>> The broadcast is now starting. All attendees are in listen-only mode.

>> Hi, good afternoon. This is Devin Grant. I'm the director of the Governor's Cabinet, an advisory committee for people with disabilities. I'm also the co-state lead for our Employment First State Leadership Mentoring Program. Today is the second part in our three-part webinar series looking at best practices for successful organizations in their workforce efforts, and today we're focusing on moving from supervision to mentoring. So, hopefully you are on the right webinar. A couple of logistical things before we get started. If you have audio problems, I would suggest using your telephone for listening into the audio. For some reason, with GoToWebinar, that seems to work better than trying to listen through your computer speakers. So, if you do have issues, start with that first. Then also if you have questions, please feel free to enter those in the questions box. You may also see a chat box. So I'll be monitoring both of those, and we'll be answering your questions as we move through. So, then, on to introductions. We have three subject matter experts with us this afternoon. Karen Lee is one of our national subject matter experts, and she is with us from Maryland. Genni Sasnett is with us from Virginia, and Gail Fanjoy is way up north in Maine. All three of them are nationally-known subject matter experts on these topics, and we really appreciate them being able to join us today. And I will skip the detailed biography, because you should've all seen those in the announcements, and I'm sure you'll hear more about their individual stories as we go through today. So, with that, I will turn it over to Karen. Thanks.

>> Thank you. Welcome to everybody, and just want to say that the first webinar, I think there was some difficulties with folks being able to sign on and get the information. So, you can go back to the website to see that first webinar where we really talked about recruitment and onboarding of staff. I think it's a really important first step. I also wanted to make sure that we're recording this, Devin. I don't see the-- I see the recording button, but to make sure that you're recording this so that people can listen to it going forward.

>> Just-- yeah.

>> And thank you so much. Okay, good, and thank you so much. We are going to work together on this. Genni is, as Devin said, coming to us from Virginia, and Gail is up in Maine. And we have worked together for years. Actually, Genni and I worked together about 30 years ago, together at St. John's in Washington, DC, so it's a pleasure to work with two other really great professionals on this topic, and hopefully you'll get a really great, some great information. So, with that, let me make sure we can-- there we go. So, one of the things that we talked a lot about in the first one, and I just wanted to review this for a second is, in terms of staff recruitment and retention, there was kind of a Premier article and research done back when it was AAMR, now AAIDD, and this study was done with a lot of national experts, and it really, today, continues to be the research involving how we support staff and what we think about as we develop our staff, and on-board new staff, and who we're looking for. Really incredibly

comprehensive study. You can actually Google this, this Premier monograph. And I want to just say that the three of the-- the most important things that came out of that that really guide us through today and through all of our discussion is that we lose staff because they don't have opportunity for growth. You know, they get into a job, and they're just kind of stuck there, and they don't see a ladder or lattice, they don't see a place to go. They aren't well-supervised or mentored. You know, often times, I think in our field we have staff that do a really great job, and so we reward them by moving them into a supervisory position, and that might not be their greatest strength. But we have moved them into that position, and also, there's a lot of new techniques. We're learning about coaching and mentoring versus supervision. And then finally, people leave because they don't feel competent or confident about their job. They really don't have the skills. There's a gap between what it is that our expectations are versus what it is that a staff has been trained or supported to do. And so, I only bring this up because I think it's a great beginning dialogue for us to continue to have, and to keep thinking about those three things on a daily basis as we speak through all three of our three webinars. So, today, we have three objectives for you, and each of us has a strength and some stories to go along with each of these. And so I invite you to, you know, take notes. You'll be able to download the PowerPoint. Devin will have access to that. And so, to go on. So, we're going to talk today about-- I'm going to talk today about workforce development. And one of the things that I think is so interesting about workforce development is what it used to be, and what it is today, and what it means to develop your workforce. Is it a one-stop thing? Does it only happen during the beginning of orientation, and then we expect people to retain all of that for years and years and years? So, what happens after orientation, right? All of us have, and I am an executive director of an organization, and Gail is an executive director of an organization, and Genni was chief operating officer of a multi-state organization. So, we've all been in your shoes. We've all been direct support professionals. We've all been managers. We've all been assistant directors, and we've all been directors. So, we certainly know the challenges that everybody faces every day. Training costs a lot of money. It takes a lot of money for us to train folks. And when we have vacancies and overtime, it costs us even more. And so as a result, we don't stop and do the ongoing develop that needs to be done. I love the saying by Zig Ziglar, you know, the only thing worse than training employees and losing them is not train them and to keep them. And I think that that's, in our field, so often what we've done in terms of that. So, I think people are always learning, and we're going to talk more in our next webinar about decentralized, but I want you to think about this today, as you go from maybe an organization that does center-based services, and as you transition into community-based services, there is such a huge change in problem-solving skills, and how to get things done. And, you know, back in the day when I first started doing community-based services, I had worked with Genni at St. John's, and I remember that when we were in the center, you know, it was no problem. Somebody, a male had to go to the bathroom, and you just, you know, walked them to the bathroom, or they walked by themselves to the bathroom, and used the men's bathroom, and they came out, and that was it. But I remember the first time, in 1986 maybe, or '87, when I was out with somebody in a very crowded DC McDonald's, and there was no co-bathroom, like there is now. You know,

there are some co-bathrooms. What do you do? How do you solve that problem of a woman-- you're not going to go into a men's bathroom, and you're not going to take this adult man with you into the women's bathroom. And so really, some of the retraining we have to do as we move people out into the community is to think about the kinds of things that our staff are going to experience. And they're going to have a whole new way of having to deal with the work that they do, the supports that they give. So, I think staff development is absolutely critical as we move over time. Okay. So, this is a little bit about workforce development. And remember, this is a field in and of itself, workforce development. And they have a language of their own. And it's a great place to actually access tools from. As developmental disability professionals, we often look at our own field only. But the field of workforce development is a huge, huge, very well-organized field. So they use words like incumbent workers, you know? The workers that we're currently working with. And that's such a better thing than old staff, you know? Such a better word to use than just old staff. But, you know, there's, the perspective was, when somebody's in trouble or when we're changing, that's historically when we would do workforce development. And now, the current trend really is to think in the world about keeping people up to date, keeping people moving forward. And if we go back to those three original principles we talked about, do people feel competent and confident? Do they feel as though they have an opportunity for growth? And are they mentored and supported well? And certainly, workforce development hits all three of those things right on. And it's not just about training. It's a much broader view, and we're going to look at that. So, as we move from the historical perspective to the current perspective, we have to think about this on a daily, weekly, and a monthly schedule, not just when there's a new policy that we need to share, or a new HIPAA rule that comes out, or on their annual basis. So, one of the things I like to think a lot about is that training used to happen here, at the water cooler. This was one of my favorite coffee break-- from Men in Black. And truly, you know, we used to, people used to take smoking breaks, and they used to take coffee breaks. And when you're all together in a centralized situation, it's so easy to have a quick chat about workforce development, and training, and, you know, oh, I was working with Carl the other day, and he's really struggling with this. And, you know, he got mad at me. And you can share information right away when you're talking over the water cooler. And that's something you can do that when you're in centralized services. But when you're not in centralized services, you have to be really, really intentional about your staff development, and about your ongoing support of staff, above and beyond just-- because the water cooler doesn't exist anymore when you're decentralized, and neither does the coffee break. So you have to be really intentional about that. So, one of the things that we do here at Seek is, we've made the rule, and it's an interesting story. We made the rule that you have to meet at least once a week, that supervisors need to place eyes on the people that they are supporting at least once a week. And the reason was, it didn't seem to make sense to people, oh, we're busy. There's no place to meet out in the community. It's too difficult to do. But folks started to really feel an absence when they were out in the community, and didn't have that kind of connection, and there wasn't an opportunity to see where it is that a person was struggling at the time. And so we started regular community meetings, and it

wasn't until we started to collect some data around that. We had a couple of teams that were doing community meetings, and a couple of meetings that weren't, and we saw an increase in staff retention when we were in the meeting once a week, or putting eyes on folks once a week. We saw a decrease in people calling off when that happened. We saw an increase in outcomes for the people we support, something like 30 to 35 percent in all of those really increased, and as a result, then we didn't have to make a mandate that people met once a week. Once they realized that you didn't have to put out so many fires when you're actually talking and seeing people once a week, and that's really the opportunity for that staff development to happen, or that workforce development. We also were very intentional about identifying places to meet, like we always say, never the malls or the libraries. Those are two places that folks are hanging out all the time. So, here are some components of workforce development that are really critical. We talked about some of them in the first event, or the first webinar, but I want to go back and go over them, is the competency-based training versus time-based training is a really critical component of workforce development. So, the difference is, what are we training people for? Are we just training them for time? You know, okay, take a pre-test, take a post-test, and this is a 30-minute training, or a half an hour training, or an hour training. You really have to be thoughtful about competencies. And in your state, we know that you have ACRE competencies, and you have APSE, the CESP, is what your ODP and your VR are looking at, making sure that the staff have the competencies to do that, and demonstrated not just that they take the 40-hour training, or a 20-hour training, but they actually have those skills. We talk about minding the gap, and I'm going to get more into that on the next slide, but what are really the needs of the staff so that they, what are the skills that they don't have that they need? And then, of course, one of the most critical things I think that we really need to do is we need to make sure that whatever it is that we're training folks in, when they go back to do their job, they have an opportunity to implement that training. And that's certainly been one of the biggest barriers in our field in workforce development. And I think it happens over and over and over, more than with anybody else, I think it happens with job developers, or people who are doing customized employment, is that your executive director or program director sends you to an external training, and while you're at this training, you learn these great skills and techniques about negotiated job development, and about informational interviews, and how to do discovery. And that takes a little bit longer. Of course, customized employment, you do the hard work up front so that in the long run, it's a better match for somebody, and you need less support in the long run, for the most case. And so, really flipping that organizational structure where, you know, quick placement, placement, placement, and then you have to glue a direct support staff to somebody because it wasn't a great match is, of course, the traditional way we've been doing supported employment. And so when we send people out to trainings, it's so critical that whatever it is that they learn, they're able to bring it back to the organizations. And I think that's one of the things that I see over and over again with our organizations that we do some consulting with across the country is, they send their staff out to training. You know, oh, no, they're all ACRE-certified, they're all trained by, with an ACRE certification, and they all have an APSE CESP. And then they come back, and the structure of the department doesn't actually

support what they have learned how to do. So I think that that's one of the issues about spending a lot of money, and not getting a lot of return. So, another thing that I would recommend for folks that are on the call today, and I'm sorry we weren't able to do any polls. We had intended originally to do some polls, and it just didn't work out, to see who was on the call today, but one of the things that is so critical, I think, for management, if there's folks that are on the webinar today in management, is to find out what the efficacy of the training is. So, maybe you're sending somebody to a person-centered planning training, and when they come back, they need to demonstrate how they did it, and how they can do it, and you need to give them time to be able to do that, and the resources they need to do that, whatever tools your organization is using around that. And they need to be able to demonstrate that. But then you need to make sure that the structure is there for the person to continue to be able to do that, and to succeed in that. Going back to kind of the same old ISP that you've always done is not necessarily consistent with the kind of person-centered planning they did externally. And the same is true with job development. So, of course, webinars, there's just a plethora of opportunities that are out there in our field, and webinars, and external trainings. I know you have some wonderful training organizations in your state. Conferences are a great way to reward folks. I had the pleasure of being at your Everyday Lives conference, and I know that Pennsylvania puts on a number of conferences. So that's a great way to reward people, not only to have them develop, but to put that trust in them, and of course that's that advancement we're talking about. So, minding the gap, I think, is one of the most important pieces that we need to do in our workforce development as we start to prepare our staff to do something different. And if you think about one of your staff that might have been just a phenomenal worker on a crew, on a work crew, maybe they were just the best janitorial work crew supervisor in the world, well, the skills you need to be the janitorial work crew that's working in the evening in an office building might be very, very different than the skills that you need to go out and to meet an employer for the first time, or to do an informational interview, or to coach somebody one on one where you're trying to decrease your presence rather than be there. So when we say minding the gap, what we mean is, it comes from, when you're in Europe and you're trying to get on a train, they always say, "Mind the gap," because the gap between where the train pulls up and the platform, sometimes there's a little gap there. What do you need to fill that gap? Mind that gap. And so when I think about mind the gap, I think about, you've got to look out, and you've got to say, what do we need? And then this is a great picture to me, because you know, you're surveying. What do I need? Where am I going to put my foot next? What am I going to do next? You kind of have to survey the land, and we need to do that with a staff, and especially as we go out into the community, and we're providing more consistent one-on-one supports to folks, is that we have to be able to say, here's what Sue needs in her life. You know, we've done some person-centered planning, and we've figured out that Sue really needs to be doing some things with her hands. She needs some art classes, and she needs to be doing some kind of work that involves her hands, and we've gone through the whole discovery process. But our staff only knows about jobs that are, you know, maybe gross motor, and not fine motor. Or, they know one geographic area but not the other area. There's a

gap between what the person needs and the skill of the direct support professional. And that gap is what our workforce development really needs to be. It needs to be based on the individual folks that we support, and where that happens. So we have to think about how we will start to develop each person, each staff person, just in what you're thinking about how you support the people that you work with. Very much the same way, you do the same development in thinking where are they now, right? Who they are is who they are. Where are they now? And where do they need to be to do this job well, to feel confident and competent? Where are they going? And that's the gap that we are trying to fill in workforce development. Some organizations use individual training plans for staff. It's a great way to go about it. And especially if you have a match between somebody that is supported and a direct support professional. So, here's another one of the really important pieces of the workforce development. People need an opportunity to grow and to be rewarded. Think about how many people in your career, and I think about this in my career, how many people were wonderful direct support professionals? They were highly skilled, they did a great job of working with somebody, maybe somebody who had a very specific support need, maybe somebody with autism, or somebody that had very significant medical support needs, and they did such a good job that we rewarded them by having them become a front-line supervisor, even though that is not what their strength is. But people make those choices in their career because there's no other option. If I want to get paid more, I want more capital, I want to have more prestige, I want to move up the organizational ladder, I have to go from what I do really well to something else. And so on the right-hand side, this whole idea of career lattice, and these words are not necessarily our industry words on the right, but it's more of what we're thinking about these days, is looking at a way of creating that. So, what we've done here in Maryland is, we went to the workforce organization in our state called Department of Labor Licensing and Regulation. I don't know what it is in Pennsylvania, Department of Labor on the federal level. And they had a grant to re-train incumbent workers, right? And in our state, we so often go back to our DDA, your ODP and say, we need some more money, we need some more money, we need some more money, we have to re-train our staff, we have to do that. But those are not necessarily the only places to go for funds to re-train staff. And so what we found was, we had a lot of folks that were great direct support professionals. And they wanted to move up in the field. They wanted other opportunities. They wanted to be able to try some other things. But they didn't necessarily have the training or the skills to do that. In the meantime, we all know that there's a workforce crisis right now. I addressed some of that in the first webinar, and how critical it is for us to address these issues of the workforce crisis as we move forward, and what will happen if we don't start to address it today, in five years, ten years. And so we started to look at staff turnover, and at the same time, our state DDA was looking at it as well, and said, how in the world can we help our provider community in reducing turnover? And so Seek, the organization that I work with, and four of my colleagues got together with the state DDA, and we applied for one of these grants to do some incumbent worker training. And we've been doing it for, we've had the grant for about a year, and we are in our second cohort of people. And so what we're creating in Maryland is a DSP-1, a DSP-2, and a DSP-3. And, you know, every organization can

call folks whatever they want. If you want to call them, you know, a job coach and a job developer, or a customized employment specialist, whatever levels that you want, but the state is going to pay a differential for higher-skilled staff. And so that's a great way of showing how a partnership is creating these opportunities for people to grow in their profession without having to become supervisors. And after we establish this DSP-1, 2, and 3, we're starting to look at the lattice. We're starting to look at things like, I'm a DSP-1 with an autism specialism. Or, I am a DSP-2 with a community connector specialist. So, they could be, your specialties could be either in a specific disability, a specific population, a specific skill, or even in the specific environment. And so looking not only at going up with folks, but going out with folks as well, so that's kind of the difference, the career ladder and lattice, as a part of workforce development. So, this is just a really great competency. To look at competency, there's a cycle of training. So, we train folks. We observe. We want them to demonstrate, and the way that you have to ongoingly support people is they have to have a motivation to keep doing it. And go back to some of the folks that you have worked with, staff that you've had for a long time, and you think, oh, I already trained them on that. Why aren't they doing it? Or why aren't they doing it again? And we have to really put into the cycle, and Genni's going to talk more about some of that motivation and some of those other things that we do as an organization. So, to really think about your own workforce development internally as well as externally, but to think about the training piece. Okay, I'm going to show you how to do it. I'm going to give you the academic information. And then I'm going to, I want you to observe me doing it. And we're going to talk more about that in terms of mentoring, and the role of mentoring in demonstrating and observing. And then we're going to watch what people are doing. We're going to make sure that they're doing it right, tweak what they're doing, and then we're going to motivate them to continue to do it ongoing. Because once they have the skill, remember, we still are talking about the structure. Is the structure of the organization set up in a way to do that? And then are we motivating people to continue to do that? So, I am going to go ahead and pass that over. I don't know, Devin, I think we'll go ahead and pass this over to Genni right now. Unless there was any pressing questions.

>> All right.

>> There's a couple questions, if you want me to read those.

>> What would you like to do? Do you want us to wait, or do you want to—

>> Let me read the one question in particular, and then the other's more of an issue, let me comment on that. Somebody commented about the timing URL where we've posted the recordings. And the first part from this year is not posted yet. Unfortunately, it does take us a while to get those recordings posted, because we have to caption the recordings first. So, if you check back, they should be posted eventually. But in the meantime—

>> And where will they be posted?

>> The address is tinyurl.com/emp1st. And that's where we've posted all of last year's, and then we'll post this year's as well. And those are, that address is in the notices that go out, the announcements for the webinars. So, if you didn't get those, let me know. And my address, my email address is dgrant@pa.gov. And I'll put that in the chat box too, after I ask this next question. But the question that got asked was, mentoring once a week is an ideal endeavor, but if you're a large provider with more than 150 individuals supported in the field, how do you manage the mentors, personnel costs, time, particularly in providing support in a large metropolitan area?

>> So, I'm happy to answer that, but I think Genni, you're going to feed right into that in what you're talking about, correct.

>> Yes, yes I will.

>> Perfect.

>> [INAUDIBLE]

>> We'll pass it right over to Genni.

>> Okay. Well, thank you, Karen, that was a really terrific presentation, and thank you, Devin. And Karen is right, I will be touching on how to logistically do some of that mentoring as a part of your support to staff. But before I get to that, there were just a couple things that came to my mind as Karen was talking, the first of which is this. You know, I am fortunate that I worked in an agency that was initially very traditional, 100% facility-based agency. And that over the years, I know for a few years, actually, that agency transformed itself from a traditional facility-based agency to 100% community-based agency, meaning that we sold all of our facilities and buildings that we had, and at that time, we were also expanding into new states, so we didn't ever buy new things as we expanded, and we just operated, began to operate simply just in the community. And you know, I learned a lot from that transition of, you know, what it meant to the agency, what it meant to the staff, obviously what it meant to the individuals, but also the impacts that occurred that we did not anticipate. And one of those impacts was the impact that that much change would have on the personnel, on the staff. Because we went from a situation where we had four walls, right? Four concrete, brick, mortar walls. And business can be conducted a certain way when you are within four walls. As Karen mentioned, you know, you can talk to people, you can center people. I can recall a day when I could actually talk to every single person who worked for my agency within the course of the day. But over time, and again, as we transitioned into the community, and also transitioned into providing services to many different states, and eventually evolving to having 900 staff across five states, obviously it was

very hard to do business as we had done before. So, I definitely had to change some of my behavior. We had to do some restructuring of the organization. But the first thing we had to do was recognize that the staff are the four walls of the future. You know, there won't be, at least if my dreams come true, as much inclination for people to provide services within facilities. That means most of what we will do will be in the community. That means that's where the staff will be. That's where they will be headquartered, that's where they will operate, and it'll be communities in which they live. Our staff has always been extremely important and valuable to us. Their value only increases day by day as we make this transformation, and this journey further into communities. So, we have to be extremely thoughtful about all the things we talked about last time, which was how to attract staff, how to recruit them, how to bring them on board, but also how to keep them, how to make their quality of work such that they will enjoy the work, and then they'll want to stay with us. We are absolutely and positively nothing without our staff. So, really, as we move forward, and as we do some things in transformation like what I was just describing where my agency sold off its buildings and properties, those resources have to be translated into things to support the staff in the field. That's the objective. That is rebalancing your resources so that they are, in the future, directed towards the right place, which is the community, and towards the right people, which is the people you serve, and obviously the staff. So, staff are just getting more and more and more valuable to us, and we have to make more and more, have to pay more and more attention to the kinds of support that we provide to people. So, Karen, if you go on to the next slide. You know, we talk a lot about training staff, and then we talk about staff involvement. And there are some distinctions in these things, as well as the distinctions in mentoring. You know, training is more of a time-limited thing. It's what you do, you train somebody in CPR. You know, that happens over the course of hours, or a day, or whatever. Very time-limited thing. You don't often get much additional support around that, not a lot of mentoring or other kinds of reiterations of what you've learned. But there are other things that people learn, that staff learn, that indeed are things that are less time-limited. They are broader concepts. They are things that they learn over time and through a variety of modes. So, it's important, I think, to think about, you know, what is it that we need staff to know? What skills do we need them to have? What competencies do they need to be able to show? And how are we going to be able to deliver those things to them? What's going to be sort of a time-limited training? What is going to be teaching over the course of time and reinforcing through a different mechanism? So, you know, there are certain things that we need to get clear in our head when staff are first coming on, and we are preparing them to be able to do their job in the future. And the first thing, and if you are able to listen to the previous webinar, or if you were in attendance, we talked a lot about the importance of making sure that staff who are coming on board with us now are coming on board with the proper philosophical foundation. You know, that we have to behave as management in ways that demonstrate or exemplify those philosophical principles that we are communicating to people. Now, if people don't have the basic understanding of why we are doing what we are doing in our field now, it's going to be very difficult for them to truly be able to do a good job, or do it with the proper spirit. So, it's very important, as we're bringing people

on, to make sure that we are hitting that philosophical foundation, and that we are managing our own behavior as managers in such a way that communicates the philosophy we're trying to communicate. There are other things that we need to think about in training and staff development for folks these days that we didn't think about as much, I think, historically. And that's things like qualities and characteristics, again, something I spoke about extensively in our last session. But also things like self-reliance and teamwork. You know, we have sort of a dichotomy that we're putting folks in. We have to bring people on who are very self-reliant, or who can be taught, and supported, and mentored to become self-reliant, because of the amount of time staff now are in the community with individuals without direct supervision at hand. So, people have to learn how to depend on themselves, and to be able to make decisions and choices in situations that are presented to them as they are making their way through their workday. But at the same time, we have to encourage self-reliance and help develop self-reliance. We also have to help people learn about teamwork, because teamwork happens to be one of the most critical things in the work that we do today. We're always working in teams. We are always cooperating and depending on others to get our work done. So, when we're bringing people on, it's not just teaching people technical skills, though obviously we need to do that. It's making sure they come in on the right platform with the right basis, paying attention to things that are more characteristics or behaviors that we want to make sure that people display. And then moving on to our technical skills. Technical skills, obviously, are important. That's what it takes to do the job. I mean, Karen spoke a lot about customized employment, and that comes to mind for me as well. You know, we bring people in who may not have all the technical skills that are going to be required to do the job. In fact, it's likely we're going to bring people in who don't have all of the technical skills. So, we're going to have to make that part of the training and mentoring process. Teaching people how to do the tasks of the job, and spending the time with them to ensure that they really have it, that they feel comfortable with it, that they've gotten support during the learning process so that they can move forward once the training is completed. But we also need to teach them about our structures, and our processes, and our procedures, because every agency has ways of doing things, and those ways are different from agency to agency. So, when I sort of think of the strand of training, supporting, mentoring, this is the strand I think of. Building a philosophical foundation, teaching about self-reliance and teamwork, adding on some technical skills, and then making sure all the structures and supports are there for the individual. Next, Karen, you can go. Self-management skills. You know, there are many things that are required of staff in the community that are different, as I mentioned before, than what we may have expected within facilities where supervision and support was much more available to people. And these skills are less obvious. You know, they don't necessarily come to your mind automatically. But self-management skills are very important for our staff as they conduct themselves throughout their work and throughout the day. It can be, and I'm sure folks on the webinar know this, it can be very stressful for staff when they're trying to figure out how to prioritize things, how to meet all their commitments, how to use their time effectively. People need support in learning how to do that. These are not innate skills. These are learned skills. And once again, it's something that

you can teach, but then you have to demonstrate, and you have to mentor people to help them acquire a proficiency at the skill once they have acquired the skill. Now, acquiring the skill is one thing. Becoming proficient and competent is something else. It is more advanced than just being able to demonstrate a skill. And another thing that's very important, I think, to focus on in developing your staff is, you know, teaching people how to get information when they need it. I think about this all the time. I reflect on when I was in university myself, and, you know, it's been a long time, and I don't think I remember very much in terms of specific things I may have learned. But what I do remember, and what I did take away, and what most people do take away from advanced training or higher education is the understanding of how to get additional information when you need it. You know, information changes rapidly, especially in our world now, so people need to have the ability, and need to be motivated to get information when they need it, and to share that information with others, and to use it in support of the work that they are doing. Another self-management skill folks need is being able to recognize that you need a network of support around you as an individual, as a human being, and that you probably do have that. And that you must learn to rely on that more for support for yourself. And by the way, as you are relying on that network for your self-support, you are also mining that network for connections for others, to figure out how you can help the folks you're supporting make connections in the community. You know, networking's sort of the name of the game these days, and it's critically important that again, we teach our staff to recognize networks they have, teach them how to build new networks, and how to support individuals to build networks. These are not skills that automatically come to mind, but these are skills that are going to be needed for our staff as we move into the future. Okay, Karen, you can go to the next slide. Another thing that I think people think is innate, and I absolutely know is not innate, is the whole notion of judgment and decision-making. You know, all of you on the webinar, and Karen, Gail and I, all were not born automatically knowing how to make good judgments and how to make decisions. Those are not innate skills. Those are acquired skills. And yet when you think of your personnel going out in the field, being out in the field sometimes for days without any direct face-to-face contact with you, they're going to be in many, many different situations in which they're going to have to use very good judgment, and they're going to have to have some very strong decision-making ability. I think about, one time I was working with some adjudicated youth in a program, and I was in Washington, DC, and I went to talk to a professor, you know, at Howard University. She was going to give me some insights into some things. And it was actually she who got me to understand, as I was working with this youth, that there was no reason to think that they knew how to make decisions, or how to make sound decisions. That it was entirely possible that they had not had that modeled for them, that they had not really seen the process of sound decision-making, and therefore had not acquired those skills. So, I think it's very important for us to hone in on these kinds of things as well as, you know, foundational, philosophical things, or technical skills, or how we do things at our organization. Also need to help people feel confident in going out, and when they are faced with a situation that is not something they've been faced with before, they know how to go through the process of assessing the variables in the situation, of weighing the risk and benefits in the situation, and

coming up with a sound decision as a result of that. But it's also important for us to make sure that we are helping people know sort of the parameters of the decision-making authority that they've been given. I think that there's a lot, and it's talked about a lot when you talk about developing self-directed teams, that one of the things that you need to do to help people build confidence in their decision-making is let them know the parameters. These are the areas in which you're going to have to make decisions. There are things that are going to come up during the day, versus these other items, which are not things that need to necessarily be responded to so quickly, but need input from others. So, again, if you're going to teach someone the process of making a decision, then you have to give them the parameters within which they would make those decisions. Again, this is something you demonstrate all of the time as a manager to your staff. Your process for making decisions, and it's something that you can mentor staff through as they are learning how to do it on their own. Okay, next one here. So, again, folks are going to need, you know, direct training and mentoring and support to acquire some technical skills that they may not have when they come to you. And I do believe that our work is getting more technical, and that such strategies as customized employment really call for a higher level skillset, and also calls for more thoughtful training and follow-up. And when I think about the acquisition of technical skills, I think of this little schematic. And it's starting on the upper left-hand side is the direct training, whether that may be, you know, face to face training, or online staff training. And by the way, just a word about online staff training. You know, in my agency, we did use some online staff training, but we made a rule that we would set up a lab where there computers would be, where people could do the training so that a manager could be present and help facilitate that online training, and be available to answer questions, make points, or somehow effectively enhance the training. But at any rate, after there is direct training, for most of the more technical work that we're doing these days, and again, [INAUDIBLE] employment is a good example, there has to be-- it's not even optional. There has to be some follow-up field-based mentoring. And that, you know, can be challenging, and someone asked the question earlier about how do we afford these things? And that is challenging, that's something one has to account for and figure out in your planning process. But that field-based mentoring will lead staff to skilled development, and they will begin to be able to demonstrate the skills that you're hoping to see them be able to demonstrate. But, that is not the end of the story. Being able to demonstrate a skill is different from being competent. Competency comes with practice. Competency comes over time, as a person goes from "I know how to do this," to "I'm very comfortable doing this. I could even teach somebody else how to do this. You know, I am completely at ease with doing this." But a problem, and Karen also touched on this before, and it hopefully will somewhat answer the question that was posed before, is we have an issue in our field of having managers, middle managers in particular, who are not trained in the same way that our direct line staff are, and therefore, the managers themselves do not have the skill or the competency, and even worse, in some cases, not even the understanding of what it is that the staffer is being charged to do. And that makes life very difficult. If, indeed, the middle management is prepared and does have the same set of skills that we're trying to imbue into the staff, then they can become the mentors. That's how I

acted, way back when, when my agency was a traditional facility-based agency. As I said earlier, I could go around and talk to every single person every single day. Those conversations were mentorships, and easily done in that scenario. But in the brave new world in which we are involved in, where staff are decentralized and scattered in the community, it's really important to get management staff, middle-management staff in particular, well-trained, well-versed in the technical skills, so when they go out to the field, when they visit with their staff, when they attempt to provide mentoring, they know what they're talking about. And again, themselves can demonstrate some of these skills. In Michigan, where I worked a good deal over the past few years, we recognized this problem was occurring in the state. And so we worked with a colleague of mine, folks may know Del [INAUDIBLE], and we developed a "train the trainer" training for mid-level managers within agencies. And it did two things. One, it got those people to a level of competency so that they could supervise other staff who were attempting to do customized employment, which was the focus of the training. But also, so they could train people within their organization. One of the problems we have with training is that you may get staff trained, but a training may only come around every so often. It's not available, people have to go away, it's expensive, you know? So the degree to which we can develop internal capacity within our agencies to do training is greatly to your advantage, because then it can be provided as needed. They have new classes, staff coming on, you can do that training internally. Perhaps that training can be done by someone who subsequently is a person who can provide mentoring within the community. I think it's an important thing to think about. Teamwork. I mentioned teamwork before, and I don't know if you guys can see, but in this picture, the Chihuahua is looking at a plate of hamburgers, so that's what these guys are teaming up to do. But teamwork is what it suggests. I mean, it is a planned and coordinated effort on the part of a group of people to act together in the interest of a common cause. In our field, doing the work that we are doing now, it's more decentralized. Teamwork only gets more important by the day. And again, there is absolutely no reason to assume that people inherently know how to work in a team. I think we do assume that, and I think we get some pretty strong surprises as a result. So, by the same token as I was speaking earlier, that you're teaching people to be self-reliant, what that means, how to make decisions, how to make judgments. You're offering them support on technical skills that you're providing. You're also having to make sure that people understand the importance of teamwork, that strong teams are created, that strong teams are supported, that those teams, again, are given the parameters of their authority, what they can decide as a team, what they might need to consult with management about. Because the more you are decentralized like we were in my agency, the more you tend to gravitate, as we did, to sort of geographical team formation. And what I mean by that, and we'll talk more about this in our next time we talk about decentralization, but in order to manage 900 people across, you know, six states, there have to be some structures that facilitate that management, and teams are the best structures to do that. But one has to, again, figure out how to best support those teams once they are put together. In my own agency, and this relates to the ladder, career ladder that Karen was talking about earlier, we had geographical teams that had a lead person in them. And that didn't mean that that person necessarily ran that whole team, that just

meant that that person had some extra duties. They had a little higher salary. Had a little more time on the schedule to do some communication between the staff and management to do some last-minute staff rearranging for coverage and things like that. So, that was, you know, an effort to one, just manage things, but two, to give people a chance to move up. But to move up in a manner that didn't do what Karen warned about, which is moving somebody too high, too quick when they're not prepared to take the responsibility. But, you know, teamwork is critical in our work, and again, some effort has to be made to help people form teams, and for you to demonstrate how teamwork occurs. Next one. I am a big advocate of staff meetings. Karen talked about staff meetings. In my agency, we really relied on our staff meetings for communication and many other things with the staff. It was a great way to reinforce what we were saying to staff about the importance of being in a community. We decided that it would make no sense to have staff scattered in the community and to bring them back to our offices for a meeting when the message to them was that your home is in the community, your place is in the community. So, we modeled inclusion by having all of our meetings in the community, in rec centers, or church basements, or wherever we could find, and really focused those meetings on problem-solving, doing some brief training, having a place to talk, to get help. But very importantly, and Karen touched on this, to make people feel like they belonged to something, that they weren't just hanging out there in the community all by themselves, that they were still a part of our agency, that we knew they were there, we were coming to them, we were listening to them, and that they were valued. And those staff meetings also lend themselves to acknowledging success, so they can be a very effective tool for you. You know, I always felt like the staff meetings were part of my communication plan. And everyone was expected at every level, if you had a staff meeting, to take that information back to others. So, senior management had a meeting. That information was to go down to management, that was to go down to the direct staff, everybody communicating backward and forward. This has been touched on in the last couple of presentations, so I'm going to go through this quickly. But, you know, we talked extensively last time about the importance of job descriptions and making sure that they are accurate, and that they are imbued with values, and that they reflect the competencies needed. The same is really true with performance evaluations. They should be based on, you know, the competencies the staff are demonstrating, and the outcomes they are able to achieve. But of course, you can't evaluate someone on competency and outcomes if you haven't given them any additional training and support that they require. Also, a good performance evaluation system is always going to help the individuals set goals, review how they're doing vis a vis goals that have been set, and to push their growth, their staff development continually up the chain. And of course, we do training to the job and the person, but a counterpart of that is now, we have to have so much flexibility in staff that you never know where staff are going to be, where individuals are going to be, and what is going to happen over the course of the day, and who is going to need to support whom? So, you both need training to the job and obviously training to the person that people are going to support. And on the other hand, training that will allow people to be flexible if indeed that [INAUDIBLE] the course of one of our very active days, of people doing something they don't normally do, or

being with someone that they're not normally with. Then I'm going to talk a little bit about rewards, in a bit. So I'll ask Karen just to go to the next one. You know, one thing that, and I'm going to try to do this quickly, in my organization that we did, and I was crazy about, and I thought it was the best thing we ever did, is that we began, rather than going out and evaluating staff performance exclusively, we began to evaluate the effectiveness of our training through observations, and this is how that went. Basically, two times a year, managers would go out and observe the staff just as they were doing whatever they were doing at that period of time. And what they were observing for were skills that were taught in training, and competencies that were identified in the job description. So, we were going out to see, are they actually demonstrating what they have been taught in the classroom, or perhaps taught and then mentored on? And really, the essence of that process was not to, in any way, make the staff feel penalized, but rather to say to them, we have a responsibility to come out and see, did you learn what we tried to teach you? Was our process effective? And that really helped staff, I think, to not be intimidated by the process. Because we were partners. Now we are partners. Management and the staff are partners trying to figure out if the training folks got really worked. And when the requirement of my agency was after one of these observations [INAUDIBLE] within 48 hours, the manager had to sit down with that staff who had been observed, and discuss with them, and together decide if there was an area that the person had not been able to demonstrate a competency in, what strategy would they take from there? Is it just, this conversation is good enough? Oh, yeah, I got it now? Do you need to be retrained? Do you need to be partnered with someone who can mentor you? What exactly is going to help you get these competencies that we so dearly need you to have? Next one, Karen. This is just a little thing I got on the Internet, and I just thought it was kind of funny. This is sometimes how we end up doing, and it's not what we intended to do. So the guy basically indicates that they're going to change the salary to be on the number of pages she wrote, and obviously, that's going to drop the quality. And the guy just feels like, well, you know, I'm just moving a hairball from one pocket to another. That's how I felt, sometimes. I was moving one hairball from one pocket to the other, particularly when it came to things like salary and other things that I had so little control over. But Karen, you can go on to the next one. Let's talk a minute about incentives, and I'm sure Karen or Gail could talk about this as well. In my organization, we did give monetary rewards, such as bonuses, for people who were not job developers, who helped find good jobs for people. And the reason we didn't do it with job developers is they were paid to do that. But there were other personnel who were not, that was not their primary duty, but it might be a secondary duty, or something that they could do if they had time on their schedule, and they were given assignments. For people for whom it was not their primary job, if they found a job for somebody, if it was the right match, per what was on the positive personal profile or whatever person-centered document that identified the type of work, then they could get a bonus. Sometimes, you know, people got pay increases associated with getting additional training, or demonstrating additional competencies. It's also incentivizing for people to have a chance to get additional training, to go to an advanced training, or to present at a conference, which is very rewarding for people, especially when they've done great work. And

also, sometimes identifying people who have done things exceptionally well for mentorship, for leadership, that those people wouldn't just happen to-- what Karen described would not happen to them. They would get kicked upstairs without having the skills to really do the job, and then fail when it really wasn't their problem. Karen, you can go on to the next one. Celebrations. Well, you know, obviously a very incentivizing thing for folks is to be able to celebrate what they've done. So, the staff meetings that I described were a great place to acknowledge accomplishments and eat pizza, which I indicated here. We had awards, events all over the country, because our agency was in multiple states. Our trade associations have awards events to make sure that our staff are recognized around the awards events, trade associations, and then national conferences like APSE or Anchor recognize staff. It's great. We always made sure that we nominated people for those types of things. But also highlighted people in newsletters, highlighted people on websites, sent out blasts in social media about accomplishments of the staff, just so that they knew that they were being appreciated, and that they were celebrating their accomplishments. Okay, Karen. You can go on here. You know, and really, keeping people, and Karen made a good point, it costs us a fortune, every person that we lose that we have trained and brought on board and invested in. So, keeping people on board is critical, and the organization really does have to have some kind of strategy for rewarding people. Sometimes those are a monthly thing. Sometimes they're annual things. Some of them can be just episodic. But it is important to recognize this staff now is all you have once you become 100% community-based, which I hope you all will. And you have to do everything in your power to attract the right people, to give them the right support, to reward them, and to motivate them to stay with you. Okay, Karen. Again, you know, there are many different ways that success is celebrated, and I could give you all kinds of stories of, you know, where people have pictures of the staff on hallways in the office, people who have done a great job, and all of the other things that I mentioned before. But again, I think it is really critically important for agencies to do very careful thinking about how they're going to reward their staff. This is also related to marketing, how you're marketing your agency's successes, including the successes of your individuals, the successes of your staff. And so I'm going to cut it a little bit short so that we can move on to Gail, since we're running a little bit behind. So, if there are any questions, I think I'll take them at the end. Thank you. Gail?

>> Thank you, Genni. I'm going to run through my stuff too, and so, you know, I might not need all of the time. So, I'm just going to talk about developing high-performing teams, and you know, I'll tell you, you know, we've not totally figured this out yet. I often tell people during orientation, it's not scientific, but 99% of the staff that we suggest leave our agency, okay? Read between those lines. It isn't because they can't handle kind of the technical aspects of supporting someone, it's because they can't get along with their coworkers. And it's to the point where it affects the quality of life of the person supported. So, building effective teams is really, really important. It's an important support to the person, that they have a team that gets along, at least, and that they're on the same page. They can, you know, bring individual strengths and unique perspectives to that person, but they've got to be a functioning team. And

we also often find, speaking of something you need to hear, or Genni said, that often times, these staff don't have supportive personal networks, and they're living on the edge. And so, you know, we always are seeking better ways to figure that out, whether it's through flexible work hours, or, you know, whatever types of things will help that person maintain a relationship with our agency if they're really good at what they do. I'm going to attribute this quote to Jeff Strully, because I heard it from Jeff Strully. I don't know if he made it up or not, but I love it, because it talks about the colors of life's journey, right? So, when you think about your own life, I hope your life is bold and brilliant. I hope it's filled with color. But, you know, many people who rely on the system for their supports, their lives are gray. They're safe, perhaps they're happy, but they're gray. They don't have a whole lot to look forward to. They're kind of shuffled off from one building that might be called a home to another building that might be called a day program. They often times go in groups, or small herds of people like themselves, and there's not a whole lot of excitement going on. So, what we do is we really strive to bring bold color to people's lives, and we do that through creating opportunities. Next slide. Jeff also said this, and I don't want to mean any disrespect to anybody who's on the phone, and I will tell you that not everybody fits into one of these categories, and I think that we all find a little bit of [INAUDIBLE] in all of ourselves. But basically, there are four ways, four big ways that people can show up in other people's lives. And the first way is controlling. So, these are people, staff who are in charge. They're, often times they get a lot done controlling people, but, you know, you really feel like you're under somebody's thumb. The second way of staff-- and we try and weed those folks out, right? If we find somebody is controlling, we can't kind of fix that about them? And sometimes often it's just a personality thing with them, and they're controlling in every aspect of their lives, and we cannot have them controlling folks' lives. The second way people show up in people's lives is lazy. These are positions of very high trust. We don't get out once a week to lay eyes on every single staffer that are out there, for sure, all the time. But not every single staff person gets an eyes-on every week. And so they are positions of high trust. And if you have a lazy staff person, that's not who you want. So we try and either, again, mentor that, try and change that behavior, or we get rid of that person. The third way people show up in people's lives, and I think this is the most common, the most common way, they're good company. Good company. Friendly, wow, we want people to be friendly. We want people to like what they're doing, and like the people they support. But again, you know, they are really more kind of companiony-caretaking roles when you think about that. The fourth way is what we strive for. We strive for generators of possibility. So, we often take those people, those staff that are good company, those teams that are filled with good company, and say, how can you be a generator of possibility for the person or the people that you provide supports to? Okay. So, what do generators of possibility do? Well, obviously, they have to go the extra mile. They have to know the person really well, or the people they're supporting really well, and they really kind of step outside of the box, or a whole team can do that together. A quick story about a man that we support named Paul. And this was around 2010, and one of the things, Paul lived in a boarding home. We didn't control where he lived, but we saw him during the daytime. And Paul had a work life, and he was retired, but he was really, really upset about the Iraq War. He

was so upset about the Iraq War, it kind of colored, like, everything, the lens through which he viewed life. And so we said, look, let's try and think of something that will address that. So, you know, if you feel like something's gone wrong, but if you do something to try and address that, you feel better about it. Jessica Wooster, who now works for the state of Hawaii, was a support coordinator and wanted to ride out one of our DSPs who continues to work for KFI. So, one of the things they helped Paul do was to go volunteer for the USO. So, he lives in this little town in northern Maine, but what he did was he raised money. He held fundraisers. He collected items, personal care items primarily, to send to soldiers in Iraq. He would buy-- one Christmas, he mailed nine boxes of personal care, big boxes of personal care items to soldiers in Iraq. We also supported him to write letters to soldiers from his home town, to keep them abreast of what was going on. And then, when those soldiers came back home, they formed relationships with Paul. They knew him. And so, our staff, it was Jessica's brainchild, and our staff person wanted to help him through the mechanics of doing that. And he got his picture in the paper. I mean, people just loved what he did. Again, it was Wanda and Jessica showed that they were generators of possibility. I think that I remember talking to somebody else, and they said, you know, if he was in some other agency, they might have written, you know, a behavior plan for him, right? So that's the difference in that type of support. So, what makes a team capable of exceptional performance? And, you know, obviously some of them are the competencies that you can see, you can develop, you can refine. Often times, though, they are intangibles that people show up with, or that you need to mentor or demonstrate. Next slide. Going to load one at a time. So, obviously, you need to be person-centered. You know, the whole reason you're there and present in somebody's life is because you believe in that person. But more than that, you have to believe in the community. You have to believe in the capability of typical members of the community, whether you're seeking a job for a person, or whether that you're seeking membership, or you're seeking some kind of a relationship, or a volunteer group. You know, there's a saying, seeing is believing. And we say, believing is seeing. So, if you believe in the person, you believe in the community, you are able to envision possibilities, then you can see them. I think it was Yoda that said, "Believe it not, and you will see it not." So, that's important to hold those beliefs and high expectations. In terms of envisioning possibilities, you know, obviously you need to create both time and space to talk about a person's future. It's not just the here and now, so you're always thinking ahead, you're always thinking about, how can we make this person's life better? Building capacity, obviously through training and mentoring, and Genni went through all that. We look at, you know, where does this person fit in the bigger world, you know? Is their life gray? Is it filled with color? How can we fill it with more color? We honor and respect the individual contributions of team members. You know, we often say, you don't have to go out after work and, you know, go to the bar and have a drink together. You don't have to, you know, invite your teammate to, you know, your baby shower. But you've got to be able to communicate effectively and provide supports that are not counter to one another, but actually complement one another if you're not working at the same time. So, part of that is valuing diversity of ideas, experiences, and so forth. And we often talk about how we have each other's backs, because that means a lot. This is Courtney. Courtney has a team.

Again, we're going to talk a little more in our next webinar about how we staff certain individuals. We talk about geographic teams of staff, and we also employ geographic teams of staff. We also employ teams of staff around an individual, and these pictures are of Courtney. She graduated from high school in 2012. She owns her own home. She has a vending machine business. She has a volunteer job. She has typical friends in the community. She has membership. She's a kayaker. She has credit, you know? She has a bank account, and is building credit. Courtney's labels are as long as your arm. Courtney, you know, has a profound cognitive impairment, you know what I mean? She just has autism, CP, a seizure disorder. She doesn't use words to communicate. And she has no reliable communication system. And so the team of people that supports Courtney, and again, this is one team of people who does soup to nuts. So, you know, when Courtney gets up in the morning, they support her with her personal care routine, and getting breakfast and all that stuff. But they also were a team of people, or are a team of people at the time that Courtney's business started, she had three direct support workers. All were certified as direct support professionals in the state of Maine. All of them were certified job coaches. One of them was a career planner. Two of them were ACRE-trained job developers. These were people who took her grocery shopping and to church. So, they had to band together, team together to understand how to bring color to Courtney's life, and I just read you some of the ways that I think that they did that. Okay. So, in terms of supporting the team, and again, these are people who, in our agency, we call our support coordinators. They're direct supervisors of all of our direct support staff. So, it's important for the support coordinators to understand who they are, and talk about unique ways to honor their contributions. Again, as Karen said, we have no water cooler. We need to be intentional in our communication. And people are all connected, through technology and they may go off, you know, in a pair and say, go have a cup of coffee, and chat about that issue, or discuss that issue, and that's how they listen to each other and support each other. So, when it's not working. So it all sounds really wonderful, right? We have these wonderful, perfect teams, and everybody gets along, and life is good. Well, you know that's not true. So, you know, we have a plan, and we've done our training, and life happens. We're people working with people. It's imperfect, as we all are. And often, people tell us with words or actions or both that something isn't working for them, and that teams has got to-- next slide-- go back to square one. And often, what that results in is the team coming together and developing some positive support plan, learning from each other, so there's no hierarchy for the whole team, you know, doesn't necessarily know what to do. There may be members of the team that have suggestions, but obviously, the person and the people closest to the person are the experts. Next slide, Karen. We find time to debrief. We engage others, if we need to bring others in. If there's a, we have a customized employment person who's working in southern Maine. She brings in other employment people to help resolve problems. There are obviously other people on the team that are supporting a person when they run into a roadblock. So, engaging others, I think, is really a really great strategy, even if they're not on the team. Most importantly, we need to create safe space for honest conversation. So it's not, I see you don't know how to, or I see you're having an issue

with, but let's brainstorm about how. It invites that conversation. It invites everybody's thoughts. And it creates a sense of team. That's really what it is. I'm done. Yeah. Go ahead.

>> Okay, Devin, did you have any questions that came in?

>> There's a couple questions, but it's really again just how to follow up afterwards, and a couple people asked if they can get a copy of the slides. I did post the address for where the recordings will be posted. What I can try and do is post just the slide decks in the meantime. So, I'll try and get that done in the next few days, and see if-- you know, it's the government, so we have to go through channels, but I'll try and get those posted up there in the next few days. And then those will at least be available until the actual recordings get posted. But those are really the only questions. We do have a couple of minutes, so if anybody does still have a question, maybe type quick and we can try and squeeze those in. I do want to thank Genni, Gail and Karen for another very good webinar. And hopefully, you've all received some great information from them. Our next webinar will be March 27th, and that will be the conclusion of this three-part series before we jump into the next series of three webinars, and that series will be [INAUDIBLE]. How do you operate in rural settings? You know, a lot of Pennsylvania is fairly rural, so what do we do there differently than we do, maybe, in big cities? Let's see, I did just see one question pop up. Gail, can you give us an example of how you turned a lazy aide into a generator?

>> [INAUDIBLE]

>> Or any of the three of you, I suppose.

>> Well, obviously, it requires more eyes-on than we generally provide our direct support staff. But I think that everybody can be inspired. Everybody can be inspired, and every single person can be inspiring. And so, part of it is giving that person suggestions and also opportunities to carry something out, and then say, what will you do to keep this going, or to go one step further? I mean, obviously, if a person is inherently lazy and they're going to just [INAUDIBLE] with last week, somebody, you know, left somebody for an hour during the time they were supposed to be supporting them. And so, you know, we had to deal with that in a personnel sense, but as it turns out, the staff person was really kind of stymied about bringing some color to that person's life. It's a very difficult woman to support. And so, part of it is just sitting down and figuring out, what is it about your job you might not be understanding, and then how can we help give you some ideas? And then you've got to come back to us and figure out, contribute ideas on how to keep it going. And we often see turnarounds when people have inspiring things to do.

>> And one more question popped up, and I think, if I understand what you guys are going to talk about next time, this might lead into that, so maybe it's a good teaser. But the question is,

what are the key pieces of technical equipment that are provided, needed to support staff in the field, and are you paperless? So, I guess the idea of, you know, if you're not centralized, and all your staff are out there in the field working mostly from home, what exactly is an organization providing them to help them do what they need to do?

>> This is Gail. All of our staff have technology at their fingertips. We provide them with a netbook, or sometimes they use their smartphones, if they're young and have, you know, young eyes, I call them. But we provide them with a netbook, a laptop, a something, technology to use so that they are in instant communication with one another. I can be instantly in communication with them, and I am. And we are paperless, so we use a platform called Therap for all of our documentation and others, MAR, the Med Administration Record, different things like that, reportable events. But mostly communication among, between the staff and their supervisor and other members of our agency. And that includes family members, and that includes case workers, sometimes want to be let on their progress, or notes, or whatever. So it depends on who it is, and what level of knowledge they want.

>> This is Karen, and I-- can I go-- so, I think that Genni touched on this earlier when she talked about that as you don't use your facility, and you can sell your building, or rent it out, or do something like that, you have to switch the resources. And I think it is definitely difficult, as you are downsizing your building, and increasing people being in the community, you know, you're at a point where you're both spending the money on the building, and you're spending money on the community. But, to be able to make a switch in resources, so for every time people go out and you're not using the building, if you can rent some of the space out, or sell the space, or something like that, you have to change your resources so that they can have those same kinds of technologies that Gail was talking about. And we also use things like photo streams, and Google Photos, and so we're always sending pictures in, and we're seeing from people, and monthly staff newsletter, and social media, and all those ways that you stay in touch with people.

>> And this is Genni, and I-- oh, I'm sorry.

>> Oh, I was just going to ask Gail, what was the name of that app again, that you mentioned? Could you spell it?

>> We use Therap. It's a cloud-based system, does way more than we use it for. And it's paid for by the number of users, meaning our clients.

>> And this is Genni, and my agency uses the same, uses Therap as well, although Gail and I don't work for Therap, and we're not getting kickbacks. But that is the system that we use. And I will say this. Any agency that is in transition, and transforming themselves to be more community-based right now must be thinking about how they're going to be able to get these

kinds of systems. I truly do not believe that any agency is going to be able to exist without these systems in the future. They're just imperative to keep the agency together, to keep the communication strong. In my agency, I could communicate with 900 people at once, because everybody had an email account through that particular--