

# Partnering in Rural Communities



## Slide 1: Speaker Notes

Rural areas generate unique challenges for workforce development programs. How do programs reach individuals scattered over large geographic areas who may live many miles from access points and have limited transportation options? How do you best serve these individuals? Common strategies for working with rural populations include strategic marketing and outreach, transportation assistance, Internet services, phone services, and itinerant staff. While financial assistance and support sounds like it should solve these challenges, and it definitely helps remove numerous barriers, money is not always the solution. If there's no one there when they do need help, it can be disastrous. Literally one conversation, one email, and one positive comment at the right time can make a difference in a student's life. This is why the wrap-around services offered through PHOCAS are vital to each participant's individual success.



## Slide 2: Speaker Notes

Let me give you a little bit about the make up of our area...

Its vast and mostly rural.

The Region 8 Labor Market covers sixty-five hundred square miles

Two Workforce Development Areas, ours serves the rural parishes and we have partnered with the other, which serves the metropolitan parish.

All together the Region's population is the upward of 304,000.



**Slide 3: Speaker Notes**

50% of that population resides within Ouachita parish – and this is what the downtown area looks like.



#### **Slide 4: Speaker Notes**

The remaining population resides within the remaining ten parishes....

And those downtowns look more like this.

We want both populations to be equally served and supported.



○ American Job Center

★ Louisiana Delta Community College Campus

## Slide 5: Speaker Notes

In our region, we have 11 American Job Centers and 7 Community College Campuses.

American Job Centers each have a varying level of services, from comprehensive to computer-only. The job centers are not all open 5 days a week and not all parishes have a campus or even a close campus.

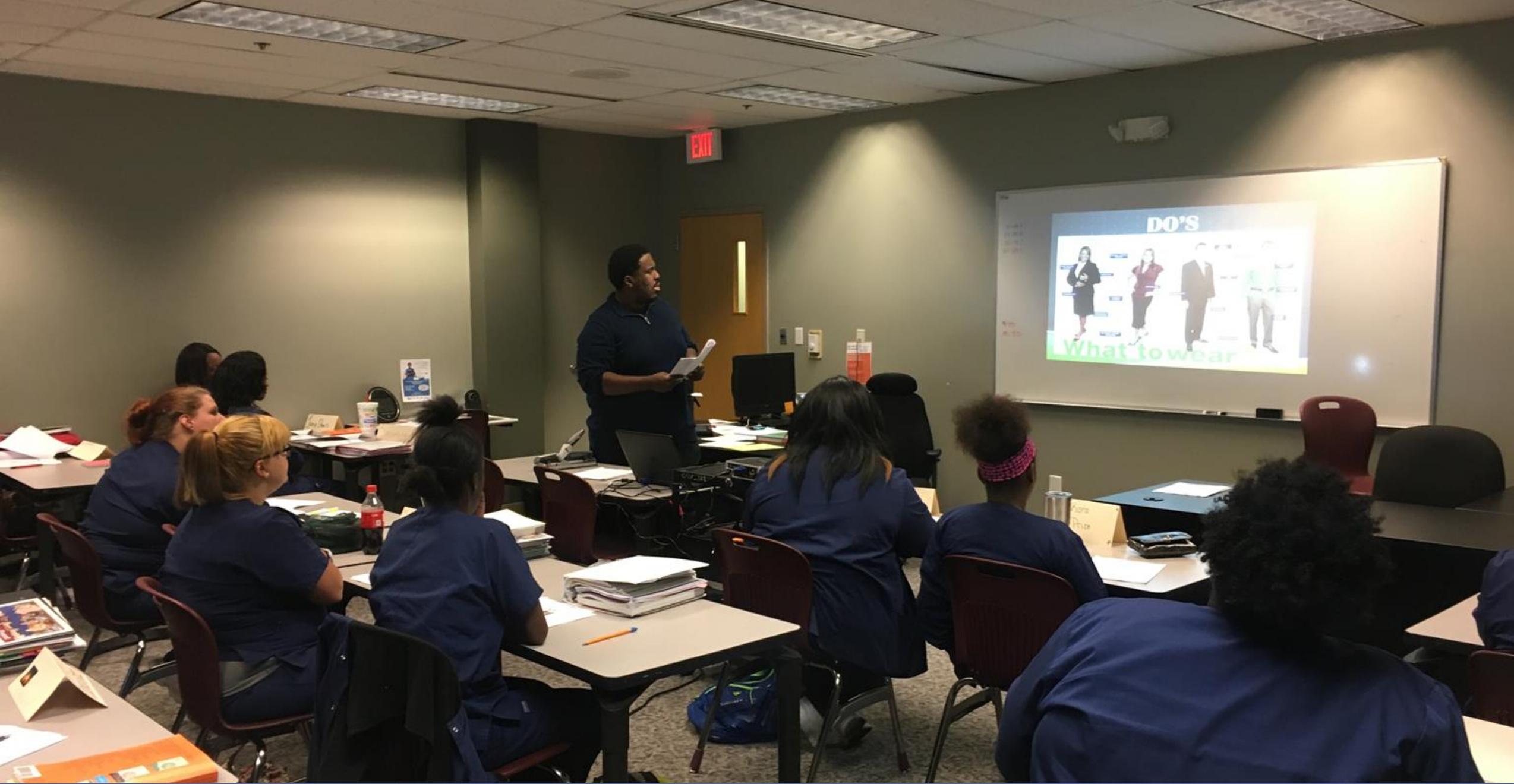
Prior to the way we are delivering services now, people would show up to our office interested in training and be sent to the school or show up to the school and be sent to financial aid and then our office. If this person was on TANF or another program that would be yet another stop somewhere along the way.

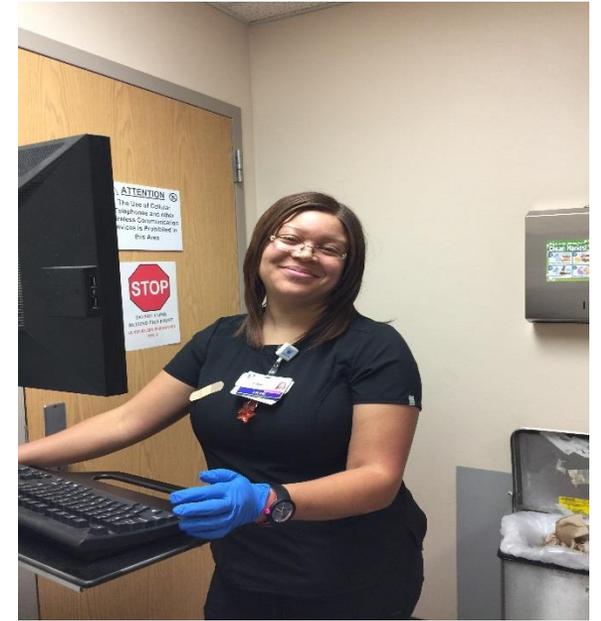
Or, this office might be closed or this program case manager isn't here on this particular day so you will have to come back. This was frustrating for the participant and those of us working with them. Why were they "slipping" through the cracks?

Well, If there's no one there when they do need help, it can be disastrous. Literally one conversation, one email, and one positive comment at the right time can make a difference in a person's life.









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