

Developing Stakeholder Partnerships Internally and Externally for Successful Grants

March 23, 2017

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=utNDvhEo8ao>

Introduction

Michael Lesiecki – Good day everyone, welcome to today’s webinar. I’m your host, Mike Lesiecki and today our topic is *Developing Stakeholder Partnerships Internally and Externally for Successful Grants*. Today’s March 23, 2017.

Webinar Details

Michael Lesiecki – Let me tell you a little bit about the webinar and our host. First, the webinar, itself, you’ll be in listen only mode using your computer or phone. But the question pane that you’ll see on your lower right of your own display, in fact, you can open that make it larger; you can customize your own display. Please use that, make some comments, ask some questions of our expert panelist, we’ll have an opportunity to several times during the webinar to talk about your comments and your questions. This webinar is being recorded and you’ll be sent a link automatically to the webinar recording and to the slides as well.

Brought to You By

Michael Lesiecki – This webinar is brought to you by CCTA that’s the Centers Collaborative for Technical Assistance.

The CCTA is Led By

Michael Lesiecki – Let me tell you a little bit more about them. They’re led by five centers; you can see the list here: CTC at Collin College, SCATE in Florence, South Carolina, FLATE in Florida, Bio-Link, headquartered at the City College of San Francisco and the Networks Resource Center, right here, at the Maricopa Community College District in Phoenix, Arizona.

CCTA Purpose

Michael Lesiecki – What’s the purpose of this CCTA thing? Originally, it came about as a request from the Department of Labor to the National Science Foundation. They’d like to take advantage of the many years of the ATE program and help provide technical assistance to DOL and TAACCCT grantees. There’s lots of activities that the CCTA takes part in and all of them are related to Labor grants, NSF grants and workforce oriented programs of all kinds. We deliver webinars like this one, document best practices, which you can see on the website, and we host convenings. We’ll mention this summer convenings coming up at the end of today’s program.

Poll #1: Your Affiliation

Michael Lesiecki – Let me now ask you a question about your affiliation. In just a moment here, I’ll turn on this poll. The first poll helps us, helps us determine who participates and helps demonstrate our impact to the National Science Foundation. So on your screen right now; you’ll see radio buttons that ask you to click: I’m involved with an NSF grant, a TAACCCT grant, both or neither. So please, I see all your results coming in. You probably know the answer to this question. It doesn’t take too long for you to do it. Oh, almost everyone’s voted already, very good. I’ll count down and 5, 4, 3, 2, 1. Close this poll.

Let's take a look and see who's here. And closing the poll. And now sharing the poll. Here's the results, you can see that, boy, it's really distributed today. The highest number being 34% with an NSF grant. Good numbers from the TAACCCT side. Many of us have both and many of us almost 20% don't have a TAACCCT or NSF grant at this point. That's great. Let's close that poll.

Poll: How many people are listening with you?

Michael Lesiecki – One more question and then we will begin today. Oops, excuse me. This helps us determine the impact. Could you tell us how many people might be in the room with you? Now some times we'll convene in a conference room, and we'll watch it together, that's, actually fun! Please take a moment and tell me how many people are listening with you in the room. Almost everyone's voted already. Excellent. Counting down 5, 4, 3, 2, 1. Closing that poll. And now sharing the results with you. And you can see, this is pretty typical for us, but it's a pretty high number today. Eighteen or more percent that have someone with them in the room. Excellent. Thanks for providing that information. Let's go ahead.

Today's Presenters

Michael Lesiecki –Today's presenters are led by Elaine Johnson. Elaine is the presenter, one of our major presenters today. The PI and Executive Director of Bio-Link, the National Center for Bio Technology Education. Welcome Elaine, please say hello to everybody and then, would you please introduce your co-presenters?

Elaine Johnson – I'm delighted to do that and very happy to have so many people attending today, welcome. I've been working on the Bio-Link ATE National Center since 1998 and have also been a Co-PI on a TAACCCT grant and have been a CO-PI on a couple of other ATE projects. So I have some experience, but always learning more. Together with me are Ann Beheler who is the PI and Executive Director of the National Convergence Technology Center that's based in, at Collin County Community College in Frisco, Texas. And then, in addition, Marilyn Barger, who is the PI and Executive Director of the Florida Advanced Technological Education Center (FLATE) that focuses on manufacturing. So together we're going to have a lively discussion and we're looking forward to, for each of you to type in a comment as we move on. It might be a question; it might be an idea; it might be some partnership that you have established.

Stakeholders Partnerships

Elaine Johnson – So with that let's move on. And today we are looking at *Stakeholders Partnerships*. We are addressing this topic, because it is so critical for student success and for the success of our projects. The National Science Foundation has indicated that it prefers multiple partners collaborating with each other and not just one faculty member that has a great idea and puts forward a proposal on their own. The National Science Foundation is actually seeking proposals under the ATE program, and we're trying very hard to provide everybody whose submitting a proposal with ideas and in this case about partnerships. The value of partnerships is, can be perceive by the reviewers as providing broader impact and leveraging funds so that we can do a better job and have a broader prospective. In every case, each partner should have some benefit of participating together and this needs to be articulated. So as you're writing your proposal be thinking about what those values are – What's in it for me? And ask our partners, what's in it for you? As we move forward, we're going to be giving some explicit examples, but we're looking for who will be our best partners, and how can we use the information that we gain from establishing partnerships to provide input into our proposal. Ann, would you like to add something to that?

Ann Beheler – I think you hit it, pretty well, Elaine. I guess, I'm going to say it again to and I suppose in teaching, it's always good to say it more than once. A partner needs to both, receive benefit and be committed to doing the work of the grant. And it's very important that there be stakeholders that are partners that are highly committed, and I'm not saying that they're supporting our work; they're more involved of actually achieving the goals of the grant as well.

Elaine Johnson – Thank you. How about you Marilyn? Do you have another comment at this point?

Marilyn Barger – Sorry, getting myself unmuted. Good afternoon everyone. I think, you guys said some important things about partnerships and you just need to remember that the partners need to get something from it also. And clearly defining the interactions you're going to have at whatever level, could be very simple, could be very complex interactions on a larger kind of project or goal. So all of them need to be looked at with an endgame in mind.

Elaine Johnson – Thank you. Let's move on to the next slide.

Key Elements of Partnerships

Elaine Johnson – As we reviewed some of the example partnerships, exemplary partnerships that we were familiar with, we came up with this list of key elements of partnerships. And I would hope that if you are writing a proposal that you'll come back to this list, and also, as we give our examples we're going to come back and make sure that they fit with these key elements. There must be some kind of alignment in mission between the partners. And the ability to articulate what one's mission is or what each partner's mission is and how they fit together. There also needs to be some common values such as: commitment to workforce development, access for students, providing skills that are needed by the industry and like-minded goals. Sometimes it's a good thing to have those goals written and they can be put into the proposal then. They need to be measurable as for as outcomes are concern so as we go through the step by step process, it's also critical to have some measurable outcomes and then figure out how we're going to measure them. Again, we see the benefit for every partner, the capacity to deliver and that commitment to the success of the project. Next slide please.

A Few Examples of Community & Technical College Program Partners

Elaine Johnson – So, as we look at what kind of examples we could have for community and technical college program partners, there could be an industry that's interested in hiring skilled technicians. Also, a good partner could be trade organizations that have common interests. Other educators, K-12 and university educators that are interested in developing a very skill workforce. Other ATE or TAACCCT projects and the distribution of the people on the call today, indicate that there are some that have had TAACCCT projects that probably wish to keep the momentum going from what they got out of those projects. Others have had ATE projects that may wish to partner with Department of Labor projects. And also within the ATE community, there have been a number of collaborations; one that we were a part of was creating a movie on bio-manufacturing using the resources of Pellet Productions in Boston. So they had the expertise in creating movies and we had the connections with the biotech industries. Also, MATEC, as you well know being on this webinar, has taken on an expertise in producing webinars. And so, we partner with MATEC, instead of trying to do webinars on our own. Another example is the Center Collaborative for Technical Assistance, where we've come together having worked for a number of years we figure that we could jointly provide technical assistance better, than trying to do it each on our own. We also can partner with scientific organizations like the AAAS or the American Society for Microbiology. You, each, have your own ideas and I'd like to have some of you type them in about organizations that within your workforce development you might wish to partner with. We also have some examples of

nonprofits, other educational organizations such as a National Academy of Science; government agencies such as the National Labs; certification boards such as ASQ, Baldrige, some of the auto manufacturers like General Motors and Ford. There are all kind of external certification boards that could be excellent partners and then, foundations that are interested in providing funds for workforce education and any merging areas. We also had some additional success with individual donors. Ann or Marilyn, do you want to add to what I've just said about this?

Marilyn Barger – No, I think that's a good, a good list and many things fit into one of those categories and sometimes organizations or individuals fit into several.

Elaine Johnson – For you, in particular, Marilyn, you are in manufacturing. Do you have a trade organization, for example, that you partner with?

Marilyn Barger – We, actually, have several. We partner with some of the national organizations. I sit on the Education Council for the National Association for Manufacturers and some others, but we also partner directly with our regional manufacturing association. There's about 13 of those in the state of Florida and we work with most of all of those. Typically, we work with them together.

Elaine Johnson – I'm interested in your comment about sitting on their board, because I think that's something that is giving back to the trade organization as well as gaining from them. Ann, do you have another comment?

Ann Beheler – Yeah, just one at this point. I think when we talk about other ATE or TAACCCT projects, actually, we want to collaborate with the existing resources so that we don't "re-invent the wheel" along the way and that we're showing good usage of federal taxpayers' dollars by reusing materials. Additionally, though, we will be working or we do work, not necessarily with the projects, but with the colleges that support those projects. And even within those colleges, there may be different departments that we may need to work with or want to work with. An example might be that, for example, in our work lately, we have been working very, very hard on increasing the number of women and minorities in IT, because the percentage is quiet low. And so, in that process, we're working not only with the college, but within particular areas of the college to be able to go after more women to support them in other ways, women and minorities to support them in other ways.

Elaine Johnson – Great, thank you very much.

Michael Lesiecki – Elaine, its Mike.

Elaine Johnson – Yes.

Michael Lesiecki – Excuse me for interrupting. One of our attendees would like to add local departments of education; they've found them to be good partners as well.

Elaine Johnson – That's great. That is really true. And I think, in addition to that, we, I mean we talk about government agencies; we talk about educational organizations, but we didn't really focus in on some of the state funding that is available in each of our states. So we got some ideas and I thank that the viewer for providing that input as well. Let's go on to the next.

Partnership Common Attributes

Elaine Johnson - We got some common attributes that exist between partners. Each have their advisory boards and as mentioned in the last comment from Marilyn, we can sit on advisory boards for other groups, and we can also invite them to be on our advisory board. If we were working in a particular industry such as the biotech industry that I'm involved with, there is a cross promotion between our partners of the industry. And when I'm, what we're talking about on that cross promotion is to promote the understanding of the kinds of jobs that are available. The variety is enormous and in our particular case, we have developed a biotech-careers.org website where we have three minute videos of different kinds of careers within biotech – it could be biofuels, it could be biopharmaceuticals, it could be laboratory, it could be regulatory affairs, but we've been very careful to also include varieties of people so that the viewers can identify their own culture with the kinds of jobs and say, "Yes, I could be a part of that industry." We are consistently share resources. One example of that is our evaluator, who has an IRB at the university where she works and has used the IRB at that university to vet the survey that we're doing on a national level. We have mentioned many times the mutual benefit, important aspect of these partnerships and we've gone into some of these others as well. The partners can recruit, help with the recruitment into community college programs, and as Ann mentioned, it's really important to build on existing networks. Those networks have been developed over many years, and they have, often times, very strong people within them and it's a good ideal to use those networks and build upon them. Any other comments from our presenters?

Marilyn Barger – Not at this time from me.

Elaine Johnson – Maybe we should see. Mike, are there any other ideas from the viewers?

Michael Lesiecki – There is one, Elaine. And it's, although industry trade associations were mentioned, one of our participants has been particularly successful working with a group that represents over 2,000 industry members. So the trade associations have provided a good, not only partnership themselves, but entrees, so to speak, into other members of the organization. So that's worked well for them.

Elaine Johnson – That's great.

Michael Lesiecki – So go ahead Elaine, I will click you forward.

Elaine Johnson – Great.

Partnership Characteristics

Elaine Johnson – Well, it was a, as we kept thinking about this whole presentation, we decided to dive a little deeper into some of the characteristics of the partnerships and we compared partnerships with a good marriage. The idea that you, it's critical to engage in candid communication and be able to hear from each other what is working, what's not working, how to make adjustments, how to appreciate each other. In appreciation of the motivation of the other, the culture of the other. And I was talking to one of my colleagues yesterday, who was attending a business seminar and was deeply engaged in the business side of biotech. And he commented how the culture was so different than the educational culture and it was just a new world, so to speak for him to be so deeply engaged in that particular kind of training. Another thing about partnerships is that they are really personal, and great partnerships evolved out of these personal connections. So we want to value and acknowledge those relationships. Any other comments?

Michael Lesiecki – No, I think we're good. It's Mike, Elaine, let's go head and just in the interest of time as you go forward into your – I know you're going to be talking about your key partnership here – just hit the highlights of that to help us keep on schedule. So thanks, we're doing good.

Elaine Johnson – I've chosen to use one single example, although we have many partners. If you click to that next slide.

Bio-Link & BABEC Supply Chain

Elaine Johnson – I want to talk a little bit about bio-link with its focus on community college workforce technician training and BABEC, which is the Bay Area Biotechnology Education Consortium that focuses on providing workshops and materials for high school science labs and particularly for biotechnology. Bio-link was first funded by the National Science Foundation in 1998 and it built on some of the work that had preceded it. Namely, we had three years of experience bringing biotech students from California to the Berkeley National Lab. We also had worked with BABEC in the past and BABEC had originally been funded with a National Science Foundation grant, but became its own 501c3 in 1996. So they have over 20 years of experience in supporting teachers, empowering teachers to provide good science education and especially biotech related labs for students in the San Francisco Bay area. Most recently, we've got something new going on and that is a supply chain where Bio-Link and City College of San Francisco and other community colleges in the bay area are working together with BABEC, and BABEC is hiring students from those programs to produce the materials for the high school students and for the teachers. It's not just providing the petri plates and the exercises and the reagents, but it's also calibrating the micropipettes and so that the equipment that is being used is always a top notch shape and that the teachers and students can experience success. Let's go to the next slide.

Key Partnership Elements in the Bio-Link BABEC Partnership Benefits

Elaine Johnson – We have benefits for both partners. And one of the things that we both get are our supplies and equipment that are donated from industry and Bio-Link operates an equipment depot that distributes equipment donated from industry. We've already distributed over a million dollars in the last year worth of equipment and supplies. We can, we together help recruit students into bio-tech. We explore career options, both the teachers of the high schools and middle schools and community college receive professional development. We share materials and we share on, being on each other's advisory boards. Let's go on.

Measureable Outcomes

Elaine Johnson – To what we might want to make sure that we include in our proposals: what is being measured and how, how do we – I know that learning is taking place in our case of this particular partnership. There's a product that's being produced and how is it being used – are the application connected to careers, or students learning workplace skills like working in teams and producing posters and participating in network events, and then, how can we use that data to go forward with our proposals.

Internal Partnerships

Elaine Johnson – Finally, after we go to the next slide, I want to look at some internal partnerships that we have identified as being important such as administrative support, business office procedures, existing department collaborations. And existing department collaborations in our case is bringing together the transitional study department. We have a bridge to biotech where some students are learning language skills, other students are learning updating and getting their math skills up to the level that they need. And we've worked together with transitional studies who have, some of their faculty

have tremendous expertise in knowing how to deal with those particular student needs. We also have issues such as space allocation, sharing of equipment and supplies within our colleges, using our college marketing and recruitment strategies. So that's pretty much what I have to say. And I'd like to move on to some questions or to move on to our next presenter.

Questions?

Michael Lesiecki – Let's take one question. Quickly, here's one, when you approach a potential partner, Elaine, and your cold calling, what do you do? Do you start with the president? How do you know? How do you get into an organization for the first time? Have you ever had any experience with that?

Elaine Johnson – We've had a number of different kind of experiences. Frequently, it's through one of our own students that now works in a company. And that's an excellent entrée, into finding out who might be the next person to approach. We've also had industry people come to us and with ideas about what they would like to contribute namely this whole equipment depot. We thought this would be a great idea to have donated equipment. The benefit of that for the industry is that they not only feel good and support their teachers, but they keep this, all these, all this plastic ware and equipment out of the landfill. So they're recycling as well and we're actually helping them. And in particular, the city of Francisco has a big project to reduce the amount of landfill. And so these companies see us as a place where not only can these materials be used, but they also are serving the other purpose of keeping them out of the landfill.

Michael Lesiecki – That's good. You know, I got a couple of other questions, but I think I'm going to save them, because we may cover some of those topics as we move through. Elaine, why don't we go ahead and transition to Ann right now. Ann, why don't you tell us a little bit more about your center, and then, how partnerships influence what you've done.

National Convergence Technology Center

Ann Beheler – Thank you, Mike, and thank you, Elaine. I am going to really hit the high points as we go through this and the interest of time and in the interest of being able to address some of your questions, but do remember that we will have a follow-up session that Mike will tell you about at the end of the presentation. We'll have a follow-up session to answer further questions next week. The National Convergence Technology Center is basically, information technology and communications. We began as a regional national science foundation center in 2004. We're now national; I was hired in 2001 to grow IT enrollments for Collin County Community College. Well, anyone in IT understands that in fact that would have been virtually impossible. As of 2002 or 3, because we not only had 911, but we also had the dot-com bust and our IT enrollment dropped precipitously. And almost all the community colleges across the nation, they dropped precipitously too. We did not want to give up and say, "Hey, IT is dead," which it's good in retrospect that we didn't, because everything's built on IT. So we went, worked together with three neighboring college districts that typically, actually, competing with each other. And we recruited businesses to help us focus on the next new thing. And Mike, I have a whole process of going after business people and usually I start with the highest person in the community. I had actually just moved back to Texas from Utah at the time so I didn't have a lot of connections. So I actually worked with the, you know, if highest person was the regional director, I started there. Very often, I did not talk to that particular person, but I had a whole script and I pitched what I wanted to do to that person's assistant and they referred me to someone within their organization that they could see helping us. Anyway, we brought business together and we were, have worked in lockstep with business for everything we do. Next slide.

It's About Relationships

Ann Beheler – *It's About Relationships*, as Elaine said, it's very personal. We want to target those who can help and can benefit from our work, our businesses, other institutions, community organizations, workforce boards, etc. What do the stakeholders – two questions – what do the stakeholders want, why do they want to work with you? And why will they continue working with you for years? We have people on our business team that have worked with us since 2003 and that's pretty impressive. When you consider all of the job changes that have occurred along the way, but they are still involved with us. And why are they involved? Well, they don't all have the same reason. They're involved for different reasons, but it's a very important thing to remember that *WIFM*, what's in it for me; what's in it for them. And that may change, but it's important that they're being involved with you is serving a need for them as well as for you, so next slide.

Gaining Stakeholder Commitment is Sales

Ann Beheler – Stakeholder commitment, it is sales. I went into computer science math, because I didn't want to be terribly social and I didn't want to sell for sure, that was the furthest thing from my mind; however, getting engagement or commitment from another person or group requires selling one's ideas. So I think it's very important that the techies of the world understand that to get ahead in business or in education or anything else, it requires selling one's ideas, and it's important to learn how to sell at least a little bit. And my cheat sheet method of doing that is to write out everything I want to sell and practice, practice, practice so that it then comes naturally. Next slide.

Your Institutional Leaders Must be Sold on Your Vision

Ann Beheler – Starting off with your institutional leaders, they must be sold on your vision, period. It's not all dollars, but a lot of it converts to dollars. Some of the benefits can be that at this point, we are regional and now national in terms of recognition for the college as a host. The host college gets to share in the creation. We have a community of practice of that addresses around 60 colleges nationally. And we all share ideas share best practices, share curriculum. Anyway, within that, the host college gets to share and that (inaudible) to reinvent wheel. We can share in the work that's done and that translates to dollars. Plus, we have professional development every single summer that's financed by our grant. And in fact, that professional development is free for faculty at the host college as well as partner faculty. And again, the curriculum stays up to date if you're in IT, if you're not changing about 30 percent a year in updating it, then, you're behind. And that's a really, really tough chain, change percentage to done, and it helps very much to work together.

Institutional Support

Ann Beheler – Next slide. Things the institution has provided us from the *very* beginning: our office space, our phones, our conference rooms, accounting support. Well you can say, well, that that comes from indirect support in the grant, possibly, yes. But the space that they provide us for our Working Connections Faculty Development Institute every summer, this year's our 16th summer that space is phenomenal. They have provided a whole convention center for us working, for our working lunches and our business speakers. Plus, they provide us 8 to 9 classrooms and labs every single year as well as the IT support to configure those labs. So that's pretty impressive, that's above and beyond the call. We, also, have administrator support of the line, all the way from the dean to the vice president provost, to the executive vice president all the way up through the president and that support has been built or commitment has been built over years. And again, that is a very personal relationship, it's important to work with them so they understand what this grant is doing that actually helps them meet their goals as well. The college also supplies the equipment support and maintenance, because within a National

Science Foundation grant we may go out and by the equipment, but we can't support the maintenance of it. Next slide.

Business & Industry Leadership Team

Ann Beheler – Our BILT, our Business & Industry Leadership Team, this is a, I usually say, it's the business advisory council on steroids, because in fact, we decided very early on to put the businesses in a co-leadership role for all the work that we do. And that is very, very different from being an advisory group that might be perceived as rubberstamping the work. We have a whole process on this, and if you're interested, my e-mail will be at the end, and we can talk about that. We have a leadership academy this summer at our Working Connections and at that leadership academy; we're going to spend a day and a half working with our partners on all of the intricacies of building a BILT, using a BILT effectively. It is an outgrowth of work, over 25 years in aligning curriculum with business needs. We want to make sure that our curriculum is going to produce workforce ready graduates so that when they do get through all of our courses, which are not trivial as none of our courses are trivial that they'll really be well suited for getting a high paying job. It is, in fact, a modified DACUM, it instead of taking 2 to 3 days, it takes 4 to 6 hours annually to get their process, the priorities for the knowledge, skills and abilities that the businesses expect to hire, 12 to 36 months in the future. And then, we have three additional meetings annually to talk about trends, to talk about what we're doing on our grant get their feedback, to engage them in to really being a co-leader. Next slide.

Business/Industry Involvement

Ann Beheler – Our businesses have validated that their need fits with our need. It's not appropriate for us to come up with a concept or a vision that is not needed, that goes back to some of our original webinars that we have held and, in fact, it's very important that what we do is extremely well in line with businesses. And those businesses need to document their commitment not support, not a "Golly, you guys are doing great work" type letter, but rather a "we are supportive of what you're doing;" or "we're committed to assisting you to identify the knowledge, skills and abilities annually that are needed; we're committed to providing speakers; we're committed to providing teachers for your professional development." Whatever they're willing to commit to. Very important that those letters be in your proposal in the supplemental documents and that they be couched in terms of what those businesses are really committing to do. Next slide.

Other Partners

Ann Beheler – Other Partners. There's going to be lots of other partners. Other community colleges, of course we have, let's see, I think we have 8 partners in our next proposal that I am hopeful is being funded (inaudible), some of those are universities, some of those are other community colleges. We, also, do outreach to high school. We had kind of gotten away from that, it's become very, very apparent with the changes in the IT industry that there is going to be too much to teach, too much content to teach in a 2-year degree. So one of our strategy is to work with the high schools and get more of the material put in the high school than is already there. And then, there are other partners that we have along the way. Next slide.

When You Make an Appeal for Stakeholder Commitment

Ann Beheler – Regardless of who the stakeholder might be, it's very, very important that you have an elevator speech. I'll call it a creditable vision that aligns with others interest and needs. It's also very important that you have an administrator to sponsor your work within your college. I know that I've worked with numerous partners who have realize that without administrative support is really difficult to get some of the, even something as simple as an invoice all the way through the processes. So it's

very important to have an administrator to sponsor your work and I'd say that administrator probably needs to be at least at a dean level, if not, a VP level. And then, it's very important that anybody committed to your work, I've said that again, be willing to document their support by writing your commitment letter for your proposal. Next slide.

Stakeholder Commitment

Ann Beheler – So stakeholder commitment is essential, I won't say it's recommended, it's absolutely essential. Seldom do I see a grant application going in that is from just one college that does not have some kind of stakeholder support at least business support, very, very important that that be there. And usually there will be some kind of collaboration with another college or with another grant. How do you keep a relationship going, just as Elaine said, a good marriage basically is based on continuing conversation. And with a stakeholder those conversations need to be during the proposal development, and during the implementation, because whatever you propose, remember, you must be able to deliver.

Questions?

Ann Beheler – So that's a really, really quick pass through this and I'm going to suggest we skip the questions slide here as well. And Mike, go on to Marilyn.

FLATE Partnerships & Collaborations

Michael Lesiecki – That sounds like a good idea. Let's do that, let's invite Marilyn to come on and talk to us about her partnership ideas. Go ahead Marilyn.

Marilyn Barger – Okay. Thank you Mike, thank you, Ann. Oh, and thanks Elaine too. Our center, as we mentioned before, is focused on manufacturing. And we always start our conversation with anyone, including this audience with our vision to be kind of a go-to place for manufacturing education in the state of Florida. So, I'm starting with that now and you can see that on this slide. Next slide, please.

Strategies for Establishing Impact

Marilyn Barger – And FLATE happens to be a Baldrige organization, that's an organizational strategy that focuses on kind of quality and continuous improvement at the organizational level. So not only do we start with our vision that helps set the stage for interactions with the new potential partners or any audience, but, also, what is it that we do. And although this is a little bit busy, in the middle of this grid are three buckets that we work in three work streams that we kind of like to talk about as we approach people and as we support our own goals and mission for the ATE program – professional development, outreach and recruitment and curriculum. So all of these of support of growing programs, strengthening programs in the technical areas, all with the goal in mind of getting those work-ready graduates out the door and into companies. Next slide, Mike.

Strategies for Establishing Impact

Marilyn Barger – So from this kind of Baldrige view of an organization, we see it simply, in a simple format in three levels and most of the partnerships that we engage in are down at the bottom, not that it's unimportant, because this is foundational that we have an activity level where we actually do things. We interact with those partners in a lot of different ways, many of which you've heard about from both Elaine and Ann. So I won't repeat some of those ideas. Our activities level is based on very targeted objectives and measurements, effective measurements that aligned to those objectives. And we also have a set of guiding principles in our Center that help us kind of filter ideas and activities to make sure we're staying on track to our ultimate goal of producing those really work-ready graduates. Alright, thanks Mike. We'll move to the next slide.

Measureable Outcomes

Marilyn Barger – And those things at that activity level where we engage with partners, actually help us and how we do that and the ways we work there really impact our effectiveness of the program and organizational level. So I'm not going to say much more about that, but that it's there and the foundational aspect of things that are done in our activity level really impact our organization as a whole. We're always trying to do things better, more efficiently, more effectively in order to have more outcomes, better outcomes, more measurable impact. So are you seeing some of these questions before Ann and Elaine both alluded to measurement, how can we, what will be measured? How will we measure it? Starting with these questions making sure there's alignment to our goals and missions as well as those of potential partners. It's just really important to think about the get-go. Next slide, Mike.

Measurable Outcomes: Organizational Effectiveness Level

Marilyn Barger – So what does this do? Ultimately, at the higher levels, questions like these will get answered for us so at our organizational effectiveness level, which is who are we as an organization; do they produce the impact that we were looking for; do they strengthen all the partners involved and foster innovations not just in the activities, but also in the processes that we use to have those activities take place. And lastly, do they lead to really, more integrated collaborations? We'll talk about that in a little bit also. Next slide.

Approaching New Partners

Marilyn Barger – Okay, so I think we have talked a little bit about this on the others so I'll just pause here for a few seconds and let you read through these. This is approaching new partners, important, I think, if you are starting the project, have ideas for projects that you focus on, some of these things be really prepared for the conversation that you're getting ready to engage with, with potential partners. Project some positive outcomes for the partners, they might not think about them right away or figure it out. Or, you might be able to help them see what's in it for them as well as taking the lead in all the communication going forth. Go ahead, Mike. Next slide.

Getting Started with Partners

Marilyn Barger – So getting started, you know, all of these things to keep in mind – I believe it's just a little repetitive of the last two speakers – what do you want or need from the partners? What can the partnership do to support you? What can you offer the potential partner? And be sure you have mutually agreed upon expectations and deliverables from all sides, might not just be two people, might not be two partners, but more than that. Okay, next slide.

Curriculum Partners & Partnerships

Marilyn Barger – I think Elaine at the beginning mentioned some specific partner opportunities. We do deal with our Florida Department of Education; they're a strong partner for us. They control a lot of CTE education in our state so we have a very close partnership with them for a lot of different kinds of things from professional development to curriculum alignment and even recruitment of students. Another particular one I'll just point out here, because we mentioned it, partners between different projects especially within the ATE community, the Mechatronics Community Exchange is a little organization of programs around the country that offer mechatronics 2-year technical programs. We get together once a month on the phone for a *quote* "conversation," somebody takes the lead and we talk about issues and problems within those programs. It does involve a few grants funded ATE projects, and it, also, involves just some other programs that have gotten wind of this community and have asked to

participate. So it's a great venue you if anyone's interested, we have one tomorrow afternoon at 3 o'clock. Alright, thank you Mike. Next slide.

Outreach Partnership Events

Marilyn Barger – So, it's a lot of times the activities in outreach area are events so for us manufacturing day is a big event. I'm going to talk a little bit about that. Next, we have an award system to recognize faculty and community partners. We have a lot of communications that we think we use partners for, we use their communication outlets. We share news and information with our communication partners, various career events, student events, all of these take more than just one organization to put forward and are certainly things you could get potential partners to partner with as you prepare your grants. Next slide.

Multi-Layered Structure Example: Goal

Marilyn Barger – So I want to take a minute to talk about the Manufacturing Day in Florida, because it's a pretty complex event. Our goal is to increase awareness of career pathways and great careers in manufacturing across the state. Lots of different people, lots of levels of partnerships, it's a lot of one-on-ones of people I don't even know personally, but they're engaged with some other regional organization that connects us to them, you know, through a third kind of party. So there's multiple layers, a lot of different kinds of partnerships on the effort to carry out lots of events during manufacturing months. Next slide.

Multi-Layered Structure Example: Getting Measureable Outcomes

Marilyn Barger – So we, we carry that out with keeping our goals in mind is to show impact. We trying to recruit students, make more of the community aware of manufacturing and manufacturing careers. So we take on the role as our center, the central coordinator for all of these activities. We find lots of people to help us in their local areas, but we do provide a lot of resources and help them do whatever it is they want to do. I'd like to point out, communicate frequently is really important, making sure everybody understands what's expected, or what they want to do, what their own goals are so we can help make those happen. Our goal is to just impact a lot of students and to do that we actually survey many of the students that are engaged in these events during the, during the year. The, one of the ways we capture that is in an infographic that we prepare at the end of the activities and share with all the partners in the whole state through our communication network. Showing how many students are effected, how many students are engaged, but also, how many parents, how many manufactures and in that case, etc. Alright, next slide Mike.

Single-Layered Structure Example

Marilyn Barger – And, not to say that all of our partnerships are at that high level and very complicated I would say in the organizational structure, but also in the interactions. We have some very, very finite, very specific partners, partnerships that we have. The one that I'm showing here is an example is for our educator and community partner awards. We have a very specific partnership with another organization in our state, they have their roles to play; they help us promote, disseminate; they, also, help us to judge and are in charge of the recognition events for example. And we do some of the logistics, we're hoping to move this totally to this partner as part of our sustainability plan, and we're probably 80 percent there. So this is a partnership that we're really proud of because we feel like we're going to be able to keep our FLATE awards even with their name into the future until there is no center, no ATE center. Next slide.

Take Home Messages

Marilyn Barger – So, lastly, I think we'll all have some of these kind of summary statement that sometimes partnerships can be thought of as more formal relationships with very agreed outcomes or deliverables. And those might be the bullets that you want, in this letter of support – Can they help you with career events; can they come to your classes, instructors, those kinds of things. Ann Beheler mentioned a few of those as well. And sometimes they're just temporary. It could be temporary or periodic things that just you don't need to have them there all the time. As opposed to that, we're always looking for someone to grow into a collaborator, it's not appropriate for all of our partners. We have some that are very targeted for targeted events or targeted activities, but a collaborator is kind of a superset of a partners that there's a lot of mutual or high level overlap of the missions, but maybe not necessarily the strategies that are used to get there. So they don't really expect reciprocity. It's not always if you do this, I'll do that, and it's always if you do this, I'll share it with you. If I do this, I'll share with you and they end up doing something they share with us on a very simplistic level. So having those kind of relationships with people help the organizations to kind of grow and become more mature, more effective. Sometimes we might call this leveraging our partners in different levels to different degrees as well. You want to remember that the partnerships are of courses required by NSF for an ATE grant, but you want to look at them as a way to help make your project stronger, not just for the time during your project, but also into the future. So finding people that you can have a really tight connection with and share the activities as well as the outcomes is really important. And it just takes a lot of kind of relationship building; I think Ann or Elaine mentioned that as well. Alright, I'm done, thanks. I think that's my last slide.

Michael Lesiecki – It is. You know Marilyn, *Don't do it alone* is such an interesting message. I'm going to step right back to your slide, because it's a key question that's come in from the audience. Just a great number of questions today. One is about this formal relationship Ann mentioned a letter; you mentioned a letter, is that ever enough. Do you ever take it to the memorandum of understanding stage; or Marilyn, do you find letters enough evidence of a partnership?

Marilyn Barger – Of Evidence for writing a proposal, yes. But, we do have some memorandums of understanding more formal connections to different organizations. Sometimes that becomes limiting in itself, but sometimes it's a good place to start, especially if you're not that familiar with the organization that you're getting involved with.

Michael Lesiecki – That's a good point.

Ann Beheler – Yes, we have memorandums, we have memorandums of understanding especially if they're going to be integrally involved in the grant and receive money from the grant. The memorandum of understanding has a statement of work and a basis of how they get their expenses paid.

Michael Lesiecki – So at some point you do want them depending, especially if there's money involved, that you would want to move it to that level.

Ann Beheler – Sure, yeah.

Michael Lesiecki – But one of our audience was just saying is it a letter enough and I think it could be in some circumstances...

Ann Beheler – Sure.

Michael Lesiecki – ...but you may want to drive it further. I don't know, that's a good one. Let me turn, you know, already I can see that as we go to our Q&A, live Q&A session next week, we'll want to come back. Such a great question about how do you structure that first meeting? I'm not going to take this one today, but I want to give you a preview. When you first meet with a potential partner, how do you structure it? What do you cover? I think we're going to save that one and talk about it in some detail next week, because I would like to know the answer to that myself. Let me turn one more question to Elaine. Elaine, sometimes it's easier to achieve a partnership at the top level, but then you inevitably have to work with the more boots on the ground people. Do you find that to be the case? How do you get their buy-in once you got the CEO to say this is great? You mentioned your students, are there other ways, Elaine?

Elaine Johnson – Oh, absolutely and we work with our trade organization. We, also, do strategic planning together and identify particular roles, but I think the key of this is to be thankful. To say thank you to the people that our partners, to acknowledge them, to really engage them. And we do that in a number of ways, not just with a formal thank you, but to have them serve on review panels, to make them judges for the poster sessions to have them engaged in training for students that are practicing their how to write a resume; how to present themselves in a job interview, mock interviews. So there's, there are number of ways of letting people know that we really appreciate what they're doing.

Michael Lesiecki – That's a good point, that acknowledgement. You know folks some interest

Marilyn Barger – Yeah, that's a great, great point.

Michael Lesiecki – It is.

Marilyn Barger – I just want to enforce that.

Join Us

Michael Lesiecki – That's good. You know what? This has been such a, this has been really one of our best webinars in this series, because the quality and the number of questions that come in. And that leads us to next week where we're going to do a follow-up Q&A. I already can see the number of questions we're going to talk about. It's next, what's the 29th? Whatever day of the week that is 3 p.m. So go ahead and register...

Ann Beheler – Wednesday.

Michael Lesiecki – Wednesday, thank you Ann. And you can submit your questions in advance, if you want, to Christina, ctitus@collin.edu. And, there's a number of questions that we didn't get to today. Folks as you leave the event today, a survey comes up automatically and if you just take a moment to fill that out, we appreciate it.

Join Us – All Webinars 3 pm Eastern

Michael Lesiecki – You know, all of our webinars in this 4-part series occur at 3 p.m. eastern time, and the final one in this series is April 20th called, interestingly enough, Final Tips for a Competitive Proposal. Will also have a follow-up Q&A after that one on April 27th. But you can always find out more and see the previous ones and their recordings at atecenters.org/ccta.

Join us in Salt Lake City, UT!

Michael Lesiecki – This summer in Salt Lake City, we're going to host a convening on the day after the conference, the 21st.

DOL and NSF Workforce Convening

Michael Lesiecki – So this one will be from 8:30 in the morning 'til just after noon. It will focus on developing competitive proposals. Many of our, as we work on our grants we're coming toward the end of that funding cycle looking for new opportunities. So I think that would be an interesting opportunity and Salt Lake's a great place to visit in the summer, and HI-TEC is a good event to meet with your collaborators to develop stronger partnerships. So I wanted to thank everyone. Elaine, thank you for leading our presentation today. Ann, your comments were right on and Marilyn, thank you for those details of the partnerships.

Webinar Survey

Michael Lesiecki – We'll look forward to our discussions for next week, again. So everyone thank you, as I mentioned take moment to help us become better. As you exit today that survey automatically pops up. For those of you whose questions we didn't get to, our apologies, but we'll address them next week at our Q&A session. Friends that officially ends our webinar for today. Thanks for joining. Thank you Ann; thank you Elaine and thank you Marilyn.