

**CLASP / CENTER FOR LAW AND SOCIAL POLICY**

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**3:00 p.m. ET**

OPERATOR: Now, I'll turn the floor over to your moderator, Jodie Levin-Epstein of the Center for Law and Social Policy Class.

JODIE LEVIN-EPSTEIN, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, CLASP: Thank you very much and welcome everyone to this audio conference well (ph) job schedules and higher education. Millions of higher education students have jobs as well. For students unpredictable job schedules can compromise access and success in higher education. In this audio conference will hear about the scope of the issue, learn how one call college system provides course stability to enable employment and how one employer has made work schedules responsive to enable educational attainment. We'll also learn about some of the latest policy developments.

But first a little housekeeping, every registrant after this audio conference will be sent a transcript and a link to the audio conference. If you've learned something we encourage you to forward this link onto your own networks. Right now at this moment we encourage you to send in your questions at any time. Here's how. E-mail any question to audio conference at CLASP.org. That's CLASP, c l a s p.org. If you've got something in mind the reason you decided to register for this audio conference it's a big question for you send it in right now.

My guest today include Liz Ben-Ishai from the Center for Law and Social Policy. Hi, Liz.

LIZ BEN-ISHAI, SENIOR POLCY ANALYST, CLASP: Hi, Jodie.

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: Konrad Mugglestone with Young Invincibles. Welcome, Conrad.

KONRAD MUGGLESTONE, POLICY ANALYST, YOUNG INVINCIBLES: Hi, Jodie. How are you doing?

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: Great. And Carol Puryear with the Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology. How are you doing, Carol?

CAROL PURYEAR, VICE CHANCELLOR, TENNESSEE COLLEGSE OF APPLIED TECHNOLOGY: I'm doing great, thank you.

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: Awesome. And Traci Tapani with Wyoming, Michigan. Welcome, Traci.

TRACI TAPANI: Thank you, glad to be here.

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: Great. Liz, I'm going to turn to you first. This audio CLASP audio conference is just one in a series about job schedules and how they intersect with workers of their responsibilities. CLASP also has other job scheduling resources. You've authored a bunch in extensive set of issue briefs. I'm going to grill you right now about what you've uncovered about post secondary education. About these millions of students who are workers, what's the number, about how many?

BEN-ISHAI: Jodie, about 15 million undergraduate students are also working at the same time that they study.

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: Ad so is 15 million a big number of all students? Is it a big percent?

BEN-ISHAI: Yes, it is. It's about three quarters of all undergrads so a lot more than many people might expect.

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: While certainly a lot more than I ever thought until you put that backsheet in front of me. So among these student workers what percent work full time? Because I'm guessing, as shocking as the number is many people are thinking, oh OK so these are people working three hours a day you know at a local ice cream shop to make a few pennies or something so is there a percentage of significant working full-time?

BEN-ISHAI: There is actually a full 20 percent work full-time year-round, so not...

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: Year round. Not just like a semester but this is year-round.

BEN-ISHAI: Yes.

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: Wow. OK so among undergraduates who also work somewhere a third hat as well, they are also parents and we're going to be talking a little bit about that with Konrad later in terms of its significance. Can you give us any scope of this phenomenon of three hats phenomenon, the worker-student-parent?

BEN-ISHAI: Yes, there are 4.8 million undergraduates that are not only students but also workers and - of - sorry, not only students but also parents and of those student-parents about a quarter of them - I'm sorry let me back up there, about 4.8 million undergrads have children and about 40 percent of those are working full-time. So for 40 percent of that 4.8 million they are wearing the three hats that you mentioned.

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: That's huge, that's huge. So I want to remind everybody again about how to send in questions just send your questions to audio conference at CLASP, c l a s p.org. OK, so now we've got this picture a pretty significant percent of the nation students are also workers and a whole lot of them are student - who are student workers are also parents. That's a lot of different schedules to try and manage. it even gets more challenging when the job schedules are volatile themselves and the worker is given last-minute notice of a schedule or the schedule itself fluctuates significantly week to week or

day to day. I mean it's just like hard to imagine that issue in and of itself for anybody who is not a parent as well or is not going to school.

So Liz, is there data out there that helps us understand how widespread the job notice issue is for student workers?

BEN-ISHAI: Surely there is some data available, thanks to analysis of the National Longitudinal Study - Survey of Youth conducted by Susan Lambert and her colleagues at the University of Chicago. Now this study looks at early career workers between the ages of 26 and 32 so it's just a portion of people who would also be students. Among that group of early career workers, among the students in that group about a third of them are getting less than one week notice of their schedules.

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: Wow. And then, turning to this issue about fluctuating hours is there information from the Susan Lambert's research that shows us the degree to which hours fluctuate for student workers?

BEN-ISHAI: There is, again for that same group of early career student workers between 26 and 32, almost three quarters of them are experiencing instability or fluctuations in their weekly work hours.

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: Wow, OK bigger issues getting bigger all the time. OK so in Congress the schedules that Work Act has been introduced Liz, can you help a zero in on that Act and its provisions but in particular might address workers who are students?

BEN-ISHAI: Yes.

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: And what is the status of the bill, first start with the status of the bill?

BEN-ISHAI: Well, the bill was introduced last - late-summer and it's set to be reintroduced in this Congress in the coming months. So the bill does have some provisions that are specific to students, those are mostly in the first section of the bill which applies to workers in all industries. So the specific provision in is we call, the right to request and what it is, is it gives workers the right to request of their employers certain accommodations in their schedules. And they are able to do this without fear of retaliation which is a big deal for the many workers who now have unstable schedules but experience retaliation when they try to make changes.

So all workers can make those kinds of requests but for workers who fall in to certain categories, including those who are students or who are enrolled in job training programs the employer is supposed to accommodate those requests unless there are significant business reasons when - that would explain why they can't. So for students they not only have the right to request but they also have the right to receive a flexible, stable or predictable schedule or some other kind of schedule accommodation.

There are other provisions in the bill as well that applies specifically to retail, restaurants and building cleaning occupations. So students who are employed in those sectors and many students you know work a third (ph) job so you it may fall into those category, they are entitled to at least two weeks of advance notice of their schedules. So for that one third that we talked about that would be a big difference.

And then they're also entitled to compensation when their schedules are choose (ph) at the last minute, if they're sent home early from work or if they're required to be on-call that aren't actually called in and also to work split shift. And finally employers are supposed to provide these workers with an approximation of what their schedule will be when they're hired so that they have you know more of a sense of what to expect.

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: So I just want to let the audience know for those of you new to this issue and the schedules that Work Act, there are issue briefs about this bill that CLASP has done and our colleague organizations as well and all of that and more can be found on CLASP repository on job scheduling and all registrants will get a link to that repository so anything you ever wanted to know about job scheduling and were afraid to ask is on the repository and you'll see lots of Liz's issue briefs and our colleague's issue briefs as well to help you navigate any question you might have and there are really very important questions. And the audience needs to start sending theirs in as well. Do not be shy. We know you have a lot of issues you'd like to have asked and answered by this group of experts.

So Konrad I'm going to turn to you right now, Young Invincibles, which is a great name, is a national nonprofit organization that focuses on empowering young Americans with information regarding healthcare, jobs, economic opportunity and more. Recently, Young Invincibles looked into the kinds of jobs younger millennials have, those who are students and those who are not. What did you find?

MUGGLESTONE: Thanks, Jodie. So back in December Young Invisibles released a report called "Where Do Young Adults Work?" and when we broke down the data we found that about 40 percent of 18 to 24 -year-old millennials work in retail and hospitality jobs. And 25 to - among those they're 25 to 34 about a quarter of them work in those hospitality jobs as well.

This is relevant because these kinds of jobs are the ones where managers are going to be using these kinds of scheduling tactics (INAUDIBLE) managers are talking about to impact their bottom line. They're called out in the schedules at Work Act. But these kinds of jobs are not good for millennials especially those who are looking to further their education or look after their children.

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: And when you say they're not good for millennials what do you mean by that?

MUGGLESTONE: Well, when you're looking after you know your children or needing to you know go to class which requires a pretty strict status - schedule of hours for one

you can't have your schedule changed on so easily. But secondly when you look at these jobs a little further these are the jobs that have the declining wages. In fact we found in that report that over the past decade young adult's wages have declined in retail about 20 percent over the past 10 years.

Part of this drop may be due to the - those kinds of reduced and cut shifts that the workers don't get paid for.

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: OK.

MUGGLESTONE: But at the same time you might want to think about you know tuition as well when you're not getting paid as much. Tuition has been skyrocketing recently in state tuition for four year public school, risen about 27 percent in the past few years since 2007 actually. So the same workers who are seeing their pay decline are being forced to take on more debt to get out of those same kinds of jobs.

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: And at the same time in the economy more and more workers are expected to have these decreased, is that right?

MUGGLESTONE: Absolutely, some reports suggested that you know by 2020 about 65 percent of jobs will require some form of post secondary education.

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: So a student has to be a worker, is that almost what we're concluding here? I mean Liz has given us some big broad breaststroke numbers which are fairly significant you know three quarters of the roughly 20 million students are workers. And it seems like people don't have a choice.

MUGGLESTONE: Well...

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: I mean there has to if the tuition is going up 27 percent since 2007 is for your public schools, right?

MUGGLESTONE: That's absolutely right. I mean, when you've got skyrocketing tuition somebody has to pay for it in either turns into debt or at you know have to be paid for through hard work.

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: OK, well let's turn to some of the other aspects of your report. And I'm thankful to the audience for beginning to send in some questions and for those of you who need a reminder please send in your questions to audio conference at CLASP, c l a s p.org.

Konrad, you're about to release a report, Young Invincibles new report will soon be coming out talking about young parents that looks at data on how they manage the clock and their competing schedules including some of those with the three hats of work school and parenting. We can't get ahead of your release, we're not going to really do that but

can you tell us a story that for you illustrates the challenge any conversations that you had in preparation for the publication or focused groups that you had?

MUGGLESTONE: Sure, absolutely yes. For this report one of the things that I love about it is that we got the whole round table with young parents in several states. One mother we talked to in Miami with name Riani (ph) and she works at Benone (ph) profit that actually hosted our round table, not only does she work a 9-to-5 job and look after two children and her - look after house as well but she wanted to get her masters to further her career. Unfortunately when she looked at a nearby Florida Atlantic University she found that they had a wait list for on-campus childcare support which she really needed in order to attend regular classes. So she ended up enrolling in a program that offered a lot of online classes, night classes and Saturday classes in order to be able to balance her pretty hectic schedule.

In the forthcoming paper will be delving a lot more into these types of statistics around when parents are in class when they study. I will just say this much that this divisions are pretty stark, enlightening and concerning especially when you consider that studies have shown that part time students and those that are there only taking you know a few classes at a time are far less likely to complete their degree and be able to compete in the workforce.

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: OK, Konrad we agree. We are going to dig deep into your forthcoming findings but you did agree to let us scratch a little bit on this audio conference and you're going to announce now if I ask you this correctly, key finding related to parents who work. What did you discover?

MUGGLESTONE: Well, I'm super excited about this report but among many other statistics if we looked into time-use that I just mentioned young parents are prime examples for difficult work schedules. When you break down the data you find that young parents actually twice as likely as their non-parenting peers look to work the after midnight shift or the commonly called graveyard shift.

These divisions are actually even more stark though when you look at low-income young parents so those who are making less than \$25,000 a year actually working those shifts that rates four to five times higher than their peers that don't have children. So when you have mouth to feed and limited time to get those resources you end up working when you can.

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: And these are just exactly the student workers who have so many responsibilities, it's hard to imagine how they manage anything well if they have to do the graveyard shift as you're saying. Wow.

MUGGLESTONE: Yes.

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: OK and there'll be more forth - more to come - more coming when you report comes out?

MUGGLESTONE: There'll be all kinds of information on when people work, on when people go to school, when they're in class, a lot of great statistics looking at everybody's daily lives.

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: The one thing that we should remember Konrad is that once this audio conference gets posted and your publication is released we should add it as a resource even though it's after the effect, OK let's be sure to do that so that the whole world when it comes to this audio conference later will have a chance to grab your report as well.

MUGGLESTONE: Absolutely.

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: It's totally dramatic this graveyard shift figure. In your mind is there an explanation that you've put on to this phenomenon?

MUGGLESTONE: So there are a couple of possible explanations, one is that parents have to build their schedules around their kids first. The average start time for school is about 8:00 a. m. and you know that covers the children for some part of the day you know getting them to school but it doesn't cover those hours after school. Childcare has become prohibitably more expensive for many young parents so working overnight may provide them some actual flexibility to be present in the early to late afternoon.

Another probably more persuasive explanation that the millennial generation was hit the most by the great recession. If you're looking for a job and working overnight is the only job available and you're driven to work more because you have greater financial responsibilities waiting for you at your dinner table you might take whatever shift you can get. On either level really it's a massive scheduling challenge that young parents are facing.

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: Well, this sounds all pretty daunting. In terms of recommendations from Young Invisibles or your all in (ph) personal ideas of how to deal with this problem what are some top solutions in your mind?

MUGGLESTONE: Certainly, so the paper will outline a number of solutions, certainly one of them is one that Liz has already outlined. We need to do more to provide flexible workplace in its secure shift scheduling with so many young adults working low-waged shift work, protecting their hours and giving them the flexibility to plan their lives is essential for their economic security.

So, the schedules at Work Act is a great step in that ride (ph) - in the right direction. In the forthcoming well we'll also be delving into a number of other solutions related to child care on - or in relation (ph) to campuses, paid leaves if you're schedule you know the greatest shock to your schedule is going to be when you have an emergency so things like the forthcoming Family Act, the Healthy Families Act, these opportunities to allow people to get out of their schedule and still have economic security these are all important

policies that are worth considering that could help a lot of people especially young parents.

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: Konrad, we have a question here for you from Rachel D. who is with the Association for Workforce Asset Management and that's Rachel Disselkamp. Hi, Rachel. Her question is getting at some of what we try to get out already but with a slightly different twist and I want to throw it at you in the way she's framed it. She asks, how are you educating millennials on how to create better schedules for themselves and others in the workplace? In what ways are you helping millennials measure how good their schedules are meaning are they adequate, predictable and stable? Any reaction to that, Konrad?

MUGGLESTONE: That's a - that's definitely a great question. I think that this is sort of our first foray into providing you know the resources and information about how millennials are actually scheduling their lives. As for how we can educate them honestly, the best we can do is provide the information about what is best, what is important which is you know you need to prioritize certain things that means you need to prioritize your education, you need to prioritize your family, you need to prioritize your career. Those three things are essential and hopefully that's the message that we're able to send out.

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: Liz, I'm going to ask you this question as well because what struck me in reading Rachel's question about educating millennials about how good their schedules are, is that - there is some sense that workers, students, parents only know their own schedules, only know their own jobs, don't necessarily know that they can ask for something that's better or as you were pointing out earlier if they do ask they're more in fear of retaliation than anything else.

On the one hand we want workers to appreciate that there is the possibility that you could have a more predictable schedule but if they're afraid to ask for it because they've seen others retaliated against it's a bit of a challenge. Do you have any sense Liz, about how to deal with this issue? We're sort of caught between a rock in a hard place in educating workers if in fact they're going to be retaliated against? Any thoughts about how people may be organizing out there or addressing this question, some successes? You mentioned the provision in the legislation, anything to give us a hook on how to address this issue?

BEN-ISHAI: Yes, I mean I think you mentioned the keyword there which is organizing and we're seeing organizing around the country both at past legislations specific to this issue including right to request provisions and advance notice laws that would help workers to avoid the type of retaliation that they now may be subject to.

And then also organizing to gain collective bargaining rights and strengthen workers power in the workplace with their peers. So I think those are the key ways and we are seeing some success on those fronts. San Francisco passed a law last year that enables workers who are employed by large retailers to Bill of Rights basically that protects them in many other ways that I mentioned are proposed under the schedules at Work Act. So



that's really encouraging and we're about to see that law go into effect and we have to see strong enforcement of it and to see other jurisdictions follow suit.

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: That's very helpful thank you very much. Carol?

PURYEAR: Yes.

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: Welcome.

PURYEAR: Thank you.

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: For those who are not familiar with the Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology, are the Colleges typical community colleges?

PURYEAR: Well we're typical technical colleges. We offer about 50 different programs in the six main areas in manufacturing, construction, business type courses such as computers and drafting, transportation programs all out (ph) health programs and then your personal service programs. We have 27 campuses in the state of Tennessee and if you're familiar at Allworth (ph) Tennessee, we're - we go from Memphis to Elizabethton so we go from one under the state to the other. We are a workforce development type program that is our mission as workforce development. We are a clock hour run (ph) institution...

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: You're a - what institution?

PURYEAR: We're a - I always get that question, Jodie. We're a clock hour institution which means we're not a...

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: Like a tick-tock clock?

PURYEAR: I'm sorry?

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: Like a tick-tock clock?

PURYEAR: Ask our students, sometimes they feel like it that way. But our students - our courses are designed to how many hours that a typical person could finish and learn the competencies in say, beginning welding or advanced welding or tig welding and so that is developed in that it becomes the student's schedule.

And so that's sort of what clock hours - it's kind of an amount that sets how much we think the student will learn in that particular time frame. Does that help?

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: Let me ask another question so this means you're a non-degree institution but are you a credentialing institution?

PURYEAR: Yes, we have - we do different types of industry credentials, certifications and then we also are credited by the Council on occupational education and we award diplomas, technical diplomas and certificates.

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: Got it, OK. So one of the things that your technical college does is provide block scheduling and this is in part I guess to help students who are also workers but could you fill us in a little bit about how block scheduling works and what you see as its advantages for students who are workers?

PURYEAR: Sure. And I think that I'll start by saying that I think block scheduling is one of the reasons why we've have such good success with our students and then working with business and industry because the way that we are set up, all 27 campuses, a student will register for a program. They do not register for a class, they register or program. So for instance if it's automotive, if it's computer information technology, if it's pharmacy technician, they register for a course and then they know every class that they'll have to take on the front end and then they decide on their schedule, whether they'll go full-time or part-time.

A full-time student, the schedule is from 7:30 generally to about 3:40 - 2:45 in the afternoon and what that means is that the block a time that, that student knows before they start that they will be in class. They'll know what subjects they're studying they'll know the cost they'll know their graduation day.

And if you want to see a student smile sign up a student and say, do you realize that in one year from you know graduation you will be leaving this institution and joining the workforce? That's something that a working adult student can grasp and that helps them plan what they're having to do.

And we also have students who will go part-time and by part-time that either come in the morning block or the afternoon block but full time will come for the whole time Monday through Friday six hours a day. And I do think that that's been very helpful with us because it takes the mystery out. I know when talking with adult students and as a former adult student trying to juggle when your classes are to match your work schedule. When our students start they know when the schedule is. We have many students that work that graveyard shift. We have many students that go straight from campus to work from the three to you know the 11 shift and then the 11 to 7 shift.

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: Right.

PURYEAR: And it's - I remember when I first started to work at the Tennessee College of Applied Technology in Murfreesboro they were - we had a student and every morning I pulled up he was asleep in his car. And I went to his teacher and I said, what's the deal here? You know, is he sick, does he not have a place to - what do we need to do? He said, no Carol. He's getting off work and he's just coming - he's resting a little while before he comes to class....

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: Wow. Right, right.

PURYEAR: And so they (ph) but he knows that if he comes, he knows how long he has to do that and then he can seem to be able to manage.

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: Right, right. So, I also know Carol, that you've got some pretty impressive outcome data on your block scheduling. Can you share some topline findings?

PURYEAR: Yes. Last - again, we're accredited by the Council on Occupational Education and we have the report our yearend. And at the yearend we had 81 percent of our students who started our programs, completed and 86 were placed in jobs in their fields. And I just really believe that there are a few reasons why and block scheduling is one of the main ones for me because if you know what you're going to have to do then it's much easier to arrange that on the front end and we've had great success in working with businesses and industries. And the students know and they work that out with their employer and then they're able to do what they need to do to further their education.

They also are very student oriented and centered. We do a lot of competency-based so students can get through early and we're workforce driven and so those are some of the other reasons but the scheduling really makes it easier for the students. They don't sign up until they've got - mom - grandma, they used to say this, all their ducks in a row. But they've got their ducks in a row so they know what to expect of them (ph) for the amount of time and then they're able to work through.

And we do have break, you know the end of the trimester break and holiday breaks and those sorts of things.

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: So Carol, given this data and given the block scheduling which sounds pretty cutting edge in fact so impressive our friends at Complete College America have featured your approach in a recent webinar they did and registrants will get a link to that as well. But you and I know there is a surprise punchline. You tell that surprise.

PURYEAR: OK, well what's embarrassing a little bit Jodie is, the Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology have really truly been doing this for 40 to 50 years. I was being interviewed by a reporter from the national public radio station and got very nervous because I thought I had blown the interview because he said, now how long have you been doing this cutting-edge approach and I said, oh about 40 years.

And he just looked at me. But it's an approach that seems to work and it works with our adult population and we have just continued and so it's not a surprise, it's not a secret except to us that everybody thinks it's a surprise and a secret.

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: Well does this mean given the attention that's being driven to the challenges of workers who are students in doing both that lots of technical colleges and community colleges around the country are running to replicate blocked scheduling?

PURYEAR: Well, I will tell you that in the state of Tennessee many of our 13 community colleges are replicating some of the ideas. They're doing the finish faster where they'll help students of registered college (ph) what we do for this block of classes and they'll have the same block in the morning every day for one trimester a semester or what have you. We've had a lot of different situations from across the nation come and visit us, the Texas Technology College System came down, IV (ph) Technical Colleges System came down, Ohio System came down to visit and mimic some of the things we're doing.

The one thing I would caution that sometimes people will just stop listening when I say, we're a clock hour institution or we're non-credit based - we use clock hours, because people think, oh we're so different we can't use that. But I think the concepts are the same. Blocking less forces together, scheduling out so that people understand what's supposed to happen, it makes it a lot easier on that adult especially if they're juggling a family as well.

We always laugh and say that our students - we're just not Burger King they don't get their way. They choose the program, they choose full-time or part-time and we can deliver on our end as far as getting the education own time and what they need, we'll hold up our end of the bargain if they'll hold up in their end and it seems to work for us.

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: Well, you know Carol, I'm glad you made this point just now that community colleges, once they hear that you're not a degree institution but you're a clock hour institution, kind of sort of shut down. What is your recommendation for those in the audience who are with community colleges or work with community colleges to get them to hear your point that block scheduling is block scheduling is block scheduling?

PURYEAR: I would first of all I'd encourage you all to come to Tennessee and come visit us. I love it when it comes to visitors (ph).... but I know that it's probably not...

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: Be careful what you wish for, Carol.

PURYEAR: I just - there's nothing better, I'm meeting a reporter after this to talk about our system. I love it but I think there are some things you can talk about. I'll be happy to send schedule out for people. I think really honestly it just takes people in a room with a blank flip chart and brainstorming. And don't get hung up. This is the way we've always done this. Or I'm probably going to say something and get in trouble but we don't schedule at the convenience of faculty members. We need to schedule at the convenience of students...

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: You are going to get into trouble, Carol.

PURYEAR: I know I am and I don't mean to, I mean that with the goodness of my heart. All of us are in education because of a student and so we just kind of have to keep -

always keep them in the front end and please don't send me hate mail I INAUDIBLE) the regular email I get.

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: Don't worry I don't think you will. Konrad, I'm going to give you a chance to ask Carol question but before I do I want to ask Carol about the graveyard shift issue that you and I were talking about Konrad. Konrad mentioned that student- worker-parents often take the graveyard shifts at work and you also picked up on that a moment ago, Carol.

Is it your sense that the New York Times story which flagged this issue and I'm going to quote from it in a moment, is flagging a new trend you mentioned having discovered this young person having been asleep in his car but did you see this as a bigger trend and trend towards when training is taking place as supposed to when work might be taking place? The story in the New York Times had a quote that I'm going to read now and it was, examining the world of student workers in Texas where the welding industry has resurged and you mentioned you're doing welding as well.

The New York Times wrote, Brian Gossett (ph) has already put in a full day moving heavy boxes and furniture for \$15 an hour when his introductory welding class began at 10 PM. The article called this graveyard shift training. Is that what you're asking your faculty to do, Carol are you asking them to begin training at 10 PM?

PURYEAR: You know (ph) so far I have not have to do that.

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: OK.

PURYEAR: But we do special industry training with companies and have them graveyard trainings for special companies...

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: Oh you have.

PURYEAR: Nor your normal public students that are coming. But as we look at what student's need and faculty in serving more students then I mean we may have to look at some different ways. We do have some community colleges in the state that have looked at weekend classes. We have not yet with the technical College system. But - so I mean I think we have to - I mean I really mean that blank flip chart and think about this and think of ways to make things happen.

We have a lot of students who work the 3 to 11 and 11 to 7 shifts that are managing to come to school. We also work with many companies that will let students come to school during company time and then make that time up after they get out of school so a lot of different options...

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: And when they come...

PURYEAR: I don't know what will happen a year from now. I don't know what we'll end up with.

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: So Carol, on the companies that let their workers go to your program are they also involved in a blocked program which is like six hours a day?

PURYEAR: Yes, they will usually be part-time in just do about a four hour block.

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: A bunch of days a week?

PURYEAR: Yes.

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: So that's quite a commitment of off hour - off the job hours at the school. Wow and...

PURYEAR: That's correct it's a huge commitment.

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: And you find that happening with a number of industries?

PURYEAR: Of the 27 campuses I can - I know a few that maybe three campuses are working with industry right now for that.

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: OK, OK.

PURYEAR: But I wouldn't know that necessarily the campuses would - some probably....

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: All right.

PURYEAR: The best resource for that.

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: So Konrad, this is your chance to talk directly with a community college - technical college administrator. What's your - ask for Carol?

MUGGLESTONE: I just - I think it sounds like a really interesting program. My question for you in the vein (ph) of young parents really is what are the sort of offerings for the community college in terms of childcare and the ability to sort of protect those that have children protect their ability to go to class knowing that they already have a dependent at home or needs to have the dependent cared for?

PURYEAR: With the technical college system I'm going to get a big sum (ph) stand on this Konrad because we do not have any childcare available for the students. We do start at 7:30 a. m. and general get out by about 2:45 which if the child is in a public school system then they're pretty much taken care of but we do not offer currently any type of childcare at our institutions.

MUGGLESTONE: It's a - important scheduling factor right there that's great at 7:30 to 2:45 it's an important block for parents so glad you offer that.

PURYEAR: And we've also done some hybrid classes in our business courses and that seem to help with parents with small children and aging parents as well.

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: Interesting, very interesting. Well, thank you Carol. We're going to turn to Traci. Traci Tapani right now, Traci you're in the manufacturing business as co-President of Wyoming Machinery. Could you just give us a little demographic picture about Wyoming Machinery? First of all please clarify whether or not you're in Wyoming but how young is the company, how many employees, what do you produce that kind of thing?

TAPANI: So Wyoming Machine was founded in 1974, we are a manufacturer as you mentioned. We are not located in the state of Wyoming, we are actually located in the state of Minnesota. The company was started in the town of Wyoming Minnesota....

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: There you go.

TAPANI: We were doing machining in 1974 but at this time we're primarily a precision sheet metal fabrication company. I have owned the company with my sisters since 1994 and it's often of interest to people to know that I am co-President because my sister and I share the presidency in the company and we have since 1999....

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: Already, pretty unique.

TAPANI: That is very unique and I - if I didn't mention already we have about 55 employees and we manufacture products for other people so we're a job-shop or a contract manufacturer.

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: Thank you very much and when you and I first connected to discuss this issue of jobs and school schedules you were quick to say that this topic really, really interest you for a whole bunch of different reasons. But a top of mind reason you offered is the issue of workforce skills. Let every else hear what I learned from you.

TAPANI: Well I think that one of the things is that many people know that finding skilled workers in many different industries is a real struggle at this point. It's been going on for a number of years, it's projected to get even worse than it is right now. And so when I think about things such as flexible scheduling that allow workers to get training outside of work I look at it really more as an opportunity to help manufacturers and other people that are looking for skills workers. So I do think it's something that we need to be talking more about and the wider world needs to get more engaged in that and look at what opportunities are available to get these trainings for people so we can keep finding workers.

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: So give us an illustration on how you've adjusted your employee's work schedules to be responsive to their interest in post secondary.

TAPANI: So for us I mean I'm a small employer so I can only speak from my own experience and perspective as a small employer but what we have traditionally tried to do with people is that if we have employees who are interested in getting some kind of education outside of what they're already doing to either enhance their skills, gain more skills to get a better paying job, that we want to invite them to come and talk to us tell us what they're trying to accomplish and we'll see if we can adjust their work schedule around that.

So, I have an - for example right now I've got a production manager who's actually managing all the employees on my production floor. He's got about 40 people that report to him. When he came to work for me just about a year ago now, he was someone that in - some point in his life had started a two-year business degree, was unable to finish the degree and we decided it was important for him to try to get that work done and actually finish the two-year degree. And so, for the - his whole first year of employment with me he has been adjusting his schedule based on his class schedule, so even though he's a manager....

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: Which changes.

TAPANI: It changes so each quarter he's going to come to me and say, these are the classes that I'm taking, I have to leave at this time, I'm going to come in at that time, I might need a little bit of time during the afternoon to close my office store and study for a test or get something done. And I have tried to accommodate that and I think we've been really successful.

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: I bet you're wishing right now that the local institution that he attends has - had Carol's blocked grant - blocked grant - blocked scheduling approach.

Female: You know, I thought that, that sounded really attractive because even if your employer is willing to be flexible...

PURYEAR: Thank you.

TAPANI: I would agree that for the employee knowing what the schedule is going to be and what those hours is - does make it a lot easier especially with family commitments that's a struggle for people.

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: Right. And from your end, was it hard to make this work schedule adjustment? You've just noted that it's probably hard for his family but from your end.

TAPANI: You know, I don't really think it was that difficult. Now, if you would have asked me this question five years ago, I might have said, "You know, what that is not going to work you can expect somebody, an employer to do that for someone. But I've thought a lot about it since then.



And I think with the - not having enough workers available for many companies especially in manufacturing, we as the employer have to change, we can't keep doing things the same way that we did 40 years ago. And so, this idea of being more flexible and trying to meet employees where they are at and what their needs are.

It's something that I have kind of picked up on and taking a hold of, you know, to try to provide a more enjoyable place to work that is good for me and its good for my employees.

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: Well, you know, Traci, I suspect that some in the audience maybe thinking well, you know, she give this for one employee simple to work around. Well, maybe not so simple but you know, you could do a work around from one employee if you really, really are committed and clearly you are. So are you only doing this with one employee?

TAPANI: No. I'm doing this with several employees at the current time. I have about you know, I think its 7 percent of our workforce that are currently doing some kind of training outside of work where we're trying to adjust their work schedule. I don't think that - I can't think of anyone who's ever been denied the opportunity if they wanted to do that.

You know, we're a company that values people trying to improve their education, gain more skills, even at the risk of potentially losing an employee to another employer or to another type of industry. I'm not the type of employer who's going to hold somebody back. And I really look at it like as an employer.

I always have people that are gone for all kind of reasons to the illness, appointments, family commitment and this is just another thing that adds into that pad and I have to figure out how to deal with it. So it's not a situation of chaos, it's working quite well.

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: OK. And you're from the world of manufacturing.

TAPANI: Correct.

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: It's special to hear that in the world of manufacturing, you're making these kinds of schedule adjustments. Are you aware of other manufacturers thinking of doing this kind of thing you've done in order for workers to access degrees or credential?

TAPANI: You know, I have and I'm not going to say that it's widespread at this point. But at least when I'm at meetings in the community with higher education talking about training programs or skilled workers that need to learn machining or welding or some other technical skills, usually the employers that are participating in those meetings are more like minded with me.

Where they are doing what they can to try to find solutions to the challenges of finding skilled workers. And so you know, I'm not going to say that it's everybody but there are people who are starting to do the same thing that I'm doing which is to make these flexible schedules available to their employees.

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: And are you aware or do you yourself have employees who are talking advantage - this - within your 7 percent for example, are there employees who are on the bottom end of your salary range? Is it just for your upper end management types or on a track for management?

TAPANI: No. The majority of the time that we see someone trying to get a flexible schedule is usually the frontline workers who were actually working on the production floor. But they are going to school trying to get a two year technical degree, let's say in machining or welding or some of other discipline where you know, they feel that in the long range of their career, they'll be able to earn more if they get those degrees. So more often than not it is going to be frontline workers that are looking for this kind of opportunity.

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: Well, it sounds to me like until more educational institutions have tools like block scheduling or other tools that could be created to ensure a set number of hours and not you know, guest work as to what's going to happen every three months or four months with the semester, something like this. That until such time as that happens more broadly, we need more and more employers to be like you are you know, you've got 70 percent of your workforce you're juggling enormous amounts of individualized scheduling.

And doing it - and as you've describe in your own self-interest as an employer because it makes them better employee either for you or someone else in the future. How do you think what you've internalize as a motive for making these accommodations can be transmitted to other employers. What's your message for other employer?

TAPANI: You know I think that - my message for other employers would be is that, as employers, we have to change; we have to become more creative. We've got to become more open-minded. We can't continue to schedule and operate as we did 30 - 20, 30, 40 years ago, right?

I oftentimes hear business owner's especially smaller business owners talking about the fact that their companies could have grown if they could have find - if they could find the workers that they need. But I look at it and I think they need to look at as are entrepreneurs which is what we are.

We find solutions to business challenges so that our companies can grow benefitting not only the company but the employees that worked there and this is just one of those challenges. So I'm an entrepreneur. I'm going to look for a solution.

And I think other people need to start looking for those solutions as well rather than you know, raising your hand and saying well, I would have grown my company 25 percent last year but I couldn't find any employees. I don't think that's a very entrepreneurial way to approach this problem.

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: Yes. I'm going to let Carol ask you a question in a moment as our resident educator talking to an employer who's adapting her employee's schedule in order to let people get an education. But first, I want to ask you one.

Which is that, you heard from Liz in the beginning about this provision called, "Right to Request" which would enable employee to have the right to request a change in their schedule without retaliation. Your employees clearly feel comfortable asking you and do not need to fear retaliation for - asking for a change or an adaptation in their schedule.

As an employer, how would you advise those of us who know employees are retaliated against day in and day out when they simply asked for an accommodation for education or for other reasons? And that, that retaliation can take the form of getting fewer hours at a job or getting worst schedules at a job.

How do we approach this issue which you've now internalize as something you want to address for the virtue and benefit of your employees. How do we tackle this issue best with employers who aren't getting it?

TAPANI: Wow that's a really difficult question. I'm going to be honest with you. When I heard Liz give that statistics they're talking about the fact that employees are retaliated against, I have to tell you that my honest thought was really - you know, I hope that employers aren't doing that but I believe that, that probably is happening in some industries and in some companies.

I think that the strongest workforces going forward in the United States are going to be with employers who understand that employees and employers are in a relationship together and the company as a whole is most successful when you can have open dialog.

I would say to somebody if an employee wants to ask about a different work schedule it's nothing more than a question. And if the answer has to be no, fine, you know, tell your employee that the answer is no provide some reason why it has to be no. But it is nothing more than a question.

And so what I like to tell my employee is, there's nothing more to it than that and you should feel comfortable to ask whatever question it is that you have and I try to hear it as nothing more than a question. And answer you know, with an honest answer. If I can't fully beat what they are asking for maybe we can come to some agreement that can work for both of us and give and taken a little bit.

But I do see it as a relationship that's most successful when honest questions can be asked and they can be given honest answers. And I think we just have to keep talking about it. We have to adopt these employers.

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: Carol, as the educator, do you have something you want to ask our employer today?

PURYEAR: Yes, I do. Thank you Jodi. One of the things that I like to know from the standpoint of the company and the educational provider. What are some things that we can do to help you more? I mean, we laughed a little bit about graveyard shift courses and things like that but what are some things that we're doing? And do you feel that as an employer, you can enough say in what education entities do. And remember I'm a workforce - I mean, that's our mission. So that would be what that question.

TAPANI: So I think that in terms of that, that educational facilities are offering this kind of workforce training generally speaking or doing a really great job trying to reach out to employers and understand what needs are and meet those. I think one area that I hear about from my own employees that are taking classes.

And we sometimes laugh about it is that, well, from an administrative standpoint, the colleges have done an awesome job in the classroom sometimes, adult learners are still treated like highschoolers, maybe not even like highschoolers. And so, you know, for example, my production manager, we laugh sometimes because he might be going to a class. He fully understands that his class has a schedule and he's got commitment that he needs to meet.

But as a production manager he has a lot of responsibility. So we've had a couple of times working and I might have been on the phone talking about a problem that was urgent and I needed his assistant in solving it. And he'd be like, "Traci I have to hang up right now or I'm going to lose five points in my class if I don't put my cell phone away." And I would like to see that sort of classroom part of it continue to evolve.

PURYEAR: OK.

TAPANI: That the adult worker is juggling a lot of things and not only administratively does the school need to deal with that I think right in the classroom to recognize this person is juggling a lot and we need to maybe be a little bit more flexible.

PURYEAR: OK. Thank you.

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: We are fast running out of time and I want to give everybody a chance to answer this same question. Which is, what do you think is the most important take away you want everybody in this audience to leave this audio conference with? And we will start first with you Konrad.

MUGGLESTONE: Sure. I think the most important take away is really that everyone is busy. But when you add in you know, when we're trying to improve your educational or standing our your career and you have external responsibility such as health, you need to

make sure that we're flexible and address - allowing people to address like challenges that can come up, so really just that - we need to evolve as a society to allow that flexibility.

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: Great. Thank you and Carol Puryear with the Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology?

PURYEAR: I think their take away would be to consider block scheduling. Think about ways that you can schedule and assist working adult especially those with families. Really think about some ways that you could do that.

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: OK, Excellent. And Traci Tapani, Wyoming Machine?

TAPANI: Well, I think that some of the solutions that you know, people have presented today its really common sense. We need to make some accommodations for people schedule so that we can have the workers that we need and we can get things done and keep people employed. It's a no-brainer, we have to do it.

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: Excellent. And Liz Ben-Ishai?

BEN-ISHAI: I think we've heard that, you know, in terms of addressing the challenges that student faced with their work schedules and the other obligations in their lives. There's really a role for so many different party is employers, educators and then there is a need for public policy. And you know, unfortunately, not all employers are doing what Traci is doing. So you know, legislation like the kind (ph) we're saying proposal on the country is really critical to protecting workers and ensuring the success of employers too when they will have skilled and committed workers on their staff.

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: Well, great and I want to thank the audience for tuning in. And tell you (ph) that our next audio conference in this series which is always held on the third Thursdays of the month will be the third Thursday of May, May 21 and it's about job schedules and software related to job scheduling and we hope you'll be joining us then. I want to join together with the audience and thanking our guest today, Liz Ben-Ishai from the Center for Law and Social Policy. Thank you, Liz.

BEN-ISHAI: You're welcome. Thank you.

FEMALE: And from Young Invincibles, Konrad Mugglestone, thank you, Konrad.

MUGGLESTONE: Thanks for having me.

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: And Carol Puryear with the Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology thanks for joining us Carol.

PURYEAR: Thank you for this opportunity.

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: And with Wyoming Machine in Minnesota, Traci Tapani, thanks Traci.

TAPANI: Thank you so much.

FEMALE: And again, everybody, you will be sent a link to the audio conference and a transcript and the resources as well. So thank you so much for joining us. And join us again. Bye everybody have a great day.

PURYEAR: Thank you.

LEVIN-EPSTEIN: Thank you.

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