Transcript of *Developing New York's New Workforce* Conference
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Welcoming Remarks

Nina Mogilnik, Senior Program Officer, Altman Foundation: Good morning! The power of the microphone! Okay, well, good morning again, my name is Nina Mogilnik, and I'm here to welcome you and add a few remarks beyond that. I'm very pleased to welcome you here on behalf on the Center for an Urban Future, the Business Council of New York State, and the Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy. I'm up here today because as senior program officer for the Altman Foundation, we've had the privilege of being a lead funder of this conference. I'm delighted to see so many of you here today and also to take special note of a number of Altman Foundation grantees. I'm not going to talk to you about policy or data; you're going to hear about that from folks who are far wiser on those issues than I am. I would like my brief remarks to focus on something different, with both a micro and a macro twist.

My interest in issues related to immigrants, literacy, and workforce development is both professional and personal. You can see from my bio that Altman has historically been committed to all of these areas and for many good and obvious reasons. However, as the daughter of an immigrant refugee, I have a very straightforward, though I hope not simplistic, view of why literacy and being literate in a required language, matter. My father, may he rest in peace, came here in the 1950s, speaking, reading, and writing in four different languages, none of which was English. Somewhere along the way, in his journey from dishwasher in Atlantic City, to employee in an eyeglass shop, to owner of his own antique business, he learned English. I cannot tell you when or where, but I can tell you that it was never an option for him not to learn English. It was essential to his being able to achieve success in the economy and to becoming a citizen. It seems to me that it is patently absurd to talk about the importance of education as a key underpinning of personal and economic success, and to talk, as people do regarding the 21st century economy, of the need for higher-order thinking skills, of the need for problem-solving skills, the ability to work in diverse teams, to be creative, etc., etc., and not talk about and act on, the need for people, literally, to have a common language in which to do those required tasks. How can we expect economic progress in the absence of the ability of many, many people, including far too many native-born English-speakers, to communicate well and with some sophistication, in the required language of the mainstream society? And how can we expect people to develop their spoken and written English skills, if there aren't enough classes to accommodate them?

On another personal note, my younger son, Noah, is autistic. What, you might be asking yourselves, does that have to do, with issues of immigration, ESOL, and a vibrant economy? I think a lot. Noah's communication and comprehension skills are severely impaired. It is as if he is a speaker of another language, stranded among English speakers, whose utterances he can only make episodic sense of. I have told his classmates to do a thought experiment. Imagine you were dropped into China, speaking no Chinese. How would you manage? How would you make sense of everything going on around you? How would you contribute to the society, and have that society value your contributions, and so on? It seems to me quite obvious that a society cannot succeed if everyone does not have a common grounding in one language. We need to be able to communicate with one another in order to solve problems collectively, share ideas, and even disagree with one another. It is not only our educational and economic systems that are at risk if we fail to deal with this issue. It is, I think, our democracy.

The answer to the problem being addressed today should not only be money. It is never the only answer. Wearing my program officer hat, I will tell you that just because a program claims to be able to deliver a good and worthy service does not mean it does so. In addition to allocating needed resources, we need to be a lot smarter about identifying who delivers services well, and how we know that. One final word, my seven-year-old daughter has told me that she often feels sorry for grown-ups, and when I've asked her why, she's told me it's because when they grow up, they lose their imaginations. I hope we will prove her wrong this day, and find creative ways to address a serious, persistent problem, one confronting both immigrants and native-born, though functionally illiterate English speakers. We've put men on the moon, and rebuilt Europe through the Marshall Plan. Surely, finding ways to satisfy the linguistic needs and aspirations of all seeking to enter the American mainstream is well within our reach. Thank you.

Andy Breslau, Executive Director, City Futures: Thank you, Nina. I also want to acknowledge Karen Rosa, who is the head of the Altman Foundation here with us today, as well as Deborah Povich, whose support from the Working Poor Families Project has supported Schuyler and the Center for an Urban Future in this endeavor and in others for a number of years. Without their help and support, we wouldn't all be here today, so I thank them both. I also want to thank our partners in this event. First let me tell you that my name is Andy Breslau, and I'm the executive director of City Futures, which is the proud parent, home to the Center for an Urban Future. In addition to our philanthropic partners in this endeavor, I want to thank Karen Schimke, and all the staff at Schuyler, and Kenneth Adams and the Business Council for their partnering with us today, who helped create what is a statewide event, on an issue of statewide importance. This really is the first of its kind event. We have a wonderful mix of panelists today, who can offer a fairly remarkable range of perspectives on this issue. They'll talk about how immigration trends are playing out on the ground throughout the state, why English is more important than ever, what obstacles immigrant learners face in trying to gain access to ESOL services, and the challenges that ESOL providers deal with every day, given the growing demand and limited supply. We'll examine what this means for business, whether that's a major corporation, a farmer, or a small entrepreneur.

But the panelists today are only part of the story. All of you here today will be essential to what we leave here with. You'll help make today a great success. As you'll see in the agenda, we've shifted gears a little bit, and over lunchtime, instead of having a keynote speaker, we're going to ask you to keep the conversation going. Over lunch we'll ask you to talk with folks at your tables, and come up with several ideas in response to what you've heard over the panel discussions. Together you'll come up with what you think are the most important things to take action on, after we leave here today. Going forward, these action items will serve as a set of marching orders to hopefully jump-start reform around these issues, around the state. We can't do that without you, and I really urge you to stay through lunchtime to participate in those discussions.

And you who are here couldn't be better qualified to have that conversation. Let me tell you a little bit about who's sitting around the tables. We have more than 150 registered attendees. We have people coming from five states, and coming from 31 counties in New York. Thirty-one out of the state's 62 counties, or fully half. Representatives from fourteen different colleges and universities, more than 15 people from different arms of the state legislature, a great mix of city

and state agencies are represented, particularly the State Department of Education, the State Department of Labor, but we also have representatives here from agencies like OTDA, ESDC, the New York City Department of Small Business Services, and the New York Farm Bureau, just to name a few. You all are the workforce providers, thinkers, doers within agencies who really change lives, and you often do so with very limited resources. There are people here from a tremendous number of critical not-for-profits, and community-based groups, three library systems, and six different BOCES, so I think together, today, we have an incredible brain trust and we hope to take advantage of that over lunch.

Lastly, I want to give you an anecdote about something that I think gives life to why this is so important in terms of spreading the word. This is actually one of my favorite pieces of correspondence that came into the office. After we originally released "Lost in Translation," the report on which this conference is based, we got a letter, and I'm paraphrasing to protect those who wrote it and their families, which basically said: thank you so much for that report; if I ever hear my Uncle Murray at Thanksgiving say, "why don't those people just learn English?," I will roll up my report and beat him around the head with it. Well, Thanksgiving having just passed, we hope Uncle Murray is having a swift recovery. Without further adieu I want to introduce to you Tara Colton, who is the author of "Lost in Translation," to not only go over some data, originally from that report, but to update you with some current facts and figures that we've uncovered to update that report. Tara?

Overview of "Lost in Translation" report and release of new data on supply and demand for ESOL in New York's 20 largest counties

Tara Colton, Associate Research Director, Center for an Urban Future: Thanks Andy. Good morning, everyone, it's great that this day is finally here, we've been planning it for a while, and I'm thrilled that you're all here to get some movement on what I think is a critically important issue. So, as Andy mentioned, last year, the Center for an Urban Future and the Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy released "Lost in Translation," and there are copies of that report in your packet and charts from the report around the room. What the report really showed is that we have a crisis on our hands when it comes to ESOL in New York State. Our research showed that about 5% of the need for services among adult learners in New York State for English-language instruction was being met, and the new data which I'm about to show you, sadly, shows that the numbers have gotten even worse. The panelists today will focus on what's going on, on the ground, and talk about potential solutions. But first, I'm going to just give you some numbers, some statistics that paint a portrait of a rapidly changing New York State, from Schenectady to Suffolk County, Binghamton to the Bronx.

So, just quickly, looking at the numbers about immigration trends in New York State, about four million of our residents are foreign-born – more than one in four adult New Yorkers. And the foreign-born population continues to skyrocket. In some cases around the state, it's accounting for the only net population growth. The native-born population in a lot of areas has actually been declining, and the only reason these areas are seeing net gains is because of immigrants. It's not just a New York City trend, and I really want to make that point clear. A lot of people think this is just an issue in New York City, and the data really bears out that it's an issue in all corners of

the state. You can see that immigration numbers grew by 34% in Suffolk County, just between 2000 and 2005. Fifty percent in Orange County, 16% here in Albany County, so these numbers are really just continuing to grow and they're pretty tremendous. This is again, some of the data from "Lost in Translation," and, like I said, there's copies of that in your packets, and the charts are around the room. Looking at it you see, with one exception, double-digit growth among the foreign-born population between 1990 and 2000. In several cases, over 50% growth. But you see that the total population really wasn't keeping pace with that, and in some cases, the native-born population was actually declining. And again, it's not just New York City; you're seeing these numbers in Dutchess County, Monroe County, Rockland County. Again, looking just from 2000 to 2005, the numbers continue to show the same trends. Orange County is one of the most tremendous ones; they saw 50% growth in foreign-born residents in that time period. And even some of the areas that have seen smaller growths, like Monroe County, which saw about 9%, they actually saw a decline in their overall population. So that really shows just how important immigrants are.

Now this is the new data that we're releasing today and there's copies of all these statistics in your packets. But what we found is that this year, for the most recent data available, there were about 1.75 million working-age adults in New York State who have limited English proficiency. Almost 250,000 of them spoke no English at all. What that shows, compared to last year, is that that's an increase of almost 8%, about 123,000 more people in a year, and you see the increases again, really significant here in Albany County, also in Erie, on Long Island, and again, in New York City. But, as we're here to talk about today, the supply of English-language instruction just hasn't even remotely kept pace with the demand. So, the new number is that there were 1.75 million adults in need, but there were only about 87,000 adults enrolled in state-funded, state-administered ESOL programs last year. So that means about 5% of the need was being met. If you think about what that means in terms of people, for every seat that was filled, there were 20 people who could have potentially taken it. That's not to say that every one of them would have jumped at the chance to have sit in that seat, it's unlikely that there would ever be 100%, but even if there were five of those bodies, 10 of those bodies, it just shows the gap.

Again, these are the new numbers that we're releasing today about the difference between the enrollment in state-funded ESOL and the demand for it, and you see that the percent served here, on the right, the highest percentage is actually in Onondaga County, where Syracuse is, at about 14%. But statewide, we're at 5%, and in some cases, we're even lower: Niagara County, at about 3%, New York City, 3.4%, here in Albany, about 4%. As many of you know, we're really not doing so great. And unfortunately, although we've actually added seats since we released "Lost in Translation," in terms of the data that's available, a smaller percentage of the people who need the services are receiving them now, because there's been such a spike in the number of people in demand for these services. So, when we released "Lost in Translation," we said that about 5.3% of the need was being met, and that's actually gone down. Just quickly, looking to hammer the point home that it's not just a New York City issue, a lot of these areas that are really changing rapidly have actually seen their ESOL numbers decline, so Orange County, which I mentioned grew by 50% in foreign-born residents, lost 40% of their ESOL seats in the last year. Erie County lost 10% of their seats. Suffolk County, Long Island, which has seen incredible spikes in immigration, lost more than a thousand seats.

To sum up, what we're seeing is that we're really starting off the 21st century with a workforce around the state that's just not equipped for today's knowledge economy. Unfortunately, as these numbers show, unless we take action, the trends are just going to continue. What we're going to be talking about today is the reality that if our workers don't have the skills that are demanded of them, that will have really dire economic consequences for working New Yorkers trying to enter the middle class, for the businesses that employ them and for our state's economy as a whole. English-language instruction has been show to have an incredible return on investment; some studies say that it's as high as 11 to 1, for every dollar put into it. Very few investments can do more to increase a worker's earning potential, their career advancement opportunities, so it's really a smart way to invest in our workforce and invest in our state. We do really have an opportunity here, and that's why I'm so thrilled that you're all here, but we have to act quickly, because not doing so is just a risk that we can't afford to take. So, now that I've given you a lot to chew on, we're going to jump right into the first panel. I'm thrilled to introduce Kenneth Adams, President/CEO of the Business Council of New York State, Inc. and the moderator of our first panel.

Panel One: The Big Picture

Kenneth Adams, President/CEO, The Business Council of New York State, Inc.: Thanks, Tara. You know, this is a good way for me to get to know the panelists. Would the panelists come sit at the panel? And we'll introduce ourselves as we get set up. As our panelists come to the panel, a couple things. First, just a word on the Business Council, because this affiliation between the Business Council and the Schuyler Center and the Center for an Urban Future, is significant, and, we think, important. The Business Council is the state's leading business association. We have about 3,000 member companies in every county of the state. Most of our members are small business owners, but we also include in our membership some of the great legacy companies of the state's economy: IBM, Corning, downstate financial services, you name it. And when we survey our Business Council members about the issues they care about that we here in Albany work on, time and again, workforce development themes emerge. We have spent a lot of time, and I've got a couple of colleagues from the office, Marg Mayo and Tom Minnick who are working on our workforce development initiatives. But one of the things I want to say is that I start out today just as a moderator, but with an assumption that this is an issue that we need to frame as a really important economic development issue, to drive it home as an economic development imperative, and to do that, we've got to engage the private sector, we've got to engage employers and the Business Council is certainly poised to do that and wants to help.

I really think this is important, and I sort of approach this morning with another assumption, alluded to in Tara's slides and comments, which is that if we want to get traction, if we want to get progress on this issue, we also have to frame it as a statewide issue. And the data in the original CUF report started to do that. I think we really need to focus on that today as well, which is to say again that it's not simply a New York City issue, it's not a Suffolk County or downstate issue or even an Orange County issue. It really is a statewide issue, and the degree to which we get people, including employers, including our Business Council members, from all across the state, in particular upstate, to rally around this and make it a statewide issue, we will have a stronger political hand, if you will.

And the final thought, and this is, I think, more of an assumption, again, I bring to this with respect to the conversations that will happen over lunch and into the afternoon panel, is that we have to be realistic about the fiscal challenges about the state's looming budget deficit, and about how we're going to pay for this. I don't imagine our friends at the Altman Foundation want to pick up the entire state burden of this challenge. But they've gotten something started here, and I think we have to be realistic about resources to move forward. And again, with that in mind, I would remind people, again, we can look at this later, that we already have $1.2 billion dollars in the New York State workforce development system, we can't always find where the money is, it's obviously parsed out to a variety of different agencies, but there is an infrastructure, I would suggest, there are intermediaries, like chambers of commerce, some of which like my alma mater, the Brooklyn Chamber, are represented here today. They're partners as an infrastructure, they're intermediaries, and again, there's $1.2 billion dollars out there. Denis Hughes of the AFL-CIO and I co-chaired Governor Spitzer's transition committee on labor and workforce development issues, and we looked at this, and at the time didn't have enough to go on with respect to this challenge of ESOL resources, but I think there still is an opportunity working with this administration to kind of right-size some of that spending and drive home this priority. Anyway, those are just three, I guess assumptions that I approach this discussion with today. Our pledge at the Business Council is to be a sincere and helpful partner in this effort, and we really hope, again, we can help frame this as a statewide, economic development imperative.

Having said all that, I'll take my chair next to my colleagues, let me tell you who's on the panel. You've probably figured this out already, if you've either read their nametags; it's a little hard to see from the back, or taken a gander at the program. I'm going to start with the woman who's closest to me, because I know her the best, that's a good way to go. Joyce Minard, president of the New Paltz Regional Chamber of Commerce, and she's a WIB member from Ulster County. I know from a recent visit to Joyce's chamber, remember I talked about the important roles of chambers and other intermediaries play in this sort of thing? And Joyce has done a lot of this; she's a lifelong resident of New Paltz in the Hudson Valley, and prior to her work at the chamber, she worked for the Ulster BOCES, where her duties included developing curriculum for labor unions, and working a lot with the Ulster County Farm Bureau. Ulster County of course home to Hudson Valley's finest wines, right Joyce?

Next to Joyce is Kevin Smith, Executive Director of Literacy New York. Kevin is based in Buffalo, which gets back to this idea of making sure we drive home the statewide nature of this challenge. Kevin heads up a network which was formerly known as Literary Volunteers of America, New York State, of 41 literacy programs throughout New York State, and about 60% of their students are in ESOL classes, although Kevin says he could easily have 100% of students in ESOL, the demand is staggering in his area as well.

Now it's getting a little harder for me to see, but I suspect next to Kevin is Chung-Wha Hong, who is Executive Director of the New York Immigration Coalition, and she is – you know, I think this makes you our New York City person, Chung-Wha, in terms of who's on the panel geographically. She is originally from South Korea, a longtime advocate for immigrants' rights, outspoken, you may recall, in the last few weeks, on the licensing issue, that's sort of set this

town aflame, and she will have a lot to add from her perspective with the New York Immigration Coalition and, in particular, views from New York City.

We have next, is this Martha or Bea? I'm sorry, it's either Martha or Bea, I can't see your nametags. Bea is, in your program, technically named Bethaida Gonzalez, but we call her Bea. Bea Gonzalez is the dean of the University College at Syracuse University. And Bea has been with SU, with Syracuse University, in their continuing education college since 2002. The college focuses on part-time students, and includes an English Language Institute, geared toward international students. Among other things, Bea oversees the college's business and workforce development efforts, and she was elected in 2001 and became the first Latina elected president of the Syracuse Common Council. She's got a lot of affiliations, and I think she will know better than most the data on the Onondaga County slide that we just saw. Thank you, Bea.

And finally, on the far right is Martha Lopez-Hanratty, who's the director of the Westchester County Office for Hispanic Affairs. Nice to meet you, good morning all. I'll get to the other the end of the table and say hi later. Martha is originally from Mexico, and she is the director of the Westchester County Office for Hispanic Affairs, where she is the chief advisor to the Westchester County Executive on Hispanic Affairs.

What we're going to do now is, some of you have been to these before, I know I have – a Center for an Urban Future tradition is that we don't ask our panelists to stand up and give big long speeches, they wouldn't want to do that anyway. No, we're going to launch right in with a series of questions, and kind of get the debate going. We'll do that for say about 45 minutes or so, and then, we really want to get all of you in the audience, well, if not all of you, many of you, to participate as well. But we'll get it started with some questions that we can address to the panel, and I think there's no reason not to go straight to Joyce. She didn't know this was going to happen. But the first question – the first question's usually a softball in this things, and this is one that, indeed, we need all the panelists to talk about, with respect to their own communities. And sort of to get the ball rolling, as it were. Thinking about, in your case, Joyce, Ulster County, how has immigration affected the workforce – again, I think with your chamber role, you're particularly well-suited to address this – the workforce in Ulster County, that is in your community? And then related to that, how would you describe the demand, presumably the growing demand in your area, for ESOL programs?

Joyce Minard, President, New Paltz Regional Chamber of Commerce: Well, in our area, it's a farming community, basically, and what I see is a tremendous demand. We have Jamaicans, Bangladeshis, Hispanics, South Americans, we have a slew of wonderful people and unfortunately they cannot communicate. And one of the problems we have is that they cannot get their jobs done. They come in family groups and they have a lead translator. And they migrate from farm or business, together. And without that lead person, they're lost. And unfortunately, it's gotten to a point where the employer and the employee can not only not communicate, but there's a huge frustration. One of the problems that I see is that the employer does not consider them a long-term employee. They do not form a relationship with these people, they do not befriend them, not that they have to befriend them, to be their bosom buddies, but befriend them to get trust from these people, so they have a motivation to learn English. The employee is so afraid of losing their job, they stay within their little group, and they work very, very hard;

sometimes, some of these people work two and three jobs. So there's very little time to learn ESOL. I'm from the old school; it's ESL, so pardon my blunder here.

But, let's go back, a little history. I'm from a farming family, my farms have been in generations of farming in Ulster County and trying to explain to my husband at the time, that it was very important to teach these people English, the Jamaicans, the Bangladeshis, and the Hispanic people, so they could learn their job better, was very foreign to him. He couldn't understand why there was such a need. He said: it's the bottom line. I need the apples picked, I need them picked in a timely fashion, and they cannot bruise the apples and we don't have time to teach English. All they have to do is pick the apples. Well, through much discussion, I brought in people from the outside, people from outside the farming community, as my ex would call it. I brought in BOCES, I brought in my teacher friends, and just before they go to work at dawn, I would bring an ESL teacher in, to teach them a little bit of English. And it was related to the farming community, so that they would be able to communicate with the boss. I was boss lady, he was boss. And then little by little, I befriended the immigrants, so that they got to trust me. So little by little, secretively, we learned English, and they stayed with the farm. Some of our employees have been with the farm for over forty years. But the lack of befriending the employee is a big mistake employers have in Ulster County, throughout. These people are humans, these people have families. And I can't stress enough how employers need to form a relationship with their employees. They would see their bottom line grow so quickly, and these people would go up the career ladder in that business, and it would help them tremendously.

Kenneth Adams: Joyce, let's go to Westchester for a second. That's a great example of an agriculture issue, Martha, you don't have a lot of agriculture left in Westchester County. What's the situation like for you in Westchester?

Martha Lopez-Hanratty, Director, Westchester County Office for Hispanic Affairs: Well, first of all I want to say, I hear so many times that immigrants do not want to learn English. And that it is really great to see this report, because it opens eyes to other people that are saying: wait a minute, these people are coming here and they are not learning English. In fact, we all know as immigrants, that in order for us to compete, we need to learn the language. Westchester County's immigrant population certainly has increased and I see several of my colleagues from Westchester here, and they will agree that ESOL programs are extremely important. We have not only the Latino community, who is growing, but I just want to share something with you, that in Westchester County, we have people from the Caribbean, Asia, Latin America, Europe, Africa, the Middle East, and Australia. So us immigrants, they are definitely hoping to integrate into the community. But it is really very challenging, when you come into a community and you do not find the programs that are available. Luckily, Westchester County has really done a terrific job, and yes, the need exists, and we will hope to continue doing that with the Gateway Center, which the county executive has committed $14 million dollars to build.

Kenneth Adams: That's great. Kevin, what's happening in Buffalo?

Kevin Smith, Executive Director, Literacy New York: It's interesting, actually, Ken. The Federal Reserve Bank just put out a study that in Buffalo, New York, America's second-poorest city, 46% of the immigrant population have advanced degrees, in the Buffalo-Western New York

Area. This cup is more than half full. This is an issue of providing the opportunity to learn the language to fully integrate socially, economically, and personally into the communities. The immigrant populations are coming to a place like Buffalo, New York with advanced degrees in their native language. They are contributing fully to the community and to the economy. It is a matter of assisting them to learn the language. Fewer than 20% of the immigrant population in Buffalo lack a high school diploma, which when you reflect against our native population, the immigrant population is more highly educated than our native population in Buffalo and Western New York. They are a part of the future of economic development in Western New York and in Buffalo, New York. They should be encouraged, supported, and given the full opportunity to gain English language skills in order to fulfill that dream and that promise, mostly for Buffalo, New York, that needs them desperately. Thank you.

Kenneth Adams: Thank you. Chung-Wha?

Chung-Wha Hong, Executive Director, New York Immigration Coalition: Good morning, everybody. I want to just thank you so much for holding this forum. I want to recognize a couple of people who work very closely with me, in New York City, and we are a statewide organization, but you can kill several birds with me, that's okay. Elyse Rudolph, from the Literacy Assistance Center, and Joanne Heyman from the International Center are here together, I feel like I'm kind of representing them at the same time. We're privileged to be a part of this growing network of very committed activists around leveraging both more resources and setting a new policy direction for one of the most critical issues that I think we have a huge opportunity for. So my organization is made up of 200 organizations throughout the state, working on a number of different immigrant issues, including ESL and literacy, but not limited to. Who would have thunk that driver's licenses would be a major issue that we work on? It got me there.

But ESL, I think ESL is just one of those issues that the time is so ripe for us to just kind of like, say what the problem is, and what the solution is. And with immigrants in general, the starting place has to be that this country, the basic economic demand and supply dynamics require that we have immigrant workers to come and fill the jobs that our economy needs to grow. So if we want to grow the economy, if we want to strengthen the economy, we need immigrant workers in addition to those who are already here. We need to invest, at the same time, the native-born workers and the immigrant workers, and so the question is: do we minimize the returns that we get from immigrant workers? Or do we maximize, and what are the policies that maximize immigrant workers' contributions back to the economy. And we were also part of a report that was released yesterday that issued some pretty staggering numbers. The Fiscal Policy Institute, I don't know if David Kallick is here, he'll be here later, calculated that immigrant workers are responsible for a total, about a quarter of New York State's entire gross economic output. Does anybody know how much money that is? Take a guess, anybody? $229 billion dollars are generated from immigrant workers working and generating that kind of economic output, right? And that's almost a quarter of the entire state's output.

So that's the framework in which we're putting this issue in; it's not about, oh, poor immigrants, help us, we need to speak English, we want to speak English. It's not that. The state really needs, it's stupid not to capitalize on the kinds of economic contributions that immigrants can make. But unfortunately, between the workforce development system, which is this huge, giant monster

nonfunctional in many aspects, and the whole literacy, adult literacy universe, immigrants are just falling through the cracks. They can't take advantage of the overall workforce development system, which isn't really tied into the whole statewide integrated economic development plan anyway, to start with, s no wonder immigrants are falling through the cracks, either because of their status, or just lack of convenience or lack of programs, all of that. And they're not really completely captured in the whole adult literacy world, either, despite such committed and long-term work that people are doing in that area, because some of the funding rules don't apply to immigrants and just complicated service delivery systems and all of that. So I think we have to kind of revamp the whole way that we're delivering services, ESL services, and you know, along with our partners, we're looking at long-term planning, to come up with the kind of advocacy and programming plan and strategy, and together with that, as Ken alluded, we need to come up with the funding and political strategy to get that through.

Kenneth Adams: Thanks, Chung-Wha. Bea?

Bethaida Gonzalez, Dean, University College of Syracuse University: I'm going to be quoting from a report that was done on the Onondaga County immigrant workforce by Cornell University this past June. And in Onondaga County, we have both an urban crisis in terms of our immigrant population as well as a rural crisis, because we have farm country 10 minutes outside the boundaries of our city, and most of the apples and most of the milk that we eat and drink in our region – the work that brought those apples to market, was by immigrant hands. Onondaga County had 13%, we reached 13% of our immigrant population but what's happening to the others? And I think we're starting to get it in Onondaga County, and we're working in coalitions to address our problems. The Cornell study was one of the pieces that helped us see that, the IDA in Onondaga County was the lead in pushing this project, and we have this thing in our region called "Journey to Jobs," and that's just what it is. Journey to Jobs is about connecting workforce to jobs, people to jobs. And in the process of that, we discovered our gap with our immigrant populations.

The other thing I want to point out is that when we talk about immigrants, in Syracuse it's immigrants coming from Asia, Africa, from the former Soviet Bloc, and then we have a Puerto Rican community. And we have to remember that even though Puerto Ricans are citizens of the United States, their experience when they come to the United States and when they come to places like Syracuse, New York, is an immigrant experience. And that's my background so I just want to say that before one of us forgets to say it.

I'm looking for solutions that are regional, you have concentrations of immigrants in your communities where your numbers are strong; 20%, 30%, 40%. In our communities, they're about 5%, they're 2%, they're 1%. So for your policy solutions to get to us, we need regional policies, so we can bring all of those small percentages together to get to a critical mass. And then it's the partnerships, it is the higher education institutions, it is your chambers, it is your manufacturers associations, all of these people need to come together to work on this. P-16 Councils, how many of you are talking about P-16 Councils in your communities? Or Pre-K-20 Councils, it depends on how you want to look at it. We need to figure out ways to tie our educational, our public education system to everything else around it. You know, if we want our children to be successful, we want to align the curriculums from one level to the other. That's

great. But we need adult ESL to partner with that, because if we educate the parents, we're improving student performance as well. So for me, it's looking at this in a very comprehensive way, and bringing all of the pieces together, in a way that makes sense regionally.

Kenneth Adams: Bea, let's sort of take that and make this into our second question for all the panelists. You spoke about things in Onondaga County, that were getting some traction, that were starting to work. Can we think about, across the state, what's working, what's a good example, what's a model in your community, in your county, in your region, that's actually doing a good job? It may not have enough money, or it may not serve enough people, but what's a best practice, if you will, in your particular part of the state?

Bethaida Gonzalez: For me, I'll highlight, first off, the West Side Learning Center. The West Side Learning Center exists in the near west side of Syracuse, it's one of the poorest tracts in the country, by Census designation. It's one of the most diverse neighborhoods in the city of Syracuse. That is a comprehensive center. They teach workforce literacy there, they have child care and day care, they'll take the student where they are and move them along. One of the complaints in our community with some of our programs is that, the women feel or the people feel that they're only being taught a limited skill. People want lifelong learning skills. They want to have enough knowledge to take that and translate that into a lifelong learning opportunity. I think the West Side Learning Center in Syracuse is a good example of that. It is at capacity, and it could accommodate a couple hundred more students.

Kenneth Adams: Kevin, what's a good program in Buffalo? Yours, of course!

Kevin Smith: Well, Ken, actually, Literacy Volunteers has been doing a good job for many, many years in New York State. Over 45 years, founded in Syracuse, New York, in 1962. However, what I'd like to highlight in response to this question are the upstate urban literacy coalitions that are coming together in Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse, and Schenectady. These are often mayoral, in their genesis or in their endorsement. They are bringing together community entities, agencies, and are crossing over, as I think this forum is doing today, for the first time, at least in my 25 years, longer actually in working migrant education right out of college. We have never framed this issue as a workforce economic development issue. It's always been literacy and language skills, adult education over here, the backwater of P-16, and economic development/workforce development over there. It is extremely encouraging to me to be framing this as a workforce development concern and issue. And if that means from doing it from an ESOL/immigrant point of view, then so be it. But we should not forget that there are many, many, many tens of thousands of native-born Americans, who do not have a high school diploma, who read below the eight-grade reading level, and for every seat in the adult education system, that is taken by an ESOL learner, rightfully, a basic literacy native-born adult does not occupy. I want this audience to understand that the adult education system is designed to serve both populations. It is barely serving the needs of either.

So, from our vantage point, the Literacy Volunteers programs, and as was stated earlier, 100% of our programming could easily go to ESOL, tomorrow, if we allowed it. We have said, as a policy and as a practice, we will not permit that to happen. Or level 1, level 2, those adults reading below the fifth-grade reading level, with the probability of a learning disability, who have gone

to eight, nine, ten years of public education, and are still reading below the fifth-grade reading level, also need our assistance and support in our communities, through the system of adult education. In total, the nation puts $535 million dollars for WIA – Workforce Investment Act – Title II adult education. That is less than the Buffalo public schools' operating budget. The nation, $535 million. New York State has about $140 million, which is about 10% of what I heard the number was for workforce development for the adult education system. That includes secondary, community-based, library programs, volunteer programs, statewide. It is a very, very small system that is doing its utmost to serve as many adults both native-born and foreign-born, in basic literacy and conversational English, as it possibly can. Unless and until this is framed as an economic development problem and issue, I don't think adult education and literacy will be brought into the larger system and larger solution.

Kenneth Adams: Thanks Kevin. Joyce, what's a best practice, if you will, a program working in your area, in Ulster County?

Joyce Minard: Ulster BOCES. Like Kevin says, they take the student no matter if the person's an immigrant, or an American, they take them in, they screen then, and they bring them through the entire level of education with child care, long-term social skills, everything, it's a one-stop shop. And you can stay with Ulster BOCES as long as it takes you to get a GED, or a job, or whatever your need is. We will take care of it.

Kenneth Adams: Do you know, Joyce, what's the percentage of students that are taking ESOL in the Ulster BOCES program?

Joyce Minard: I have not a clue. Liz [Hayter] would know that.

Kenneth Adams: Well, your county has a big demand, and wondering to what degree the BOCES satisfies that demand?

Joyce Minard: I don't know, but I do know that Ulster literacy, demand is so great, we don't have enough volunteers.

Kenneth Adams. Chung-Wha?

Chung-Wha Hong: I have more of an aspirational answer to that, but I do want to point out a great program; I don't know if the Workplace Project is here? It meets a number of different criteria that everybody talked about: number one, it's regional, because Connecticut, Westchester area, number two, it connects workers to the jobs that are being created, so, trying to close that skills gap between the workers and the skills that are needed to fill those jobs, and three is that wonderful collaboration among business, labor community, and the community college network. And so that's where I want to talk a little bit about – I think we have so many great examples throughout the state of serving people, I think what we need to create is a statewide infrastructure, and an advocacy machine, so to speak, to really make that happen. And I think that's got to include a huge business participation and commitment which we have here, and then it needs to be statewide, including counties that really have small populations, because you don't want to wait until you have 40%, and be caught not prepared. So it needs to have the kind of

coverage, also for it to work politically, right? Otherwise it just becomes like a city issue, so we'll give a bunch of city officials this much money.

And then also, it just has to include, bring African-American and immigrant communities together. I think we lose this battle, if we just promote immigrants or just promote native-born, whether it's workforce development or adult literacy, and on the city level, we tried both kinds of advocacies, we tried asking for immigrant money separately, and then we also tried going for adult literacy, and they both work and have pros and cons, but in the long term, when you act like an ethnic lobby, or a special-interest group, and ask for your fair share, it really doesn't open up that space to articulate your vision, for why you're asking for this money, for what kind of infrastructure and long-term vision you're trying to meet here. And so in order to do that, I think we need to work together with native-born and immigrant communities at the same time. So I would love to just, you know, during lunch or in ongoing sessions, talk about how we can, there's a huge opening here, an opportunity for collaboration and I'm just so excited to be here to take the next step to make that collaboration happen, and get some commitments from some of the state government people who are going to be here later.

Kenneth Adams: Martha, what's working in Westchester County?

Martha Lopez-Hanratty: Well, I couldn't wait to answer that question, because the partnerships that are created certainly have helped us tremendously. It is extremely important that we work with other communities and especially because we don't want to divide the community, working with the African-American community, with the native community, it's important so that all needs are met as well. In Westchester County, we have established partnerships with the public and private sector. We have gone to the schools, everyone has to take part of the problem so that the issue can be resolved. And that has been what has been working in Westchester County, I believe that establishing different liaisons to work with particular communities are important so that we can get to the problem.

Kenneth Adams: This is a chance for the panelists to get to know the audience a little better, and I want to do something related to Chung-Wha's point about the need to develop a statewide imperative around this issue. Everybody raise your hand, everybody. Now if you're from Albany, put your hand down. These are my local friends. If you're from New York City – keep the hands where we can see them – if you're from New York City, put your hand down. Okay, so this is what we're getting at. At every table, just quickly, where are you from, if you're not from Albany, if you're not from New York City, because we've got to get to Chung-Wha's point here of really building statewide participation. So just start here on the right, just sort of randomly here.

Audience responses: Syracuse, Ulster County, Westchester County, Rochester, Dutchess, Westchester, Orange, Utica, Oneida, Rockland County, Saratoga Springs, Westchester, Rensselaer, Long Island, Monroe County, Connecticut.

Kenneth Adams: Great! So, the other thing about this, just again to see who's in the room, about making sure we're developing an economic development agenda, that we're building support for this as an economic development issue, how many of you work in business, or in business

associations, or somehow legitimately can say you're here on behalf of the private sector, businesses? A couple. Sir, where are you from?

Audience response: New York Farm Bureau.

Kenneth Adams: The Farm Bureau, perfect. Trade associations are included in this question, right? B.J.?

Audience response: Proprietary colleges.

Kenneth Adams: Okay. What other employers or representatives of employers are in the room?

Audience response: Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce.

Kenneth Adams: Which runs a great employment program and does ESOL at the Brooklyn Navy Yard, as I recall. Okay, so a bit of homework to organizers and our friends. Ma'am, yes?

Audience response: School Boards Association.

Kenneth Adams: We've got pretty decent statewide representation, and we can certainly build on that. We've got the Business Council here, but my colleagues and I, and the Farm Bureau's here, but seems like down the road we've got to do a better job of engaging employers, if we're going to make a credible economic development argument. Let's get back to Chung-Wha's point, she started to list characteristics, attributes, of a new system. I know that word is not the right word, but you know where I'm going, right? Because it really isn't a system, but how about attributes of an approach or a strategy to addressing the challenge to provide more ESOL training to workers in the context of adult literacy to serve broader needs as has been mentioned, but characteristics of a program at scale. Because you can't just talk about a best practice in a particular community that's a one-off really good thing, if it can't be scaled up. So panelists, you're thinking about this, I can tell, Kevin. And someone's taking notes here. Jonathan Bowles is studiously writing all this down, I'm sure Tara is too. Characteristics of strategies, or a system to address this need, broad characteristics, someone's mentioned partnerships. Chung-Wha, why don't you do your list again and then we'll take it from there.

Chung-Wha Hong: Sure. One is multisector collaboration, business community, labor, community college networks, and then one is statewide coordination. Another one which I didn't mention before but I think we should have clear, clear goals. I think we need to have twofold goals: economic development goals, and then I think there are social integration goals that are not completely captured, so I don't want to abandon the importance of social integration of adult literacy as a lifelong learning experience. Just because in the end, immigrants need two things, I think. They need to learn English but also need to become citizens, because right now, we have almost a million people stuck in the underground economy, but also in language isolation. So I just want to say that we need to have social integration and economic goals that are very clear, and then I think we need a government and advocacy strategy, and then a funding plan. Because right now if you look at just New York City for example, there's all these different funding streams, it's going through nine different agencies and it's under four different deputy mayors, so

the coordination is not happening. And if you don't have coordination, are you going to be able to deploy, and strategically shape the programs in the way that you want to serve the goals that you have set out? Because we have so little resources, that even if we marshaled all of our resources and programs, to completely push for specific economic outcomes, it still wouldn't be enough. So I think we need to do some of that. And then bring native-born and immigrant communities together.

Kenneth Adams: Kevin, what would you add to the list?

Kevin Smith: This is, I think, the most difficult question. I think we need to start small, and be very practical about identifying so-called best practices or solutions on-scale, and choose areas of the state and communities around the state that may be representative and put some additional energy and resource into those communities, and try things. Again, it has been my observation and my experience that the adult literacy and education community works very hard and very much in isolation most frequently of the economic, especially the economic development but probably also the workforce development. And there are great examples of good communication, cooperation in both arenas and areas.

But I don't think, in general, and I'll speak from the adult education world, when we are being given a relatively small amount of resources to get adults very far, very fast in terms of their skill development, and let me be very specific about that. If a native-born adult walks into a Literacy Volunteers program reading, testing in at the second-grade reading level, we have one year and $600 dollars to move them up into the third- or fourth-grade reading level to demonstrate an NRS result outcome. This is an adult, native-born, probably attended eight, nine, ten years of public education, still reading at the second-grade reading level. We recruit, train, and match them with a community volunteer, and we have one year and $600 dollars to move them multiple years of reading growth, and also if they are seeking employment, to get them an employment outcome as well. So the onus, the responsibility on the adult education system is huge, with little resource. To then ask that they integrate and work more cooperatively with the workforce development system and the economic development system is a little more than I think we can ask.

So again, my answer is start small, pilot things, test, try things that demonstrate, show good results, good outcomes. The goal is to get an adult the ability to get, understand, and utilize information independently over time in the course of their adult life. With English language, we had a caller on the radio program yesterday, WNYC, Brian Lehrer, who said, well why do we keep offering Spanish-language alternatives when you call into agencies? Why don't we just offer English and that will force them to learn English? And the three of us on the show are like oh my goodness, well if you only are serving 5% of, only offering English-language instruction to 5% of the population and this is vital information at these agencies that these individuals need, then you must offer it to them. If you are offering 100% ESOL programming, then I might say, well, okay, don't offer that information in Spanish anymore. But unless and until you have actually saturated the market with the supply of services to equal the demand for services, then we have to continue to get the information, the vital information to these folks in a way that they can understand it and utilize it to move forward in their life. And so too with our native-born

speakers. So start small, try different things, bring different programs together, on-scale, and then build it from there.

Kenneth Adams: Bea, from your point of view? Values, characteristics

Bethaida Gonzalez: Just something very practical. Map your community services around specific topics, so you can see who they are and who they serve. And that will then help you make decisions about how to rearrange those services for maximum outreach. In Syracuse, we've done this around hunger, we've changed where our food pantries are.

[Tape cuts off briefly]

Martha Lopez-Hanratty: Chung-Wha, it sounds to me like you really do have a plan, and I think that strategies, we should definitely have an ad-hoc committee, and have Chung-Wha coordinate that committee and lead us to the solution, because she certainly has, you know, spoken about every single segment that will make the program a great success.

Chung-Wha Hong: Can I also mention that I've been meeting with some state people including long-time activists, legislators, and they're now asking for concept papers, because they're excited about this. I think there's a certain amount of momentum building around this, both with the kind of economic impact study that came out yesterday, and then this conference, and then the Federal Reserve Bank will be doing their event this Friday. I think we can keep this drumbeat going, and we're actually asked to produce a concept paper around how business and community groups can collaborate and make that big ask. So, I think we should work on that together. I think we have a lot of just great nuggets of information and then, together with the mapping, we're actually trying to put in a budget line on the city level to get a couple of researchers to do a mapping of not just city programs, but all the funding streams, put just little dots and see where the gaps are. Because sometimes it's a geographic gap, other times it's an ethnic gap. There could be in a certain area four Spanish-speaking geared programs, but none for Chinese or Korean and so on. And then different kinds of programs, right? There could be GED programs, but no ESOL programs. So, I think we have a lot of work to do, but we just can't access the work and the experience and the insights from everybody unless we have an advocacy structure and that's why I'm just so grateful for this conference. So Mr. Chair, take us to the next step.

Kenneth Adams: Let's go back, before we do that, Joyce, do want to comment on what you think the qualities of a successful strategy are?

Joyce Minard: I agree with Bea, mapping the region, very much so. But here we all sit, as the experts, but the people who are missing are the business owners and the immigrants themselves. And I feel that we need to hear what they have to say and we need to incorporate some representation from them, in order to do the strategy we need for our individual regions. Business owners, they're missing the boat. We're trying to help them, along with the immigrants. So I really feel that they need representation, and through the Farm Bureau, and through the chambers of commerce, like we always used to do, we used to take small groups and go to the nucleus of the problem, sit down, bring everybody in, work with people, and then outreach and work on the solution.

Kenneth Adams: Okay. That's really important. Let's take a moment to open this up a little bit on this, I think this really important point that Joyce has made. And let's ask both our panelists – you can think about this – along with everybody in the audience who wants to chime in, to talk about a situation they know about where a business they know is actively engaged, is participating in ESOL training for its workers. Again, just examples from around the state where an employer's at the table, where an employer is part of the solution. And I'll start from my friend from the Farm Bureau. Even if you just want to speak from the perspective of the agricultural community, and the Farm Bureau on the issue, but also what you know is going on in terms of engaging employers in the agricultural community.

Matthew Hobart, New York Farm Bureau: I think there is an interest from the agricultural employers and the employees in regards to English-language training. Language is one of the barriers we deal with, and there are other programs dealing with cultural differences, but when you bring farm workers together with employers, I think a lot of them do count them as an extension of their own family, because they're working right alongside them. Looking at creative ways to make sure that those programs get out there to the state, I think one thing to look at is the agricultural technology universities and colleges around the state, through students that are going through the program to enter the agriculture industries. Part of the training is they have a language requirement. I think there's a lot of interest in working cooperatively with the farming community and with other organizations to promote these programs around the state.

Kenneth Adams: Thank you. Other examples of employer participation in this?

Barbara Wyman, Literacy Volunteers of Rensselaer County: We're working in two different factories right now, one has a couple classes going, it's right there prior to the second shift, right after the first shift, and then we have another going that we've just started that is during the lunch break of the second shift, and there's two different classes that are going, the owner of the company called us and we're in there. And I had a call from a farmer yesterday in Rensselaer County who has five Hispanic workers that wanted us to come in and work with them in his farmhouse, so, again, I think they are involved and want their workers to learn to speak English.

Kenneth Adams: I'm sorry, I should know this, but who does the actual teaching in those examples, when you're – have someone with the workers onsite?

Barbara: Mainly volunteers. Although they're supervised and our staff are substitutes.

Mike Rosenthal, Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce: We started a small program at the Brooklyn Navy Yard. We don't have farm workers of course in Brooklyn, but we have a lot of manufacturing jobs still, and they rely very heavily on immigrant workers but they don't find a way to promote the workers, so they want them to learn, and the workers want to learn so they can do better also. What we do is we bring the program to the company, we do it on site, we make the company buy into the process, by at least paying for some of the books, paying for the workers when they're doing it, we find that that works best for the company, it provides the best services. We brought in a company called Eriksen Translations, which does the teaching, and they have a woman from Rutgers University, who did very specific vocational ESL for these

workers. We spent hours assessing the workers, hours learning what the safety issues were, what the signages were, what all the issues were that would make these particular workers improve in their jobs. And it's a many-week program, we're just finishing the first round, we're about to start another round in January, and we find that bringing it directly to the employer site and accommodating the employer as best as possible, that's what really works best for us.

Kenneth Adams: And this is a jargony word, but it sounds contextual. Your teacher is actually working with the employers so the lessons have to do with the workplace.

Mike Rosenthal: Absolutely, absolutely. We spend a lot of time just going over the culture of the workplace, so that these workers would improve in a way that they can get promoted and make more money. Many of them have the capacity, but they can't do it because of the language barrier.

Kenneth Adams: And Mike, I'm sorry, last question, because I've lost track of this program. How do you evaluate success? What's the benchmark? What does the funder ask you for?

Mike Rosenthal: That's one of the issues that we have and one of the things I'd like to learn about today, is about how we're going to evaluate. It's very easy to evaluate in terms of testing, they were tested to see what level they were at when they started, they're going to be tested at the end, no doubt they're going to improve in a certain way. That's very good. But the value to the employer is: are they a better employee? Can they be promoted? Can they earn more money, which in actuality earns more money for the company? That's something that we're still struggling with, is exactly how to evaluate that, how to see that so, because I know funders want to see direct outcomes. And improving their test scores is certainly an outcome, but from a business point of view, that's not the most important outcome. The most important outcome is: are they going to become better employees, and make the company better and more profitable?

Kenneth Adams: And how is your program funded?

Mike Rosenthal: How is it funded? City money. And we're obviously looking for more money.

Kenneth Adams: A government grant from New York City government?

Mike Rosenthal: Right.

Kenneth Adams: Sort of as a pilot project, gotcha. Panelists, examples of engaging employers in this challenge?

Kevin Smith: Ken, a couple. Dresser-Rand, in Allegheny County, has established some criteria for employment, that includes indication of math and literacy skills. Our Allegheny program is working very closely with them. Prospective employees go through an intensive training program to bring their skills up to a level to allow them to be eligible to seek employment through that essential corporation in Allegheny County. And the CEO of Dresser-Rand is very, very involved in that programming. The other couple of examples are more broad-based. In Buffalo, the medical corridor is actually supporting, sponsoring again, these are foreign-born

immigrants with advanced degrees in science and in medicine who lack English skills. They are supporting our programs to provide intensive, to move individuals up on the list, basically, giving the programs money to work with them. So in that case, it's a pay-as-you-go kind of a program, which is pretty unusual. We try to avoid that where we can. And then finally, I think the third industry, or the third area that is ripe, is the hospitality industry, and we're getting more and more communication with that industry about how we can work with them to assist their employees to learn the English language. And that's kind of a statewide industry initiative that we're just beginning.

Kenneth Adams: Thank you. Chung-Wha?

Chung-Wha Wong: Can I throw out something kind of radically different here? I think if we do form a task force, we've got to look at local, state and federal advocacy. And I think one of the federal advocacies that we could be thinking about is: how do we get a revenue stream to fund some of this? A lot of corporations that I've talked to who are not direct employers of low-wage immigrant workers, there's kind of the high-end corporations too, right? And the biggest immigration problem for them is that they can't get visas for the workers that they need, H-1B visas. And so, companies like Microsoft, once the immigration reform bill died, they went right the next day and opened up an office in Canada, to show that if we can't get our visa, we're going to move elsewhere. And so my feeling is that what they're willing to do if we can make this happen, is that for every H-1B visa that they get, that they're willing to pay thousands of dollars to put into a workforce development fund for native-born and other workers, right? Because it's this whole premise that you don't want to abandon the American workers here and just keep on bringing foreign workers. And so if we can work on that together, so that the employers get the high-end people that they need, and at the same time, use that as leverage to really train the talent within, including immigrant workers who are already here, and native-born workers. And that could be a huge revenue stream going forward and there are conversations that are already happening around that so I think the federal piece is really important.

Kenneth Adams: Thank you. Martha?

Martha Lopez-Hanratty: Yes, I was trying to find the page in "Lost in Translation" about the incentives for employees and it said in one of the articles that many times employers are going to say: what's in it for me? And that is so true, so I think that it's important to bring information and economic development in telling them how they can succeed by helping their employees, because many times what happens is that they are so worried, many of the employers are so worried on trying to make some money, that they forget that if they maybe had trained their employees, if they would have given them time to go learn English, then they can prosper. So we are lost in the middle. So I think that incentives of economic development and that's why creating partnerships and maybe conducting workshops, conferences, training, it's important for them as an economic development tool.

Kenneth Adams: Thank you, Martha. We've been joined by Randy Wolken, who runs MACNY, the Manufacturers Association of Central New York, so we have another private sector representative here. That introduction was a way of giving Randy a heads-up, because this question is coming back to you soon. We're talking, Randy, about making ESOL as a workforce

development imperative and to do that, you've got to engage employers and we're looking around the room for best practices, existing situations where employers are at the table, and have invited in or are participating in English-language programs. And we're going to actually toss this example over to Onondaga County and our great representative from there, Bea.

Bethaida Gonzalez: I was going to, since I saw Randy in the back of the room. I already mentioned that MACNY was a partner in a lot of the work that we're doing in this area and I was going to say, because I'm having a blank moment here, just some of the ideas. We are doing workplace literacy, that's where we're headed in Onondaga County, to bring people together. We have some employers in Onondaga County that actually seek immigrant workers. So they actually go to the refugee center, or the West Side Learning Center, and they say: give me whoever you've got, because they see the work ethic that these folks have and they want that in their companies. So those are not the companies we're worried about. We're worried about the companies who complain about not having entry-level workers but refuse to take a risk or a chance with low-skill or no-skill non-English speakers, and so we have kind of the whole spectrum in Onondaga County. I don't want to steal your thunder from this afternoon.

Kenneth Adams: Let's let Randy think about his answer, because he just arrived, and finish our panelists' response to this question by going to Joyce. Joyce, companies in Ulster County that have stepped up?

Joyce Minard: I'd like to use the Council of Industry of Southeastern New York. I'd like to call on Harold King, the executive director for the Council of Industries of Southeastern New York. It's a manufacturing organization and I'd like to call upon the Farm Bureau, and I'd like to call upon Ulster BOCES, and I'd like to call upon our SUNY system, and I'd like to see a nucleus group put together a bottom line. You have to show a business owner how it will affect their bottom line, by teaching people English, math, science skills, reading, whatever it may be. It doesn't necessarily have to be an immigrant. It's all of us in this room. If you can't show the business owner a bottom line, and how it relates to their business, they don't understand. You know, it's meat and potatoes, they want the green. And they want to see their company grow, so, again, it's going to take a lot of work. But I'd like to go visit business owners in general and get the word out to business owners and have these forums and the Council of Industry is on the northeastern seaboard of New York State, so why not include them and move forward with that?

Kenneth Adams: Jonathan just wrote it down. I'm reminded by Andy not to let Randy give away too much on what he's going to present in the afternoon post-lunch panel. But still he's my friend and he's here, so I wonder if he would give a tempered answer or make some comments on this issue of engaging employers.

Randy Wolken, President, Manufacturers Association of Central New York: Sure, I don't want to give away all my stuff for the coming panel, but I would agree with Bea that there's a significant desire now for skilled labor now, especially in the Syracuse area, in manufacturing in particular, skilled labor coming from a variety of immigrant populations, and the last speaker spoke of the need to have the intersection between language skills and workforce literacy skills, and I think that's where we need to work a lot harder. I think employers are willing to invest in their workforce, in productivity improvements and they see language skills being a critical

component of that. But we need to marry workforce literacy with the language skills and we need to bring it into the employer's place of business because it's a significant cost to have people go offsite or to go into other environments, so we need to marry the two efforts. I think this is a significant opportunity that presents itself because of the lack of workforce. A real shortage now presents an opportunity, if we can get our ducks in alignment and we can have the right programming and the right opportunities, everything from grants to loans and so forth, to have the companies do this. So I think there's a significant opportunity here.

Kenneth Adams: Thank you, Randy. Let's open it up now, we've got about 20 minutes left in this part of the morning's program. So you've got your questions ready for our panelists. I've had some fun putting them on the spot, now it's your turn. But please introduce yourselves and ma'am, we'll start right here and go around the room. Tara Colton doesn't just write reports and do research, she's also the A/V expert here.

Sandy Vasquez, New York State Education Department's Office of Adult Education and Workforce Development: I don't have a question, but I did want to continue with what people were talking about, to bring up the fact that about a couple of years ago, the Hotel Pierre's director of education contacted our office and asked if we could provide him with English-language instruction for his hotel workers. They gave a room that was filled with computers, and I was able to put them in touch with a teacher from Hunter College who contextualized a course of study over 24 hours that was provided during working hours to the employees there. They were then able to write a proposal and they got a grant from SBS in New York City to continue that work. I don't know if they're still doing it, but they had done it a couple of years ago and I thought that was, well, it was an idea to make a coalition or something of hospitality workers in New York City among high-end hotels. I don't know if that ever happened, but I was contacted about that.

Another thing I wanted to bring up was that I think there needs to be a change of culture in the United States, and our attitude about immigrants. So until that happens, the general public doesn't know what immigrants do, they only know the bad stuff that we get from the media. So I would suggest that the best thing to do is a publicity campaign or however you would like to call it, about what the benefits are to the economy of the United States, and to New York in specific, as to the work immigrants bring to this economy. We don't know, and if we don't know, we can't advocate. And if students can't get into a classroom and they're not going to their local legislator, nobody cares about that, and local legislators can't come up to the state legislature, and say: we need to have more money for education, if no one is demanding it. I know when people had problems about getting their GED, and being scammed in New York City, I was being called all the time by legislators, and we got something done. We took action, with our legal counsel, to stop that. But if I don't get calls and Tom and the others in our office don't know about what's going on, then we can't advocate for that kind of thing. So I would just suggest that if we could think of doing something with a campaign, possibly a free campaign, or somebody come up with the money about what the benefits are to this economy from immigrants, it might help our cause.

Kenneth Adams: You know part of that's clearly the FPI, Fiscal Policy Institute report, just released yesterday that got a lot of media attention…

Chung-Wha Hong: I know, but can I tell you what we're doing with that? We commissioned the report so what we're going to do is that we have a campaign called "The Truth About Immigrants" where we're going to offer the Powerpoint presentation version of the report because none of you have time to read the report, right? Just like Tara did, so we're going to go on a road trip all across the state, specifically targeting non-immigrant communities, like African-American, business communities, suburban white communities, religious communities, and we're calling it "The Truth About Immigrants," because so many people just don't know the economic, the net positive impact of immigrants. So let's learn the facts first. And then, let's develop opinions, right? And so, I'd like to thank the state and I see Manny Rivera there who's going to be very helpful. We hope to take this into the schools, into the businesses, everywhere. That's an offer, so if anybody wants a workshop…

Audience member: I think that's a great thing, but I really think it's got to go to Lou Dobbs and I think, single-handedly, it's has been a very serious problem that CNN has done this. And I think that talk should go to the CEO of CNN and Lou Dobbs.

Kenneth Adams: Good. Other questions for our panel?

Mike Fondacaro, State Senate: Not necessarily a question, my name is Mike Fondacaro, I'm with the State Senate and I'm also the editor of a weekly e-mail newsletter that's sent to about a thousand people every week. The point made by the lady about getting this to Lou Dobbs is very well taken. However, Lou Dobbs will continue to have his own agenda as will many of the talk show hosts in this area and in many other places, not just in upstate New York, but across New England and in substantial immigrant communities there, Framingham, Providence, New Bedford, Danbury, there are talk show hosts who have unfortunately seized upon this. What we need to realize is that this will probably be a long battle, and what Chung-Wha is doing, and so many others, is really the first step. And of course, we can say it's nothing new to this country, but unfortunately a high number of elected officials including Assemblyman Tedisco have seized on this, sadly, comparing immigrants to terrorists. Just so that nobody's under illusions that this attitude's going to change overnight. This is going to be a very hard-fought battle, but I just have to credit what Chung-Wha is doing and so many others in this room who I'd just like to say get it, who understand. Thanks.

Kenneth Adams: In the back.

Laurie Bargstedt, Hamilton-Fulton-Montgomery County BOCES: I'm a program manager, and I'd like to build on something that Kevin said. We have an ESOL program in the city of Amsterdam that serves about 70 people. Nearly 50% of them do have advanced degrees from their native countries. Our challenge for these people is to help find a way to get their credentials reviewed in America so that once they do gain the English-language skills, we can help them practice the professions that they're so adept at in their own country. So with Dr. Rivera here, I'm going to ask, point blank, could we find a way to help alleviate, remove some of the barriers? Because as a native-born person, I'm greatly challenged in helping these people find their way through the system. I'd like to see if we can find a way to remove some of those barriers so once they gain English-language skills, they can do even more in our nation.

Dr. Manuel Rivera, Deputy Secretary for Education, New York State: I think that's the purpose of what today's all about. From my understanding and reading of the materials in getting ready for my own panel's presentation, to think about what kinds of recommendations and what kinds of actions we need to take as a state, combining both the legislature, the executive branch, the State Education Department, and other aspects of government, to remove as many barriers as we can and I think that's what we need to do.

Deborah Povich, Working Poor Families Project: Hi, I'm actually from out of state, and so I want to give a perspective back on how to involve the business community more, from a national perspective. I'm from Virginia and I work as a consultant on workforce development issues. In the states where businesses have actively been engaged in this, they don't do it from a monolithic of "the business community." They do it from a sector-based approach, because the demands differ based on the sector of work. We've mentioned the hospitality, health care is typically one that comes up, manufacturing has been mentioned here, so I just want to mention that there are states, Pennsylvania, Illinois, Washington, that have what they often call skills panels. And they bring in business leaders in high-demand sectors, so these are areas that are looking for workers, and it's important, as several of your panelists have mentioned, ESL is within the context of adult education, because they need skilled workers, whether they're native-born or foreign-born, there isn't enough money in the system at all, so it's not worth pitting one against the other. But trying to find this as an economic development solution, meeting the business needs of the business community. And then I just want to mention that Tara's covered a great best practice on page 12 of her report, out of Washington State, I-BEST, they have outcome measures, and it was driven by policy incentives. They funded at 1.7 full-time equivalent students who went to community colleges with an adult education or ESOL teacher, and a vocational teacher. And the student got a credential in the end. So that allowed them economic mobility. It fed the business community and supported the student and it's a great practice.

Kenneth Adams: Thank you. Just a quick footnote to that, we've heard – very important to come back the theme or strategy for focusing on sectors and not being so broad, to have focus. So to recap a little bit we've heard from agriculture here, we've heard from manufacturing, we've heard from hospitality, is there a sector in New York State, economically, that we're not thinking of? I mean that's already three, which is a lot, but I just want to make sure.

Chung-Wha Hong: Health care.

Kenneth Adams: Health care, put that one on the list, right?

Chung-Wha Hong: The health care industry, it's the fastest-growing, 35% of the upstate economy's health care industry is held by immigrant workers. You know, we don't need to describe why language is so important.

Kenneth Adams: I wanted to go back to that, because again, add health care for sure, so you've got four sectors, and our view, the Business Council, Randy's here, it's really important to have credible intermediaries, in other words, trade associations from those sectors that get it, to quote someone. Right, to put that infrastructure together, because the employers themselves are too

busy trying to make ends meet, trying to survive, and they need the people to bring them together and engage them in these programs. So chambers do that with small business owners and large across the state, but we need to think, and I go back to Chung-Wha's going to co-chair or chair this effort, because they're not all here in the room today, honestly, but who are the credible intermediaries in those sectors, representing those employers that will take this on and get engaged again to frame it as an economic development argument on a statewide level? I'm sorry, there was a question here on the left here.

Heather Groll, Corning Place Consulting: I actually have a question. I work for Corning Place Consulting, but prior to that, I worked in Buffalo as head of communications for Buffalo public schools, where we spoke 65 languages and served on the board of Literacy Volunteers for five years and one of the things that I noticed was that there were so many different groups competing for little pots of money to do little bits of things, and I hear lots of things from different people here. How do propose that we move forward in working together to share the goals in reaching them, as opposed to all the infighting that goes on for all of the money and all of the programs that are going on right now statewide and nationwide?

Kevin Smith: Hello, Heather. Again, I love the idea of looking at the four primary sectors, I think that's a great way to do it, and again to experiment, if you will, and/or find those areas where they are successful. My general observation is that in rural, smaller communities, where these agencies are literally in the same building, so-called co-located, and the director of the BOCES adult education program is a neighbor of the Workforce Investment Board, or the One Stop, that's where things work best. It's a personal, relationship-driven system, if you will. Unfortunately, the core of the problem ends up in urban areas, where these agencies don't personally know one another, don't work, which is why, again, I say these coalitions. And the state education department has some very promising initiatives as well, I think there are handouts over there about the literacy zone initiative, which, for example, are a good way of creating incentives to bring these programs together.

We are often working with the same individual – the adult education system providing English-language instruction, the workforce system providing workforce skills, as Randy said, somehow we have to marry those two things and demonstrate the advantage not only to the employer, and to the prospective employee, but also to the programs that are serving them. Do we both get a credit? In the system of judging the outcomes and the results of whether we spent the monies that we received well, are we both getting a positive point for that? Or are we actually fighting by virtue of the nature of how the system doles out money and rewards programs for the services that they provide, are we actually not working in communication, in coordination in that respect? I think it is currently more the latter, I don't think that the data collection systems demonstrate or show one program who happens to be working with one adult, that the other system or the other program down the street is working with that same adult. We don't have good communication, information sharing in that respect. So things like that I think we can try, within sector, small-scale, try it, find those best practices, figure out those solutions and then take them to the larger scale.

Kenneth Adams: Bea, what would you say to that broader question of what do you do to bring groups together and avoid the infighting?

Bethaida Gonzalez: We find a convener in a community, or someone that has enough pull to convene groups and you begin to build the relationships. For us, I think that the mapping exercise in Syracuse around hunger brought this point home. And then other sectors started to say: I want a map of our services to see how we're providing. You know, continuum of service is what we need to think about, instead of isolated pockets of service. Because in our community, there was a lot of basic ESL, but nothing at the intermediate or advanced levels. If we had a map and we could see that picture, I think it would be easier to then get the agencies that are providing the service to kind of pick out at what level they want it to work, so we could create a ladder, or a continuum, instead of just struggling with each other over the dollars.

Kenneth Adams: Chung-Wha, you've given a lot of thought to organizing strategies, already, with respect to this, how do you respond to the question?

Chung-Wha Hong: I think what Bea says makes sense, I think we're at a much better place than we were five years ago. In the city, basically, people were working separately, the CUNY system was lobbying for their money, and the adult literacy people and the immigrant groups, the library system, but more of us came together, partly because of the federal cuts that were so, like, out of this world, or were just such a threat. And as a fruition of a new level of coalition work, you know, we were able to get $5 million dollars from the city, under the Mayor's Office of Adult Literacy, so I think all the existing provider networks, just like the four sectors and the business community need to come together and then really we need to start with this mapping and then, based on that, do some strategic planning so that groups, instead of just doing the same things, can look forward to what kind of needs different programs want to meet and if they want to specialize in family literacy because of blah blah blah reasons, or if they want to specialize in, you know, working with businesses. We need to develop program specialties to meet different needs and have the kind of coverage and all the stuff that we talked about, so I think it's possible. I think the big difference that we do have now is the governor's office. I'm glad we have a strong panel of government officials. But the message that I'm getting is that they want to do good work, but we can't go to them with a half-baked idea. We've got to organize ourselves first. We've got to have the programs, we've got to have the right players, and we've got to have the commitments from our side, and then it's just easier to work with the governor's office. I think if we give them a good product, and if we organize our legislative allies, and find our champion within the administration, that this is a win-win dynamic.

Kenneth Adams: We have time for just a couple last questions.

Audience member: This is another topic because I'm concerned about the service that is provided. You're expanding services and I'm concerned about the quality of it. For instance, I don't think you can get a degree in New York State in teaching English as a Second Language, a master's degree, you have to get a linguistics degree, and I know SUNY Albany has one that's mostly anthropology. So I think: who is going to provide the service and who is going to train these well-meaning volunteers? You know, when you work with volunteers, that's another whole set of problems, so I'm very concerned about increasing the professionalism of the people who provide the services.

Kenneth Adams: Let's see we have time for one more question, wherever Tara can get the microphone to.

Bethaida Gonzalez: While you're looking to the next person, Syracuse University recognizes the lack of TESOL training in the state, and is looking to reinvigorate its TESOL master's degree, both in partnership with the Foreign Languages and Literature department, as well as our school of education.

Kenneth Adams: That's a very important question which I expect can be addressed by some members of the panel this afternoon. Okay, on my right.

Amanda Bergson-Shilcock, Welcoming Center for New Pennsylvanians: Hi, I'm glad to be here today, visiting you all in New York. I wanted to return to the question about credentialing, to let you know that Pennsylvania will look eagerly to New York for anything that you do. We work as a nonprofit organization in the Philadelphia area both with immigrants who are in the low-wage workforce, but also with immigrant professionals who have credentials from their home countries, who have the same issue that you are identifying. And in the United States, there are a couple of well-established pathways for doctors and for nurses, who want to transfer their credentials. It can take a few years and a few thousand dollars, but it is possible. For engineers, for accountants, for lawyers, for airline pilots, for anything else you want to name, that pathway is not nearly so clearly established. And indeed, I would encourage you to think boldly, in terms of your policy work here, for a few professions like teaching it may be more local, but for many professions, whatever you do in New York, to smooth and clear pathways for people to transfer credentials from their countries of origin, will be something that other localities around the country will be interested in and be very able to take advantage of. So I'm delighted to be here today, but I just wanted to remind you that as you're all working so hard to think statewide, some of us are thinking more than statewide, so thanks again.

Kenneth Adams: Thank you.

Kevin Smith: While Tara moves, I just wanted to respond to the credentialing issue as well. I've for 25 years been the director of Literacy Volunteers, we have done yeoman's work in New York State providing ESOL and basic literacy services to adults who would otherwise not be served in this state. We take great pride in our ability to recruit, train, and support our volunteer tutors across the state. They are people just like you, who are interested in one neighbor helping another neighbor. We with you hope that there is eventually a system in this state that both credentials and provides fully accredited, fully certified services to all immigrant adults and all basic literacy students. In the meantime, we will continue to serve as many adults as we possibly can, and serve them well. Thank you.

Kenneth Adams: Kevin, how did you know that that was the last comment? The clock just stopped and that was a very good ending. We have to bring the first panel to a close because we have a lot more to come this morning. You see to my left Andy Breslau giving me the proverbial hook, but I won't let him do that until we thank our panelists one more time for their participation, and again, Bethaida Gonzalez, Chung-Wha Hong, Martha Lopez-Hanratty, Joyce Minard, and Kevin Smith. Thank you.

Panel Two: Solutions: What can the governor, legislature, municipal officials, and business owners across the state do to improve and expand English-language instruction for working New Yorkers?

Moderator: **Jonathan Bowles**, Director, Center for an Urban Future

Panelists:

- **Marianela Jordan**, Executive Director, Nassau County C.A.S.A.
- **Hon. George D. Maziarz**, NYS Senate; Chair, Senate Committee on Labor
- **Dr. Manuel Rivera**, Deputy Secretary for Education, New York State
- **Randy Wolken**, President, Manufacturers Association of Central New York

Jonathan Bowles: Director, Center for an Urban Future: I'm Jonathan Bowles, and I'm the director for the Center for an Urban Future. Let me again thank our co-sponsor organizations, The Business Council for the State of New York, Inc. and the Schuyler Center. I think everybody here seemed really pleased with that first panel, I certainly was and I think it's so exciting that I think the broad issues that were in the "Lost in Translation" report really played out in that panel. I think that Kenneth did a great job of finding out what really is going on in the state, and, I think, helping all of us show that this is not just a New York City issue, and as Chung-Wha and others talked about, that we have a really great opportunity here and I think that's what the second panel of the day is going to get to.

Before I go any further, a couple of housekeeping items. One is after this panel is complete, we will have a working lunch, lunch will be served here and we're really excited about an exciting working session we're going to having to figure out three priority issues to take away from this conference. We're going to be asking you for all of your ideas and input and we're going to be hearing from you. So, everyone's going to be involved and that's going to follow this panel discussion. Also, one of the panelists that we have in our packet for this panel, I regret to say is actually not able to be here today, Assemblyman Adriano Espillat intended to be here, was very much looking forward to being here, but when the governor called a closed-door meeting for today with most of the members of the majority in the Assembly, the Assemblyman decided that that was important, and rightly so. So hopefully he's talking behind doors about some of these issues.

Also one of our other panelists, Marianela Jordan, is coming from Long Island this morning, Nassau County, and we just got word that she's in bumper-to-bumper traffic. Imagine that, traffic congestion in New York. But she should be here within half an hour and as soon as she is, she will join this panel. But fortunately, we have three really distinguished people from around the state, that I think are going to add a lot to this discussion, I'm just going to introduce them very briefly.

In the middle, we're really thrilled to have State Senator George Maziarz, who has represented the 62nd senatorial district in New York since 1995. He entered into the city government in North Tonawanda as deputy clerk and shortly earned the distinction of being the youngest city clerk in

New York State. He remained in that position until 1989, at which time he was elected to the office of Niagara County Clerk, and then he got into the Senate in 1995. In the Senate, he served as Chairman of the Committee on Tourism, Recreation, and Sports Development during 2003-2004, and since January 2005, he has served as Chairman of the Senate Labor Committee, and fought for workers compensation reform. He is also a member of the New York State Workforce Investment Board.

We're also pleased at the far end of the panel to have Dr. Manny Rivera, who was appointed Deputy Secretary for Education in January of this year, by Governor Spitzer, while he was also finishing out his role as Superintendent of Rochester City Schools. In 1991, Dr. Rivera was first named Rochester Superintendent of Schools, a position he held until entering the private sector in 1994. That year he joined the management team at Edison Schools, and in 1998 was named Executive Vice President for Development. In 2002, he returned to Rochester as Interim Superintendent for the 2002-2003 school year, and after a national search, he was named permanent Superintendent of Schools in 2003. He was named New York State School Superintendent of the year by the New York State Council of School Superintendents in 2005, and in February 2006, he was named national superintendent of the year by the American Association of School Administrators.

Randy Wolken, President of the Manufacturers Association of Central New York, is seated closest to me here. Randy, it's good to see you. Randy is the president of the Manufacturers Association of Central New York (MACNY), an employer association serving approximately 320 companies with 55,000 employees in a 19-county region in upstate New York. The 93-year-old organization is the largest manufacturing organization in New York, and Randy is a board member of the United Way of the Central New York, Leadership Greater Syracuse, Focus Great Syracuse, and the Greater Syracuse Chamber of Commerce. He also served on Governor-elect Spitzer's Labor and Workforce Development transition advisory committee, and chaired the Training subcommittee. Prior to joining MACNY in 1991, he served as executive director of the Samaritan Center and worked as a senior budget analyst in the division of management and budget, for Onondaga County government.

I also just want to say just a little bit about Marianela who'll be joining us so I won't interrupt the discussion when she does come. Marianela Jordan, who will be joining us, is the Executive Director of Nassau County's Coordinated Agency for Spanish Americans. She was born in the Dominican Republic, and immigrated to the U.S. in 1979, and in 2002 she was appointed by county executive Tom Suozzi, to the highest Latino post in Nassau County as Executive Director of C.A.S.A.

So as we get into this discussion, we started the opening panel with Kenneth asking kind of a very broad opening question, and I'd like to do the same with this. But, you know, in the last panel, I think we heard so much about why we're here today. We have a fast-growing immigrant population in almost every corner of New York State. As Tara's new data showed at the beginning of the day, we have a huge, unmet need for ESOL programs. We heard that this is an issue not only for workers around the state, but for businesses. I think also a lot of folks here, as Chung-Wha mentioned, see that there's an opportunity here to really seize this issue and develop some momentum around solutions. In about a month's time, Governor Spitzer will be giving his

"State of the State" address, the legislature will be starting on a new session, and I think the time may be right to really elevate this issue and I wanted to just throw a question to all of the panelists, and maybe we'll start with Dr. Rivera and work our way towards this end of the table. What should we be doing to address the challenges that we heard about in the first panel and about the huge unmet need for ESOL programs around New York State? What do you see as some of the things that really could and should be done?

Dr. Manuel Rivera: I think, first of all, we have to look at the context a little more broadly. I look around the room and I see all these charts that show the increasing percentages of adults who are English-language learners, if you will, who are immigrants from other countries, those that participate in ESOL programs, where they are available, and the percent that is served, the percent that's not served. And even in reading the report in preparing for today, looking at the increasing number of immigrants, in Long Island, in Westchester County, in Upstate New York, I couldn't help but look at it through the lens of a K-12 educator, and say: these adults have children, and these children are in our schools. And there's a huge need for us to address this, I believe, in a much greater context. It is not only better addressing and better serving and better meeting the needs of adults, and recognizing the fact that that, in and of itself, can have a huge impact on public education and the education of children throughout the state of New York. Children from the time they're born, through grade 5, and then those who enter into our K-12 system. I have seen this in my short eight months working in the governor's office, and you know, I know what I experienced in Rochester, the increasing number of English-language learners and multiple-language groups, and listening to the former communications person from Buffalo, representing 65 language groups. Well, I've been seeing that and hearing about it from school superintendents across the state who come to the office, who talk about increasing needs in their district, in their communities. So it's a greater need, I think, that cuts across education itself.

I think, secondly, in terms of how we would approach this, I couldn't help but resonate with what Chung-Wha was talking about in terms of having a plan and being focused. And in my own observations and trying to figure that out at the state level, I saw a very interesting opportunity, a couple of opportunities. One was knowing that right now, there are regions that are developing regional blueprints, looking at their economic development future, and what's needed and the workforce needs that they have. We have to do a better job of linking that level of planning, with what's happening in our four-year institutions, in our two-year institutions, in our K-12 system, and there's got to be not just alignment, but greater alignment and integration. And I think a way to approach this would be to look at it on a regional basis, with some major policy initiatives, that help us to promote and put in place and make the right kinds of investments to support the programs that we need. So I tend to believe that we need more cohesion, more focus, and a plan that links the education system with our workforce development needs, in one aspect, and then of course, the kinds of policies and the funds to support what needs to be done. There are several other recommendations that I read that I can't wait to get into – EPE and some of the changes that I think we ought to advance in that area – but I'll save that for a little later.

Jonathan Bowles: Senator?

Senator George Maziarz: Thank you very much. I first want to thank the Center for an Urban Future, the Business Council, and the Schuyler Center for the invitation to be here today. You know, whenever you're at a function like this, and you think: is there any place else I'd rather be, than right here, right now? Well, I'd be less than honest if I didn't tell you that I wouldn't mind being a fly on the wall at that closed door meeting of the governor and the Assembly Democrats. I really think that I could learn a lot there, and maybe answer some of your questions on the discussion based on that other meeting. First I just want to congratulate you and thank you for having such a distinguished group of people here like Dr. Rivera, and Mr. Wolken, two people who I've dealt with and really are experts in this field. I think that, particularly what Dr. Rivera talked about, the linkage and regionalism he mentioned, you know the reality is that New York State is a very diverse place. We have many, many different areas, and when it comes to education and the school districts, the big five – Yonkers, New York, Rochester, Buffalo and Syracuse – are much different than the areas of New York, for example, the areas that I represent, very rural and suburban counties. And I think that having those linkages between the local school districts that are teaching K-12, linking them with the community colleges or the literacy programs that Kevin Smith and his organization run, so that you're getting both the young children and the K-12 but then their parents too.

Last, and I think the most importantly, is the business community, and making sure that those individuals that are trained in English literacy programs, that those individuals are being trained for real jobs, jobs that are available out there. There's nothing that can be more discouraging, or I think that can probably set an individual back, than to go through a program and they come out, and that pot of gold at the end of the rainbow in the form of a decent-paying job maybe with some fringe benefits, is not there, is not available for them. And I think, again, I'm primarily talking about upstate New York, I'm talking about, and really all over New York, there's jobs that are out there, right now, available, in the field of health care, entry-level. I've worked during my course as chair of the Senate Aging committee, with administrators, owners, and operators of nursing homes to get people in at an entry level and while they're there, train them, give them the opportunities and the money necessary to go to a training program at a community college, not only to learn work-related skills but also English-language skills, so that they could be eligible from promotions from within. I think that the linkage that Dr. Rivera talked about is probably the most important issue. Thank you.

Jonathan Bowles: Thank you. Randy?

Randy Wolken: I'd also like to thank you for inviting me. I'm probably one of the few business people in the room, but do not despair, they care about this issue. In fact, I really believe the best way to start in addressing this issue is to start at the business need, start at the level of needs right now going on in the business community. And I can talk about our members, two-thirds of which are manufacturers and also those in other high-tech industries, everything from health care to engineering firms. And I'll tell you that there's a dire need right now for skilled labor and it's getting worse. I like to call it the "quiet crisis." What's happening now is that there aren't enough young people emerging, to go into these skilled labor jobs, and the baby boomers are retiring. In fact, by 2010, we're told that we'll cross over and Generation X to Generation Y will be the majority of people in the workforce, and there just aren't enough workers to go around. So innovative companies are out there, identifying the need. They're a little bit ahead of the curve,

and we can use those as best practice places, we can learn from them. How did they do it, how did they implement it? And I'll tell you what they're doing, it was mentioned earlier by several panelists, is that they're figuring out how to integrate their workforce development needs with their literacy needs. And they're starting on the other end of the spectrum. How do we make sure that they can operate and earn a living, and then move towards the other literacy needs that they have? So if I have one recommendation that sticks today, it's: start at the place of business, look for needs and then develop from there. Because now you'll have a willing, active participant.

Second of all, look for best practices. In industry, people listen to each other. My members, CEOs, presidents, HR managers, they talk to each other. If it's working someplace else, they don't want to recreate the wheel, they want to go and do that. I talked a little bit about the "quiet crisis," which I think is really important. And what's needed here is that communities need to address this issue. In the Syracuse area, there are really two important initiatives that have been ongoing: the "Journey to Jobs" approach, which is really a community collaborative, that looks at ways to fill the needs of the workforce and the needs of the community, and the other one is "Workway to Syracuse" which is more recent in terms of development and is all about: how do you work with the school system to develop more opportunities for young people as they're coming through school? I think it's a prime opportunity right now as employers look for employees, and I think as communities have immigrant labor that's ready, willing, and able to go to work, we need to take advantage of this opportunity, which I don't think, from my best understanding, existed five years ago. So we now have the opportunity and my hope is that we can take advantage of it.

Jonathan Bowles: You know, the first panel made it perfectly clear that there's a lot of issues, from collaboration and other things, and this is not just about money. But I don't want to get past that money issue, because I think that a big part of this is that ESOL providers all around the state are seeing huge waiting lists. Kenneth Adams, in his opening remarks, talked about how we have a really dire crisis financially, fiscally in the state right now so it's not like there's a fountain of new money that's going to be out there. But I'm curious, given the financial environment that we're in in New York State coming up, how can we begin to dedicate more funds, whether it's for businesses on-site to offer more ESOL programs, or whether it's for the ESOL providers, community colleges, libraries, BOCES, how can we expand ESOL opportunities around the state? Anyone? Please feel free to jump in.

Senator George Maziarz: Well, I think one of the ways to do that and clearly, all of the cautionary flags are being sent out there about next year's fiscal situation and state budget. If you've dealt with the New York State budget for a long time, you know a lot of it depends on how the stock market goes, and that's very difficult to predict, but I think maybe the first goal and objective is to identify those programs that work in various regions of the state. And again, I think the important thing, as Dr. Rivera pointed out, is to look at this thing regionally. Because it's different upstate, and in rural and suburban New York than it is downstate in Westchester and New York City and Long Island. For the past several years, the Senate majority has financed programs in the Bronx and Staten Island and in Brooklyn, mostly through the initiatives of Senator Maltese, Senator Padavan and Senator Lanza, and these programs, I think, have proven to be very successful in their particular areas. So I think, probably, the first thing is to look at what organizations, community colleges, local school districts are doing, programs that work in

their particular region. We spend a lot of money on education now, I think we're probably going to increase that, despite what the financial condition is of the state, but I think it's important we identify those programs that work so that when we put money into it, it's going for its best use.

Dr. Manuel Rivera: I would hope that the education budget would increase. But in the environment that I've had a chance to see, I'm not convinced that that's the case yet. Yet I do see needs that really need to be addressed. But the fact of the matter is that our needs are changing as a state. And we have a population of people who contribute to the economy, who need to be better served with appropriate kinds of instructional services and that means to me that we need to take a serious look at redirecting some of our existing resources to provide the kinds of literacy and ESOL programs that are needed across the state. So, in fact the Contract for Excellence, the expectation that fifty-five districts who are intended to use this new foundation aid, to provide this increase in education aid, to the neediest students and they define that as English-Language Learners. That's one effort.

When I think about adults, there are other steps that I think we can take in looking at how we can redirect some of what is in the current budget or at least what's likely to be in in '08, '09, to increase programs and services for people. I met with a gentlemen who represented a community-based organization in Long Island, who had submitted an application, they were trying to provide a program for adults in their particular community, to serve immigrants. And they had to go through a particular resource, they were not allowed, they could not go through the EPE, because the EPE funding, as I understand it, is only to support district-run programs and BOCES-run programs. I think we ought to be looking at that law or that regulation and how that can be opened up, because the fact of the matter is, in a lot of these communities, it is the not-for-profits, it is some of the small agencies that are more closely connected with people in need who can truly reach them and get them access into the kind of programs that are needed.

Randy Wolken: I think one of the keys to looking at resources is to identify what you're trying to solve, and I really believe it's an economic development issue. We have to stop separating it into just a literacy issue. It's an economic development issue and we ought to be making investments, because there are spin-off dollars when you make investments in jobs. For every job created, especially in high-tech sectors, you create two or three additional ones. So, this is an investment proposition to start with, so talking about economic development with literacy as a component I think is important.

Second of all, it's an opportunity to leverage resources, through training grants, through other ways of leveraging resources, you'll get the private sector to also ante up. They're already anteing up when it comes to allowing them to work during the workdays on their literacy skills, many times they'll fund some of the training programs so that typically matching programs, so you'll leverage resources, especially in a tight resource environment. What you do is you give the businesses the opportunity to be engaged. One of the things I've learned by doing this work for some time is that often times we create programs that are too complicated, too difficult for businesses to engage in. It becomes too cumbersome for them to even participate. So we have to find ways to simplify it, to make sure that there are rolling grant opportunities, so that you don't have to apply by March 31st or you're all out for the year. And you make them small grants. Get people engaged.

And then of course learn from best practices. So I think it's an investment opportunity more so than ever. I also think there's some leveraging that should be going on, again, I think the key is to do it within our communities, with the right partnerships, and then going to leaders in the community, people who are willing to take a stand, and we have several companies in our community, ConMed, in fact, is noted in "Lost in Translation," Stickley, another fine company that has really invested in this. They're thought leaders. We need to go to these organizations that have figured out how to do it, and they do need more resources, but I think look at it in the context of an investment especially within economic development.

Jonathan Bowles: I just want to stick on that point for a second. I think you got to this, to a large extent, but when you talk about this issue, I think we've heard a lot that people say: you know the business community really needs to pony up when it comes to this, because funding is an issue. And clearly some businesses are doing that, I mean, is it too much to ask businesses to take on a huge burden here, or is it the kind of thing where businesses are going to do it if part of their own investment is leveraged by state or local funds? How can we get more businesses involved? I think you already spoke to it a bit, I'm just wondering if you can follow up a little bit more?

Randy Wolken: Sure. First of all, making investments is to their advantage, in terms of putting out their product or delivering their service. Sure, they care about the community, but they also care about making a product. So, you need to find businesses that have the need. Second of all, it doesn't hurt to incentivize, that is, provide some additional resources. You don't have to pay for the whole training endeavor, but giving them some additional resources to do it now, can be very helpful. Oftentimes, it's not even the resource itself. You don't need to have to have the dollar available, you need to have know-how. You may have a need, but you don't know how to address it. If you're an HR manager, you're running a firm, you may be in a very tight environment, and having the time and the expertise to figure out how do it is a big plus. So outside resources can be brought in. Oftentimes it's knowledge and know-how, not just dollars that entice companies to go down this route.

I also think there's a sense of desperation now that didn't exist. We've got companies that five years ago had 10, 15, 20 people apply for a job, they have no one apply today, not a single applicant will come in the door for a skilled labor position. Other types of skilled labor which only require, you know, sometimes a good high school diploma or advanced training, a couple-year degree would be enough. The reality is that there's a new sense of awareness that they need to meet their needs differently, and now it's time to tap into it. Again, outreach is important, you talked about marketing, an awareness, an awareness that the solution does exist, but I think most of this is quiet marketing, it's not ads in the newspaper or on TV, I think its outreach and community discussion.

Senator George Maziarz: If I could just follow up on that a little bit. I think that, again, I'll go back to the example of the health care workers, and I particularly want to talk about nursing home workers. You know, an operator of a nursing home, an administrator of a nursing home, would get an employee that was a good employee, who showed up on time for work, who didn't take unnecessary time off. They see that as a great investment for their future, and if they can

improve the skills of that employee, generally these are sometimes very entry-level employees, but it's an investment for them to improve their literacy skills to begin with, but then going up the ladder within the health care field. Let's say, from a food service worker to a CNA, a certified nursing assistant, and then right up the employment ladder of health care. They see it as an investment in a good employee that's going to be there for a long time, in a field where it's very tough to get people at that entry level. So I think they're willing to make a financial investment in an employee like that. Thanks.

Dr. Manuel Rivera: I just want to second something that Randy said, because I agree with him wholeheartedly. We really have to look at this as an economic development issue. This is really about the vitality of this state and this country. As I was trying to learn more about the regional blueprints that are being developed in various regions across the state, it's based on five "I's." Don't ask me to name what all the "I's" are, but the one that I do remember is intellectual capacity, and building that intellectual capacity. What we don't really have is: how do you operationalize that? What does that look like? What kinds of program adjustments and changes do you make at the four-year level, at your community-college level, that are directly aligned and in sync with those workforce needs, in that region, that are going to help drive that economy? Similarly, how is your K-12 system? And I think that there's an opportunity here, right now, this year, as these blueprints are being developed, for us to seize the opportunity to have an operational plan that does carry with it some incentives, that does incentivize business, also encourages school districts and community colleges, and your higher ed system to be part of that structure, in that operational plan, to deliver on these economic development blueprints.

Jonathan Bowles: You know, I think what Randy said and what Manny followed up with is apt. The data that Tara showed earlier that 27% of the state's population is now foreign-born, the fact that we see county after county, upstate and downstate, where the native-born population is decreasing or only gaining by a small amount and the foreign-born is really driving all the growth, clearly this is the future of our workforce. But when it comes to funding, I really want to get back to the EPE issue in just a little bit, but, Dr. Rivera, you talked about these regional blueprints, and I think that's important. And Kenneth earlier talked about this $1.2 billion dollars that we have in statewide workforce development funding, and I'm curious, how do we go from making this a literacy, beyond the marketing and getting the word out about this, how do we get Empire State Development, the Labor Department, is it even possible to get funds from that $1.2 billion dollars that we talked about? How do we get the regional blueprints and the work that the economic development agencies are doing, to make this a part of what they're doing?

Randy Wolken: Well, just in a sense, I'll tell you what we've been trying to do. I actually took a proposal and sat down about three or four weeks ago, with Dan Gundersen, who is the upstate ESDC chair. And talked about the role of education and the need for connectedness with what we are doing statewide in education to economic development and the development of these regional blueprints. And I think there is an opportunity, we have actually identified a community that could be an ideal demonstration site, where you can bring best practice, where you could come at it in a focused, aligned way and show that you can make a huge difference in operationalizing this concept that I've explained. And there is a proposal that is on the table to do exactly that, and it calls for leveraging some dollars, dollars that are currently within the state as well as dollars that hopefully could be available for our higher ed initiatives, as well as K-12

dollars, and allows us to come at it in a less complicated manner. You know, so many different funding sources, so many different funding streams, it's really very frustrating for communities to put together programs and mix and match various funding sources. We have to have a more simplified way of consolidating some of these funding streams to allow us to move these best practices. So I think the way to start is in one or two communities that are ready, that are far enough along to have something that you can operationalize, measure it, evaluate the success of this, continue to build on it, and then see if you can't have a roll-out plan that extends beyond what you have going.

Jonathan Bowles: Everyone, I just want to make sure you've seen, Marianela has joined us, thank you, Marianela, I introduced your bio before you got here, but we're really pleased for you to be here, and I want to ask you a specific question in just a moment. But just to stay on the issue for a second, Senator, you've been a part of the state's Workforce Investment Board, this question is not solely for you, but I'm just curious, sticking on this issue, as far making this a workforce development issue, and this is open to everybody, is there a role for WIBs? To what extent are WIBs already working on these issues, how do we get this to be more a part of workforce development beyond the regional initiatives that Dr. Rivera just spoke about?

Senator George Maziarz: Well clearly, there's a role for the Workforce Investment Board along with what Dr. Rivera talked about in Empire State Development and that initiative under ESDC., the Department of Labor, in conjunction with the Workforce Investment Board, Commissioner Smith is forming a Division of Immigration Services, a unit right within the DOL, to try and coordinate programs for literacy education, for immigration services, again, not just in the downstate area. You tend to get the impression that this is a metropolitan issue, but there are also issues, particularly again in rural and suburban New York. You know, all politics are parochial, you know how I keep bringing back the rule in suburban areas of the state, farm workers and the issues facing farm workers. You know, I've got farmers in my district that did not plant particular crops this year, because they knew at the end of harvest season, there'd be no one there to harvest those crops and ended up losing hundreds of thousands of dollars. So this really is an economic development issue. Clearly, this Division of Immigration Services right within the DOL, working with ESDC, I think. is probably going to provide more services and more answers than some of the existing services that we have under the Workforce Investment Board.

Jonathan Bowles: Great.

Randy Wolken: Clearly the WIBs are a great opportunity because when companies look for the workforce needs and they submit a grant application, they ought to be thinking about literacy needs, and incorporating that into their improvement in their workforce. So it's an opportunity, those are the dollars that they're going to be asking for, they're going to use them for process improvement, they'll use them for other ways of improving their workforce, they ought to be using them for literacy opportunities. So, I think there are some dollars available, we need to maximize those. As an organization, we'll assist companies in finding opportunities, we assist companies in looking for providers, and I think what should be on their menu of things to do is: how do I improve literacy skills within my workforce? Or how do I look to enhance my workforce by bringing in an immigrant population that would have the skill set that I'm looking for? So my sense is that part of the challenge is to get the community and business leaders to

start thinking about alternative solutions, because the current ones, putting an ad in the newspaper, posting a job isn't working. So more and more people are going to be interested in new solutions so I think at least one source could be tapping into existing revenue sources. I think we need to make sure that they're readily available because most of those are matching, for a dollar of state funding, you're usually putting in a dollar of private investment so you're getting twice the bang for the buck in many cases.

Jonathan Bowles: Marianela, welcome, and we're really thrilled to have you here. We didn't have any representative from Long Island on the opening panel this morning, so I want to ask you if you could try to summarize just how important these issues are playing out on Long Island, in Nassau County especially, but more so, also on what do you see as some of the solutions, what would you like to see done to deal with this challenge?

Marianela Jordan: Certainly. I mean, first, I'd just like to apologize because everyone's time is very valuable and I drove in from Long Island this morning, there was some construction. But I think certainly what was said here was that with the local implementation of English language programs, the needs are going to be very different depending upon where you are. And certainly on Long Island, where you have other current events happening, or if you're upstate, or whether you're an educator, or you're somebody in the business or private sector, whatever your competing interest is, has to have a way of getting on the political agenda. I don't know if anyone spoke about the 'P' word. But you know, there's a lot of politics involved. Whether you're talking about in the funding, or in the way that this issue is framed overall. And that is part of the problem.

On Long Island, one of the things that we face is that although, certainly, the immigrant community is a very vital part of the economy and a growing part of the workforce, and it's critical, it's really not viewed that way in many circles. So one of the first stumbling blocks that we face is that we have to start to reframe the issue, sort of the way that the Center for an Urban Future is doing with regard to keeping us competitive as the workforce in a global economy, where other countries speak multiple languages, the U.S. really has to look at it. I speak four languages, and I'm foreign-born and I wish I could speak more languages. And I think we have to start reframing it as something that's going to make us certainly competitive. However, locally on Long Island, immigrants are not embraced in the same way as they are in the five boroughs. Although we have an economy that's become a service industry where people are not cutting their own lawns and people are not washing their own cars, there's still this schism that is existing between the fact that there is this service industry that we've created because we're very busy people. And how are we going to get to cross the bridge with people needing language access, and the implementation of the actual funding at the local level?

So I'd like to talk about how we've done that in our office, briefly. We are a Nassau County government department, and what's unique is that we provide an ESL program. A lot of this funding goes directly to the school district. We are community-based, so we are an office of Latino affairs, but we are a community-based agency that coordinates services with all the other Latino CBOs, specifically with the Latino community but we work with other sectors of the immigrant population. Where we have been successful has been to go into memorandums of understanding with local school districts, because they don't have the space, something as

critical as being able to have satellite programs, where you're going to have accountability, which is very important at the state level, where you want to make sure that people are administering these funds properly, and that they're going to be doing all the testing requirements and the documentation for the state. So we have been able to go into contracts with the local school district to provide space for them.

So at C.A.S.A., we're able to provide four different levels of English, Monday through Friday mornings, Monday through Friday evenings, and on Saturdays. And this is an invaluable resource to school districts that don't have the space because during the day they're in school. So in Hempstead, the Hempstead School District has been very successful in using satellite programs where they're provided space for free, it could be in a church, it could be in a local building that's not being used, we use our civil service classrooms, where people come in and take the police exam. We use the cafeteria where people, in the morning the cafeteria's not being used. So you can be creative about implementation and I think it's such a critical need but one of the major stumbling blocks is the politics of the issue, and certainly the way you're going to implement this, the testing requirements are really difficult. I think a lot of our teachers and a lot of community-based organizations state that they wish they could devote more time to teaching. And you have to have a very good administrative staff in the school district, and you have to have good administrators in the local program. So it's something that I think there are a lot of creative ways where we can bring these programs to a community, and ultimately tie them into economic development. But there are certainly competing interests that impede that.

Jonathan Bowles: That's a great point, and you talk about community-based organizations and their role in this. And it gets back to something I think that Dr. Rivera talked about, when he was talking about EPE. And I wanted to ask a general question about EPE, and whether this is something that should or could be reformed. Because, you know Dr. Rivera talked about how often it's in these communities where it's the best way to really deliver services – the Center for an Urban Future, earlier this year, released a major report about the impact that immigrant entrepreneurs are having on the economy of New York City and one of the things that struck me about that was that New York City has some amazingly good economic development and small business services, but there's a disconnect where a lot of the immigrant entrepreneurs around the city just aren't connecting because a lot of them just aren't on the ground in immigrant communities and there's a lot of misunderstanding about how to actually reach out and connect with some of these communities and I'm just curious, bringing it back to EPE, you know, is this something that needs to be reformed, and is there a political will to do it?

Marianela Jordan: I think, certainly, political will is parochial, again, to use the same term. In Nassau County, you know, we're very grateful to have a county executive who's very bold politically on immigration. I mean, he just created an immigration task force where we even called into investigation what local immigration officials were doing and are not supposed to be doing with Nassau County police. So political will is critical, but political will in Nassau is different than it is in Suffolk, than it is in Queens. EPE, I had a really interesting discussion with our ESL coordinator about how we happen to have very quality, well-educated staff who are working with our student population. But a lot of the teachers and a lot of the students and a lot of the community-based organizations feel that EPE funding, if it could be opened up to community-based organizations with accountability standards that you set up, with benchmarks,

with testing requirements, but I think some of these things need to be revisited because often times, we all know that what's most critical to getting outcomes is when you're going into implementation on any program.

And the implementation of EPE funding is really challenging, even down to the way that the wording of the questions are set up, the fact that students have to, before they go to level 1, pass level 1 to level 2, they have to have 60 to 100 hours before they can qualify to move up to the next level. And these requirements that don't have the same amount of fluidity, which certainly we understand, it's to uphold accountability, it's also something that is making it very difficult, sometimes, for educators to teach, because they have to devote a lot of time to paperwork, they have to devote a lot of time to making sure they have accurate records of attendance, which, again, is important to draw down the funds. But what we don't want to do is that when we're measuring, and we do this in government a lot, that you're not doing something where measurement is something that impedes the progress of what you're actually trying to implement. And I think that at the state level, and I wanted very much to learn from the colleagues the table, so I'm sorry that I missed some of your comments, there are certainly tremendous opportunities in the community-based non-profit sector. What you want to do is you do your homework about who's reputable and who's really doing a good job of providing outcomes in other areas, because these organizations have the trust of the community, they have space and non-traditional hours, which is also very, very important, and may be able to provide free space, we provide free space.

Jonathan Bowles: I should also just point out to everybody, for the few of you who probably don't know this, but EPE is by far the largest pot of state funding for ESOL services around the state. And yet, as I understand it, libraries, community-based organizations, community colleges can't tap into that funding pool and another problem that we have found in our research with EPE is that the funding formula for EPE disadvantages some communities. The other members of the panel, I'm just curious, is EPE reform something you see as important, and how do we get there?

Dr. Manuel Rivera: I think it is, but I also need to provide full disclosure here. We sued the state education department over EPE. When EPE funds were first available, to the Rochester City School District –

[Tape cuts off briefly]

Dr. Manuel Rivera: …that existed in our community for adult education, for ESOL services, a few years later, the state developed regulations and came in and audited us, this is after the fact, and disallowed us $13 million dollars. So we were in the courts for a couple of years. Ultimately, they upheld the audit, but my point is, with EPE funding, it is an opportunity, it does represent an opportunity, yet on the other hand, in trying to do the right thing, you can have so many compliance regulations, that it does become a barrier to reaching your needy population, because it all comes down to implementation. And, again, making sure you have access, making sure that the adults who can benefit from some of these different services have the access that they need, and that you really need, I believe, to look at who can be some of the best organizations or service providers to deliver those services. It could well be CBOs, it could well be community

colleges. I think we need to examine that, I think we also need to examine the rate structure, and I think it's time that we paid attention to that and put that on our agenda.

Jonathan Bowles: Randy or Senator Maziarz, any thoughts?

Senator George Maziarz: I think this is probably going to be redundant, but is there the will to reform, the need to reform? Absolutely, but I think it's going to take organizations like this and forums like this to come back to the governor, and I clearly don't speak for the governor, to the governor and the legislature, to tell us what types of programs work. It was stated previously: is it the community-based, not-for-profit organizations? Is it organizations like the community-college level for adults? And what programs within the lower-level K-12 that work in which districts.

Randy Wolken: I really can't speak to the reform itself, I can say though from the business community, having intermediaries is absolutely critical. They don't have the necessary skills within the organization, so finding the best way to get those skills into an organization is helpful. So, any way to streamline and improve the process would be welcomed, I think, by the business community, to make it more accessible.

Jonathan Bowles: We're going to get to questions from the audience very shortly, but one thing that came up in the first panel was that New York City has come to the table, relatively recently, with new funding for, paying for ESOL programs. And I'm curious, as we've demonstrated that this is becoming a growing issue around the state, is this something, and maybe Marianela, you can speak to it coming from Nassau County, that county governments, that city governments, as your county executive has mentioned quite often over the last several years, that local governments face some incredible fiscal challenges, and are already probably overburdened, but is this something that local officials should be looking to help fill the gap?

Marianela Jordan: Yeah, I think local officials just need to be educated on it, and they need to know that if it's not going to cost them anything locally, they're going to jump right on board. Because the fact of the matter is that at the local level, they have to deal with the quality of life issues that people are complaining about all the time. And what do people complain about the most with new immigrants? They don't want to learn English. They don't want to learn English, why don't they learn English, The Italians came over, they learned English. And our English classes are severely wait-listed. We serve 500 students a week, and we have three different semesters throughout the year; in the summer, there's an intensive program, it takes us one day to register. One day, morning and afternoon, wait-listed immediately, and we then have to refer to churches that do not have certainly the same caliber and quality of a program.

You also have a severe situation where local officials feel like they'd like to see how these programs are implemented, but even so, they want to know: how are they going to be able to measure and how are they going to get credit for it? And I work in government, I'm a non-profit management background person and community person, but I learned to organize a community to get their issues on the agenda. And there are certainly a lot of elected officials that want to see this happen. I think what we did also in Nassau County is that interestingly, when the budget was reviewed last year, all of a sudden, three legislators took an interest, because in their districts,

they saw a need for this and they actually put funding into contractual services, into your contractual services line, that we then are contracting out to local CBOs that don't qualify for EPE funding. I mean, it's nominal, $5,000 here, $10,000 there, but if that could be used somehow to leverage, I think that you would get, certainly, local officials that are willing, they just don't know how to do it, they want partners but they don't know how to do it.

Jonathan Bowles: Anyone else think that local officials should be part of this, as far as the funding discussion?

Senator George Maziarz: Well, in some respects, they may already be, but they just don't know it. Like, upstate, again, not really upstate, but I'm less familiar with the island of New York City, but most of the counties upstate are the prime sponsors of community colleges. And most of the county legislators appoint the members of the board of trustees of those colleges. So maybe it's informing them that pursuing ESOL programs, and that the funding for them through that mechanism, through their already-sponsorship of local community colleges at least at the adult level.

Jonathan Bowles: I guess the last question that I have before we get to the audience questions is how the broader points – someone mentioned Lou Dobbs earlier today, Marianela talked about the political lack of recognition or respect that the immigrant community gets on Long Island, despite their growing importance. How do we go from here just as kind of a marketing vehicle, or just changing the way people around the state, and maybe New York City has a head start, maybe we're a lot of the way there in New York City, but in other parts of the state, how do we change the tone of the debate and really get out more of the positives? Obviously there was the report yesterday, the Federal Reserve report coming up, but what else could be done as far as just moving public opinion?

Marianela Jordan: I think one of the really important things is that you just have to reframe the argument. At the local level, whether you're talking about Nassau or Suffolk County, again, there's that schism that I mentioned. People want people to learn the language, they want them to become integrated, but they won't vote on it in their school boards to allow for space for these programs to take place. The city of Glen Cove used to have, years ago, from what I understand, ESL programs there. Freeport, which is the village where I live, and so, they voted it down, and sometimes people just don't want to go into the implementation process whether it's because it's cumbersome, or because: is that going to draw more immigrants? There's that other issue, I think, and I think if you start to reframe it, the way that this organization has done, that's the way you want to do it.

You have to link it to industry. You have to link it to the almighty dollar, because that's what drives progress in this country, you know, entrepreneurial spirit, our love of capitalism, of the fruits of your labor. It doesn't have to be: go hungry, the less for the poor and more for the rich, but really, our ability as communities, which include immigrants in our communities, to really see the fruits of our labor. And how will we see more fruits of our labor? I always like to speak to the opposition because we don't want to preach to the converted. So, if I'm going to survive in Nassau County politics, or anywhere, I always have to speak to the opposition. The opposition wants you to address their issues, which are valid. And having downtown areas, where

immigrant communities now have opened up businesses, is really important to local economies where box chain stores came in and you have somebody on the panel who is business and it's the Latino and immigrant businesses that went in and opened up the mom and pop shops that have been vacant in Nassau County for 10, 15 years, when the Staples came in and the Home Depots and the T.J. Maxxes, and you know, people who used to open up those stores have gone elsewhere. A lot of times it's in minority neighborhoods, a lot of times it's in economically depressed neighborhoods. Linking that to this, I think, is important, because there is a tremendous entrepreneurial spirit, and people are figuring out that how to open up their businesses with limited English. And that is really contributing to our economy. If we could link it to that, I think it would be key.

If you're in government or you're in non-profit, we really have to learn to not make the same argument that's not working. You talk about, all human beings need to be treated with human dignity and respect. Yeah, we all know that. But if people really felt that and thought that, then we wouldn't have the problems that we're having. So that argument is not working. So we have to start talking about contributions and we have to start talking about knocking down what your concerns are and addressing them. And, yes, we want everybody to speak English. Allow us the opportunity to reframe opportunities and implementations so that we can do it. We want people to understand that ten people, 15 people shouldn't live in a house, let's teach people the American system so that they can become integrated. When you start speaking to people within the American paradigm, they respond. And that's the way that we've been successful, that's how I've been successful at doing it in Nassau and Long Island, because, unfortunately, people feel that undocumented human beings are illegal human beings, illegal aliens, not of this planet. So they are just completely disconnected, and when you're disconnected from people and you can't relate to them, all kinds of bad things happen. And I think people are disconnected to this issue in their neighborhoods. And we need to connect the dots for them in a way that they can relate to. They can't relate to it this way, so we have to try something else.

Dr. Manuel Rivera: More than about 15, almost 20 years ago there was a study done on the Perry Preschool Program demonstrated – it was a longitudinal study, cost-benefit analysis – on the impact of children attending preschool programs. And this study, many, many years ago, made the connection between the cost to a community in terms of social services, prisons, and how this investment that you would make early in a child's life could have a huge economic impact down the road. I think the same thing, and now, only now, in the last several years, do you see more and more people realizing: we need to invest more in preschool and invest more in early learning services for children, because ultimately, it's going to have an impact in our communities. I think the same thing holds true here, in terms of being more clear about not only the ways in which immigrants are contributing to our economic development in communities right now, but what is the impact of not investing in these types of services and programs, and what is the potential impact in a community? And just getting that and drilling it and bringing business in as a key partner, and reframing it, as you have said, and just being as clear as you can about the numbers and drilling it home, in terms of the importance of these investments.

Randy Wolken: I think the key is to change the language as well. I couldn't agree more. We need to talk about investments, not spending. People believe in investments, they understand the value of investments, the business community understands, they make capital investments every

day, they also want to make human resource investments. We also have to speak to different communities, well said. I mean, we can't keep speaking to the people who already believe what we believe. The key is to speak to new communities. And the final item with marketing is you've got to say it over and over and over and over and over again. Saying it once isn't enough, and I think one of the things, if anything, is that we don't say it enough; we don't talk about it enough, and therefore, just because it's been once doesn't mean it's been out there enough for people to hear it. It is a long battle, so to speak, in order to be successful, but I also think that the climate is right. Politicians care about losing businesses because they can't find quality labor. That would be a sad proposition, especially for upstate which has been losing population, to lose additional businesses because we can't even find skilled labor. So the reality is I think it is a different day, and we have to communicate differently, and investment is one of the paradigms I think we need to shift.

Jonathan Bowles: Okay. Questions? Anybody have a question from the audience?

Elyse Rudolph, Literary Assistance Center of New York: I want to know how I can get the private sector, local government, and the Department of Education together outside of this room, to effect real policy change. Because I want to challenge you about what to do with next steps. Because in New York City, and I'm sure all over the state, it's not just us, we have great examples. Both panels said the way to start is to do pilots, evaluate those pilots, show that they work and bring them to scale. Well I can't do that unless the three of you together, on a broad scale, help us make policy change that bring these things to scale. We do partnerships and collaborations between literacy programs and health care institutions, it's funded by private funds from Altman, public funds by State Ed. And Maureen O'Connor, from the libraries, can tell you about how the Queensborough Public Library has enhanced the quality of care at the Queens Health Center, and how that partnership has brought better access to care, and jobs. Home Hospital said that their partnership with an adult learning center changed the culture of the hospital. It's led to internships, it's led to jobs, it's led to a better understanding of the health care sector about who they serve. It's evaluated, it's a great pilot, I can't bring it to scale. I don't have the legislative support, I don't have systemic support on the part of the private sector, I don't know how to take it to the next step. So what do I do next?

Randy Wolken: Well, first of all let me commend you on having what sounds like a successful pilot. You start with success. But my sense is you can't start in the esoteric or the theory. You start with real success. You have real success. Now you need to talk about how do you take it to the next level? Who's not sitting at the table? Who needs to sit at the table for you to take it to the next level? It is really going to be implementation. In our community, one of the ways we started addressing the whole workforce development issue is we got together and started writing a grant. And we didn't get the first grant. But the idea was: we're now sitting at the table, we're now facilitating conversation. We're beginning the process, and it's a long, arduous process. It took several attempts to get a grant. It took several attempts to have the community dialogue. But if you've got a successful example, that sells. People love to jump onto success, so I would just encourage you to expand the network in which you're communicating with, bring new partners to the table, people who are maybe naysayers or doubters, and educate. I think it starts with successful pilots that grow into more successful opportunities, at least in the communities we looked at in our area. The ones that started down the road, five, ten, years ago are so much

further down the path of success because they have some successes. Nothing breeds commitment more than somebody else did it well. So I think you're on the right path, but I would expand the network.

The other thing is to get the people at the table to talk honestly. You know, we could have a lot of conversations, but if people won't put it on the table, you don't get anywhere. So you really do have to have a level of trust and you can only get that by sitting at the same table over and over again, and calling each other, in an honest way, to accountability. You know, it's the same kind of thing that goes on in any successful business or any successful family. It's about accountability and talking about the real issues, and I don't think we do it enough in our communities.

Jonathan Bowles: All right, next question?

Maria Morgan, Southern Westchester BOCES: I operate a literacy program of about 5,000 students a year. We register four times a year, for a week at a time, a lot of people. I would certainly support the idea that EPE is unfairly distributed. For one thing, it punishes the communities most in need. The higher rates of EPE are paid to the communities with smaller need, as it turns out, they're upstate because of the perceived wealth formula or some such. Those of us who operate literacy programs have been lobbying, hard, for many years to have that recalculated, because of that problem. The access to services for people is largely tied to money. We used to have money for access centers, things like child care, transportation. That no longer exists. We used to be able to offer people parenting classes; it's very difficult to do that now because that has to be tied to a GED. Those kinds of things slip by school districts who really cannot seem to perceive the relationship between their illiterate adult community and illiterate child community, for reasons I don't understand at all. There's a lot of lobbying that needs to be done to make the system work. And retooling EPE is a small piece of it, really, but a big piece. The State Ed literacy pool is a big one, and a potentially huge one that I think really needs to be marshaled by people on top. They need to be able to say to school districts and providers: this is our goal, these are our objectives. Let's get on with it; we know what has to be done. But the goals need to be set in a clear, definitive way, in a way that everybody can get behind.

Jonathan Bowles: Thank you. Anyone else?

Speaker from Ulster BOCES: Hi, I'm from a BOCES as well, but a much smaller BOCES, a much smaller community in Ulster County. And I would just like to say, we were talking about linkages and how to get the message across. BOCES represents a very unique agency to do that, especially the adult education program. We work with the K-12 programs, we work with BETAC, which works with many school districts, and we also work with the adult community, the Literacy Volunteers, the non-profit community, the Workforce Investment Board, we sit on the board, we bring employers into our school to see the kinds of vocational training we do, so that our vocational training meets the needs of the employers, and we provide vocational training in addition to our literacy classes, for free, for those students that are in the literacy classes. This is a great advantage in our county, and we are the link, we provide these services and we provide the networking and the advocacy in our county. And I'd like you to remember that it's not just

higher education, and it's not just K-12, but it's also BOCES adult education that's involved in this mission, and we're very involved, and we want to continue to be involved.

Karen Rosa, The Altman Foundation: I'm Karen Rosa from the Altman Foundation, representing private philanthropy, and I don't know if there are any private foundations in the room, but I'd just like to suggest that – I've also just stepped down as chair of the New York Regional Association of Grantmakers, which was 270 funders representing $35 billion dollars in assets. There are regional associations all over the state, and I strongly suggest linking with them, because we're the ones that work with those community-based organizations. We know who has great programs, we're able to fund evaluations very easily in a way that government agencies might not be able to do, and, also, foundations have trustees. Foundations need to understand that this is a critical issue in so many areas, whether its health or economic development, whatever area they're working in. Immigration is an issue for them, education, whatever it is. And, foundations have trustees, and those trustees are members of your business community, they're people who do have access to people who can make change. So I would just urge people to reach out to them, as well.

Randy Wolken: I'd like to make a comment on that. I'm really glad you brought that up because a lot of community involvement is done by private foundations and they leverage additional dollars. So you can end up piloting that to something even bigger. And you're right on in all your points; it's a way to involve the business community, as well, through a private foundation.

Marianela Jordan: I just want to piggyback on something, you know, when I hear the "lobbying" word, I start to kind of panic, because I think it's a very intimidating word for people at the local level, and they figure, oh my God, am I supposed to lobby this stuff at the federal level, at the state level? I think we don't have to reinvent the wheel, and sometimes there are really easy ways for you to just have your issue addressed, or listened to, right where you live. And it occurs to me that something as simple as maybe approaching the president of your school board, or your PTA, I mean, right where you live, and saying: this is an issue we care about, is this something that you would be willing to have somebody come in, and have a meeting, and have a presentation made to them at the local level? It's so much easier than thinking you're going to have to come up to Albany and you have to lobby and you have take on this big, intimidating project, and you would be surprised.

Because I think that if you want things to happen, you have to make it easy for people. And if you could come in and present, and this is how it works, and this is how it works in the Hempstead school district. So Hempstead and Freeport have it, why not Glen Cove? And this is how they do it. And just show them exactly how it's done, and how you as a CBO would want to be a satellite. And you can do it, these are the other services that you provide, and show them how it's done, and link up with maybe a mentor, a nonprofit in another area that's been successful in doing it, so you can see, you know, what their obstacles were. And I think that's so much easier for someone to do, and maybe have an example of a success, and to link it to your local chamber of commerce, rather than, sometimes at the state level, these associations are really critical but they can be intimidating to people who don't view themselves as advocates.

So everybody is an advocate, so if you're an educator and you really care about this, or you're a mom or you're a dad, or you're a business person, you can bring that information to your little group, and have that be a lot easier. You know, that's politics. Organizing around an idea. It could be you want a basketball court, at the park, and you know, I talk to kids about that all the time. We can do the same thing as a community, that's how I got involved in government, by organizing around an idea, that I felt people weren't looking at the right way. And we can all do that, because there are so many brilliant people in this room that are coming from their heart, about caring about this issue. Educators are very special people. And so, you can bring that message locally, and it's so much easier to do than when you have to do it from a lobbying perspective, which can be very intimidating and bureaucratic.

Denise Bukovan, Community Colleges, the State University of New York: Hi, I represent the thirty community colleges of the State University of New York, and just as a matter of sharing information, I would like you to know that the community colleges receive a line of categorical state aid funding and it's called non-credit, remedial course aid. And this aid funds non-credit courses in basic skills, which many of you would call literacy, and which includes services for college students as well as for community-based populations. In addition, it can fund ESOL. And as a matter of fact, those 30 community colleges right now are spending about $8 million dollars a year on ESOL and serving several thousand – I don't have the exact number, but my guess is they're serving about four or five thousand people in ESOL programs. Those community colleges, by their very nature, are designed to create linkages with their communities and that would include reaching out and working with community-based organizations to serve the needs of these populations.

Jonathan Bowles: Thank you.

Claudia Dean, New York State Education Department, Adult Literacy Office: Hi, this is just a comment. It's really great to hear real talk about reformulating EPE, or at least taking a look at it, because it's come up for so many years. The one thing I find a little bit scary, though, is unless you also look at removing the cap to EPE, just allowing other agencies to apply for it isn't really going to help expand services. You're just going to have more agencies fighting for this small pot of money already. It's very discouraging when we have applications come in, knowing that there are excellent agencies out there that provide wonderful services. We've seen them do it, we've helped them provide the service. We can't fund everybody now, so to just open up EPE to more organizations is not going to expand services, unless you look at removing the cap. So, just, while that discussion is coming up, I would just beg you to look at that, because it really won't expand services.

Jonathan Bowles: I think have time for probably one more audience question, but before we get to that, I actually want to ask Dr. Rivera, while you're here, I'm just curious, Dr. Rivera, and also Senator Maziarz, are there any things that you would suggest for members of the audience, for community-based organizations, for community colleges, for the various folks that are here that are concerned about this issue. What could they do to help you?

Dr. Manuel Rivera: Well, let me kind of back up, because the very first question that was asked, and it's going to relate to my response to your question, the very first question that was

asked about what can we do, how do you bring these people together, how do you get organized for this? I firmly believe that we need policies, maybe even, very clear policies, where it's in law or regulation, but at least very, very clear direction that actually causes these key agencies and institutions to come together, that brings together your state education department, that brings together your local government, that brings together your school district, that brings together institutions of higher ed within a region, that brings together the business community.
And, secondly, you incentivize that organization.

And they have to have clout. They have to be able to move an agenda within their community, within their region, with their resources, and cut through some of the bureaucratic barriers that hinder a community from implementing. So I guess what I would suggest is that somehow, as we go forward, working with different communities, all which have sometimes different needs and are in different parts of the region with different economic and workforce development needs that there ought to be, I believe, whether it's through literacy zones and building on that concept, or other opportunities to create these consortiums, of key policy makers together, locally or regionally, to help put together that plan that's needed in that area, how you're going to use your available resources, what other resources might you need, but it's a matter of, I think, bringing those institutions and the organizations together, and getting focused, and having a plan, and then driving it.

Jonathan Bowles: Thank you. Senator Maziarz?

Senator Maziarz: Well, the political realities, Marianela talked a little bit about the politics of all of this. The political realities of New York are that we still have a relatively new governor. And when the governor was elected, just a little over a year ago, really, the first budget that he proposed to the legislature in February, his people all took office in January. The first budget he proposed was probably a whole lot of issues and items and dollars that were proposed by the previous administration. I think, to get to the answer to your question is about change and regulations on EPE and removing the cap. I think we have to give this governor a chance. Particularly, I think we have to look at this year's budget, which will really be this governor's first full budget, developed by his staff. I think he's made some very positive moves. I think appointing Dr. Rivera, somebody who was in an upstate, big city school district to develop education policy right within the executive branch, is a very positive move. The fact that Dr. Rivera is here, speaking to a group like this, and making suggestions, I mean, he's got the ear of the governor. And one thing I've learned in the state government, in the years that I've been here, is that if a governor wants something, he is going to get it. So I think that's a positive step.

But I would go back, as Dr. Rivera did, to that first question, and it really wasn't a question, it was more of a comment, but maybe with a suggestion. I think that taking that positive example, if you will, and again going back to the political discussion on how things move, and how things get done, but partnering, taking that positive example, something that works, you mentioned, I'm not sure what hospital you mentioned, I'm not familiar with the area, but if that hospital has an organized workforce, you know maybe a major, unionized workforce, but getting them on board and then going to the local business community representative, either a local chamber or business association, who probably is a member of the Business Council in the state, getting them, labor and the business side, to partner and come to Albany, and say: look, here's an

example that works, that really works. It was a great investment of dollars, and you've got both labor and business telling you that this is a great way to move your agenda forward.

Jonathan Bowles: Okay, thanks. Last question.

June Franzel, Orange Ulster BOCES: I'm from Orange Ulster BOCES, and I run the adult ed program in that BOCES. One of the benefits that we have, not being a CBO, is that I only hire certified teachers, to teach ESL. And I also hire certified administrators. In running the program here and there, we've hired somebody that's not certified, that's not trained, and we've had abysmal results. The fact that we're within a BOCES, we're tightly watched, we're tightly controlled, we're watched by our board, and we have to follow the regulations that are laid down by State Ed. As it applies, another person made the point that if we spread that EPE pot, we're going to see more organizations fighting for the same amount of money. And I can tell you that, right now, running a program with approximately 3,000 literacy students in a year, if my EPE is reduced, I run the chance of not being able to run a program again. There are not enough CBOs in Orange County that could make up for the population that we currently serve. We can also go into any CBO and help them run a program, using our EPE funds, which would then be very closely administered, and it would be very closely watched, we provide the professional development. And people who are not in education often think that they know how to teach and that they know how to deliver instruction, and that is not the case. Even some of our certified instructors do not meet the qualifications that we need to meet our State Ed mandates. So, before you tear apart a system that is working and is extremely successful, please take a close look at how you're going to distribute those funds, because you may be paying for things that won't relate to instruction in the long run.

Jonathan Bowles: All right. Please join me in thanking our four wonderful panelists, really an excellent discussion and before you get up, again, we are going to be serving lunch momentarily, we're going to actually have a break for about 10 minutes or so, then lunch is going to be served, and please don't forget that during lunch, I think one of the most exciting parts of this day, we are going to have people at every table get together, brainstorm, we're going to be asking you, each of you, each table, for three ideas. You've heard a lot of ideas today about what can be done to expand and improve ESOL, and we want to hear from you what you think your three top priorities are. Thank you.

Working Lunch: Developing An Action Agenda: Attendees identify strategies and priorities for legislative, executive, and private sector action.

Moderators: **Karen Schimke**, SCAA and **Tara Colton**, Center for an Urban Future

Karen Schimke, SCAA: We are pleased to be able to co-sponsor this event with the Center for an Urban Future and the Business Council. We're asking everybody to take a seat and get started, because we think a lot of energy was built up this morning, there were a lot of good ideas, and I certainly saw clusters of people, I don't know if they were plotting or just, what they were doing, but they were certainly engaged in thinking about these issues. So, what we want you to do over lunch, this is a working lunch. The definition of a working lunch is when you get

to talk with your mouth full, and we want you to put some ideas together, that could become say, three action ideas, that could carry us to the next stage, as we've talked about the work this morning around ESOL. So we're asking each table to identify a person who will then be asked to share with everybody your two or three top points. If there are people at small tables, if you want to fill in places so that you'll be part of a larger conversation, we invite you to do that; we would urge you to do that, in fact. So, we want the ideas that you would generate to be very actionable, very focused, very targeted. We want to give a couple of examples toward that end.

Tara Colton, Center for an Urban Future: So, just to add on to what Karen said, we really want to you to think creatively, think about the actions, less about the strategies and how we get there. So, be as specific as possible, and we really would encourage you, given all we talked about today, to come up with at least one of your three ideas for the private sector. You could have all three be for the private sector, but we really encourage that at least one be for them. So, just to give you some examples of ideas, of the specific types of things that we're talking about, and I'm not asking you to approve these ideas, these are just, if I was at a table, these are some of the things that I would say. And they give you an example of the kind of specificity we're looking for.

Karen Schimke: So, after you do this, and after we take it down either on a flip chart or on the computer, you might be wondering what would happen then. What would happen then is that for one thing, we're going to publish proceedings of this event, and these ideas will be incorporated into that publication. We hope it will inform our work, but we also hope it will serve to inform work that you might doing in local communities or in statewide organizations, toward making strides toward more availability of ESOL. So if you have ideas, I don't know about you, but sometimes when I leave an event like this, when I'm driving home, it's when I have my very best idea. And so, we invite you to email your very best ideas to Tara. So, with that, I think you should get started, do identify somebody who later can become a reporter for your group, get started in your conversation. We're here to promote action. Thanks. Have good discussions.

Karen Schimke: We're going to ask you to report no more than three things, if you have fewer that's okay, we hope that one of them would be in the private sector, and we expect you to be very, very brief, like two minutes, or something like that, per table. And not everybody gets to speak, only your spokesperson. So I think we're going to start over here, with this table, because they volunteered. I guess it depends on your definition of volunteering.

Audience speaker: Great, thank you. We came up with three things, our second and third are actually connected. The first is to refocus the message on framing the immigrant population as an answer, in many cases, to our New York State economic development issues, rather than a problem. In other words, creating more of the potential for solutions, invest in the potential of this resource, not just spending on a problem, promote greater tolerance, and we thought that could also be done and pushed down to the K-12 education opportunities, in focusing on language studies, working with the Board of Regents in perhaps giving high school students greater recognition for language studies as high school requirements. Number two is mapping and assessing the need for –

Karen Schimke: That was one recommendation? Could you maybe summarize it again for us in one sentence so we could get it up here?

Audience speaker: I'll give you this piece of paper when I'm done. Two is mapping and accessing the needs for employment opportunities in each region of the state. Where are the services currently provided to create an overlay of needs and availability of services to create better coordination? And that links to number three, which is connecting with the governor's economic security cabinet, which is an existing structure created by the governor, of various public agencies, I know the state Education Department, we sit on that structure as well as DOL, SUNY, CUNY, higher education, OTDA, and they've broken into a workforce development sub-cabinet already, that is already discussing the needs of LEP/ELL students, and LEP adults, so we thought that would be a great focus to bring the private sector into that discussion as well, focusing on connections and collaboration, and link that to number one, saying: where is the need available, where are the jobs available?

Karen Schimke: Thank you. That was a pretty good role model for brevity.

Nadia Rubai-Barrett, Binghamton University's public administration program: We had four, but I'll only give you the first three. Okay, one is the need to reach out to include organized labor at the table, for a couple of reasons. Obviously, they're an important player in this, they have an interest in upgrading the skills of workers, and they're also another pool of resources. Second is to not look at the teacher side of ESOL from a simple approach, but rather to see it as tiers of qualified teachers that are required, yes they need to be able to do the vocational, program-specific, specific-purpose English training, but we also can think in terms of qualified teachers, to teach basic levels, and then credentialed teachers to teach the more advanced levels. And then third, in terms of disseminating information, to perhaps partner with universities, students and faculty who may be able to write up case studies targeted to different audiences. It could be published in newspapers, chamber of commerce publications, union publications, disseminated to legislative staff, packaged in different ways, but talking about success stories and providing very detailed information on how to replicate those successes in other settings.

Karen Schimke: So that's an effort, in part, to respond to the reframing discussion that happened earlier.

Nadia Rubai-Barrett: The reframing, and how do you go from a successful pilot to broader dissemination of that information?

Matt Hobart, New York Farm Bureau: One of our ideas was to kind of look at it from a two-tiered approach, involving both the public and the private sector. We looked at the need of having, for the business community, having more applied experiential language development, for safety issues, breaking down communication barriers and cultural barriers. One of those ideas, obviously, would still involve partnerships between the public and the private sectors, but for the short-term needs, whether it's at the site of employment, to bring in people to train on sector-specific language-development skills that are needed, where you'd also have the employer there as well. So you could, for an example, if you're learning the Spanish word, you also learn the equivalent word together, which really does help to break down those cultural and

communication barriers. And then for the long term, looking more to the public groups and the community-based organizations to meet the life skills and language proficiency needs down the road, the long term, really developing them so they can be proficient in that, addressing sort of the short-term, kind of rapid response and then the long term. Also another idea that we talked about was the idea of some kind of a fee-based program, you know, if we have 70 seats in the classroom, and we have a waiting list, is there any way to look at being creative? You know, 70 people, if each one has to pay a dollar, how many more seats do you create at the table with the limited amount of funding? And we do this in a lot of other areas with income threshold and then assess it based on that, another example would be school lunch programs, some kids get lunch for free, some pay 25 cents, some pay 50 cents. Just the idea of thinking creatively of how to get the most impact out of the dollars that we currently have.

Maria Morgan, Southern Westchester BOCES: In public, we'd like to see goal setting. Simple clear goals, that would include things like all entities receiving state aid must participate in some form of literacy education, or at least have it on site in some shape or form. Obviously, retooling the EPE formula, especially to touch on those who are 18 to 21, that's the fastest-growing population that we have. To make state aid available for adult ed facilities, school districts get huge state aid for facilities, adult ed gets none, which is a real problem when you're talking about mounting an adult ed program. Privately, to have people participate with New York State in a campaign to paint a realistic and true picture of immigration and what it means to the economy, and to the students and the people in our communities. And to have a worker-retention incentive for employers, so that they have a big reason, to not only hire but to keep their employees.

Audience speaker: I'll be fast, a couple of ours are repeats. We also thought about worker-retention incentives for businesses, and echoing the table over there, we talked about looking at the certification requirements under EPE for teachers. And we also talked about different strategies to make ESOL services more worker-friendly, so, supportive services, we talked a little bit about transportation, especially in rural areas, as well as using contextualized education. And then we also looked at the EPE funding formula, and thinking about including both base funding as well as performance or enrollment-based funding.

Marilyn Rymniak, Literacy Assistance Center, New York City: Some of ours have been covered already, but basically really undertaking a definitive, sophisticated needs analysis and gap analysis study. A lot of them have been done, there have been mappings all over the place, but one statewide, and particularly one that takes into consideration all the different categories of ESOL learners we have. We're going from oral tradition up through some people with PhDs, MBAs, and medical degrees, and we're sort of putting them in one size fits all categories, and that's a problem. And that's not conveying exactly what we're dealing with. Secondly, again, a very sophisticated, maybe the Ad Council can do this, PR campaign, statewide, to really counteract the Lou Dobbs of this world, to basically say: this is what we're dealing with, with immigration, here are the actual facts, and here is what it takes to get these people into the economy and why it benefits overall, the state. And the third one—and Tom's going to love this one—a statewide, funding a statewide hotline for literacy programs. A lot of the problem is that people don't know the programs that are out there, so there are a lot of programs that go without enough students, next to a program that's overloaded with students, and we'd like this to be

multilingual, so that people can get real counseling online of what they need so they don't start a program and find out five weeks later that they're in the wrong program.

José Davila, New York Immigration Coalition: We also raised the mapping piece, matching immigrant community needs to workforce needs, some great ideas about some local, I guess forums. One was having local county legislatures have hearings, to try to discuss the issue, generate support and launch local pilots to build that kind of grass-roots support, for local governments to really be supporting these kinds of expanded models. Also arranging briefings, locally and statewide, through NYRAG, in terms of getting the philanthropic community together, to become partners in this process and also to leverage resources as well. I think the other idea was really working with the state about developing sort of a concept paper that lays out both what the framework would be for an expanded, improved system, but also lining up all the players and the stakeholders who are in the room and others, to be part of this process, labor and so forth, and really laying out, also, an advocacy strategy on how to achieve those goals.

Audience speaker: Okay, a lot of what I'm going to say has already been said, but I'm going to say it anyway. We nailed it down to three. Survey the business community, to assess and identify appropriate incentives to provide literacy and language skills on-site. Identify foundations or other neutral community arbitrators to bring together relevant players and then employ neutral technologies to kind of problem solve, and that includes mapping, and then I just want to add we had a great idea to write op-ed pieces, twinned op-ed pieces, with people from education and people from business, or advocates in literacy with business people, and begin to build in your community that way. Establish multi-stakeholder MOUs as a basis of EPE reform, such as libraries, community-based organizations, BOCES, community colleges, etc.

Jim Rodriguez, Capital District Workers Center: For the public, we would look at the New York State Economic Development Corporation, they should assign a portion of their annual funding towards English-language instruction, as a workplace development initiative, as a collaborative effort between public and private. Industrial development agencies, otherwise known as IDAs, should assign a portion of revenues obtained through bonding initiatives to English language infrastructure, that means if they don't supply us with the amount of jobs that they have, hopefully that the monies that they're supposed to pay back are accountable and collected, so we can use that. Our third one would be to expand public partnerships to provide ESOL training by strengthening relationships between the New York State Education Department, the State Department of Labor, and SUNY through statewide EOC networks which provide pre-college non-credit training for adults.

Audience speaker: We ended up having a tremendous conversation really learning about one another, and collaboration and cooperation rather than feeling as though because of the money pot, sometimes we're pitted against one another, so we had this amazing conversation. What does that look like? How do we collaborate, what is regionalization, and what would that look like? But also, are we going to retool our financial dollars right now to support many of these literacy initiatives, and what are we in education and Department of Labor and in the workforce, looking at in the emerging technologies for green careers? How do we save our environment, what are we looking at right now for us in education, to make sure that our current workforce understands green careers, how are we preparing them for that and how are we preparing our

young people for that, and are we working with our WIA system? Are those systems working, how are we making them work, if they're not, what do we need do to help with our workforce initiative? And everything else that's up there.

Hilary Hodge, The Governing Institute of New Jersey: We talked about how bills such as the farm bill, which are currently being negotiated, some subsidies could be mandated to go toward language training. We talked about supporting current legislation, such as the Adults Achieving the American Dream Act that would give additional funding, and also pushing for a Senate version of that bill. And our second idea was to have brief, concise reports, up-to-date reports, on current trends, like, projected population change, and also hard data on the benefits of workplace English programs that employers could look at and have that be available for the Business Council, chambers of commerce, and any other interested parties on the state Department of Labor website.

Linda Feldman, Literacy Volunteers of Rensselaer County: We talked a great deal about things that have already been mentioned, but we also spoke specifically of the need to identify people within the immigrant or foreign-born population who can act as interlocutors between their own population and the business world, and the world of services. We need to be able to identify the people who are already in the workplaces, who are able to perform that service in the workplace, to promote their own need for services, on the job site. And what else did we cover? Oh, and goals. If we're able to articulate our goals, in really concrete ways, if we're able to establish our goals in ways that give people a sense of the doable and concrete outcomes, it would give an indication that we've done our research, we've done our homework, we can bring that to the public sector and to the private sector as well.

Karen Schimke: It's amazing to me in this short amount of time, we could come up with 37 ideas, and they seem to have some themes, themes like – a lot of interest in setting goals, some interest in legislation, certainly a lot of discussion about collaboration, and then information. I think that if I heard anything loud and clear, it's that we need to have a better understanding about all kinds of information, the population, which is not a single population, the landscape of what's out there in terms of opportunities and service delivery and so on. So as we said before, the intention will be for this to become part of the proceedings that will be published that you will all receive, and have access to on the website, and of course, will send it in your Christmas letter, or your holiday letter, to all of your nearest and dearest friends, because you'll want them to have it, because that's part, by the way, of framing it. Part of educating people, is talking about it with people that we just run across in everyday life. And so we'll be getting that out, in what time frame, Tara?

Tara Colton: Oh, tomorrow! [audience laughter] Within a couple weeks.

Karen Schimke: So you should have it very quickly. And again, we want to remind everybody that if you have some thoughts or ideas that somehow didn't get incorporated in this pretty long list, you're going to have to go with your memory for now, please contact Tara via e-mail, and share those ideas that you might want to see added to this list, and we'll see that they get added. So with that, I think that we have had a very busy, breathless morning I would say, wouldn't you? Just on behalf of the Center for an Urban Future, the Business Council, SCAA, we're

pleased that you came, we're energized by the fact that you came, you probably have brought more work to us, we hope we've brought more work to you. Thank you so much.

Additional Ideas and Input Received Via Email

June Franzel, Director, Adult & Continuing Education, Orange-Ulster BOCES: In Orange County, we do not have any waiting lines at this time, nor am I aware of any other BOCES program with a waiting line. My EPE cap has been raised substantially and allows me to open all the classes I need to. If a CBO needs certified instructors trained in NRS outcomes, I could supply them within two weeks, and they would be observed by a certified administrator trained in instruction and classroom management. Teaching is more than putting a person in a classroom. BOCES and school district programs are fiscally accountable to a business official and a school board, which closely watches how money is spent. These controls are not in place in many CBOs. Our program offers far more services than a CBO can offer, but EPE is our major source of funding. If this source is compromised, my entire program, which includes career training, could fall apart. Petitioning for increased funding is important, but opening up current funding to other agencies without accountability could ultimately reduce educational opportunities, not increase them. I suggest you include some adult education program managers in this process. A small change to an outsider, thinking they are helping, can lead to disaster for a program. The only people who truly understand the complexities of these programs are adult ed program managers.

Pamela Rourke, Director of Adult Education, Sullivan County BOCES: I do not think the issues facing New York City should be identified as issues statewide. Sullivan County is a rural county located approximately 90 miles north of New York City. We work very closely with our local Workforce Investment Board and our One Stop Center. The Department of Labor funding (WIA) received by the Workforce Investment Board has been drastically reduced over the past few years, as a result we do use both WIA, TANF and EPE dollars to maximize resources. We also have on-site ESOL classes at local businesses and have ESOL classes in communities with a large population of non-English speakers. We also do not have a waiting list. Students are enrolled and begin classes immediately. Because Sullivan County is small it is easier for agencies to work together, in fact we have to, to ensure our customers and students receive the training and services necessary to assist them in overcoming the barriers that have kept them from being successful. I do appreciate and applaud you addressing this issue, however I do not believe that what you stated as top priorities are the same statewide.