



## Secretary's Advisory Committee on Apprenticeship (ACA)

### ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON APPRENTICESHIP – THIRD MEETING

#### Executive Summary

The ACA is a discretionary Federal advisory committee re-established by the Secretary of Labor on May 4, 2021, following the President's February 17, 2021, statement on bolstering Registered Apprenticeships, in which he highlighted the importance of the worker's voice and encouraged the Department of Labor to reinstate a national committee focused on apprenticeships. This was the third public meeting of the ACA, and it provided a forum for ACA members representing the employer, labor, and public sectors to present and discuss the subcommittees' efforts thus far, to hear a Federal panel describe and answer questions about apprenticeship's role in key workforce priorities across government agencies, to vote on the 6-month interim report, to hear apprentice perspectives, and to discuss next steps for the ACA and its subcommittees.

Moderator: Dr. Pam Eddinger, ACA Chairperson

USDOL Speakers: John Ladd (Administrator of the Office of Apprenticeship), Angela Hanks (Acting Assistant Secretary, Employment and Training), and Martin Walsh (Secretary of Labor)

#### Meeting Highlights

- **Dr. Pam Eddinger** moderated the meeting.
- **John Ladd**, serving as the Designated Federal Official, opened the meeting, recognized the ACA Co-Chairs, and took roll call.
- **Subcommittees Presentations:** Spokespeople outlined each subcommittee's progress on identifying issues, background, and recommendations and/or best practices:
  - Industry Engagement in New and Emerging Sectors (**Amy Kardel**)
  - Apprenticeship Modernization (**Marty Riesberg**)
  - Apprenticeship Pathways: Pre-Apprenticeship, Youth Apprenticeship, and Degree Apprenticeship (**Noel Ginsburg**)
  - Increasing Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility in Apprenticeship (**Raymond Boyd**)
- ACA Co-Chairs **Noel Ginsburg** and **Bernadette Oliveira-Rivera** led a discussion regarding pathways to family-sustaining wages.



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- **Representatives from Federal agencies** participated in a panel discussion, facilitated by **Brent Parton** (Senior Advisor to the Secretary of Labor), on the role of apprenticeship in key workforce priorities across the government:
  - **Kevin Gallagher**, Senior Advisor, Upskilling and Broadband, Department of Commerce
  - **Paige Shevlin**, Strategic Advisor for Infrastructure Workforce Development, Department of Transportation
  - **Amy Peterson**, Senior Advisor, Industry Relations, Department of Energy
  - **Jen Mishory**, Acting Assistant Secretary, Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education, Department of Education
- **Members of the public** were invited to comment on the ACA's work.
- **ACA members** voted to approve the 6-month interim report.
- **Apprenticeship Program Graduate Highlights: Jeremiah Gray** and **Keyona Dobbins** recounted their experiences as apprentices and described the benefits of apprenticeship.
- **Departmental Remarks: Acting Assistant Secretary Angela Hanks** expressed interest in hearing about pressing issues in apprenticeship and **Secretary of Labor Martin Walsh** stated that the ACA can help lay a foundation for what the future of the workforce looks like
- **ACA members** and **USDOL leaders** participated in a facilitated discussion of perspectives from the interim report.



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#### Meeting Minutes

Location: U.S. Department of Labor  
Frances Perkins Building, Great Hall, Washington, DC  
Virtual Option: Webex  
Date: May 16, 2022  
Time: 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Eastern Time

*10:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.*

#### CALL TO ORDER

**John Ladd**, Administrator of the Office of Apprenticeship, opened the meeting and welcomed the assembled ACA members, delegates, and guests.

Mr. Ladd introduced ACA Chairperson **Dr. Pam Eddinger**, who briefly greeted both the in-person members and those attending virtually and noted that the roll call would include members as well as delegates.

John Ladd recognized the ACA Co-Chairs, **Noel Ginsburg** and **Bernadette Oliveira-Rivera**, for introductions. Mr. Ladd then conducted the member and delegate roll call.

#### Member and Delegate Roll Call

- *Employer Representatives:*
  - Jonathan Adelstein, President and CEO, Wireless Infrastructure Association
    - Delegate: Brent Weil
  - Amy Kardel, Senior Vice President, Strategic Workforce Relationships, The Computing Technology Industry Association
  - Carolyn Holmes Lee, Executive Director, The Manufacturing Institute
  - T. David Long, CEO, National Electrical Contractors Association
    - Delegate: Jared Karbowsky
  - Obed Louissaint, Senior Vice President of Transformation and Culture, International Business Machines



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- Rosanna Maietta, President and CEO, American Hotel & Lodging Association Foundation
  - Delegate: Sarah Cozewith
- Karmela Malone, Senior Vice President of Claims, The Hartford
- Timothy Oberg, Assistant Director, Independent Electrical Contractors
- Valerie Richardson, Director, Talent & Workforce Development, Prisma Health
- *Labor Representatives:*
  - Raymond Boyd, Assistant Director of Education and Training, United Association of Journeymen and Apprentices of the Plumbing and Pipe Fitting Industry of the United States and Canada
  - Daniel Bustillo, Executive Director of the Healthcare Career Advancement Program, Service Employees International Union
  - John Costa, International President, Amalgamated Transit Union AFL-CIO/CLC
  - Stephanie Harris-Kuiper, Executive Director of the Training and Development Fund District 1199J, American Federation of State, County & Municipal Employees
  - William Irwin, Jr., Retired Executive Director, Carpenters International Training Fund
  - Michael Oathout, Director of Safety & Health, Apprenticeships and Scholarships, International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers
  - Vicki O'Leary, General Organizer and Director of Diversity, Ironworkers International
  - Anton Ruesing, Executive Director of the International Finishing Trades Institute, International Union of Painters and Allied Trades
  - Todd Stafford, Executive Director, Electrical Training ALLIANCE
- *Public Representatives:*
  - Todd Berch, President, National Association of State and Territorial Apprenticeship Directors (NASTAD)
  - Walter Bumphus, PhD, President and CEO, American Association of Community Colleges
    - Delegate: Jennifer Worth
  - Erin Johansson, Research Director, Jobs with Justice
  - Donna Lenhoff, Principal, Donna Lenhoff Associates, representing Chicago Women in Trades



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- Robbie Melton, PhD, Associate Vice President, Tennessee State University, Smart Global Technology Innovation Center
- Traci Scott, Vice President of Workforce Development, National Urban League
- Orrian Willis, Senior Workforce Development Specialist, San Francisco Office of Economic and Workforce Development
- Randi Wolfe, PhD, Executive Director, Early Care & Education Pathways to Success
- *Ex Officio Representatives:*
  - Kevin Gallagher, Senior Advisor, Upskilling and Broadband, Department of Commerce
  - Johnathan Gardner, Director, Human Capital Programs, and Chief Learning Officer, Department of Health and Human Services
  - Amy Loyd, Senior Advisor, Department of Education
    - Delegate: Jen Mishory
  - Amy Peterson, Senior Advisor, Industry Relations, Department of Energy
  - Michael Shapiro, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Economic Policy, Department of Transportation
    - Delegate: Paige Shevlin
  - Diane Shelley, Regional Administrator, Department of Housing and Urban Development

Following roll call, Mr. Ladd commended the ACA members' dedication and hard work toward modernizing, diversifying, and expanding apprenticeship over the past 6 months, including over 100 subcommittee meetings and time spent working on the report. Mr. Ladd then provided an overview of the meeting agenda.

*10:15 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.*

### **SUBCOMMITTEE PRESENTATIONS AND FACILITATED DISCUSSION**

Dr. Eddinger noted the order of the subcommittee presentations, including a break before the last presentation, to be followed by a facilitated discussion on pathways to family-sustaining wages.

#### **Industry Engagement in New and Emerging Sectors (Amy Kardel and Daniel Bustillo)**

***Kardel:*** Our subcommittee formed four working groups to discuss specific issues.



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### *Standards and System Building recommendations*

- Tie approval of future apprenticeship frameworks to high-quality, industry-accepted occupational skills standards that are developed according to recognized best practices and include worker, industry, labor, and community input.
- USDOL should be solely responsible for determining new occupations and for how apprenticeships are organized and approved. A centralized repository for current and new apprenticeable occupations should be developed and maintained.
- Research how well an occupational skills classification system similar to that of Canada and Germany, for example, might fit into the U.S. context. Includes revisiting the role of a National Skills Standards Board.
- Establish formula funding to ensure USDOL has necessary staff and technological resources to modernize and support the growth and expansion of Registered Apprenticeship.
- Explore ways to leverage Registered Apprenticeship as a tool to elevate lower wage careers into living-wage careers with full benefits.
- Seek opportunities for alignment and collaboration with other Federal and State agencies to encourage development of high-quality, living-wage RAPs and to promote DEIA in these careers.

### *Sector-Specific recommendations*

- USDOL needs to establish equitable, universal, non-exclusionary eligibility standards that can be balanced with sector-specific employment requirements unique to nontraditional and emerging sectors.
- USDOL should establish policies and eligibility criteria related to RA standards, apprenticeable occupations, and allocation of RA resources to ensure full inclusion and equal stature to sectors focused on workers traditionally underrepresented in RAPs (e.g., women, people of color, low-wage workers, care economy workers).
- ECE RAPs leading to locally based family-sustaining wages should be prioritized as essential industries and not penalized for the “wage issue” (e.g., ECE is not publicly funded and so relies on private dollars and unsustainable State/Federal programs). The RA system needs to be part of the solution, leading the way to necessary system change and policy reform (e.g., compensation parity with K-12).
- Recognizing that technology and technology skills are required across all sectors, USDOL, with assistance from SAAs, should coordinate efforts and resources to ensure that RA development and expansion in new and emerging sectors sufficiently incorporates technology and technology skills.
- USDOL should promote expansion of public-sector apprenticeships as pathways for USDOL workforce development program participants. Entry-level public-sector



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- employment opportunities, including public-sector RAPs, should be viewed as an extension of the public workforce development system.
- To support the creation of a national system of skills standards, work skills that are essential, universal, and relevant across all sectors and all RAPs should be identified and codified. At the same time, skills unique to specific sectors or groups of sectors (including new and emerging sectors) should be identified and codified as such.

### *Branding and Perception recommendations*

- Educators should not speak of apprenticeship as less than a college option for students – Registered Apprenticeship should be seen as a viable option on the pathway to becoming a successful middle-class American. Branding and marketing at 4-year institutions, 2-year institutions, and training providers generally should address misconceptions about apprenticeships as only limited to skilled trades.
- Plans should be customer-centric in sectors – solutions should be designed for the customers' requirements.
- USDOL should engage with industry and trade-associations in developing branding and awareness campaigns.
- Assets and resources should be broken up and accessible according to audience.
- Branding, perception, and marketing materials and outreach plans should include recognition of and strategies supporting a wide range of diverse applicants and address specific concerns of underserved communities.
- State resources: USDOL should create an asset map of what States have for branding and perception.
- Stories: more stories should be shared, in case-studies, using video.
- USDOL should work with other agencies – more connectivity should be demonstrated, but the roles of each agency should remain clear and distinct. For example, USDOL should work with ED where educational institutions are involved in the delivery of apprenticeship.
- USDOL should consistently define and communicate how stakeholders will benefit from registering an apprenticeship and how workers can benefit from joining an apprenticeship program.

### *Incentives recommendations*

**Bustillo:** The premise that we were looking at is how well-designed incentives can be highly effective to support wider adoption of Registered Apprenticeship. When we think about the current system of incentives, they're not necessarily directly tied to performance outcomes, or sufficiently coordinated, or robust enough to move the needle for new and emerging sectors that we work in. The theme before us was really thinking about how can properly targeted incentives – designed with and on behalf of employers,





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labor unions, joint labor-management training programs, and other training partners – be used to spur wider adoption of Registered Apprenticeship?

Direct incentives recommendations – legislators should provide tax credits for wage and training expenses for apprentices in RAPs, with the assumption that these can be highly effective to support the growth of Registered Apprenticeship in new and emerging sectors.

The second recommendation is related to partial wage support to apprentices in RAPs, with appropriate guardrails to ensure that incentives are being utilized in the spirit of what they are meant to be, a short-term solution toward startup support.

Nonmonetary recommendations – the development of model language that can be utilized to help standardize State and local incentives, with the recommendation that USDOL should consider providing a guidance letter with suggested language for implementing these incentives. Clear definitions around the conditions and uses of incentives would also be useful.

A second would be that agencies should consider other nonmonetary supports, such as public recognition, support for outreach, and recruitment assistance.

Last in nonmonetary is the provision of academic credit for apprenticeship training or tuition reimbursement, which could be effective incentives for apprentices, with USDOL coordinating with ED and educational institutions to promote the use of this strategy.

Investment recommendations – USDOL should continue expansion of industry intermediary contracts targeting new and emerging sectors. These contracts have been effective engines of targeted incentives commensurate with the startup support required for apprenticeships in some of the nontraditional sectors. USDOL should also consider providing stable multi-year incentive contracts through dedicated funding to better align with sponsors' and industry intermediaries' planning and training cycles. These contracts could potentially also include increased expectations year over year as programs ramp up.

Next, categorical funding that would target size of organization, industry sector, and geography could be used to capitalize on specific expertise. And finally in this bucket, there should be an increase in WIOA/ETP funding dedicated to Registered Apprenticeship, while also streamlining the process.

Innovation recommendations – USDOL should provide or support a universal tool to support apprenticeship management and tracking. Similar to an app to log hours or competencies.





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Lastly, USDOL should provide or support a directory of incentives that would be available to a wide array of stakeholders in Registered Apprenticeship. This could potentially be organized according to the ZIP codes in which the incentives are available.

### *Questions and comments for the IENES subcommittee*

**Ginsburg:** Need to ensure that incentives aren't built in such a way that they discourage employers from participating – they may look at reporting requirements, decide they are too burdensome, and opt out of participation.

**Berch:** I represent NASTAD and have a question about the “only USDOL registers apprenticeships” recommendation – what about SAAs? And on incentives, is there a way for USDOL to provide funding support for staffing?

**Lenhoff:** The DEIA subcommittee appreciates the IENES subcommittee for the number of references to diversity issues in their recommendations.

**Kardel:** In a way, the virtual manner posed challenges. But the ability to convene in other ways (ad hoc, subcommittee subgroups) provided opportunities to produce all the recommendations we've put forward.

**Eddinger:** Good time to mention that we should think about next steps as well.

### **Apprenticeship Modernization** (Marty Riesberg)

**Riesberg:** Apprenticeship quality recommendations – retain the elements that have worked well.

Apprenticeability recommendations – discussed as “splintering” in the report. We don't want an overly specific apprenticeship and don't want to disrupt established industries.

Data usage recommendations – what is the best way to use data to move apprenticeship forward? Targeting new industries, DEIA issues, program reporting, and program quality.

Procurement recommendations – infrastructure funding could drive additional apprenticeship programs and apprenticeship utilization on projects.

Apprenticeship ecosystem – working through USDOL and with SAAs, how to best dive deeper to understand similarities, differences, and implementation of national programs. All stakeholders can be part of that discussion in order to extend benefits to everyone in the ecosystem.



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Emerging technologies recommendations – take advantage of remote learning and other virtual technologies. Can't replace on-the-job learning, but could classroom-type learning be improved? Standards may need to be updated to reflect these new technologies.

Messaging and outreach recommendations – address the issue of school counselors viewing apprenticeship as a less viable career development program. Language should emphasize career, job mobility, and earning while learning. Need to update and modernize legacy language.

### *Questions and comments for the Modernization subcommittee*

**Berch:** Wanted to discuss “splintering” – consider looking at splintering “post-core,” similar to majors vs. minors. NASTAD as a cohesive organization has helped with the national/State-based stakeholder relationships.

**Scott:** In looking at technology, consider digital literacy. Access to a tool is one thing but knowing how to use a tool is another important element. Please consider digital literacy in future recommendations language.

**Ginsburg:** When talking about technology and digital literacy, should also think about investments to improve RAPIDS, make it more accessible and easier to use, which could help employer engagement with apprenticeship data.

**Lenhoff:** One of the recommendations on procurement and funding was also discussed by the DEIA subcommittee – require programs to meet apprentice utilization goals. This is important for entry-level job seekers and getting diverse populations into career pipelines. Requiring goals for apprentices works well in construction, for example. I look forward to thinking through how that would work.

**Kardel:** Appreciate the presentation, and the term “legacy language” jumped out at me. We can't underestimate the importance of getting language right for both employers and apprentices. We need to not speak in code, using terms that only current/legacy apprenticeship stakeholders understand.

**Oliveira-Rivera:** Commend this group for the incredible work you've done. You've clearly been very thoughtful in your recommendations, particularly making sure that whatever we do considers the ultimate customer, which is the worker, and maintaining quality while expanding opportunities. On procurement, we can definitely leverage Federal funding in construction and in other industries.



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**Ginsburg:** On Federal contracts, many require a bachelor's degree. That could preclude many job seekers/potential apprentices from participation and is something we should look at.

### **Apprenticeship Pathways: Pre-Apprenticeship, Youth Apprenticeship, and Degree Apprenticeship** (Noel Ginsburg)

**Ginsburg:** Want to thank the subcommittee members, including for the mutual learning that has occurred.

Clarity – how we define pre-apprenticeship to ensure programs remain aligned with quality metrics.

Flexibility – we know that not all employers view pre-apprenticeship as an option for them. As a businessperson, I believe that unless we can make the case that there is an ROI for apprenticeship, employers will still tend to stay away from participating.

Inclusion – pre-apprenticeships can be designed to equip workers with skills they'll need to participate in future apprenticeships. Promote applicant pool diversification in service of diversifying Registered Apprenticeships. As an example, a school district in Colorado with teachers that did not represent the diversity of the student body and were from not from the district created a program to diversify the faculty through pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship and using paraprofessionals as the entry point.

Grants – ensure that requirements are not so onerous that employers won't participate.

Collaboration – more intentionally coordinate efforts and distribution of funding between ED and USDOL.

Awareness – provide assistance, tools, and resources to support promotion, awareness, and uptake of pre-apprenticeship. Without data and evidence, it's difficult to make the case to employers that they should participate.

Marketing – create a “pre-apprenticeship-friendly” marketing program. The trades know how valuable apprenticeship can be, but we don't always see the same understanding in banking, healthcare, and other industries. We must create demand for apprenticeship programs for both employers and potential apprentices.

Questions going forward – How to define and expand youth apprenticeship? How to figure out the appropriate balance between apprenticeship programs and continued



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academic pursuits? How to ensure secondary and higher education provide credit for learning on the job and through an apprenticeship to support pathways to high school diplomas and community college or university degrees for apprentices?

### *Questions and comments for the Pathways subcommittee*

**Malone:** The work you all have done is fantastic. In communities of color and other underrepresented communities, where apprenticeships are less well known, work is needed to change the narrative around what an apprenticeship can do. From an employer standpoint, the point around scalability and the ROI story is critical, and I wanted to commend you on that. There's a need for wraparound services as well, in particular to support communities of color and underrepresented communities.

**Bustillo:** On the alternative methods of validation, have there been further conversations related to what that might look like and who might be eligible for that? Flagging it in the context of where we were a few years with concerns around those alternative methods of validation for the RA system.

**Berch:** The subcommittee, and several SAA leaders, have discussed the idea of a pre-apprenticeship program being like an AP course in school. Pre-apprenticeship programs should never be static – they should be flexible, portable, and allow credits to travel with the participant into an apprenticeship program, like AP credit toward a degree. There are too many people who go straight into post-secondary education and accumulate debt – pre-apprenticeships could be a way around that.

**Worth:** Going back to Ms. Malone's comment, community colleges are one of the most affordable, inclusive, and accessible methods for talent pool preparation, and AACC appreciated being represented on this subcommittee. To scale innovation and diversity in pre-apprenticeship, particularly in emerging sectors, we need to use community college and wraparound supports and systematize it across every community college.

**Lenhoff:** Thanks to the subcommittee for its work and for its incorporation of DEIA issues. TEN 13-12 does not require that pre-apprenticeship programs be paid – we shouldn't assume that pre-apprenticeships are paid, and we should remember that some are much more robust and more connected to actual jobs than others. Another overriding concern is we want to be sure pre-apprenticeship doesn't become a diversionary pathway for women and people of color. We don't want to set it up as another hurdle for women and people of color to join a Registered Apprenticeship – this could be counterproductive going forward, and I would urge the subcommittee to consider those concerns.



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**Oliveira-Rivera:** I second Ms. Lenhoff's concerns and thank the subcommittee for its work. Consider that pre-apprentices do not benefit from the same protections as RA participants. We must be cautious about structuring the pathway between pre-apprenticeship and Registered Apprenticeship – wages should be a part, and the same protections should be in place. I feel reassured that this conversation is starting from an existing definition of quality apprenticeship programs. Pre-apprentices shouldn't take the place of apprentices in RAPs as it could be detrimental to DEIA issues. I do like the framing of pre-apprenticeships as similar to an AP program. Finally, on language, use "Registered Apprenticeship sponsors" rather than employers, and consider different variations on types of programs.

**Richardson:** Is there an opportunity to network and collaborate with school counselors? Counselors sometimes talk about "career clusters" – is there an opportunity for tying this concept to pre-apprenticeship, thinking about apprenticeship programs, etc.?

**Berch:** A pre-apprenticeship, as we've thought of it, is not pre-emptive – the intent is to give participants additional skills. Totally agree with the point about collaborating with school counselors. Also, show of hands on those who have completed an apprenticeship program. (Several members raised their hand.)

**Ginsburg:** Ms. Richardson is right on target with the point about school counselors. In many schools, the ratio of school counselors to students is too high, and only those who are really bright or in trouble end up seeing these individuals. Consider that the teacher-to-student ratio is much better. Can we also provide resources to teachers to help drive the apprenticeship promotion option? Teachers may be the best messengers for pre-apprenticeship. Career exploration doesn't occur early enough in students' academic careers. Pre-apprenticeships could be an opportunity for a younger person to try, test out, and think about occupations and career options.

**Oathout:** The subcommittee did a great job. Our organization partners with pre-apprenticeship programs. I don't like hearing about pre-apprenticeship programs that are not paid – we can't have that. Companies are then making a profit on any programs like that.

**Shevlin:** We hear all the time that pre-apprenticeship is a barrier for women and people of color to participating in RAPs. Is participation required for all entrants? It should be the same for everyone – who's looking at the standards for RA participation?

**Parton:** Thank you so much for all the hard work and the useful discussion today, and I appreciate that we're all in person today. On the report – this is about taking actual policy



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steps. Some of this is “next-minute” stuff, and some of the issues are things that we should continue to collaborate on going forward.

### **Increasing Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility in Apprenticeship** (Raymond Boyd)

**Boyd:** Good morning to the ACA and thank you to Dr. Eddinger and Mr. Ladd. The DEIA group is large and diverse. My heart is heavy to talk about these issues after the weekend’s mass shooting. Thank you for the opportunity to present and speak with you all today.

We will play a video that our subcommittee feels exemplifies the importance of DEIA in Registered Apprenticeship and features a diverse range of voice expressing the impact of apprenticeship and the value that it can have for people’s lives and livelihood.

– Video plays –

**Boyd:** 30+ years ago, I was the only African American graduate in my apprentice class, and 30 years later, things throughout the country are still the same – we have to do better.

DEIA game changers:

- Embed DEIA fully into all aspects of Registered Apprenticeship.
- Address occupational segregation with women and people of color (overly represented in lower-paying jobs).
- Communication – changing perceptions and connecting supply and demand with resources.
- Create a culture of inclusion, free of bullying, harassment, and intimidation.
- “Walk the walk” – investment and procurement. Resources to implement recommendations on DEIA.

**Lenhoff:** We reviewed equity metrics and found that to clarify those aspects of registered apprenticeship that are not equitable and to identify opportunities for change, the data measures must be disaggregated (e.g., by gender, ethnicity, race, disability, geography, occupation, wages, and education). Rather than lump all underrepresented communities together, pay attention to the specific issues impacting specific groups, and use equity indices to see how apprenticeship is working for specific groups.

**Malone:** We need to ensure that past, present, and future apprentices are part of a holistic solution. One of our recommendations is to create a national organization of apprentice





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alumni, which would allow for these generations of apprentices to participate in the development of solutions and apprenticeship improvements. We know that associations and affinity groups work, particularly for women and people of color. This could attract apprentices, provide networking, mentoring, and career counseling, and be another body that could be leveraged to support other recommendations discussed today. This type of empowerment would allow participants to engage in self-service and be better equipped to find resources they need. Our subcommittee asks that we seriously consider creating such a network.

### *Questions and comments for the DEIA subcommittee*

**Ginsburg:** Thanks for both the presentation and for how you opened the presentation today. These issues continue to impact our country and aren't going away. Young people of color need true pathways to opportunity. There's an opportunity before us, and we have to take advantage of it.

**Wolfe:** I want to commend this subcommittee on its work and on its aspirations. I work in the ECE sector with Registered Apprenticeships. We do want equity in every aspect of apprenticeships. When we don't challenge the inequity of the salary and wage issues in this country, we fall short. I looked at the chart of occupation wages equity metrics and wonder why electricians or carpenters make three times as much as ECE practitioners. We need to extend the goal line and address inequities that are right in front of us.

**Berch:** This has been a touchy subject recently, and maybe touchy because we all believe in it. No matter who we are or how we identify, apprenticeships can be a pathway to lifting up careers. At NASTAD, we applaud the idea of an alumni network. Employers who want to utilize apprenticeship programs for DEIA are looking for tools to get access to the people who want to participate in apprenticeship and get into these professions.

**Kardel:** Thank you for your work and presentation. Coming from a tech/IT background, the data piece is critical. The slide with data presented on equity metrics stood out to me, and the IT industry appreciates that this story is laid out in data.

**Eddinger:** Thanks, Mr. Boyd. You've touched our hearts today, and I agree that now is the time to pursue systemic change.

**Shevlin:** I would love thoughts from this group, and others, on incentivizing higher wages for professions with lower pay through apprenticeship models.





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### **Facilitated Discussion: Pathways to Family-Sustaining Wages** (Noel Ginsburg and Bernadette Oliveira-Rivera, ACA Co-Chairs)

**Oliveira-Rivera:** We don't expect to come to a resolution today, but this is a good opportunity to begin this discussion on the role of the ACA's recommendations in addressing wages.

**Ginsburg:** If the market is not supporting wages in industries like ECE, what is the best way to address this issue? Is it within the scope of the ACA?

**Oliveira-Rivera:** I want to speak on the issue of collective bargaining – this can be a useful mechanism for achieving living wages. It's not the only mechanism for ensuring equity and opportunity, though. Interested to hear what members have to say.

**Bustillo:** I appreciate that we're having this conversation, especially connected to the DEIA conversation. I feel it's essential to have work done around family-sustaining wages as the ACA. It's not an issue specific to only one sector.

Two fundamental considerations – firstly, we've seen how caregivers have supported us societally, particularly in the pandemic, and we need to invest in those workers who have given society so much.

Secondly, we should not subsidize programs that pay poverty-wage jobs.

**Berch:** Regarding wages, NASTAD States represent minimum wage, State and Federal; prevailing wage; wages agreed upon by collective bargaining; and at-will wages – at-will wages seem to be at issue here. We recommend that mean wages within occupations be presented to sponsors as a recommended wage level. We also agree that “rising waters raise all boats.” The validity and rigor of what an individual does in ECE should be rewarded with higher wages.

**Wolfe:** First, I'm not willing to think small. I'm determined to think as big as possible. When people say, “Is this issue of wages really something that Registered Apprenticeship should take on,” my response is that OA is part of USDOL. Therefore, my question becomes, if USDOL is not the place to raise this issue, then where is the right place? Private complaints, marches, and State-by-State small fixes aren't going to change a systemic problem. How do we push on the larger point and avoid settling on small gains?

Second, the work ECE workers do is vital. The pandemic proved that without the ECE industry, no one else would be able to work. Mothers couldn't work because they need childcare. ECE props up the entire economy.



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Third, the idea that Registered Apprenticeship can't take on low-wage industries, low-skilled jobs, is not correct.

Fourth, we don't have a wage issue in ECE, we have a funding issue. ECE is not publicly funded the way that K-12 is, and the way community colleges are. ECE teachers with comparable qualifications do not have pay parity with the K-12 system.

**Bustillo:** That is not at all what I said, just to be clear. I want to lift up the work of people on the ground – we shouldn't downplay organizing and the other “small gains” you mentioned. We definitely need the support of OA and the Federal government to address systemic barriers.

**Worth:** If you were to ask community college executives about this, they might be split. Some might say that programs would grant access to a “career lattice,” others would absolutely agree that students should be funneled into higher paying programs.

**Lenhoff:** Thanks for everyone's thoughtful comments. I would like to associate myself with what Dr. Wolfe said at the beginning, which is that ECE workers should be paid more. I would also like to address the question of whether this issue falls within the scope of the ACA's work – that answer is clear that there is a role. SAAs may not be able to require wage levels, but OA could have a role. If apprenticeability was to be redefined to include that to be apprenticeable, an occupation has to pay a family-sustaining wage upon completion, OA could have a role in lifting up wages. Look at wage calculators as well – is there something we can recommend that OA examine and potentially use?

To the question about incentivization – if we can define Registered Apprenticeship as a program that results in family-sustaining wages for participants, that could be the hook.

Dr. Wolfe has also pointed out that many providers simply can't afford to pay ECE workers more. I would suggest that we should look at that – consider similar occupations that do pay family-sustaining wages, and what we might learn from them. Can the ACA hold hearings – could we bring those folks in?

**Costa:** Within transportation, leveraging partnerships is important, but we also must look at procurement. Contracts and projects are seeking to make profit, and that comes off the backs of workers' salaries. Having labor at the table in creating partnerships prevents injuries and deaths and highlights the importance of training and better pay.

**Oathout:** The ACA's goal should be to focus on family-sustaining wages. Forty-hour work weeks, safety regulations, things people take for granted – those things were hard won in fights led by organized labor. If we really dug into the data, it's likely that there is



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more collective bargaining going on in trades that do pay enough. USDOL removing barriers for workers to organize should be a goal to address these issues.

**Richardson:** I would support what Ms. Lenhoff brought forth. I agree that there's nothing wrong in asking if RAPs lead to family-sustaining wages. We should be asking programs this question – does your program lead to family-sustaining wages in your geographic area?

*12:15 p.m. – 1:15 p.m.*

### **WORKING SECTOR CAUCUS LUNCH**

*1:15 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.*

### **FEDERAL PANEL: APPRENTICESHIP'S ROLE IN KEY WORKFORCE PRIORITIES ACROSS THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT**

**Facilitator:** Brent Parton

**Panelists:** Kevin Gallagher, Jen Mishory, Amy Peterson, Paige Shevlin

**Parton:** This is a unique opportunity to engage with Federal partners on a lot of the issues that have been raised. Important to hear things from Federal partners as well, specifically about Registered Apprenticeship as it is a priority for the Biden-Harris administration. Apprenticeship itself is being integrated into a range of other priorities across the administration that touch workforce development, the passage of the infrastructure law, and how to build out career pathways for our young people. How can we leverage Federal investments to advance the work we want to advance for apprenticeship, which is expanding and ensuring we are confronting longstanding issues around equity and representation within the RA system, and how can Registered Apprenticeship itself help advance DEIA and equity goals when it comes to things like infrastructure investments and supporting, engaging, and improving strategic workforces across our labor market? The good news is despite how far away we're sitting from each other, we like each other, and we see each other quite a bit. I wanted to open it up and hand the floor over to each one of my colleagues here to first share a bit at a high level about how Registered Apprenticeship is being engaged with your agencies' priorities.

**Peterson (Energy):** I'm a big supporter of Registered Apprenticeships and happy to present here today. One of the things we've heard a lot about today and that the people at Energy are talking a lot about is threading together quality jobs and diversity, equity, and inclusion. If you look at the first funding opportunity that we put out under the infrastructure law on battery manufacturing, we combined that into an equity plan, which is focusing specifically on quality jobs. Registered



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Apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship are called out in what we're asking people coming to us for funding to look at and think about. We are interested in how Registered Apprenticeship can help organizations in the energy sector source talented workers from diverse communities.

**Mishory (Education):** We oversee Perkins Act funding, oversee title II of WIOA, work closely with community colleges, and focus on programs for individuals incarcerated and formerly incarcerated. Apprenticeship intersects with our priorities in three areas: connecting education pipelines to RA opportunities, connections with community colleges and other similar organizations, and worker shortages. Our funding supports uptake of STEM apprenticeship programs, for example. We're also looking at shortages in the teaching profession, including new ways apprenticeship has engaged with the teaching profession.

**Gallagher (Commerce):** We're focused on workforce development as part of an economic development strategy – these two are inextricably linked. On Friday, Commerce launched the \$65 billion "Internet for All" initiative included in the infrastructure law – the goal is straightforward, but the implementation is very complicated. Registered Apprenticeships are one way States can ensure that State residents get new jobs created through investment. Thanks to everyone in this room for the meaningful work you do!

**Shevlin (Transportation):** Lots of funding is coming through Transportation. I want to talk about competitive programs where we're emphasizing Registered Apprenticeship and then I want to talk about what States can be doing. We have a number of major grants for transportation projects across the country, and those notices of funding opportunity include selection criteria that promote applicants involving Registered Apprenticeship. Requiring use of Registered Apprenticeship on projects, especially programs with apprentices from underrepresented communities, is a goal on our radar. We've embedded preferences for applications with RA representation in other programs we're putting forward. State funding for infrastructure/highway funding can now be used for workforce development – this is a new development. States seem reluctant do this, but messaging and encouragement from this group could be helpful with that.

**Oliveira-Rivera:** Thanks for sharing a high-level view of what your agencies are doing. It's encouraging that there's a big focus on Registered Apprenticeship. For the representative from ED, in my organization, we have an occupational pre-apprenticeship program for trades, and we find we have to go State by State to engage with the K-12 system, despite being best positioned to approach this on a national level. ED should look at ways to facilitate national implementation of pre-apprenticeship and evaluate schools (for funding/ratings) such that going into a Registered Apprenticeship has the same value as going into a 2- or 4-year post-secondary degree program.

For the representative from Commerce, is there any way to require Registered Apprenticeship as part of the funding availabilities you mentioned?



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**Berch:** Superintendents always ask, “What do we do with these students?” And employers ask, “What do they teach these kids in school?” How can Education encourage apprenticeship stakeholders to be more involved with industry councils and also have guidance for not only States but also trickle down to municipalities to integrate workplace learning with these policies for high school seniors to get into pre-apprenticeship employment opportunities?

**Mishory (Education):** Local partners coming together to discuss community needs does happen, and folks sometime need reminders. Employers may need to be reminded to join such meetings and engage with such partnerships. It’s something we’re focused on going forward.

**Parton:** I want to pick up the thread about connecting young people with apprenticeship opportunities – how do you see that playing out in your areas?

**Peterson (Energy):** We’re focused on job creation, particularly in disadvantaged communities. On the construction side, we’re bringing together industry, community, and labor stakeholders to think about how to connect clean energy, weatherization, and solar jobs to Registered Apprenticeship, the building trades, and a broader career pathway. On the manufacturing side (e.g., battery manufacturing), the challenge is bringing all the stakeholders together, including from brand new industries, to create entry-level standards and improve access to opportunities.

**Shevlin (Transportation):** In the sectors where we’re working, Registered Apprenticeship signals job quality. There are other such signals, but we use Registered Apprenticeship because it has some standards, including around wages, and structure that we want to see. We do hear concerns about the lack of diversity in Registered Apprenticeship. Local and economic hiring preferences are another important tool to accomplish this. For us, job quality and equity are key ingredients.

**Kardel:** Appreciate the point about Registered Apprenticeship being a signal of job quality. I wanted to ask about efforts to employ apprentices in your Federal agencies. You’re large employers, you’d have a role in this.

**Gallagher (Commerce):** Federal hiring is complicated and byzantine. However, the Office of Personnel Management has given agencies the opportunity to pilot different approaches. We’ve worked with USDOL to figure out how to register an apprenticeship program we use to staff one of our departments. Agencies don’t have a ton of control over their hiring or engagement with job seekers or workforce development programs, but it’s a good question.

**Parton:** The Federal government is looking at ways to identify shared needs across Federal agencies, by the way.

**Adelstein:** I appreciate the nod to broadband – there is a general shortage in supply of skilled workers in this field, and I appreciate hearing that you’re highlighting and targeting RAPs. These



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jobs will be here for a long time. We're trying to bring workforce development and Registered Apprenticeship into a new industry, and the support from the relevant Federal agency is helpful. Thank you for that!

**Karbowsky:** Making sure apprentices work on these jobs is important and we should be sure to highlight successful, quality RAPs. We can fund programs that need help, but there should be quality standards in place.

**Ginsburg:** We know that apprenticeships represent a true path to high earnings. Recognizing that the average age of an apprentice today is 28, which means opportunity lost earlier on in their life, are you thinking about how to make connections with potential workers earlier in their careers? Also, for youth apprenticeships, people focus on jobs happening outside, but engineering, tech, and accounting are apprenticeable. Are you all thinking about how to move the pipeline younger in age to build a foundation for apprenticeship and ensure young people can access these jobs?

**Shevlin (Transportation):** Great point. In conversations with States, we're making it clear that States could use funding to support career awareness, youth apprenticeship, etc. Some of the funding we're putting forward right now is for projects that won't start for a long time – we need to consider the future workforce.

**Weil:** Agencies should consider what other funding they can leverage, so that stakeholders aren't starting from scratch unnecessarily.

**Parton:** For the panel, what questions, issues, or opportunities should the ACA be considering?

**Shevlin (Transportation):** States need support to scale apprenticeship and create pathways to it in a way that leverages the current RA system. Many State transportation entities don't know about the existing system – anything this group could do to create a "how-to" manual for States implementing the infrastructure law (e.g., broadband, EV charging) to leverage the RA system would be useful.

**Gallagher (Commerce):** My request is for this group to be as specific as you can be on where you see opportunities. Ms. Oliveira-Rivera mentioned going down in the weeds with her question – that's where we need advice. That's where decisions are made. You'll notice improving iterations of the language in notices of funding opportunities – the more specific you can be in recommendations, the better. That helps us do our work.

**Mishory (Education):** Definitely agree, specific recommendations are so helpful. Work with us to highlight where educational partners like State CTE and adult education directors and school districts can be at the table and play key roles. Also, the American Rescue Plan – some school districts plan to use these funds to re-engage students through CTE and apprenticeships.





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**Peterson (Energy):** Thinking about the recommendations on data and transparency, someone said we shouldn't subsidize jobs that don't pay good wages – if we track who gets jobs, where they live, and their demographics and start to talk about that publicly and at that level of detail, you'll see some really good things, and where you don't see good things we'll have a lot of visibility into making changes there.

*[Question not audible]*

**Mishory (Education):** The Secretary of Education is really committed to highlighting quality models, and really committed to career pathways work through connecting and rethinking the connections between K-12 and the workforce, and between K-12 and 2-year colleges. There is a dedicated focus on that, so we would love to partner with you all on making sure we send a clear message to people that quality pathways are really critical.

**Parton:** Thanks to the Federal partners who have joined us today.

**Eddinger:** Thanks to all of you for being here for this great dialogue – we'll be in touch, and we will be specific.

2:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

### **FINAL COMMITTEE BUSINESS AND APPRENTICE PERSPECTIVES**

#### **Public Comment**

**Connie Ashbrook (co-chair of National Taskforce on Tradeswomen's Issues):** Having worked in construction for 17 years, I tremendously value the apprenticeship system. The National Taskforce on Tradeswomen's Issues commends the ACA for identifying the underrepresentation of women in apprenticeship programs, particularly in trades occupations, but more is needed. We have great models to bring women into apprenticeships, and models to provide technical assistance to programs. What is needed is targeted funding, and increased focus on compliance.

I also want to speak in support of short pre-apprenticeship programs – it's the valuable kickstart that women need to be competitive applicants for apprenticeship. We agree with the DEIA subcommittee's recommendations, in particular, including the importance of disaggregation of data and other recommendations around women's participation in apprenticeship programs and ability to secure quality, high-paying jobs.

**Ladd:** While the public commenter from the Growth Alliance is trying to unmute, we want to acknowledge that we also received a request to add a topic to the agenda. Marcia Proto, Executive Director of the Connecticut League for Nursing and the Connecticut Center for Nursing Workforce, recommends that the ACA take up the topic of apprenticeship for registered





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nurses and licensed practical nurses in post-acute care settings. We have let her know that will be entered into the record and we will consider that for future agendas.

**Noel Moran (business manager of Penal Reform Solutions at the Growth Alliance):** I'm filling in for Dr. Sarah Lewis, who had a family emergency. My journey through the criminal justice system started with a life sentence, and by chance I met Dr. Lewis. Her research captures how people grow by building relationships and trust, finding meaning and peace, and constructing positive climates and safe environments. I signed up as a researcher and moved into the business manager job. Our work takes us into prisons, schools, and communities and is centered around growth – we believe in reducing social harm and changing the conversation around punishment and that everybody deserves a second chance. First, we do a complete needs analysis. Then, we look at implementation through consultancy, training, and development and growth among the staff and prisoners, implementing projects with involvement from them and agencies. Next, we step back and look at sustainability to let the project take care of itself. It's about meeting people where they're at and helping them grow.

### **Committee Vote on 6-Month Interim Report**

**Eddinger:** I will entertain a motion and a second, followed by any discussion members would like to have, and then Mr. Ladd will call the roll.

**Berch:** Motion to accept the interim report.

**Kardel:** Seconded.

**Eddinger:** Mr. Ladd, will you call the roll?

**Ladd:** *Public sector –*

Berch: Aye

Bumphus: Aye (*via proxy – Worth*)

Johansson: Aye

Lenhoff: Aye

Melton: Aye

Scott: Aye

Willis: Aye

Wolfe: Aye

*Labor sector –*

Boyd: Aye

Bustillo: Aye

Costa: Aye

Harris-Kuiper: Aye

Irwin: Aye (*via email*)



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Oathout: Aye  
O'Leary: Absent  
Oliveira-Rivera: Aye  
Ruesing: Aye  
Stafford: Aye  
*Employer sector –*  
Adelstein: Aye (*via proxy – Weil*)  
Ginsburg: Aye  
Kardel: Aye  
Holmes Lee: Absent  
Long: Aye  
Louissaint: Absent  
Maietta: Aye (*via email*)  
Malone: Aye  
Oberg: Aye  
Richardson: Aye  
*Chair –*  
Eddinger: Aye

**Eddinger:** Congratulations, everyone – we have a report that we can submit to the Secretary of Labor. Our next agenda item will be to discuss the road ahead for the ACA. Any comments at this point?

**Kardel:** One of the speakers mentioned the possibility of calling in experts, a hearing. Is that something we can entertain for a future agenda?

**Ladd:** In earlier iterations of the ACA, we've held meetings in different parts of the country, so we can be using that time to bring in experts, do site visits, and engage in other ways to learn more.

**Kardel:** I would encourage the group to consider that option.

**Eddinger:** I think our Co-Chairs would agree as well, but we should be sure to know where we want to go before calling in experts so we can be pointed in our gathering of information.

**Ladd:** The committee work will continue after this meeting. At the far end of the road map, the final report will be due by June 2023 per our charter, so we'll likely want to have our last meeting in May 2023. We'll need some time to absorb all that we've discussed today and understand where we need more clarity and feedback from you all. At our next meeting we'll want to come back to you all with which areas in the report require more guidance, feedback, and clarity from you all.



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**Eddinger:** In areas where there is great clarity, we don't need to wait to make a plan in terms of policy and implications. I would warn us against wanting everything to be perfect before we proceed and needing to get to it all at the end – so perhaps that clarity comes in a spectrum and we move on the things that we're clear about and begin to implement a lot of stuff.

**Ladd:** Exactly, and I think we'll hear that from the Secretary of Labor this afternoon, that he wants to see progress and action on these items.

We're pulling together a survey that we'll get out to members to help us understand what's worked well, where we need to improve, how to structure meetings going forward, and other areas where we'd love to get your input.

### **Apprentice Perspectives**

- Mr. Jeremiah Gray, Assistant Operations Manager, Hightower Communications

**Jeremiah Gray:** Thanks for inviting me here to offer an apprentice perspective. My participation in a TIRAP apprenticeship program helped catapult me into the position I'm in today. It gave me documented proof that I've completed trainings and am a journeyworker in my trade. It's unique among any jobs I've ever held. I found the structure of the program helpful and would recommend it to anyone looking to start a career in telecommunications. Now I'm better able to train apprentices at my organization, and it has given me an incredible foundation in this industry. Registered Apprenticeship affords my company with access to a pool of capable workers that will keep our company moving forward.

- Ms. Keyona Dobbins, Medicaid Support Assistant, District of Columbia Department of Health Care Finance

**Keyona Dobbins:** Without my apprenticeship program, I wouldn't be who I am today. When I applied to an apprenticeship program, I didn't know who I was. I had to write an essay about myself to apply for my program, and that made me realize that I'm more than just a mother and a wife. I realized I'm a growing and educated woman and understood opportunities that were available to me. I now speak about the value of apprenticeship programs in my community. Apprenticeship was such a great opportunity for me. I learned about the apprenticeship program through a neighbor who believed in me. Thank you all for giving me opportunities, and know that other apprenticeship program enrollees are grateful for the opportunities apprenticeship programs provide.

**Eddinger:** Keyona, you're why we do this work. We're honored both of you are with us today. We'll do everything we can to produce more of the likes of you.



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**Wolfe:** Members are busy people, as are you, and we would so appreciate advance notice for the meetings that are coming up, so we can clear our calendars and hold that time.

**Eddinger:** Thanks for that note – we will do that!

**Melton:** Representing people with disabilities, I didn't hear a lot about those with disabilities, and wanted to again push that out as we move toward our final report.

2:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

### **BREAK**

3:00 p.m. – 3:55 p.m.

### **ETA WELCOME, DEPARTMENTAL REMARKS, AND FACILITATED DISCUSSION**

**Hanks:** Thank you so much for being here today. I'm excited to see you all in person! It's very exciting to see all the great work that this group has done, so thank you.

The Secretary of Labor and I both understand how important it is to convene this group, because we need to hear from stakeholders about the most pressing issues in apprenticeship. This group is an invaluable resource for collaboration and sharing among peers – we know that apprenticeship is a proven way of establishing pathways to great careers.

On behalf of all our partners at ETA, thank you. I'm excited for what this group is going to accomplish together!

**Walsh:** I want to begin by thanking Angela and her team, who have done an amazing job during the first 14-15 months of this administration. Thank you to the ACA for accepting the invitation to be here. Thank you to my friend Pam Eddinger – we used to work closely together when I was Mayor of Boston.

I hope you all understand the magnitude of this moment in thinking about the workforce. I get reports on the first Friday of every month and have needed to think about ways to improve employment outcomes. Coming out of a pandemic, we have a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to do things differently. The work you've all done, and the report you've put together, can play a big role in that. I think this committee could be one of the most important out of all the committees established by USDOL.

Being in this role for 14 months, with so much work being remote, we can lay down the foundation for what the future of the workforce looks like. When I see Congress tomorrow, I hope I'm given the opportunity to pivot to workforce development so that I can refer to the ACA and its work on those issues.



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**Eddinger:** Thank you, Mr. Secretary. It's an honor to do this work for the people and for you.

We're going to ask our subcommittees to present their high-level recommendations, including asking a question to facilitate discussion.

**Kardel (IENES):** Our subcommittee is committed to the need to meet the moment and the new work realities brought forward by the pandemic and working virtually. In the arena of expanding access to Registered Apprenticeship, what is realistic from your vantage point? How far can we dream, how far do you hope we'll get, and how do we measure progress and success?

**Walsh:** I think that we have to dream big. We need to design these programs correctly, similar to what we see in European countries, and use them not as a way to avoid getting employees on the payroll, but as a way to train employees and move them forward. At a roundtable last week, an employer expressed concern to me about the costs to them of apprenticeship and I was taken aback – it shouldn't be a burden. There are so many industries that could use apprenticeships. Kids not interested in college are looking for pathways – that could be apprenticeship.

**Ginsburg (Pathways):** Thank you for coming to Colorado, Mr. Secretary! Our group, the pre-apprenticeship/youth apprenticeship group, recognizes the greater definition that's needed for pre-apprenticeships and youth apprenticeships. These programs shouldn't be barriers to Registered Apprenticeship – they should be something to build upon. We also want to make sure that DEIA issues are built into this, we want there to be sufficient flexibilities, and we want students to do the necessary career exploration to find apprenticeships in careers that they're interested in.

Registered Apprenticeship works very well in the trades – is there flexibility to think about new ways to establish apprenticeships in new industries?

**Walsh:** Yes, I think the answer to that question is yes. I think it's helpful to get a feel for an industry and then move into different areas. Pre-apprenticeships could indeed be an opportunity to get a feel for what sub-occupation within an industry a potential worker is most interested in.

We just signed an MOU with Austria, where entry-level jobs are apprenticeships. I think it would help our companies with worker loyalty and retention if we adopted a similar approach. It may take a while for us to get there in this country, but there are "low-hanging" industries such as IT, for example.

**Riesberg (Modernization):** We've talked about many different issues in our group, including apprenticeship quality, apprenticeability, emerging technologies, and messaging. How do we best message apprenticeship using terms people want to hear? We're looking for your take on what you see as the time-tested pieces and qualities of apprenticeship that we should not lose as we move forward and modernize – what are the qualities we shouldn't lose?



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**Walsh:** I think the building trades model has been around for 70 years, it's a big investment, and it's the gold standard when it comes to apprenticeship. Most people who complete programs are journeypeople, and they have a license and skill in their trade. Ultimately, the way I look at this is thinking about the numbers of people leaving their jobs – 4.3 million people in the past month. I think apprenticeships could help us avoid that turnover, where people go to work for a company and are willing to stay there. I think the biggest piece is quality – is it a quality program that leads to a quality, middle-class job? No industry can immediately get up to that gold standard that we see in the trades – it will be a process. The building trades are unique, and we may not need to expand some elements of apprenticeship programs in those industries to programs in new industries.

**Boyd (DEIA):** I shared earlier that I was heartbroken over the mass shooting and other things going on. It has really dawned on me that it's time to start doing better on DEIA issues. I was the only African American graduate in my apprenticeship class, and those types of issues persist today. I was proud looking back on your history, Mr. Secretary, in particular the Building Pathways initiative – I appreciate that you're of a similar mindset. The current moment is a golden opportunity to involve all communities in economic recovery. People may refer to a "worker shortage," but we don't necessarily see it that way – there are plenty of people out there, women, people of color, and people with disabilities in particular, who have talent and skills and want to be in the workforce. We would like to know your plans for increasing DEIA in Registered Apprenticeship, and whether our recommendations align with those plans?

**Walsh:** Thank you for your work on the report. When I started with Building Pathways, everyone looked like me, and I felt I needed to call that out. Each trade didn't quite fight me on those issues, but they weren't immediately on board either. If we asked those questions today, it may be a different story. We shouldn't have to rely on unfortunate shootings and deaths to prompt this issue – it's a longstanding issue that we need to address. I could take you down to parts of DC to show you plenty of young people who would sign up and get on a pathway to good-paying jobs through apprenticeships if we had the programs available.

**Eddinger:** Do you have questions for us, Mr. Secretary?

**Walsh:** Any hot topics that came up – let's hear them!

**Berch:** I represent NASTAD – thanks for having us. One of the things we've talked about over and over is the integration of STEM education for apprenticeability. College shouldn't be the only pathway – how can we embed that in conversations with counselors? We need to start having the conversation that apprenticeship is equal to, and not less than, post-secondary education. We'd ask you to help us further embed this conversation with ED.





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**Walsh:** I'd also take that one step further and ask us to think about what defines success. I've had some good conversations with Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona. I do realize that we sometimes focus on the wrong things when it comes to education. The last 2 years have been devastating for education, and we're going to feel that somewhere. I've also had the conversation with Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo. There's a need for business, education, and labor to be together and not apart.

**Worth:** Thank you for acknowledging that data point. I think we focus on following the data in a meaningful way that has industry relevance. We also need to think about meeting the needs of employers, and not leaving people on the table.

### **Facilitated Discussion: Interim Report Perspectives**

**Oliveira-Rivera:** Thanks for your time this afternoon. This has been an incredible experience in terms of collaboration. We recognize this is an interim report and need to further explore topics beyond today.

Wages have been an important topic raised by this group – what role can apprenticeship play?

How do we expand and modernize apprenticeship while ensuring that the appropriate guardrails remain in place?

**Walsh:** The quality aspect is so important for expansion – new industries aren't going to want to expand and start up an apprenticeship program that's not high quality. If you're an industry and you don't create a quality apprenticeship program, you won't create good employees to help companies.

**Lenhoff:** I would like to build on Ms. Oliveira-Rivera's point. We talked about two issues around diversity and inclusion in apprenticeship, two different sides of occupational segregation that are built into our employment system and, therefore, into apprenticeships – there are many industries where women and people of color are underrepresented, such as IT with higher paying jobs, and industries where women and people of color are overrepresented, such as ECE with lower paying jobs. Is there some sort of wage requirement for apprenticeable occupations – should they pay a family-sustaining wage, as they do in the trades? What should we do about that in new and emerging sectors? How can we leverage apprenticeship to address wages?

**Walsh:** I hadn't necessarily thought of that – I think of apprenticeships as leading to middle-class jobs. It's an important thing to consider. It's something that should stay at the forefront. At the end of the day, let's remember we're at a unique moment in time coming out of the pandemic. Good-paying jobs means middle-class jobs, and that should be the case across the board. To Mr. Boyd's point, the race issue still persists – and to other points made, there are plenty of people out there. Diversity is one core pillar – good-paying jobs is another pillar.





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**Wolfe:** I wanted to underscore what you just said. There are odd exceptions, childcare and early learning being one of them. Funding for our programs (Head Start, universal pre-K, etc.) does come from public vehicles, and yet wage issues persist. Teachers are highly skilled, required to have degrees, and yet we have this problem. I would just caution that if we make this a requirement – middle-class jobs – industries could be left out. And that would be at the peril of the entire economy – workers couldn't work without these services.

**Walsh:** Thank you for that. First and foremost, with the educators side of it, we're having a conversation right now about creating an apprenticeship pathway. I think when it comes to childcare and those areas, we have to have a longer conversation about those sectors and wages in those sectors. I wouldn't say we want to leave anyone out, but I also don't know if Registered Apprenticeship works in every industry right off the bat.

**Hanks:** I also think this an important area where worker voice needs to be a part of the conversation. When I spoke with former apprentices now in the home care sector, we heard from many women who had spent a long time in that sector, which is notorious for high turnover, low pay, etc. It's important to have the NEA and other organizations involved in these conversations.

**Costa:** Thank you for coming. We have different sectors at the table – we have programs there that will pay off, especially with the additional funding coming from the infrastructure law.

*3:55 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.*

### **MEETING ADJOURNMENT**

**Eddinger:** I will entertain a motion to adjourn.

**Berch:** So moved.

**Kardel:** Seconded.



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**CERTIFICATION**

As the Chairperson of the Advisory Committee on Apprenticeship, I hereby certify the accuracy of the May 2022 ACA Meeting Minutes.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pam Eddinger". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

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Dr. Pam Eddinger  
ACA Chairperson