Submitted by Greg Mette on February 11, 2024

New York State Earns National Recognition for IT Innovation

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WASHINGTON – The National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA) honored the New York State Department of Labor (NYSDOL) with the prestigious **Merrill Baumgardner Innovation in Information Technology Award**, presented by the Technology Committee, at the 2024 Winter Policy Forum in Washington, D.C. This award recognizes states demonstrating excellence and innovation in information technology.

The NYSDOL received the award for its *M-AI-N Attractions: Perkins & Virtual Agent*, a web-based chatbot and telephony platform. The Perkins chatbot uses Google Artificial Intelligence (AI) and is available in 13 languages. Perkins is available to users 24 hours a day and any unresolved issues are assigned a case for agent assistance.

Perkins allows authenticated users to submit claim-specific requests, issues, and inquiries without the need to speak to a representative. With the Virtual Agent, system navigation has been cut in half while recording over one million total conversations since its July 2023 inception.

> "The New York State Department of Labor has developed a pair of excellent AI-powered services that are sure to help meet the needs of its clients," NASWA President and CEO Scott B. Sanders said. "These innovations allow access to services no matter the time of day and provide a quick, easy way to access information for claimants."

"This award underscores our agency's commitment to leveraging advanced technology to enhance the accessibility and efficiency of our services," New York State Department of Labor Commissioner Roberta Reardon said. "The Perkins chatbot and Virtual Agent embody our dedication to providing exceptional service to New Yorkers, breaking language barriers, and ensuring support is available around the clock."

For more information, visit NASWA's Winter Policy Forum and Technology Committee webpages.