

# Aligning Workforce and Registered Apprenticeship: Peer-to-Peer Learning



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Session 1: September 25, 2025

# Presenter

## Katie Adams

Chief Delivery Officer  
**Safal Partners**



# Center of Excellence Overview

- U.S. DOL initiative to increase alignment, partnerships across apprenticeship, education, and workforce systems
- Led by Safal Partners; 5 national partners
- Provide technical assistance through:
  - 255 virtual, in-person and hybrid sessions
  - 18,000+ TA recipients
  - 82 webinars with 5,000+ participants
  - 41 states impacted via cohort or 1:1 TA
  - 4,483 commitments to drive RA strategic partnerships
  - 132 new TA resources on our website (desk aids, guides, webinars, etc.)





# Agenda

- I. Center Overview > A Look at Alignment Fundamentals
- II. Spotlight: Missouri, Puerto Rico
  - Overview of Workforce and RA Systems
  - Key Alignment Practices
  - Aligning for Success
  - Challenges & Recommendations
  - Looking Ahead – Future Priorities/Goals
- IV. Facilitated Breakout Sessions
- V. Report Out and Wrap Up





# Determining Alignment Fundamentals



# Firsts: Understanding the Field

**Multiple methodologies: ongoing data analysis, interviews, national and state assessments, focus groups, TA participant feedback, literature review. Work produced numerous firsts:**

- First national assessment, "Workforce System RA Baseline Knowledge Assessment Report"
- First analysis of WIOA State Unified and Combined Plans for RA
- First framework for RA and WIOA alignment
- First analysis of national, state WIOA/RA co-enrollment data
- First landscape scan, analysis of Apprenticeship Networks across US
- First national report on WIOA Title I, II Partnerships, Pre-apprenticeship framework for adult IET programs
- First national Apprenticeship Training Representative (ATR)/Business Service Representative (BSR) training



# Advancing Alignment: 4 Pieces of Work

Knowledge Assessment



WIOA State Plan Analysis



Key Components of Alignment



WIOA Data Analysis



# Baseline Knowledge – Rethinking Assumptions



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF  
**WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROFESSIONALS**  
CONNECT, ADVANCE, INNOVATE

- RA knowledge is a leading indicator of workforce system alignment
- The degree to which an organization's leadership and/or staff has large RA knowledge gaps = degree of RA alignment and utilization in service delivery





# Baseline Knowledge Assessment: Connecting Systems

|                                |   |  |   |
|--------------------------------|---|--|---|
| 51%                            | 46%   | 46%  | 43%   |
| DO NOT UNDERSTAND              |   |  |   |
| the role of USDOL OA or an SAA | how registered apprenticeship correlates with key WIOA performance measures | the relationship between their state or local Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) and the related instruction (RI) component of registered apprenticeship | how their state or territory's Unified or Combined WIOA plan or local workforce board WIOA plan relates to Apprenticeship |
| "Very Little" = 38.88%         | "Very Little" = 35.87%  | "Very Little" = 34.48%   | "Very Little" = 34.01%  |
| "None" = 12.38%                | "None" = 10.09%   | "None" = 11.21%  | "None" = 9.41%  |

# Baseline Knowledge Assessment: RA 101

|   |  |   |   |  |
|---|--|---|---|--|
| 45%   | 41%  | 40%   | 38%   | 35%  |
| DO NOT UNDERSTAND   |  |   |   |  |
| the responsibilities of an Apprenticeship program sponsor | the supervision requirements for apprentices in registered apprenticeship programs | what registered apprenticeship programs exist in their local area | related instruction (RI) requirements of Apprenticeship programming | the difference between registered apprenticeship and other work and learn models |
| "Very Little" = 36.21%<br>"None" = 8.82%                  | "Very Little" = 31.13%<br>"None" = 10.15%  | "Very Little" = 33.02%<br>"None" = 7.4%                           | "Very Little" = 30.81%<br>"None" = 7.66%                            | "Very Little" = 28.07%<br>"None" = 7.28%   |

# Baseline Knowledge Assessment: Funding

44%

33%

DO NOT UNDERSTAND

what programs pay for the  
components of registered  
apprenticeship

how to use WIOA supportive  
services to serve apprentices

*"Very Little"* = 36.73%

*"None"* = 6.99%

*"Very Little"* = 26%

*"None"* = 7.43%



# Baseline Knowledge Assessment: RA Outreach

**47%**

**42%**

**30%**

**DO NOT UNDERSTAND HOW TO**

convene partners  
locally

communicate  
benefits of registered  
apprenticeship  
to employers

communicate the  
benefits of registered  
apprenticeship to  
job seekers

*"Very Little"* = 37.46%  
*"None"* = 9.18%

*"Very Little"* = 31%  
*"None"* = 11.09%

*"Very Little"* = 24.22%  
*"None"* = 6.08%





# Contributors to Low WIOA Title I/RA Alignment

## Multiple additional factors driving low incorporation of RA into WIOA service delivery including...

- Priority of meeting WIOA performance metrics – easier to meet with short-term training
- View of WIOA as "last dollar in" for RA given administrative burden vs. fewer restrictions with non-WIOA \$\$
- Few/no strategic relationships with RA system
- Very low understanding of Workforce System/WIOA on RA side
- Lack of easily accessible, system-focused, scalable training
- Separate data systems



# The Significance of RA-Inclusive WIOA State Planning

- Increases RA incorporation into broader workforce goals
- Expands RA sponsors', apprentices', stakeholders' access to funding and resources
- Encourages RA-supportive policy development at the state and local level
- Prioritizes RA for WIOA service delivery to job seekers and employers
- Improves WIOA performance outcomes
- Increases likelihood of data sharing across systems



# 6 Indicators of RA Alignment in WIOA State Plans



- 1.State-Level RA Coordination Committee
- 2.Local RA Expertise
- 3.Federal RA Grant Engagement
- 4.RA Strategy in State Plan
- 5.Measurable RA Goals
- 6.State-Level RA Investment or Policy



# Indicators of Alignment in 2024 WIOA State Plans



| RA Alignment Indicator                      | # of States/Territories Meeting Indicator | % of States/Territories | % Change 2020-2024 |
|---|---|-------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. State-Level RA Coordination or Committee | 14  | 21%                     | -12.5%             |
| 2. Local RA Expertise                       | 22  | 33%                     | -8.3%              |
| 3. Federal RA Grant Planning                | 47  | 71%                     | 4.4%               |
| 4. RA Strategy in State Plan                | 36  | 55%                     | 24.1%              |
| 5. Measurable RA Goals                      | 9   | 14%                     | 28.6%              |
| 6. State level RA Investment or Policy      | 33  | 50%                     | 50%                |

# Key Components of Workforce System Alignment with Registered Apprenticeship



Key Components of Workforce System Alignment with Registered Apprenticeship (RA)

# The Significance of Data in Strengthening Alignment

## Why Track, Use, and Share Data?

- Provides evidence, insights and accountability
- Drives strategic decision-making
- Informs resource allocation, improves efficiencies
- Assists in setting service delivery priorities



## For Example – Data Shows Us....

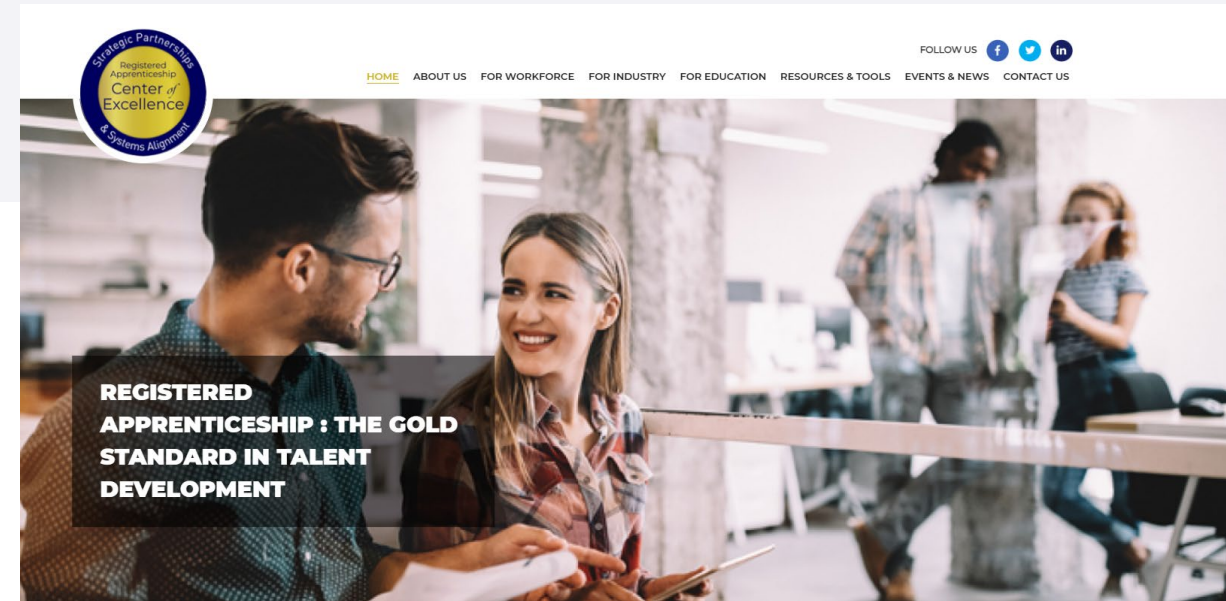
- From 2020 to 2024, 37.5% growth in the # of states with 3 of the 6 RA alignment indicators in WIOA State Plan
- Current national WIOA Title I/RA co-enrollment rate = .6%



# Sustaining Momentum

## Center's web repository includes accessible, actionable tools:

- National ATR/BSR training
- WIOA State Planning webinars
- RA Guide for Chambers of Commerce
- Adult Education / IET Pre-Apprenticeship RA Framework
- Intermediary Assessment tool
- Tip Sheets on Working with Employers, Engaging Veterans, and more





# Spotlight on State Teams





# RA & Workforce Alignment: Missouri



# Presenters



**Donna Brake**

Manager

Apprenticeship & Work-Based Learning  
**Missouri Dept. of Higher Education  
& Workforce Development**



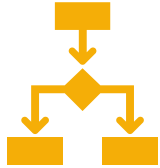
**Tracy Laughery**

State Director

**US DOL/Office of Apprenticeship**



# Overview of State Workforce & RA Systems



## Structure

- MDHEWD serves as the State Workforce Agency
  - WIOA & Apprenticeship under one department
- Missouri is **PROUDLY** an Office of Apprenticeship (OA) state



## Roles & Responsibilities

- Office of Apprenticeship & Work-Based Learning (OAWBL) formed through [Missouri Executive Order 19-20](#)
  - Inter-Agency Committee on Apprenticeship
  - Business & Industry Council
- Fosters the growth, awareness, and expansion of work-based learning opportunities across the state



## Priorities, Goals, & Objectives

- Priority Goals: Increase access to Registered Apprenticeship
  - Increase availability of Registered Apprenticeship Programs
  - Grow number of apprentices served



# Key Alignment Practices

## PARTNERSHIPS

- Inter-Agency Committee on Apprenticeships
- Missouri Apprenticeship Team
- Youth Focused Partnerships
- Disability Focused Partnerships

## PLANS & POLICIES

- State Plan Priorities
- Local Plan Policy on Apprenticeships
- Work-Based Learning program policies
- WIOA ETPL policies and procedures

## INVESTMENTS

- Discretionary Projects
- Consultants and Technical Assistance Providers
- Tools for Statewide Use

## TRAINING

- Annual Apprenticeship MO Summit
- BSR Bootcamp
- Monthly Apprenticeship Office Hours
- MDHEWD Registered Apprenticeship Program



# Aligning for Success



## Outcomes/Successes

- Active Apprentices nearly doubled since 2016
  - **Exceeded initial goal to serve 20,000 apprentices 3 years early!**
- Over 50 Registered Youth Apprenticeship Programs
- Increased collaborative efforts with key WIOA partners and State Agencies
  - 1 WDB Program Sponsor
  - Multiple State Agency led programs
- Workforce Development Registered Apprenticeship Program
- Representation in local plans
- Discretionary grant options
- Apprentice Connect

# Challenges & Recommendations

## Challenges

- Competition Mindset
- Funding



## Recommendations

- **STRENGTHEN & LEVERAGE PARTNERSHIPS!**  
Do not underestimate the value of a good relationship where your apprenticeship partners have a voice at the table.
- Include partners with your investments when feasible
- Remember: we are all in this together, same goal and mission
- States must take steps to secure additional funding where possible.
- Utilize WIOA Discretionary dollars and incorporate a standard proposal process

# Challenges & Recommendations

## Challenges

- Lack of awareness statewide for those outside of the apprenticeship system/network
- Lack of apprenticeship knowledge within Job Center frontline staff



## Recommendations

- **STRENGTHEN & LEVERAGE PARTNERSHIPS!**
- Branding, constant messaging and continual delivery of technical assistance & informational webinars
- Publish public resources
- Apprenticeship job board
- Continual delivery of training to staff
- Creation of informational resources, handouts
- Provide peer to peer exchange of information when possible



# Looking Ahead



## Future Priorities Goals Objectives

- Increase number of New Apprentices by 10,000 this year
- Publish WIOA Apprenticeship Policy and supporting guidance materials
- Continue growing number of available programs & remain relevant in what we do and offer to the apprenticeship system
- Revisit old work and build upon past successes





# Contact Us

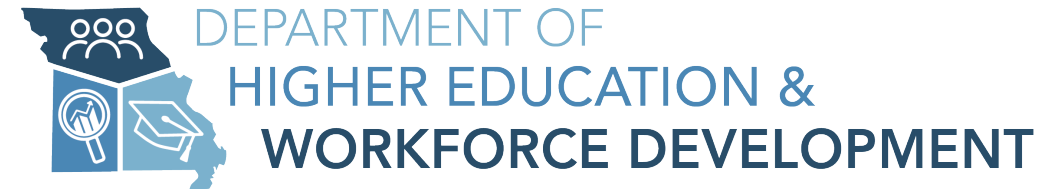
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[dhewd.mo.gov/workforce-  
development/apprenticeship-mo](https://dhewd.mo.gov/workforce-development/apprenticeship-mo)





# RA & Workforce Alignment: Puerto Rico

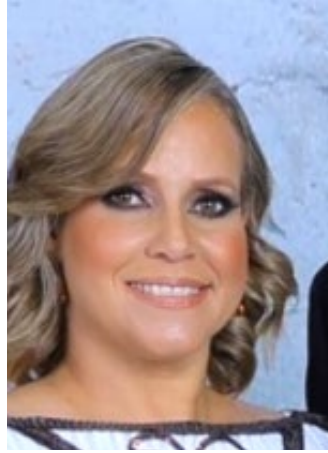


# Presenters



**Charles McNeil**

Deputy Regional Director  
**Office of Apprenticeship**  
**USDOL/ETA Region I**



**Christine Carreras-Amadeo**

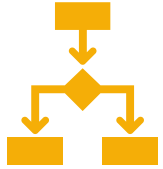
State Director  
**Office of Apprenticeship**  
**USDOL/ETA Region I**



**Mariamelia Sueiro-Alvarez**

Director, Workforce Connection  
Deputy Assistant Secretary  
Federal Programs  
**Department of Economic  
Development and Commerce of  
Puerto Rico**

# Overview of State Workforce & RA Systems



## Structure

The Puerto Rico Office of Apprenticeship was established in 2018 through a joint venture with the USDOL-ETA-OA (Region 1 - Boston). It operates within the Workforce Development Program of the Puerto Rico Department of Economic Development and Commerce (PRDEDC).



## Roles & Responsibilities

- State Director: Charles McNeill
- Apprenticeship Program Lead: Christine Carreras-Amadeo
- Workforce Development Program Director: Mariamelia Sueiro Alvarez
- Apprenticeship & Training Representatives:
  - Jessica Saldaña-Torres
  - Ivonne Santiago- Burgos



## Priorities, Goals, & Objectives

Support the development and expansion of Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAPs) across key industries, establish pre-apprenticeship pipelines through MOUs with key workforce system stakeholders such as the PR Department of Education, and align workforce investments with WIOA funding.



# Key Alignment Practices

## WIOA Funding

Integration with Puerto Rico's workforce system (WIOA Title I-B), with over \$18 million of WIOA Governor's Reserve funding invested in OJT and related instruction between 2020–2025.

## WBT Public Policy

The Workforce Development Program has established Registered Apprenticeship Program as the priority when it comes to work-based training model

## Outreach Activities and Employer Orientations

- +10 Apprenticeship Accelerators in the last 5 years
- Ongoing technical assistance workshops to all 15 Local Workforce Development Boards to strengthen RA alignment and system-building
- Combined orientation on the Registered Apprenticeship Program and WIOA funding opportunities.



# Aligning for Success



## Outcomes / Successes

### New Registered Apprenticeship Programs per Year

| 2017-2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 |
|-----------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 3         | 4    | 10   | 6    | 15   | 46   | 41   |

- Growth of over 3,000 registered apprentices from 2017-2025, of which:
  - 2,138 currently being trained
  - 987 credentials granted
- Expansion of RAPs to emerging industries – IT, clean energy, healthcare, hospitality, advanced manufacturing and education being impacted through 124 occupations.
- **Case Study: Boston Scientific**
  - \$3.5M in WIOA funding
  - 95 amount of credentials
  - Five (5) occupations





# Challenges & Recommendations

## Challenges

- Local Workforce Development Boards in Puerto Rico
- Employers in Puerto Rico are reluctant to work within WBT models without WIOA funding
- WIOA Eligibility v. RAP Eligibility



## Recommendations

- Establish mandatory professional development for LWDB staff and board members on compliance, employer engagement, and braiding WIOA funding with apprenticeship programs.
- Strengthen employer outreach and awareness on the value of RA with or without WIOA funding.
- Issue an official DDEC/WDB policy clarification aligning WIOA participant eligibility screening with RAP sponsor intake, to minimize duplication.

# Looking Ahead



## Future Priorities Goals Objectives

- **Strengthen and expand Registered Apprenticeships** across Puerto Rico's priority industries, including advanced manufacturing, information technology, healthcare, hospitality, energy, and pharmaceuticals.
- **Expand cross-sector partnerships** to align and maximize the use of workforce development resources.
- **Advance system-building efforts** to institutionalize apprenticeships as a core workforce strategy across the Island.
- **Scale pre-apprenticeship pathways** to equip youth with essential skills and ensure seamless entry into Registered Apprenticeships.
- **Establish a state-supported incentive model** to promote apprenticeships as a preferred training approach for employers.



# Contact Us

## Charles McNeil

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State Director Puerto Rico | Office of Apprenticeship

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## Mariamelia Sueiro-Álvarez

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# Take a Break

*(11:00am ET – 11:15am ET)*





# Facilitated Breakout Sessions



# Facilitated Breakout Sessions



- You will be assigned a breakout room for a 45-minute discussion
- Each room will have a state team rep and facilitator to help ensure the conversation is engaging.
- This is your time to ask questions, learn from your peers, and expand your apprenticeship network—take advantage of this opportunity!

| Breakout Room | Safal Facilitator        |
|---------------|--------------------------|
| #1            | Jeremy Faulkner          |
| #2            | Melissa Aguilar-Southard |
| #3            | Melissa Schroeder        |





# Break-Out Room Report-Outs



# What's Next



- Identify your state's opportunities to enhance alignment
- Share today's insights with your teams and partners
- Explore resources at [Apprenticeship.gov](https://Apprenticeship.gov) & [Safal Partners](#)
- Stay connected
- Share strategies and tools



# THANK YOU FOR JOINING US

*Email us your questions at [RA\\_COE@SafalPartners.com](mailto:RA_COE@SafalPartners.com)*

For more information, visit: [dolcoe.safalapps.com](https://dolcoe.safalapps.com)

