



## **2004 MINNESOTA YOUTHBUILD REPORT**

Prepared by the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development  
Community Based Services  
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In accordance with M.S. 3.197, the cost of preparing this report was \$625.



## 2004 YOUTHBUILD PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES

Number of Youth Participants in 2004.....	324
Successfully Completed the Program.....	71%
2004 Average Cost per Participant.....	\$2,963
2004 Total State Appropriation .....	\$754,000

### Long Term Outcomes for Those Who Complete the Program

Completed High School/Obtained GED.....	85%
Entered Unsubsidized Employment or Post-Secondary.....	81%
Average Wage of Unsubsidized Employment.....	\$10.05
Average Attendance Rate of Participants.....	84%

### 2004 Housing Outcomes

Total Number of Units Constructed or Renovated.....	32
Total Number of Low Income Homeowners/Tenants Affected.....	94

### Ten-Year Cumulative Performance Outcomes

Total Number of Units Constructed or Renovated.....	1,547
Total Number of Low Income Homeowners/Tenants Affected.....	5,037
Total Youth Who Obtained Diploma/GED and Entered Full-time Employment/Post-Secondary..	2,564

## 2004 PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS

### Youthbuild Participant At-Risk Indicators

Left School, Dropped Out, or Expelled.....	90%
Juvenile or Adult Offender.....	66%
Chemical Abuse or Drug Use Problems .....	26%
Emotional/Behavioral or Learning Disability .....	25%
Homeless.....	11%
Pregnant or Parenting Teen.....	14%
Receiving Public Assistance.....	69%

### Age

16-17.....	43%
18-24.....	57%

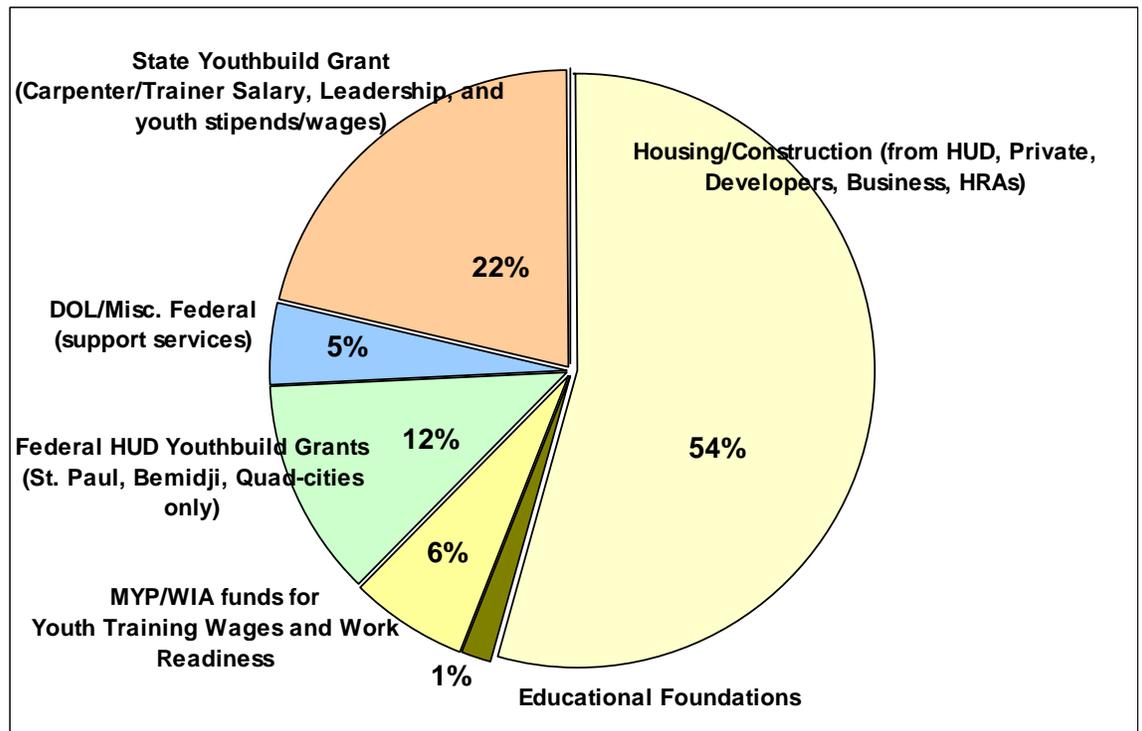
### Race/Ethnicity

African-American.....	12%
Native-American.....	17%
Hispanic.....	12%
Asian-American.....	14%
White.....	45%



### Funding

In 2004, \$754,000 in state funds supported ten Youthbuild Programs (see page 22 for current local contact information). A \$400,000 federal HUD YouthBuild grant secured by DEED is expected to expand services in northern Minnesota and St. Paul in 2005 and 2006. In addition, local Youthbuild agencies leveraged approximately \$3 million in non-state matching funds through their partnerships with local community service agencies, housing coalitions, alternative learning centers, faith-based organizations, unions, law enforcement agencies, colleges and technical schools, and court services.



**State Youthbuild Grant and Leveraged Matching Funds as a Percentage of Total Program Costs**

## Youthbuild Program Model

Youthbuild provides a unique set of services to prevent at-risk youth from dropping out of school. The Youthbuild Program emphasizes three major learning models:

### (1) Work-Based Learning Model

- provides comprehensive work-based services and acquisition of positive work habits to successfully transition from high school to the real world of work or advanced post-secondary training for those who do not go into the building trades
- recognized for excellence as both a state and national work-based learning model

### (2) Youth Community Service and Citizenship Model

- enhances citizenship skills, self-esteem and respect for self and others
- provides opportunities to give back to the local community through meaningful and necessary community service: graffiti removal, yard work and snow shoveling for elderly and disabled neighbors, highway clean-up, and assistance at food shelves

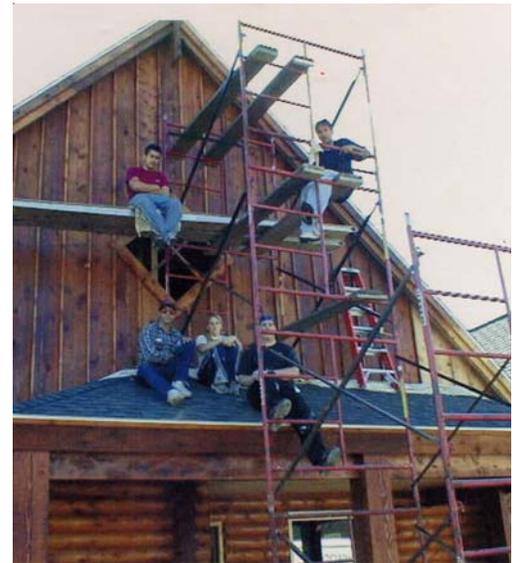
### (3) Crime Prevention and Restorative Justice Model

- recognized as a model program for restorative justice for youth involved in gangs and the justice system
- over 100 Youthbuild participants have provided restitution to crime victims
- of the 169 Youthbuilders with prior criminal involvement, less than 5% have re-offended this year

## Customers

The Youthbuild Program served 324 young people in 2004. Thirty-two (32) units of affordable housing were constructed or renovated, benefiting over 90 low income and homeless persons during the past year. All youth participants were ages 16 to 24, economically disadvantaged or eligible for the High School Graduation Incentives program, and had previously dropped out or were at risk of dropping out of school. Over half of the participants were youth of color. Of the youth served in 2004, 90% had left or been expelled from traditional school, two-thirds had previous involvement with the juvenile or criminal justice system, one quarter had drug or chemical abuse issues, a quarter were emotionally/behaviorally or learning disabled, nearly three-quarters were receiving public assistance, and 90% were economically disadvantaged.





**Youthbuild Program Objectives**

**(1) Dropout and Truancy Prevention for at-risk youth**

- Keep at-risk youth in school with significantly higher rates of attendance
- Increase high school and GED graduation rates

**(2) Increase Education and Basic Skills of at-risk youth:**

- Improve basic academic performance and school attendance
- Increase enrollment in post-secondary institutions

**(3) Increase the Employability Skills of at-risk youth:**

- Increase job readiness and work maturity skills
- Increase construction and building trades skills
- Increase job placement in the building trades

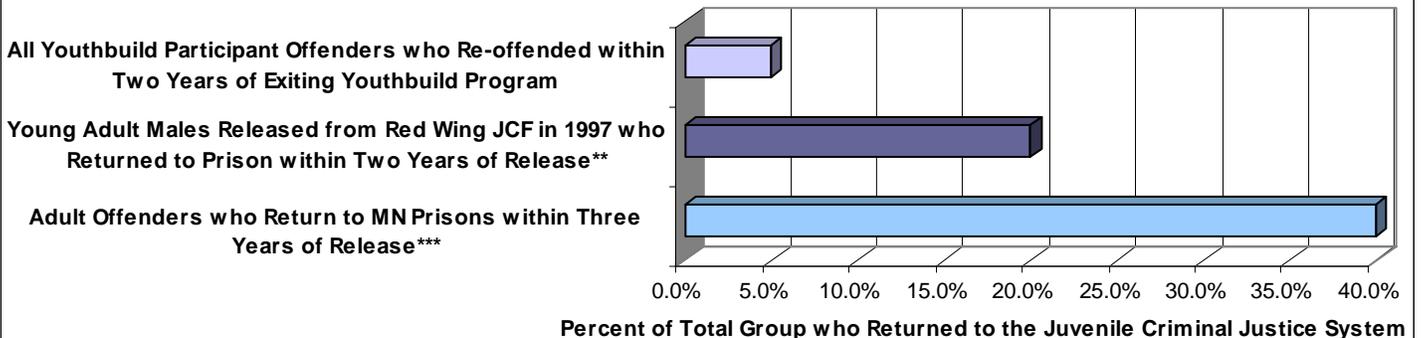
**(4) Provide Community Service and Leadership Opportunities for at-risk youth:**

- Develop self-esteem, respect, and personal empowerment
- Enhance citizenship, problem solving, and negotiating skills
- Develop life skills: conflict resolution, time management, budgeting, communication, and attitude
- Reduce crime, teen pregnancy, drug use, and other negative behaviors
- Increase commitment to community service and responsibility to local community

**(5) Rebuild Deteriorating Communities and Neighborhoods:**

- Increase affordable housing for homeless, battered, and poor families or individuals
- Provide construction or renovation of various social service agencies: learning centers, homeless shelters, family health centers, Head Start facilities, handicapped accessible ramps, and playgrounds for low-income communities.

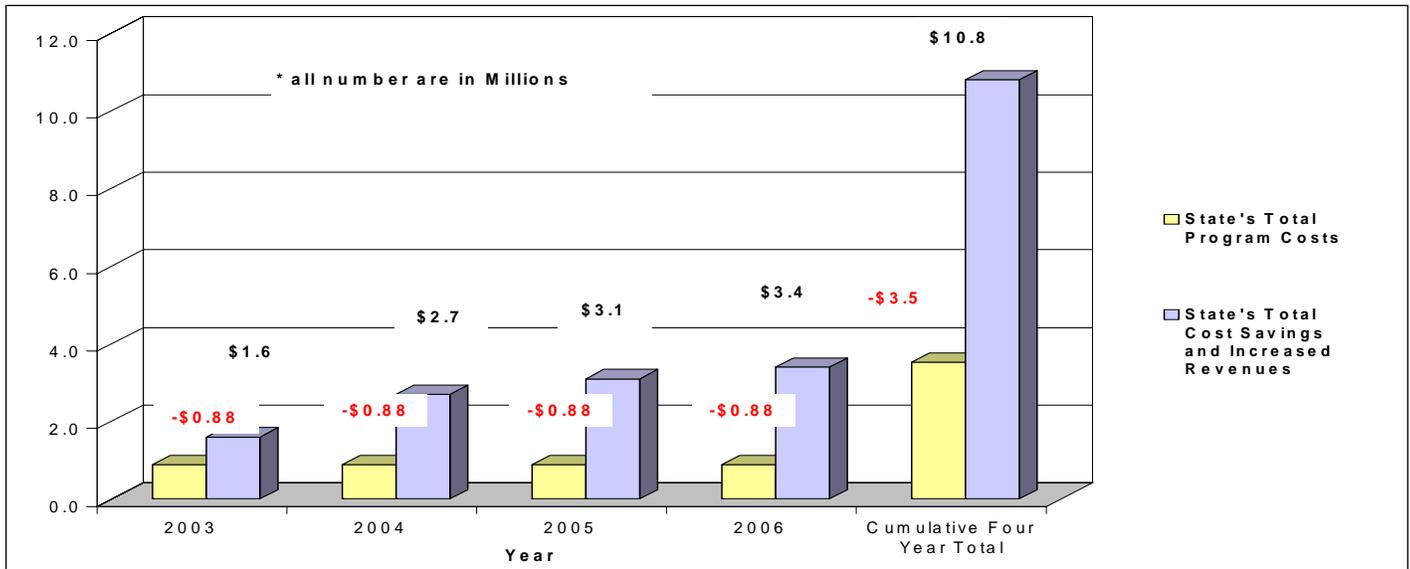
**Chart 1: Recidivism Rates: Youthbuilders Versus Comparison Groups**



\*\* based on new offense convictions only; as reported in MN DOC 2001 Annual Performance Report

\*\*\*Based on new offenses and technical violations of parole; from MN Legislative Auditor's Report (2001)

Chart 2: Program Costs Versus Revenues and Cost Savings to the State Attributable to Youthbuild Program

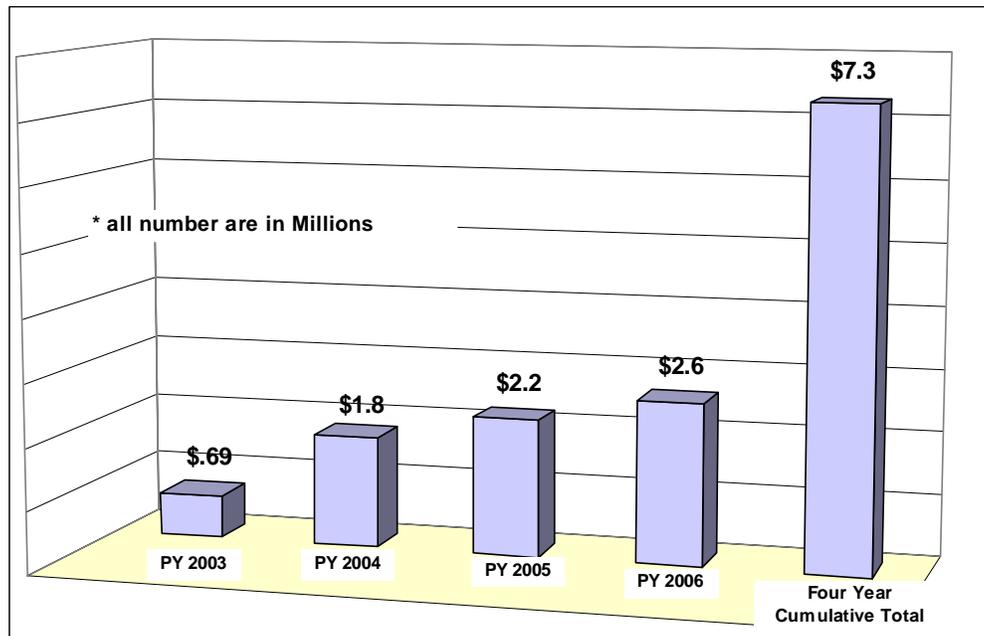


**Measuring the Costs and Benefits of the Youthbuild Program**

From 2000-2003, DEED conducted a cost-benefit study of the Youthbuild Program to examine the benefits and cost savings to the state of Minnesota generated by training at-risk youth and offenders in the Youthbuild program. This analysis, commissioned by the Youthbuild Advisory Committee, suggests that in the first year after exiting the program and securing unsubsidized employment, each group of youth trained in the program generates approximately \$350,000 per year in additional state tax revenues (based on their higher wages and salaries upon exit from the program versus a comparison group of minimum wage workers) and \$1.2 million in state prison cost savings (based on their lower recidivism rates versus a comparison group of Minnesota youth offenders). After subtracting out costs and benefits attributable to comparison groups in the absence of training, the analysis suggests that the benefits and cost savings generated from Youthbuild program training outweigh the state's cost of providing training within the program (see Chart above).

Moreover, the state's investment in Youthbuild participants appears to pay off the first year immediately following participants' graduation from the program. "Net" revenues and cost savings to the state of Minnesota are calculated to be approximately \$700,000 in the first year, \$1.8 million in the second year, \$2.2 million in third year, and \$2.6 million in the fourth year. Over a four year period, this total cumulative pay off exceeds \$7 million. These results are summarized in the chart below (for the full text and analysis of the study please go to: [www.deed.state.mn.us/youth/ybuild.htm](http://www.deed.state.mn.us/youth/ybuild.htm)).

Chart 3: State's Total Net Benefits Attributable to the Youthbuild Program



Bi-County CAP, Inc., a private nonprofit corporation serving Beltrami and Cass counties, operates the Minnesota Youthbuild program in collaboration with Rural MN CEP, Northwest Technical College, and Cass Lake Area Learning Center.

### EDUCATION

Academic instruction is provided by the Cass Lake Area Learning Center (ALC). This year, Bi-CAP YouthBuild has two ALC teachers assigned full-time at YouthBuild. The ALC has adopted the Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound (ELOB) education model that is a good fit with YouthBuild. Students have the alternative option of completing GED testing. An articulation agreement reached with Northwest Technical College also allows Youthbuild graduates to receive technical college credit for two construction courses due to their Youthbuild participation, if this course of study is of interest to them.



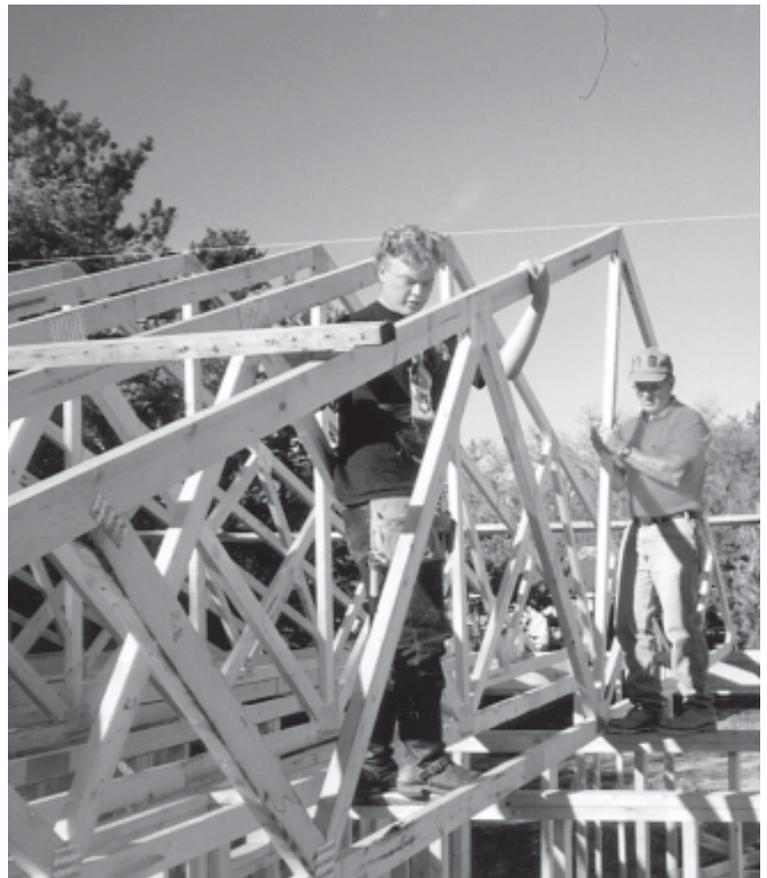
### WORK EXPERIENCE

The work experience is two-tiered. Tier One involves construction training and job readiness instruction. Tier Two provides high school credits for work experience in the building trades industry. Two certified instructors supervise crews of youth. Participants are paid \$6.00 an hour for 32 hours a week.



### LEADERSHIP

Youthbuild workshops this year addressed topics such as chemical abuse, sexually transmitted diseases, and Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and First Aid training. Community service projects this year included snow shoveling and yard work for the elderly, a Head Start cultural diversion project, building ramps for the disabled, helping at the food shelf and the Beltrami Animal Shelter, and highway cleanup.



**HOUSING/CONSTRUCTION**

Youthbuilders completed one single family home for a low-income homebuyer. They have also rehabilitated two transitional housing units in Cass County.

Since 1992, Bi-CAP Youthbuild has constructed or renovated over forty homes for homeless and low-income families in the Cass Lake and Bemidji area, several units of transitional housing, and four early childhood learning centers/ family service centers in northern Minnesota.

**Success Story: John Anderson**

John Anderson dropped out of the traditional school system in 2003 after lacking the credits to graduate with his classmates. John had been diagnosed with ADHD and had a difficult time in traditional hour-long classes. He tried the local AEC program but was still unsuccessful in completing any credit towards diploma in that setting. John came to the YouthBuild program in March of 2004 hoping to improve his education, construction skills, and life skills. After a rocky start with poor attendance, John was able to identify his goals, and embrace the values and philosophy of the YouthBuild program. From that day, there was no holding John back. He completed the requirements for high school graduation in three months and delighted his family by walking the traditional graduation line at school. He began to excel on the construction site and impress the Youthbuild staff to the point that they often argued over who would get John on their job site that day. John's enthusiasm during leadership activities raised the interest and rallied other members of his team to any task they were given. John has not yet completed a full year in the program; however it is clear to the Youthbuild staff that he has already earned a full-time employment position as next year's YouthBuild intern. He is among the most deserving of this respected position. The entire staff considers it a privilege to have witnessed his journey. We are extremely proud of this young man. After completing the next full year as Bi-CAP's YouthBuild intern, John is interested in college or vo-tech school, possibly in the heating and air conditioning trades.



**John completed his academic credits in three months and was able to graduate with his traditional high school class.**



**DISTRICT 930, the CARVER-SCOTT EDUCATIONAL COOPERATIVE, CHASKA, MN**

School District #930, the Carver-Scott Educational Cooperative, (CSEC) operates the Youthbuild program in various locations throughout Carver and Scott Counties. It has a long history of collaborative projects with the Scott County HRA, Carver County HRA, Scott-Carver-Dakota Community Action Agency, Youth Employment and Training programs in both counties and the Carver-Scott Housing Coalition.

**EDUCATION**

The educational curriculum emphasizes applied learning in the areas of math, reading, writing and citizenship. Related topics are woven throughout the program and it is possible to complete several graduation standards by the end of the school year. Career development activities include field trips to local technical and community colleges, industry exploration and goal setting.



**WORK EXPERIENCE**

A licensed vocational instructor provides specific construction skills training to youth on the work site and in the shop/classroom. Youth are involved from start to finish on most construction projects, enabling them to develop a wide range of skills. Good work behaviors such as attendance, promptness, task completion and working as part of a team are addressed on an on-going basis. Students can participate in either a full-day or half-day program that runs throughout the entire school year, or a full-day program that runs throughout the summer months only.

**LEADERSHIP**

CSEC has been designated a National and State Leader School for Service-Learning. The Corporation for National and Community Service and the Minnesota Department of Education recognized CSEC for dedication to combining meaningful service and classroom studies in a way that strengthens communities and improves student learning. CSEC also was inducted into the Service-Learning Hall of Fame, a designation awarded by the National Youth Leadership Council to only eight schools in the state of Minnesota. Staff and students are frequently involved in teacher trainings and workshops. Youthbuild participants assist in the interview process, serve as peer mentors, participate in a school-wide leadership class, and serve on the service learning committee.



**HOUSING/CONSTRUCTION**

In 2003-2004, the students did major remodeling in the West Carver Area Learning Center and completed the finishing work on the woods workshop that was built adjacent to the CSEC main campus. They also renovated the Transition Program area in the main campus, and restored it to its original 1930's era style with needed modern day improvements. They remodeled the CISCO Academy classroom and built a storage building for the local school district. In the summer, the Youthbuild students began construction on a three-bedroom rambler that will be moved to New Prague to be purchased by a first-time homeowner currently enrolled in the Scott County Homebuyers Club (HRA).

**GUADALUPE ALTERNATIVE PROGRAMS, ST. PAUL, MN**

Guadalupe Alternative Programs (GAP) operates the Youthbuild program on the West Side of St. Paul in collaboration with Grosso Construction, the American Red Cross, and Argosy University.



**EDUCATION**

Students spend between ten and twenty hours a week in academic classes. The curriculum focuses on the acquisition of basic skills and also provides enrichment opportunities such as studio arts, physical education, and cultural activities. Youthbuild participants receive job readiness training in the areas of career awareness, interviewing, developing a resume, organizing a job search, and post-secondary planning. Field trips in 2004 included local technical colleges.



**WORK EXPERIENCE**

A journeyman carpenter provides specific construction skills training to two crews of four youth each on the work site. Participants spend approximately fifteen hours a week in work experience training, which includes work maturity skills, safety training, teamwork development, and carpentry skills. Specific skills gained this year include framing, sheet rocking, roofing, painting, installation of doors and windows, and landscaping. During the school year, participants earn a stipend of \$6 an hour if attendance and safety participation are excellent. During the summer, "best" participants earn between \$6.00 and \$7.00 per hour for up to forty hours of work each week for ten weeks.



**LEADERSHIP**

Youthbuild participants are encouraged to run for GAP's Student Board. The Student Board is involved in all levels of school governance, including mediating student disciplinary matters and hiring teachers. Also, Youthbuild participants were involved in various forms of community service, such as snow shoveling, a food drive, and a blood drive.

**HOUSING/CONSTRUCTION**

During 2004, participants renovated one single-family home, constructed on new garage, and helped construct two new single-family homes.



**ARROWHEAD ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY AGENCY (AEOA)  
VIRGINIA, MN**

Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency operates the Arrowhead Youthbuild program, providing services to youth in the quad city area of Virginia, Eveleth, Gilbert, Mt. Iron, and surrounding communities. Collaborative partners in the project include the Adult Basic Education Program, Northland Area Learning Center, AEOA's Housing Services, Range Mental Health, and the area juvenile justice probation staff.

**EDUCATION**

Arrowhead Youthbuild academic activities assist students with achieving their GED or High School Diploma. These activities combine experiential education with traditional classroom setting in order to provide the most effective learning environment for each student. In addition to the core curriculum, students attend seminars on job readiness, job search, career development, and Independent Living Skills.

**WORK EXPERIENCE**

A journeyman carpenter provides skills training to youth at the work sites. Participants are taught techniques in areas such as framing, sheet rocking, demolition, landscaping, siding, roofing, layout procedures, and blue print reading. The program also offers youth a chance to "job shadow" construction trades to get a first-hand look at the field as a profession. Youth receive a stipend for working up to 32 hours per week. One-hundred percent attendance during any 2-week period is rewarded with incentives.

**LEADERSHIP**

Youthbuild participants who demonstrate responsible and conscientious work habits are put in charge of specific tasks at job sites when appropriate. Lessons of accountability and quality assurance are demonstrated through inspections by the crew supervisor. Youth are also involved with several volunteer community service projects each year.





**AEOA Youthbuilders' extensive renovation of the historic Finnish Boarding House at Iron World.**

## HOUSING/CONSTRUCTION

In the past year, Youthbuilders completed the demolition and remodeling of a kitchen at the Range Mental Health's Bell Building, which is a drop-in center for MI patients. The Arrowhead Youthbuilders also worked with Range Mental Health to completely rehabilitate a 4-bedroom group home located in Virginia. The renovation included sheet-rocking, mudding, sanding, painting, the hanging of doors, windows, trim and a suspended ceiling. Other projects included working with the AEOA Housing department to renovate two homes for low-income housing. One of the homes was located in Virginia, and the other was in Hibbing. The crew also assisted with a myriad of projects for AEOA's Head Start program, including the creation of a playground and storage shed. Projects were also completed for the Senior Dining program and Bill's House (a housing unit for low-income and homeless persons).

### Success Story: KERRY ELMBERG

Before joining the Arrowhead Youthbuild program I was an unmotivated punk. I was just a kid goofing off and thinking I knew everything. (Now I know I still don't know everything!) I just slacked off and didn't get much done. I was doing drugs and dumb stuff like that. I did try the Job Corps before going to Youthbuild, and it was a good program, but it just wasn't right for me. AEOA's Youthbuild program was what really worked for me.

I learned to complete simple tasks instead of walking away from stuff unfinished. I learned to work with others better. I also learned very useful carpentry skills, which have helped me in the long run. I'm proud to say that I had a really good mentor/ crew supervisor, Dave Gornick. Youthbuild staff even helped me get my GED certificate.

Since leaving Youthbuild I have had several jobs, but now I'm going to Mesabi Range Community & Technical College. I have just finished my first semester in the carpentry program and I'm doing fairly well. If I hadn't had the help from Youthbuild, college would be much harder.

My plans for the future are to graduate from college and work in the carpentry field for a while. I would also like to eventually go back to school for computers, and someday have my own business installing computer systems. I have to say a special thanks to all those at AEOA that made my Youthbuild experience possible. Thanks for the "push."

**CITY ACADEMY, SAINT PAUL, MN**

City Academy, the nation's first charter school, operates the Youthbuild program in collaboration with the city of St. Paul (Planning and Economic Development and Parks and Recreation Departments), the East Side Neighborhood Community Development Corporation (ESNDC), and St. Paul Public Schools.



**EDUCATION**

City Academy students spend 30 hours a week in the classroom with teacher-student ratios of 1 to 8. Internships with the community and participation in post secondary programs provide students with bridges to the world beyond high school. The curriculum includes all facets of the construction industry: market research, site selection, negotiations and planning with city agencies, financing, mortgage underwriting, marketing processes and property management techniques. Courses include: Blueprint Reading, Drafting for the Homeowner, Architectural History, Neighborhood Design, Business and Community Law, Architectural Math, Computer Drafting, and Woodshop.

**WORK EXPERIENCE**

A construction trades specialist provides training to participants approximately 15-20 hours a week at the construction site. In addition, participants attend job readiness classes that emphasize punctuality, regular attendance, and the importance of effective teamwork and communication. City Academy Youthbuild has formed partnerships with McGrass Construction, Sherer Brothers, Bob's Drywall, Vern Craven's Concrete, Gateway Mechanical, Ries Electric Company, East Side Neighborhood Development Corporation, and Ft. Road/West Seventh Development Corporation.

**LEADERSHIP**

As advisory board members, students are involved in the actual planning and evaluation of the construction projects, including making public presentations to the city council, selecting project sites, and petitioning city offices to obtain site approval and control. Students also do yard work and shovel walks for elderly neighbors.

**HOUSING/CONSTRUCTION**

Youthbuilders completed the maintenance building for Wilder Recreation Center, learning masonry skills from a Master mason. In the past five years, Youthbuild participants have completed approximately 100 single family homes and rehabbed five homes for low-income families in the east and west side neighborhoods of St. Paul. The current site is a two bedroom home in Oakdale which is being completely rehabilitated for single family use by spring of 2005.

**Success Story: TOUA VANG**

Toua Vang has been named the 2004 Youthbuild success story by both staff and students. Toua Vang has been with City Academy since Junior High and has become a City Academy Youthbuild leader. He has participated in all aspects of the school's community outreach program including construction, volunteer projects and citizenship for leaders. For the past two summers he represented City Academy at the Youth Leadership camp in Michigan and has brought his experiences to support the everyday community at City Academy. Toua graduated from City Academy in December of this year and is currently enrolled at St. Paul Community and Technical College.

**THE CITY INC., MINNEAPOLIS, MN**

“Pride in the City” Youthbuild program in Minneapolis is a collaborative effort between The City, Inc., a nonprofit youth agency, and Habitat for Humanity.

**EDUCATION**

Youthbuild participants are enrolled in The City School, an accredited alternative learning center with school sites located in north and south Minneapolis. The curriculum emphasizes basic skill acquisition in math, English, problem solving, leadership development, and a community-building mission. Job search skills, as well as college and career planning, are emphasized through post secondary options classes. Field trips to various sites, including Dunwoody Institute, the University of Minnesota, and University of Saint Thomas, encourage interest in the building trades and retention in the Youthbuild Program.

**WORK EXPERIENCE**

Under the supervision of a journeyman carpenter and a site supervisor, participants spend one day each week learning with appropriate tools and gaining a basic understanding of physical structures and housing construction. With supervisor-student ratios of 1 to 4, participants acquire experience in a variety of areas relating to carpentry, including cabinet construction, taping, shingling, staining, framing, blocking, siding, drain tile, and blue print reading. Participants also learn to utilize surveying and design skills and have opportunities to work with tiring strips, footings, concrete rebar trusses, and sheer panels. For their work experience, participants are eligible for elective credit and a stipend based on attendance.

**LEADERSHIP**

As teacher assistants and mentors to younger students at Longfellow Middle School, Youthbuilders help to teach reading and writing skills and assist students with homework assignments. Longfellow staff reported that the Youthbuild students were among their best assistants and mentors and asked them to continue the program next year. Youthbuilders lead the student board and have played an active role in The City, Inc. activities.

**HOUSING/CONSTRUCTION**

Youthbuilders worked on the construction of three Habitat for Humanity homes in the Minneapolis and St. Paul areas. They have also constructed interior/exterior prefabricated walls and various framing at the Habitat for Humanity panel plant facility.



Minneapolis youth framing a Habitat for Humanity home.



**RURAL MINNESOTA CEP, INC.  
DETROIT LAKES, MN**

Rural MN CEP, Inc. operates the Minnesota Youthbuild program in collaboration with the Perham-Dent School District, Otter Tail-Wadena Community Action Council, and the Leaf River Habitat for Humanity Project.

**EDUCATION and WORK EXPERIENCE**

Students work toward a high school diploma through the Perham-Dent Alternative Learning Center. Students also attend life skills classes that cover the following topics: self-esteem, motivation, attitude, organizational skills, time management, budgeting, team building, communication, conflict resolution, and substance abuse. Rural MN CEP also provides career planning, guidance, and job search to all participants. A certified construction trades instructor trains and supervises youth for an average of 15 hours per week during the school year and 30 to 40 hours per week during the summer months.

**LEADERSHIP**

Participants serve as crew leaders under the supervision of the construction instructor, and have responsibilities that include tracking breaks, reviewing time cards, and assigning tasks to other participants. Several youth provide peer counseling in areas of worker safety and responsibility. Youth are also members of the Youthbuild advisory committee and have input into project decisions and evaluation of program outcomes.

**HOUSING/CONSTRUCTION**

The Youthbuild crew is in the process of constructing a single family dwelling at 1005 5th Ave. NW in Perham. Completed work has included plastic waterproofing around the outside of the wooden basement, installing floor joists, sheeting the sub-floor, and building walls. Currently, they are installing rafters and roof sheeting. Youthbuilders also completed the landscaping on five houses in Perham and two houses in Pelican Rapids. This included designing the landscaping for each house, researching appropriate greenery, creating rock beds, seeding/sodding lawns and planting the shrubbery and trees.

Since 1996, Perham Youthbuild has constructed fifteen homes for low-income families in the Perham area and have constructed or renovated three early childhood learning, family, education, and senior centers.

**Success Story: TRENT DAVIS**

I wasn't doing well when I was in the mainstream school. I was only passing a few classes and I was constantly juggling new jobs every few weeks. I started going to the ALC and the Youthbuild program a year ago. Working in Youthbuild was a fun and creative way for me to learn with hands-on projects. To this day, I still love working there. Now that I have only a few credits left in school, I am hoping to spend as much time working there as possible.



**Youthbuilders work throughout the winter months to complete construction of a single family home in Perham.**



**CENTRAL MN JOBS AND TRAINING SERVICES  
MONTICELLO, MN**

Central Minnesota Jobs and Training Services operates the Minnesota Youthbuild program in the New London-Spicer area and the Pine City area in collaboration with the New London-Spicer and Pine City Alternative Learning Programs and the West Central and East Central Minnesota Habitat for Humanity organizations.

**EDUCATION**

Academic activities are integrated with work experience, job readiness, and leadership activities. Each student participates in the School-to-Work Transition class along with the career exploration and vocational evaluation program at the Career Assessment Center. Students at the ALP also participate in the shop/classroom part of Youthbuild, which teaches skills such as computer aided drafting, building estimating, understanding building codes, and blueprint reading.

**WORK EXPERIENCE**

A certified vocational instructor provides skill training within a classroom/shop setting and a certified carpenter supervises participants on the work site. Participants spend two hours a day at the job site learning specific carpentry skills. In addition, punctuality, safety, work quality, conflict resolution, and teamwork principles are taught and reinforced on the job.

**LEADERSHIP**

In the classroom and on the job site, participants are taught teamwork principles, awareness of local social issues, problem solving skills, and civic responsibility. Over the past year, participants were involved in various projects for the City of Willmar, Prairie Woods Environmental Center, Willmar Regional Treatment Center, and others. Participants also gave presentations to the Willmar School Board.

**HOUSING/CONSTRUCTION**

This year, participants worked on the construction of two homes in Willmar and New London. The participants also assisted in the construction of storage sheds for the Willmar Housing Authority.



**Senior citizen thanks Youtbuilders for their work constructing the Habitat for**



**Success Story: JEREMY MEIS**

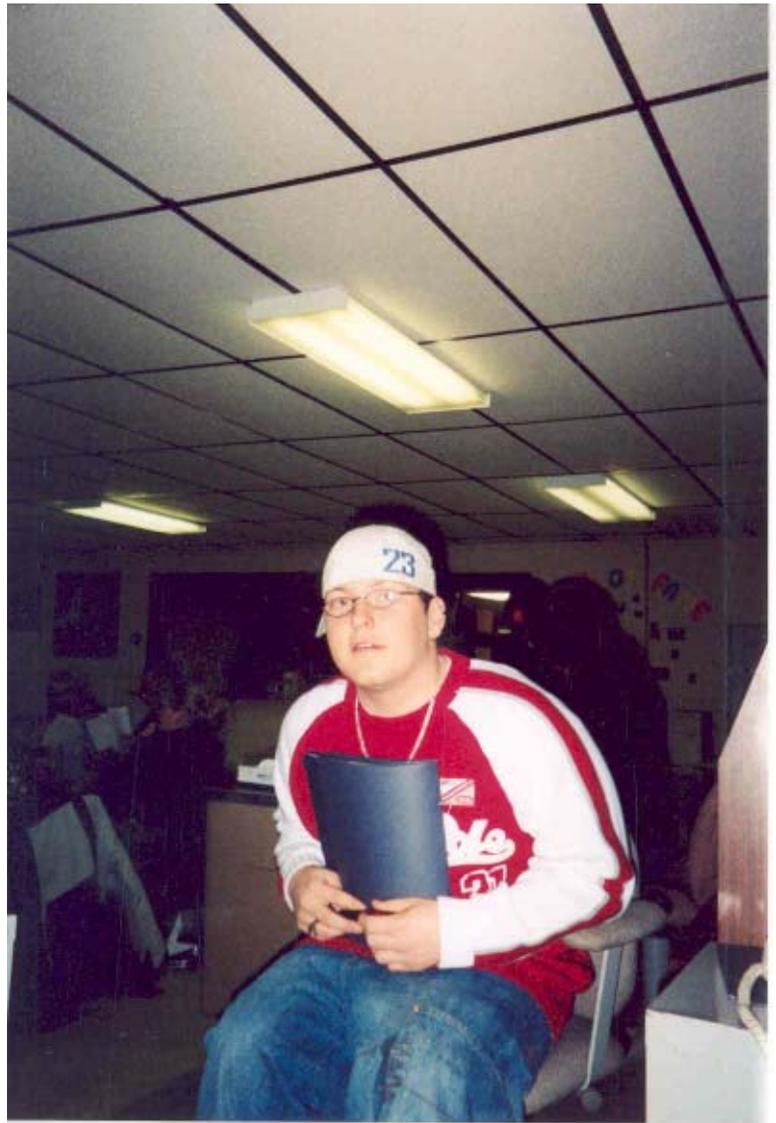
Hi my name is Jeremy Meis and I am a senior in High School at New London Spicer ALC. I have been with the Youthbuild program for about three years. I have helped build five different houses. The following is my experience with Youthbuild and working with Habitat for Humanity.

I have learned quite a few skills from working on the Habitat Homes. The volunteer carpenters have shared a lot of knowledge with us. I have learned how to hang sheetrock, frame walls, install insulation, and put up siding. We have done a lot of staining and varnishing. After the staining was completed we assisted in installing the materials on the doors and window trim.

We have also learned how to landscape. We raked and leveled the lawn and put in the sod. We framed the driveway so we could level it out for the pavement to go in.

We were able to meet the families who were moving into these homes. They were so grateful for all of our work. It was very rewarding.

This program has helped me in so many ways. It has taught me a lot of different skills that one day I might put one of these skills to work and get a carpentry job. I have earned school credit. I will soon be able to transfer back to the High School to graduate with my class. This would not have been possible with out the YouthBuild program.



**Jeremy will soon be able to transfer back to Spicer-New London High School to graduate with his class.**

## **WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT, INC. WABASHA, MN**

Workforce Development, Inc. operates the Wabasha Youthbuild program in partnership with Wabasha County Housing and Redevelopment Authority, Wabasha County Alternative Learning Center (ALC), Local Carpenters Union 1382, and Three Rivers Community Action, Inc. The program is located at River Valley Academy, an alternative school serving Wabasha County.

### **EDUCATION**

Youthbuilders work with the youth counselor to develop an individual plan to address educational issues, increase academic skill levels, and obtain a high school diploma or GED. To assist them in preparation for future training or employment, the Youthbuild program helps participants identify transferable SCANS skills (Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills). As Youthbuilders become familiar with the skills they are using, they are better prepared to understand the expectations of future employers and to have success in that employment.



### **WORK EXPERIENCE**

A licensed vocational instructor coordinates the work experience component and supervises the Youthbuild participants. The program provides an environment in which the youth can apply the skills as they learn them. This gives youth a stronger self-concept and a personal feeling of accomplishment because they can see that their efforts improve the lives of others. Youth receive a training stipend of \$5.25 per hour and may also earn bonuses and scholarships based on performance and attendance.

### **LEADERSHIP**

This program provides many opportunities for the development of leadership and teamwork skills through training, field experiences, service learning, and career exploration opportunities. The youth enjoy challenging activities like "climbing walls" and "high ropes courses" to gain team-building skills. Youth participate in all aspects of planning and implementation of the construction projects to help them develop problem-solving skills and become familiar with the resources in their community.



## HOUSING/CONSTRUCTION

Projects this year have included the construction of fifteen air conditioner covers for low-income housing units, construction of two sheds for collection of recycling materials in low-income areas, construction of several handicapped accessible ramps for disabled low-income families, and a room in the River View Academy to accommodate the new "Day Treatment Program".



### Success Story: MATT WAAS

Matt Waas started the Youthbuild program in October.

He immediately amazed us with his natural talent in woodworking, sense of humor, and work ethic. Matt was one of those youth who was "falling through the cracks," not sure what he wanted to do, and was not very excited about coming back to school. Since he started Youthbuild, his grades have improved significantly and he is back on track for graduation at River Valley Academy in Kellogg, MN.

Matt started out the year questioning his involvement in Youthbuild. I think he has surprised himself, along with the Youthbuild staff, about how excited he is now to come to Youthbuild every day. Matt is hard working, motivated, and is a real leader in the group. He helps others along with their projects much of the time, and concentrates on his individual work the rest of the time. Dave Kuntz, paraprofessional at River Valley Academy, stated that Matt has "become a model student."

Youthbuild participants have worked on a variety of different projects, including building furniture and donating it to local non-profit agencies, building air-conditioner covers for low-income housing units, construction of sheds for collection of recycling materials, and helping with the construction of rooms for schools that serve low-income students.



**STEARNS-BENTON EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING COUNCIL  
ST. CLOUD, MINNESOTA**

Stearns-Benton Employment & Training Council operates the Youthbuild program in collaboration with the St. Cloud Housing Coalition and Tri-Cap Community Development.

**EDUCATION**

Youthbuilders attend classes through Adult Basic Education (ABE) and their respective Alternative Learning Centers up to 15 hours per week to work toward obtaining a GED/high school diploma. Youthbuilders receive elective credits toward their high school diploma for their work site learning.

**WORK EXPERIENCE**

Youthbuilders learn job specific skills on the work site. In addition to spending time on job tasks, Youthbuilders learn the technical skills involved in the construction project, including power tool safety. Performance reviews are completed for each crew member on an on-going basis.

**LEADERSHIP**

Youthbuilders share active leadership roles within their team structure each day. Two opportunities are available to experience effective leadership skills. The Housing Coalition provides one-on-one leadership by a retired veteran with over 25 years experience. The other opportunity is to be part of a leader-led construction crew doing new construction.

**HOUSING/CONSTRUCTION**

The Youthbuilders assisted in remodeling several low-income apartment units in 2004.



**FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE MINNESOTA YOUTHBUILD PROGRAM CONTACT:**

Kay Tracy or Nancy Waisanen  
Workforce Partnerships Division/Community Based Services  
MN Department of Employment and Economic Development  
1<sup>st</sup> National Bank Building, Suite E200   
332 Minnesota Street  
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101  
**651/296-6064 or toll free at 1-800-456-8519**  
TDD/TTY: 651/296-2796

Upon request, this report is available in alternate formats such as audio, Braille or computer disk.

**Local contact information for current service providers:**

**Anne McGill, Assistant Director of Operations**  
**Tina Sweatt, Youthbuild Program Coordinator**  
Bi-County Community Action Programs, Inc.  
P.O. Box 579  
Bemidji, MN 56601  
**218/751-4631** #104/ #145 (fax 218/751-8452)  
[amcgill@paulbunyan.net](mailto:amcgill@paulbunyan.net)  
**Service area: Beltrami and Cass counties**

**Joyce Eissinger, Youthbuild Program Coordinator**  
Carver-Scott Educational Cooperative  
Crosby Park Manufacturing /Technology Center  
309 Lake Hazeltine Drive, Chaska, MN 55318  
**952/368-8126** (fax 952/368-8888)  
[jeissinger@cseced.org](mailto:jeissinger@cseced.org)  
**Service area: Scott and Carver counties**

**Gwen Grell, Youthbuild Program Coordinator**  
Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency, Inc.  
702 Third Ave. S.  
Virginia, MN 55792  
**Mon & Thurs: 218/749-2912** #220 (fax 218/749-2944)  
[ggrell@aeoa.org](mailto:ggrell@aeoa.org)  
**Tues, Wed, Fri @ Grand Rapids office: 218/327-6749**  
[ggrell@ngwmail.des.state.mn.us](mailto:ggrell@ngwmail.des.state.mn.us)  
**Service area: St. Louis county (except city of Duluth)**

**Huldy Sannes, Youthbuild Program Coordinator**  
**Craig Nathan, Youthbuild Fiscal Manager**  
Rural MN CEP  
803 Roosevelt Ave.  
Detroit Lakes, MN 56501  
**218/846-7377** (fax 218/846-0773)  
[hsannes@wfc.des.state.mn.us](mailto:hsannes@wfc.des.state.mn.us)  
[cnathan@wfc.des.state.mn.us](mailto:cnathan@wfc.des.state.mn.us)  
**Service area: Otter Tail county**

**Marni Harper, Development Coordinator**  
The City, Inc.  
1315 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue North  
Minneapolis, MN 55411  
**Southside: 612/724-3689** (fax 612/724-0692)  
**Northside: 612/377-7559** (fax 612/381-9156)  
[marni\\_harper@thecityinc.org](mailto:marni_harper@thecityinc.org)  
**Service area: city of Minneapolis**

**Allen Selinski, GAP Director**  
**Jody Nelson, Youthbuild Program Coordinator**  
Guadalupe Alternative Programs  
381 E. Robie St.  
St. Paul, MN 55107  
**651/222-0758** #305/ #302 (fax 651/290-2703)  
[aselinski@hotmail.com](mailto:aselinski@hotmail.com)  
[jnelson@gapschool.org](mailto:jnelson@gapschool.org)  
**Service area: city of St. Paul**

**Milo Cutter, City Academy Director**  
**Terry Kraabel, Youthbuild Program Coordinator**  
City Academy  
958 Jesse St.  
St. Paul, MN 55101  
**651/298-4624** (fax 612/292-6511)  
[miloc@cityacademy.net](mailto:miloc@cityacademy.net)  
[terryk@cityacademy.net](mailto:terryk@cityacademy.net)  
**Service area: city of St. Paul**

**Natalie Kuehl, Youthbuild Program Coordinator**  
**Leslie Wojtowicz, Youthbuild Case Manager**  
Central MN Jobs and Training Services  
106 Pine Street  
Monticello, MN 55362  
**763/271-3706 (Natalie) 763/271-271-3723 (Leslie)**  
(fax 763/271-3701)  
[nkuehl@cmjts.com](mailto:nkuehl@cmjts.com)  
[lwojtowi@cmjts.com](mailto:lwojtowi@cmjts.com)  
**Service area: Pine and Kandiyohi counties**

**Jean Abeln, Youthbuild Program Coordinator**  
Stearns-Benton Employment & Training Council  
3333 W. Division St. - Suite 212  
St. Cloud, MN 56301  
**320/229-5713** (fax 320/654-5173)  
[jabeln@sbetc.des.state.mn.us](mailto:jabeln@sbetc.des.state.mn.us)  
**Service area: Stearns and Benton counties**

**Marge Kuethe, Youthbuild Program Coordinator**  
**Jinny Rietmann, Wabasha Youthbuild Case Manager**  
Workforce Development, Inc.  
300 11<sup>th</sup> Ave, N.W. Suite 110  
Rochester, MN 55901  
**Wabasha office: 651/565-2635**  
**Rochester office: 507/379-3409** (fax 507/292-5173)  
[mkuethe@wfdi.ws](mailto:mkuethe@wfdi.ws)  
[jrietmann@wfdi.ws](mailto:jrietmann@wfdi.ws)  
**Service area: Wabasha county**