

15:02:38 CC, you kept turning it on or off.
15:02:40 It is an automatic feature. So there are some errors,
15:02:43 obviously that happens every so often.
15:02:45 So would that again,
15:02:46 encourage you to introduce yourself and the chat.
15:02:49 And.
15:02:50 For those.
15:02:51 I'll start, I guess, by introduce myself.
15:02:53 Nicholas you at strategy director.
15:03:02 Big college America.
15:03:03 And it's my pleasure to welcome you to today's webinar on adult
15:03:07 learner engagement with two of my colleagues from the graduate
15:03:10 network, Bridget Strickler and Kathy's of Dona.
15:03:12 I was very excited to partner with them.
15:03:15 And to hear a little bit more about how we can best support
15:03:18 our adult learners.
15:03:20 To return and complete their degrees at this time. So with this,
15:03:24 I'll turn the floor over to Bridgette.
15:03:26 Hi, everybody.
15:03:31 Thank you Nicholas NCCA for inviting the graduate network to
15:03:34 participate on CCA line. This is very exciting.
15:03:38 I'm Bridget Strickler I'm the senior vice president for learning and
15:03:40 impact.
15:03:41 The graduate network.
15:03:43 And what that means is my portfolio is really around research to
15:03:46 action.
15:03:50 And we have a large body of original research that I'm going to be
15:03:54 talking to you about today.
15:03:56 Called data that move us.
15:03:58 So if you'd go to the next slide.
15:04:05 So as everybody on the call here today probably knows there's
15:04:08 36 million adults in the us.
15:04:15 With some college credit,
15:04:17 but no degree in that comes from the national student clearing house,
15:04:20 2019, some college, no degree we report.
15:04:23 And we had the graduate network honor.
15:04:26 These determined individuals.
15:04:28 Who are intent on completing their degrees by designating them as come
15:04:32 backers.
15:04:33 The graduate network coined this term.
15:04:36 To underscore their potential and their tenacity in college.
15:04:40 Time around and come back. Hers are our heroes.
15:04:47 As you'll be hearing more about that for me,
15:04:49 as I advanced through the slides. Don't don't go yet though. Nicholas.
15:04:54 So we,
15:04:56 we believe our w our vision is really that every adult who aspires to
15:04:59 earn a college degree,
15:05:01 Has access to the resources and the supports that they require.
15:05:04 Just start and complete.
15:05:09 And equity as at the heart of our mission,

15:05:11 we believe everyone should have an equitable chance to achieve the
15:05:14 education and career that they desire.
15:05:16 Next
15:05:17 slide
15:05:22 .
15:05:26 And this is a map of where we do our work and you'll hear
15:05:30 more about specific bodies of work that we are doing.
15:05:34 In states and communities from my colleague. Kathy's Dan donuts.
15:05:37 A little later in the presentation.
15:05:39 But basically.
15:05:40 We work with.
15:05:41 Civic leadership partners in higher education.
15:05:45 Economic and community development, workforce development.
15:05:51 Businesses labor and comeback or towards a future.
15:06:08 Where there are established and sustainable services and every
15:06:12 community for adults.
15:06:13 So sort of at the center of our model is a community
15:06:17 based institution,
15:06:19 neutral navigator that helps adults.
15:06:21 Figure out every step of their education journey.
15:06:25 If you'll go to the next slide, please.
15:06:27 And as I said, equity as at the heart of the graduate model.
15:06:30 This is some demographic information about the comeback.
15:06:33 That our community served.
15:06:35 90% Of our comeback occurs.
15:06:38 Earn less than \$42,000 a year and half earn less than
15:06:42 \$24,000 a year.
15:06:47 And our comeback, hers skew female 70% are women.
15:06:50 Most are the first in their families to attend college.
15:06:53 70% Are black.
15:07:00 And an Albuquerque and San Antonio most are Latin X.
15:07:03 So our communities are serving primarily non-white and low-income
15:07:07 populations.
15:07:08 Next slide, please.
15:07:09 So, as I mentioned, our original.
15:07:15 Body of research is what we refer to as data that move
15:07:18 us.
15:07:22 And we annually produce reports that are mined
15:07:25 from across.
15:07:27 About a dozen communities who are using the same.
15:07:32 Methodology and tracking mechanism to document their
15:07:36 interactions with comeback offers.
15:07:38 This report.
15:07:45 The comeback story was published last September in partnership
15:07:49 with new America, it was funded by Lumina foundation.
15:07:52 And it represented a two year joint investigation and I'm going
15:07:56 to drop a link.
15:07:57 Oh, great. Thanks Nicholas.
15:08:01 That's where you can read the full report,
15:08:03 but the information I'm sharing with you today.

15:08:05 Comes from the comeback story.
15:08:17 And our findings are helping to shape policy,
15:08:20 drive institutional change and change the way that practitioners,
15:08:24 researchers and those inside higher education.
15:08:27 Think about the some degree are some college,
15:08:30 no degree population.
15:08:31 I also wanted to.
15:08:33 Plug that in later this summer,
15:08:35 we will be releasing an updated report that we're calling.
15:08:38 The comeback.
15:08:40 Odyssey. So that's very exciting.
15:08:41 Next slide.
15:08:50 So here are a few of the top level findings have come about the
15:08:53 comeback and our study set.
15:08:55 Who graduated.
15:08:56 69%.
15:09:16 Stayed continuously enrolled after they re-enrolled on their way to
15:09:19 graduation,
15:09:20 but one in five had additional starts and stops along the
15:09:24 way.
15:09:25 So the concept that I'm going to be talking to you more about is that
15:09:29 perseverance.
15:09:30 And we think that the language that we use around.
15:09:34 Come backers.
15:09:35 Should.
15:09:36 B one, a perseverance and not.
15:09:39 The traditional term of persistence.
15:09:41 One in 10 come backers.
15:09:43 Who graduated were able to move to.
15:09:46 They faced an administrative hurdle on their way to graduation.
15:09:50 And most of the time, once that administrative hurdle was overcome,
15:09:54 they were able to move on.
15:09:56 To graduation very quickly and.
15:09:58 Examples of that are things, you know, bureaucratic tangles.
15:10:01 Like they didn't apply.
15:10:03 They didn't do their graduation application.
15:10:05 They may have had an unpaid balance or something of that nature.
15:10:23 We also know that come backers motivations for wanting to complete
15:10:26 their degree are deeply personal. They,
15:10:30 they cite intrinsic reasons like wanting to be a role model for their
15:10:34 family,
15:10:35 or just a personal sense of satisfaction for completing.
15:10:38 And interestingly, even more than family.
15:10:42 The top factors cited.
15:10:44 By comeback or others.
15:10:45 For, for their ability to complete their degree.
15:10:47 Was that,
15:10:49 that they had a supportive faculty member or key staff person in the
15:10:52 institution.
15:10:53 That encouraged them to complete when the going got rough.

15:10:57 And that was 88% of respondents to us,
15:11:00 to our survey.
15:11:01 Cited, this supportive institutional faculty and staff.
15:11:05 Next slide, please.
15:11:08 And so I'm hoping that the two key takeaways you have from this
15:11:12 presentation today are these two things.
15:11:15 We need to tell a new story.
15:11:17 About stop-out.
15:11:19 The story is not one, a person persistence, but one a perseverance.
15:11:23 And we also need to tell a new story, not one.
15:11:26 A failure or shortcomings.
15:11:27 But one of untapped potential.
15:11:30 Next slide.
15:11:39 So again, this data comes from the comeback story.
15:11:41 You can read more about it and the full report.
15:11:44 But the majority of the comeback.
15:11:50 Hers who engaged with the network and who went on to
15:11:54 graduate, stayed continuously enrolled the whole time.
15:11:57 That's 69%.
15:11:58 Come backers.
15:12:04 By definition,
15:12:06 I've already taken a non-traditional pathway on their higher education
15:12:09 journey. And so we really wanted to dig in and understand.
15:12:14 What were the pathways that they did take it is
15:12:18 really an amazing story of determination. And especially.
15:12:22 If you've considered that.
15:12:23 Of those in our study said the average age of the comeback.
15:12:27 Who re-enrolled was 33.
15:12:31 And they had been,
15:12:32 and it had been an average of 3.7 years since their last
15:12:36 enrollment.
15:12:37 Next slide.
15:12:39 So now let's look at the 20%.
15:12:49 Who had additional starts and stops along the
15:12:53 way. So you can see that one in five.
15:12:57 Had at least one additional stop-out.
15:13:00 And.
15:13:06 And that, and 15% had one stop-out and two,
15:13:10 our 5% had two or more additional stuff out.
15:13:13 And for those of you who are curious about the 11%.
15:13:17 They are that's.
15:13:18 Those are the ones that overcame an administrative hurdle and went on
15:13:21 to immediate graduation.
15:13:26 But in our qualitative research,
15:13:28 which consisted of focus groups and one-on-one interviews,
15:13:31 we asked comeback.
15:13:32 About those additional starts and stops and why they were needed.
15:13:37 And the,
15:13:38 the reasons that they gave us fell into three different categories.
15:13:42 So one was a change in personal situation.

15:13:46 A change in marriage.
15:13:49 The examples of this are a change in marital status.
15:13:52 Oftentimes a divorce.
15:13:58 A change in caretaking responsibilities for someone in their family,
15:14:02 whether that was an older person or children.
15:14:05 And, and also illness was another thing they cited.
15:14:09 The second category of reasons for stopping
15:14:12 again.
15:14:19 Really clustered around balancing school and work.
15:14:21 So things like coordinating their work in class schedules was not
15:14:25 an easy thing to do.
15:14:27 And the third category was financial difficulties.
15:14:30 So running out of financial aid,
15:14:32 no longer being eligible for employer provided.
15:14:34 Tuition assistance.
15:14:36 Losing their job or an unexpected.
15:14:38 Large expense, like medical bills.
15:14:47 And not surprisingly the lower the income bracket,
15:14:50 the more likely to come back or was to have stopped out again.
15:14:54 But of the combat furs who did stop out.
15:14:57 A hundred percent of them.
15:14:58 Said that they wanted to go back.
15:15:03 So again, underscoring this concept of perseverance. Next next slide.
15:15:11 So in the higher education world,
15:15:13 there's a lot of focus on the metric of persistence.
15:15:27 And for sure.
15:15:29 There's just a ton of research out there that shows that students who
15:15:32 start college their freshman year and are enrolled again the
15:15:36 fall of starting their sophomore year,
15:15:39 that they're more likely to make it to graduation.
15:15:41 But that's the story for traditional students who start directly after
15:15:44 high school.
15:15:45 And matriculate matriculate full-time on campus.
15:15:48 We need a new story for comeback, firs.
15:15:50 And if I just think about the word persistence.
15:15:57 That really makes me think about like nonstop movement and progress
15:16:00 towards a goal.
15:16:02 And it's very firm and unrelenting and an obstinate
15:16:06 almost, but for comeback spurs.
15:16:09 Just think about the word perseverance,
15:16:11 which really brings to mind overcoming obstacles and navigating
15:16:15 detours towards their goal. It's steadfast.
15:16:19 Despite difficulties and delays.
15:16:21 So again, I encourage you to read and our comeback story.
15:16:25 These amazing stories.
15:16:27 And it's filled with a comebacker quotes that animate this idea of
15:16:31 perseverance.
15:16:32 Next slide.
15:16:33 So now I want to move to the concept of untapped potential.
15:16:37 So, if you look at the bars,

15:16:51 The things that have bars on the left are representing the
15:16:55 universe of some college, but some college,
15:16:58 no degree population and the thicker bars on the right are
15:17:01 representing our study set or the comeback.
15:17:03 That we work with.
15:17:10 So there's a whole pipeline of comeback or others who the national
15:17:14 student clearing house has dubbed potential completers,
15:17:16 meaning that they've completed two years of more of academic progress
15:17:20 during their first try at school.
15:17:25 And so the,
15:17:26 if you look at the comeback hires who are coming through the door
15:17:30 of the graduate network communities close to
15:17:34 half or 44% were potential.
15:17:37 Completer.
15:17:38 So you can see that's a larger proportion of those potential
15:17:41 completers that our communities are working with.
15:17:45 So, this is a huge.
15:17:47 Untapped potential of, of, of students.
15:17:50 Next slide, please.
15:17:59 So now let's dig in a little bit more on this potential
15:18:03 completer population.
15:18:05 And so of all the potential completers who engaged with the network.
15:18:15 Three and five or 61% already had close to our
15:18:19 more than four years of academic progress under their
15:18:22 belt.
15:18:23 Again, underscoring the concept of untapped potential.
15:18:27 Next slide.
15:18:39 So before I handed off to Cathy,
15:18:42 I just want to say that we,
15:18:45 we really at the network want to tell this,
15:18:48 this new story about adults.
15:18:50 One of perseverance, not persistence,
15:18:54 but also not want to fail your short shortcomings,
15:18:57 but one of untapped potential.
15:18:59 And so with that, I'll turn it over to Kathy. Zandona.
15:19:01 Great. Thank you so much.
15:19:03 Bridget. That was an excellent presentation.
15:19:05 And it's so interesting that we just given you a lot of debts.
15:19:08 And information about what we know about those come back. [unknown].
15:19:20 And whole and how they get through school.
15:19:22 And Nelson's going to talk to you about how can we get them into the
15:19:24 door of,
15:19:26 of that institution in the community so that they can fulfill their
15:19:29 dreams and get that degree or that program. So a little.
15:19:32 Reminding you that.
15:19:33 We've got 36 million individuals out there that we can have an
15:19:36 opportunity to change their lives. And I think that's what all of us,
15:19:40 I'm sure everybody on this call.
15:19:41 Really out there to do is to really help support adults returning.
15:19:45 So one of the programs,

15:19:46 as Bridget mentioned that I was going to talk to you about is the
15:19:49 graduate network ambassador program. And next slide.
15:20:04 So what is the ambassador program and what do they do?
15:20:07 I'm sure many of you can think of the term ambassador and think, well,
15:20:11 maybe those folks,
15:20:12 people in the community going out and talking and you'll be absolutely
15:20:15 right about that next slide. This is one of those progression slides.
15:20:18 So bear with me.
15:20:19 So,
15:20:20 what we do is we identify individuals in communities that want to be
15:20:23 ambassadors.
15:20:24 And that they'll commit it to having intentional conversations with
15:20:28 potential comeback who's in their networks.
15:20:34 The friends, the family, the coworkers, their neighbors,
15:20:37 whomever that may be because it's so important to have a trusted
15:20:41 friend or someone that, you know,
15:20:42 talking to you about what potential that you have and where to go to
15:20:46 fulfill your dream. Next slide.
15:21:04 They encourage potential comeback who's to persevere and share with
15:21:07 them about available resources. I,
15:21:10 this will be my fifth time today talking about the ambassador program.
15:21:13 And I think that those available resources, right there are key.
15:21:17 It is so amazing. How many communities,
15:21:19 regions and states have services and resources available
15:21:23 that is sort of like the hidden secret,
15:21:24 but no one really knows what's out.
15:21:26 Out there.
15:21:27 And that's what the important part of what we equipped an ambassador
15:21:30 with is what are some of those things that are in your community that
15:21:34 maybe folks don't know about? And if they just knew that was there.
15:21:36 They would be willing to go start that conversation either in a
15:21:39 graduate network community with our navigator or if the community or
15:21:42 for your institution.
15:21:44 Next slide.
15:21:45 Now our ambassador program.
15:21:46 We, we, we really want to have some qualifications.
15:21:49 Of who can become a graduate network ambassador.
15:21:51 And I want everybody to just kind of realize that our ambassadors are
15:21:54 people that are talking to their neighbors and friends about
15:21:57 resources.
15:21:58 So next slide.
15:22:00 They are not.
15:22:16 Required to be experts in the field of adult education or higher
15:22:20 education. In fact, I know this will sound kind of crazy.
15:22:23 We don't want them to be that we know that we want to make sure when
15:22:26 that adult hears about those services that are available at a college
15:22:30 or higher education institution,
15:22:31 that they go to the source to get the right information.
15:22:34 And so we want to ambassadors to be equipped with exactly what we want
15:22:37 them to know about to talk to their friends and neighbors.

15:22:40 And who do we throw them?
15:22:41 To or what website to look at, whatever it might be.
15:22:44 Next slide, please.
15:22:45 Ambassadors or catalyst who opened the door to the conversation.
15:22:48 And I think that word catalyst says it all. If, think of it,
15:22:52 if you just had,
15:22:53 if you knew someone in the neighborhood and you talk to them about
15:22:55 these opportunities,
15:22:56 You're sparking an interest in that individual so they can make a
15:22:59 difference and they can go back and fulfill their dreams and get the
15:23:02 education.
15:23:03 Next slide, please.
15:23:05 So hero marketing,
15:23:06 what is pure marketing and how does it work? First of all,
15:23:09 let me just say that digital marketing experts.
15:23:12 Estimate that most Americans.
15:23:19 Are exposed to 4,000 to 10,000 ads every day.
15:23:22 That's pretty darn scary in my mind, but it is a fact. And it's,
15:23:26 I think it's also a fact that we've become a Bolivia's to all these
15:23:28 messages that we're getting and they're not going,
15:23:30 they're not coming through.
15:23:32 So next slide, please.
15:23:33 What we do know is in this slide, this.
15:23:36 Fat to me is just, it's kind of like, oh my gosh,
15:23:40 but it does make sense.
15:23:41 33% Of consumers trust paid advertisements.
15:23:44 But 92% trust, pure recommendations.
15:23:47 And as I was preparing for this, I just, Hey.
15:23:50 Went on a little vacation.
15:23:51 And I was thinking about how we look at trip tech a week.
15:24:06 We, you know, look at the restaurant reviews and see, you know,
15:24:09 where should we go? But you know,
15:24:10 what we really want to hear is where somebody else's already been what
15:24:13 they said about it, and that's what we usually go.
15:24:15 So I usually pick I'm a foodie.
15:24:16 So I usually pick restaurants that somebody has already been to.
15:24:18 And they told me it was just wonderful. So.
15:24:20 92% Trust pew recommendation.
15:24:22 Consumers pay more attention to their friends and advertisements.
15:24:25 Next slide.
15:24:26 And he was where the ambassador program comes in.
15:24:29 Word of mouth is five times more effective than traditional
15:24:32 advertising.
15:24:33 Paid search email, et cetera. So think of this and again,
15:24:36 it's someone talking to someone else. How do we get the message out?
15:24:39 And it really is that trusted friend that trusted.
15:24:42 Person that you, you know, in a club with you go to avid.
15:24:45 Charged with whatever it might be.
15:24:46 And then the final bullet from the American association of national
15:24:49 advertiser.

15:24:50 Is word of mouth is the most impactful and trusted marketing.
15:24:58 So again,
15:24:59 the importance of our ambassador program and what our ambassador
15:25:03 program does in communities.
15:25:04 So next side, please.
15:25:06 Next slide is going to take us back to the.
15:25:07 Ah, ambassador ripple effect.
15:25:09 Is so in Kentucky.
15:25:15 We worked with the ARP group and we trained some of their
15:25:19 ambassadors. In fact, we trained five and next slide.
15:25:22 So, excuse me, ADA ambassadors.
15:25:23 Let's see if I can get my slides straight. My apologies.
15:25:25 Eight ambassadors and those eight ambassadors.
15:25:29 Had conversations with around 500 potential comeback.
15:25:49 Now think of this. So if in fact, eight people reached 500 people,
15:25:52 and if we did a little pyramid effect and started thinking about how
15:25:55 many people, let's just say 500, talk to three people,
15:25:57 that's another 1500 people that became aware of the
15:26:01 resources that were available in Kentucky.
15:26:03 And the messages we had were free GED with community colleges had some
15:26:07 special technical schools that were available, tuition free.
15:26:10 And then we had a Donovan scholars program and a four year
15:26:12 institutions that we were able to talk to people about.
15:26:14 So you can see that really in a community.
15:26:17 Utilizing an ambassador program is one surefire way
15:26:21 of getting the word out so that we from a graduate network
15:26:24 perspective.
15:26:25 I can hope to get more and more come backers into our.
15:26:38 Come back on track so that we can get even more data that Bridgette
15:26:41 told you about in the beginning of this,
15:26:43 that helps all of us better understand who these comeback was,
15:26:46 are so that we can a messaging message to them and support them with
15:26:50 in their, in their journey.
15:26:51 To completing their degree.
15:26:53 And next slide, please.
15:26:55 So I'll stop there.
15:26:57 Just bought the mat back up again to just kinda,
15:27:00 maybe talk a little bit about the work that we do.
15:27:03 And I don't think we have any questions at this time. So.
15:27:12 And the map is color coded in some different ways to talk about
15:27:15 where we actually have graduate network communities.
15:27:17 We're organization has come together to create a vision and a mission
15:27:21 on the adults. They want to reach.
15:27:22 Those are the green ones.
15:27:24 The blues are the states that we're working in.
15:27:26 And the purple ones who are going to be the states and the higher
15:27:29 education institutions that we work with.
15:27:32 So in Michigan, for example, we're working with.
15:27:34 Leo.
15:27:45 I'm going to do this really labor and economic opportunity who began

15:27:48 is managing the Michigan we connect program,
15:27:51 which we have been partnering with that staff and train their
15:27:54 navigators. And I'm, I'm proud to say that.
15:27:56 When Michigan reconnect launched on February the second from February
15:28:00 the second two, I think my data goes through yesterday.
15:28:02 Over 70,000.
15:28:03 Individuals in Michigan who were eligible,
15:28:06 have applied for and will be had the opportunity a 10 to a 10.
15:28:10 Community college tuition free.
15:28:14 This is how we're going to make a difference and economic prosperity
15:28:17 for individuals and for adults.
15:28:19 And I think we can take the PowerPoint off now.
15:28:22 Thank you.
15:28:23 Thank you for this Kathy, that.
15:28:24 And by the way,
15:28:25 Full disclosure.
15:28:28 And before I asked you a quick question about one of those states that
15:28:31 were highlighted in blue.
15:28:33 My colleague and I met with representative.
15:28:39 It was hazard Madisonville and Jefferson community colleges. And.
15:28:46 In Kentucky and they participated and the ambassador program. And,
15:28:50 you know, like I asked that like,
15:28:51 So.
15:28:52 What do you think?
15:28:53 You know, how'd it go? And they, they loved it.
15:28:56 I think they really appreciated the resources.
15:28:58 That they, they received the, the connection, like the, I guess.
15:29:01 They just felt, I think.
15:29:03 Better prepared to, you know, to reach out to them network.
15:29:05 And you said, I am.
15:29:06 I don't really talk about.
15:29:12 The value of higher education and then like, you know,
15:29:14 bring them to the resource like you said, and I really appreciate the,
15:29:16 the aspect that you mentioned that.
15:29:18 They don't need to be the expert. And I think that, you know, like,
15:29:20 I think that when I was at, at that.
15:29:27 That's one thing that I was always a little bit worried about training
15:29:29 other people. It was like,
15:29:30 but they need to know everything in this case.
15:29:32 No, they don't just make sure that.
15:29:34 You, you talk to them.
15:29:39 And then bring them back to the college,
15:29:40 the colleges we'll we'll we'll talk about the resources that they have
15:29:43 and go, go ahead and get.
15:29:47 Well, one of the things that, that we at hazard community college.
15:29:50 So that's in Kentucky. Yes. It's in rural Kentucky. So let's just put,
15:29:53 put the.
15:29:54 The demographics, the.
15:29:55 Amount that they were able to through the.
15:30:11 The college president was so excited about the program that they

15:30:15 actually use part of their staff training for the beginning of the
15:30:18 school year to train the faculty and staff on what they were doing
15:30:22 at their own community college. So think of this.
15:30:24 So now that we've got everybody knowing, wow, we're doing this.
15:30:27 I work here now. I know what's happening in our community.
15:30:29 It was really powerful. And actually hazard
15:30:32 took a step.
15:30:44 Father and went ahead and started a debt forgiveness program.
15:30:46 And that was another, you know, again, you know,
15:30:49 it's so important how we need these ambassadors to get this message
15:30:53 out because it wasn't known. And you know,
15:30:55 that's one of the big reasons why many,
15:30:58 many individuals who have stopped out don't return because of the
15:31:01 prior debt that they have.
15:31:02 Bridget mentioned.
15:31:03 The, the academic hurdles and.
15:31:05 Obviously the other responsibilities that they have.
15:31:06 And I think that's why I like the so hazard would.
15:31:08 The loan forgiveness to Madisonville.
15:31:10 Like their accelerate program. That really, again, to me,
15:31:13 work around the schedules that makes it much more flexible.
15:31:16 Smart schedules.
15:31:17 To help the students and the same way.
15:31:19 Jefferson had their work ready scholarship. So again,
15:31:21 Connecting.
15:31:22 You know, just coming back to get a degree because it's a check box.
15:31:25 I've got my degree.
15:31:30 Making sure that we're connecting them with like,
15:31:32 so what can you do with that degree?
15:31:33 And I think that that really helps.
15:31:35 I think it resonates a lot more and makes the purpose of a degree
15:31:39 much.
15:31:42 Much more like concrete that I'm not just going back to school because
15:31:45 I have to go back to school.
15:31:46 I want to go back to school because you know,
15:31:48 better job opportunities grow with social mobility and.
15:31:51 You know, all of that stuff. That's so important.
15:31:53 Or it can be personal growth as well.
15:31:55 But all of these play, obviously with this. And one thing that I,
15:31:58 I appreciate what these three institutions and exactly kind of what.
15:32:01 Bridget mentioned earlier, is that.
15:32:02 Before we reach out to these adults.
15:32:04 We need to make sure that we are ready.
15:32:06 Right.
15:32:07 To welcome them back.
15:32:08 Cause if it's like theirs.
15:32:16 There are some reasons why they left in the first place they could be.
15:32:18 So if you're not addressing those reasons that we're just repeating
15:32:21 the same mistake over and over again.
15:32:23 So I think that, so I really appreciate that.

15:32:25 Like I said,
15:32:26 What they were saying,
15:32:27 they were really happy with the ambassador program. I was like, well,
15:32:29 good. I need to tell them that.
15:32:30 And I don't mind doing that.
15:32:32 On camera.
15:32:33 Talk about that.
15:32:35 Before I jumped into the next.
15:32:37 All the attendees.
15:32:40 Now folks, if you have questions, please feel free to use.
15:32:43 The QA and all the Q and a feature, or even.
15:32:45 Put it in the chat. We're happy to.
15:32:47 To talk about that.
15:32:53 But Kathy, I was,
15:32:54 you mentioned a little bit about Carolina work in Carolina as well.
15:32:57 South Carolina.
15:32:58 It was only to talk about if you could talk a little bit about that.
15:33:08 So it's has we'd look at the graduate network and we look at different
15:33:11 models that will, that we're working in communities with.
15:33:14 We've been pleased in the last year or so with.
15:33:16 We've gotten some in Greenville, South Carolina.
15:33:19 There.
15:33:43 Their chamber of commerce really had started to look at the data for
15:33:46 the economic prosperity of the individuals and the educational
15:33:50 attainment.
15:33:51 And I had made some connections with the staff there and they reached
15:33:53 out to Bridget and I to talk about what they really wanted to do
15:33:57 was to create a Greenville education,
15:34:00 commitment to improve educational outcomes.
15:34:03 So we were able to say to them, okay, well,
15:34:04 here's some places that have done that Louisville, Kentucky.
15:34:07 St. Louis, Missouri.
15:34:08 The Troy, Michigan. And that I,
15:34:10 I said those three communities for a purpose.
15:34:12 Cause they were all chamber communities.
15:34:14 So they could talk chamber talk to one another.
15:34:16 So we were able to connect in April to help them.
15:34:18 See what the potential was in Greenville and they have now.
15:34:21 Joined the graduate network.
15:34:23 So then that'll be interrelated into all of a professional learning
15:34:26 communities that we have, and there'll be able to learn from others.
15:34:29 In the graduate network community in order to proceed with their work
15:34:33 and they're starting their work using one of the networks.
15:34:35 Premier programs, which is bridging the talent gap.
15:34:50 Which is our employer and employee survey.
15:34:52 So they're actually going to go out there to your point on colleges
15:34:55 being adult friendly.
15:34:57 We also need some businesses to step up and see what they are doing to
15:35:00 provide, not just tuition, tuition, reimbursement, excuse me,
15:35:04 but also other services within adult education, friendly workplaces,

15:35:08 what are they doing to support the adults?
15:35:09 And then with the employee survey, it helps identify adults.
15:35:12 Who will employees who want to further the education.
15:35:15 It may be a career ladder that they can use or whatever.
15:35:17 So they're going to launch that in July,
15:35:19 and we're just really excited about that.
15:35:21 We've now done bridging the talent gap.
15:35:23 And over.
15:35:24 30 Communities across the country and we are.
15:35:27 Now that COVID.
15:35:28 What we'll post almost.
15:35:29 We'll be getting to see the survey world pick up again. We kinda,
15:35:33 we very flexible as a network.
15:35:35 We've put everything pretty much pause that so that everybody could.
15:35:37 You know,
15:35:39 move through how they dealt with the pandemic in their community.
15:35:42 So that's, that's pretty exciting while also working in Spartanburg.
15:35:45 They have a cradle to career.
15:35:46 Community. They were one of the strive.
15:35:48 Strive communities and they have identified,
15:35:50 they need to support adults going back to school too.
15:35:53 So that's just some of the startup work that we do.
15:35:55 We're really excited about it. So that was just why I bought those up.
15:35:58 Thank you.
15:35:59 I, I love the connection with the employers. I think that that.
15:36:02 Again, it's where, where are.
15:36:03 Where are those come backers?
15:36:05 Well, a lot of them are at work. So how do we, how do we.
15:36:07 How do we make sure that we, we partner with, with the employers?
15:36:10 I think to me,
15:36:12 That that something that really.
15:36:20 Excites me, would that connection with the employers?
15:36:22 Is that also by connecting with the employers, you kind of know like,
15:36:25 well, what do you want, what are you looking for?
15:36:26 At a worker.
15:36:32 So that you can basically something that what you're doing with the
15:36:34 survey and also it's connecting and sharing those learnings with the
15:36:38 institution so that the institutions are able to, again,
15:36:41 Communicate with the compactor is like, well, this is,
15:36:43 these are the skills that the employers.
15:36:49 Are asking this,
15:36:50 these are the skills that my program or our programs are able to
15:36:54 provide you. So you're going to be able to actually, you know, you're,
15:36:56 you're much more marketable. Not again, not just because.
15:36:59 The degree, but the skills in the company,
15:37:00 all the competencies that you've learned.
15:37:02 Coming back in.
15:37:03 You know,
15:37:04 Mastering him in our program. So I'm really excited about that.
15:37:07 That aspect of it. Yeah.

15:37:32 And one of the,
15:37:33 one of the goals in working with the employers is to get them to
15:37:36 really think about their frontline and entry level incumbent
15:37:40 workers,
15:37:41 because so often the tuition benefits programs or the education
15:37:45 assistance programs are not going to those employees who could most
15:37:49 benefit from that resource.
15:37:51 So bridging the talent gap is an opportunity for employers to think
15:37:55 about the way that they promote their educate.
15:37:56 Education program and how can they get more employees
15:38:00 utilizing that and pro that program in a way that's mutually
15:38:03 beneficial to the, to the business and to that individual.
15:38:07 I love that.
15:38:08 Because I was wondering if you could talk a little bit more about the,
15:38:11 the, the work in Michigan. You, you started talking about that.
15:38:13 Cause I think that too is, is really exciting about,
15:38:15 you mentioned like what 70,000.
15:38:17 That participated. So I was wearing.
15:38:19 To just talk a bit more about that.
15:38:21 So the Michigan reconnect program,
15:38:23 the governor passed into law in February of 2020.
15:38:28 For tuition free community college,
15:38:30 then Michigan was hit obviously by COVID like the rest of us and then
15:38:33 very, very wisely.
15:38:34 They went to a program called futures for frontliners.
15:38:37 And so they actually provided tuition free.
15:38:39 Community college for frontline workers who were displaced.
15:38:59 And that program launched in may of 2020,
15:39:02 and also was very successful.
15:39:04 And I know someone from Michigan is on the call and they may be able
15:39:06 to put into chat how many future frontliners actually applied in our
15:39:10 own school. But when they launched in February,
15:39:13 that community college for adults.
15:39:14 Blue 25 years of age and older,
15:39:16 who did not have an associate's degree or a bachelor's.
15:39:19 That the flood gates open and you know,
15:39:21 over at now over 70,000 adults.
15:39:24 Or in a pipeline to return to school.
15:39:26 What Michigan did that we partnered with them on.
15:39:30 Was they so lightly provided and
15:39:33 recruited?
15:39:34 A total of 10 individuals that are navigators that were trained in.
15:39:38 On not just graduate network, advising methodology.
15:39:45 But again,
15:39:46 more has important on the resources available for
15:39:49 adults in the state of Michigan,
15:39:51 for all sorts of different organizations.
15:39:53 And that to me is so powerful that they literally.
15:39:57 Recognize the importance of the need for wraparound services.
15:40:00 And those wraparound services are gonna.

15:40:03 Even be going to be as important as the navigation to help.
15:40:10 Adults make the move and get back into school.
15:40:12 And I think we just saw in the chat, the answer to my question, right?
15:40:15 So Brandy, thank you very much. A hundred thousand plus apply.
15:40:19 15,000. Very good. Everybody can read that. So this is wonderful.
15:40:28 It is. I mean, what we really do talk about Michigan a lot,
15:40:32 just as we talk about Tennessee a lot,
15:40:33 because they Tennessee really started this.
15:40:40 I think they started the movement.
15:40:42 I don't know from if I'm correct or not, but drive to 55,
15:40:46 which was the governor's initiative back in 2010 to get
15:40:48 55055%.
15:40:59 Of the Tennessee population with two year four year high quality
15:41:02 credential by 2025 was pretty darn powerful.
15:41:06 Tennessee use the graduate network model to create the Tennessee
15:41:08 reconnect communities. And then once again, in 2019,
15:41:12 the governor put into play.
15:41:14 Free community tuition for it.
15:41:15 I keep needing to say that word tuition first,
15:41:17 because that's what it is. It's tuition free community college.
15:41:20 And they then brought in their navigators into the system
15:41:24 so that they could.
15:41:25 They could manage and be able to report on and know.
15:41:28 At any moment, how many.
15:41:29 People in the pipeline and we're getting this going directly to the
15:41:32 community college and all through the navigation process.
15:41:36 There are 12 navigators in Tennessee today,
15:41:39 about two years later,
15:41:40 manage a caseload of about 800 individuals who are indifferent.
15:41:44 Places.
15:41:45 In the inquiry to inactive,
15:41:47 to pre enrollment enrollment to graduation.
15:41:49 So we know the navigation system.
15:41:51 Both Tennessee.
15:42:02 And Michigan is key to an adult success. So two things we heard,
15:42:06 you know,
15:42:07 we know that we got to get the word out and we know we need them to
15:42:09 have that trusted friend or that individual that they could count on
15:42:12 to give them the information they need.
15:42:14 Again,
15:42:15 the navigators in both places are not taking the place of a community
15:42:18 college or a college financial aid representative, or any of that.
15:42:21 They have to lead and navigate the adult to the right location.
15:42:24 Yeah, I think that's the responsibility.
15:42:27 And obviously we're trying to get them back into it.
15:42:29 And I think that again,
15:42:32 Then it becomes the institution's role to, to reconnect.
15:42:35 And I think to two bridges point about like how many, you know,
15:42:38 some of them have multiple stop outs.
15:42:41 I think this is where the, the relationship from a coach,

15:42:45 an advisor, a faculty member at the institution can, again,
15:42:52 You know, like if there's a, stop-out like continue,
15:42:54 the conversation is like, you know, and encourage them to come back.
15:42:57 If like when there's something or again, to me, it's all about like,
15:43:00 It's communication.
15:43:01 And relationships. And I think that I, I love the, you know, the.
15:43:03 The perseverance much more than persistence.
15:43:07 Because it.
15:43:12 And I think when you said the comeback Odyssey, I think that's a,
15:43:15 I'm an English major.
15:43:16 So I think that the Odyssey I'm thinking of like how long did it take,
15:43:19 you know, this has to come back to finally.
15:43:20 Divorced.
15:43:21 To reach back home.
15:43:23 I get to see that a lot of students.
15:43:25 About students are going through that and they need the help.
15:43:28 They need the support and the communication from the institutions.
15:43:30 And they're there.
15:43:31 They're their network to encourage them.
15:43:33 I think the other thing that Bridget brought up in the slides was that
15:43:35 that slide on untapped potential.
15:43:37 Yeah, absolutely.
15:43:38 I would just say,
15:43:40 if we could all start thinking in those terms that it's an untapped
15:43:43 potential.
15:43:49 What a difference we can make in the conversations that we have with
15:43:53 individuals who need that encouragement and that nudge,
15:43:56 they are untapped potentials.
15:43:58 Absolutely.
15:44:05 And I, I love the, the term because again, it's, it,
15:44:09 it is not a deficit language. It's really looking as like, you know,
15:44:13 who are our potential students and we know they can do.
15:44:15 You know, do do wonders.
15:44:16 With this.
15:44:17 So would this.
15:44:18 Again, I'd like to thank you both again for,
15:44:21 for your time and your expertise and the knowledge that you're able to
15:44:23 share.
15:44:24 Like I said the PowerPoint presentation as well.
15:44:26 The recording will be on our website later tonight or tomorrow at the
15:44:30 latest.
15:44:31 Please feel free to.
15:44:32 I'll continue to connect either through our website.
15:44:34 Twitter, LinkedIn is my email address. If you have any questions,
15:44:37 I'm happy to.
15:44:45 Did the go-between also strongly, you know,