

*Webinars for AmeriCorps VISTAs*

# Helping SNAP Households Gain Self-Sufficiency Through Employment and Training

To join the audio portion, please dial:  
800-369-3146 Passcode: 2292358.

This session will begin shortly.



# Tips For Participating

## *Webinars for AmeriCorps VISTAs*

- Submit questions to the presenter at any time using the Q & A feature
- Share tips, resources, and ideas with other attendees using the Chat feature
- There will be closed captioning throughout the presentation
- The phone line will be open later in the presentation for Questions and Answers



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Welcome to  
Helping SNAP Households  
Gain Self-Sufficiency Through  
Employment and Training



# Today's Team

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Mark Wilson,  
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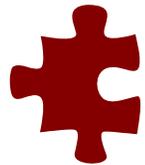
# Today's Agenda

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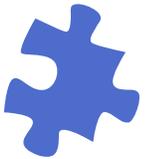
- Welcome
- An introduction to SNAP and SNAP Employment & Training
  - Focus on SNAP E&T in Washington State
- How to incorporate SNAP E&T into your work
  - Connecting your assignment
- Focus on Benefit Banks
- Q&A

# How do the pieces fit together?

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- **USDA** - The Federal agency that oversees the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and SNAP Employment and Training programs (SNAP E&T)



- **State agency administering SNAP** - SNAP and SNAP E&T funding is distributed to state agencies or Indian tribes for administering benefits to households



- **State workforce agency** - States also run agencies that administer unemployment benefits and help people become employed



- **Non-profit organizations** - Local organizations work in coordination with the USDA and state agencies to help connect households with nutrition and employment resources

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# Introduction to SNAP and SNAP Employment and Training

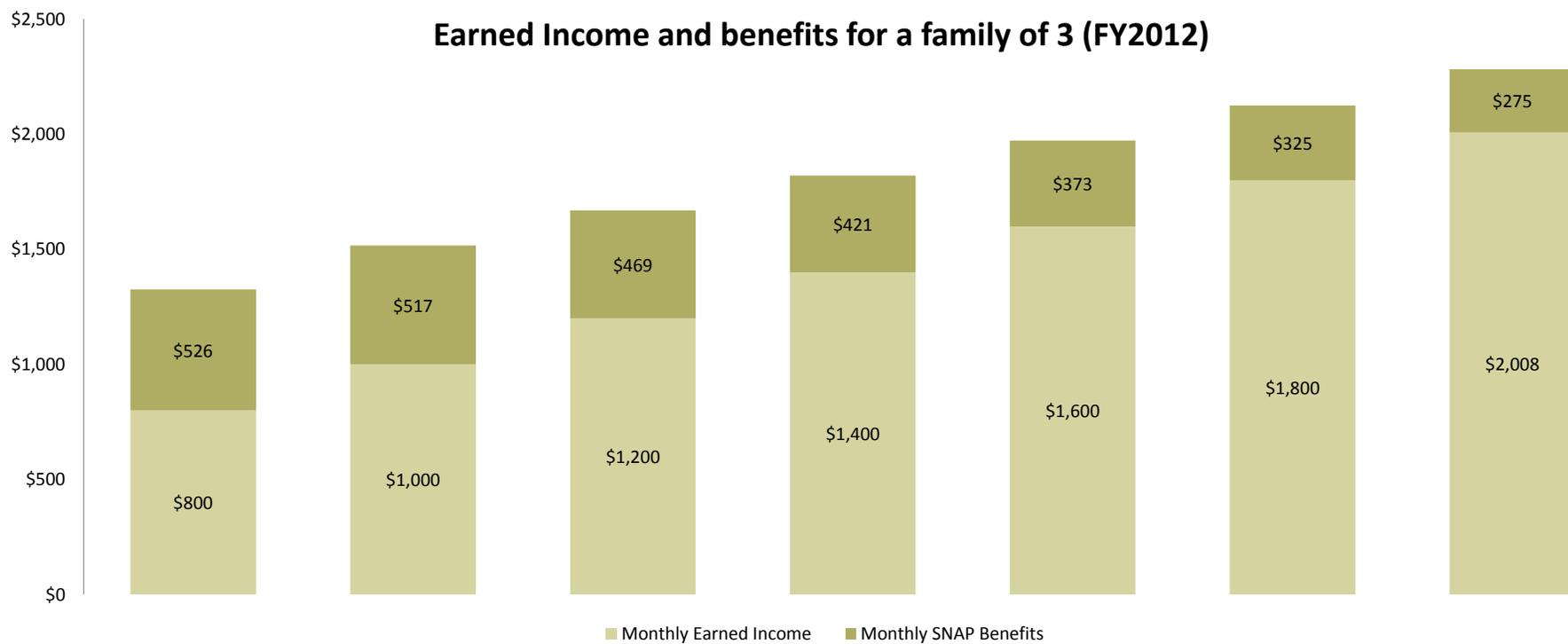
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## The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP):

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- Cornerstone of American hunger safety net
- 30% of all SNAP households have earned income
  - *The majority of adults who can work, are employed in the year before or after receiving SNAP*
- SNAP benefits help supplement family food budgets while household members look for work or seek out higher paying jobs
  - Deductions for work-related expenses: earned income and dependent care
  - Households can qualify for the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and the Child Tax Credit (CTC)

# SNAP Supports Work



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## SNAP Supports Work cont.

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- SNAP agencies offer employment and training (E&T) programs
- SNAP E&T programs compliment other workforce programs
- Unless specifically exempt under federal law, SNAP recipients must register for work with the State at the time of application and every 12-months thereafter

## Purpose of the E&T Program

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To assist members of SNAP households in gaining skills, training, work, or experience that will increase their ability to obtain regular employment.

Section 6(d)(4) of the Food and Nutrition Act

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# SNAP E&T Overview

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- USDA oversight
  - Allocate funds, approve State plans, review compliance
- State administered
  - Design programs, set standards and policy
- Locally provided
  - Case management, training and services

## Flexibilities of SNAP E&T

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### State SNAP agencies may:

- Design programs that best suits the needs of the target population and local economic conditions
- Determine location and type of services offered
- Exempt categories of SNAP recipients from mandatory E&T participation
- Partner with agencies to deliver services
- Leverage State and local dollars (50 percent reimbursement)

# The E&T Program

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## Components/activities:

- Job search
- Job search training
- Workfare or work experience
- Educational activities
- Self-employment training
- Workforce Investment Act (WIA) funded activities
- Job retention

# Participant Reimbursements

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State requirement may include:

- Transportation
- Books
- Course or test fees
- Dependent care

# Types of E&T Funding

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- E&T program grants
- ABAWD grants
  - Able-Bodied Adult Without Dependents
- 50 percent reimbursements

# Funding Structure

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**\$90 million** in Federal grants for operation of E&T programs

- Allocated by # of work registrants and ABAWDs
- State spending beyond E&T grant is reimbursed at 50%

**\$20 million** in ABAWD grants

**Two types of reimbursement**

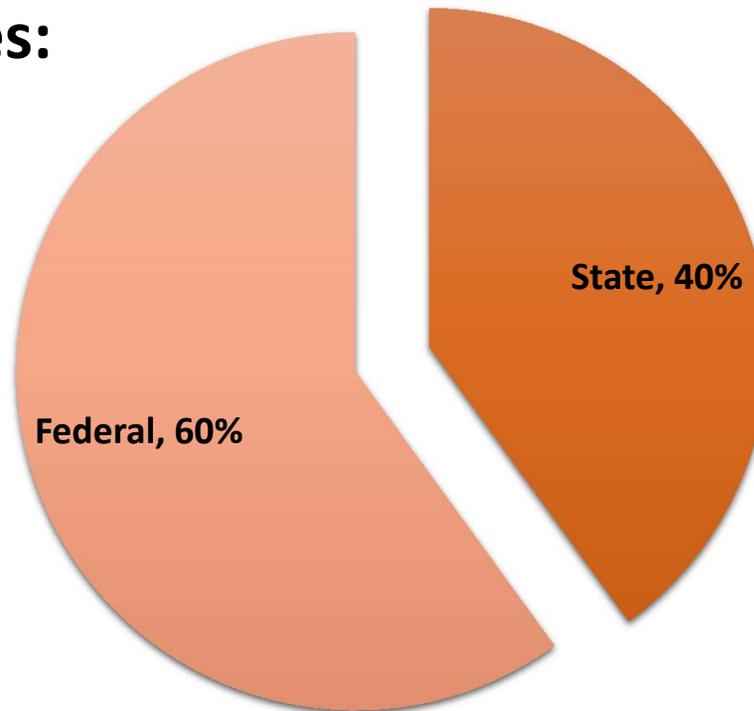
- 50 percent of additional administrative costs
- 50 percent of participant reimbursements

# National E&T Spending FY 2013

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**Federal expenditures:**  
\$287 million

**State expenditures:**  
\$189 million



## Partnership - VISTAs Role with SNAP E&T

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- Work with State Agencies to increase SNAP participants' ability to obtain and retain employment
- Promote the SNAP E&T program
- Connect low-income households with services

## Areas of Partnership

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- Community Engagement
- Volunteer Training & Outreach Development
- Fund Development
- Anti-Poverty & Self-Sufficiency Initiatives
- SNAP E&T

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What type of employment and training programs have you had contact with and/or worked with as a VISTA?

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## VISTAs and SNAP E&T

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- The connection between SNAP E&T and field placement's mission and work
- Understand SNAP work requirements and E&T options
- Explain SNAP E&T to current and potential recipients
- Develop capacity regarding SNAP E&T

# Washington State's SNAP E&T Program

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## Prior to 2005:

- Program focused on serving mandatory ABAWDs living in the Seattle area
- No SNAP E&T services in the other areas of the State
- Program services were limited to job search and workfare, provided by the Washington Employment Security Department (ESD)
- Total program budget: \$250,000 per year

# Washington's E&T Program Now

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- Seattle received funding from of the Annie E. Casey Foundation's Making Connections Initiative
- Catalyzed a partnership of governmental, educational and private organizations to help SNAP recipients find work as part of the project
  - Original core partners: Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS), one community college and 5 community based organizations (CBOs)
- Now:
  - Program operates statewide through a network of State and private partners, including all 34 State community colleges and 30+ CBOs
  - Program budget: Over \$30 million

# The Nuts and Bolts of Washington's Program

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## Program Outcomes

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- 56,800 participants since 2005
- Entered employment rate is 58% and median wage of \$10.66 per hour (slightly higher for vocational ed. - \$11.44 per hour)
- SNAP E&T has a significant impact on employment for this population

# Resources

The screenshot shows the USDA Food and Nutrition Service website. At the top, the USDA logo and "United States Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service" are visible. Navigation links include "About FNS", "Ask the Expert", "Contact Us", "Other Languages", and "En Español". A search bar is present with a "Search" button. Below the navigation, there are tabs for "Programs", "Data", "Newsroom", "Research", and "Forms". A "Home" link is also present. On the left, a sidebar menu lists "Employment" with sub-links: "State E&T Sites", "E&T Resource Center", "Resources for States", and "SNAP Homepage". The main content area is titled "Employment and Training (E&T) Resource Center" and features a "Print" button. Below the title is a photograph of a man presenting to a group of people in a classroom setting. Underneath the photo is a "FIND HELP" section with a map of the United States and text explaining the purpose of the E&T website: "FNS applauds the efforts of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) participants that take steps to improve skills that can lead to a career and financial independence. The FNS Employment and Training (E&T) web site is intended to provide participants with connections that can help them create and lead better lives. Individuals who receive nutrition assistance benefits qualify for many Federal and State employment and training programs that help them obtain and retain employment. Click on the map to find State E&T sites." At the bottom, there is a section titled "Employment and Training Opportunities" with logos for the Department of Labor, Job Corps, Department of Veteran Affairs, Ticket to Work, USAJobs, and Youth Conservation Corps.

[New E&T Resource Center:](http://www.fns.usda.gov/employment-and-training-et-resource-center)  
<http://www.fns.usda.gov/employment-and-training-et-resource-center>

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## Resources cont.

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### State tools available on the E&T Resource Center

- E&T State plan handbook:

- Allowable activities
- State plan format



**E&T Plan Handbook**

- E&T Toolkit for State Agencies:

- Information on partnerships
- Cost principles
- Allowable participant reimbursements
- FAQs



**E&T Toolkit**

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# How to incorporate SNAP E&T into your existing work

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## Where do we want to go from here?

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- Outcome: More households are financially self-sufficient and able to afford healthy food
- Intermediate outcome: Community organizations are better able to effectively serve households experiencing hunger

## Employment: What does success look like?

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- Increasing the number of households receiving job training and other skill development services
- Increasing the number of households receiving job placement services
- Ultimately: More economically disadvantaged individuals are placed in jobs

## Hunger: What does success look like?

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- Increasing the number of individuals receiving food support
- Increasing the number of individuals receiving support, services, education and/or referrals to alleviate long-term hunger
- Increasing the number of individuals that reported improved household food security

# Become Familiar with SNAP E&T

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- Research
  - Information on SNAP and SNAP E&T is generally available on state health and human services websites
    - E.g. Run an Internet search for your state and the words: SNAP employment training
- Plan
  - How will you incorporate the work?
- Take Action
  - Implement your plan

# SNAP E&T: Spread Awareness

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- To SNAP participants
  - Many states allow any SNAP participant to add training
  - SNAP households may need help meeting E&T requirements
- To the Community
- To Partner Organizations

# SNAP E&T: Working with Volunteers

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- To Raise Awareness
- To Conduct Trainings
- To Spread the Word

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## SNAP E&T: Identify Barriers to Access

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- To work on addressing those barriers
- To better assist clients in accessing services
- To identify why clients may not be receiving SNAP E&T Benefits

## Connecting the Dots

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- Employment organizations are better able to connect households to food resources that serve as work support, such as SNAP
- Hunger organizations are better able to connect households with employment and training assistance, such as SNAP E&T

# Connecting Your Assignment

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- Speak with your supervisor about what is possible
- You can also ask to see the Application for Assistance that guides your entire VISTA project to see how your work fits in
- Who are your existing partners? How do state agencies that administer SNAP and state workforce agencies fit in?

## If your year involves partnerships...

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### Consider:

- Creating partnerships between hunger agencies, workforce agencies and state agencies administering SNAP
- Convening local leaders to create anti-hunger plans that address SNAP and SNAP E&T
- Building partnerships with potential employers to help them recruit from your community

## If your year involves staff development...

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### Consider:

- Developing training for staff in order to better understand changing SNAP and SNAP E&T requirements
  - So that they can, in turn, better support the community
- Helping your organization understand changing SNAP requirements specific to your state

## If your year involves program development...

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### Consider:

- Developing employment programming that can enhance existing efforts
  - Workforce training
  - Basic work skill classes
  - One-stop programs such as Benefits Banks
- Working to renew the effectiveness of other employment assistance in your state or expanding it to new localities

## If your year involves community services...

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### Consider:

- Putting together a professional clothing closet
- Writing scripts and training volunteers to run mock interviews
- Providing matchmaking services between employers and job seekers

## If your year involves resource development...

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### Consider:

- Fundraising to hire career counselors and caseworkers
- Fundraising for employment support programming
- Learning about the relationships between non-profits, state agencies administering SNAP, state workforce agencies and your community to see where there is a possibility for resource sharing

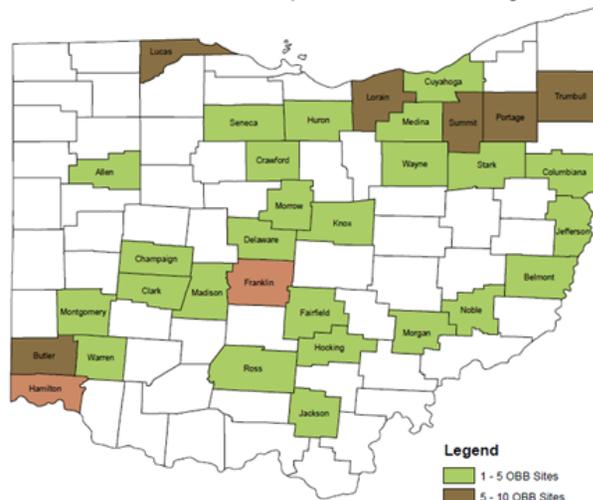
# Ohio Assoc. of Second Harvest Foodbanks: 5 yrs.

Number of OBB Sites By County as of July 2006  
Prior to Launch of the AmeriCorps VISTA Community Trainers



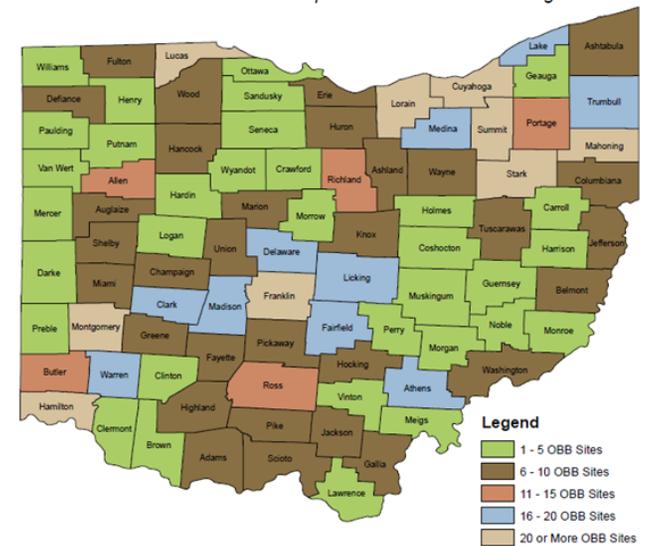
**Legend**  
■ 1 - 5 OBB Sites  
■ No OBB Sites

Number of OBB Sites By County as of July 2007  
After 1 Year of AmeriCorps VISTA Members Serving



**Legend**  
■ 1 - 5 OBB Sites  
■ 6 - 10 OBB Sites  
■ 11 or More OBB Sites  
■ No OBB Sites

Number of OBB Sites By County as of July 2011  
After 5 Years of AmeriCorps VISTA Members Serving



**Legend**  
■ 1 - 5 OBB Sites  
■ 6 - 10 OBB Sites  
■ 11 - 15 OBB Sites  
■ 16 - 20 OBB Sites  
■ 20 or More OBB Sites

This map represents the accomplishments of nine (9) AmeriCorps VISTA members who throughout the year established 254 Ohio Benefit Bank sites and trained 642 Ohio Benefit Bank counselors. Those counselors and sites served 2,335 households helping them access \$9,121,991 in potential benefits and tax credits.



Prepared by the Ohio Association of Second Harvest Foodbanks, August 15, 2011

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# The Ohio Association of Foodbanks

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Joshua Logsdon,  
The Ohio Association of Foodbanks  
VISTA Alum

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# How to Ask Questions

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To ask a question electronically, use the Q&A feature located in the bottom right corner



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# Evaluation

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Please take a few moments to share your feedback. How can we improve these sessions? What topics should we include in future webinars?

Thank you very much for your time and participation!

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# Thank You for Your Participation!

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If you have further questions or for more information,  
contact us: [VISTAwebinars@cns.gov](mailto:VISTAwebinars@cns.gov)

**VISTA App and Performance Measures**

Wednesday, September 24, 2014

2 – 3:30 PM ET

Visit the VISTA Webinars page on the VISTA Campus for a complete schedule of VISTA webinars.

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