank you.

Robert Reiter ...

(Inaudible.)

MS. SHAW: Thank you.

Donovan Pepper ...

(No response.)

MS. SHAW: I'll circle back to Donovan.

Pam McDonough ...

BOARD MEMBER McDONOUGH: Here.

MS. SHAW: Carrie Thomas ...

BOARD MEMBER THOMAS: Here.

MS. SHAW: Rahnee Patrick ...

BOARD MEMBER PATRICK: Present in the room.

MS. SHAW: Thank you.

Adam Hecktman ...

BOARD MEMBER HECKTMAN: Present in the room.

MS. SHAW: Thank you.

Hardik Bhatt ...

MR. CASSELLE: Omowale Casselle for Hardik Bhatt.

MS. SHAW: Thank you.

Jennifer Foster ...

MS. THOMPSON: Whitney Thompson for Jennifer
Foster.

MS. SHAW: Thank you.

Matt Johanson ...

BOARD MEMBER JOHANSON: Present.

MS. SHAW: Thank you.

Michele Smith ...

BOARD MEMBER SMITH: Here.

MS. SHAW: Thank you.

Lisa Stark ...

(no response.)

MS. SHAW: Xochitl Flores ...

MR. THOMPSON: Michael Thompson, proxy for
Xochitl Flores.

MS. SHAW: Thank you.

Lisa Bly-Jones ...

BOARD MEMBER BLY-JONES: Present.

MS. SHAW: Thank you.

Manny Rodriguez ...

MS. GALLO: Jackie Gallo for Manny Rodriguez.

MS. SHAW: Thank you.

Victor Dickson ...

MR. DICKSON: Here.

MS. SHAW: Joshua Davis ...

MR. TAYLOR: Stephen Taylor, proxy.

MS. SHAW: Thank you.

Trenity Dobbey ...

BOARD MEMBER DOBBEY: Present in the room.

MS. SHAW: Thank you.

Jacki Robinson-Ivy ...

Co-Chair ROBINSON-IVY: I am here present.

MS. SHAW: And we did the attendance again because we are about to do the voting and this is also to admit the people online who are board members because they -- (inaudible).

BOARD MEMBER McDONOUGH: (Inaudible).

THE COURT REPORTER: What did she say? I can't hear her.

BOARD MEMBER McDONOUGH: I make a motion to include the virtual participants in the roll call.

BOARD MEMBER PATRICK: Rahnee seconds.

BOARD MEMBER McDONOUGH: All in favor?

(Chorus of ayes.)

BOARD MEMBER McDONOUGH: Abstentions?

(No response.)

BOARD MEMBER McDONOUGH: Okay. Motion passed.

You coming up, Amy?

CO-CHAIR ROBINSON-IVY: While Amy is coming, I neglected to -- we have some folks who are just joining us for the first time. To those of you members, welcome. And can you just raise your hand, we have a couple others that are new. Thank you so much. We know that this is heavy lifting, so thank you for taking the time out to being here. Back to you.

BOARD MEMBER McDONOUGH: Okay. As George referenced, we have a schedule of RFPs and I think Amy is going to walk through that and she'll also walk through a couple additional training providers from previously approved list.

MS. SANTACATERINA: Good morning, everybody. And as George did say, it's -- if you're interested in getting involved with our RFPs, I want to go through our schedule. First up, we have what we initially is a request for proposal for our sort of traditional model of our American Job Centers, the --
(inaudible) -- and affiliate. Our American Job

Centers that are located in space with our partners or our space and we're issuing that RFP, we're getting a release in January, February for a program start date on July 1. Another model we will be issuing is our -- previously called our delegate agencies where our affiliate American Job Centers career pathway training. Looking at that, we are anticipating release date around April or May and those will be a start October 1. So that's -- There's also our sector centers start date which -- for a -- I'm sorry -- February for a sector center release and that will be a start date of July 1. So again, it's good committees. We would appreciate your support either in as we release what we're asking for and definitely as the time to review our proposal. We really appreciate your help.

Lastly, for me is our WIOA eligible training provider list. Each of you should have received the attached recommendation of our training providers and it is -- you should have those received them in your packet. In terms of eligible -- (inaudible) --

THE COURT REPORTER: I can't hear you. I'm sorry. I cannot hear you at all. Can we turn up that

mic more, please?

(Brief pause.)

MS. SANTACATERINA: For our continued eligible, this is a list of our training providers that submitted their request to stay on the State eligible training program so we reviewed their outcomes, evaluated. We only see one program did not meet the benchmarks that were set in place and that is the American College, CDL training program so we are not recommending that program. The rest of the training provider programs did meet their benchmarks and recommending forward for them to continued maintaining on the list of eligible training providers.

Then there is the list of initial eligibility. These are training providers that presented a new training program to get on the list, we see those here. And they met the criteria and we're recommending that those training programs to get on the stay list. And this is a voting issue so we would need a recommendation for these programs.

BOARD MEMBER McDONOUGH: Yeah, I would make a motion to approve the addition of additional providers as well as approve the elimination of the one that did not meet the criteria. Do I have a second?

BOARD MEMBER BLY-JONES: Second.

BOARD MEMBER HECKTMAN: Second.

BOARD MEMBER McDONOUGH: Okay. All in favor vote
aye.

(Chorus of ayes.)

BOARD MEMBER McDONOUGH: Opposed?

(No response.)

BOARD MEMBER McDONOUGH: Do we have any
abstentions to anybody on the list?

BOARD MEMBER REITER: (Indicating.)

BOARD MEMBER McDONOUGH: State your name so we
can put it on the record.

MS. RUTLEDGE: Connie Rutledge, City Colleges
abstaining from the vote.

BOARD MEMBER McDONOUGH: Okay. And nobody else
that's on the -- is voting that's got training
provider status on the list?

(No response.)

BOARD MEMBER McDONOUGH: Okay. I think we're
good.

CO-CHAIR ROBINSON-IVY: City Colleges have to
abstain.

MS. SHAW: Next up we have Carly Bykerk. She's
going to be kicking off a new program performance

recommendations.

MS. BYKERK: Thank you, Nicole. Carly Bykerk, associate director of program performance. I'm going to start out with the performance department. Can everybody hear me okay? A little bit more.

Okay. All right. I'm going to skip the slide and start out here with our program performance overview. So in the materials provided to you all, there's a lot of data graphs on the side that feel free to please view and peruse, but I'm just going to provide some high level -- a high level overview here from our Program Year 20 to Program Year 24 performance outcome. So our Workforce continues to stabilize post-pandemic. We're showing solid outcomes in employment and earning across all of our populations.

Starting with our adult groups, so we see that our employment rates rose steadily post-program year 22. So when we're talking about employment rates, we're talking about those exit employment rates, so those that exited and had employment at the second quarter and the fourth quarter after exit. We also see that our measurable skills gains are in the ride since Program Year 20 demonstrating the

effectiveness of our instructional and our training support. A majority of our adult participants do enter the program with significant barriers, again demonstrating our value to the services that we're providing the intended population that WIOA is supposed to serve. So we're really happy to see with our adult population we're serving around 90 percent of our population does enter with barriers.

All right. For our dislocated workers, we are seeing that re-employment is zero -- (inaudible) -- pre-pandemic levels so employment rates are hovering around 80 percent which is really awesome we see for our dislocated workers and our -- (inaudible) -- rates are around 65 to 70 percent. We see that recovery effect from the pandemic in wages when it comes to our dislocated worker group. We see that workers found jobs during the pandemic in sectors that were paying significantly higher wages and wages that were more readily available for those skilled workers. Even since that 2020, we see kind of, like, a dip after 2022 when we're going into program year 2023 and 2024 when it comes to wages; but we're still gaining if we're comparing our program in 20 to 2023 and 2024 and seeing about 12 percent higher wages

since then.

We also continue to serve participants with barriers in our dislocated worker population. So most of them are low income and have basic skills deficiencies and wage are trending as I mentioned slightly slower lower, but it aligns with our pandemic effect as we discussed.

All right. When it comes to training centers for our adult population, you know, our training investments are aligning with low point industry demand so our top training sectors for our adult population are in healthcare transportation and logistics. IT is emerging as the fastest growing sector and healthcare training is yielding strong employment outcomes for our adult population. For our dislocated workers, we see IT and business services are leading the wage outcomes while skilled trades and infrastructure are also performing well.

I wanted to mention here you may see a data graph in your handout. In it, it indicates training related employment. Those rates may look low to you and I want to mention that that is mainly due to a system issue right now with IDWS, the state system. It's not automatically linking training to employment

outcome so it actually has to be manually entered and determined by the career folks. So we hope with the new IDWS system, that this could be automated in the future.

CO-CHAIR ROBINSON-IVY: How much do we think that might be off by, like 10 percent? 20 percent?

MS. BYKERK: I think closer -- I'm think closer to around a 20 percent increase. I'll have to look back on that because I did a little more digging on that on my own end so I can back to you on that.

CO-CHAIR ROBINSON-IVY: That's important to know particularly given the growth of I'm sure speaking to this in their sleep, given the growth of what's going on with AI and IT, et cetera, et cetera. So I think it's really important for us as we talked earlier that this is more strategic than it is transactional. It is important that we have accurate data. That's not a slam to you. It is whoever doesn't have their systems working, they need to fix that so we can --

MS. BYKERK: I agree 100 percent. And I know we spoke in the committees too about really leaning on data heavily and working with our partners to ensure that the new systems that are created are with our input as the folks that are interacting with it

because we do see these discrepancies and where -- can be made and, again, with AI and technological advances we really need to get there here in workforce when it comes to the data and what we're accessing, reporting out on. So I agree 100 percent. And as I mentioned, I'll see what I can -- what I can find. I know with our data that was provided in that particular slide, that was only data from PY18 to PY23 because the State did not have the PY24 data available so I can look into that.

CO-CHAIR ROBINSON-IVY: Thank you, Carly.

I'm going to invite Pilar to come up.

MS. TREJO: Good morning, everybody. My name is Pilar Trejo. I'm director of Program Performance at the Partnership and happy holidays everybody. We're going to take a quick look at -- now that we've had a look, at several years of data that Carly presented. We need to see how we're doing in our first quarter. So let's take a look quickly at this adult program snapshot. We're looking at July 1 through September 30. This information obviously was provided in your packet. We discussed this in the committee meetings. I just want to point out a couple things. First of all, if you look at the new enrollment, we've

had a pretty strong start and that's really good. If you look at the exiters of 473. And then if you take a peek down here on the right side, it shows that of the 473 exiters, we have 300 of them that have been exited with employment, and that's a 68 percent exit rate for the first quarter which is great and for employment, so not too bad for the first quarter. We also say back to the top in the purple here, we have 2,012 people in training. That's what we should be doing, we should be training people. So we are doing what we need to be doing in this first quarter.

A couple of other things I wanted to highlight on this snapshot is if you look here at the demographics, we are -- you know, this is an alignment with our equity and what we're supposed to be reaching out to in the community, 50-50 and we are as far as gender goes and black Hispanic, we are mostly working with the communities of color. So that continues to do well.

Let's take a peek down here in this section where you see in blue educational background for our adult program enrollees, it's a broad spectrum when you look. And basically we have a good population of people that have a high school diploma and then we

also have a decent population, almost 20 percent, of college graduate. That's important because we keep hearing as we talk about anything that's happening with the local administration and what we need to be doing with workforce, that training is important and this is good to see because this will help folks that need to go into advanced training.

Let's take a peek here on the top at the barriers or challenges. I just want to point out that this is the group of folks that we should be reaching out to. If we start seeing these numbers go less than we're not doing what we're supposed to be doing. These also point to economic vulnerabilities. We're dealing with people that are in the need of being reached out to and helped. We have right here 74 percent low income, but 60 percent of them on SNAP. We know SNAP benefits are changing right now as we speak and we need to be able to reach out to these people with the new authorization that's going to be out. Basic skills deficient. Again, why 50 percent. That points to us being able to use bridge programs more with the population. 11 percent reporting if prior offenses, personally I'd like to see that higher, but sometimes people don't divulge that.

Again, this is the population we should be working with. And the other thing I'll point out also that's, you know, of the higher wage is at least on this list is almost 8.2 or almost 9 percent report long-term employment. Not being employed for a while becomes an issue, a confidence issue and the economy is changing so fast that these individuals that are long-term unemployment we need to be able to have training available for them.

The last thing I'll say about this is if we take a look at the bottom right here, underneath the exit with the employment, it shows \$23.86 an hour is average wage replacement; however, according to -- link dot com, minimum wage is 24.43 so we need to do a little better with our businesses and how we prepare people. So that is our snapshot for the adult program first quarter.

Now, let's take a look at that again, but for the dislocated workers. Okay. So again, robust start and 151 people for the first quarter, again we're talking July 1 to September 30 looks great. Exiters, 254. If we go back down here and compare that to the 192 of those people that were exited with employment, that's 76 percent of people coming out.

That's wonderful. Almost 80 percent. So we need to keep that going because that's the right direction.

Training. Training is important and we should always see high training, 1,165 people. This is particular population usually engages a lot with training and they should be because they've been displaced from jobs maybe for several years doing one type of task for a long time. The other thing I think I'll note, I won't say much more, other than right here when we look at educational background, 40 percent of this population has a college degree and the rest of high school. Again, training very important advanced training, but let's take a peek up over here by barriers. I'm just going to point out here, 32.4 percent have our basic skill deficient. So bridge programs are important for dislocated as well. The rest of this information about barriers, these particular barriers are not like the adult program where it's about economic vulnerability. With this group, it's about specific displacement barriers. So again, we're dealing with a different population, things we need to keep in mind as we look at our programs. And then the average wage 26.34 an hour, that's pretty good. The only thing I'll say is that

the emphasis with these programs -- I'm sorry, with dislocated worker programs should be short-term training, employer driven partnerships are really important and we need to continue to look at rapid response for these individuals as soon as they, you know, lose their job. The problem with this population is this: They wait until the last employment check to come to the center. So that's something that we need to keep in mind and how we can reach out to them a little more.

UNKNOWN BOARD MEMBER: (Inaudible) -- I was curious about the Delta between the exiters and the exiters without -- or what happens to those who are exiting without employment and what is the sort of -- what's the reason behind the Delta between the adult and the displaced workers being slightly higher at the 23 versus 26?

MS. TREJO: So the average wage -- Your question was in regard to the average wage between the adult and the dislocated worker. The adult typically do not have the same set of skills that the dislocated workers do, so that's one of the reasons. That's one thing I can say. I think we can look into more about that, but my first inclination would be to say about

the skills. And then your second question was about the exiters, like what's happening -- and I'm just rephrasing your question, let me know if this is correct -- what's happening with the ones that did not exit with employment. Unfortunately, some of those people we've lost in the process. The individual may have found the job but has not reached back out to the career coach or they have fallen off and for whatever reason did not complete, did not get a job and are not following up. This is something that's typical, it does happen; but I think a way of looking at this is looking at how we are keeping these individuals engaged in the process. I get it when people find jobs, sometimes they don't have time to reach out, but it also speaks to our career coaching and the benefit or the value that the customers receive with our program. So I think that kind of thing would need a deeper dive as to understand engagement in how we keep people engaged in our programs.

CO-CHAIR ROBINSON-IVY: I'll ask a question. Thank you for that. I want to kind of piggyback off his question. A lot of the delegates that are delegates of the Partnership are also delegates funded under City funding through the Department of Family

Support Services. So for those individuals that exit and they do not have a job and to your point there's a loss of engagement for whatever reason, are you all connecting with the counterparts at DFSS to see if participants have also been served there? Because in my direct service career before I got to where I'm at today, participants sometimes have different relationships with different service providers and they may be more willing to communicate and share information.

MS. TREJO: Thank you so much for bringing that up because one of the things that is very important and really on my mind George talked about the MOU, the Memorandum of Understanding, between our comprehensive centers. The point that I want to say is that we need to work better Title 1, Title 2, Title 3, Title 4 so that that information so that our referral process so that that collaboration can happen. I don't think it's not happening and I will say that it may be, but we have to have a streamline process. So I really, really hope that when George called out to the call of action, maybe somebody like you can be part of this conversation because we need to come up with ideas about how we can better collaborate and make sure that

the information is being shared or that the referral process is happening and, of course, most definitely through our one stop operators. So thank you very much for bringing that up.

CO-CHAIR ROBINSON-IVY: I would be interested in knowing our companies, I'm assuming that SDI, I'm assuming will group and couple of others in the room are getting some of your dislocated, is that a safe assumption to say? It's not a safe assumption to say it.

MR. TAYLOR: You can do more.

CO-CHAIR ROBINSON-IVY: We can do more.

MR. TAYLOR: I think it's engagement, but we're planning on taking advantage more, we want to do more.

CO-CHAIR ROBINSON-IVY: Exactly.

MR. TAYLOR: Yes, and we have ambition to do more.

CO-CHAIR ROBINSON-IVY: Right. So I thought that's what you were going to say and I don't know -- I know that you guys are, you know -- people are --

MR. TAYLOR: The reason I ask is we want to do more -- (Inaudible).

CO-CHAIR ROBINSON-IVY: So it sounds like we have a -- it sounds like Ternity, Stephen, and Omowale, I

said your name wrong four times, so I want say it again. It sounds like that's ad hoc right there to, you know, for Pilar to work with and if anybody else wants to -- you know, if we've got -- you know, don't work harder, work smarter and if we don't fix what's not broken, it seems like we got a group right here. Pilar, I don't know how you want to put that together. Is there anyone else, not just manufacturers, but if there are other companies in here that, you know, are having that same issue and I'm assuming that there are, then we've got a group right there.

George, is that safe to say?

BOARD MEMBER WHITE: (Indicating.)

CO-CHAIR ROBINSON-IVY: Pam has a comment.

BOARD MEMBER McDONOUGH: What about do we track through IRS or through -- you know, I mean, if somebody has got a job and they're paying taxes, then they're in the IRS system so what kind of cross-checking can we do with that if we're not having them report back to us testing?

MS. TREJO: Great question. I think we looked at different ways of being able to track information. One in particular is being able to look at UI wages for the surrounding states. We do have a lot of

people that are in Indiana and, you know, that are employed and we'd be able to pull up that UI information; however, specifically to answer your question about IRS, I do not know of a link. I don't know if there's a feed with that, but that's something we can take a look at and we'll make note of that, Carly, so we can check into that. However, one other thing I will say is that there is something called a work number, it costs -- it's, like, \$45 or \$50 per hit, it's expensive. There are options, it's just that there's costs.

BOARD MEMBER McDONOUGH: Even with the data share agreement we sign, that's not one of the categories apparently? Huh? Because we can access, you know, DES and some other data sources, but maybe state income tax? I don't know.

MS. TREJO: Well --

BOARD MEMBER McDONOUGH: I would think we might be able to make a connection there and then data share agreements.

MS. TREJO: I'm going to speak loud without sounding like I'm yelling. Pam, I'm glad you brought that up because that is something that we want to look at when we discuss the MOU. There's a whole section

on data sharing. And if we're going to be sharing costs, let's look at something that makes sense for us. And if it's a platform, an AI platform, technology platform, a special link that costs a lot of money, we can all put the money in there and it will allow us to be able to get more displacement data, that is good and I think that maybe transactional; but at the end of the day, this is a placement program and we have to be able to pull, you know, provide that information. So thank you very much, Pam.

BOARD MEMBER DOBBEY: To Madam Chair's point, if it's not broken, don't fix it or use what you have available, so just for transparency, I am working with several of our State partners specifically speaking to the City funding programs. Those agencies do not have the overhead to pay for the work number and it's important to say that they should not have to pay for something that is already being done and we can totally talk about this offline. I am working with our State partners to identify and develop a streamline pathway for employment verification that would not be a cost to service providers. So again to George's point, strategy, like we have to start having

transparency conversations.

CO-CHAIR ROBINSON-IVY: While we're trying to get people jobs -- (inaudible) -- paying, I work for corporate, but why are we paying for that.

BOARD MEMBER DOBBEY: Exactly. Which is why I tell people, we don't have it, there is no money. That's the reality for the City budget and across the country, things will be massively cut. So as far as my strategy for 2026, I'm focused on transparent conversations and rebuilding, reestablishing relationships and trust and leveraging that so that partners that are not at the table should be at the table that they're willing to contribute to the collective work that's being done across all layers. Again, that's something I can talk about offline, but there is early and work being done so that service providers that lose engagement with participants or even employers which is a different story, a mission I'm working on, they don't have to pay for how they get paid.

MS. TREJO: That is very encouraging and I'm really glad to hear this because we do want to eventually start having deeper discussions about this.

BOARD MEMBER McDONOUGH: Do you know what,

doesn't -- for child support, don't we -- there's an ability to access income data so maybe we need to look at how DCFS or whoever it is that, you know, monitors that because, you know, there's mandatory income withholding they've got to have data, I mean, that's a federal law. So, you know, it's another way to find out if somebody is employed.

CO-CHAIR ROBINSON-IVY: I feel like some of the HR folk would know about that. I don't want to belabor -- Nicole is getting her steps in today. George, I don't want to belabor it, but I do want to talk about it because it is important, but, George, if this is something that you should be handling in office with this group that we sort of kind of pulled together, you know, Pilar can do. I just don't understand why we're paying for stuff. Wait. Sorry. There's another question.

BOARD MEMBER THOMAS: Carrie Thomas with the Department of Security. So we do collect wage records for the purpose of administering the unemployment insurance program. Those records are only collected on a quarterly basis. We have a data share agreement with DCO that then goes down to the local areas. They are for the performance of WIOA performance reporting.

So those wage records are available to everybody. The timing, though, because they are quarterly, so somebody -- anyway, you can figure it out. It's lagging piece of information, but it is shared and it is provided. I also believe that it's exactly how the child support office gets their wage records so we have lots of data share agreements with other shared agencies. I always think for me, I'm not the data person. I just remind myself the purpose of collecting the wage information from the employers is for the purpose of administering unemployment insurance. So the way it's collected, when it's collected, then it's wages by quarter has to do with one particular program and, unfortunately, it is imperfect for all other purposes, but I maximize that use. Pilar, we can follow up and talk about UI wage records in other states because I believe through the State wage interchange system, DCO is a party to that. So we should have that, but if we don't we should talk more about that because we manage the source agreement.

CO-CHAIR ROBINSON-IVY: Thank you. So before we -- that gets away from us, there were a couple people that we kind of anointed and pointed to that

committee. Can you put your hand up so Nicole can know who they are? Dr. Bly-Jones, Steve from Will Group, Omowale, Adam, you don't get a choice. Who else did we say? Ternity. Was that it? Nicole, do you got that?

MS. SHAW: Yes.

CO-CHAIR ROBINSON-IVY: You're better than me.

MS. TREJO: This is great. I'm really excited to hear about that especially as we're going into MOU. I do want to say we're going to switch gathers right now, but really exciting to hear all of this. We're going to talk a little bit of workforce landscape, we're a little over time, but definitely if anybody has any comments, please raise your hand. So the landscaping and emerging trends -- I do want to say one of the individuals on my team, she's on call, I want to make a point of announcing her name, she's our managing policy and impact, her name is Kathleen Branigan, she's not new to the Partnership, she recently was involved with a business unit as a manager and in July she came on board and she's fully transitioned as of October. She basically is looking at monitoring legislation, analyzing labor information and any studies or priority populations that could

recommend policy updates. So it's really great to have somebody on board. I'm just going to go over some of the slides she had; and if there's any questions, maybe she can jump on and depending on our time, but let's just take a look here. Workforce landscape for Cook County is showing 5.2 million people, aging, smaller houses, increased diversity; unemployment in August was 4.9. I don't think we -- we still don't have the September 25 data. However, we continue in this region to have top growth industry or high demand with healthcare, logistics, IT and business services and construction. I will say with business services that overlaps into different industries, so it's not really an industry in its own, it kind of overlaps. And the other thing is median household income is \$75,000. We see the disparities, continually seeing the disparities with African-American black community, 47,000 where with white Caucasian 81 percent. So that's a huge disparity, something that our industry needs to do something about by working with our businesses. So workforce implications are that we have an aging population. Digital skills, we've been talking about AI and technology. The last committee member, we

really got into in-depth conversation about that. So we have to look at more an adaptive training models so that we can bring our customers up to speed and I also mean not just job seekers, but our businesses.

Another bit of information that I thought was really helpful is that we now more than ever are dealing with a very mixed workforce group. We have the Gen Z folks. These people are basically technology over-oriented. They were, you know, coming out of the womb with cell phones, you know. They basically -- that's the world that they live in. They're very flexible, but purpose driven. It's very important what kind of jobs they work in and they prefer to be coached and not managed which is -- could be a problem if you see -- some of you are laughing because you might have some of them on your team, but it can cause issues in the workplace. Millennials, they already are very tech comfortable, but they're looking for that value with balance and family life and are looking to grow. They're also more inclined to switch roles. That's something that businesses are not used to now. Gen X, they're pragmatic. They're the ones that are bridging our leadership, transitions from the new people to, you know, roles where people

don't have any of the skills in. And then our boomers mostly are retiring, but basically they would be wonderful for mentoring programs. You know, it's something again that we need to get our businesses to think about, very committed. Overall, the implications are that we need to embed digital literacy. Soft skills are important and career navigational programs. We have to support interracial membership and leadership transitions. Also as we're looking at training, we have to have hybrid models that are tech driven, so very important bit of information that we need to think about as we strategize.

As far as federal policy and WIOA re-calibration, I think we all know MASA is, you know, right now it's not -- it's proposed, this is not something that's happening, but something to think about as we look at our local plans and we look at the future of our industry is that they're talking about, you know, consolidating 11 programs into a block grant and that's a negative 1.6 billion, you need to keep that at the forefront and be compared. The focus here which is good news is that apprenticeships are a focus. That's good. That's on both sides of the

house. I think people are happy to see that and we need to think with that.

The other thing that MASA or Make America Skilled Again really focuses on is rapid re-employment and connection. I don't think any of that is a problem, I think that's a good thing, I think that's strategic. One thing to keep in mind is with regard to MASA, they're looking to strengthen the adult ed role and partnership and that's very important. I think we -- I believe some of the information was that they would be looking to have more career navigators up front to work with people and that doesn't sound bad either, but we have to understand back to what we are saying, how do we collaborate -- Title 2 is one of our partners, but we've got to get better at collaborating and making sure we understand both sides.

So again proposed, but this is what's happening right now. And I think George talked -- I'm going to switch gathers and talk about the MOU, Memorandum of Understanding. I just want to be clear when we walk out of here July 1 of 2026 starts a brand-new three year MOU and basically we will be working with you, you'll be -- we'll be reaching out

to have you involved in this. So our comprehensive Centers are King Center, Pilsen, Prairie State, Wheeling and we look forward to talking to you more on this. You can see the time line. Feel free to make note of those dates, but we will keep you posted.

And then last, but not least, George also talked about the local plan. We are in the four-year local plan at the two-year mark. We will be modifying the information, very important time because things are changing. We will be reaching out and I believe we just recently received local plan modification guidelines and I'll get that out to you guys.

And I'm going to invite Carly back up.
Well, I have Carly or is it John?

MS. SHAW: It should be John.

MR. HOLTON: Good afternoon. I'm John Holton. Thank you, Pilar, for that information. I'm going to quickly run through the slides. I know we are limited on time so very quickly. The business engagement team has processed as you can see job orders. I think the point is that we're doing a lot more in-person events so you can see a big decline in. This is an update on our numbers, gives you an idea where we are spending our money and where our money is

going. The OTJs, which is on-the-job training, this is our incumbent worker training. This is our update reports. This is our layoff reports. I think we're seeing definite increase in organizations that were reaching out to us, letting us know that they're having a mass layoff. Between the last trend, we see an increase of 73 percent of the amount that we're responding to as well as 53 percent of the amount of workers that would be impacted. Just a side note, reports information that we respond to only captures large employers so we're missing the small to median size businesses. The forecast in terms what we expect to happen in the next three months, we can continue to increase in reports. We suspect that the recent climate for SNAP will also increase the amount of people coming into our agencies.

In summary, we expect a significant amount of more people coming into our agencies and we're going to need a lot of collaboration in our committee members and our agencies to make sure they have the support that they need. I'll leave it at that. Any questions?

(No response.)

MR. HOLTON: All right. Thank you.

CO-CHAIR ROBINSON-IVY: Thank you, John.

I'm trying to play serious catch-up here.
Youth Committee Report.

MS. BYKERK: All right. We've got youth performance. Again, just an overview of Program Year 2024. For our youth participants, employment is stable above 70 percent for our post-exit grades. Measurable skill gains improved by 52 percent since Program Year 20 which I think is really a testament to the effectiveness of our instructional training programs in addition to the value of work of our career coaches and case management. Youth are earning about 33 percent more in Program Year 24 than 2020, so they're also exiting better prepared, exiting higher skilled jobs and, again, training and case management practices likely improved because of these. We see it because of these outcomes. We had our best performance year here yet for our youth population. So really good to hear for Program Year 2024. Barriers again are in line for our youth population all in their adult dislocated workers so we do continue to serve majority of youth with barriers coming from, you know, impacted by economic disparities particularly communities of color.

In terms of training sectors, so we do have strong enrollment in health care and in transportation aligning again with your industry trends here and strong employment rates for those in health care. Youth are seeing the best gains in terms of wages in the IT sectors. I want to mention here again the issue with the data is training related placement, but, Jacki, do want to mention to you, and I can potentially dive into this at a future meeting, but we do have really interesting data related to outcomes at Title 1 versus Title 3 as it comes to post-exit wages and employment rates. So I'm happy to also provide that in the future meetings.

What I have now related to that is we can see that for our youth population Program Year 2023 that our youth were making -- those who received training were making about 30 percent more than those who did not. They were also at 5 percentage points higher at 80 percent employment rate for those with training versus those that did not receive training at 75 percent. So I just want to mention that here. Again, I'm happy to provided more data on that in the future if you would like.

CO-CHAIR ROBINSON-IVY: I do.

MS. BYKERK: Pilar ...

MS. TREJO: Thank you very much.

So we're going to have a really quick look at the youth snapshot. Basically, strong start. I do want to point out that as far as 451 enrollments of the exiters, we have 58 percent that exited with employment. That's fantastic. And then as far as post-secondary 16 percent, so that's a great start for the first quarter. As far as the youth landscape, basically we'll say it's, you know -- it's not finalized and the things that we just need to think about is the fact that -- the things that we need to think about is that many programs will be eliminated and that will affect our youth funding. Right now we don't know enough. So that's pretty much it.

CO-CHAIR ROBINSON-IVY: Are we about to go network?

MS. SHAW: Yes. Next we're going to be going to our network spotlight. We have Mr. Drosos, the manager of the Palmer House.

CO-CHAIR ROBINSON-IVY: Before he comes, Nicole -- I mean, please come on up -- I just want to take a moment for the Board and any public folks that are here, can we just recognize and applaud the staff

at the Partnership, the data what they pull together, what they do.

(Round of applause.)

CO-CHAIR ROBINSON-IVY: As we look through all this, it's amazing; and if you talk to George, he's not at all surprised, he's, like, yeah, that's what they do and he doesn't take it for granted. It's just that he knows he has got great staff, let's just make sure if you see one of them because there are a few here today, just make sure you let them know. This is tough work. So thank you.

MS. MASSEL: Hi, everybody. So we talked a lot about strategy, we talked a lot about placement. I think we can all agree a very important part of this whole plan and our work is employers, right, no career has ever succeeded without an employer. So if you know about for the last year, we've asked a member of our agency to come present to this group, it's usually been one of our delegates, but this quarter we wanted to change it and ask for really important employer partner to come so I've asked -- This is Konstantine Drosos, thank goodness he goes by Gus, so he is the GM of the Palmer House Hotel which is a terrific employer partner. He's going to come up and introduce himself

and share the important work they do, so thank you.

MR. DROSOS: Thank you, Susan.

I'd like the record to show that I have been to church, I was waiting for my turn to come up. So good morning. Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today. As Susan mentioned, my name is Konstantine Drosos and I am the general manager of the Palmer House Hotel, your neighbor just down the street from here and it's an honor to address this Board and organization that sits in the center of one of the most important challenges and opportunities facing our region which is the development of a strong, stable and future ready workforce.

I'd like to speak briefly about the role of the hotel in the hospitality industry in the broader Chicago and Cook County economy because the impact is deep, diverse and it's often underestimated. I'm going to repeat that, it's often underestimated. Across Chicago, hotels directly employ more than 30,000 people and that number doesn't begin to reflect the tens of thousands of additional jobs we create indirectly. When hotels thrive so do restaurants, transportation providers, events and conventions, theaters, retail and countless small businesses. We

are part of a massive economic ecosystem that touches every neighborhood in the City and much of Cook County, yet despite our recovery, we are still operating with 6,000 fewer hotel jobs than we had before the pandemic. That gap reflects the service levels, guest experience, the City's competitive position against other major destinations and, of course, the economic well-being of thousands of potential workers who could build for years in our field.

Hotels are one of the greatest economic engines for public revenue. The tax base created by hotels through room tax and sales tax, amusement tax, you name it. Our hotel alone creates more than \$2 million of tax revenues for the City, the County and the State and that helps, you know, State of Illinois and every hotel home filled translates into dollars that help fund schools, transportation, safety and community infrastructure.

So we talk about workforce development and hospitality, we're not talking about filling shifts. We're talking about supporting the financial sustainability of Chicago and Cook County. This is why the work of this Board is so important. The

Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership has been instrumental in helping hotels, my own included, connect us with dedicated workers who want long-term careers. At the Palmer House, we have worked several team members to the Partnership, most recent tenure hires are entering their third year. They started in 2023 and their growth has been remarkable.

This is what I want to emphasize about hotel working. Hospitality is meritorious. If you're willing to show up, learn, work hard and take care of our guests, the industry will always take care of you. I'm living proof of that. I started as a payroll clerk for \$7.50 an hour. Now I have the privilege of to running one of the most largest iconic hotels in the City of Chicago.

(Round of applause.)

MR. DROSOS: My story is not unique. I have many colleagues and I elected to have one example. A good friend of mine who was my hotel manager in the hotel previously. Her name is Leticia Focus (phonetic) and she is a product of Chicago Public Schools and of Mexican heritage. She began her career as a front desk agent at Hilton Chicago almost 30 years ago and today she's the general manager of -- (inaudible) --

in the Magnificent Mile, one of the top performing hotels in the city. Stories like hers exist to every hotel across the city of Chicago.

One of my mentors when I was going through ran a large hotel, I was shocked to find out he didn't have a college degree, right. It wasn't necessary. Now it helps, but it wasn't necessary. Our workforce is one of the most diverse of any major industry: racially, culturally, linguistically and generationally. We hire veterans, immigrants, second-chance job seekers -- (inaudible) -- and career changers. We offer an average starting salary at our hotel alone at \$27 an hour. That comes with strong benefits, careerability and work environment where employers can grow into leaders.

(Ground of applause.)

MR. DROSOS: But we can't continue building these stories or fulfilling the economic pipeline without the help of the Partnership and the strategic leadership of this Board. Your work ensures that we have the talent we need to need welcome conventions, support tourism, host global business and provide youth employment to the thousands of Chicagoans. Your help in building not only a workforce, put a pathway

to stability, mobility and economic strength for our entire region.

So on behalf of the Palmer House, the hotel community and all the people whose lives are uplifted by this industry, thank you. We rely on you, we appreciate you and we look forward to deepening this Partnership as we rebuild, rehire and continue fueling the Chicago and Cook County economy. Thank you for your time.

(Round of applause.)

MS. MASSEL: Thank you so much. We really do appreciate you coming and you can see you're a real hot spot and high point because that energy and that understanding of our importance, we should bottle it. Thank you. Thank you, Gus, so much.

So I'll make my presentation. Don't worry I know I'm between you and lunch and for some of you, it may be the beginning of the holidays so I will be quick, but I will say that we do podcast of the Partnership called Higher Frequency and in the middle of the pandemic, we did a podcast on hospitality. I'll never forget somebody telling us, I think it was Michael Jacobson that they had to find a way to lock the doors at the Palmer House because it had never

been closed. They had to put chains on the doors, I'll never forget it, so it's just a remarkable part of our history for Gus to be here.

Okay. Let me get myself going here. So as George as alluded to, as a lot of us have alluded to, these have been some unusual times and -- (inaudible) -- and we're looking to have some external help as well. We do a lot to try to support our team during very unnerving, unsettling time for us personally and professionally. And most of all, put up banners, we send out social media to assure our customers that we are still working. I think it's really important for you guys to understand, our network never stops working, we kept going through everything, even when our future was unclear or unsure we kept going. So I'm proud of that and I'm proud about the comm department for support.

In terms of our social -- I didn't know that -- (inaudible). In terms of our social media followers, I'm proud to say that they continue to grow. Instagram has really done a leap, but honestly I think the LinkedIn number is the one that is the most important to us at this point. It is more and more considered a professional hub and I think our

work there and our messaging there is continue together grow and I'm glad to see it.

I want to give you an idea of what we're doing on social medial. You can see here we try to track sort of the external facing calendar, what is the whole community celebrating and thinking about and then all these success stories. I always say social media has to have a heart and success stories.

Anybody here who's from a delegate agency knows how much I'm always begging for them and how pictures are so important and videos are so important and they continue to be some of our most engaged with posts.

And then, of course, there's sort of the workforce calendar that we try to watch too, specifically months. And I want to thank Becky -- is Becky -- but our OSO has been great about sharing with us what I call good reviews. These customer testimonials, they're unbelievable and when I'm trying the push them out more and more real people who fit in American Job Centers saying these guys help me and my career is going in the right direction because of them. So I'm always happy to see that.

So as you may remember, we did a website Refresh that really launched in June of this year and

really happy to see that people are noticing it. We did a survey. We spent a lot of time analyzing it, seeing what we needed to do to make our website more intuitive, to make our voice more compelling, to make our art more meaningful and I think we did a good job and I think these numbers show us that people are visiting our website and specifically know how to find the information they need more easily.

And then, of course, it's always important I think to show you the fliers because our events are never ending whether they're something the Partnership does, like Hospitality Hires at the Palmer House traditionally or something going on in our network, we work really hard to make our events calendar on our website more robust and a real place people can go to see what's coming up in the region of workforce development.

And then I do want to talk about the podcasts. I mentioned them earlier. George is just a terrific host. When I tell people the great thing about George hosting is he listens to what people are saying. Many hosts are so worried about the next question they're going to ask that they don't listen and pivot off the information being shared. George is

really good at it. You can see we've done some things lately on internships and apprenticeships. We're doing another one Monday about a very well-known online educational opportunity. It was actually a big partner of ours at our golf outing so I hope you listen because we've had almost 5,000 downloads since we started it. And one of the things I always say is we're very well-known among the people who know us. So these podcasts asking the guests to share with their networks is really an important way for us to get out of our sort of echo chamber and I encourage you all to do it too. Listen to them and share them. So this was -- Nicole runs a really tight ship. This was due before Thanksgiving so I had to get these pictures, but I'm trying to show this is not -- this is Ebony and the hr group and internal group we start called the fundamentals committee which has just taken off. This is some fun pictures we took at Halloween. I should say we had something for Thanksgiving. We're doing a lot of great donations and I think we have something coming up I think for the holidays later this week. It's completely employee driven and I know George has mentioned this, the leadership is kind of inspiring. I mean, people are diving in, people feel

the need celebrating internally and with moments like this as well.

And speaking of the need, we sort of dove in this year to giving Tuesday. It's not something we've done a lot of. Everybody knows about the golf outing in June -- or -- I'm sorry -- in August. That was successful. These were some of our best engagements with social media posts. So again, I would encourage any of you to see these posts, share these posts, respond to these posts. I'm not going to lie, it didn't bring in a ton of dough, but I think it helps us with awareness and it helps people think of us as a non-profit organization whose resources are limited and sometimes threatened. So I hope that when we see these posts, you will think of us as a place that is a good investment. If nothing else, that's what these meetings show.

There you go. That wasn't too painful.
Does anybody have any questions?

(No response.)

MS. MASSEL: Thank you for your time and your attention.

MS. SHAW: We're now moving to the public comments section of our meeting. If there's anyone

either online or in person who has questions for the Board or about material ...

MR. MAUER (phonetic): (Indicating.)

MS. SHAW: If you could state your name clearly for the transcriptionist. Thank you.

MR. MAUER: Good morning -- Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen of the Board. My name is Rob Mauer and I came really just to check out this meeting. Very exciting topic, very exciting information from the public's perspective. The results in terms of helping people become employed and all the different positive things that that employment has -- successful employment has in people's lives and how that spreads out into the community. Thank you for your work. You all are the top leaders in the industries in your companies and in your organizations and to come together to collaborate, it absolutely does make a difference, a big difference. So I'm very excited to see what's going to continue to come. In the words of the great CEO, the strategic, you know, vision of movement to continue to achieve, so I know this is behind times, I just came to say thank you and happy holidays, blessed.

(Round of applause.)

MR. MAUER: And I was very excited to Ms. Susan in the back. I told her, I let her know she is amazing. Let's give a round of applause to Ms. Susan.

(Round of applause.)

MS. SHAW: Thank you. Otherwise I hand the mic over to Jacki Robinson-Ivy.

CO-CHAIR ROBINSON-IVY: Thank you, Nicole. Nicole, you don't have to worry about going to workout today because you clearly got your movement in.

I know we are well over, it is 12:15. I want to thank Mark Schulman. He provided the treats today. We missed Mark physically, but he certainly is still spreading -- If you did not get into one of the Rice Krispies bars that Eli's provides for Starbucks, please, there's a couple left. Hospitality Hires, I'm sorry that Gus got away, but I would like to have gotten a picture with him and, George, we can make our way if you did not attend the Hospitality Hires, put your walking shoes on and plan to come next April. Make sure you're at the Palmer House. Am I supposed to say something about this, Claudia?

MS. CATTHOUSE-REGALADO: (Shaking head.)

CO-CHAIR ROBINSON-IVY: Okay. CEO, am I leaving anything out? Board members, am I leaving anything

out?

(No response.)

Co-Chair ROBINSON-IVY: Okay. So I will echo what George said about having happy holidays, spending time with your family. That is far more important than just about anything else. Let's plan on getting some down time and coming back in 2026 ready to roll.

Do we have to do -- Okay. So I pass back to Nicole for adjournment.

MS. SHAW: Calling for a motion to adjourn.

BOARD MEMBER McDONOUGH: So moved.

BOARD MEMBER JOHANSON: Second.

MS. SHAW: The meeting is adjourned at 12:17 p.m.

(Which were all the proceedings

had in the above-entitled cause.)

STATE OF ILLINOIS)
) SS
COUNTY OF COOK)

Lisa M. Walas, being first duly sworn, on oath says that she is a Certified Shorthand Reporter doing business in the City of Chicago, County of Cook and the State of Illinois;

That she reported in shorthand the proceedings had at the foregoing Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership Innovative Board Meeting.

And that the foregoing is a true and correct transcript of her shorthand notes so taken as aforesaid and contains all the proceedings had at the said Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership Innovative Board Meeting.



LISA M. WALAS, CSR

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