December Accessibility Program Managers Meeting Captioned Text

December 10, 2019

The December 10, 2019 Accessibility Program Manager Meeting was hosted by the General Services Administration, Office of Government-wide Policy at GSA Headquarters in Washington, DC.

The Relay Conference Captioning (RCC) translations provided during the event are included below, verbatim, and without editing.

For additional assistance, please contact us at [section.508@gsa.gov](mailto:section.508@gsa.gov).

--- BEGIN CAPTIONED TEXT ---

Please stand by for realtime captions.

Good morning. This is Mike Horton with GSA. Who is on the phone?

[Captioner Standing By]

I want to test my connection to the captioning display.

We have success. Thank you very much. We will start about 9:00. We may have announcements between now and then, so thank you.

[Captioner Standing By]

Testing 123. Testing.

Testing 123. Tim, can you hear me?

Okay.

[Captioner Standing By]

Testing audio loop. Thank you.

[Captioner Standing By]

[Pause]

Good morning. My mic is not on. I've got it, all got it, all right, got it. Jericho, Kathy who is [Indiscernible - low audio], that there? We are leaving no man or woman behind, so move on up. Move on up. No man or woman will be left b ehind.

Kathy knows I'm [Indiscernible - low audio].

We have other seats up here. We get [Indiscernible - low audio] of both, at least three.

Jericho, you let somebody get back there. Okay. Jericho was [Indiscernible - low audio]. Ladies, the morning. We're going to ask you to move up. No, know. Trust me, you are going to like it, trust me.

Welcome, welcome, welcome. This is our last meeting of the year.

[Laughter]. I knew that was you. You said you were not going to give not going to give me trouble today. That wasn't supposed to happen.

[Indiscernible - low audio]

Happy birthday, amino. Happy birthday.

[Applause]

Yes, man.

We're going to try to help to help you celebrate as much as we can today. So, good morning, again. Thank you good morning, again. Thank you for moving up. I want to welcome you to you to our last meeting, and last meeting, and so I just want to just mention a few things. If you have been here before, how many people have been here a here a few times? Raise your hand. So, you want to did not raise their hand, you let them know where the bathrooms are and all of the other things, okay. That's your job. That is hand, you let them know where the bathrooms are and all of the other things, okay. That's your job. That is your job today. All right, so what have we we learned during this past year? To get started we had all of those things of those things going on at the end of last year so we started a year so we started a little late in April with the discussion of performance measures and using them to advance program maturity. And we moved into June and we were introduced to this review tool, SRT, including section 508 and acquisition lifecycle, using acquisition requirements tool, and using SRT to verify your agencies solicitations. August brought up the digital dashboard accessibility monitor, and was expected for the August program, maturity. Raise your hand, Mike. Then we had October 10 and had Agency perform in a new location, mind you. It took us from the right now to the standards and act about act about the 21st century integrated experience act. We must realize that the full potential of the workforce and continue to advance the government for creating an accessible customer experience program. So, I ask you from December, December 10, 2019, what time is it?9:05a.m., where do we go from h ere? You have some time to think about it but I'm going to let John Sullivan come up and Michael&#160;Horton come up, maybe they can help you along to think about it but I'm going to let John Sullivan come up and Michael&#160;Horton come up, maybe they can help you along as you figure out where we are going from this point now moving into next year. John and Mike?

[Applause]

Thank you, you that. Appreciate the opening here. I am John if you do not know me. I wear a couple of hats around h ere. One of those is the Program Director for the Accessibility Program, and this is my colleague who is at my brains behind the bunch. Or statutory charge is [Indiscernible - low audio] Kathy and Tim are in and Tim are in the room to provide technical assistance to you all to ensure what we buy and build is accessible. There is accessible. There have been challenges, long history of challenges and priorities being priorities being other than accessibility, and those do not go away. Is what we got, I wanted to give an update on some of the update on some of the things we have going on and make sure you talk to people in the in the room today about those. First off, thank you for interagency forum in October. They can to Kate and our host at HHS but I think it was a phenomenal success.

[Applause] Kate and our host at HHS but I think it was a phenomenal success.

[Applause]

The feedback on the customer survey feedback was extremely positive, and so I challenge anyone to come up. It's time to start planning for for next year, so we need a couple of of agencies to stand up and agree to lead support but we need Agency leadership on that. But we we also need a host. We were really pleased for the most part with HHS facility. It was good. The ability to put the videos, you know, doing the live captioning, the video the video was really professional production quality. The room was a little noisy being in the lobby and the way we had to split the exhibitors up didn't please some of the exhibitors, but a problem in the space is I I do not know who has better space pick if you know of a good space. I mean, obviously we are outgrowing. We had the in-person in-person and virtual over 500 attendees top 300 or so in person, and actually had more who had a problem they are. In fact, if everyone that showed up in person actually showed actually showed up, that signed up showed up, we were not sure were not sure how that was going to fly. But, you know, I think we are at a quandary here of in person, face-to-face contact is so important for building this community, but we also can be Washington DC centric, and everybody doesn't have travel dollars to travel dollars to show up and we have to travel around the country. If you are here in DC, we want you here in person if at all possible. Recognizing some people that is a very very difficult challenge, but we're looking for the right space and we've got a whole list of requirements around space but if you think your Agency has, by all means let us know, because we need to start first step is locking down a location of where we down a location of where we are going to do this again next year. Along with this year is the 30th anniversary of ADA. That comes in July, and some of the things we well do in terms of our theme are open for us here, but we've got a lot of good planning to do for that event, but we also have, you know, we have the four other events like [Indiscernible] Webinar Series which is every every other month out of the education Committee, and our plan is to have a strategic agenda for all of us. All of that build in some good good needs here. That is what we are trying to do. In the meantime, Mike, Kathy and others are preparing the IDT baseline, along with trusted test five-year [Indiscernible]. Do you understand any of that, Mike?

that, Mike?

It's in the early stages but Kathy has been working on the IDT testing baseline for quite some time. In fact, that underpins underpins the trusted tester program and that test process. What we're looking to try and do is bring that into more we're looking to try and do is bring that into more formal entity where we have clear lines of how it benefits [Indiscernible], private sector industry, creating products as well as industries that are creating testing tools so that we have a common method for as industries that are creating testing tools so that we have a common method for evaluating products using automated methods or manual methods.

Thanks, Mike. Having the baseline will allow us to get to some commonality across session tools park everybody is using different Accessibility Tool's, and we all know that they come up with different results. Anything that provides a standard, and I've been using the calibrate testing tool, again, tool, again, the baseline is a good thing to bring us into consistency. We're really looking forward to that and trusted test for five is out and available, I do in the room has been digging in using it? Anyone here?

All right. We have a few. [Indiscernible - low audio].

All right, that's great.

[Applause]

Twice a year for OMB strategic plan for improving accessibility, which has been on the book for six six years now, we do twice end of your maturity assessment. Mike is now going to the ones being submitted and we are about to send about to send out the report. The report is structured government-wide view, and we share with the [Indiscernible] and OMB the specifics on the agencies. We share with each of the agencies in general where we don't name names and and then we share back observations on your individual status. That report is valuable, even though we had a session, one of the sessions we did last year is what metrics make sense for you to manager to manager program. We're looking at going forward in the the future and changing what goes into that report. After the February cycle there are no changes here but we're watching what happens on the 21st century integrated experience act, After the February cycle there are no changes here but we're watching what happens on the 21st century integrated experience act, [Indiscernible] and implementation schedule which I will talk to in a minute here. in a minute here. At the moment we're keeping the cadence to the 508 reporting the same as it has been. Mike will send out has been. Mike will send out the report which goes into Harrison the last reporting cycle. That we will be looking at looking to get to some value out of those here. One looking to get to some value out of those here. One note pushing it up to two weeks this year weeks this year which will be due February 15. All that presumes there is no that presumes there is no Government Shut Down. December21st comes and we are in a different, all bets are off and [Indiscernible - low audio] happening here -- happen again h ere. We sent out to you last summer a website challenge. I went through just I went through just what we have on and mentioned digital dashboard and assessment assessment tool. We have your second level domains only go your top page call your homesite, and we really testing for three simple accessibility checks. And so, we sent out to you the CILs the challenge to see if we could increase 2% over the summer, and we did. We made 11%, so thank you.

[Applause]

But that is still 89% more to do and mind you that is the red caring. This the red caring. This is just a simple sample of three metrics that you can be working on. And generally speaking, if those three are wrong then there is bigger problems underneath. The ball point is it's an attention-getter to get this thing to get this thing in here. I think the strategic error we made is we did not send it to your website managers, which we well do next time. Our assumption is you are in a regular dialogue with them. Maybe that's not the case pick we case pick we want to make sure we go out. However, this WTI 0 in the call she likes this type of activity. It got some results. Small, but it got result in she wants us to repeat this again. And so the next one is looking at, Mike, what don't you described this as you have done all the all the working on this.

The previous one we use digital dashboard accessibility model looked at the three standards, set a goal, and this time we used the analytics tool, I forgot the acronym. [Indiscernible] program available at Analytics.uSA.gov pick one of the metrics in there they metrics in there they provide for participating agencies that we used this custom Google solution is the top downloads. The given age and what -- Agency what top downloads or. I look at at all the [Indiscernible] agencies. I looked at 240 files, and I identified of those which ones were PDF. 171 of those were PDF, I believe, and I evaluated all of those PDFs to see if there was at least one or more I evaluated all of those PDFs to see if there was at least one or more defect. The report we are preparing now we'll go again directly to the program managers and the Web managers, and it's geared to raise awareness to look at policies and procedures that can be improved, contact contributors that can be trained so we don't put out forms.

Part of me?

Too someone else's form and we can combine them. That report will be be going out shortly. To tag along with that [Indiscernible] a Margie Graves encouragement is for us to set quarterly challenges of this nature. It could be documents. It could be procurement. It could be somewhere else of the lifecycle. I won't ask for the right now but to set quarterly challenges of this nature. It could be documents. It could be procurement. It could be somewhere else of the lifecycle. I won't ask for the right now but if you can send me an e-mail if you have thoughts on what might be beneficial to your program as far as an accessibility challenge. But it's raising trusted testers, raising the number of trusted of trusted testers in the organization. Maybe it's identifying how many pages are on your public facing website. Some are on your public facing website. Some of the measurement were way for us that we can better understand how to make the decisions and our community. We have one question real quick?

[Indiscernible - low audio]?

You need a microphone for the audience.

The question was, are we addressing the.know on the digital scanning of a dashboard? Is it still an issue?

No, not yet.

[Indiscernible - low audio]

Yes, yes, that's the answer. If you do have a suggestion on our future challenge, please send me an e-mail.

Okay, and I know we need to hurry suggestion on our future challenge, please send me an e-mail.

Okay, and I know we need to hurry up here. I wrote my own talking points. I do want to say the 21st century idea act you will see guidance coming out and an implication schedule coming up. In fact, first went to the CILs last week, CIOs last week and they are rolling it out in pieces is pieces is the way to say it. They really focused on the first thing is the Web design system. The standard is a system and they've got somebody to listen to that. There but implementation schedule to go out and look at most popular sites to see which ones are [Indiscernible] to you, which ones you will address the first is the use of the Web design system. Of course, the Web design system use of the Web design system. Of course, the Web design system implies testability built into t hat. A major the accessibility was the accessibility was written and is there. But make no mistake, the idea act brings nothing new to the table. Everything that is called you should be doing. It kind of wraps it all together and puts a new emphasis on things and the website a particular. In no way changes 508 and law, and everything beyond website certainly on website must be 508 complaint. While you will see a focused area on focused area on taking some priorities they will get attention around the idea act and we should be supporting that. It doesn't change your job. It still very much still very much important we have you to focus on getting to true accessibility of all of the [Indiscernible] here. Lastly, the interagency Association of professionals, the international interagency [Indiscernible] is a new survey out around procurement and accessibility in the Procurement Life Cycle. They would like some participants to take a look at that and check their work. I will forward it out after this meeting, and if you would like to participate with him it's a good thing. Several of the you would like to participate with him it's a good thing. Several of the support results they put together will become a new certification for accessibility in the acquisition professional lifecycle. I am not sure what sure what they are calling it. It's about [Indiscernible] accessibility. Look forward to that. [Laughter]

Thank you, John. Thank you, Mike. Great, okay. Avis is supposed to be doing this but one of us needs to hand out a paper. He is going to hand out, everyone is going to get a sheet of paper.This is going to require needs to hand out a paper. He is going to hand out, everyone is going to get a sheet of paper.This is going to require you to interact with each other. This is called, human being go.

What you will have to do is look at the bingo card. You are going to have to find someone in the room that fits in that box. They have to do this initially in the first person in the first person that yells being go, I have something for you. Let me give you an example. Let me see one of them, Avis.

If you wanted to start this way and start this way and go around and I ask you, or you an only child, and you said, yes, you would initial in the box. The first person that has initials in each box and create be no, no, that's the winner. It will only take about 15 minutes to do it. This will force you to have to go and talk to each other, too get to know each other. We want to make sure [Indiscernible - low audio], okay. [Indiscernible - low audio]? I say, okay. I got this one filled out and I still have [Indiscernible - low audio]. I got that one filled out. I've got to go around the room to fill out who can can fill out the [Indiscernible - low audio]. Okay, all right.

[Participants are participating in group exercise.]

[Captioner Standing By]

[Silence]

Hello, all right, everyone.

Hello. Hello, we have being go in the r oom. We have, Haley. Raise your hand, Haley. And then we have, excuse me, [Indiscernible] over their raise your hand please.

With got bingo.

There are prizes for everyone.

We do have prizes for the winners. Thank you, very much.

[Pause]

[Applause]

Thank you, thank you. Did you get to know each other other a little better? Did you get to know each other a little better?

[Indiscernible - low audio]

I did two. There was a whole lot of lot of competition going on. I am glad. I am glad we had a little fun. Now we are fun. Now we are going to call up we are going to call up Shana. Come on up, Shana. She is from the environment protection Agency and she is a 508 assistant Program Manager. She joined the Section 508 program. She has been primarily focused on increasing employee awareness of accessibility issues and She has been primarily focused on increasing employee awareness of accessibility issues and resources. She's updating the agencies Section 508 policy and integrating it into the agencies IP lifecycle process. Prior to working for the Section 508 program she worked in worked in years for the PA quality staff. She has been at EPA. She's been any PA employee since 2005 when she came to the Agency as an intern. She graduated in PA employee since 2005 when she came to the Agency as an intern. She graduated in spring 2005 from the University of Maryland, Baltimore County with BA in environmental studies and [Indiscernible - low audio] and acting. Tended to you all an actor. Something. Let's give a round of applause.

[Applause]

And Sarah?

Hi, everybody.

Hello.

I originally planned this a long time ago with a completely different plan of what I was going to talk to talk about. I was going to talk about some very detailed work we have been doing. There is a thing we have been developing called the compliance assessment and remediation plan and at the 5-year Plan thing we have been developing called the compliance assessment and remediation plan and at the 5-year Plan that we have to attempt to inventory the entire Universe of ITT we have and based on the varmints, and then start everybody on remediation plans. Not going to talk about that today, but first I want to talk a little bit about me, myself, and my history, because you that said this is supposed to be a lot more fun this but first I want to talk a little bit about me, myself, and my history, because you that said this is supposed to be a lot more fun this year. This presentation is going to be about my unique journey joining the 508 Universe here. As he that said, I've been been any PA my entire career right out of college, but before that when I was four, I was diagnosed with [Indiscernible] and fairly severe dyslexia. They even were concerned that concerned that was a going to be able to go to law -- College, let alone have a career. It took me an extreme amount of time to learn how to read, and if you see my handwriting it will be very obvious that I fall into the disability real. Because of that because I was diagnosed so early and diagnosed so early and so young at age four, this was in the 80s when I was diagnosed. My father was really in technology and the computer, computers, and my mom became a learning Specialist, so they, you know, got into assistive technology pretty young. I was an early I was an early adopter of Dragon back in the day and it [Indiscernible]. One way I was able too [Indiscernible] was using Audiobooks, you know, Audiobooks for the blind pick that is how I did all is how I did all of my school reading. Eventually I did go to college and I got and I got a Bachelor's Degree. I've had a career at an Agency, I'm the one thing about being dyslexic is because it takes us a long time to take in information. We like calmness and a structure, so the government is a nice place for me to be. Maybe why I have stayed here so long. When I first got there I was on the quality staff, which is staff, which is an information, you know, IT oversight program, and it's very detailed, and it's focused on data collection and quality and doing assessments and oversight. When I first came to I first came to the 50 a program, that is what I was going to do. I was going to run the 508 program just like the environment, information environmental quality system any PA. We were going to do assessments. We were going to do everything you wanted to give a background to say to do assessments. We were going to do everything you wanted to give a background to say that in 2016, when I joined the 50, there's a picture up on the screen of me in my second trimester. I had just voted in the primary, and I can't at this point was extremely excited to have my first child. I was reading all of the books and making the most detailed baby registries and going to ask your doctor visits because because it was a quality person. I wanted to get all of the information and and the data. Even paid for the extra genetic tests because I wanted that data and information to know. Everything was fine, didn't have to worry. We were very lucky. And at this very same time I joined in the five away program. I was a staff member. It was a bit of transition, the 508 Coordinator had just left. There were a few people, I was a staff member. It was a bit of transition, the 508 Coordinator had just left. There were a few people, I think at the time there we're technically three FTE, and then I joined. And a so, I did the same thing. I started reading every day about Section 508. I'm like top I know about Assistive Technology Program know Technology Program know how that works so let's . I read the 508 original policy and all of our Agency policies our Agency policies on information management, what system lifecycle, CPIC, Enterprise Architecture. Thanks, John Sullivan for writing the architecture policy at EPA. I read that I read that back and forward, and how can I [Indiscernible] into that. I read all of our security p olicies, and I scoured the Internet, and I was on on the original GSA 508 website all over the place. And I was going overboard and then I launched into my third trimester. It was that summer and dust at home we are doing everything. We were purchasing everything. We got a new car park it was the sample. I was going to have a baby in August. I forced I have is to buy a new AT system. We were taking all of the parenting classes, setting up the nursery, and at doing all of the research and I started reaching out to folks in the 50 a community. Amanda was the Coordinator. I was her friend. I was interviewing her constantly trying to figure out what we can do and making all sorts of plans. Then boom, August second, [Indiscernible] was born, eight pounds 13 ounces, 21 inches. I was going to have a natural have a natural birth. No, it was a week late, he was a week late, 21 inches long, and he was not coming out. My water broke Rick I did not know it. I had no idea my water broke. I was sick. I was in labor for, I don't know, 18 hours refusing to have epidural because I knew that if I did not have epidural until I at least got to five centimeters than I would have a better chance a better chance of actually giving birth. I never got to train two centimeters. They let me go go through the whole night, in and now, Pitocin. The nurse rushing in freaking out. I was watching 30 rock the whole time. whole time. That's all I really remember. I eventually just gagged after six hours for the epidural because it was, well, this is a going to work out. They came in the morning at like, I don't know 8:00 a.m. They could have come in sooner or any time They came in the morning at like, I don't know 8:00 a.m. They could have come in sooner or any time to say how about a C-section. I say, yes, you do not even have do not even have to ask. Why don't we do it now? Get this child out of me. And I tell you this story in sort of a preamble, tell you this story in sort of a preamble, because this many micro story along with the the whole story is very, very much reflective of how the last three years of my life has gone as a young member of the 508 community. I mean, while I was doing this my office, we organized. While that was happening the staff of three or four was down to enter into, and I was one of them and I was on maternity leave until January. So that really [Indiscernible] the program and tend to a halt. At the time the program was actually the program was actually in a pretty good place and they left us in a left us in a pretty good place. We had A5 zero eight eight policy. It was based on the original standards. We had a training program. It was kind of basic that how do you make an accessible we're document? How do you make an accessible PDF document? We had a training program. It was kind of basic that how do you make an accessible we're document? How do you make an accessible PDF document? There was nothing specific beyond that. We had a group of Section 508 liaison Scott about 20 of them, one for every office of the Agency or so, and we also had a Section 508 community forum that met twice a year that was just anybody in the Agency interested in section 508 issues. Actually, one of the first things things I did was have Tim come present on our forum on the revised standards, and I've got to say, I found it fascinating. I don't know what the rest of our 508 found it fascinating because it was very detailed, very detailed, very much the policy. I had a lot of questions but nobody else in the room had a had a lot of questions.

[Indiscernible - low audio]

[Laughter]

Yes, I'm back to work and at this time, Tye, is six. He is pulling himself up. He is starting to eat solid food, so what am I time, Tye, is six. He is pulling himself up. He is starting to eat solid food, so what am I doing? Ms., I am prepared. I'm going to be the best parent ever. I'm pur&#233;eing and making my baby food and have my own detailed and have my own detailed plan. This week we are going to go through and sprinkle out the 10 types of highly allergic foods and do each one individually, and then make a new food for that and for that and a new food, and baby proofing my house. I drove my husband crazy. He was not to worried, He was not to worried, whereas I was appear. I had researched all of the top baby proofing consultants and contractors that could come in and install all sorts of crazy contraptions that my husband never let me do. He sort of put a couple of things here and there. And everything is fine. He never never fell down the stairs, and we live in a townhouse, so we have we have a lot of stairs, but he's absolutely fine. And at the 508 Compliance program what I would come in raring to do, that was January 2017, and the Standards refresh was about to happen, and coming out, and I went to the playbook training. I think Bruce was teaching it with Robert in January that year, and I was here in this building for my first time. I have my pumping materials with m e, and I was scheduled when I was going to pump, how much milk I was going to pump that day, and my plan after that day when I came back I was like a this is it. We're to pump, how much milk I was going to pump that day, and my plan after that day when I came back I was like a this is it. We're going to revise our EPA 508 Compliance policy. We're going to write a brand-new procedure that will be very specific, and then we are going to educate the entire EPA on what the 508 Compliance refresh is park I'm going to invite Tim and everything, and we're going to update our training program to include the refresh. And include the refresh. And that we did do that, and I'm going to redesign are intranet and our intranet site. Most of these things I have not fully accomplished yet. Toddlerhood, so, he starts with teeth coming in. He is learning to walk. My parents and my husband's p arents, and there is an adorable child building a tennis ball and a green onesie setting up all by himself on the screen. And we realize that we've got to find a nanny because my parents and my husband's parents we're driving us crazy. Not that they were getting tired. They were driving us crazy. You pay for the child care to go home, not for them to take care of your children. You pay for them to go home at the end of the day. And that we were getting ready to plan his first birthday and how this [Indiscernible] 508 Compliance program, I started creating that 5-year that 5-year Plan that I talked about, the compliance assessment and the remediation plan. I I start writing it. I've drafted the first version of the revised procedure and the revised policy. I rewrite it because I'm taken more more training. Of taking 25 job. I have taken training from Tim. I watched those webinars and I'm like, oh, I've got to change of that. That isn't exactly right. Let me Let me do that again. Really pick we are working on trying to hire a to hire a new Coordinator of what we were calling at the time, and my main thing, and this is the one victory I I got, when needed to be it to be a team. We need to attract help attract help because I'm basically here by myself but I need somebody I need somebody to help me out, and that we invigorated our Executive Council, are Section 508 are Section 508 Executive Council which is senior management we brief all the time. I'm leaving them on the [Indiscernible], the new policy and my new all the time. I'm leaving them on the [Indiscernible], the new policy and my new procedures. Then we get a new COO, because administration changed. Then there is preschool. Because I said it's expensive and he needs [Indiscernible - low audio]. So, that throws everything into a loop. So, we had to reestablish his routine. They only have [Indiscernible - low audio] at school. Everyone is sick all the time. The 508 Compliance manager will attest that I'm constantly sick. I am always working, but I'm constantly sick. She's like to just stay home and rest. Do not give me sick. I'm like I will stay home and sick. She's like to just stay home and rest. Do not give me sick. I'm like I will stay home and work park at the 508 Compliance program, guess what? In this environment we are in we go through in we go through another reorganization, so that's really helpful, so I've got a whole bunch of new got a whole bunch of new people to re- brief and re- talk about and re-train. And trying to get this new policy and procedure down the road, and it's not going anywhere. But while I am doing that, while I am writing these very detailed directives over and over and over again, we start implementing that 5-year Plan Rick we tell all of our Enterprise level ITT system and applications, we owners to do an inventory. We want you to inventory all of your systems, tell us what they are and rank them in order of how much you would like to assess them and prioritize them. I even asked Mark at this point, I believe, because that seemed like a good idea, Mike Urban from CDC who is very of a. He thought it was a pretty good idea. He thought it was me trying to take over the world, and idea. He thought it was me trying to take over the world, and he was [Indiscernible] but thought it would be an ideal an ideal State, which it is in an ideal environment, which we were not in. And at this point I decide, you know what? My procedure is really wrong because need because need to rewrite it again. I got to break it out into four different types of procedures. I'm going to make an acquisition procedure. I've got to make a testing procedure. I got to make an exceptions out into four different types of procedures. I'm going to make an acquisition procedure. I've got to make a testing procedure. I got to make an exceptions procedure. In an ideal world I would have an electronic document procedure but I do not have time for time for that now. Then there will be a reporting procedure on how we're going to collect information from everybody across the Agency from the Agency from all of these different systems. That's what we're going to do. And my bosses like top you still are just you right now. I'm like, yeah. Okay, [Laughter]. Luckily, finally, they hire [Indiscernible], and she's a managing. She's a project planner. She helps to focus all of my ideas and all of my conquering the world. Just like when my son started to get older and we started to work on potty training, she got me get older and we started to work on potty training, she got me to go back and make sure we were taking the right approach, researching the right methods, and also that we needed to get help. Just like my son where Just like my son where we were bribing it with stickers, toys and M&Ms too use the potty, we needed to start bribing our system owners to provide us with the information we needed to start bribing our system owners to provide us with the information we needed. And we realized that not only when we only when we were trying to do this inventory we realized this was a moment where we could educate the system owners, because we are trying trying to make it easy for them. So, we wanted to do was to collect there 508 Compliance documentation from their systems and see what they had, if they had anything. That was my goal. I wanted the data. I wanted to see what it was and where they were. And we had set up this whole system, up this whole system, this three phase, five your system where they would provide us their documentation. We would review it. We would see if it was any good because I had taken Roberts training on what a good ACR was because like top I know what a good ACR is that let me look at it real quick and I will tell you if it's good or not pick we realized very quickly that was in going to fly ACR is that let me look at it real quick and I will tell you if it's good or not pick we realized very quickly that was in going to fly with folks. Of they could give me the information and are determine on my high pedestal that, yes the information and are determine on my high pedestal that, yes or no, this was good enough, and you don't have to do further testing or assessment on your on your system. So that we spent the next nine months very, very similar to how long it took my took my son to potty train. In developing a detailed process that a third-party could do to evaluate and ACR then do document whether it's a sufficient quality or insufficient quality. And that whatever the vendor was claiming of conformance but the idea was also that this was also that this could potentially applied to test results and it would come in a similar format. What we would do with that and what we are doing with that right now is we have trained one of our contractors to do this process, and it the Phase I enterprise level systems have gone through this process and they have got their scores and it [Indiscernible] are doing with that right now is we have trained one of our contractors to do this process, and it the Phase I enterprise level systems have gone through this process and they have got their scores and it [Indiscernible] because even if we said at the time when collecting the data v ersion 2.0 or 2.1 I DPAT really wasn't everybody's friend yet still. We had a lot of vendors ignoring it or 2.1 I DPAT really wasn't everybody's friend yet still. We had a lot of vendors ignoring it completely. And what became useful about this exercise is we were giving them a memo template to send to vendors, vendors, specifically asking them to submit a CRs using the DPAT template the DPAT template to put one and we realized this exercise we were meaning to define the Universe, to dry the cosine of America in terms of identifying all of the ITT a baseline in the level of conformance. It wasn't actually going to ever happen completely, but what what it was going to become was an education campaign to employees but maybe there's probably a better way we could have gone about it. It's working right now, we do we could have gone about it. It's working right now, we do have plans to attempt to shift this direction. We are going to continue with it but we are going to shift it and focus much more on the education side than the going to shift it and focus much more on the education side than the assessment and the checking side, and how this applies to potty training, we tried to bribe by son every evening that he would use the potty. My husband's great idea were teeny tiny toys he would reach into for surprise bags. And so [Indiscernible] would work. This was quickly backfiring quickly backfiring on us though. Tiny little figurines of dinosaurs everywhere, and everywhere, and they were multiplying and multiplying all over the house pick we were like, this house pick we were like, this is not sustainable. We cannot handle this pick we need we need to come up with a new plan, and go with stickers and go with stickers or M&Ms which are more easier to deal with. Now we reach the three major. My son is three and what are the next steps? How do we approach all of these trials that we have learned? We realized we are not the perfect parents. We make a lot of mistakes. We aren't going to raise him in a way he is never going to suffer. We're not going to know everything that happens to How do we approach all of these trials that we have learned? We realized we are not the perfect parents. We make a lot of mistakes. We aren't going to raise him in a way he is never going to suffer. We're not going to know everything that happens to him. And he is starting to assert Independence and Independence and he could talk to us and communicate with us with us and we can work with them. I realized something as I am working with him, it works a lot better when I tell them what is going on, when I give them all of the information. If I explained to is going on, when I give them all of the information. If I explained to him why I need him to put issues on right now that we need to go and look at a go see grandma. Sit down and put on your shoes and we will go see grandma. We were put on our shoes we got to go now, now, he throws a fit, and if I give him all of the information that he gets to go see his grandma, play with her and have he gets to go see his grandma, play with her and have good food, because I don't make much food, then he follows, and I realize that's the same way I need to approach the system owners and fellow employees at the Agency. I had to give them all of the employees at the Agency. I had to give them all of the information. I have not been giving them the information. I haven't been flexible, and they are asserting their Independence just as my 3-year-old as my 3-year-old or but they are say, know we can do this right now. We don't have a budget. I'm like, you our right. We don't have a budget. We are the can do this right now. We don't have a budget. I'm like, you our right. We don't have a budget. We are the PA. I understand, and I realize I need to have a softer focus, positive parenting, and realize we are in a constantly changing environment, because just to hear my office Director change, and we've got a brand-new office Director and a brand-new Deputy Director, and now I've got to bring them all up to speed on what they are going on because they're like what are all up to speed on what they are going on because they're like what are you doing? I'm like, what? You know you have no budget. budget. I'm like top I know, because I never bothered to stop and think maybe we should get some funding for this. And that is what we bothered to stop and think maybe we should get some funding for this. And that is what we are doing now. We're stopping and getting funding because we have been low funded, and I think a lot of us of the woefully underfunded for of the woefully underfunded for a very long time, in the way good thing about this new management is they want us to they want us to succeed in want us to somehow lead EPA find more funding for the 508 program, which is very, very lovely of them. And so what I have learned is that the moments of most success I have had is when I have when I have collaborated with my fellow 508 Program Managers and worked with Robert, and God knows, Tim, I have e-mailed you so many questions many questions over the last years and going over the tiny thing about about the law and undue burden tried to figure out all of these things. At enabling last year I was harassing everybody because we had a potential we had a potential complaint going on. I am still going to do that. I'm going to do that even more as lessons learned more as lessons learned because both have been my successes is I have done that. I want to prioritize what I tried to take on, like I tried to prioritize with my son. We prioritize [Indiscernible]. Him eating that works. We can only take on so much and we have we have only so much resources and realizing that we can do it by ourselves. Ever, and parenting it's the same thing. I have my mom Partner. She is the best pick she is a stay-at-home mom. I am a working mom and between the two of us we make it work, and that I am a working mom and between the two of us we make it work, and that is the same thing with solely. I have solely on my team. We just hired a We just hired a program Training Coordinator, and we're bringing more people on and of their shopping for contractors because we did not plan this last year and we went through contacting, and that has been killing we went through contacting, and that has been killing us. We wanted to get the right kind of support. We're shopping for Web testing tools. We are working with all of our other partners across EPA to coordinate because ITT is all over the Agency and so many different owners pick up we are preaching to them they are not going to listen but the main thing is slow down, take a breath, and enjoy it. It goes by really fast. I do not not know how we became this kid that can ride the tricycle you can see on the screen, and he is three already. he is three already. I do not know what happened to this teeny, tiny baby I had. I was still thinking I brand-new as 50 I brand-new as 50 a Coordinator. In some respects I am but at the same time I have been here for a while now two. In the room but at the same time I have been here for a while now two. In the room just at our table there's also brand-new 500 a Coordinator Program Manager in this right now. I wanted to take this moment to turn it back to you guys and say, who in here to the one thing at weddings that you do? Who in here has been A5 0 a Program Manager for more than 15 years? Please, stand up or raise your hand? With got pad. We have a couple. What about more than 15 years? Please, stand up or raise your hand? With got pad. We have a couple. What about more than 10 years?

[Captioners transitioning] And then, when you're? And then less than a year? Yeah, it's most of the room. We are changing completely. I'm going to have another question. Who has an established 508 policy? Can I see them? Does anyone have an acquisition procedure? Can you tell that I am trying to go through the procedures? Whose 508 program is centralized? Who is a decentralized system? And then, who owns the web analytics tool? One that will automatically view your entire agency's website? OK. So it just describes what happening, it seems like little pockets, nothing is you know universal across the crowd. We are all viewing our own little pockets of things and I know I am definitely, you know, we are overworked. We don't have time to reach out and to hang out and coordinate and to work together and we really need to share picked the other thing that -- our training program, we are trying to develop role-based trading. Instead of reinventing the wheel. Again and again with having another class on how to make your word document 508 compliance your who has any specific role-based training for their web developers? Awesome. What about further acquisitions professionals? Anybody? Yeah. OK, that's a dream of mine. So, does anybody have any questions for me before I sort of wrap it up? No.

I have one. Actually I have several. I'll pick the best ones. So, I'm interested -- you mentioned that you shifted away from evaluations and [ Inaudible ] education become long ago was that?

It's very recent. We are still evaluating and we are currently designing our training right now pick but, I will say that what I have done in my meetings on it I have sort of shifted away from -- I must have your information now and more to the present education. This is about you guys learning, this is about providing resources and that has shifted from a negative response to a much more positive response. Our phones are ringing more and people are being proactive. We are getting a lot of help now pick

There is that -- you are supporting them as if something is happening to them. So, we know that that can help. You also said that it was better when I tell them everything and why. Just like you tell your son. You're going to grandma's and let's put on our shoes. But, just like our children, if you tell them why and they still don't want to do it, how are you encouraging folks that you are kind of investing in and explaining why, and what they need to do, and they still leave it to do that. of you had any approaches to how you respond to that?

We are not fully there yet. Luckily but first, we are so -- we started with it's a lot you must do it and blah, blah, blah and we are sticking more to civil right and, you know, telling them about our numbers in terms of disability employment and how that is going down and the advantages of hiring individuals with disabilities and each of the things but in terms of that stick we are going to get, we have that also. What it is is at APA we are collecting metrics and we started reporting on the CRP as a metric for each phase and what percentage has actually completed the assessment that were a reply -- we are required to complete pick and we have been to for a long time and now, because of the current environment we are in people really care about metrics right now so my CIO and his boss are being like what can we do to change that and they are like if you need me to make some calls, I will. And, they are. To my delight folks are actually using the resources we are providing them and actually using our testing services to start getting things done pickets actually face to that has jumped ahead. Phase 1, the enterprise systems, are dragging their feet. They came to my office just last week, yesterday, so that is helping. The metric. The measures. The red. Embrace the red.

Thank you. So the question I have is I guess in your experiences versus your 50 a people who are coming to is this a question where they are talking about content creation of websites or their talking about acquisitions, where do you find that you are getting most of your questions? Is a questions about the software or how to remediate documents? What are you find out -- what are you finding is going on?

We get everything. And, we get a lot of how do I remediate this and how do I remediate this. But then, because of the process we are getting a lot of how do I make sure what I'm acquiring is 508 compliance. And that's the best thing that has come out of this. I realize this is an education effort and people coming to ask how do I make sure what it is. For trying to get a mix of both. We got people coming learning to be like I want to know how to fix this or test for this. And yeah, I find myself just sending out different links, you know, to Section 508.gov all the time. Check this out, check this out but before it was how do I have an exception to this and now it is switching to how do I make sure this is 508 compliance.

I really enjoyed your presentation. Thank you very much. The question I have is when you're trying to educate all of these people about 508, is that something you're willing to share so that other agencies can repurpose or hijack whatever you have done?

Yes. I mean, we are still developing them and honestly if anybody else has and I would like to steal them. And that actually perfectly into our next flight which is -- I like your friendly neighborhood Spider-man. I have a picture of my son and Spider-man costume climbing in a tree this Halloween. Call me anytime. If you've got a policy that you are proud of and you want to share at acquisition procedure, please share it with me please. And I will share my. We talked about this several times, we are going to me because I know he is writing his policy right now, and maybe we could all get together and work on our policies because even though it's been three years my policy still has not been put through agency review and finalize. I keep rewinding it. I keep taking very good training and that's the other thing, I want to advertise for all you new program managers. All the resources we have. The ICT -- IDT testing symposium with revolutionary for me this year. And enabling every year. And has been helpful. And I am hoping to go see some this year. There are a lot of great resources out there in this room and available so take advantage of it and please call me and let's hang out. I do have a 3-year-old so, lunch is better than drinks but you know, you know, I can get a babysitter. You know.

I want to dress up I'll get you in a second. With respect to sharing policy there are some folks doing -- there are some people there doing are on Section 508.com but we are in conversations with folks that run [ Inaudible ].gov to talk about establishing it there so we can collaborate and share stuff and those things so I want to say that it is and often said thing, can you share that with me? Can you share that with me? I want to pull those together for the very same reasons I'm hoping we can get that done in 2020 but I would be remiss if I didn't that. And then, --

I also involved -- I also enjoyed your presentation and how you correlated your son's development with your own. I also appreciate you sharing your learning disability with us. I just have a question that sounds like a dumb question. What you at the EPA used in terms of testing your website for accessibility? Especially as it relates to redesign and then working with vendors and, you know, you have the conversation about making sure the website is accessible. Here it is if accessible, but it would be great if we could take your word for but obviously do to the audit who do you suggest for that?

So, at this time the only thing we are using is a lovely tool provided by GSA for our main site. We have been shopping and -- we are like I said underfunded but planning on purchasing a tool that we can provide enterprisewide. For EPA.gov, the web team who runs that shop has purchased site improved which I believe does a fairly good job but not quite what I need in terms of determining 508 compliance. But we are working with them. They haven't actually put that in place yet. It should start in January so we were there and work with them but that is only one of our domains. And EPA.gov, we have like 14 publicly registered domains and I realize quickly that those folks don't meet. All the owners of the different domains. Only EPA.gov is meeting soap who is managing energy star, an error now and what's going on? So, I'm realizing quickly that we have to get a structure in place. And work with them and right now we will be a team of three working on four people who are supposed to be writing the policies and I landed this five-year plan on our lap. And so, we are hoping to get more contract support but will we do have is we have two working capital services available for people at our agency to purchase. Through my loving support and this five-year plan have now become trusted testers certified. And so there are like three trusted testers available for the entire EPA this time that they can purchase and use. And I have honestly been educating our contractors that I'm not actually responsible for the process. And getting them and letting them know, hey, we need you to be trusted testers certified otherwise the documentation we get the test results you get because some folks in that first round of test results that were completely poor and unusable in my need to baseline level of performance. And so, now, they are using trusted tester version five which I can baseline and all of this happened kind of all at once here in September and November. It's all very fresh right now. So, right now that is where we are. Were moving to the hope of the web tool and a web tool we can use on our website and also bring on something, you know, on premise herbicide that can work on our what -- but right now we just have trusted tester contractors, brand-new ones really, that folks are using and I'm just getting those results in now and I am pretty happy with them.

If I could add onto that. Just a reminder that automated tools can only test a portion of the required standards. But you should have a manual process that can augment where those tools cannot test. Thank you. Any other questions?

My question is how does your agency address deficiencies when it comes to assistive technology and the products that the employee workforce has to use?

Yeah, that honestly is our biggest challenge. And it is something that we are constantly dealing with and is a real difficulty because we have major interoperability problems with their enterprise level software and that is honestly was my reasoning for starting the five-year plan because I saw that we had all these systems and applications that were interoperable with the assistive technology being used by our employees are all these custom software's that was being developed to do the scientific specific jobs or any job honestly across the agency, and they were not bothering to make sure that they would work with assisted technology. That was the desire that birthed the five-year plan in terms of working with folks and making sure that they are testing to make sure that it is 508 compliance and hopefully using the tools in that process. That is why we are very focused on asking them to use trusted tester methodology.

So, given that -- listening to your presentation you shifted from a body of evidence to a body of knowledge on -- are you education -- what happens when you get a complaint or something worse? Where's your body of evidence to produce that you have done dude to your due diligence?

That is what this process is attempting to build. That body of evidence. They don't have it and that is what I'm trying to make clear to them. That is how this is also an education campaign in that they don't have the support behind them. They come in and say, it is 508 compliance and I say, how do you know? What documentation do you have? That is what this process is because, yeah, if we get a complaint, which we might and could, I encourage any of my employees to complain, loudly, that we can't support it and that is the vulnerability. And that is one of the reasons why I am happy with this process. At least folks are starting to build that documentation and realizing that they do have a problem and not thinking that they don't.

Thank you. Evette, John, all of you, call me. I will answer the phone or email. Let's get lunch. A lot of us work near each other.

Before you leave, I would like to say thank you. And I am giving you this award from the Section 508 Academy for sharing your information with us. [ Applause ]

Now we will have Mr. Pat Sheehan. Pat is a wealth of information. I will give you a little tidbit if you want to nor more you can turn the page of a. Pat Patrick, I call him Pat, Patrick is with the Department of veteran affairs in 1989 as a computer specialist. He worked with the VA IT test facility as an adaptive trainer until 2001. He joined the 508 office in 2001 and is currently the chief of the 508 office within the Department of veteran affairs as the agency 508 coordinator. And he turns up in his capacity has a responsibility of leading a team of 25 and 30 the contractors which ensure that all electronic information and information technology that the VA uses, maintains or develops require Section 508 including enforcement of the multimedia provisions within the department to include close captioning and audio descriptions. The departments 508 office is available to IT professionals and officials and disabled VA employees to explain what Section 508 is. And what disabled exploits -- employees can expect from the BA on the VA's responsibility under Section 508 and 50 -- Bible for. I give you Pat.

So, I just want to say thank you for that last presentation. That was just very entertaining and, you know, I enjoyed her and what is going on with her agency. I think that's terrific. I will meet you for lunch sometime. The Department of Veterans Affairs is a different animal. I think as all of us have experiences with our own agencies. We have the second largest agency in the government and we have hundred 50,000 people in the agency. 59,000 of them have disabilities. We have 28,000 that have targeted disabilities. We have a large disabled workforce and that makes life very, very interesting for us. We also have interesting organizations outside the department. I will get into that in a little bit. They help put pressure on the agency to do the right thing. Why the veterans Association? Is able to metric -- disabled American veterans, wounded warrior Project, all of those groups report to Congress and all of those groups testify to Congress and our friends at the veterans associate -- blind veterans Association have two pieces of legislation, HR 1199 and -- they are 1199 and if it passes it will make my life very interesting. It will put a lot of pressure on us at the VA but it will help to ensure that Section 508 is more prioritized within the agency. So, we all have work to do and I do have a large staff and I do have excellent contractors. We even stolen some very good talent from Homeland security. Thank you very much. Trusted tester pick we believe in taking the very best. But, we've got a great staff. A couple things I want to leave and I want to say to start off with, one, I am very proud of the team that I have at VA. I think it is the best team in the federal government. As far as government people are concerned. They do a great job. The reason why my program is successful is because of the team that I have. They work well together, and when people asked me what I do, I tell them I hire smart people and I let them do their job. And letting them do their job not micromanaging them, not hold -- holding them accountable for doing good work and working hard , it is important. They do a good job and if there's a problem or something blows up, which it will, I am there to take the heat and they just go on chugging. So if you have a team of people, I don't care if it is two, three, or 20, appreciate those people. Make sure that they know their work is appreciated let them do their jobs and give them the training and let them make mistakes also. My boss let me make my mistakes. Growing up in the agency. And it is important. That way people can grow and that is important. Second thing I think I have learned since working through Section 508, the joy of delegating responsibility. Years ago when I started out and I had two or three people, three of a century contractors, I thought we were the best in the office and maybe I was but what I learned from my bosses down the line, thinking of the last bus I had, you need to learn to delegate and let people in your office do the work. Even if you think you are the smartest one in the office which I wasn't. Let people do their jobs and let people work at what they are responsible for. Give them encouragement and give them the tools and give them training. And let them go. When you do the delegation piece, it's hard to let go. It's hard for other people to take the spotlight. But it helps to move the program forward. It gives you more people working in more areas. And that is important. If you want your program to grow. If you don't want it to grow and you want to be the head honcho and keep it in a small space, then don't delegate but that was what I was told to do and that is what I am trying to learn to do. When I don't delegate properly I people who beat me up in my office so, you know, that is what they are there for. They do a good job and I think we have grown well. When we started off, as I said earlier, we were three government and three contractors. We had to put the program much like EPA is done and we had the benefit -- we started this in 2001, 2002 is when I took over. I've had the benefit of doing this for what, 17 or 18 years or something like that. You know, it has been for me it has been progress. With the group that we started five, six, seven us, as we grew a little bit, we put together a process of what we needed to have in place. Tools, training, and support. On the tools piece we took automated, automation tools and actually used tools from the DQ and we also had another office that was using tools and we had competing scanning tools and we did a lot of scanning on the web, Internet, intranet, that sort of thing. One of the things that was indicated which I think is critically important is we used the metrics of scanning on the web and reporting out within the agency and this was before the OMB report to report on what the agency was doing to show individuals within our administrations, veteran bets -- veterans benefits of magician, cemeteries and what we call central office, what their websites look like. And so we were able to articulate and that was important because that meant we were moving it out of the 508 office and showing the webmasters where the risk was and what the issues were and how those risks could be remediated. We were not doing the remediation and I think probably other offices have seen this where they expect the 508 office, all three of you five of you, whatever it is, to do all the work. You are the 508 office, picks it. Not my job. My job is to work with you and to try to help you fix what you are working on and move forward and be your partner. We can't do the work for you. We can show you why you need to do it and can even show how to do it but we are not going to do it for you. So we used a combination of automated tools and as I said scanning tools to start off with, and we also used some guided tools. Tools where you had to have some human interaction sit down with that tool and make that tool work. I know trusted tester has tools in that arena and we use those. Then we also used AP tools. As part of our manual test and we have had this since 2002. We been very lucky. As part of our office and we have had a group of blind and sighted testers who work using a teacher test applications, websites, documents and that sort of thing. To see how they work with [ Inaudible ]. So, we are getting the view of the disabled person. We have a lot of disabled veterans using the same tools so we can mimic that experience and we find that very, very valuable. On the tool side, we have a wide range of tools. What is also important is that our tools are consistent. I can't tell you the amount of times we have been fighting between when we had level access and DQ and the skin would say one thing and another scan would say another thing. We pared it down to one tool. We don't like the tools to compete. On the training site we started with three or four courses, five courses, right now we are up to 34 and we do a mixture of online training, and virtual training. And you know, I have received questions over the past will you share our trading with us and share your policies with us? And can you share your techniques with us? And I would like to. My boss is not in favor of that soap you are right, for whatever reason VA has not done a good job in sharing but as far as meeting and talking to you about where we are, what we have done, the good, the back, and the ugly, our successes at our failures I will be happy to do that. Recently I got not moved, moved to a different area within my office. I run the office but I have another lady who works for me and I will call her my deputy but actually I think she runs the show. Carla. Carla who is in charge of the operational piece of the office and I am in charge of the outreach piece of the office. So, what I am doing here today, meeting other agencies, meeting other coordinators is now my primary job. And when I get my hand back down the operational day to day stuff Carla slaps my hand and make sure that I am not getting in her business. So, my boss asked me the other day whether I miss the operation stuff. I don't miss the day to day headaches of working with PMs in projects and applications and that sort of thing. But I miss the people because the people are what makes it work. So I still find time to talk to the subject matter experts that work in the office and are working on the day to day stuff. I sneak in every once in a while to assist on some of the projects that I might have some influence on and certainly I have some historical knowledge of things we have done in the past and why things work. And so, the training has been critical. We've also developed within the office -- we have training for our people within the department. PMs, developers, content providers, all that kind of stuff. We also provide training for our people inside the office. 43 courses to bring people we just bought in and we just brought a dozen in last year, we were at 12 or 14, we brought in about a dozen new people and put some training courses together to bring them up to speed. Something that would have taken maybe 18 months we were able to get all the training done in like six months or eight months. It was a huge help for us. We have a lot of 508 training and sometimes I think we have too much training and spent a lot of time training. Lastly, in the area of what we did in the past, we talk about support. So, we have in that group of 25, about a dozen of them are subject matter experts and 508 and sit on project teams. We work with developers and they work with PMs and they help explain what is 508 and what does it mean to your project and that sort of thing. So that is where we were. May be, what, four or five years ago. And one of the reasons they wanted me to talk to you today was not only how to implement a program and we don't have that same thing but how you talk to the managers about that. Leadership. How do you relate to leadership? The first thing I needed to do was build a program. I needed to learn how to delegate and I needed to learn how to appreciate the people I had. I need to get them trained and I need to get them working in a configuration that I thought was appropriate. So we had developed in that arena five years ago a WorkStream. I had a WorkStream for the web, a WorkStream for legacy applications, a WorkStream for e-learning and one for mobile. A WorkStream for training, and then all of a sudden one of my people left at I had nobody to cover e-learning and mobile. And I realized I had to change my organization and how it was put together and now we are in a more functional organization. We now have crosstraining between -- we don't have WorkStream's anymore. We have homerooms and people move from homeroom to homeroom and you have areas where people are getting cross trained. And that's interesting because we all get comfortable where we are. We all get comfortable with what we do. And, we don't like to move. But we are asking people to move to get new skills to learn new things so that if somebody is out, someone's on vacation, somebody is having a baby, that work doesn't stop because one person leaves. And that is something that my boss has indicated is a good thing. It is something that my leadership and my were talking leadership, they appreciate that there is somebody always that they can count on in the 508 office and I think that is important. So, looking at an organization functionally is different than deciding specific task to the Pacific people. When it comes to leadership you know, has a blind person going forward in the old days I said the same thing. I said, it is the law, it is the right thing to do, it's a fair thing to do, and you've got to do it. And by the way I would like some money so I can run my program. And I say, we have all these other competing priorities over here, and I don't think we can give you as much money as you think you need. So, I needed to make my program important to my leadership and I needed to change that narrative. One of the ways we did that was to look at metrics. We had an awful lot of data that we were scanning rescanning websites all the time and working on projects all the time. We had lots of data on Deepak's and how long it took to fix them and where the issues were. And being able to report those upstream to my manager and educate him so he could speak to management about him was absolutely critical. And that is what we started to do. There's a difference in my office between data which we see all the time and metrics as to what does that data mean. Are we getting better? Are we getting worse? What is the risk? And that is what my management is all about. What is the risk that an agency has when it has bad websites? Congress asked us that question this past spring. Because that is what the blind veterans Association indicated. There were areas in which we had applications that were moving just up that we are working on and how quickly can we instill 508 within those applications. All those things are questions that management has asked us. When I started we were in a waterfall environment which means applications could take a year or two years before we need to come up with any demonstrated application. They may or may not be compliant. And we found out what times and not they were compliant. A lot of times we didn't even have working code let alone accessible code. And then we started something in my office where we came out of the waterfall and came into a new, a new type of application development where we would generate the applications and six months. A big change from a year to two years down to six months. And we were able to see that 508 was incorporated into that process and that was good but there was a lot of self certification going on between developers and PMs so they could get these applications out in six months. Self-service wasn't working out well because a lot like the -- [ Inaudible ] they would say it works and we check it after we deploy it and we are out here and see you later and have a nice day. 80% of what we looked at after it got self certified weren't accessible. So we had a problem. Then we moved from six months and here we are now to or three years ago we started working [ Inaudible ] we are from six months to three months and now are doing something called [ Inaudible ]. Which means we are now working on a weekly basis, a biweekly basis moving very, very quickly. When we talk about management and what they want to see one of the things they want to see is results. They don't want 508 to be sitting here doing stands or manual audits that will take two weeks because they've already got two leaks. They what I wait not to be a speed bump within their process because within their box it was key that we move quickly. Daily, weekly, biweekly deployments. We got to move fast. So what do we do for tools? Well, we go back to what I started with. We talk about tools, training and support. We talk about the tools and now we look at scanning tools and we look at automation and we look at tools that look at the code before it is executed and that is what we are starting with. We've got tools, we have a couple automation tools, we have some tools that are embedded into the browsers to scan the contract that we have, and we have manual testing. So we still continue to do that and I think we will get pretty good results. We utilize, we utilize the techniques from a VHS and we have a good amount, not an extraordinary amount of trusted testers in the department, but that trusted tester knowledge, the experience is absolutely invaluable. And we continue to talk to VHS. We find out that some of their intake procedures are exactly right. So, being able to show where we are with respect to results incorporating Section 508 into an agile [ Inaudible ] environment is absolutely critical. If we don't do that we are just going to be ignored and I will come to us and no one will look at us because we will slow down their projects. We need to be able to assist the teams in the same way that we were working before. On project teams and make sure they understand what they are looking at as far as reports when we're talking about [ Inaudible ] people with 700 applications in the VA and the dozen subject matter experts, it is hard to jump to all of that. So we are back to taking 508 and giving individuals request developers and PMs and content providers the same tools that we have taking the mystery out of the tools and letting everybody utilize the same tools we are using because within the department we have to leverage 508 so that everyone can do it, everyone can use it. And it becomes part of the way business is being done. So, what we see at the department is progress over time. And I think that is another thing that we talked to people about. To managers about. We are not expecting 100%. We are not expecting everything to be perfect. What I strive to achieve is that we are part of the team. We are working toward success. And I can show through metrics, through a progress, tracking or whatever, we are making progress. And then we throw in commercial off-the-shelf products. We throw in Microsoft, we throw in Microsoft dynamics, we throw in team site, not team site Microsoft teams, and we throw in Oracle, and how do you manage that within the project. So, we have also been leveraging our relationships with the commercial world and also, and thanks to Mark urban and others, who were working with Microsoft teams, talking to Microsoft about how we can move forward as the federal government to make sure that what we are providing is critical. That also is another point that we discussed with management because they want these projects to work. They want us to be involved with the vendors, they want to know what is the risk if we deploy this and how are we going to work with people with disabilities and what will happen with respect to any potential lawsuits. So those are the things, those of the questions we need to answer. Outside of the fact that we are working on projects and we have defect and all that sort of thing. So, my office and myself particularly we try to answer those questions so that we can provide access, as much as possible, to as many people as possible in a timely fashion and be able to work with applications that are developed by VA. A lot of times applications that are developed by VA jointly with a commercial project embedded in them. One of the things we looked at over the last two or three years at VA and this is just VA, we started taking a look at the 6000 commercial products that we have what we call our technical reference model. The universe of everything we can attach to that is commercial. With Don about six, eight, 900 maybe 1000 projects products, what we found is that 93% of those products that we evaluated for 508 commercially are not compliant so we have a lot of work to do. We meet monthly with Microsoft and we meet monthly, weekly with Oracle, and their timetables are not agile. They are not getting things fixed in two weeks or a week or two weeks a month, three months. Quarterly, maybe. See you in six months maybe. And so, we need to find ways to work around that so whether we are scripting a solution for disabled users or something else, we need to come up with answers. Equivalent facilitation. Do we have application -- do we have the correct language in our acquisitions yet? Can we see the acquisitions coming through the department and evaluate incoming technology? No. We don't have that. Do I want to sit on contract evaluation. Absolutely not. I am happy, I am happy that the chief, that is one area where I like to delegate. Contract evaluations are no fun. But I've got some good people and they have done some good work so, working with upper management. That the different narrative. It's a different story. You have to understand where they are coming from. They are coming from -- they came from the project management accountability system. Then we went to agile. And then when they went to deadlocks and then we scrambled still. We are looking for answers that fit in their paradigm. So we can continue to make Section 508 relevant. At the Department of Veterans Affairs. We don't want to be a speed bump. We don't want to be after-the-fact. We've already done that. And we see what happened. Maybe that's part of what I bring to the table. At the department, a little bit of history, because even though I teach I don't -- I don't think human nature changes and I think it's a schedule that determines how quickly things are produced. And under agile, we need to make ourselves part of the team. We need to make ourselves, we need to make 508 easier for developers to achieve. We need to move it to the left so we are looking at code and as is developed and before it gets compiled and before it gets executed and implemented. We need to look at it then. And not after-the-fact as I always envisioned it. -- we aim to be team partners, and the way I manage is I jump in with my team. I try to solve problems. I do the same thing with project teams. I think I am solving problems, my contractor say I'm working drug deals so I always try to have -- they always give me adult supervision so I can remember when I promised people. It's important, it's important to be part of that team. Moving forward whether we are working on a project and we've got the check, we went those fixed and we need things done. What I am finding is it's a matter of the team working together and it is a matter of trusting the people that can actually do the development work that they understand your defects and they will prioritize them. And we are there to remind them that the defects we have are critical. That they are critical to disabled people, to our population, to the veterans who are out there who need to -- that need to be using the products. And critical to the management. Over and above, you know, the project managers and that. It's a team effort and once again we've got a fairly sophisticated set up. But we have exactly the same issues. That everybody else has. The more you uncover the more you know you need to do. And the more you professionalize it the more you realize that you need to reach week your procedures. And I will leave with this. This last little story. My boss comes in five years ago and he wanted to look at our processes. So he said let me look at your processes. He came in from DoD. He was looking for the [ Inaudible ] document. What is that? I've never heard that before? Where are your processes? And I sit there in my head and he said, that's not a good idea and we started working on -- we don't work on a five-year plan we work on a one year plan and we have business process documents and I think what that says is that we all work towards our strength. Mine perhaps were solving problems. Mime are not documenting problems so we are starting to do that. So there is an awful lot that we can learn. The Department of Veterans Affairs has been around for a while and is a good program. But I think it's important for us to be able to learn from each other and contribute what we can. I am happy to talk about all of our glorious failures that we have had over the years. So you folks won't make the same mistakes I made or we made an we can learn from each other. So thank you for listening. I appreciated and I appreciate this group and all the work that you do. Thank you very much.

[ Applause ]

Can I take any questions?

Hang on a second.

Thank you for your talk. You mentioned the apartments of metrics versus data. Could you talk more specifically about the type of metrics that were helpful for you to forward to your leadership?

Short. Let me mention the tool that we use. I believe -- I stole the metric guru that we have from [ Inaudible ]. They are not happy. We've done great work. That was her expertise. Metrics. I'm very happy to have that. One of the areas for instance, an easy area, let's take web metrics. The percentage, I'll Tele myself because you could get it from OMB anyway since we get the data all to OMB every six months. Our web metrics are pretty bad. Because we look at sites versus pages. And so our percentage is extremely low. It's like two, three, 4% on sites. Versus pages. I don't know I think we are somewhere on 30, 35% but we have a lot of pages. Were looking at both Internet and intranet. That's not a good number to report to Congress when you are going up for a hearing on accessibility and you just had the blind veterans Association testify against you. So, what the metrics were able to show is that even though pages were not totally compliant, that the majority of the pages that we had 81% of those pages or showing improvement over time. A significant improvement over time. So, we were moving in the right direction and so although the data was showing things like Texan color contrast and data tables that were noncompliant, what the metrics were able to show was that 81% of our pages over time are getting better and better and better. The number of defects that we had were going down and the reason why pages in general warrant getting fixed is because we were generating [ Inaudible ]. It helps with the narrative to understand what the data means. Because there's so much data, we need something to tell the story and the metrics do that. The metrics are an easy way for us to be able to share that with management. So my boss loves graphs and analysts and loves his tables and all that kind of stuff. That's a story he uses to tell to the bosses above him. As he has told me he fights on our behalf all the time. He will not tell me who is saying what but he says that a lot of management is concerned because they say the Department of Veterans Affairs is tougher than any other federal agency. Why are we so tough on as far as defects are concerned? But he takes the metrics to show management that we are making progress over time. Trust us, we know what were doing. The trust is so much that as I said by a year and a half ago he said go out and hire 12 more people which brought us to 24, 25 people. I have never heard in all my years in federal government, and I have been here for 43 years, over 42 years, being able to hire a dozen federal workers. That is pretty amazing. Thanks to him. And when I thanked him he said he was just doing his job and that's the kind of person he is.

So the metrics that you are using, it's generated from a proprietary system?

For instance, the web metrics we are using the [ Inaudible ] complied tool. We have used in the past we have used the level access tool. And we find both tools are good. They are technical. One is better than the other in areas but the data is generated by those tools and we test about 450 websites a month either on the Internet or intranet. And we are looking to take the complied tool to get it out to some of our SharePoint people in the next few months so we can start to capture some of the 87,000 SharePoint sites that are out there. And that 87,000 is down from 240,000 SharePoint sites. Are you kidding me? How do you start to make sense of that kind of data. A lot of data out there. And what does it all mean and that is what the metrics are giving us. So, the automated tools have a use but they also have just that they also have their limits so anytime you are using tools understand that the tools can only bring you so far and many times we go into a situation where people use the tools and they say, it says it's conformant so it is conformant and then all of a sudden a manual audit comes through with manual results and the subject matter -- subject matter expert do a manual test and it's a different story. But, that is where the relationship comes in. We will not throw them under the bus because we want to see improvement over time. Maybe not tomorrow or the next day, or next week, work with us. That's what we say.

How are you doing, Patrick?

Good.

It sounds like you have a process of transforming your office. The question, was that transportation -- transformation strategically done or was that something you guided?

I would like to take credit but it was strategically done. My boss said were going to do it this way. He had come from a shop in DoD where he had a high functional job. And we started off with as I said initially work streams and they did a good job because they helped us to delegate responsibility down to PMs who were in charge of the WorkStream. But what I didn't know and what he actually knew what we started this is that because you have work streams that specialize the people who were sitting in the WorkStream doing nothing but the work, when they left you were going to be in bad shape. So, he was the one, my boss is the one who taught last year about doing cross functional training, cross functional duties, and moving people around in the organization below me so that everyone sort of learned everybody else's job. And it's hard. People get comfortable where they are. They don't want to move or learn new things. But it is good. And we are going to be a better organization because of it. You need a certain level of discipline to be able to do it and you do it over time.

Apparently I have the last question. First of all I want to thank you for your story and in particular sharing with us how you empower and invest and trust your people. I think it's an amazing thing to say and more amazing to do. I want to thank you for that. [ Applause ] you know, that's what we do here. It's metrics and is squarely things and automated tools but day-to-day is about the people. I thank you for bring that home. The question I wanted to ask goes back to the metrics question. We've been talking a lot about the web is stuff that we can get that fairly easily and we can tell some of those stories. We get some of that through the biannual reporting we have. If that turns up as I said my colleagues, we have really out of the 13 questions we have six meaningful pieces of data that we can use. The number of employees we have, there are two questions and then there are four related to the Internet and intranet. And I think we can measure those untracked those and trim those overtime but there are a lot, I think there a lot more at metrics that can be tracked and we talked about this in a previous meeting. Are there other things you are tracking outside of web that are helping you tell this story to leadership or is it really still just you are able to do that just on the web stuff alone? In order to achieve your goals?

It's funny. The leadership I'm in right now, they care about dev ops. They care about agile, they don't care about the web. That is where you get most of the metrics. That's the easiest place rest to grab it. But really we are also able to look at web-based applications. And that is where we are able to look at web-based applications and we have a good metric on that. We are actually capturing that manually and it becomes part of our monthly data that goes upstairs. And gets converted into metrics. So, for management on our side it's all about speed and it's about schedule and it's about deployments. On a weekly basis and backlog and sprints and all that kind of agile level jumbo. As a matter fact it got under what were using right now called safe, we've got a whole new set of terms that I haven't even mastered yet. But, we are actually -- if you listen to my direct management more about web-based application, automation tools, sprints, backlog and that sort of thing, the web is secondary but the vast amount of data that we run into is web-based. The applications that the veterans are using that we can get dinged on by Congress on a day-to-day basis are web-based applications. My healthy that, the benefits, the education benefits that are out there, the mission act, all of those things that come up are all application based. And of course we've got the other piece, the legacy piece, and there is a lot of old applications based on mom's, the be safe, they're all scripted for our disabled individuals who still need to do their job and then oh, by the way, and the media say this last thing. The relationship with the 504 office. Having a strong 504 office alongside a strong 508 office is key. And right now I am working with the 504 office to make sure they do things right. And if I get my wish this week we will be able to work through the Department of Commerce, thank you the department of Congress and TIF, using the same set up that SSA is using to make alternative formats a reality for disabled veterans who want their statements and their benefits in braille, large print, audio, and also for the 28,000 targeted people with disabilities who need information in a clear format. That is what it comes to. SSA did the hard work on alternative formats and viable for 10 years ago. The Department of Commerce has a wonderful organization that is aces of putting the stuff together so, that is why these partnerships as we have seen today work. Because I don't have to go out and re-create the wheel. All I have to do is sit up here and say thank you SSA. Thank you commerce, further work you do. Thank you BHS for training all the nice people we stole from you. At the Department of veterans for. Thank you, everybody for your attendance and for working so hard and for having the passion moving forward. Thank you very much.

[ Applause ]

I enjoyed that., I will give you your award. You have the Section 508 Academy award for rules of engagement and I will bring you your dish also. Let's give Pat another round of applause.

[ Applause ]

So, I know that this is what we are going to do. Were going to take a break and you will take part because the extra time you can take a break and do this. What you will do is everybody is going to have a flipchart or you can use the whiteboard. There are only four in here are five. You will get together with the other people at your table and the sky is the limit. You are going to create the ultimate 50 18. You have to have four people. So all you need to know is the position and what they are doing. Get together with your group and build the ultimate 508 team. You don't have the give people if you don't want to. You can do not give the names are you but we need to know their position and what they will be doing on the team. OK? So take your break. Work on that and we will convene at 11:45.

[ The event is on a 30 minute break. The session will reconvene at 11:45 AM EST. Captioner on stand by. ]a 30 minute break. The session will reconvene at 11:45 AM EST. Captioner on stand by. ]

[ Captioners transitioning ]

Please standby for realtime captions.

Hello? Hello!? Do we have our teams together? Okay. I need one person from each team. You have 30 seconds to come up and present your team. And we are going to start in the back! Come on! Come all the way up! All the way. That's fine. Hello! Everyone! We need your rep from your team! Who else are we missing? Oh, yeah, that is good. I might have tapes. I have tapes. 's back okay! We are going to start right here. Your names and your agency until we get to know you. You have 30 seconds! [ Indiscernible ]

OPM, our members are fully crosstrained but everybody has a rule so that there is no confusion. John Wanita is the lead with other agencies report to leadership, the program manager and for agencies that don't even know where to start and for legal and for complaints. Paul and Paula does the training and the [ Indiscernible ] on electronic communications. Ringo does training and recommendations as well as reporting and this is, we hope over time, the lightest of the three and is therefore helping Paula a lot and Georgina a lot because Georgina is doing the procurement and the development which means helping people throughout the process from writing recommendations to testing and ongoing testing and whatnot so that our procurements are done properly and so that in-house development is done properly and I think I stayed under 30 seconds.

Note that all of those names seem to be related to the Beatles. My name is Bill and I am at the wrong meeting. [ laughter ] Sorry! All right, thanks, Tim. You are such an awesome guy! What we have is a program manager who also is the training and education officer. They have to know the program to begin with and so we thought that was the best place in hiring somebody who is also a trainer because that way, they can communicate the program and manage the program. We have an acquisition compliance officer because that is one of the problems that we have in our current construct, making the money work the right way and forcing the right statements in those PW's, those performance work statement. We have a development team or a development person who is separated from the trusted tester and the reason is, if you don't do that, you have a self licking lollipop. Okay? Which is the truth. If you don't have that wall of separation between the developer and the tester, if they are the same person, guess what? Off it goes and every error that you can think of is out there. And so we would like to have about 50 other people but they only gave us four. That is it. That is our team. [ Cheering & Applause ]

Okay, so our team we have on the wall, four squares. We have mitigated that it indicates color because of the season. Four areas. By the way [ Indiscernible ] developers and [ Indiscernible ] acquisition and you can see they all enterally and to relate to each other. There are content creators because they have to know what they are doing. Also, they have to have knowledge. Developers and testers, software testers and developers, [ Indiscernible ] development lifecycle considered from beginning to end. That is all consideration and finally you have the acquisition for [ Indiscernible ]

To my team, I want to thank Tammy and Sarah and said. We also went with the red and green colors. The hero positions of the program manager, testing and policy superstar, they all have to do metrics but the program manager has to wrap them all up, studying the direction and managing four other people we don't have a developer but we have a testing guru able to talk to the developers and coming up with how do you deal with these large dynamic websites. Our training list is also in outreach and communications, developing curriculum and development with stakeholders and the superstar is going to be writing the policies management making sure that the sensibility policies link up to the other institutional policies, processes and the most important thing is who is going to do this? We start out with Robert Downey Junior as Tony Stark. He got fired so we are going with Evans as Captain America! Our testing group, I wanted to pitch Mike Mayers but I was vetoed. We have Paul, he walked out. Paul's division, your artificial intelligence, we think Tom Hanks in this role as Mr. Rogers and the policy superstar's. The Wonder Woman. [ Cheering & Applause ]

Okay! We've got our team here. Whose demon is this? This team right here! This one right here! [ laughter ]

We are going with the starship approach. We have our captain and our 508 P.M. and our bridge officers. We have our procurement person a T who is also interfacing with our service desk and our reasonable accommodations team, our trainer. Requirements manager web and [ Indiscernible ] service desk and 80 persons interacting. For me, the most important part is our bottom layer. Our 508 SMEs. So for each subcategory, your procurement, your web, your climate manager, you have 508 people who are assigned to each of those categories but then you also will be pulling them together into a 508 pull and they can be sent out into the agency to focus on different areas regardless of where they are in the organization providing support, they can assist in different ways. And then you have your trainer, our trainer, they can help train with testing, they can help with procurement. The trainer is attached to his procurement members. His developers, his testers. That way he can support in those different ways. Any questions? I'm kind of nervous.

[ Cheering & Applause ]

We were discussing about this and the business we would like to have so we decided four different programs. The first one would be Section 508 and with that, responsibilities are planning to programs and managing the resources. Instead of three or five years, what needs to be done in that timeframe to update the processes. Also with the resource management, their responsibility will be looking for resources and finding ways to support the development and supply those. Moving on to the second one, training program manager and that one, to me, is really important. It is an important role because experience in expertise like digital documentation and things of that sort. I need to look for one person who really is a great deal of knowledge and training in that field to implement that in the planning of that. To create the content and develop the content, for example, documentation or PowerPoint XL for those acquisitions of to make sure they are compliant so that person needs to be aware of all of the 508 component. One example could be the BDS , the PDS can have different, four different versions but on 508, the website only provides tools that they don't have standardized version. Meaning that we need someone who is able to implement that, who knows it very well and who can implement all of the different versions to provide people with access. Everyone can use it. That is just one example. Three would be the web developer. And with the web developer, that person would be able to develop and access and make sure that we are in compliance with the web content that we have. That is pretty self-explanatory and the fourth one, I will turn it over to the governance policy.

So we thought we would hire someone who can draft policy and implement that policy into the IT government process to ensure that future procurement engineering and development and lifecycle management all include IT accessibility.

Thank you from my ladies in the back who helped to put this together. My name is Mia with the Air Force, I am the coordinator there. We had actually different ideas, this coming from our background and where we are and our very own agencies with like the program manager, the coordinator but if we only had to pick four people in a perfect world, we would have the program manager which could also be the coordinator which would do policy training and outreach. We have a section 504 program manager next which would assist us with coordinating those that have reasonable accommodations or those that have reasonable accommodations and also to help with mitigating and reducing litigation that may come. And then we have acquisitions, the acquisitions office. What kind of all no Section 508 really needs to kind of start with that process, within that office and then last, we have the trusted tester which would remediate the document and assess any kind of website and everything.

[ Cheering & Applause ]

Okay. My team is in evac. Angela and Jen and we work for the OJ. Twitter is a better tool than Outlook so we are going to walk through and tell you why. Of course, the Parker said he wants twitter to come through and someone questions, I don't think this is compliant so you might need an exception so we have staff with termination certification and the exceptional request program manager. That goes down to the program coordinator communicator who determines if you need an exception request, the program manager comes to me and I'm going to let him know the rules and regulations. I'm going to go ahead and do it anyway because I'm going to keep my job and they created a manual. This is why it works and this is why it doesn't work and I really don't approve or whatever so you come down to the acquisition and they are working with the CEO. Let them know, this is what you have need to do. Anything else, we will have to send you back to the program manager and they will send you back.

My name is Melody.

Thank you, Melody.

I appreciate that. Did recover our group? I knew there was one or two missing. He has been trying to get out of it.

Being limited to four and just sort of thinking of the general area, assuming that a lot of it is responding to questions and guidance. It seems like there is more need in the document Terry. So that sort of has the tone specialist and the P.M. would be like the coordinator, the vision budget and awareness overall. They would be cross trained. This person [ Indiscernible ] so specific knowledge could also be knowing about teen governments and the acquisition and knowledge as well as contract support [ Indiscernible ]

Thank you, John.

I am Jericho and we are the Department of the young and beautiful. [ laughter ] We pretty much [ laughter ] We pretty much had what a lot of you guys had. We had the program manager handling policy. Technical compliance. We have acquisition specialists handling contracts. And of course, we would like more contractors, more than just four people.

Mike gets a five second question. I do have to come back. After which we will take a vote on. I would not have you go through all of that and you guys don't get to vote so we will bring Angela and then after that, we will vote. And I have something else for everybody.

Thank you. So I really didn't know what Evette was doing . She was keeping it a secret and as I watched everyone appear, the exercises I went through as a coordinator was the kind of dream of what this would look like when I was an office of one. So there are a lot of folks out here that are offices of one. Maybe offices of two or three but not four or 117. You know who you are. And so I am wondering, a show of hands -- who is in an office of four or less who has written down kind of their idea programming and the types of folks? I think it is a worthwhile exercise, particularly, when we take in things early of metrics. You will go to someone and ask for money or ask for help and what will you do with that? So I think it is a worthwhile exercise to go through understanding lifecycle and how you would deploy a workforce and invest in that workforce to do the job so I just wanted to kind of have a show of hands of all of the ones trying to do everything. That's all I have.

Can you hear me? But Angela Watkins is a certified program manager. She served as program manager for benefits, guaranty Corporation. She has been serving since January 2018. She has been aware of accessibility censoring our agency wide since 2001. Her current role, she has had experience as a business representative service desk manager and a contracting representative. Sharing the product. She was responsible including Section 508. She serves an Section 508 interagency team comprised of representatives from the agency's communication, training, human resources, legal, EEO, IT and chairman departments. She and her team have been effective in [ Indiscernible ] accessibility is everyone's responsibility in her agency. Can we give Angela a round of applause?

Technical difficulties. I can't see. Where is the timer? Thank you. I can't see that, either.

You can hear me, okay, correct? Awesome. Okay! As Yvette mentioned, I have been the program manager since 2018. My predecessor retired in 2017. As a new person on the block, I wasn't sure people would actually come to a meeting that I was holding because I didn't know if they knew what my section was so I invited myself to their meeting. So if I ask for 15 minutes on your already standard agenda, you are already having a meeting, you just add me on there and I can hold you hostage for at least 15 minutes and make my case to educate you. And so one of the things, and major thing that you will see that I know about, you give people a glimpse of what it is like to walk in someone else's shoes, they are more apt to do what they need to do. So, and every meeting and people saw me in meeting after meeting based on the same thing every single time. So at some point in the meeting, I make sure I have everyone's undivided attention and I just say something in the manner of. What I said was I was moving my lips and I did not have sound. And I would say thank you or some such. My main thing about doing it that way is because, #1, I will not always have presentation. Or I don't want a presentation with volume control because I lose control but if I am talking to you and I move my lips, you get a taste for a moment of how someone who is deaf looking at captions is looking at something like, what is going on? I cannot control this and I don't know what is going on for a little bit, you have a little bit of empathy about what it is like to have something outside of your control. Also, there are times I tell people, and they don't have to raise their hands but I ask somebody, when is the last time you have been sick and you had to depend on someone to do something for you until you were well? Granted, it is temporary for you but you have to wait on their timetable, their schedule, their availability to do something for you to where you are back to where you can do something independently for yourself. So my main take away, making sure people have an exhibit these standpoint and my lessons, to be creative as possible so I am sharing. I put everything of five lessons learned and I have the formal version and the informal version so you want to maximize your resources and whatever you're going to have, through focus on communication, you want to focus on collaboration, we talked about measuring the impact and empathy leads to action is my major, major take away. So one of the things that I want to share as well when I was thinking about this presentation, still trying to make sure. I am encapsulating for myself so I end up writing something. Sometimes I write to help express myself but this is part of my main realization as I go to the rest of this presentation. Sympathy is a reaction. Empathy leads to action. Why should I care how you fare when you use IT that you can't see. As you look on in fear of yet another video about the play that you can't hear. Why should I care how you fare as your eyes glaze and your head bends in another email your brain cannot immediately comprehend. To quote a lot of big words from the dictionary, forgetting to speak the language of those of us who are special and ordinary. Why should I care how you bear that you cannot move a mouse like they say you might if there is no keyboard option available? What I need from you is to pay attention in the rules of accessibility. That is the best and most important thing you can do for me. It is not even about a sense of misplaced sympathy but about using time and effort. If you took a moment to walk even in once you, you would realize what is needed and not that hard to do so I am able to showcase my greatness and more productively and enjoy all of that just like you while doing it independently.

[ Cheering & Applause ]

Thank you! So that is the best way I can encapsulate everything I am trying to touch on right now so the five and foremost lessons learned are, get the help you need, need to help you get, I will learn to speak your language so it makes sense to you. #3, let me show you why you need to learn how to do this yourself. #4, sign here so I can prove that I spoke to you about this. [ laughter ] #5, of the three, only one needs to change and that is empathy. Okay. So one of the things I was talking about is to get the help you need a need to help you get. I am a small agency. And I am the prime program manager, I am the prime program manager and I have another teammate but we also have other people in HR, EEO, procurement, legal and the training Institute as interagency groups but it is still my responsibility. They are part-time or they are when they have time, that is their role and they provide guidance. We meet once a month but one of the things I did, I am leveraging all of the help that they, and experience that they have. I went to the website and there is a lot of information there and as a new person, oh my God! This is all my job now. [ laughter ] And so, I am going here, learning this, learning that, doing this, doing that and&, You are supposed to be reporting stuff every six months and I went to my supervisor and I said, I forgot about reporting. I wasn't that dramatic but I wasn't that far off. But she said, we are a small agency and we don't do that. Cool. Okay. Even though I knew don't need to report on it, we need to have some sort of measurement and then I saw the playbook and I was all into that and one of my major takeaways was consistency and two takeaways, use what you need for your environment. Everybody is different. Like I said, I don't have a development team. There is nothing but me and the other people but for a while, people just thought it was me. Like I have a team, Section 508 compliance team at Section 508.gov. But we have decided consistency. So once a month, we have training, hands-on training. Right now, we are just wrapping up 508 accessibility PDF. I am the one doing the training so it is one of the many hats we talked about, I provide training and one of the things on my culture there is that they don't want to do it anyway so why am I going to make it harder for them. I want baby steps, a sense of success. So we are breaking out the accessibility checker. It is over here on the review tab and hit accessibility and let me walk you through one hour of your time to make sure you are doing something right. And why you need to know what you need to do and the accessibility webinar, we have bimonthly wants and this has been a wealth of information. It has helped me realize that I don't have to panic, I can take one step at a time, baby steps for me just so that we can have a sense of success both for me and for them. So they have some type of resources they can feel are making a difference and I saw the bimonthly meetings would come here. I have learned so much and I usually have a question. So, this has been a great resource of reaching out and meeting people, learning stuff and just listening and one time, I was like, why can't we make all of the communications accessible? Well, that is not an official thing. I teach to make sure communications are accessible but I slide in there if you don't know where it is going to end up anyway, why don't you do the right thing from the get-go. Regardless of where it ends up, you don't have to worry about it some might say, do I have to do this to everything? You have to do it for any official communication going through or a large distribution group so that is the official answer but I recommend you start learning how to do it from the get go so you never have to worry about it when you send it off somewhere else. Someone else might share it and they are not checking and the GSA listers, I love email groups. I will recommend that you set up a role so you know exactly where it goes into the folder. I have seen too many other people. If you set up a rule, I still follow policy templates and all kinds of stuff so it is a really good resource but you get what you need and you use what you get so everybody doesn't eat everything. So that is in two. So I will speak your language. I have to learn that not everybody understood what I was saying about accessibility. We had a nice tech view. So that is how we tagged it. Where technology means usability and people leveraging. We have the audiobook and things like that. This is all about how we progress to use technology in to make things more usable so I will speak your language and someone says, why do I need to give people access to my files? He says it has to be accessible. So I had to make sure they understood what I meant to make sure my message was received better. [ Indiscernible ] there was like [ Indiscernible ] at the meeting and they were like, we want to be in compliance. I have family in Tennessee so the southern monologue comes out and everybody gets the call. It is already a law. And they were not aware. Because we want to be compliant. Thank you for sharing that and it helps me know people still don't have a clue that there is actually a law in place. Sometimes, they are not caring about the law. The law is so far removed from them. So the empathy factor plays more than the law. Like no one is coming up with the handcuffs. So I need to make sure I speak their language on their terms in a way that they can understand so that my #3 collaboration, let me show you how. The other part was, I can just send this to you and you will do it for me? And I'm like, no! Bless your heart. I'm one of those people, if you give a person a fish, they eat for a day. If you teach a person how to fish, they do good for a lifetime. So you're not sending it to me. I will help you collaborate. I will show you how to do all of this. You can show it to me. I will walk you through it because if I do it, you won't learn. You will be sitting there like, what did she do it again? I want you to have muscle memory. I will walk you through and I also have the threefold I will show you and then I will undo it so that you can do it. Hopefully, you are making notes the second time. The third time we go over something, I will give you notes on your behalf. The fourth time, we have a problem just emailing back and forth. You're wasting my time and you are not learning anything. But like I said, once a month and I have it on the third Wednesday of every month, some type of 508 hands-on training and baby steps. One each hour. When we did the accessible PDF, I tried for two hours and I made the first hour mandatory. The other part, I am just showing them what I know. And they didn't know. I'm going to show you how to use the wizard. I'm not showing you how to use the application but I'm showing you how to use the wizard. On the Microsoft, I'm not showing you how to use words and encouraging you to take class from the training Institute, how to better use the stylesheet, the features on the outlines in structuring your documents so it is easier to use and one of the things I am always doing lately, just use the outline feature so all of you who have been using it for tabbing and returning, instead of using a regular line, they use . I will read out loud to you what that sounds like. , , , Tab, tab, tab. That is how someone who is using technology, it is annoying to them, too. Use stylesheets as opposed to formatting a document you can go to class and learn. I am trying to make sure people understand, if you are irritated by me doing this to you in this one hour, think about someone trying to get their job done and the fact that you don't know how to maximize tools so they can get theirs done. It is always about the empathy so let me show you how so you can do what you need to do. Also, listen #4, I know we have a number of metrics and things like that so one of the things we are doing. She's reporting to HOB. We have stores during the audit for our website but there are times when we measure what is the outreach that we are having? So I have 15 minutes left? I want to know everyone who is here. Everyone of you have a brochure. So that is one of the ways we keep track with you we are talking 2 and 2 we are communicating with and where it is possible to keep track like last year, 267 different people impacting between training, presentation and all throughout the agency. We just recently signed our charter. And based on the report, about 157. He thought it was less. Sometimes, small agencies but I am getting people to come out and talk or listen or educate them and even after the hands-on, I have every second Tuesday that got rearranged this month, that is tomorrow but every second Tuesday for one hour, just come in and asked questions. The great debate. So I want to make sure it is fun for people. I want to make sure people understand what is going on and if you have questions, we are available. And it is primarily as a team member but there are other people that delegate so they can feel comfortable during the training. So even when I do the training, I am having classroom and Skype simultaneously and I realize everyone is not comfortable. I am managing people online and in the classroom. It will eventually be recorded so people can replay it later but we want to make sure it is accessible. I make sure people sign in. I keep the roster. And the people come in, I am tracking all of that. If I can get to the point where people log on to our Internet page, that would be something great, too but I want to make sure I have proof and I am making an effort to explain something to you. So listen #5, the three paths, the apathy, sympathy or empathy. The apathy, that is not my job. I don't have anything to do with this. Everybody does. The solicitations going out, are you not making sure that people who are disabled have an opportunity to participate and bid on our work? Come on back over here and have a seat. And we had a presentation called what is a [ Indiscernible ] to do? If you get a deliverable that is not compliance, you send it back and make them cry until they comply. If you don't get paid because you did not give me compliance, reject that invoice. Let the Seo know that you reject that invoice. This is kind of like everything else and when we collaborate, one of our structures, the Bible weight and security are all there before the product comes in and we are reinforcing. Market research is your biggest gateway. And I'm like, I have a B pack. Did you read it? What? Did you read it? B pack just killed how well they are accessible. So it is best to delete it, I said, so what do you plan on compensating when they ask for the meet the requirements. What? Okay, back to the whole education and let me explain a few things, just because you have a B pad doesn't mean you have a green pass. You need to read it and figure it out. We work with procurement to make sure we have a B pad or a waiver because that is signed by the CEO but we are not the ones signing off on it and we will collaborate with all of the stakeholders to make sure they understand what their responsibility is because accessibility is everyone's responsibility. If the contract was just a PDF document, which you want accessibility to make sure it is compliance? So we are making sure that everybody understands because apathy is the worst thing. Sympathy is all well and good.

Learn to use the tools that are available. And then I move you to empathy, you will get what you need to get done because it is the right thing to do. [ Technical difficulties ]

Money, I had no idea. And do you know what, I can do better and they do and more people come to class. More people come and ask questions. More sending emails. So it is a beautiful picture. And I have nothing else in the middle because there is a picture offset. So I will find someone and send it back. And they are like, hey, have you considered? Or you can come to class. You can actually have a better communication because someone cannot have it read to them so empathy has been the biggest mover of everything I have been doing and it has had the biggest impact. So the teams that are there, we have contract teams and they will make sure they do AV pack. So we are getting more people to take on the accessibility more and more. It is still growing but empathy has been the biggest mover versus the law or anything else. That is my major take away as program manager. Any questions?

Any questions?

Can you give me your phone number, please?

I can and I will email you a PDF version of my brochure, as well. Fact are you on Instagram?

I am everywhere. Yes, I am on linked in. I go by Angie Watkins. I have a brochure. I call it a take away because in the brochure, we have steps about how to use the Microsoft accessibility checker and we have do's and don'ts along with email addresses. I came straight from the airport today from a family event so I did not get a chance. Otherwise, I would've been doing my been a white, here is our brochure. Any other questions?

[ inaudible question ]

That was so awesome. And it works, I worked showing her the tool and it is safe to say, after going through the emails 405 or six times and she's like, but the contractor said -- well, the contractor is lying! So we sat down for two hours and at the end of that two hour session, she was crying but in a good way and she said she now understood and she was going to be the biggest advocate but here's the catch, the program is the national background investigation system. So for me, that is one person but that is a big program. And now I have an advocate.

That is awesome!

That is wonderful. Angela, after this presentation, please share your information.

Angie, do you provide training to us fellow coordinators? Just curious.

I have not provided training but I did talk about making sure having the sessions that I have open. I need to confirm that you can get in because everybody doesn't use Skype. But the third Wednesday coming up now. I am not opposed to it I love to train people. I am willing to share whatever I know and maybe we can all come together and share what we all know.

I have an idea for everyone. Can we put together a standard set? There are some where you can drop in your agency logo. No matter where you are, you can put in some good pics. We have a standard library that people can use for their respective positions. That way you are not spending time creating slides. And I have a new one. A standard 508 presentation. I am going, talking to people and explaining what 508 is. So we have a series and that is one of the first I can make sure I have a form that goes out to the entire agency. I did it first in May and again in April. On the Internet, it gets captioned and it is also recorded by our communications department and made available to the entire agency.

Just to piggyback on that, the board sponsors a webinar series every other month so mentioned in passing today, we divide up the year. I have January, March, May and July, September and November so we have webinars. We just had one in November. They are all archived and all of the slides are archived. The way to find it is to put home page, to resources and it says webinars. So follow the link at Section 508 and that webinar is going back six years and they are in reverse chronological order and if you want to see the basic 508 standards, first series in 2017 where we did chapter by chapter throughout the entire year. So if you're looking for slides, that is where they are. Thank you.

In November, I thought it was 24. But as I constantly persuade people, you educate people over and over again until they get it.

I would also like to add to Tim's comments in working with our communications update. Some information on creating accessible documents, based on information from the excessive electronic document community with practice videos or creating PowerPoint slides and XL so we're kind of revamping all four of those and hopefully, that will be in the next couple of weeks. Two of those videos are up now but they are small snippets and obviously, we would love to get you recorded up there, as well.

I do look at the videos in different resources that I have to customize my to make it simple. I want to make sure they have a sense of success immediately. So that is the mindset. If I can teach someone in an hour the difference you can make and it is easy.

Sarah has got a question.

Can you open and give it to us? Like your cute little idea of reading out loud or just not talking and moving your lips. Like that approach, a checklist or a PINTEREST board or something of your ideas would be amazing.

They always tell me it is the department of defense and they say, we don't need defense. So everyone here who has a pair of reading glasses, please hold them up. So they held them up and I say, you use accessibility. All of a sudden, it changes their dynamic. The rock them back on their heels and then we bring in you, the hurricane. And the approaches that you have to get them to here and in the empathy is the key because they don't care about budgets. All they hear is white noise. Because of the end of the day, they have to get the products out the door, but empathy, that is the way to win this game.

Any more questions?

All right. Thank you very much.

[ Cheering & Applause ]

Okay. We are almost at the end. Just some quick things. Does anyone have a favorite group? Who said that? So we are just going to do it like this. Group #1.

[ Applause ]

Group #1, raise your hand.

I have four.

Group #2. Ultimate four person team have the 504 program manager acquisitions. Group #1, John, providing training resources. Ringo pending assessment and Georgia procurement. That was group #1. Okay, this is group #3. This was the 508 policy government, developers, testers and acquisition procurement personnel which was Tim's group. All right, we've got to count.

Freehand.

I want to thank everyone. I really do. I wanted it to be different than our usual meetings because we go to events and meetings and we don't really get the chance to interact with each other, get to know each other a little better so I really want to say thank you and how much I appreciate each and every one of you coming. Next. Anybody at six months or less? Six months or less? I got something for you. I got something for you. And I need the oldest. Years in the position. Nine years? Pat, you are the oldest? That takes care of one, two, three, four. For everyone, you can accept these. With the exception of Mark. So I have something for you just to say thank you. And how much I appreciate you. And how much I appreciate all of you. So just give them to everybody. Everybody can have one. So thank you so much and we will see you next year. [ Event concluded ]