



Quarterly Report – Narrative Questions

Please answer the following questions. Include this document as an attachment to your quarterly report.

Grant Recipient: Rural Health Association of Tennessee

Project Name: Delta Workforce Healthcare and K-12 Collaboration Project

City: Decaturville **County/Parish:** Decatur **State:** TN

Point of Contact: Patty Lane, Workforce Development Director

| | Program Outcome Goals | Q1 Dec 15 2020 | Q2 March 15 2021 | Q3 July 15- 2021 | Q4 Oct 15- 2021 | Q5 Dec15- 2021 | Q6 Mar15- 2022 | Q7 June15- 2022 | Q8 Sept 15 – Dec 2022 | YTD Outcomes |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|------------------|------------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------------|--------------|
| Individuals Trained | 500 | 0 | 10 | 363 | 39 | 97 | 55 | 40 | 38 | 642 |
| Communities Served | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 |
| Industry Certificates Awarded | 200 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 14 | 14 | 9 | 47 |
| Labor Certificates Awarded | 120 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Job Created | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 36 | 36 | 50 | x | 55 | 55 |
| K-12 Partners Trained | 10 | 15 | 3 | 48 | 35 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 109 |
| Community Partners Trained | 150 | 0 | 19 | 35 | 43 | 87 | 25 | 1 | 2 | 212 |
| Locally developed curriculum | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |

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Quarterly Report – Q8 Narrative Questions

1. During the period of performance, what project activities occurred and what was accomplished? Describe all major tasks and deliverables. (10,000 characters max)

In the final quarter of our Delta Regional Authority grant, the Rural Health Association of Tennessee (RHA) continued to serve 5 counties as originally identified in our grant. In November, RHA convened a meeting with community partners from all five counties to recap the grant, highlighting the projects and activities, accomplishments of the participants and engagement with workforce and community partners. The convening provided an opportunity for partners to celebrate our collective successes and for participants to engage beyond this meeting in new opportunities with one another. Our partnership with Pine Meadows Healthcare and Rehabilitation, West Tennessee Healthcare (WTH), Jackson State Community College (JSCC), Professional Allied Health and WIOA will continue beyond the scope of this grant.

In addition to supporting individual participants and providing supportive services, RHA is supporting a GIVE grant through TCAT Jackson, in which we will work with high school CTE instructors, supporting work-based learning students. We will continue to work with JSCC, WTH and the north and south workforce boards on a medical billing and coding grant, which will be a new educational endeavor at JSCC. WTH will support positions and opportunities in this area while RHA will provide a well-defined social support system during their education experience and as they enter the workforce.

The past two years have allowed RHA to gain valuable information on how we support participants, gathering input from participants, employers and others in the field providing similar services. To that end, we have rolled out a new supportive services model in 2023 focusing on mentoring and case management. Participants will receive mentoring and coaching, membership to the Rural Health Association, enrollment in Telehealth opportunities for their household, access to monthly webinars and a monthly participant newsletter. One JSCC participant shared that this program was a great opportunity to gain professionalism and engage in the healthcare profession. Kimberly Burse, Staff Coordinator at Pine Meadows commented that RHA provided students with the assistance to complete the nursing assistant class.

Individuals Trained – RHA continues to promote our Workforce Readiness Curriculum, which is being updated for web and in-person content, with a target audience of ages 16-24. An instructional designer has completed Module 1- personal skills, with a completion date of early February for Module 2- professional skills. RHA staff utilized several lessons from the curriculum with EKG, CMA and Phlebotomy students at JSCC, covering SMART Goals, Resume Building and Interviewing Skills. Students were provided an opportunity to share SMART Goals and provide a resume for RHA review in preparation for their clinical experience at WTH. The relationship with Chrystal Taylor, Asst. Director of Health Sciences, will continue long after this grant. Thirty-eight students received supportive services and benefitted from classroom content. RHA was instrumental in forging a relationship between JSCC and WTH, wherein students in the above areas have an opportunity to complete clinicals at WTH and are provided an opportunity to interview.

Industry Certificates – RHA continues to engage on a regular basis with Professional Allied Health, who recently added Patient Care Technician to the courses they provide for students in the Delta. Seven participants receiving support from RHA received their Phlebotomy certificates

in Q8, 1 participant received a Medical Assisting Certificate and 1 received an EKG certificate. Additionally, RHA is providing mentoring support to 7 students who will complete their certification in CMA or Phlebotomy with Professional Allied Health early in the new year. RHA's relationship with WIOA has also expanded. In the past year, we supported 5 students in the RN program that were referred by WIOA. Although one student had to put her program on hold due to personal reasons, we did see four students graduate and will soon be eligible to take their RN certification. Additionally, we spoke with our WIOA contact, Rhonda Mitchum about supporting other students in the Delta Region that need additional mentoring support.

Nine additional students were referred in Q8 and will be eligible for our mentoring and supportive services. Rhonda recently stated: *Thank you for partnering with WIOA. I know the students will be forever grateful for any assistance they receive from Rural Health. It is always a great pleasure for WIOA to partner with Rural Health of TN as well as many other programs to help as many students as possible to achieve their educational goals, Again, thank you so much for the partnership!*

RHA has a strong relationship with Milan High School. Four students from Milan High School are working towards their LPN diploma and license and were scheduled to graduate 12/20/2022. They are attending classes at TCAT- Paris. Additionally, we are working with the CTE Director at Milan on developing a Behavioral Health track for high school students, which will soon be submitted to the state for their review. This will provide an additional health care pathway for those students who would like to enter a mental/behavioral health field.

We anticipate that there will be additional certifications earned by JSCC students. Their semester ended in December and therefore it is anticipated that students will take the certification test in the next several months.

Labor Certificates – Throughout the life of this grant, RHA has continued to discuss the process of Registered Apprenticeships with employers. As mentioned previously the challenges continue to be with the incremental wages and 1:1 supervision. Progress is being made in this area. We have Registered Apprenticeships in Community Health Worker, Workforce Development Specialist, and Certified Medical Assistant is close to being finalized. RHA is working with Vanderbilt University and Meharry Medical College on their HRSA Community Health Worker grant, wherein we will assist in supporting apprentices and assisting these two entities with employer recruitment and assisting with a Registered Apprenticeship Program. RHA had their first apprenticeship signing last quarter and a second signing is scheduled for February of 2023. Although the progress has been slow, we anticipate that apprenticeships in these three areas will continue to grow, and we can add additional healthcare occupations. Another area on our radar is pre-apprenticeship. A pre-apprenticeship requires a solid relationship between youth to career opportunities. As our relationships with CTE Directors and high schools evolve, and our healthcare employer partners expand, our goal is to see the pipeline from high school to career materialize in a true pre-apprenticeship that meets DOL requirements.

Jobs Created – The Rural Health Association of Tennessee has continued to work with JSCC to track certifications obtained and the job placement of participating students (38 students). Tracking students once they graduate is challenging. Not only do some students not continue to engage with the college upon completion, JSCC’s personnel that was responsible for tracking student certification and job opportunities transitioned to a new position at a neighboring institution. In Q7, RHA began supporting 12 employees with Dyersburg Hospital. In 2023, we will begin connecting with leadership at Dyersburg Hospital and Dyersburg Community College as a new opportunity for recruiting and supporting individuals in entry level positions. Pine Meadows hired two new nursing assistants in Q8, and with a new class of participants, we anticipate that additional new hires. RHA has connected Professional Allied Health with Pine Meadows as a possible testing site for individuals who complete the nursing course, but need to identify a location that could provide certification testing. Three participants that received certification from Professional Allied Health (3) will continue to receive mentoring and coaching services, which include assisting with job placement in a phlebotomy field.

Community Partners Trained –RHA counts Professional Allied Health (PAH), WTH, JSCC, TCAT Jackson, Milan High and Pine Meadows Rehabilitation as our most engaged partners. We continue to grow our partner and community base. The Director recently reached out to every Chamber of Commerce and CTE Director in West TN to share information about the Rural Health Association. Having recently hired a new coordinator in the northeast corner of Tennessee, we anticipate that our list of employer and community partners will expand across West TN.

2. During the period of performance, were all approved project activities completed? Explain why or why not. (5000 characters max)

The Rural Health Association of Tennessee completed all approved activities throughout Q8. As disclosed in previous Quarterly Reports, the partnerships created have continued to strengthen with hopes of continuing the relationship after the grant has ended. The Rural Health Association employees have continued to support the participants by sustaining the supportive services of mentoring and case management, discussing opportunities in the healthcare industry, while also providing guidance on professionalism and communication. In efforts to expand our web-based platform, newsletters for both employees and employers were distributed in Q8 to participating individuals and organizations. As previously stated in the Q7 report, utilizing Apprentiscope to engage participants more fully has proved to be a challenge while working with rural participants, but attempts to improve this process are underway. We are confident that this will not be an issue for future participants, and we will continue to support the recruitment, retention and upskilling of participants.

3. What outcomes have been realized so far? Describe the specific tools used to measure outcome achievement. Are the proposed outcomes still achievable during the period of performance? Explain why or why not? (5000 characters max)

The Rural Health Association of Tennessee has continued to train individuals, at high school and college levels utilizing the Workforce Readiness Curriculum. In addition to sharing the curriculum with high school instructors, RHA provides a certification of completion and the opportunity to have RHA staff provide classroom instruction in areas supported by the curriculum including education on entry level careers in healthcare and inviting employer

partners into the classroom. The curriculum is currently being revamped to improve the quality of the content, the handouts, and ease of administration, improving the overall delivery across the state of Tennessee. Apprentiscope, a participant and apprentice tool continue to be our software of choice for logging individual activity. We have expanded our collection tool to include demographics on race, ethnicity, SNAP utilization, insured and uninsured as well as capturing completed certifications and trainings. Apprentiscope allows for capturing communication notes between coordinator and participant as well as the type and amount of financial and other supportive services. In Q8 RHA began training staff on TruServ, this tool will be utilized to track employer and other partner engagement. The type of activity, the contact, and the geographic location of services are among the types of data we will be able to capture. Additionally, all workforce staff utilize a workplan to track individual accomplishments, which rolls up into a larger picture of our workforce development objectives across the state.

4. Do you have specific needs for technical assistance that DRA can help provide during or after the life of the grant? Explain. (5000 characters max)

RHA has appreciated the support provided by the Delta Regional Authority. Our learning in workforce development, which began in the Delta Region because of this grant, has led RHA's Executive Director to initiate a plan for formally capturing our experiences and lessons learned, including challenges and successes. Select participants and employers were surveyed in December and asked to provide feedback on their experience in the program, which will be utilized to inform our process moving forward. The grant funding has afforded us the opportunity to continue our support with new and existing participants, while also supporting employers in recruitment and retainment.

5. Do you have specific needs for technical assistance that DRA can help provide during or after the life of the grant? Explain. (5000 characters max)

RHA is very appreciative of this funding opportunity in workforce development in the Delta region which served as an impetus for taking our initiative statewide. We have learned a great deal about navigating apprenticeships in healthcare including pre-apprenticeships. Additionally, our supportive services model has evolved over the past two years to a place where we are focused on quality of mentorship as opposed to numbers of apprentices/participants. We have improved our workforce readiness curriculum and by contracting with a specialist in adult learning and virtual platforms, we anticipate the development of other trainings in the year to come. As mentioned in this quarterly report and previous communications, this grant has resulted in other grant opportunities to continue and improve our work in this space. RHA would like the opportunity to network with other grantees in this space either virtually or in-person and stay abreast of additional funding opportunities as they become available.