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Institute for Youth, Education, and Families

*Effective City Programs to Expand Job Opportunities
for Parents & Young Adults in Tough Economic Times
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Moderator: **John E. Kyle**, Program Director, Outreach and Strategic Planning
Institute for Youth, Education, and Families

Speakers:

Richard Greenwald, Transitional Work Corporation, Philadelphia, Pa.

Andrew Moore, National Association of Service and
Conservation Corps, Washington, D.C.

Tiana Wertheim, Goodwill Industries of San Francisco, California

KYLE: Welcome. My name is John Kyle at the Institute for Youth, Education, and Families at the National League of Cities.

The call today is about effective city programs to expand job opportunities for parents and young adults in tough economic times. Can transitional job programs help hard to employ residents find secure jobs? We have several guests with us today to help us talk about this. We have Richard Greenwald from the Transitional Work Corporation in Philadelphia; Andy Moore from the National Association of Service and Conservation Corps here in Washington; and Tiana Wertheim in San Francisco with Goodwill Industries.

We thank you all for being with us. Andy, could I ask you to start off? Just tell me what we're talking about here. What are transitional jobs programs?

MOORE: Transitional jobs programs are an updated and renewed way of talking about a method of providing training and employment simultaneously for people who are out of work and needing to get back into the regular workforce. And in the particular context of the programs I work with around the country -- Service and Conservation Corps -- it's a short-term, six to 24 month experience of working individually or on a crew under relatively close supervision on projects of community benefit.

KYLE: Tiana, what's the context that you bring to this from Goodwill Industries?

WERTHEIM: Goodwill Industries is one of the key administrators of the community jobs program in San Francisco. And I also personally spent the past three years at the San Francisco Department of Human Services, where I was the manager and instigator of the program from that vantage point. Just to add, I think some of the key points in the model are often the wages that participants are paid are publicly funded, or at least publicly subsidized. Typically, as Andy said, the jobs are transitional and time limited and the effort is to help folks transition into unsubsidized employment when they complete their transitional job.

KYLE: Richard, give us some idea of what the Transitional Work Corporation is about.

GREENWALD: The Transitional Work Corporation (TWC) is in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. It's probably one of the larger, if not the largest, single program in the country of this kind of new, reinvigorated model of transitional work. But of course, this model evolved out of all the work that's been going on for years and years in this industry. And in particular, TWC combines probably the best of both -- the supported work model and some of the better training and education programs that are out there for people who are on public assistance whom we don't necessarily categorize as the hardest to serve, but the federal government does.

I think Andy gave a good overview. I would add that one thing that transitional jobs are not -- at least in Philadelphia -- they're not a WPA type project. It's a paid work experience to move people into an unsubsidized job. That is the goal at the end. There are mechanisms and vehicles built into our organization to connect people and support people in the unsubsidized job after they're with us for a period of time. And then I think what Tiana said is most important -- that this is a paid work experience. So you get an actual paycheck. You learn how to work by working while being in our program. And, if you don't work, you don't get paid. So, it's an important distinction between transitional work and other schemes toward employment like a work experience program or something like that where you're working off a benefit.

KYLE: Tiana, what are some of the core elements of a transitional jobs program?

WERTHEIM: I think the fundamental pieces, as we've been saying, are that participants need to be paid a wage and that wage needs to be separate and distinct from their welfare grant. By being paid a wage, they're eligible for the Earned Income Tax Credit. They're also going to be paying their FICA employee taxes. They're going to have the psychological benefit of having a real paycheck rather than a welfare grant, in the instance of former or current welfare recipients. Typically, they have a good amount of supportive services offered, whether it's job coaching or efforts to connect folks to mental health or substance abuse or whatever particular type of support they might need. Many of the programs, as Andy said, are time limited -- typically, I think, six to nine months in many programs, at least those serving TANF clients. So, they would be in a transitional job for six to nine months. Then, they would have assistance being placed in an unsubsidized job, and most frequently continue to get some kind of retention services for up to a year in the unsubsidized job.

But, I really think that the key difference in this program from other work experience or workfare type programs is that they're paid a wage and typically get more support and more individual attention than in many other programs.

KYLE: Andy, are these similar, or are there additional or different elements when you're dealing with youth versus adults?

MOORE: Well, I did slip in earlier the key word that applies. We think based on experience and evidence from the youth context. And that is working with youth defined as 16 to 25 year olds, based on their stage of development and what works for them psychologically. The crew placements -- group placements -- are an important part of the picture, maybe not for the entire

time that one is involved in a transitional job, but at least at the outset. There is an important element to be gained from placing young people on a crew under close adult supervision and following that through for at least a six-month period.

KYLE: Keep on with that, Andy. What types of placements are then common for youth?

MOORE: If I'm hearing your question right, John, the way I would answer it is in terms of the types of projects that the crews then apply themselves to, which are often community beautification, conservation projects, building or enhancing current recreational facilities ranging from playgrounds to trails to city and rural parks. And, increasingly, fielding teams in a school or a social service setting such as a nursing home where part of each day might be spent working in a group of two or three, and part of each day would be spent working individually.

KYLE: Richard, types of placements or kinds of jobs that you think are typical for folks in your program?

GREENWALD: At the Transitional Work Corporation in Philadelphia, we're dealing only with adults, many of whom, though, are like youth in that they've never worked before, are still struggling with some adolescent type behavior or kind of a place where they are in their lives. But, the one thing about our participants is while they're in this category of "hardest to serve," we certainly don't look at them that way necessarily. We look at them as prospective workers in the labor market, people of value. And, it's the message they get from us from day one. They are not kind of herded or categorized as having all sorts of these barriers that would not allow them to work successfully.

However, of course, many do have barriers. And our practice during this first six months of transitional work is to teach people how to center work in their lives and knock off all the barriers around work, as opposed to approaching work and its barriers in a linear fashion.

Given that, the difference between our guys and the youth model that Andy was talking about was that we've learned that putting people in group situations or crew situations for adults doesn't work as well. Particularly, it doesn't work if you're going to dress them up in t-shirts and hats and do rah-rah chants and things like that. It works great for youth and young adults, and less well for older people. In addition, a lot of the people that we work with never worked before. Putting them with a group of other people that have never worked before can also sometimes lead to people feeding off of each other's bad habits and gossiping and all sorts of other things.

We typically do placements around the city in individual or two or three people in a setting. In each setting we have somebody we call a work partner. You might think of them as a mentor. But somebody who is actually their supervisor at the job site when we're not supporting them through our own career advisor. Those types of jobs are a variety of jobs, because we have people with different level skills when they come here. The jobs can be anywhere from basic kind of maintenance and housekeeping type of things to more sophisticated clerical positions. They range from small nonprofit organizations throughout the city to about a third of our jobs are in the city government sector -- different departments around the city. Depending on what you can do or what your criminal background is and your ability to do certain things physically is where we'll try to place you after you've been here two weeks as your transitional placement.

KYLE: Tiana, out in California, what kind of placements?

WERTHEIM: Let me chime in to agree in some ways, but disagree I think with quite a few of Richard's perspectives. I want to share a perspective that supports placements in groups versus as individuals. There are quite a few factors that I think are important to keep in mind. One benefit of placing a group of folks, whether they're adults or young persons, is that the social good or the community benefit from whatever project they might be involved in is going to be considerably more obvious as a product.

I think that in the discussion nationally about what this model looks like and in what ways it's connected to social entrepreneurship, I think there are quite a few group models out there – for example, Goodwill, and not even particularly the Community Jobs Initiative. Goodwill is an organization that places transitional employees in groups doing things like packaging or assembly. There is a product, a company, or something that they're creating collectively. Another benefit of having folks in groups is that it's obviously a lot easier to supervise and, with economies of scale, to have a job coach on site. I think this is particularly true for people with more substantial needs or particular types of barriers, whether it's learning disabilities or mental health issues. I just thought these points are important.

I think that throughout the country, projects have addressed this question in quite a few ways. For example, in St. Paul they have varying levels of placements. The first level is a group setting in a packaging company. It's serving primarily people with very limited English, and often they have mental health issues as well. Those folks are placed working in a packaging company as a group. It's somewhat like a Department of Rehabilitation model, with job coaching onsite.

Then, for folks that have more sophisticated computer or clerical skills and maybe a little work history or something, that gives the agency confidence that they are slightly higher functioning, the St. Paul project might place them in a science museum. Many folks would be placed in the museum, but they would have different jobs so that they're not all working as a crew. Some might be working in the education department. Others might be working in janitorial. But by having them all in one building, there is some kind of ease with the supervision and the job coaching.

Then they have a third level that is placing folks in county departments and satellites them throughout the city in individual placements. Most typically, these are higher functioning folks with more clerical skills. I just wanted to give that as one example.

In San Francisco, we, like the Transitional Work Corporation, are in most cases placing one or two clients, sometimes more, all over the city in different nonprofits. They range from things like the AIDS Emergency Fund to Board of Supervisor Offices to mental health services to the public radio station. Many of the placements are clerical. Some are childcare. Quite a few are healthcare related, but often clerical in nature -- a medical clerk or some kind of assistant. There are some kitchen helpers. There is an animal care attendant at the SPCA. There is a full range.

One thing we've learned in San Francisco is that there are some folks that aren't quite ready to go out on their own so quickly in this way. For that reason, we've just recently developed a group site for folks who might need a little time in a group placement before they transition to their more individual placement.

KYLE: What are employers thinking about this? Do employers like this? Are there particular elements of a transitional job, a transitional crew, a crew of youth? Are there particular things that they're looking for that make them want to jump on this and accept the placements you wish to make?

MOORE: I think it's important to emphasize at least a two-level relationship with employers. There are transitional, temporary placements. Then, there's the long-term relationship with employers having to do with making the placements when people have clearly served enough time in a transitional role.

GREENWALD: I think Andy is exactly right, and it's important for the audience to understand that the transitional program as we do it here in Philadelphia is a twofold process, and one part is not more important than the other. I can't speak for San Francisco and St. Paul, but we spend a lot of time together, and it's very similar. The first six months is the transitional experience here. People are on our payroll. If you're going to do a program like this, you're going to have four or five or six hundred people on your payroll at any one time. It's a very complicated thing to manage. Within two weeks we get them placed in a transitional job. Those jobs, as I said, are in an array of offices and places around the city.

It is less important to us to produce a community product or create a worker that is valuable to the worksite. By the time a person becomes valuable to a worksite, it's time to move them into a more permanent or unsubsidized job. And, of course, we want a product. Some kind of product would be terrific, and it's great when sites rely on our workers, too. But what's most important is that our worker learns to work. Typically, it's at great expense to the sites, or at an expense to them, because they basically have volunteered to assist us. They're giving us time. They're giving us something like an internship, a work situation. They're teaching our people about work. They're holding them accountable. They're working in lock step with us to make sure that our person shows up every day and is learning all the rules about work.

At the end of this period -- up to six months -- people are now more ready to work. They've been working on our payroll, so their resume is hot and active. They can now have references from the worksite and us that show the person has learned to be a good worker. Now we're ready to do the most crucial, second part of our program, which is to connect somebody into an unsubsidized job, and then continue to support him or her at that job.

What employers really like is that this person has been working. And their skills got upgraded. Concurrently with 25 hours of transitional work, they're spending ten hours doing some basic education and training. The employers like that we can vouch for somebody -- that they were on our payroll for six months, that they're not strangers, and that the employer can benefit from the time and money that we've invested in the participants. They get to know who they are. We can make a good match for the job that will continue to support the person so the retention rates will be higher than the typical entry-level person that an employer hires. There are tax credits, of course, available if you hire one of our participants, and we'll educate the employer on those. So again, this is a kind of savings for an employer. These are the things that employers value.

Implicit in the question is what an employer doesn't value. What they don't want is for us to be a typical program or the typical experience they've had in the past where programs demand and expect employers to help them. Where a program dumps participants on employers

and then doesn't support them, doesn't try to make good matches, and doesn't educate them about what the needs of the employees are or what benefits or entitlements the employer has.

So those are the things that employers like about the Transitional Work Program and this experience in general.

WERTHEIM: The host site isn't typically the employer. Typically there's a separate employer of record. I think it is important to be up front about what is involved. It is a cumbersome request. We're asking host site agencies to offer supervision to create new positions -- the job typically is not meant to replace an existing worker. They're really trying to identify a new work need that hadn't yet been addressed. That's going to take some intention to think about what the work would be. The work is supposed to be an opportunity for the participant to gain some real skills and to do something useful to the company or the organization. So there's some effort there. There are some expectations that the host site is to communicate with the transitional jobs program if the participant is not showing up on time or is consistently having some problem on the job. When these programs work well, I think the transitional jobs programs have staff that is highly available, very responsive if there's a problem or issue. So that the host sites feel that they're not overwhelmed with this task and this burden, that they have an agency that's willing to jump in and to really address questions. So that's from the host site's perspective.

KYLE: What are some financing issues connected to this? How do people get them paid for? How is that happening?

WERTHEIM: Typically these programs have an employer of record. In the case of the Transitional Work Corporation, the Transitional Work Corporation is that employer, and it's kind of a particular model. Many of the other programs use organizations like the Private Industry Council. I'm not quite sure how you all do it in the Conservation Corps. You guys might be the employer. So some kind of funding is amassed to provide the funding source for the wages. Oftentimes the funding, at least in programs serving TANF clients, could include TANF dollars, Welfare to Work dollars, or general fund dollars from a county or from a city or some kind of state contribution. Some programs have actually been funded with federal work-study dollars or temporary employee wages in a county budget, if a county was being a host site. That funding source has been used in some parts of the country. So some public dollars are going to be organized, or maybe private foundation dollars would be contributed. Those dollars are going to be located with the employer of record, and the participants are going to be submitting time sheets like any employee would to their employer, and then receiving a paycheck twice a month.

GREENWALD: Tiana has made two important points in the last couple statements. One is the way the funding works -- a lot of organizations or a lot of states probably use some type of grant diversion to fund the wages. Also, they make working in a transitional program attractive and a better offer than not working, even though typically, like in Philadelphia, if the individual is at the end of his or her time, the individual has got to do something. In our case, there is a 50% disregard [of income] before they start lowering the individual's grant. That's important to know as people around the country are looking at different models. We all pay different wages, but there's an incentive typically in each state that makes being a part of this program attractive.

A second thing I thought was important is that these jobs are not to displace other

workers. And to have any kind of success in any city, it's very important to get union support in what you're trying to do and make sure that you're teaching people how to work, and that you're not filling in for work that somebody else would be doing.

MOORE: In the context of the Conservation and Service Corps, where there is a strong emphasis during the transitional job experience on producing a product of public benefit, I would add that our experience has been that it opens up additional funding sources beyond welfare, Welfare to Work, and job training funds. Namely, some federal transportation funds for certain kinds of conservation and trail projects, other federal natural resource funding, federal funding for national service programs and emergency response programs that are often passed down through state and county and local agencies. So the financing possibilities start to multiply, depending on the type of transitional placement.

And then Tiana also mentioned the entrepreneurial model, where theoretically, and in some cases, in actuality the transitional workers are producing goods and services for which someone is getting charged, and that provides income to the program.

KYLE: Can we talk a little bit about some of the implementation challenges and how those have been overcome in the programs you're affiliated with or that you know about? If you want to start one of these, what are some of the things that are the toughest nuts to crack and how have you done that?

GREENWALD: The toughest nut is getting support. The only way we can have any success here is to have a couple of mentors and visionaries looking over your shoulder and making sure you're okay. In Pennsylvania, we have a courageous Secretary of Welfare, Feather Houstoun, who is courageous because she is willing to experiment with different ideas, learn as we go along from the performance measures from these organizations, and adjust accordingly. But you have to have people like that supporting you. And we also have in the city Ernie Jones, who is head of the local PIC [Private Industry Council] here -- it's called the PWDC [Philadelphia Workforce Development Corporation]. And in the Mayor's offices -- we've had two mayors since we started -- they've both been very supportive. And you need that in order to succeed. And that support travels down to the people who are the mid-level bureaucracy who actually had to do the work.

We set up very complicated programs and spent a ton of time working back and forth with the welfare offices around eligibility issues, tracking people, communicating back and forth, making sure supportive services are in place. If you don't cultivate those relationships and aren't respectful of the people in the bureaucracies, then you will fail. So you have to have the mentors and the visionaries and the political support and people in charge of the public money that comes through here really supportive and willing to take a risk. Then, you have to work hard at the relationships in mid-level bureaucracies in order for it to succeed.

WERTHEIM: Yes, in San Francisco, I would just fully agree with everything that Richard said. We have had amazing support from the Mayor and the Department of Human Services that oversees welfare in the city through their commitment to putting resources -- both TANF dollars and City of San Francisco general fund dollars -- into the program. I think financial support is one of the big challenges, particularly in this economy right now with tightening budgets. Without those public funds, a program like this would be extremely cumbersome.

It is also important to have some leadership that's willing to take a risk and to do things differently. In San Francisco, things did become very complicated at one point in the way we were doing some grant diversion with technical bureaucratic things that had never been done before at the department. It took significant pressure from the senior management to mid-level bureaucrats to make sure that this wasn't just a talked-about idea, but actually could come to fruition. Obviously, you need the community agencies that are being your host sites to offer some sort of support and to be willing to play the game. But we found that to be much less challenging than we had initially anticipated.

MOORE: Yes, I would just add on to that I think I'm presenting a sequentially helpful picture -- you need the top-level support. You need to amass funding so that you have some promise of a sustainable program over time. You need technical intervention and assistance into the eligibility and certification and other processes. Then, when you get into actual operations, you need a staff that is willing to do things in a different way, do things with a transitional viewpoint, rather than, an immediate labor force attachment model or a job placement viewpoint. You also need staff interwoven in the process that can take the long view and provide the kind of support after the initial transitional and job placement phase of the program. So that people meet and rise to whatever personal or workplace challenges come along, and they retain their jobs and begin to advance.

WERTHEIM: One last thing with the type of staff you need, or at least the attitude or the mindset. What I've seen in San Francisco and really heard about in quite a few other parts of the country is an attitude of flexibility, learning as we go, starting as in some pilot mode and really being willing to adapt a program. Because based on all the local circumstances, even being informed by the many programs that are out there now, it's hard to get this right with the first crack.

KYLE: What is some of the resistance that you've seen? Why wouldn't employers, why wouldn't bureaucracies, why wouldn't the public want transitional jobs programs? What are some of the things to overcome in terms of an attitude or a resistance that you need to think about, as you want to try and go ahead and implement those?

GREENWALD: I think some resistance has to do with equity issues. Who gets to be involved? Is it just for welfare recipients? Is it for the hardest to serve folks? Resistance also revolves around dollars. They can be expensive programs, depending on how long you keep people. There is resistance about agreeing on what the wage should be for people in the program. There is resistance in having people in these programs for up to six months, and sometimes longer depending on where you are. Some people think that the farther you get from a city, typically, if you're in the state, the more you think that "languishing" in a program, from their perspective, for any period of time is wrong. So that's some of the resistance you get.

MOORE: It's certainly not unknown to find some resistance on the issue of perceived displacement of regular workers. Sometimes that leads people to dismiss a transitional jobs approach out of hand because they think it's too difficult to work through establishing protections so that you're sure you're not displacing regular workers. And I think the message from the three of us and the others involved in the National Transitional Jobs Network would be

that there is now ample experience in how one does work through that form of resistance.

WERTHEIM: I think for audience members that are interested in pursuing this design, who have some kind of interest already in it -- I think the biggest initial hurdle is amassing the adequate funding. Although some people claim that these programs can be quite expensive, I think an important argument to keep in mind is, as Richard mentioned a little bit earlier, that they're grant savings. If folks are getting earnings, their grant checks are going to be reduced, even if there is a substantial earnings disregard that some communities are utilizing. The wages tend to be the highest cost in these programs. Typically grants are going down, or in the case of San Francisco, the actual grant dollars are used as the primary funding source for the wage, so folks are not continuing to get a grant in addition to their paycheck.

KYLE: It occurs to me that these programs sound like they're great. Do they exist everywhere? Are they only in big cities? Are they in small places? Are they more difficult in smaller communities, as opposed to big cities?

WERTHEIM: The Transitional Jobs Network, which is the network that I want to make sure folks here know about, that I'm one of the persons working on, is an effort to try to get a sense of all the programs out there [See page 15 for contact info]. And also what resources we can provide to both existing programs and to emerging new programs. We can come back later to how to get more information about the network and what we offer. In recent work, the Network has identified at least 40 programs throughout the country that I think fit in this basic paradigm. Since doing that work, it has become clear that there are many others that I think fit. Programs are sometimes statewide. Georgia had a small pilot in Augusta, Georgia that recently has been expanded to statewide. Washington State has a statewide program you might have heard about. Richard's program is citywide in Philadelphia.

There are rural programs in parts of Georgia, programs up in rural parts of Washington State. Typically, the challenges in rural or smaller towns and communities have to do with fewer work opportunities and transportation challenges. Sites that I know of are familiar with addressing the transportation challenge. They have to in all of their work. So whether it's vanpools or other strategies, that can be addressed. I've heard about models with quite a few configurations in both urban and rural areas, in small town and large cities.

I think Richard's in Philadelphia is the largest single program, as he mentioned. The Washington State program is statewide. They've had five or six thousand participants at any one time throughout the state. So the sizes vary. The San Francisco project is very small, with maybe having served about 300 participants so far. The St. Paul program is very small. I think they can be small or large and work.

MOORE: But to answer another part of your question, John, these programs are not everywhere yet. So that's why there is a concerted effort and a developing strategy to provide assistance in the development of additional programs along this general model. The network of Conservation and Service Corps provide transitional jobs for over 20,000 youth and young adults per year. But we're only in 2/3 of the states. We're not in every state yet.

KYLE: Are there other providers, other folks who are concerned about youth participants besides the Conservation Corps? Are there programs like those in Philadelphia or San Francisco

where some or a chunk of their participants are youth? Or is this a pretty specialized way of approaching young people being involved?

MOORE: Well, in addition to our network of Service and Conservation Corps, there is another substantial network of at least 5,000 participants around the county -- the Youth Build Network of Affiliated Programs -- where highly disadvantaged young people do low-income housing construction and obtain additional schooling. So that's another large youth network. I actually don't know of other city-based transitional jobs programs for youth offhand.

KYLE: One of the things that I wanted to ask about was the training that gets provided to participants -- so called "wrap around" training. Are educational institutions involved with this -- local schools or local colleges, junior colleges, community colleges, things like this? How is that going on, Richard?

GREENWALD: In Philadelphia, the training component is important. It's ten hours of a 35-hour workweek. We do most of the work in-house.

Just as a parenthetical thought, Transitional Work Corporation is a private, nonprofit organization. And some of the places that Tiana and Andy were talking about, some of those are nonprofit, some of those are run by the city, or by the local PIC [private industry council] which is a quasi-government agency. So a variety of people run these things, just for your information. We are a nonprofit.

We choose to do the training part of it ten hours a week back at our site, which by the way is in Center City Philadelphia. It is in the business district, in a very professional, upscale building where we wear suits every day. Because, remember, this is all about getting a job at the end. While we do our transitional work -- 25 hours a week of work out around the city -- people come back here ten hours a week to do their training because we need to get to know who they are so we can job-match them at the end of this process. Everything is about work. Every bit of training we do incorporates how whatever we're training you in today will factor into the work you do at the end of this. So for us it's important to have all the training in one place.

The types of training we do range, and we experiment. Tiana talked about changes. You constantly change in this business. You try to figure out the right thing because none of us has the perfect program yet. We do a lot of ABE -- Adult Basic Education training. We do language training for people with English as a barrier. We do basic job readiness activities. We do some targeted employer training. But really we're just trying to work on what you're learning at the worksite and improve it back here so we can market you to employers at the end of this. And we spend a lot of time on computers as well as working with your career advisor, or your personal job coach, in sorting out all those issues in your life and organizing them around work. So, we do all the training back here.

KYLE: In San Francisco, Tiana, how does the training go?

WERTHEIM: One of the challenges with a small program is economies of scale. When you have a small number of active participants at any one time, sometimes it's hard to have full classrooms. We initially did not have a training piece in our design. That had to do with regulations having to do with California's TANF and community service law. Changes have

been made, and so more training is now allowable under the paradigm we're operating in. And we're now instituting a couple different types of training. We're doing English as a second language for folks with significant barriers to English. We have, like Richard is mentioning, hired our own instructor to do that. Oftentimes working with community colleges and city colleges, there are issues with getting people involved in semester-long programs. There are a lot of bureaucratic issues -- funding issues with having to have large classrooms. Typically, at least in San Francisco when we work with City College, we have to have at least 20 to 30 people in the classroom. We prefer with the community jobs initiative to have ten person classrooms, and so we've been able to do that by hiring our own instructors.

Computers have been a big piece. Soft and hard skills are what's involved in the training here. And I think that different parts of the country have addressed this differently. I know that in Georgia when you have statewide programs, you're going to have different models throughout the state. In some of the programs, people attend a class at a one-stop center and maybe the class is individually tailored to make sure that the class is a good fit with the client's goals and the work skills. In other parts of the country, they might organize all of the participants to go through one curriculum. So, programs address this question differently.

MOORE: In the network with which I am most familiar, the leaning is probably in the direction of the way that Richard is describing where eventually many of the training and educational services come in-house. Although sometimes the resources to provide those services, whether it's GED, high school diploma, come from outside sources such as a school district, such as affiliation with a charter school or a community college or ABE program. But in order to make sure that the education and training fits really well with what's going on in the work experience, the predilection has been to move more and more of that in-house.

WERTHEIM: A good example of what Andy is just referencing about having the training time be connected to the worksite experience is when we developed the English as a second language support component in San Francisco. We specifically wanted to have our own teacher and our own classroom so homework assignments would be related to participants' time in their jobs. So, the homework assignment might be to ask their boss how their weekend was and to come back and report in English to the group. There was a very clear connection between the two parts of the program. Also some programs have chosen to pay participants for the hours that they're in training, and there are some equity challenges if you mix a classroom with some folks who are in your program and some folks who might not be in your program. Having some be paid and some not be paid was one challenge that we wanted to avoid in San Francisco.

KYLE: One of the things that we're being asked about is this connection with the placements and work. Do any of the temporary placements ever lead to permanent employment with the same employer?

WERTHEIM: I think the question about how typical is it that the host site actually permanently hires the participant -- different programs might be handling that different ways. I know in San Francisco, when we tried to encourage host sites to join the project, we clearly communicated that we did not have the expectation they would need to voice some commitments that they were willing to hire those folks. But some programs in the country are starting to do transitional placements in the private sector. And oftentimes in private sector placement, there is a built-in

assumption and some kind of commitment made that if these private sector wages are going to be in any way subsidized during a transitional phase, there is some expectation that the employer would hire the participant after the transitional time period.

KYLE: Another thing to ask you about is why would a community use a transitional jobs model? In some ways it sounds pretty complicated. There are a lot of pieces, there are places to massage the system and work the system and funding to be raised. Wouldn't a focus on simpler strategies like job search or job placement or job training be just as good if I were in a community wanting to do something to help underemployed, or get people into work?

GREENWALD: There are a variety of approaches that need to go on in any community because the people that you serve are fairly diverse and/or there are different parts of the continuum of services that they're allowed to get. Within two years, you've got to be in a work activity or you could be sanctioned, in Pennsylvania. And of course, we're all dealing with five-year time limits. So different approaches need to be available for different types of people. You don't want to have people who are more job-ready -- who don't need a transitional experience -- in our program, for example. We want to get them in a job as quickly as possible. That's the important thing. And, then we want to have government make that job pay as best they can. So to continue to support it so the person can make it through transportation, childcare, clothing allowances, etc. This transitional experience here is not for everybody. It's for people who have had unsuccessful experiences in those other types of programs.

MOORE: Building on Richard's point, I think there are some preliminary indicators of why you might want to do a transitional jobs program, why you might want to adopt this approach -- that is if you have a sense that there is a critical mass of youth, adults, or mix thereof who are falling through the cracks. A critical mass that is obtaining jobs through a rapid attachment model and then not retaining them or otherwise basically going unserved and likely to continue going unserved unless they amass some job experience somewhere. That's what you need to look for as a *raison d'être* to get one of these started.

KYLE: You started to touch on something that came from one of the listeners. What kind of success rates -- what kind of outcome data -- what's happening six months later after they have had their six months in the transitional job and what's happening six months after that? What kinds of data are out there? What kind of support is there for getting that kind of information?

WERTHEIM: In general, the outcomes suggest a 50 to 70% unsubsidized employment rate and I'm talking about nationwide in these programs. But programs track success measures differently. Philadelphia's Transitional Work Corporation finds a 63% rate of permanent job retention. Washington State talks about 69% job retention, but the typical wage placement level might be different. In San Francisco, there is a lower placement rate of more like 55%, but the average wage tends to be as high as \$9.22 cents an hour. I know in a statewide study in Washington, they found that compared to other Welfare to Work programs, the state's community jobs program has the most significant impact on employment and earnings of program graduates -- compared to all other of their supports for TANF folks, even those who don't have as extreme barriers to employment. They found that this program has the most

significant impact on employment and earnings of program graduates.

MOORE: Those rates sound right. An initial 50 to 70% job placement rate, and then at the six or twelve month mark, statistics showing at least 2/3 of the people still working and making initial progress toward wage advancement.

KYLE: What are the average wages that people are getting in these transitional jobs? How does it compare with minimum wage or average wages elsewhere in the community? What can you tell us about what they're being paid while they're in the program?

WERTHEIM: Typically the transitional wage is either minimum wage or slightly above minimum wage. So, they're ranging from \$5.15 an hour in Arkansas up to \$8.00 an hour in San Francisco. In Washington State, they have a minimum wage that grows with inflation, so it's indexed. It's going to grow that way. In San Francisco, the wage was lower. Due to advocacy by grassroots community groups, there was pressure to raise the wage to \$8 an hour. But typically the wages tend to be in the range of \$5.15 to \$8.00. Many of them are around \$6.75.

KYLE: Has there been a role by faith-based organizations in transitional jobs programs in your experience anywhere?

GREENWALD: Not that I know of.

WERTHEIM: I think there is a great opportunity, particularly given the attention and the upcoming funding for faith-based communities. I also think many faith-based communities have good attachments to the grassroots and are really connected to communities and neighborhoods. I think there is a great opportunity there to make that link. I'm not familiar with programs that have done that so far.

KYLE: I'd like to give each of the three of you a round of applause for your participation today and give you one last opportunity to tell us something that you didn't get a chance to say. Or something significant or important that the folks listening should keep in mind as they go out to start work or continue work in transitional jobs programs.

GREENWALD: I'll say two things. One is we are really learning a lot about outcomes. And we're learning a lot about internal performance measures and indicators. So I think it's a more sophisticated type of industry as far as the transitional work part of Welfare to Work than it was several years ago. So don't mix this up with old programs. We have certainly grown off the backs of old programs. But we're new and sophisticated and exciting and have a good story to tell.

The second is I would like people around the country to tell this story to their legislators. There is some pending legislation out there that's supporting an additional \$500 million for TANF reauthorization toward transitional work programs. If you'd like to know more about it, I'd challenge you to contact Steve Savner at the Center for Law and Social Policy [CLASP] so he can tell you a little bit more about it and encourage you to work with your legislators to help us get funding for this very fragile program. [<http://www.clasp.org>/or call 202-906-8000]

WERTHEIM: I just want to give a quick plug for the Transitional Jobs Network, which is a recently developed effort to keep track of how these projects are doing nationwide and have a single place of contact if you have questions or would want to be connected with a resource. If you want to know what part of the country is dealing with certain demographics or has a design that involves home visits or whatever your question might be, the Transitional Jobs Network is a good place to come. My phone number is 415-575-2157. I'm one of the people that answers calls for the Transitional Jobs Network. The Transitional Jobs Network website is <http://www.transitionaljobs.net/>.

MOORE: I just wanted to repeat what Richard said, that there is a growing movement to include transitional jobs in federal legislation, although it is certainly, and it remains, an allowable activity even under current TANF rules, to run a transitional jobs program, so there's not a barrier. And I would just say as a member of the Transitional Jobs Network that we want very much to stay in contact with folks who are developing new programs. And the information exchange is not just one way. There is a rich base of experience already in the network. But I'm sure other people are going to be developing great new ideas and the function of the network is to keep spreading those around and multiplying them.

KYLE: I want to thank everybody for being part of the call today. The National League of Cities' Institute for Youth, Education, and Families has sponsored this audioconference. You can go to our website at <http://www.nlc.org/iyef> for more information.