NEW TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE OPPORTUNITY FOCUSED ON INCREASING APPRENTICE DIVERSITY

~ REGISTER BY SEPTEMBER 21 FOR THE NEXT INNOVATION COHORT ~

WHAT IS AN INNOVATION COHORT?
An innovation cohort consists of a small number of states that collaborate through an organized and facilitated process to explore and develop solutions to a specific apprenticeship expansion challenge that they share. The innovation cohort model is a proven approach to developing innovative and pragmatic solutions that help states meet apprenticeship expansion goals.

HOW WILL THE NEW INNOVATION COHORT APPROACH APPRENTICE DIVERSITY?
The Increasing Apprentice Diversity Innovation Cohort will look broadly at challenges and opportunities related to increasing diversity of participants in Registered Apprenticeship Programs. States that are seeking to expand apprenticeship opportunities for underrepresented populations are encouraged to apply.

The Innovation Cohort will explore a focused challenge question: *How might we significantly increase the participation of and success of underrepresented populations in Registered Apprenticeship Programs in our state?* We will consider tactical learning topics such as: 1) analyzing data and understanding factors that limit diversity and inclusion in apprenticeship; 2) building trust with key stakeholders and partners to navigate diversity challenges; and 3) examining case studies of successful diversity and equity efforts.

HOW WILL THE INNOVATION COHORT WORK?
The Innovation Cohort Process

The Increasing Apprentice Diversity Innovation Cohort will work through a structured set of activities, including a combination of state assignments and full-cohort discussions. The Innovation Cohort will participate in six interactive webinars between October and December 2020. These facilitated webinars will provide opportunities to explore challenges, discuss solutions, and share ideas. The Innovation Cohort will respond in real time to the challenges and interests of state teams and explore case studies that match the cohort’s top interests. Teams will use what they learn to draft action plans that they will present in the concluding session.
Membership

The Innovation Cohort can accommodate up to eight states. Each state should participate as a team of two to four individuals. To foster innovation from diverse perspectives, we encourage teams that reflect individual diversity (e.g. gender, race, ethnicity, education background) as well as organizational diversity (e.g. type of organization, seniority of participant, location). States will be selected based on a short application process. If more than eight states apply, Maher & Maher and the Office of Apprenticeship will select teams that demonstrate engagement and readiness through concrete challenge and success statements in their application, and also consider past Innovation Cohort participation.

Interactive Webinar Schedule

The webinars will start on October 7 and follow the schedule below. These webinars will provide teams an opportunity to learn from peers and subject matter experts and discuss efforts underway in each state and collectively across the country. Each team member is expected to engage in all webinars and activities.

The webinars will run from 3:00 to 4:30 p.m. Eastern Time on the following Wednesdays:

- October 7, 2020
- October 21, 2020
- November 4, 2020
- November 18, 2020
- December 2, 2020
- December 16, 2020

Team Time

In addition to webinar participation, state teams should plan on spending three to four hours per week exploring state-specific challenges, completing team assignments, and developing state-specific strategies. Team time will allow the state team to learn about cross-agency programs and explore approaches the state might select to pilot. Teams may encourage other partners and colleagues to contribute to “team assignments” and engage in state working sessions and virtual discussions. The Innovation Cohort facilitators will provide assignments and materials for state team meetings.

HOW CAN MY STATE PARTICIPATE?

Click here to register by Monday, September 21. If you have questions, please contact Jennifer Jirous-Rapp at jirapp@mahernet.com.