

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
NATIVE AMERICAN EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING COUNCIL MEETING**

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 30, 2022

The Council met at the SAFE Credit Union Convention Center, located at 1401 K Street, Sacramento, California, at 9:01 a.m. PT, Joseph Quintana, Chair, presiding.

Present

Joseph Quintana, Region 6, Chair
Kay Seven, Other Disciplines, Vice Chair
Jacob Bernal, Region 6
Lora Ann Chaisson, Region 4
Robin Counce, Region 4
Lorraine Edmo, Region 4
Patricia Hibbeler, Other Disciplines
Candace Lowry, Region 3
Holly Morales, Region 6
Angel Peer, Region 5
Gary Rickard, Region 6
Darrell Waldron, Regions 1 and 2
Winona Whitman, Region 6
Jacob Wojnas, Other Disciplines

Absent

Kim Kaniatobe Carroll, Other Disciplines
Robert Houle, Region 5
Shawn Isaac, Region 6
Erwin Pahmahmie, Jr., Region 4

Also Present

Athena Brown, Designated Federal Official (DFO), Chief, Division of Indian and Native American Programs (DINAP)
Jack Jackson, Jr., Tribal Liaison, Office of Congressional and Intergovernmental Affairs
Cierra Mitchell, Division Director, Office of Apprenticeship
Kim Vitelli, Administrator, Office of Workforce Investment, ETA
BC EchoHawk, Tribal Tech, LLC

Blessing/Call to Order/Roll Call

Athena Brown, Designated Federal Official, opened the meeting at 9:01 a.m. and gave the blessing. BC EchoHawk conducted a roll call and determined there was a quorum.

Approve Minutes/Review and Approval of Agenda

Councilmember Hibbeler made a motion to accept the minutes of the June 22-23, 2022, meeting as written. Councilmember Lowry seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

DFO Brown reviewed the agenda. Councilmember Chaisson made a motion to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Waldron and approved unanimously.

Review of NCAI's Agenda and Discussion of Potential Sessions

DFO Brown indicated that the original agenda has been modified so that NAETC can attend the NCAI session on Day 2, which will include a presentation led by Chair Quintana. Chair Quintana said that this is a great opportunity for NAETC to be supportive of NCAI. NCAI is going through some changes, and NAETC has had a difficult time trying to build a relationship with them thus far. Among the topics of discussion slated for the NCAI agenda are inflation, reinvesting in workers, and building the skills necessary for members to find quality jobs long term. Vice Chair Seven asked if it is appropriate for the Council to send a letter to NCAI to share information about who the NAETC is and its interest in the workforce throughout Indian Country as a way to open the door to future arrangements.

Councilmember Edmo agreed that it would be a great idea to send a letter to the new leadership stating NAETC's goals and purpose. Councilmember Chaisson said that if NAETC is going to send a letter in the future, it should be sent prior to the NCAI meeting.

Vice Chair Seven made a motion for the NAETC to submit a letter to the leadership of the NCAI to educate them about who NAETC is and its interest to work with NCAI on the opportunities for addressing workforce development in Indian Country. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Edmo and approved unanimously.

Review of NAETC Strategic Two-Year Plan

Councilmember Hibbeler led the review and presented the draft of the strategic plan. She said that she hopes a final strategic plan can be prepared and passed by the Council as quickly as possible. Having a strategic plan to go with the letters to NCAI will give stakeholders a good sense of how active NAETC wants to be, what it wants to do, and how NCAI can partner with NAETC on activities that align with their goals.

The strategic plan has been organized into three particular categories: (1) strengthen infrastructure; (2) expand training and technical assistance; and (3) increase visibility and awareness. These strategies came directly from the discussions captured in the prior NAETC meeting minutes. Initially Councilmember Hibbeler gave her best guess as to which workgroups would be responsible for each

aspect of the strategic plan. She asked the Council to look over the strategy to see if anything is missing based on what was discussed at previous meetings.

DFO Brown indicated that she did make some changes to the strategy plan based on the last meeting. In light of DFO Brown's plans to retire at the end of the year, Kim Vitelli, Administrator of the Office of Workforce Investment, will be key in following up on some of the strategic plan items in the interim. Ms. Vitelli will be heavily involved in the recruiting and selection of the next DINAP Chief.

Vice Chair Seven said that in looking at the strategic plan, NAETC will need the resources from the Department of Labor (DOL) to work in a manner where it has national visibility. One resource that should be considered is the tribal liaison in the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs, Jack Jackson. Vice Chair Seven raised this consideration in light of the new memorandum of agreement that was recently signed on October 7 under Public Law 102-477 as amended by Public Law 115-93. This could strengthen NAETC's infrastructure and expand training and technical assistance to have the DOL reaching out across the federal agencies on potential future partnerships. Last week Vice Chair Seven was at a Department of Energy meeting, and she was thinking that the Departments of Energy, Agriculture, Labor and Interior should all work together to meet the needs of tribal communities with regard to energy development.

Chair Quintana echoed the importance of using the expertise of Mr. Jackson to build out NAETC's visibility. Vice Chair Seven said that because the memorandum of agreement is so new, the tribal workgroup has an interest to broaden its outreach to all 12 agencies. Councilmember Edmo pointed out that Mr. Jackson's position was just created recently, and she emphasized the importance of working with him directly and providing advice on how he can help with NAETC's efforts in reaching out to the other agencies. Chair Quintana agreed that utilizing Mr. Jackson will assist NAETC as it continues to move forward. DFO Brown said this is also a great opportunity for NAETC to think about some of the other federal agencies and the cross-cutting initiatives that are going on at the Departments of Transportation, Agriculture and Interior.

Councilmember Hibbeler suggested reviewing each item of the strategic plan individually for edits and wordsmithing. Chair Quintana and Vice Chair Seven agreed that it would be an opportune time to review the plan and take care of any necessary edits. Councilmember Hibbeler proceeded to review each of the strategic plan items. First, under strengthening infrastructure, is planning the meetings of the NAETC -- one to be held in Sacramento, and another at the upcoming national meeting. Councilmember Hibbeler assigned this task to the executive team. Chair Quintana suggested adding the planning committee to assist with this meeting and future ones.

The next strategy is to support the selection and process for the next Chief of DINAP. This task was also initially assigned to the executive team. Councilmember Rickard said that he does not think it should be only the executive team responsible for the support and selection process for the next DINAP Chief. He argued that this is part of the Council's job. Councilmember Hibbeler clarified that the "Workgroup Responsible" listed on the document is the workgroup responsible to lead the strategy forward; it does not mean that they are the only ones working on it. Vice Chair Seven said that the executive team has spoken several times this past summer about how they want to keep the full Council on the same page

as they move forward. She emphasized the importance of doing a better job at keeping everyone on the Council in the loop via email. She would rather know what is going on before getting to the meeting. Chair Quintana agreed that Councilmembers do not want to be frustrated by what they do not know or get blindsided by information that they are unaware of. Councilmember Waldron reinforced Councilmember Rickard's point and emphasized the importance of the free flow of information and tight communication.

The next item on the strategic plan was to review the annual DINAP budget and excess carryover, which has been part of the discussion in recent meetings. This task was assigned to the effective management workgroup. Next was to develop resolutions for the Council to consider and approve discussions with DOL regarding other necessary processes; this task was also assigned to the effective management workgroup. Councilmember Hibbeler noted that the effective management workgroup is comprised of the full Council.

The next strategy is to elect officers, appoint workgroups, and develop structure for the Council. DFO Brown says that is one of the tasks for which the Council should get an update from the leader of each workgroup. Councilmember Wojnas said that the census workgroup has solicited subject matter experts from the full Council through email and other sources. They have reached out to a number of those folks and found a number of highly respected and experienced individuals who are interested in serving on that workgroup. The census workgroup has scheduled a session on November 14, where all of the Councilmembers who expressed interest in the workgroup, in addition to the subject matter experts, will have a chance to get acquainted with the census data and formulas that they use.

Chair Quintana shared on behalf of the performance and reporting workgroup. He recently met with Jennifer Whitmore, the subject matter expert. Duane Hall was very involved with the workgroup previously, and he said that they are in very good hands with Ms. Whitmore. The performance and reporting workgroup will be working to identify additional subject matter experts as they go forward. With regard to the youth workgroup, Councilmember Whitman said that she has also met with Ms. Whitmore. The youth workgroup has set aside Tuesday, December 6 for their online meeting. The members who have volunteered thus far are listed on the last page of the strategic plan. Councilmember Hibbeler said that the effective management workgroup has been working hard to get the strategic plan itself in place in order to drive its work over the next two years.

DFO Brown said that with regard to the format of the workgroups, each workgroup is supposed to define the tasks that they anticipate fitting into the strategic plan. For instance, with performance and reporting, the Effectiveness of Serving Employers measure is coming up soon for final public comment. There is also an update to GPMS and where they are going with reporting. With census, there is a comparison of the data currently used to what they anticipate looking at in the future. All of the workgroups tie in to recommendations to the full Council for consideration and implementation. DFO Brown emphasized the importance of the ongoing work of each of the workgroups. Councilmember Hibbeler echoed the importance of the workgroups moving the strategies and initiatives forward over the coming months so that NAETC can look at the recommendations and act upon them at the next

meeting. Knowing when the meetings are going to be and really working towards them will make a big difference. Vice Chair Seven added that another important task is to send an official letter to Secretary Walsh once the strategic plan is approved.

The next strategy, A.6, was to eliminate the DINAP program being a competitive program by placing it in the reauthorization for limited competition. Councilmember Waldron clarified that the word "competition" was recommended to be removed. DFO Brown confirmed that the language has been recommended by the DOL in the reauthorization of WIOA, so it has not been completed yet and is still considered ongoing. Chair Quintana emphasized that it is a living document designed to help the Council move forward. It does not have to be perfect in its current form, but the point is that NAETC ultimately wants to see these items through long term. Vice Chair Seven suggested adding a task regarding reauthorization under Section A of the strategic plan.

Under Section B, the proposed strategy is to assist the DOL in planning, with a focus on youth development, which is the youth workgroup. Vice Chair Seven asked if the focus of Strategy B.1 is the Good Jobs Initiative. She asked if perhaps there should be a specific group working on that with Secretary Walsh and Mr. Jackson. Councilmember Hibbeler said that it was discussed at the last meeting about focusing on an initiative around youth, so this was developing a plan for a focus on that youth work within DOL, which is why the youth workgroup was created. A new strategy would be added to partner with the Secretary of Labor on the Good Jobs Initiative. Councilmember Whitman added that in her meeting with Ms. Whitmore regarding the youth workgroup, they looked at encouraging programs to enhance the youth services, which could include career pathways, apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship. They also discussed looking at ways to improve outreach, simplify eligibility, and overhaul the GPMS case management system. Vice Chair Seven said she wants to make sure that whatever NAETC is doing does not have a standalone WIOA focus. By using the authority of the 477, there is opportunity to partner with other federal agencies, which would enhance funding opportunities for the youth by making it a cost-sharing endeavor.

The next strategy was to assure training and technical assistance exists for adult- and youth-based grantees to effectively use the GPMS database. Councilmember Lowry asked whether for this strategy the case managers are still going through a certificate program and the directors going through director training. She feels this is needed because the programs are very comprehensive. She emphasized that the module trainings and certificate levels at each point would be key, as there is always a great deal of continuous learning involved in a constantly changing environment. Vice Chair Seven agreed that the training for case managers is critically important, and she asked which strategy is going to make that happen -- for instance, partnering with the National Association of Workforce Development Professionals, or conferring with the American Indian Higher Education Consortium. This strategy was assigned to the effective management workgroup.

Next was to implement a needs assessment with input from DINAP to determine detailed needs from grantees. This strategy was assigned to the census workgroup. Councilmember Rickard suggested switching Strategy 2 and Strategy 3 because the assessment should be completed before the decision on

action is made. He said the grantees should be the ones specifying what they need. In his over 20 years of experience in the case management arena, Councilmember Rickard finds that most of the time the case management staff has not received the training that they need to do the job, which results in unbelievably high levels of turnover.

DFO Brown echoed Councilmember Rickard's remarks and recommended adding a new task to that effect. She also mentioned that Tribal Tech will be conducting a needs assessment to obtain grantee input. A curriculum will have to be developed based on that needs assessment. Councilmember Lowry added that it would be good to have an outline from the organizations on what kinds of tasks a director is expected to complete. Councilmember Bernal noted that the projected deadline for this strategy is prior to the current turn of the Council, and he asked if that needs revisiting. He also asked if there is a better fit for synergy between this item and the scope of the performance and reporting workgroup. Chair Quintana asked if there is an estimated time on when the needs assessments will take place.

BC EchoHawk reminded the Council of the survey that Tribal Tech sent out when they began their tenure. They got limited feedback, but enough to give them an idea of what folks were responding to at that time. When Tribal Tech proposed a more detailed version of that survey, they encountered some suggestions for changes that were quite significant. Ultimately the recommendation was that it was not clear if there were folks who would be able to take the time to respond to a questionnaire of this length. It would be better to hit some salient points and get some initial feedback, and from there the questions can be more specific next time with a quick follow-up. Program directors and their staff are constantly busy, so ideally the assessments should take a form where participants will actually take the 15 to 20 minutes to respond. On the 166 side, it is a small enough sample that a few individuals could conduct the surveys. The number one source of training that people responded to in the first survey was WorkforceGPS, the online DOL website. Tribal Tech is ready to implement the needs assessment and go back to the initial questionnaire for reference.

Chair Quintana recommended having the effective management workgroup work alongside Tribal Tech in order to develop the questions. BC EchoHawk said Tribal Tech would be more than happy to work with whoever is assigned to that task. Councilmember Rickard offered to share the questionnaire that he has used over the years. He found that in a lot of instances, each case manager designed their own forms as opposed to using a standardized form. Councilmember Hibbeler added that it might also provide some good data to ask what other trainings they recommend, or what else they need for their program to be successful. She also suggested that some of the data they are looking for may be available already, rather than over-surveying everyone. Councilmember Rickard noted that for a while there was an individual named Ken from Texas who was compiling all of that information and putting it into a database.

Vice Chair Seven said that she will look for the national conference evaluation. Case management was a key training request. NAETC represents all grantees across the country, whether they are 166 or 477. Vice Chair Seven said one of the most interesting comments she saw on the evaluation is that 166 grantees who attended the national conference felt like it was strictly a 477 event. She said that we

need to learn how to get rid of that feeling, and instead refer to each other as all Native American workforce development professionals. Whether it's 166 or 477, these professionals do the same job, whether they're on a reservation or in an urban center. Councilmember Hibbeler agreed that we are all doing the same thing, and it is important to support each other to do it in the best way.

The next strategy was to advise in the development and dissemination of the necessary tools and training for a successful peer to peer training system. Following that was increased visibility and awareness. Councilmember Lowry said this was more going out to events such as NCAI, and talking with grantees that are under us, making sure that we are reaching out to those areas. Councilmember Hibbeler said she thinks that's a great question, because they did talk at the last meeting about a communication system and how to report out to local grantees. That structure is not currently in place. Chair Quintana said that goes to the point that Vice Chair Seven shared with regards to not being siloed into specific 166 or 477 awardees; instead they are all sharing the same message and hearing everyone's concerns. Vice Chair Seven agreed that part of the strategy should be to determine how to get the news out to the communities.

Councilmember Hibbeler recommended renaming or redefining the strategy to something like developing our communications system. Councilmember Rickard suggested that it could be more like disseminating information from the Council. Councilmember Edmo said this area would be a good place to add the work of Mr. Jackson in his role as the new tribal liaison, to see how NAETC can coordinate its efforts and reach out to other agencies to increase the visibility of the Council. Councilmember Lowry asked if there is a LISTSERV already in place for each region. For instance, if something is happening in Region 3, and they want to broadcast that out to Region 6, is there a LISTSERV in place of all the grantees by region? BC EchoHawk confirmed that there is a LISTSERV. She confirmed that if it is not already broken down by region, Tribal Tech can add that capability.

Next was building out the expertise of the Council by adding topic experts to the workgroups, which some of the workgroups are already doing. The last strategy was based on a conversation the Council had about beginning to create a campaign or messaging to the programs about focusing on middle income, as most of the work to date has been with the hardest to serve. Councilmember Rickard said that instead of focusing on moving people to middle income, the central focus should be on attaining self-sufficiency. Councilmember Lowry said that self-sufficiency and unsubsidized income would be better. Vice Chair Seven said she would like to get away from statutory language. Why not talk about building wealth of Native individuals and tribal nations across the country? Chair Quintana said that it is okay to be general, as not to pigeonhole the Council to certain things. Councilmember Hibbeler asked if the Council wants to add another strategy that focuses on developing a mail campaign, a letter of awareness, and the strategies to get there, and which organizations in addition to NCAI the Council wants to send those to. Vice Chair Seven agreed that it would be good to build that list.

Councilmember Waldron suggested really condensing this into some serious bullet points and sending them directly to Secretary Walsh. DFO Brown added that each and every one of the members has responsibility for reporting to their individual communities, grantees, and stakeholders. She said that

having the Council work out a process for communicating better or sending out information to their respective members of the public is a separate process than the Council actually making formal recommendations to the Secretary of Labor. Vice Chair Seven suggested deciding in the next six month period how to keep that communication loop intact. Councilmember Hibbeler added that the workgroups can and should be meeting outside of the two scheduled annual Council meetings. That is what moves the work forward and gets it prepared for being put in front of the Council. DFO Brown emphasized that the workgroups make recommendations to the full Council; they can meet anytime they would like, she just asked that they include DINAP so they can assign a staff member to work with the workgroups.

Councilmember Waldron briefly returned to the topic of removing the word "competition" from the strategy statement. He said NAETC should be putting forth resolutions consistently to the Secretary's office on that particular issue. Councilmember Hibbeler asked members to confirm that their names were listed under the appropriate workgroups in the strategic plan. Councilmember Whitman asked to have Tara Andrade and Rosemary Reano added to the youth workgroup.

Councilmember Hibbeler indicated that she will clean the document up overnight based on the suggested edits, and bring it back tomorrow as a final draft for approval of the Council.

National Indian and Native American Employment and Training Conference (NINAETC) Regional and National Conference Updates

Vice Chair Seven reported that since last November, the Western Region Executive Team has been planning to meet in Phoenix, Arizona. Next week, November 7-11, is the Western Regional 166/477 Training event at the Gila River Indian Community property at the Wild Horse Pass Resort & Casino, located in Chandler, Arizona. As of last week, there were a little over 300 attendees registered. The hotel sold out, and there is now an overflow hotel. There is an exciting agenda set up from Tuesday through Thursday.

On Tuesday, D.J. Vanas, author of *The Warrior Within*, will be the keynote speaker. The intent is that Mr. Vanas will help rejuvenate and re-inspire some positive energy after the pandemic. Following that, there will be a cultural activity at the museum. On Wednesday, Ian Record, formerly with the NCAI, is coming in to discuss his contract work with the Northwest Area Foundation, which is focused on tribal workforce development. After that, there will be a banquet Wednesday evening, with a silent disco dance afterwards. Vice Chair Seven said it would be great if there were data that could say that in Indian Country, these are the top three industry sectors that are important to tribal communities or nations. On Thursday, a 12-year-old entrepreneur who runs a business on his pueblo in New Mexico will be presenting to the community. Vice Chair Seven said she was really impressed with the Cherokee Nation helping the National Conference with the evaluation process. Their IT department uses a platform that implements QR codes for participants to do their evaluations.

Councilmember Waldron expressed excitement about the upcoming NINAETC 166/477 conference in April at the Foxwoods Resort Casino in Mashantucket, Connecticut. The workshops at the Myrtle Beach

conference were well attended. One of them was on managing your office, which had quite a few people in attendance. There were some role-playing activities with the directors of the programs conducting client interview simulations where the case worker has to respond accordingly. Both of those workshops were well attended, so they will be duplicated. The state program in Rhode Island is in the process of forming a formal relationship with the Secretary of Labor, and duplicating some of those efforts throughout the regions.

NAETC has received some requests from grantees; a lot of it is around spending their dollars and managing their programs. There are 22 different tribes in the area, and they are looking at some pretty fancy cultural activities at night and during the day. They want to put a very serious twist on the conference with regard to opportunities. They are seeing a lot of free training in the regions. They are trying to form relationships now, which could mean added dollars. There will also be some new funding opportunities, such as the ICRA Off Reservation Program, which is being run by one of the former chiefs of DINAP. There is also another good size pilot program on prevention for Indian child welfare that will be presenting at the conference on how to access those funds. The Urban Based Indian Health Program in New York City has grown quite a bit.

It is a little bit early in the game still, so they have not started soliciting too many private dollars in support yet for the NINAETC conference, although Foxwoods Resort Casino is likely to be one of the key donors. There are approximately 400 rooms reserved at the government rate. Councilmember Waldron suggested that people reserve their space early; there are several overflow options in the immediate area, in addition to a couple different hotels inside the casino.

Chair Quintana echoed the sentiment that the Council is looking forward to the Western Regional and the National Conference at Foxwoods. Councilmember Edmo asked if the Council will meet during the first couple days of the National Conference. Councilmember Waldron said that will be woven into the National Conference at a time deemed most convenient. DFO Brown said that now is the time to start thinking about topics for the Council agenda, in addition to any invited guests, so they can start working on the agenda in advance of the upcoming meeting in concert with NINAETC. Councilmember Waldron expressed interest in inviting Ms. Vitelli to the conference. Councilmember Rickard suggested inviting Secretary of Labor Marty Walsh; Councilmember Waldron said he began working on setting that up last week.

Vice Chair Seven said she would like to see a presentation from the White House Office of Intergovernmental Affairs. She also suggested that if they could not make it, it would be good to have a pre-recorded statement to play at the conference. Councilmember Edmo recommended inviting someone from the American Indian Higher Education Consortium to discuss opportunities for case management training. Councilmember Waldron added that there have also been discussions about creating an inter-tribal Indian college in his area. Councilmember Lowry recommended reaching out to the Governors' Interstate Indian Council. Chair Quintana suggested inviting a representative from the Bureau of Indian Education, in addition to Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland. Councilmember Waldron confirmed that he was on the phone with the Bureau of Indian Affairs on Friday regarding their interest in opening up a new eastern office.

Update on White House Initiatives and Other Issues

Tribal Liaison Jack Jackson, Jr., of the Office of Congressional and Intergovernmental Affairs, delivered the update. Mr. Jackson has been serving in his role as Tribal Liaison since April. Over the past 7 months, Mr. Jackson feels that he has built up good momentum under his wings in the role. He gave a brief update on a couple of initiatives that the DOL has been spearheading on behalf of tribal nations. Most recently Mr. Jackson spent a lot of time in submitting the Department's tribal consultation progress report, following up on what was reported to the Office of Management and Budget last year. There were a number of programs and initiatives that the DOL has been working on, as laid out by the Office of the President and Vice President. Mr. Jackson has been reaching out to agencies at the DOL and getting updates from them on some of the significant work they have done with regards to outreach and engagement with tribes. All of that was compiled, updated, and submitted on time last week.

In the report, the Office of Congressional and Intergovernmental Affairs is tasked with updating the DOL's plan of action for outreach to tribes. There are a number of updates to that report, including updating the tribal consultation policy that was provided in 2012. They continue to look at ways to improve it. The goal is to get that update out the door by the end of 2023. A lot of work needs to happen to ensure that they are meeting all of their targets. All of that takes place by working with the various agencies at DOL, including ETA, OSHA, ODEP, the Office of Federal Contract Compliance, Office of Worker's Compensation, the Veterans Employment and Training Service, the Mine Safety and Health Administration, Wage and Hour, and the Women's Bureau. Mr. Jackson's job is to meet with representatives of those agencies and see what they are doing with regards to outreach to tribes and engagement, and also to plan ahead to ensure that tribal communities are being listened to and met with.

The progress report also includes some of the important tribal consultations and listening sessions that many of the sub-agencies have conducted over the last year. The Women's Bureau is looking at 2023 in a progressive way; they have been talking with some of their congressional members and their staff to learn how they can begin to increase outreach to tribal communities. They are looking ahead for ways to learn from tribal communities about challenges of gender-based violence and harassment, which has a disproportionate impact on women, giving rise to the missing and murdered Indigenous women problem.

Now that the Tribal Nations Summit has been announced for November 30 and December 1, a lot of effort has been underway to ensure that the various agencies are working on deliverables that can be announced at the summit. The DOL has been involved in many of those initiatives. One of the bigger initiatives is the effort on Tribal Treaty Rights. The DOL joined a number of agencies on Tribal Treaty Rights in 2001; this year they have been working with about 17 agencies to update that MOA. They are working on new guidance that will assist federal field staff in integrating the consideration of tribal treaty rights into agency decision-making processes. The announcement will be made during the Tribal Nations Summit.

Another major initiative the DOL has been working on is the EV Initiative for Indian Country. The EV Initiative will ensure that tribal nations are part of the electric vehicle future of the country, and that federal resources for EV development are equitably shared and supportive of tribal economies. They are also planning to make sure that the physical buildout of the national EV network includes tribal lands. Mr. Jackson has been working closely with Ms. Vitelli from the ETA on the language in that initiative. There is also an Indian Energy Transition Initiative, where the Department of Energy is launching a new interagency initiative to support tribes transitioning from non-renewable to renewable energy development. That initiative will be supported by the Departments of Interior, Transportation, Agriculture, Education and Labor. The details for both of these initiatives will be rolled out during the Tribal Nations Summit.

A lot of work has also gone into getting the new MOA on the 477 program signed. The next step for some of the agencies including DOL will be to develop guidance to assist tribes in taking advantage of the new 477 MOA. The Departments of Labor, Education and Interior will be working on that guidance, and that initiative will also be announced at the Tribal Nations Summit.

Finally, the DOL is joining 12 additional agencies on expanding and implementing the Native Languages MOA, which was signed last year. A lot of leg work has gone into ensuring that it gets signed by the Secretary of Labor. Moving forward, this will strengthen native languages and cultures via all of the agencies that have signed onto it working in concert. There is going to be a report that will propose a framework for a 10 year national plan on Native Language Revitalization. A lot of interagency collaboration is happening across these initiatives that were proposed by the White House, and the DOL continues to be a part of that. The DOL is also working on an initiative with the Department of Transportation looking to revise their FY 2023 programs to include language that would more directly encourage transportation investment in workforce development, especially supportive services. Part of Mr. Jackson's role is to ensure the inclusion of tribes and tribal governments as part of those definitions.

Mr. Jackson also announced that he has been working on the first tribal newsletter that will come out of OCIA. His plan is to get that out next week after receiving some press releases from the White House on the National Native American Heritage Month beginning in November. The plan is to distribute that newsletter to all of the tribes to keep them updated on initiatives and grant opportunities coming out of the DOL.

Chair Quintana said that Mr. Jackson's work is going to be integral to the success of NAETC long term. Councilmember Edmo asked if the consultation report Mr. Jackson is pulling together is in preparation for the Tribal Leaders Summit. Mr. Jackson said it was just submitted to OMB last Tuesday, and he will find out if it can be released publicly. Councilmember Hibbeler followed up on the Good Jobs Initiative and Summit and asked if there are any updates on the planning. She also asked if it would be possible to get an agenda from a previous summit to get an idea of what happens there so the NAETC can advise on speakers to invite and topics to cover.

Mr. Jackson emphasized that the Secretary wants to ensure that tribal governments are a part of the Good Jobs Summit. In light of that, folks at DOL began looking closer into the matter. They used that

lens to think about how they might pull together a convening for tribes. A number of DOL staff began reaching out to various tribes to talk more about what they do in ensuring that their specific projects implement some Good Jobs strategies such as registered apprenticeship programs or project labor agreements. Councilmember Lowry asked if the EV Initiative will be open to state-recognized tribes or only federally recognized tribes. Mr. Jackson said that he believes at this point it is only going to be for federally recognized tribes because a number of federal agencies are working on it, but he will have to get back to NAETC on that.

Vice Chair Seven asked how NAETC, working with DOL, can become the key agency that other federal agencies and tribal leaders can consult to help shape future tribal workforce development opportunities. Mr. Jackson said there needs to be a focus on the tribal workforce, and as the federal agencies continue to work together towards this collective goal, he tries to attend most of those conversations.

Update from the Office of Workforce Investment

Kim Vitelli started by discussing the preparations for hiring the next DINAP chief in light of DFO Brown's retirement at the end of December. She has been working with the Office of Human Resources to develop the job posting. At the Council's last meeting, the effective management workgroup had taken on the task of helping to support these preparations. Ms. Vitelli has already spoken with the executive team on the preparations. The Department will be posting this position sometime in the next two weeks. In the meantime, there has been a small email and Facebook campaign to tell people that this opportunity is coming. Job postings by the Federal Government are open a standard 14 days, which really is not a long time if it is a job that has not been on anyone's radar. Ms. Vitelli asked Councilmembers to help out in spreading the word too. She also welcomed Councilmembers' feedback and input generally on the best way to move forward with the application process.

Chair Quintana emphasized that the Council wants to be supportive in any way it can be. The Council also needs to be mindful of the fact that this is a long term process. Once the new DINAP chief comes on board, it will be an adjustment for them, and it will take time for the new chief to build a relationship with both the DINAP team and the Council. Councilmember Lowry asked if it will be a hybrid position or stationed in Washington, D.C. Ms. Vitelli confirmed that the official duty station is in Washington, D.C.; however, there is the opportunity for a lot of telework in the role. Councilmember Rickard expressed concern that this will be the chief of Program 166 grantees, and as such he wants to make sure that representatives from 166 grantees play an integral part in the selection process. Councilmember Morales reiterated that 477 are 166 grantees, so their voice at the table should be equally as important. She also shared that Alaska has 166 standalone programs as well.

Councilmember Edmo asked how soon the position will be advertised. Ms. Vitelli confirmed that she plans to post it in mid-November, and the job listing will be open for two weeks. She also mentioned that if there are only a few applicants by the 11th or 12th day of the listing being live, there is an option to extend it by another week, as it would be tough to make the best decision with only a handful of applications.

Councilmember Edmo also asked how much involvement there was from the Council the last time around when DFO Brown was hired as Chief of DINAP. DFO Brown confirmed that she was interviewed by the Council, but she did not know what happened within the organization when the division chief was hired. Councilmember Waldron confirmed that the Council was heavily involved in the prior DINAP chief selection, and it was a very smooth and cooperative transition. Vice Chair Seven added that the executive committee was involved in the process. Councilmember Waldron agreed to be part of the selection process as a past chair of the Council.

Ms. Vitelli also shared an update pertaining to recommendations by the Council on WIOA reauthorization. Congress has not reauthorized WIOA. The House did pass a bill; the Senate has not taken that bill up. It does not look as though they will do so by the end of this Congress. Ms. Vitelli offered to share a link to the legislative language of the bill that the House passed, including language relating to Section 166, Council terms, and variations on the regular competition. The DOL is very interested in supporting Congress and making sure to answer any questions they have. Secretary Walsh has made it clear to congressional leaders that he is hoping for WIOA reauthorization among several other legislative priorities in the Department.

The current WIOA legislation requires the WIOA core programs, as well as several other programs authorized by WIOA including the Indian and Native American Program, to measure effectiveness in serving employers. Congress required this measure but did not define it, and instead left it up to the Department to define. The Department has piloted a couple of different measures thus far, conducted a study along with partners at Adult Education and Vocational Rehabilitation, and held town halls last year about what could be good measures of effectiveness in serving employers. Several Councilmembers and other organizations participated in those town halls. One of the documents included in Councilmembers' packets was a document summarizing the feedback received at those town halls. The Department has released a corresponding Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, a draft regulation that is now open for public comment. It is published in the Federal Register, and it is also available on regulations.gov under Docket Number ETA-2022-0005. Comments are due by November 14th. Any comments should be submitted through regulations.gov, as the Administrative Procedures Act dictates that official comments cannot be received through other methods.

DINAP is part of ETA, which has put out its Notice of Proposed Rulemaking. One thing included in the summary document pertains to calculation at an aggregate national level rather than at a grantee level. The statute requires that the Department collect the measure as a grantee measure; what the DOL does with it though is up to them. In the grant competition that has to be run under the current regulations, for instance, the DOL takes into account grantee performance, but it is not the only thing they consider in scoring the competition. The effectiveness in serving employer measure is really reusing data that grantees are already reporting that was a high priority for a lot of members of the public. Grantees will not have to do any separate reporting on this measure; rather, it is a measure that will be able to be calculated based on data that is already reported. The DOL acknowledges in the proposed rule that some grantees are not in a position to provide certain data until the Department builds and rolls out a robust performance reporting system. The use of GPMS now makes it easier for the DOL to collect and

grantees to report data for programs serving adults in the Comprehensive Services Program. There currently is not a module for youth, although it is coming.

Vice Chair Seven suggested sharing the links to the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking with the full Council. BC EchoHawk sent the Council an email with the link, and clarified that it could also be found in the October newsletter. Ms. Vitelli confirmed that anyone who registered for the town hall also received the link. Chair Quintana said it is possible that the link only went out to 166 awardees, which speaks to the need to follow up on all of the newsletters that are shared. DFO Brown pointed out that the WIOA indicators and the data collected is applicable to Section 166, because 477 grantees are not subject to these specific performance indicators. Any member of the public can still comment on it. Ms. Vitelli added that based on the Council's recommendation, the Department also has the authority to provide waivers on performance reporting for grantees that want to use alternative measures.

Ms. Vitelli also stressed the importance of workforce development as part of infrastructure development. With the Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill, the Chips and Science Bill, and the Inflation Reduction Act, there is a fair amount of federal money flowing towards a lot of different economic and community development opportunities. The DOL is in a unique position because it is not responsible for any of those funds, yet it cares a lot about workforce development. The role DOL has tried to play is to coordinate with other federal agencies and share its values on what kinds of jobs it hopes to see produced by all of these investments. One document in the packet distributed to the Council spells out these Good Job Principles.

The DOL is also preparing to publish a request for information regarding worker-centered sector strategies. The Department believes sector strategies are a great way to build a workforce pipeline into growing industries. They will also be putting out guidance on job quality. For workforce professionals, what kind of actions can workforce organizations take to improve job quality? There will also be a grant opportunity published about worker-centered sector strategies. The DOL plans to publish that in the winter, either in December or January. Chair Quintana said that getting the MOUs is often more challenging than not. He asked if there is a way to better educate the Advisory Board as far as NAETC's role with regard to the expanded access to services and co-enrollment. He also asked if it is possible for a Councilmember to sit on the Advisory Board directly. Ms. Vitelli said the DOL could continue to provide more technical assistance to the local workforce development boards themselves.

In the most recent funding opportunity announcement, which is now closed, the DOL put a real emphasis on community colleges reviewing equity gaps with their own programming, and then designing their grant proposals to specifically address those equity gaps. That is a feature that the DOL anticipates also building into the next Strengthening Community College funding opportunity announcement. Another grant opportunity is the Workforce Opportunity in Rural Communities (WORC). The DOL has received appropriations for this grant opportunity a couple years in a row now. This program is designed for smaller organizations specifically. According to the Appropriations Act, it is specifically for the Mississippi Delta Region, as well as the areas covered by the Appalachian Regional Commission and the Northern Border Regional Commission.

Councilmember Lowry asked if North Carolina would be eligible for the WORC grant opportunity, and she clarified whether or not Section 166 grantees could participate. Ms. Vitelli confirmed that individuals from North Carolina and Section 166 grantees would be eligible. Vice Chair Seven asked if any funding opportunities will be added for the Denali Commission. Ms. Vitelli said that they may do so in the future. Councilmember Rickard suggested that they should come out and look at Rural Northern California, as it has been severely impacted by forest fires. Job opportunities that were there prior to the fires are now gone.

Chair Quintana asked what can be done to keep up with the growing concern of inflation. While NAETC makes an outward effort to place people into jobs, we know that the cost of day to day essentials continues to rise. Salaries are not necessarily rising, yet the price of everything around is becoming ever more costly. Ms. Vitelli said it is tough for workforce development to impact inflation, but the question is how to set people up for jobs in which they can withstand some of that inflation. This is where job quality considerations come in, helping people find a career that is not a dead end job with real advancement opportunities. There is no silver bullet solution, but focusing on high quality jobs with room for growth is critical. There is also an important role to be played by supportive services, which has been a feature of 166 and 477 programs for a long time, but it is not necessarily a given in every workforce program.

Councilmember Counce circled back to ask about the regional boundaries of the WORC grant initiative. She asked how often new regions might be considered for implementation. Ms. Vitelli confirmed that it is a grant program that Congress has provided annual appropriations for thus far. The one that will be published in the spring will follow the rules of the FY '22 appropriation, which carries into PY '22. In the spring, the grant competition will only be for the regions of Mississippi Delta, Appalachia, and Northern Border; however, it is certainly possible that additional regions will be added in years to follow.

Councilmember Waldron asked about the lateness in getting the monies out to grantees; they have been calling him weekly over the past five months, which only leaves seven months to do what they normally do in 12. He asked if there will be any decisions on that or leniency come next June 30th. DFO Brown suggested that Councilmember Waldron should refer those calls to DINAP to explain the funding to the grantees on an individual basis. Ms. Vitelli acknowledged that there were delays. The Department worked closely with the grants office to prioritize any grantee that did not have very much carryover. The ones that remain either had a high amount of carryover or some other kind of complication with their grant that has taken a little bit more time to resolve. They did learn a lot of lessons through this grant competition that they are working through with the grants office. Ms. Vitelli agreed that it is unacceptable, even for problematic grantees, that all of the money is not out by this point. The Department is studying those problems in order to make sure it does not happen again.

DINAP Report Out and Updates

DFO Brown, Chief of DINAP, delivered the update. DINAP is part of the Employment and Training Administration, one of the largest agencies within the DOL. The Office of Workforce Investment houses numerous programs and supports a huge budget as part of the Department's overall budget. DINAP is

one of the smallest of the programs, but it is unique in that it is a nationally administered and managed program. While a lot of their work is administering and managing grants, DINAP also performs a lot of collateral duties within the DOL, some of which is interacting with the Office of Congressional and Intergovernmental Affairs to ensure that they are conferring with Mr. Jackson about some of the larger initiatives across all federal agencies and in the White House. The federal project officers in DINAP play a large part in assuming responsibility for collateral duties beyond just overseeing the grants themselves.

DINAP is spread throughout the regions, which is to the advantage of the grantees. They want the federal project officers to have direct contact with the grantees. Ms. Vitelli has also been a big supporter of DINAP, as she approved some of the new FTEs as part of the Department's budget. Recently DINAP was able to pre-screen some applicants for another federal project officer position, and OHR has approved that and is moving forward on contacting the applicant to make a job offer. The next step is to process the job announcement for another supervisory workforce development specialist in DINAP to work alongside Duane Hall. That position will be posted on USAJobs soon. DINAP is moving on in hiring some additional staff to hopefully alleviate some of the workload on the existing FPOs.

DINAP is now serving 99 comprehensive service program grantees, as well as 66 supplemental youth services. That number is reflective of approximately three or four grantees that are no longer operating standalone programs and are currently being served by other organizations. The Council is aware that there have been some issues with certain applicants that are beyond resolving, to include issues that move to initial and final determinations, with potential fraud and abuse.

When DINAP is working with grantees that are at high risk of losing grants, they work hard to make sure that they prioritize those service areas so that the grantees do not lose the services. DINAP knows that oftentimes clients are being served, and they want to make sure there is continuity of the services being provided. They look at all of their options across the board, and one of those is whether a particular workload can be transferred over to another highly performing grantee.

DINAP has also recently approved three more grantees to participate in the 477 program. DFO Brown is pleased because these tribes have been working on their applications for quite a while. The number of 477 grantees now stands at 67, with one additional application pending. There is a combined total of \$18,716,368 transferred to the Department of the Interior for the 477 program, of which \$13,533,802 is adult funds and \$5,182,566 is youth funds. This year was a competition year, and the awards were issued with nine receiving conditional awards, and almost all nine of those conditions were related to excess carryover. This means that the FEOs will be required to work closely with these grantees to ensure that all of those issues are resolved and that they submit corrective action plans. DINAP recognizes that the targeted training and technical assistance from the Council are important components of the strategic plan, as they want to make sure that at-risk grantees and those with performance issues are addressed.

The DOL's Indian and Native American Program is funded on a program year basis, so they go from July 1 through June 30th. Throughout program years '21-23, the program has received incremental increases

in funds. In 2021, the program received \$55 million in comprehensive service funds and \$13.7 million in supplemental youth service funds. In program year 2022, the program received \$57 million in comprehensive service funds and \$13.9 million in youth funds. That amount also includes the 1 percent allowable funding that is taken out for training and technical assistance provided by Tribal Tech. The Department also reserves a very small amount of program integrity funds.

In 2023, the President's proposed funding is \$63.8 million in adult funds and \$14.5 million in youth funds. A lot of work goes into formulating recommendations for the budget every year, and putting together papers that address how DINAP wants to improve services or meet some of the targets laid out in the strategic four-year plan. DFO Brown recognizes that under this Administration, there have been incremental increases in funding, which was one of the recommendations from the Council.

The largest grant is \$6 million, and the smallest is approximately \$16,000. That speaks to the diverse participation in terms of the sizes of the tribes involved across the nation. Folks who work in smaller rural areas know that these programs really make a major impact. DINAP serves large and small grantees across the nation, and that is one of the things they take into account when working with grantees and providing training and technical assistance at the national and regional conferences.

The DOL funds youth grants to federally recognized tribes only and one Native Hawaiian organization, and that is why the numbers are so much smaller than the adult grants. The statutory language authorizes a supplemental youth program where the Indian and Native American Program receives 1.5 percent of the appropriation for the WIOA youth state formula funds. Many of the youth programs are very small and operate summer youth only; however, DINAP does allow year-round programs, so if a smaller grantee operates a youth program and has not managed to spend all of its funds, they can extend their program throughout the year.

DINAP saw a 9 percent increase in participants enrolled since 2021. Under the supplemental youth services program, in program year 2021 they served approximately 3,094 customers, which was a 47 percent increase compared to program year 2020. Program numbers significantly decreased during the pandemic, which happened in DOL-operated programs across the nation. There was a 90 percent increase in youth participants who attained two or more goals.

The DOL supports the Indian Employment, Training and Related Services Consolidation Act, otherwise known as the 477 program as amended. DOL was one of the four agencies that initially supported 477 before it became a permanent part of the law. The Department of the Interior does plan to have a formal signing of the MOA by all 12 agencies because it is so important. That program is so unique and such a huge part of Section 166 because DOL was initially one of the agencies supporting it. The regional and national conferences were combined in order to provide training and technical assistance to workforce directors across the nation without separating out 477 and 166. The goal is to keep everyone on the same page as far as employment and training initiatives. The DOL has always supported the DOI in providing technical assistance if the grantees request help navigating the 477 process.

One of the major priorities of the Biden Administration is to rebuild the economy and bring back businesses, focusing on returning job opportunities to America. Unemployment rates are dropping

throughout the country. However, this effort requires a keen understanding of Native communities, and that is where the Council comes into play, because NAETC recognizes that to understand the local reservation-based economies and the challenges where unemployment rates are much higher, the opportunities are oftentimes few. One of the major opportunities that has arisen lately is increased flexibility from the Department on workplace alternatives. Remote work and telework is allowed now, which in the past had only ever been allowable on a limited or restricted basis. As such, DINAP has been able to recruit federal project officers that are willing to work remotely from other areas.

DFO Brown expressed gratitude for the Secretary of Labor's leadership and the ETA in general. They have set up a very strong agenda for the Good Jobs Summit. DINAP is going to rely on the Council to nail down some potential dates on when it could happen. DFO Brown is also looking at the schedules of other large gatherings of tribes so they do not have to duplicate efforts.

Similar to the concerns that the Council raised in their last set of recommendations, economic growth is only meaningful if everyone can benefit. DINAP has tried to challenge itself and the workforce system to be more selective about the types of jobs that they prepare people for, aiming for those with higher wages and benefits where workers can have a good voice and a real career. This is a different mindset for the program in a way, as DINAP has historically concentrated on the hardest populations to serve. Now there is an increased emphasis on working with other people beyond the hardest to serve, and looking at where they can identify opportunities for stable jobs.

The Apprenticeship Program has bipartisan support across the board, and there is a large amount of resources dedicated to it. There has been a lot of interest amount stakeholders and those on the Hill who are supporting pre-apprenticeship as a way to expand and enter apprenticeships. DFO Brown hopes to see apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs expanded across Indian Country. She emphasized that the Tribal Employment Rights Offices across the country play a key role, as oftentimes they are the ones identifying business partners and contracts that are coming into Indian Country to offer training in various industries.

Report Out on NAETC Workgroups

Councilmember Hibbeler briefly reported out that the effective management workgroup will work on the updates to the strategic plan that were previously discussed, which will then be revisited the following day. All of the data has come directly from input provided at the Council meetings. Vice Chair Seven recommended working with the NINAETC web administrator to add a link to the two-year strategic plan.

Councilmember Bernal reported out on the efforts of the census workgroup. They are planning on having an initial discussion with the full workgroup in mid-November. They are looking forward to kicking off the collective dialogue. Those who expressed interest in the workgroup should have received a calendar invitation with dial-in details for the mid-November virtual meeting. Councilmember Bernal thanked those who have provided suggestions for subject matter experts; the census workgroup has reached out to many of those individuals. Those who were receptive and would like to be involved include a Bureau of Labor Statistics economist, a Native American legal advocate involved in census

issues, and several others. The census workgroup is also fortunate to be able to work with Ron D'Amico and members of the Social Policy Research Associates team, who assisted with the implementation of the prior decennial census data and tabulations. The census workgroup welcomes any additional referrals on an ongoing basis. Specific recommendations will be left to the Council, after having been made and formulated by the workgroup. The census workgroup looks forward to providing thoughtful feedback on any issues that arise. In light of the timelines involved, the census workgroup hopes to be able to formulate recommendations over the coming months in advance of the next Council meeting.

Councilmember Whitman said there was nothing new to add for the youth workgroup. She reiterated that there will be a December 6th meeting, and an invite will be sent to everyone whose names are listed on the last page of the strategic plan. Councilmember Whitman added that the Good Jobs Initiative will also be added to the youth program track.

Recap

Chair Quintana went around the room to check in with each of the councilmembers about what they have learned at the meeting and what they are excited about going into the rest of the year. Vice Chair Seven said her takeaway is that there is a strategic plan ready to print and distribute, and an update should be posted to the NINAETC website. Councilmember Peer said it is very important to get information out regarding the upcoming new funding opportunities. Councilmember Edmo echoed Vice Chair Seven's remark about being happy that the final strategic plan draft is ready to go, in addition to working with the Tribal Liaison Mr. Jackson. Councilmember Wojnas is excited about the sheer number of different fronts that the Council has made progress on, and the traction that represents. Councilmember Hibbeler said she is excited about the movement of the workgroups, as well as the support of Ms. Vitelli to help move the efforts of the Council forward. Councilmember Rickard thanked Ms. Vitelli for her update, as reauthorization is always an important topic. He also appreciated the information shared about the comment period for ETA-2022-0005.

Councilmember Lowry highlighted the different initiatives that are going on and the momentum in Native American communities, opportunities that Councilmembers can bring back to their regions, and the Good Jobs Summit. Councilmember Morales said that as a new member, she is most excited about learning from the existing experts on the Council to make sure she represents Alaska well. DFO Brown said her takeaway is that she is very grateful that the Council turned it into a working meeting today. Councilmember Counce said that her takeaway is that it seems like all of the pieces are coming together, and she is excited to hear about apprenticeship opportunities and the Good Jobs Summit. Finally, Councilmember Whitman said she appreciated the wealth of information shared all around; without everyone working together, none of it could have come to fruition.

The Council recessed for the day at 4:14 p.m.

MONDAY, OCTOBER 31, 2022

The Council met at the SAFE Credit Union Convention Center, located at 1401 K Street, Sacramento, California, at 9:00 a.m. PT, Joseph Quintana, Chair, presiding.

Present

Joseph Quintana, Region 6, Chair
Kay Seven, Other Disciplines, Vice Chair
Jacob Bernal, Region 6
Lora Ann Chaisson, Region 4
Robin Counce, Region 4
Lorraine Edmo, Region 4
Patricia Hibbeler, Other Disciplines
Robert Houle, Region 5
Candace Lowry, Region 3
Holly Morales, Region 6
Angel Peer, Region 5
Gary Rickard, Region 6
Kay Seven, Other Disciplines
Winona Whitman, Region 6
Jacob Wojnas, Other Disciplines

Absent

Kim Kaniatobe Carroll, Other Disciplines
Shawn Isaac, Region 6
Erwin Pahmahmie, Jr., Region 4
Darrell Waldron, Regions 1 and 2

Also Present

Athena Brown, DFO, Chief, DINAP
BC EchoHawk, Tribal Tech, LLC
Jennifer Whitmore, Federal Project Officer

Blessing/Call to Order/Roll Call

The Chair called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. DFO Brown delivered the opening blessing. BC EchoHawk conducted a roll call and determined there was a quorum. The Council then recessed until 1:00 p.m. in order to attend the NCAI meeting.

Apprenticeship Update on Participation of Tribes and Indian Organizations

Cierra Mitchell, Division Director in the Office of Apprenticeship, oversees the business and industry engagement portfolio as well as the performance and marketing outreach portfolio at OA. She gave a brief update on the current ecosystem. During the last meeting, there were approximately 38 programs, with a number of programs on tribal lands or in coordination with the Native American community. It has pretty much stayed the same since the last meeting. The number of apprentices has grown by approximately 40; there are now approximately 317 apprentices across the various states. The industries have stayed the same for the most part, although they are starting to see more from the construction industry through new partnerships with NAFTAU and other intermediaries, especially with all of the infrastructure work going on currently.

Since the last meeting, OA has launched the 120 Day Cybersecurity Apprenticeship Sprint in partnership with the White House and the Department of Commerce, based on a critical need for cybersecurity in national security. The goal is to raise awareness about cybersecurity apprenticeship programs, and to help organizations create cybersecurity programs. OA has three industry intermediary partners that it works with to develop cybersecurity apprenticeship programs. Like NAFTAU, these organizations have funds they can use to support organizations that want to develop programs.

One of the contractors OA is working with is Safal Partners, who have been working with the Island Mountain Development Group (IMDG), which recently joined their national cybersecurity program. IMDG was founded in 2009 by the Fort Belknap Indian Community Council. It is an autonomous, for-profit economic development corporation to serve the Aaniiih and Nakoda Nations. Their mission is to build a self-sustaining local economy through the creation of business opportunities. Their new program works to create true generational change and economic prosperity in the Ford Belknap Indian Community. Ms. Mitchell asked the Councilmembers to let her know if they are aware of any organizations that have a need for or an interest in developing a cybersecurity apprenticeship program. OA would be happy to help create those programs and connect those organizations with staff and intermediaries for additional support.

OA is hosting another Apprenticeship 101 session on how to increase tribal apprenticeships on November 8th at the Native American Employment and Training Western Regional 166/477 Training Conference. Angela McDaniel, Cultural Diversity Lead, also represents the DOL on the White House Native American Interagency Workgroup. Recently they put out a request for data from across the Department on what they are doing to support Native American communities. Ms. McDaniel is spearheading that effort, and all of that information will be made available on the White House website. OA is also working with the Department of Education and DOL's Office of Disability and Employment

Policy on a series of in person and virtual events to increase opportunities for Native Americans. Dates for this collaborative event will be distributed soon. There is also a lot of interest in federal apprenticeship programs at the Department of the Interior. They have a program with the Bureau of Indian Affairs using Indian preference. Recently OA has been having several conversations with Interior about federal apprenticeship programs, and they plan to work with the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

National Apprenticeship Week is taking place the week of November 14 this year. It is a great way to learn more about apprenticeships. Events can be looked up by area, industry, keywords or target populations on OA's website. OA is expecting over 1,000 events will be held across National Apprenticeship Week, and they are hoping to see over 250 proclamations this year. OA recently worked with an organization to develop a proclamation, which will be posted on its website soon.

Councilmember Rickard asked to hear more about apprenticeship centers that are being set up across the country, and he inquired as to whether or not Native tribes would be eligible to be major players in those centers. Vanietta Armstrong, who oversees OA's investments division, indicated that there is a lot of variety for funding. When it comes to Registered Apprenticeship Technical Assistance (RATA) Centers of Excellence, OA is stretching the net where they are making sure that collaborations are twofold, meaning they are very committed to doing outreach and collaboration with Indian Country to ensure everyone has a seat at the table. This is a wonderful opportunity from the RATA Centers to galvanize and find out what is needed out there. Ms. Armstrong said that forums of this type provide a good opportunity to get a temperature read on what can be done collaboratively to make a difference. She added that the RATA Centers are very well-equipped in working collaboratively with different demographics.

There are four RATA Centers of Excellence: (1) Jobs For the Future, which provides a diversity and inclusion center; (2) Safal Partners, which provides a strategic partnership and system alignment center; (3) Urban Institute, which provides an apprenticeship occupations and standards center; and (4) The Council for State Governments, which provides a data, performance, and best practice center.

Vice Chair Seven asked who in the DOL is ensuring that each contractor is reaching out to Indian Country, and how they plan on reaching out specifically. She also asked if OA is familiar with Public Law 102-477, as amended by Public Law 115-93. Ms. Mitchell said there are points of contact within the OA and federal project officers that oversee each of the grants. They are there to ensure that each contractor is working with Indian Country. Vice Chair Seven asked to see updates at the next meeting on how the contractors reached out to Indian Country and what the outcomes were.

Report Out on DOL's Youth Framework

Jennifer Whitmore, Federal Project Officer at the Employment and Training Administration, reported out on DOL's youth framework and ETA's initiatives to support youth and young adults. She briefly recapped where ETA is with service delivery for 166; ETA does not have an update on 477 at this time. ETA's strategic vision for 2030 includes the Good Jobs Summit, providing better training to get people into good careers with higher pay, and tapping into apprenticeship programs. The key component to that is youth employment work. ETA is in the process of developing this strategy where it will coordinate youth

services to provide work experience and wraparound support to introduce youth to better jobs. The DOL is invested in making sure they take value in the nation's care economy. The goal is to build a modern, inclusive workforce, which takes into account the input of the Council as to incorporate Native Americans explicitly.

The pandemic has created a ripple effect throughout the programs. In 2020, there was a drop of over 40 percent in youth serviced under the SYS program, in addition to a significant drop in the adult program. Within the strategy for better servicing the youth, ETA is forming a youth employment workgroup. The vision for 2030 is to guarantee paid work experience for every young person aged 14-24. Currently the DOL is working on a learning series, which they are looking at adopting in the tribal communities. ETA will be working alongside the Council and the youth workgroup to better assist youth providers or grantees.

There are currently 166 grantees total. There are 99 Section 166 grants. Of those 99 grants, 66 received supplemental youth services funding, and then 67 are receiving funds under Public Law 102-477. Within the SYS program, 3,094 were served this past year. With the CSP, the Conferences Services Program, they can service individuals 14 and over, so they are servicing youth in that program. Between CSP and SYS alone, there were over 5,600 youth being serviced in 2021. In SYS, over half of these youth are participating in work experience during the summer. Almost 80 percent of the participants being serviced are between ages 14 and 18. There has been a trend of younger youth coming into the program, but there is also room to serve older youth up to age 24. Over 60 percent of the youth entering the INA program are in high school.

Over the past few years, ETA has been working on the Grantee Performance Management System (GPMS). The GPMS is a web-based system developed by DOL in consultation with grantees for data collection and reporting. In 2020, GPMS was rolled out to grantees who receive TSP funds. ETA is in the process of developing a system for the 66 youth grantees. That contract was secured in July. This past quarter, ETA has been working on revisiting regulations and the law. There is a large staff committed to youth, and efforts are being made to ensure that the system is designed to meet the reporting requirements. Once the youth workgroup meeting occurs, some of the grantees are expected to provide feedback on the new system. At the regional level, there will also be a demo on the new GPMS and the progress to date. Come next year, Ms. Whitmore hopes to work with some grantees to get into the new GPMS system, create accounts, and solicit feedback for improvements. The plan is to go live by May of 2023. There are already six grantees that have been selected to participate in the initial pilot program. If there are no major hiccups within the first month or two, it will then be rolled out to all 66 participants.

Chair Quintana referenced the 50 percent youth who participate in summer employment figure, and he asked if there has been any particular reason there have been dips over the years with regard to summer employment. If youth are taking part in the summer youth program, are they finding challenges as far as finding employment during the summer months? He also asked if there is any reporting back from youth participants on their experience. Ms. Whitmore said the numbers are usually a bit higher, but because of the pandemic tribes were completely shut down. There were tribal resolutions where

they were not placing youth at work sites during the pandemic. At this point, however, most tribes have reopened and are back to work, with quarantine protocols in place for any exposures that may occur.

DFO Brown added that when the tribes shut down completely, most of the youth programs served at-risk, in-school youth as opposed to out of school youth. Once those schools shut down, there were practically no youth participants served because it was during the summer. Another challenge that was identified from talking with the tribes when the pandemic first happened was that many of the smaller tribes were ill-prepared to do anything virtual. Even the online intake process was completely shut down for small tribes who did not have access to laptops or recording equipment. DINAP started encouraging and providing guidance to grantees on how to purchase laptops, but oftentimes they were faced with their own internal restrictions on these purchases. Councilmember Rickard said it will be important to look at pre-pandemic and what happened five to 10 years prior, in addition to what is going on now post-pandemic.

Review of the Revised Strategic Plan

Councilmember Hibbeler presented a revised version of the strategic plan. The goal is to reach a point where the Council is comfortable passing the strategic plan to help guide its work over the next year and a half. A strategic plan is not something that is created just to sit on the shelf; it is a working document, and as new issues arise, additions can be made at meetings to follow.

Two particular sections were removed from the original draft: performance measure and status. These activities are more relevant to the Council's internal monitoring and do not need to be part of an external communication. Councilmember Hibbeler proposed creating a dashboard for this purpose, which would give a quick glance at the progress of particular initiatives as a way to monitor the Council's work. A section was added at the beginning that talks about the background of NAETC and its initiatives. The categories have not changed. A.2 was changed based on language taken directly from the charter.

Vice Chair Seven said in looking ahead to the second meeting of 2023, it should occur at the DOL in D.C around the time of the White House Tribal Nations Event in early November or December. Chair Quintana agreed that it is important to host a meeting in D.C., as that is where the Council's partners are at, and it is better to have access to congressional leaders directly rather than looking at them on a screen. Councilmember Hibbeler suggested that the language should specify that the Council ought to be at the National Conference, the Tribal Nation Meeting and/or NCAI. By incorporating the "and/or" language, the Council retains options on what to center around.

Vice Chair Seven pointed out that there was no notation regarding a projected timeline, and she recommended that April 2023 would be a good target date for presenting the strategy statement to the Secretary of Labor. The Council's two year appointment began April 2022 and will end March 2024. DFO Brown said to keep in mind the dates for starting the process for the nomination of the Councilmembers and the corresponding Federal Register Notice. Once the nominations come in, vetting will take place, which means the clearance of all of the nominees. Ideally that process needs to begin even earlier than six months in advance.

Councilmember Edmo asked how long it has been since the reauthorization has been under consideration or discussion, and when the Council anticipates that it will be accomplished. DFO Brown said it must be reintroduced after they re-establish a new Congress, sometime after January.

Councilmember Bernal suggested explicitly referencing the reallocation process, given the implication of the census data and formula on that funding, and the significance of those funds to many of the Council's programs. DFO Brown recommended adding language to be all-inclusive of workforce development staff.

Councilmember Rickard asked whether or not Tribal Tech has any experts in the employment training business. DFO Brown responded that the DOL contracted with Tribal Tech because of their capabilities in a lot of different areas. They have numerous government contracts that tie in to workforce development activities, and that expertise was one of the reasons they were selected. Tribal Tech also has experience in conducting comprehensive needs assessments. They work in concert with the DOL to determine the different areas specific to workforce development.

Councilmember Rickard followed up on the peer-to-peer training component. DFO Brown said the peer-to-peer training is available across the board to all of the grantees, even though they do focus on the smaller grantees. Subject matter experts are identified who can serve as peer providers from some of the larger and even smaller grantees who operate very efficient, streamlined programs. Peer-to-peer is part of training and technical assistance. BC EchoHawk assured the group that Tribal Tech is happy to accept any input that the Council has to offer.

Councilmember Lowry asked if it would be possible for the Council to review the survey before it goes out to give input on information that may be missing. Chair Quintana suggested having it go out to the effective management workgroup. Councilmember Hibbeler recommended replacing "case managers" with "workforce development staff," and changing the date to 2023. Chair Quintana suggested being conservative on the projected timeline estimates in order to anticipate the potential for hiccups. Ms. Whitmore added that the goal is to integrate the submitting reports for grantees by August 15th.

Councilmember Whitman asked if there is any regulation that precludes subject matter experts who are on the committee but not Councilmembers from serving as chair of workgroups. DFO Brown says that she does not believe that there has ever been a requirement for the chair or working groups to be a Councilmember. Norm DeWeaver, for instance, chaired the census workgroup as a subject matter expert rather than a Councilmember.

Councilmember Morales proposed removing the "middle income" language, so that it instead reads "supporting clients in their pathways." Councilmember Hibbeler said that the list of workgroup members is a work in progress. If anyone is missing, including subject matter experts, they can be added to the list at a later date.

Councilmember Rickard made a motion to approve the proposed changes to the strategic plan. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Morales, and it passed unanimously.

Public Comment

Greg Richardson, Executive Director of the North Carolina Commission of Indian Affairs, shared that his career was based in employment training programs. Upon returning from Vietnam in 1972, Mr. Richardson went to work for the state government in 1975, and then he was employed under what was called the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) program. Mr. Richardson said that program gave him an opportunity to get a job in government, develop a resume, and to start a longstanding career that led him where he is today. He emphasized the importance of keeping the state tribes and state-recognized communities in the work plans.

Mr. Richardson added that the workforce program also provides an opportunity for economic development. Disadvantaged populations in these communities really need assistance in terms of being able to get some training and career opportunities. Building the workforce is critical to economic development as it provides an opportunity for the employers across communities to have trained employees to conduct their work.

Mr. Richardson highlighted that there has been an undercount based on the 2020 census, and this will impact the funding of various programs across Indian Country. He suggested initiating a task of figuring out if there will be any additional funding to shore up what will be lost in the undercount across tribal communities. Mr. Richardson also discussed the importance of keeping the 166 component of the program intact. In closing, he thanked DFO Brown for her longtime commitment to the work.

Lorenda Sanchez, Executive Director of the California Indian Manpower Consortium, Inc., indicated that she will be editing the letter that was previously sent regarding the effectiveness in serving employers. She will be sharing that letter on the California Indian Manpower Consortium page so that other grantees can see it. Those comments will be based on the resolution that was adopted at the National Indian and Native American Employment and Training and Public Law 102/477 Conference in September 2021. Ms. Sanchez plans to incorporate the "whereas" statements from that resolution into a paper.

For a number of years, Ms. Sanchez has shared that the performance measures and outcomes for Indian and Native American programs are definitely not to be treated with a one-size-fits-all approach. The language in the law indicates that the services and outcomes need to reflect the values of the communities when different rules and mandates are placed on the programs. Ms. Sanchez was pleased to hear that there will be a waiver provision, and she is hoping that will remain in the outcomes for the 166 programs. Ms. Sanchez also commented on the discussion and recommendations of the Council to address the communication with Indian and Native American communities.

Ms. Sanchez commended Secretary Walsh on his efforts to include Indians and Native Americans in the funding opportunity announcement. She encouraged grantees to respond to those FOAs. There are many needs that Native American communities have, and it would be a shame to miss those funding opportunities. Ms. Sanchez also thanked Councilmember Lowry for bringing up the LISTSERV, which she believes is a very important tool for communication. She further commended the Council on solidifying the strategic plan and identifying meaningful tasks for the grantee community.

Councilmember Edmo thanked DFO Brown for all of her years of work with DOL. She has committed many years and a lot of knowledge to the agency. Moving forward, Councilmember Edmo hopes the Council can find someone as committed and hardworking as DFO Brown to fill the role of DINAP Chief.

Recap and Follow-up

Chair Quintana asked the Council to decide on the date of the next meeting. BC EchoHawk confirmed that the dates of the National Conference are Sunday, April 30 through Thursday, May 4, 2023. Vice Chair Seven recommended that the meeting should happen during the conference week so that the grantee community can sit in on the Council meeting and participate in the public comment period. Councilmember Hibbeler asked if public comment can occur on the first day of the Council meeting so that more individuals can participate. DFO Brown confirmed that it is at the Council's discretion to make that adjustment to the schedule. Councilmember Hibbeler made a motion to hold the Council meeting on May 3-4, 2023. Vice Chair Seven seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Chair Quintana next raised the topic of formally drafting a letter with the finalized strategic plan to the Secretary of Labor and other partners including representatives of NCAI. Councilmember Hibbeler made a motion to employ the executive committee to draft a letter to Secretary Walsh and the NCAI as an introduction to the Council and its strategic plan as passed today. Councilmember Edmo seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 3:51 p.m.