



Northern Dakota County Career & Financial Development Initiative HF106/SF1300

A History of Service

With 30,000+ participant service interactions each year, Neighbors, Inc. levels the playing field for northern Dakota County via three core program areas: (1) Financial Empowerment, providing career navigation and training, 1:1 financial coaching, financial and consumer education, financial products and grants, and asset- and skill-building to support long-term stability; (2) Hunger Relief, providing a choice model food shelf, food delivery, and off-site food distributions serving 5,000+ households in our service area; and (3) Community Supports, including free or low-cost clothing and household items provided by our clothes closet/thrift store, a seasonal gift program for children and seniors in need, and meaningful referral connections to community partners.

Rising Community Needs

Neighbors has proudly served northern Dakota County for 50+ years. Between 2000 and 2015, poverty in Twin Cities suburbs increased by more than 92%, and suburban poverty now represents 60%+ of all poverty in the seven-county metropolitan area.

Place-Based Workforce and Economic Development

Neighbors, Inc. request will bridge 250 low-income Dakota County residents into post-secondary education and living wage careers with wrap around financial empowerment services. Funding will support participants' career assessment, job search, labor market education, career training navigation, and provision of work readiness training and support services. We have and will continue to build relationships with area employers in high demand industries such as local Manufacturing, Construction Trades, Healthcare, Transportation, Information Technology, and Retail sectors, and work with public service providers (ABE, community colleges, CareerForce, etc.) to ensure collaborative service delivery. Career and financial coaches will deploy a portfolio of innovative financial products to support participants' long-term asset- and wealth-building goals, and all participants will be provided continuous coaching and access to supportive services during their program participation.

Northern Dakota County Career and Financial Development Initiative Budget

Neighbor's requests \$1.50M in state funding, to launch new career, training and financial programming serving northern Dakota County residents, employers, technical colleges, and community-based partners; and planning the expansion of Neighbors' career and financial services and/or social enterprise and onsite internship activities.

Proposed Bill Language

Neighbors, Inc. appropriation: \$1,500,000

\$750,000 in each FY26 and FY27 from the workforce development fund to the Department of Employment and Economic Development for a grant to Neighbors Inc to provide outreach, trainings, capacity building, support services, programming, and administrative support.