

Hello! And welcome to the State of 911 Webinar series, hosted by NHTSA's National 911 program. My name is Brian, and I'll be the moderator for today's session. Next slide.

This webinar is designed to provide useful information for the 911 stakeholder community about federal, state and local participation in the planning, design, and advancement of 911. It includes real life experiences from leaders utilizing processes to improve 911 throughout the country.

Today's sessions are exciting because we're focused on one of our most important issues in 911, our people.

We're gonna hear insights on the cultural evolution through challenging traditionalism and the status quo, and how the workforce has evolved in this post-pandemic world. And the related impact to PSAPs working toward change. Additionally, we will learn about approaches from two states in their development of statewide recruitment campaigns, incorporating targeted efforts at recruiting, as well as educating potential applicants on their role, serving the community as a 911 telecommunicator.

Today's webinar is being recorded and will be posted on [911.gov](https://www.911.gov). For more information on National 911 program webinars, access to archived recordings or to learn more about the National 911 program. Please visit [911.gov](https://www.911.gov)

For closed captioning, hover over the bottom of the zoom screen for the meeting controls. Then, click the CC button to start viewing the captioning.

Feedback or questions about webinars can be sent to NHTSA.National911@dot.gov.

Next slide.

The National 911 program would like you like to make you aware of the documents and tools section on the [911.gov](https://www.911.gov) website,

Uh, which has been updated with new resources and improved access. Seven new documents were added in the last 10 days. 911 stakeholders are encouraged to submit links and documents that would be of use and interest to your 911 colleagues, including policy documents, plans, and reports across several topics, such as governance, management, operations, post-crash care, standards and best practices, and technical.

You may access webpage under the resources dropdown menu or scan the QR code in the bottom right corner of this slide

Content can be submitted by clicking the online submission form on the top right side of Docs and Tools. Next slide.

The National 911 Program would also like to invite you to visit the 911 Telecommunicator Tree of Life and share the name of a remarkable 911 telecommunicator who has inspired you. Share your story at 911treeoflife.org to honor a special 911 telecommunicator who, who is making a difference in your community. We'd like to highlight the Tree of Life during National Public Safety Telecommunicator Week, and we would like more leaves on our tree

Next slide.

Please note that all participant's phone lines have been put in Listen Only mode and this webinar is being recorded. To ask questions of our presenters, feel free to take one of two actions using Zoom's Q&A feature located on the bottom of your screen in the meeting controls, you can enter the question at any time during the presentation, and it'll be entered into queue. Hover your mouse over the bottom of the page to access meeting controls.

Or, to ask your question live, use Raise Hand feature to request your phone line be unmuted, and you'll

be called upon to ask your questions. Individuals register for the webinar will receive access to today's PowerPoint presentation and the Webinar recording.

With that, I'd like to introduce our first topic and speaker.

Today we have Tina Buneta, director of Aurora 911, Aurora, Colorado.

Good morning, friends. Happy New Year! Everyone. I am excited to be here with you today and appreciate the opportunity to share some of our lessons learned in the last few years.

And for the person handling slides we seem to be bouncing back and forth between slide one and slide two, so we could go ahead and move to slide two, we are now on slide three.

I'm not sure what's happening.

Go back, please.

Back

Another one, please.

Thank you.

We'll go ahead and leave this here.

Okay, we ready? [Laughs]

So oh, please back up the slide.

Your animation keeps automatically advancing really quick. So, I'm sorry about that. I'm trying to fix it while we're live.

Oh no.

One moment you guys, sorry for the technical difficulties.

Well, while we're trying to figure that out, let me just spend a few minutes setting the stage for our discussion today. The discussion about culture, and its evolution. It's really difficult to contain it in a 20-minute discussion. And so I have boiled this down into the most

highlighted, most important factors to consider, and some of the most important lessons and steps that we have taken as a team, in the last four years. However, there's a whole lot more beneath the surface, and so I want to invite you to contact me. I will display my QR code at the end of the presentation.

Additionally, you can hear more about Aurora's 911's journey on January 17th. We will be presenting through Justice Clearing House, and we will also be present at the Be The Difference conference in Knoxville, Tennessee, at the end of the month.

So moving. Moving along. Let's talk about

what happened to 911 in 2020. Particularly the staffing crisis that emerged with the onset of the pandemic, the reality is

a lot of the problems that we were having in the 911 center and in our culture, um.

I'm wondering, Kyra, would it be easier for me to share my screen?

manually?

Korina? Can you release it to her?

Yeah.

Oh, hold on.

We might be okay. It hasn't changed. So

Okay.

Go ahead and keep going.

Thank you. So obviously we all, And I apologize for this. I'm not sure what happened here.

So, as we all know.

2020 was a difficult year, because we were already

struggling in the 911 profession. We had an average turnover rate of 14 to 17% annually, and

if you all are, you know, long in the tooth like I am, I'm in my 25th year. You'll know that the overarching culture and the, the mood of the culture in the 911 community was quite negative.

I think that had a lot to do with the disempowerment of 911 as a profession, and that there were not a lot of intentional investments made in 911. So for those of you who, you know, maybe grew up in the organization charts of other agencies, such as police and fire. You may know that you know oftentimes your leadership did not begin in the seat

as you did, or often we had to rely on vacancy savings in order to invest anything into our people. And oftentimes, you know,

command and control environments and culture were really the overarching theme. And so we really felt as though we had to follow orders. But there was not a lot of input into a communication. And so through that disempowerment, there is a culture that was created in the 911 industry where

professionals, because they maybe didn't feel like invested equal professionals in the in, in the overarching environment

perhaps took on more childlike behaviors, and more disempowered behaviors, and we, we saw that manifest through, you know, the process of eating your young. This is a, you know, a phrase that everyone can probably relate to with the onboarding process. And ,you know, not everyone can do this job. And so it takes a very unique person to do this job. And

sometimes there was actually a sense of accomplishment, when you know, members of our team were able to successfully push a new hire out.

That's not setting us up for success. And what really happened in the 2020 pandemic was that there was a great reassessment. A number of people in the 911 profession decided that they were done deciding between being a member of a team and being a member of their family, they were done with

cultures of negativity and gossip and hazing, and they were done with having no say in what was happening in their lives. And so a lot of people decided to move on.

This was a huge wake up call, and a gut check for so many leaders in the 911 industry, because we all had grown up in it. We all had experienced it firsthand, and we all knew, deep down that something had to change, but where do we begin? You know, when you don't

address an overall negative culture in a way that heals the culture. You know, we obviously were

unable to cope with the crisis of the pandemic we had very minimal coping, coping skills at all.

That spotlight on the loyalty bind is profound.

We've been in such a rigid culture for so long, where we said, you know, seniority rules. When you begin a job in 911, you will work the hours we tell you to work. If you need a second job, you can only work that second job, if it doesn't interfere with these hours we're assigning to you.

And we really put a lot of people and myself included in positions where we missed time with our family, time, that we can't get back. And that sense of self, that sense of being torn between your career and your family, was something that was accepted. We tolerated that.

And I believe that this new, this new

and this new energy that's coming out of 911, and in this this new generation of people who have decided, you know, I'm going to live my life now, and I also want to have a rewarding career

is really fundamental. Understanding that is fundamental and how we move forward as, as an industry, how we professionalize our industry, how we elevate our industry, and really how we recruit and retain the very best people, because we want people who want to be here, but we also want people who don't feel torn between us and living a life.

The truth is, ECCs across the country. What was highlighted was a culture of ineffective overall leadership. And it's not about the people. It's the fact that we didn't recognize early on the need to truly cultivate

leadership within our industry from the ground up. From the moment a person walked through the door on their first day, until the day they retired, pouring into those persons that that person's ability to have meaningful relationships, connections, and connect with a purpose in a cause that takes them to a greater level of professionalism.

Next slide, please.

So where do we begin in addressing this?

The first step is to understand the stress of our people.

Checking in with and knowing our people, what their challenges are, what are they juggling, what, what are their fears? What are their goals and aspirations?

Do you take the time to know that. And that is fundamentally one, one place that we began was the power of the check in, at every level of the organization. I'm sure that you've heard the term management by walking around and that is

the very best way to put your finger on the pulse of what's happening in your center and understanding what's happening with your team. So, begin there, know your people, and then focus on the essential needs of all employees. So, we know that universally, employees look into their employer for fair compensation.

They want relatedness and belonging, that they're a part of something bigger than themselves, that competency and development are you investing in me and my growth so that I can better invest in this service I'm providing as a professional?

And autonomy and input, we all want to understand the relevance of what we're doing. Why it's important. And we would like to have some input in crafting what our work environment looks like, and this is not unique to 911. This is truly fundamental for all employees.

And then

the next step is truly to set aside the way it has always been done.

That old way will never create new solutions. All they do is magnify what was old and what was dysfunctional in our industry, and will always prevent us from moving forward.

Most importantly, finding your flexibility.

I've learned, I would that I would rather keep a good employee and give them the schedule and the hours they need to balance their life

than to then to put my feet down and be rigid, and have that person leave a good employee for the sake of the way that we've always done it.

I'm here to tell you that command and control structure through rigidity directives

and a lack of a two way dialogue is obsolete. And so

that's the gut check for anyone who's considering

whether or not it's time to become flexible. I'm telling you that time has come and gone, and if you haven't done it, you're behind the curve. So identifying a plan to meet those needs is, is finally putting all of those

understandings into action. Next slide.

Let's quickly discuss fair compensation.

Most of us kind of live in a vacuum, and we don't really understand the intricacies involved in determining salary. And what I learned early on was, it's really important for leaders in 911 to do a deep dive into, into understanding

how the market is evaluated, and how that your market area is determined for compensation.

I came into a center that was way under compensated, and when I did a deep dive into understanding what was happening, I learned that when they were doing the, the salary study that they were in that that our compensation team was inadvertently

bringing in multiple rural area centers that had a very different cost of living index, a very different call volume and what it was doing was dragging down

the cost of the salary for our professionals. And so, by helping them identify the right market to evaluate ourselves against, we were able to increase our salary by over 63% over three years.

And it's not that this is done maliciously, but sometimes you just don't know what you don't know. And so it's really important to get involved and understand. Make sure that you stay on top of the game. This must be an ongoing thing, annually, biannually. Ensure that someone is monitoring the situation because it's a whole lot easier budgetarily to make small adjustments all the time

than it is to try to catch up or to try to figure out how to pay humongous signing bonuses in order, to attract and retain people.

The other thing to compensation, is the ability to move forward so building a career progression structure that provides every member with an opportunity to, to invest in their growth that is not

necessarily related to promoting to Supervisor. Have a career progression structure within your line level.

Perhaps tie it to additional certifications. If you begin as a call taker, and then you become certified and fire dispatch, let that be a step. You become certified in in police dispatching, let that be a step. Find ways to give the feeling of movement forward, sideways, or whatever it is, and build it to your team. Make sure it's relevant for the needs of your center and for your people.

The next thing we did was establish a compensation structure for laterals. Four years ago, the city of Aurora would pay a lateral the exact salary as they would pay a line or an inexperienced applicant.

We were able to create a compensation structure that would incentivize lateral applications in a way that would allow them to quickly kind of recoup and land where, at least where they were in relation to their experience, and oftentimes we were able to actually compensate laterals at a better rate than what they were earning in their previous agency.

Creating opportunities to take on additional responsibilities and earn detail pay. So whether you can determine this for yourself. But in Aurora, we were able to create acting supervisor, team leads.

And then we also provide detail pay for our CTOs.

We also provide compensation. It's, it's modest, but we compensate bilingual professionals, celebrating diversity and adding value to what they bring to the table

Next slide.

Let's discuss relatedness.

Everyone wants to feel like they're a part of something bigger than themselves. And

it's important for us to create

a culture of inclusion. So establishing clear expectations of interpersonal behavior. This might even dive deeper into defining your core values

in and out of bounds behavior. This takes time, but it's so important.

No tolerance for exclusion, instability, gossip, or any other toxic behavior that brings down the mood of the team. It's important to establish that every person matters. They've chosen our team, and so we have to make sure that they don't regret the choice

Supporting the whole person is important as well. We were able to identify a need to re-establish and reimagine a peer support and chaplain program.

which is now well attended and also, we are in the process of creating a job description for a full-time, spiritual wellness advisor, because the chaplain program was truly, has been so

positively successful for our team. Access to psychological resources, such as counseling and therapy, is really important. We have connected and partnered with a psychological team.

Any member of our team or the family member, can go at any time for therapy. We are billed for the hours. We have no idea who attends, and it's a great investment in the wellness of our team. It's, it's well-leveraged, and it results in a higher level of resilience, a higher level of emotional intelligence and problem-solving abilities.

And then finally, making sure that you have daily access to wellness. Whether it's creating a quiet room. Enhancing the ambiance of your center so that it is mood lifting. We installed a disco ball last

year. Wildly successful, very popular. And everyone has said that what it does is when you're having a hard day, it's really hard to stay that way when you look up, and you see all of the dancing colorful lights

We bring in a license massage therapist once a month. She spends a few hours on day shift, and she comes in over night shift. We hit both sides of the week and make sure that everyone has a connection with her.

Just making sure that people are taking care of themselves is really important. And then really identifying ways to celebrate your connection. Holding barbecues, holiday events, opportunities to bring your family in and connect them as well is important. We had a member of our team who

always brings in photo frames of her family, and she sets them at her console every day. And she is so inspiring that we designed picture frames that were given to every member of the team and invited them to add pictures of their family or identify their why and post it, you know, put it out on their console as they're working to remind them of why, what they do matters. And you know, really, why,

why, they're here. Why, they're a member of our team. Next slide, please.

We wanna make it very easy to recognize each other. So providing transparent and immediate ways of providing kudos to each other is very important for those of you who use systems such as guardian tracker, you can design your system in a way that can publicly create recognition for teams in a ways that other team members can see without seeing the employee's entire file. But what we found is by doing that that people were giving each other shout outs

all the time, and then in social media fashion, others, members of the team would sort of fly by later and add their encouraging comments as well. And so it was a force multiplier.

Inviting the families of your team members is also important. They're sharing your family member with you all the time, and so inviting them in, hosting holiday get togethers, or just bringing them in and putting them in a headset to understand what their family member does can be very powerful and getting the family support for your team members. We want to celebrate togetherness

and our team with intention. And so we make it a point to tell our story to the community we serve all the time, and it's a nice reminder to our team members

of the positive effect of our teamwork on one another. And the impact we make on our community.

Next slide, please.

We'll talk about professional development. It's really important. And I think this has really been an underserved area of culture development, ensuring that all levels of your organization have access to continuing education regardless of your staffing level. You can't let low staffing be the reason that you stop investing in, in the development of your employees.

It's even more important when things are tight

to invest in your people to remind them of their value and to fill their cup. Creating career enrichment opportunities is also a great way

to not only develop skill set in your people, but also to, you know, break up the monotony of the day to day.

We, we sponsor and incentivize professional certifications. So, you know, if we want our people to be next level, it's important for us to emulate that and to support that

by providing the funding necessary to help people achieve their professional certifications, you know,

hold ENP study groups. Honestly, we can find \$400 for someone to get their ENP. We can't use

And I will say this, like oftentimes we go to conferences. I'm one who attends, and I notice that oftentimes there it's director level supervisor level at the conferences for networking purposes, which is great. But I think it's more important

to make the space for line level individuals to attend these conferences so they can connect with their industry at a higher level, and perhaps inspire them to bring some innovation or new ideas back to the center. They need to know that they're a part of something greater than themselves. And so, you know, we can't wait for someone to become the leader

to let them experience these connections and these really important opportunities to grow and see what's happening in the industry outside of the walls of the center.

We were able to successfully establish an annual budget for professional development. It was a no brainer, just simply came forward and said, we are no longer using vacancy savings to determine whether or not we can invest in our people. This is the same priority that is placed on, you know, if you're a part of a law enforcement organization or a fire organization. You know, there are established budgets, and

a lot of resources allocated to ongoing training development certification. The same must happen in 911 that there is no difference. And so

this must happen. And it was, we were able to secure it. And we're growing our budget. So we're able to really diversify the types of experiences we're giving to our people well beyond conferences.

And the bottom line is when we invest in our people, they will in turn invest in the team. Next slide, please.

Leadership development is something that should happen throughout a career. Promoting leaders who are emotionally proficient versus technically proficient

is the way of new leadership in 911. It's so important from the moment someone is hired to invest in ongoing training and development in leadership for people who, not only are potential supervisors, but maybe even, you know also, not maybe, definitely also, people who are not interested in becoming a supervisor. When we are able

to invest in EQ-I, the ability to engage in mediation, de-escalation, the importance of documentation, the ability to coach and mentor others, we're not only strong leaders when we're ready to take those positions, but we're also exceptional teammates and peers. It's very important.

I can't really underscore this enough, and it should start from day one.

My philosophy on leadership is hire the best people, show them what to do, and then get out of their way. And so my next point is not to interfere, but pay attention, laissez-faire leadership is as dangerous as micromanagement.

Make sure that you have transparent documentation systems that allow you to check in to see the quality of the interactions, the quality of the documentation and the dialogue between supervisors and the people that they're leading.

It's really important to set clear expectations of leader behavior and enforce them. And that begins with ourselves that we're modeling the behavior we expect our leaders to emulate, and then that we are providing them with feedback. When they're doing it well and when they need some redirection, they're doing the best they can to. And so it's up to us to show them the way.

Creating a cadence of accountability at every level of the organization, beginning with ourselves, is, is

everything in culture. We are all responsible to one another. It is not a from the top down approach. Our, our organizational structure has been very flattened, but mostly inverted. As the director,

the people I directly supervise are above me. I'm responsible for them, and they are responsible for the people that they're overseeing, and so on, and so on. And we have to shift that mentality. It's so important

to the future of 911 and the future of longevity and retention in our center.

Next slide please.

Input in our work environment is something that is not,

we're not accustomed to that in 911. But it can be achieved. People want to have input for their work experience. They want to know that they have the ability to help steer the ship.

Teams who welcome input also have higher buy-in. And so if you're really in a place of he, a lot of change with technology, with organizational structure. Maybe you're consolidating.

People who have, who are invited to have input and participation in those things will exhibit a higher level of buy in and a decreased level of fear. It's just so important.

Those closest to the work are truly the subject matter experts more than we are. We want to involve them in planning for change and let them have hands on the process from beginning to end.

Transparency and communication are key. There can't be any secrets. We shouldn't be announcing changes after the decisions are made.

As much as we can involve our team, we need to. Because they will appreciate the participation, and they will also respect that you value them, and that you want that input from them.

One of the things we've done in Aurora that is incredibly successful is providing an open forum for bringing forward ideas and innovation. We want to reward team members who innovate and contribute. And so, we have created a public, publicly published idea submission page.

And whenever an, an employee, has an innovative idea, they bring it forward. We publish it.

And we also update the entire team on the outcome.

In 2023 we had almost 70 ideas brought forward by our team, and we were able to successfully implement 90% of those ideas, and if anyone was wondering what has happened with an idea, they can visit the innovation site at any time to see the most updated status

of the ideas brought forward. We wanna make sure that, our entire team understands that we value their input, that we're listening, and that we're considering all of their ideas in the future of our team.

Relevance is truly the foundation of everything, right? So everything we do, we must tie back to our mission and values, and we expect that in our team as well when they're bringing forward ideas.

So, in conclusion. it's really basic a lot of this, does it? It doesn't take

a lot to enact this, but it does take a lot of heart. These things don't happen overnight. I've been working on this for four years with my team, and we still have a long ways to go. But, but we have been very encouraged by the progress that we have been making, and I'm happy to share more in depth with you in the future. So, in conclusion, break it down this way. Identify a dedicated professional development budget monitor, compensation to ensure market equity.

Ensure all levels of your organization have access to continuing education, professional certifications, career enrichment and have input and involvement in change. create an environment based in emotional intelligence, celebrate and reward teamwork, disincentivize toxicity.

And finally,

Support your people. Find your flexibility. Discontinue rigidity wherever possible, and eliminate loyalty binds for your team members. They should never have to choose between being a member of your team

and being a member of their family or having a life. It is possible. It's different than what we're accustomed to. But I'm here to tell you. If you take the leap, you will find that you will have such a return on the investment, and it will make it much easier to move forward. With more finding, more ways

to be bendy. Next slide.

And that is the end of my time. This is my QR Code, if you'd like to connect with me. I know I've gone a little over, and I apologize for that, and I'm sorry. So sorry for the technical difficulties. If anyone has questions, now would be the time. Thank you so much.

Thank you so much, Tina, and let me just say this, that I've had the fortunate pleasure of going across the country and seeing 911 centers, and I met Tina at her center. And I can tell you that this, this isn't just words. This is how she lives in her center. And I knew at the moment I walked in.

It just feels different. So thank you for sharing this. I know we have a couple questions. We're going to actually have to keep moving because of our other content that we're gonna have. What will happen is we will get these questions answered, and they will get posted on the website, or as you had access to Tina's contact information, you can reach out to her directly as well.

But again. Thank you so much for that great information, inspiring words about how we have to look at our employees in our center's culture in a very different way. The one question about whether we're sharing the PowerPoint. Yes, this PowerPoint will be shared to attendees as well as the whole Webinar posted on 911.gov. within a couple of weeks of its conclusion here today. So now,

again, we are going to move on to our next presenters. We have two states talking about recruitment from a state point of view. So I am going to be introducing

Dana Wahlberg, director of Emergency Communication Networks and Veronica Marshall, Public Information Officer from Minnesota Department of Public Safety, and they will be followed by Pokey Harris, Executive Director of North Carolina's 911 Board, and Angie Toberville, Eastern 911 Regional Coordinator from the North Carolina, 911 Board.

So, Pokey, why don't you go ahead and take it away.

Okay, very good. Thank you. As Brian said, I am Pokey Harris, the executive director for the North Carolina 911 Board, and along with me is Angie Turbeville, who now does serve as our Education and Training Coordinator for the North Carolina 911 Board. Good afternoon to everyone. We are so pleased to provide a 50,000-foot overview of our media campaign for telecommunicator recruitment. And, Brian, we want to thank you in the National 911 Program for this invitation.

I do want to clarify that the 911 Board does not have purview oversight or authority regarding PSAP personnel, nor does the Board provide funding for personnel. However, through the ever to the Board's Education Committee, we have been focused on opportunities to assist the PSAPs, not only with education and training, but also to begin to address ways to combat the staffing shortages that PSAPs across the country are experiencing.

This recruitment campaign has proven to bring awareness of the role, the telecommunicator as a profession, and to drive interest in seeking information which resulted in the increase in applications for openings across the State. Therefore we met our intended goals and outcome for the campaign.

I do want to give credit to my counterpart, and friend Adam Wasserman, in the State of Washington. From whom I "borrowed" and I'm doing air quotes here folks, the idea. So thank you once again, Adam, for this.

As I transition to Angie to share more in depth with you about the initiative, I have to confess that we were naive when we began this endeavor. We both have learned a tremendous amount about media advertising more than we ever anticipated, because there truly is a science and psychology associated with advertising. And that is why it is proven so successful for our campaigns.

So, Angie, next slide and, or yup, and I'll let you share with the group.

Okay, thank you, Pokey. So yes, we're very excited about our telecommunicator recruitment PSA campaign and our goals with this when we, when we first began this journey was that we wanted to help with recruitment for all of our 911 centers in the State, and figure out a way to increase that applicant pool. Coming out of COVID, all of our PSAPs were sharing that their applicant pool had diminished.

and so we were looking for ways to increase the applicant pool. And then we wanted to create awareness of these positions and their contribution to the community. So that was our campaign goals going into this. Next slide, please.

So our strategy was that we had to find the 911 telecommunicator candidate

and with our partner Spectrum Reach

They, they helped us find that target audience. And then, after we found the target audience, we wanted to be able to reach them through all types of media. And then, at the end of our campaign strategy, we wanted to be able to measure our campaign, to see the effectiveness and the impact on the PSAPs in our state.

Next slide, please.

So to begin our campaign as we begin this journey, we created an audience profile based on research that was obtained from Spectrum Reach. So they looked at who,

who, typically or on average, is a 911 telecommunicator. And this information came from national statistics.

And so basically, we have over 60,000 911 telecommunicators currently employed in the United States. 73% of these are female and 27% of these are men. The average age is 37, and the average household income is 47,000. 56% are not married, 18 plus hours watching TV each week.

And then 88% watch cable TV and 94% watch streaming TV. So and this was some of the information that helped us to target. Because we want to find that telecommunicator candidate by understanding who needed to be reached.

Then we could have a media campaign that would actually reach that candidate. And of course, we all know that viewing habits, those analytics are available to, to companies such as this. And so then they could kind of match the viewing habits

with that desired candidate. So, armed with that information. we went to our next step. Next slide, please.

So we wanted a way to take the video and now and then target our target, our audience. But we also needed to have a way to connect that audience or that, or that candidate with the 911 centers in the State. So on the 911, on the North Carolina Board's website, we recreate. We created a recruitment page, and on that recruitment page we have all the 911 centers supported by the board are listed on our website. Now, when an applicant or the job seeker

comes to our website. They can go and find a listing of whoever or wherever they are looking for a job. The PSAPs in our state, they provided us the URL that they wanted that applicant to go to a job seeker for some of these. It's straight to a human resources website or web page, it could be to the PSAPs web page. It also could be to a hiring website, like, for example, government jobs.

So the PSAPs provided us that information of where they wanted that applicant to go and look and apply for a job.

So also on our website, we have the video as well. So I think it's a good time for us to for us to share the video. So if you'll go ahead and launch the video for us, please.

7 million 911 calls are made in North Carolina.

"911, what's your emergency."

Will you answer the call? Every second counts. You can be that lifeline. People in crisis look to us for assistance. We provide guidance and support until physical help can arrive at the scene. Join us and make a difference in our community. Be the calm in the chaos. Be the voice in the dark. It's the hardest career you'll ever love. Will you answer the call? Discover more at it.nc.gov/911careers.

Thank you. Yeah, we love our video. So every opportunity we get to show it I love to see it. It still gives me warm and fuzzies every time I see it, so it just makes me feel good about our 911 profession. So after we created the video and we had our, our webpage

operational, it was time for us to, to actually take our campaign out there on the media. So therefore, we decided to do a pilot project, and we did a 6-week flight because we wanted to be able to measure the effectiveness before launching this statewide and learn some lessons from that. So our pilot project. It was in two TV zones, as they say, a small portion of our Raleigh-Durham-Fayetteville

TV market. This, this, these two TV zones, as it said in media, how they refer to it was actually made up of 8 counties, which represented 9 PSAPs.

So, um

So after the 6 weeks was over, we had. We had actually worked with these PSAPs before the campaign launched, and then, after we had at, we had let them know that we would be seeking information. So we asked to for them to please keep up with, how many, if they were receiving more applications? What was our social media impacts? Was there HR being contacted more? So we wanted to have all of that information

so we could decide if this was a, a project that we wanted to take statewide. We knew we wanted to. But we just really wanted to have that information to support what we were doing. So of the nine PSAPs that were in our pilot program, 8 of them had up to a 65% increase in their applications. The one that did not, was not actively recruiting at that time.

All of the PSAPs had increase in their social media, and they also had an increase in they had, some public education requests to go out in the community, and they also had requests for job fairs. So we felt like our pilot project showed that this could be impactful for the entire state.

Next slide please. Okay.

So our campaign to take this statewide was to create awareness for the, create awareness for the

positions

through using Spectrum news, television and to actually have this geographic targeting over 60 networks and programming, to use streaming TV, to use social media, to have online search, and then also to have paid search.

So we wanted to reach statewide everyone. And we have a lot of rural areas in North Carolina. And it's very interesting to learn that, based on where you are in the State, how you access media is different from one area to the other, based on the prevalence of broadband in that region. So to cover everyone in the State and to meet, to actually get our targeted audience, that telecommunicator candidate.

We used all of these various means for our statewide campaign strategy.

Next slide, please.

So this slide, I know, is a little busy. But this kind of gives you an idea of how many how many flights, or what it, what it actually did, how many impressions, how many commercials were delivered. So Spectrum Reach, they delivered over almost 60,000 television commercials across 67 networks. The networks ranged from U.S.A., A & E, TNT.

All of the ones that are commonly used. So they, the commercials, were played strategically based on those viewer habits. Also, we had streaming TV, over 3 million impressions were delivered. 99% of these commercials were viewed fully, which is excellent. So we, so we knew that people were seeing our video. We also for our online video, we had a really high video completion rate where people were actually watching the video.

So and there. And there's more information on here, and in, in the interest of time, I will not go through all of these, but our campaign delivered, and we could see that we were getting results. It was being delivered, and people were seeing it on all the different various media platforms.

So after we had this, this information, our next step was to say, "Okay, well, this is great." I'm, I'm sorry. Can you get back for me, please? So we wanted to know how did our website perform? Because we know that state, we know that the campaign was delivered. But what impact did it have?

So using Google analytics, we, we actually look to see, how did our website perform? So during the time of the campaign from January through May of 2023, we had a 32% increase in the overall website for North Carolina Department of Information technology.

And our webpage, our career Webpage, we had over 37,000 job seekers visited, visited during the campaign.

And this traffic can only be, the only reason we did get all this traffic was because of the timeframe of the of the campaign. So it was, it was really good to hear that we were performing at this high level, but what was even more important, was that we wanted to know, what impact is this having on the PSAP? So we know that 37,000 people came to our web page.

But did anybody go and visit our PSAPs? So of 37,000 we had 32, over 32,000 job seekers visit the different job links from our PSAPs across the State.

32,000, which is a wonderful number. So it showed that that our campaign was effective, and it was creating awareness for the positions and people were actually out there looking for jobs, and they were curious about joining this wonderful profession.

So we had all of our PSAPs where access their, their link. Yeah. URL was accessed during the campaign, with the exception one, and that one their link had had broken. We were not aware of it.

So we were very excited to see all the website performance. Next slide, please.

So our next steps after the campaign ended in May is that we surveyed our PSAPs again to ask for their input, and the feedback that we received was overwhelmingly favorable. PSAPs were asking us to please continue with the campaign, that they wanted to see this again, that their telecommunicators were very appreciative of the awareness that we were bringing to, to the profession. Social media sites were, were

Increase, increased for the PSAPs. Some saw at more applications received. There was more buzz, more awareness about the position of telecommunicator. And this was the feedback directly from our 911 centers.

So after we received the feedback in the interim of before we started the next campaign, our next project was that we had Spectrum Reach actually tag the video with the PSAP logo and their URL. Very much like, if you see a Jeep commercial, and it has Jeep and then at the very end it has where they have placed what the local dealership is.

So that's what we did with our video. So basically, PSAPs to the state. They would have a professional video, high-quality video that would be tagged with their URL and their logo to use on their social media website. Or if they wanted to use it on their local media through television or so, or buy media, they could do that as well. And we also provide a display ad that could be used on social media.

So our next campaign has launched. It launched December 17, and it will run through June of 2024. Our campaign this time is three, 8-week intervals, with a 2-week break between each interval for us to look to see if we need to make any adjustments if, if there's any areas in our State that are being underserved. So we can, if we have to change up the campaign.

So but we're very excited about our campaign. It, it seems to be doing, seems to be helping the PSAPs, and our PSAPs seem to be very appreciative of, of all that we're doing to try to help them with their recruitment and creating awareness for the job.

Next slide, please.

So that is the end of our presentation. So I don't know if there's any questions, or Pokey, if you having any final comments.

Yeah, I'll just share a few closing words. I certainly would be remiss if we didn't share how critical engagement with the PSAPs was in providing the necessary data for the related analytics.

This required a huge commitment on their part in a coordinated effort. Not only with us, but with the various departments and individuals involved, with their application process within their respective localities. As well, credit is certainly due to the North Carolina 911 Board for embracing this concept and improving the financial investment

That today is just a little less than \$900,000.

They, too, are pleased with the success of the campaign, and believe it's a very worthwhile investment. Not only the current PSAP operations across the State, but in the future PSAP sustainability and the future of those who chose

this is a profession, and possibly because they saw this PSA. And I cannot stress enough the value of the partnership with our media partner Spectrum Reach. They, too, had an investment in immersed and immersed themselves in the project. They realized the value of reaching those who would become the heroes under the headsets.

And just as we learned about the science and psychology of advertising, they also learned about the role of the telecommunicator in the response life cycle. So as they learned, we learned. And I think that that added even more value to this project. So again, we want to thank Brian in the office for

inviting us. Anyone has any questions will be sure to entertain those in the chat session.

Please feel free to give either of us a call if you would like more information about this, thank you all.

Okay Great.

Good morning or good afternoon, and I can see that we have four minutes remaining, and Veronica and I will be very brief.

But we will likely go over just a little bit, and would ask for your indulgence, and staying with us, if possible.

Our office in Minnesota has the statutory responsibility for the design, management and maintenance of the statewide 911 network. But we have a lot of similarities to North Carolina as well, in that we do not have authority over the hiring or over the operational management of any of our 104 PSAPs.

We chose to work with a recruiting agency. When we prepared our,

or excuse me, an advertising agency. When we went to work with this and Veronica Marshall, who is our assigned PIO here at the Emergency Communication Networks Division, she worked with us and the office of communications prepared the RFP.

And there were a number of responses to that. We ended up awarding it to a firm known as Linnihan Foy, and we. Our first campaign cost about \$650,000, and was really focused on providing the need for obtaining quality candidates for our PSAPs.

And we've now finished our 6 months initial campaign, and we'll be moving forward into a subsequent phase as well. This one will continue to focus on recruiting. But also, we have taken some steps to look at retention. And let's go to the next slide. Play the video quick, and then

I'll speak briefly, and then turn it over to Veronica to wrap us up.

I'm a first responder, a first, first responder, even though I never fight fires, never been in an ambulance. I don't wear a badge or carry a gun.

But when somebody calls having one of their worst days, it's me they call first for help. There are easier jobs. But this isn't a job. It's my calling.

So that's the video that we're we also are very proud of it. It is on our website, our website is, it's your calling dot com,

or 911itsYourCalling.com, excuse me. And

"It's Your Calling" is kind of our logo and the billboard that you see

Featured now was these billboards were put up all across the State for different periods of time, and they generated a huge response.

And if, as we move on to the next slide, there's just some general information about that website and the criteria that we were looking for. We also created postcards

and we distributed those at the Minnesota State Fair and some other large organizations where there was a huge influx of people. So we were able to get a lot of attention, is a QR code there that people can connect to to get to the website. And on that website are all of the jobs that are posted

for PSAPs across the State. And with that, I will turn it over to Veronica to share some of the outcomes of the campaign.

Hi, everyone, and thanks for sticking with us. If you could advance the slide, please.

Thanks. So as the others have said on this you know, we kind of started off by throwing spaghetti at the wall, as you will, to see what stuck with our audience and everyone's population is different. So what worked for us might not work for you. So it was just a really good starting point for us.

So what we did find with our audience was Google Search, Indeed, Roku, Pluto TV, and Tubi were very successful for the people we were trying to reach. Our standalone website, the 911ItsYourCalling.com, got 20,000 clicks.

So for us, that was really successful. And now that we've been through this once, we can take what we learned and kind of evolve our campaign to make it leaner and stronger and know the targets we wanna hit or put more money behind. So that was a really positive thing that we have found from that outcome. Something else that we, we found was, we had a more diverse pool of candidates to choose from. So different populations were starting to apply for our position. So it was really successful

tool in that aspect.

Alright, if you could, please advance the slide.

Okay. So you might ask, why would you involve your PIO in a campaign? It's strict procurement. You don't need a PIO, but here's what I was able to do. Since I was involved

in the front end of this is I was working on earned media things that your advertisers, your advertisers, might not be able to get for you. And that's earned media, working with the media. So I put out this news release with one of the gorgeous videos they created for us talking about the need we had for more

PSTs, and so

It was a continuation of our campaign without expending money. I'm already part of the team.

So no more ad buys. So it was

we were able to, that was our release. It went out to the media. If you could click, please. We were able to reach the Twin Cities. We had news come out. This particular story

was a trusted media partner that I had actually known previously, and I invited him out to our PSAP to film and to interview the PSTs. Just like almost as a pilot program before we sent out the release, and it was so successful we had confidence going forward with the release. Loved the work he did. I attended that one personally, even though it was in Greater Minnesota. So hours from where I live. So all in all, just a really positive experience. Click again, please.

Here it is in the Twin Cities. Click again, please. Here it is on a radio. Click again, please.

Here, now this one was done by national news. I think this was ABC? It's too small for me to see. If you would click again. So, because it was national, we only had a very small shout out, so you might not think that's too helpful, but they included a link to our application site, which is huge. So it really raised our profile there in a just a super positive way.

Click again, please. Okay.

So this was our website, the standalone website that the national news linked to. And as I said, it got more than 20,000 clicks during the time we were checking. So just to really, like a sleek-looking thing, it was beautiful. And, and it really helps join a lot of

people. Dana, I don't know if you have anything you want to add about the website. But we just it's beautiful. We love it.

Yeah, well, and we've gotten a huge response from the PSAPs that this has really benefited the quality of the candidates that they have been able to interview, and it's just really a morale booster in many ways.

Alright. Click again, please.

Then that's the job board. So we have all of our PSAP managers are working with us. They have a form to fill out, and their vacancies are uploaded to the website. So it's just one easy spot for job seekers to see what is available and where, and they can do some, some filtering. But it's just to show that you know wherever you are there may be an opening, or if you want to be somewhere else, you could check and see

there's an opening there. So it was just a really helpful thing to have all of those vacancies in one spot. Click?

Okay, so here's something else that is unique, perhaps to the PIO. This is something that I was able to do again. As I say, a continuation of the campaign without ad buys. It's a recognition program that we're now doing to raise morale. So not only does that help with retention,

but word of mouth from the current PSTs to those considering the position because happy staff let other knows, let other people know they're happy. So we are asking our PSAP managers across the State to send in their recommendations. Someone on their team who has just done an amazing job, someone who deserves to be recognized. And so every month we're recognizing those PSTs.

They're getting a write up. They're getting a little video, and we're actually also working on getting them challenge coins. So they will have something tangible, physical to hold onto, as proof that we see them.

That we recognize them. We appreciate what they do. I'm actually also tried to connect with broadcasters to put this out monthly as well, just a public safety recognition. So we're gonna see where we go with that. But you know, you can take this so many different ways.

But not only does this impact your staff, but it also raises your public image by letting the public know more of what PSTs do.

And the feelings that work generates, and that they're appreciated by their managers, by the State. So that just really trickles down to raising the profile of our PSTs in and outside of the building. And that will help with hiring more people.

That said too, I'm actually at a PSAP right now. So when this is done, I'm going to film a celebration for our next PSAP star for this month, and we're gonna celebrate her 31 years of service

Next slide, please.

And that's the challenge coin. So we worked with our, as a member of the communications team for the State, we have a graphic artist. So he works with our ECN staffers to create this. It was a collaboration. It's beautiful. I can't wait to physically hold one in my hand, and I hope that all of the PSTs that we're recognizing will feel the same way

Next slide.

Alright.

I'm done. But if you have any questions for Dana, or if there's anything else you'd like to add, Dana.

No, just thank you for sticking with us. My email address is there, if you have questions. I think maybe I'll just turn it back to Brian, because I think he's gonna wrap us up. But both Veronica and I will be happy to chat more offline or, or share some of

what we've done in more detail for those that might be interested.

Well, thank you so much, again. Great presentations from two states on what they've done to help advertise the need to fill this important role of our 911 telecommunicators.

Thank you again, to all of our speakers today. Unfortunately, due to going over time, we're not gonna be able to take any more questions. The written questions in the Q&A will be answered, and they'll be attached to the recorded webinar sessions when we post them on 911.gov, which usually takes a couple of weeks. Our next Webinar is scheduled for Tuesday, March 12, 2024. Thank you so much for joining us, and we hope that you all have a great day.