

2003 Youth Employment & Training Report



Prepared by the
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Office of Community-Based Services

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On the Cover: Tou Fou Xiong, a junior counselor at Youth CARE Camp Sunrise, makes sticky rice in the traditional way in preparation for Hmong Elder day at Camp Sunrise. (Photo Courtesy of City of Minneapolis)

2003 Youth Employment & Training Report

Introduction

Funds flow through the federal Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and the state-funded Minnesota Youth Program (MYP). The assessment of each youth allows local program operators to tailor services and activities to effectively meet individual needs. Short-term goals are updated and reassessed as the participant moves through the program. Long-term goals relate to educational attainment and placement in employment, education and/or training. The Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) continues to emphasize local flexibility in designing the mix of youth services, taking into account the needs of community employers. This report includes a brief profile of youth activities available in Minnesota's Workforce Service Areas (WSAs).

Customers

Services are provided to economically disadvantaged and/or at-risk youth between the ages of 14 and 21. All Minnesota communities benefit from the community service and improvement projects undertaken by youth participants each year. Services are available to youth in all 87 counties of Minnesota.

Providers

Services are provided through a network of public and private nonprofit youth service providers, WorkForce Centers, and partnerships with local educational agencies. WSAs provide an array of employment and training services as specified in their local plans. Youth providers are held accountable to the local Workforce Council, which is responsible for strategic planning, program oversight, coordinating resources and selecting youth providers.

Services

Local service providers design an Individual Service Strategy (ISS) based on each youth's objective assessment. Youth who succeed in completing their ISS equates to success for the youth--and the program. Services available at the local level include:

- ❖ Tutoring, study skills training and instruction, which leads to the completion of secondary school, including drop-out prevention strategies
- ❖ Alternative Secondary School services
- ❖ Summer employment opportunities
- ❖ Paid and unpaid work experiences, internships and job shadowing
- ❖ Occupational skills training
- ❖ Leadership development opportunities
- ❖ Support services
- ❖ Adult mentoring
- ❖ Follow-up services for not less than 12 months after completion of participation
- ❖ Comprehensive guidance and counseling (direct services or referrals)

Youth Performance Measure	PY 2002 Goal	PY 2002 Outcome
Younger Youth Skill Attainment	71.0%	91.3%
Younger Youth Diploma/Equivalent Attainment	51.0%	76.8%
Younger Youth Placement & Retention	55.0%	74.4%
Older Youth Placement	65.0%	72.9%
Older Youth Retention	72.0%	83.9%
Older Youth Wage Gain	\$ 3,000	\$ 4,098
Older Youth Credential	45.0%	50.0%

Youth Employment & Training Programs

2003 Statewide Outcome Information

	WIA Youth Formula Grant	Percent	Minnesota Youth Program*	Percent
Total Participants	4,941		5,011	
Male	2,609	52.8%	2,820	56.3%
Female	2,332	47.2%	2,191	43.7%
Age Groups				
14- to 15-Year-Olds	1,581	32.0%	2,358	47.0%
16- to 18-Year-Olds	2,298	46.5%	1,783	35.6%
19- to 21-Year-Olds	1,062	21.5%	870	17.4%
Race/Ethnicity Groups**				
Native American/ Aleut	331	6.7%	212	4.2%
Asian-American/ Pacific Islander	237	4.8%	455	9.1%
African-American (Not Hispanic)	934	18.9%	884	17.6%
Hispanic	173	3.5%	160	3.2%
White (Not Hispanic)	3,424	69.3%	3,453	68.9%
At-Risk Groups**				
Foster Child	369	7.5%	306	6.1%
Parenting Youth	584	11.8%	193	3.9%
Youth With a Disability	1,561	31.6%	1,376	27.5%
Juvenile Offender	640	13.0%	663	13.2%
Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance	829	16.8%	788	15.7%
No. of Youth Receiving a HS Diploma or GED	541	10.9%	277	5.5%

* The total number of youth served in the Minnesota Youth Program includes summer and year-round participants.

** Individual participants may be listed in multiple race/ethnicity groups and/or multiple at-risk groups.

Northwest Private Industry Council

InterCounty Community Council

Program Summary

The Northwest Minnesota Workforce Service Area (WSA) works with staff from the Northwest Private Industry Council, Inter-County Community Council and the Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) in planning WIA services for eligible, targeted youth in the seven counties of Northwest Minnesota. The commitment of all involved parties is to provide quality services to youth on an equitable basis throughout the Northwest WSA Service Area.

The Northwest Private Industry Council (NWPIC) contracts with the Inter-County Community Council to provide work experience, basic skills training/classroom training, adult mentoring and leadership development to the younger youth who are in-school. The NWPIC also contracts with DEED to provide work experience, job placement, and occupational skill training through on-the-job training and classroom training to the older youth who are out of school.

Work Experience

The WIA summer component varied within the service area, but left a measurable impact on each of the participating communities. The crew concept was found to be very helpful for program visibility. Youth were excited about working on projects they could follow through from beginning to end.

A crew of six youth worked at a rental unit in Crookston operated by a local non-profit group. This worksite provided the youth with their first experience with painting and home repairs. At the end of the day, the crew leader told the youth to start putting things away. One youth stated, "We have had such a busy day, it hardly seemed like work! It seems like we just started the day."

Another crew had the task of painting over 300 fire hydrants in the city of Thief River Falls. All the hydrants were scraped with a wire brush, primed and painted two different colors. Many residents commented on the project in their communities. One resident provided this insight: "The community beautification project had not been done for at least 10 years and will be a great asset to the community." A local business provided free ice and a 12 pack of pop each week for 6 weeks in appreciation of the effort by the youth and the crew leader. Freshly baked cookies and pop were also provided by grateful residents when the crew worked in their neighborhood.

Program Impact

The local community wants the youth to be engaged in meaningful work that has a lasting result. The community also takes an interest in insuring that youth learn good work skills and take pride in their community. They want youth to complete their education and then to stay or come back to their home community to live. Benefits for youth participants include:

- ❖ Completing goals such as passing the Minnesota Basic Skills test.
- ❖ Earning a paycheck.
- ❖ Gaining work references.
- ❖ Creating new friendships with community members, supervisors, and classmates.

Outcomes at a Glance.....

Area Served: Kittson, Marshall, Norman, Pennington, Polk, Red Lake and Roseau Counties.

Contact Information:

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NW Private Industry Council, Inc./
Workforce Council
1730 University Avenue
Crookston, MN 56716
(218) 281-6020

WIA Youth Served..... 245

MYP Youth Served 76

No. of WIA Youth With a Disability.... 110

No. of MYP Youth With a Disability 54

No. of Foster Children Served (WIA) 30

No. of Foster Children Served (MYP).... 10

No. of Youth Earning a HS Diploma or
GED (WIA) 47

No. of Youth Earning a HS Diploma or
GED (MYP) 20

- ❖ Learning work maturity skills necessary for success in school, work and life.
- ❖ Exposure to career options that provide youth with a reality base to select a career.
- ❖ A sense of pride in what they have achieved.
- ❖ A sense that by summer's end they are leaving the community a better place to live.

Minnesota Youth Program and Workforce Investment Act

In 2003, the budget for the Minnesota Youth Program was reduced by 32 percent; it was decided to reserve MYP funding to assist youth only during the school year.

Out-of-School Services

The emphasis on the out-of-school program has been to provide training assistance to allow clients to successfully complete an educational program to help them achieve employability and a brighter future. The words of one client seem to sum up the efforts in this area: "Thank you for all your help and support. It would have been very difficult to go to school without your help. Today I went shopping for work clothes and this is something I never imagined I would be able to do."

Work-Based Learning

Two types of work-based learning were provided to participants. One was with the adult mentor involving youth in the planning phase through completion of a project. Some youth were surprised that they actually "finished the project!" To promote teamwork, youth made their own t-shirts and wore them as a team. Scattered work-based learning sites are very important to our rural communities.

Basic Skills Training

Inter-County teamed up with Area Learning Centers in Crookston and Thief River Falls; this allowed twelve youth to start and complete Academic Credit. Ninety-eight percent of the youth earned ½ academic credit during the summer and two youth earned two academic credits because of the program. The educational link between school performance and the world of work allows the student maximum flexibility and

Success Story: Joseph Hickey

Joe is a 17-year-old male attending high school who has really benefitted from the Workforce Investment Act. At age 15, Joe made some bad choices and started skipping school regularly, causing him to fall one year behind. In the fall of 2002, Joe decided it was time to straighten out his life and at this point he connected with the Area Learning Center (ALC). They developed a schedule that would allow him to graduate with his class, so Joe went to regular school all day and after school he went to the ALC.

The last quarter of school Joe enrolled in the Work Experience class and applied to go to the Minnesota Conservation Corps residential camp near Hinckley.

While at the Minnesota Conservation Corps, he learned many hands-on skills. In addition, he earned an "Outstanding Performance Award." Comments from his supervisor included the following statement: "You went above and beyond what was expected--everything from getting up early most mornings, to starting a fire, and to taking on the hardest jobs of the day. Joe provides great service to the State of Minnesota in the efforts that have been put forth to preserve and protect our natural resources through participation in the Minnesota Conservation Corps."



growth. It is a winning combination that allows youth to start over with the confidence and credit when the school year begins in the fall. The adult mentors weave in information about careers during lunch conversations and during the work day.

Leadership Development

Inter-County Community Council worked collaboratively with the People Connection to create a day-long seminar called “You’re Out on Your Own Now.” The seminar was for teens and young adults, but several parents also attended. Topics included budgeting with real income and expenses, needs vs. wants, keeping financial records, checking accounts, banking terms, setting realistic goals, and debt dangers such as credit cards and long-term contracts.



One of the fundamentals of the youth employment and training programs is learning teamwork. In order to achieve their goals, participants and crew leaders must be able to work side-by-side. Teamwork exercises begin almost immediately before the youth and crew leaders begin working in the field.

Rural Minnesota Concentrated Employment Program (RMCEP)

Worksites Developed for Career Exploration and Work Experience

RMCEP's primary activities are career exploration and work experience. Worksites were chosen for participation based on past experience in working with our program, quality supervision, and opportunities to match career choices for youth. Attempts were made to set up new sites to accommodate the youths' job goals. Younger youth typically decide where to work based on ease of commute to the worksite. Much of the focus with the younger youth is introducing and building "soft skills" of attendance, getting along with co-workers, and following supervisor's directions. Older youth were interested in worksites that matched their future career interests.

The private sector sites were developed to meet career interests of the youth such as:

- ❖ One site is providing on-the-job training to a youth who graduated from high school. This advanced training allows him to be eligible for promotion.
- ❖ A youth who is interested in forensic medicine is working at a clinic in medical records. She will be job shadowing in other departments to give her a look at the whole picture. This youth will also job shadow with a mortician and in the sheriff's department during this next school year.
- ❖ A youth working for an optometrist earned credit for high school, signed up for Post-Secondary Option, and plans to continue on in the field of Optometry after graduation.
- ❖ We have several sites that provided jobs that were designed specifically to allow youth with major learning disabilities to be successful. Confidence Learning Center continues to be a valuable resource, working with youth who have disabilities.
- ❖ Two individuals interested in pursuing psychology degrees and working with people with mental/emotional disabilities are working at a Day Achievement Center.
- ❖ One supervisor is going to tutor a youth on the special license test information to work with low pressure and high pressure boilers. If the youth gets licensed, that will open more doors of opportunity in maintenance positions.
- ❖ One young man is working at a technical college in the Center for Automation and Motion Control lab in Alexandria. He will be a second year student in that program. There are several presentations given to corporate people in the lab to generate grants and funding for the program. The networking opportunities are great for him.

In July, 145 worksites were reviewed for quality and compliance issues. Significant findings included: 57 percent of the youth reported that the job experience related to their career goals. Eighty-eight percent of the supervisors and 92 percent of the youth said that a mentoring relationship was developing.

Outcomes at a Glance.....

Area Served: Counties served include Becker, Beltrami, Cass, Clay, Clearwater, Crow Wing, Douglas, Grant, Hubbard, Lake of the Woods, Mahnommen, Morrison, Otter Tail, Pope, Stevens, Todd, Traverse, Wadena and Wilkin counties.

Contact Information:

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Detroit Lakes, MN 56502
(218) 846-7400

WIA Youth Served..... 924
MYP Youth Served..... 489

No. of WIA Youth With a Disability... 461
No. of MYP Youth With a Disability.. 276

No. of Juvenile Offenders (WIA)..... 157
No. of Juvenile Offenders (MYP)..... 74

Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance (WIA)..... 381
Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance (MYP)..... 195

No. of Teen Parents (WIA)..... 118
No. of Teen Parents (MYP)..... 9

Mentoring Opportunities

On site mentoring proved to be one of the truly great assets of the youth program. Supervisors reported developing strong mentoring relationships at their worksites with youth who worked year-round. Many supervisor/mentors expressed their concern for the youths' health, home life, and work experience, in addition to their concerns about how they were doing on the job. At one site, co-workers attempted to help one young woman get a lease on an apartment. At another site, the supervisor helped the youth figure out the paperwork she needed for college. PATH Program staff provide supervisors with insights and assistance in mentoring foster kids. One private sector worksite has offered to be a mentor for a youth that will be attending post-secondary school in the fall for carpentry. A new worksite, Shoremaster Plastics, was added for a youth who is hearing-impaired. There are two other full-time employees who are hearing-impaired who have mentored the youth.

Leadership Opportunities

Host sites incorporate leadership development in their work situation. Lead workers are asked to be role models of employer-expected behaviors at the worksite. They help communicate information from

Success Story: Carl Moench

Carl Moench is an 18-year-old young man who was involved in the probation and foster care systems. He has learning disabilities due to ADHD. He has been involved in the Rural Minnesota CEP youth program for the past three years.

Carl loves working outdoors and enjoys the challenge of building things, working with tools and accomplishing tasks. During the summer of 2002, he was the lead worker on the Youth Service Corps (YSC) that built a two-story Habitat for Humanity home in Staples, Minnesota. During the YSC project, Carl was able to explore careers, learn leadership responsibilities and earn school credits. The project helped Carl decide that carpentry/construction was the career path he wanted to take.

After high school graduation in May 2003, Carl started working for a local construction company under the youth program. After one-and-one-half weeks, the owner was so impressed with Carl's hard work, dependability and dedication, that he offered Carl a job with the company next summer. The owner also offered to assist in any tutoring Carl might need during his technical college carpentry program, which started this past fall.

He will continue to receive encouragement from RMCEP staff throughout his technical college program, and this will help him achieve his goals.

Carl's advice to other youth is to do what you need to do to be a valuable employee:

- ~ Stay out of trouble.*
- ~ Graduate from high school.*
- ~ Go on to college.*

Carl's advice to adults/employers is to:

- ~ Encourage and mentor youth.*
- ~ Give youth the opportunity to learn and succeed.*

Carl's comments on the youth program:

"Without the youth program involvement and encouragement, I wouldn't be where I am today. They encouraged me to complete high school and find the career I wanted. I knew what my goals were, but I needed help to achieve them. It is an excellent program to get involved in, and it helped me to learn how to be a good employee. The youth services coordinator really cared and was a mentor to me, pushing me all along the way, because sometimes I needed to be pushed. She always encouraged me. All kids should have this kind of opportunity to succeed."

supervisors to workers, help set up schedules, and monitor progress throughout the day. Some of our best mentors on the worksite are the youth who are themselves lead workers.

Impact of the Program

Youth coordinators have noted a connection between a successful work experience and confidence for future careers: "As the school year is beginning, about 30 percent of the new first-time workers begin asking for career planning information because of this first job. Mentors and supervisors have caused them to want to make some career choices in their lives."

One youth coordinator noted a surprising outcome from implementing a Youth Council initiative to focus on career information and financial aid: two-thirds of the youth who achieved a high school diploma or GED registered for post-secondary school or advanced training.

Many of the excellent partnership projects did not operate this summer due to budget cuts in education and youth funding. Schools were disappointed that there was no money available for academic programs and hope that funding can be restored in future years.

Success Story: Garland Villa

Garland Villa has come a long way since she started working with the Rural Minnesota CEP-Pequot Lakes High School Summer Program four years ago. After three years of janitorial work and acting as a lead worker at her site, Garland decided that she was interested in a new challenge. TDS Telecom had just completed a work training experience with another youth and was interested in training and mentoring someone new. Garland seemed to fit the bill.

At first, the difference between her expectations and the reality of working in an office setting were somewhat overwhelming. Garland says: "I was intimidated by the atmosphere (at first), but now I have learned to adjust to the way the office works."

Some of Garland's job duties include assisting with projects, helping with customer phone calls, analyzing customer problems and deciding where to send customers with questions too big for her to answer. She identifies multi-tasking as a major skill that she has learned in this position. Her supervisor has said that Garland has become a big help to her, and knows a great deal about the way their system works. Garland has become close to a number of the people in her department and throughout the company. She says that the people she works with have a lot to do with how much she likes her job.

Since her graduation this May from Pequot Lakes High School, Garland has taken some big steps towards independence. Although from a supportive foster family, her status as a ward of the state prevented her family from approving her driver's license until she turned 18. Now she not only has a license, she has purchased her own car and is paying for her own insurance.

When asked how she believes that the youth program has assisted her, she said it "helped me with responsibility and getting a better work ethic and taught me to tolerate working with all kinds of people."

After Garland completes her summer work experience, she will be attending Central Lakes College in Brainerd this fall with 19 credits. She hopes she is able to go back to TDS Telecom. This public/private partnership has made a difference in her life.



Northeast Minnesota Office Of Job Training

Program Summary

The youth program provides youth, ages 14 to 21, with an opportunity to develop essential job skills through work experience in their own communities. Youth are able to familiarize themselves with the workforce and learn how to better prepare for the future. It also offers direction to youth about the future. The Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training provides a number of activities, workshops, and enrichment exercises to complement the work experience and assist youth in their career path. Activities include tours of local technical and community colleges, money management workshops, first aid certification, career assessments, job shadowing, assistance in creating resumes, filling out applications, and interviewing, financial opportunities for college, field trips, hands-on work experience, and specific work-related training.

Work Experience

The youth program strives to provide a worksite related to a youth's career interests.

"This is one of the best jobs I've ever had. It's what I've wanted to do forever," said Trent Holcomb, 19, who provides recreational maintenance for Chippewa National Forest and plans to study forestry in college. He is interested in conservation and wilderness management as well as working



Paul Zelazny (left) and Ryan Ojibway plant seedlings in the nursery at the Cloquet Forestry Center. They have learned everything from plant conservation to wilderness management and participated in a five-year study of black ash seed viability at the center.

Outcomes at a Glance.....

Area Served: Counties served include Aitkin, Carlton, Cook, Itasca, Koochiching, Lake and St. Louis counties--excluding the City of Duluth.

Contact Information:

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Virginia, MN 55792
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WIA Youth Served..... 670
MYP Youth Served..... 187

No. of WIA Youth With a Disability... 182
No. of MYP Youth With a Disability 42

No. of Juvenile Offenders (WIA)..... 81
No. of Juvenile Offenders (MYP) 29

No. of Foster Children Served (WIA) ... 92
No. of Foster Children Served (MYP)... 11

Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance (WIA)..... 102
Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance (MYP)..... 24

No. of Teen Parents (WIA)..... 84
No. of Teen Parents (MYP)..... 30

No. of Youth Earning a HS Diploma or GED (WIA) 64
No. of Youth Earning a HS Diploma or GED (MYP) 29

with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR). "I get to do a little bit of everything from all of those fields here," Holcomb added.

The program can also introduce youth to a field and help them start a career. "This is a good stepping stone for James (Yuenger) who assists with feeding and medicating the wolves," said Lori Schmidt, wolf curator at the International Wolf Center. Yuenger plans to study wilderness management in college and is very enthusiastic about the opportunities available to him through the youth program. "James motivates us to help him build a career," Schmidt said.

Program Impact

When LeeAnn Hill, 20, applied to the youth program, she knew that she wanted to do something more with her life but lacked confidence and motivation. Youth career counselor Judy Lundquist put Hill to work at Itasca Nursing Home as a student activity assistant. In the beginning of her employment, Hill was very quiet and unhappy, but now she is always smiling and enjoys interacting with the residents. Supervisor Connie Anderson said, "LeeAnn is growing as a person. The program is really working for her." Hill has now decided to go back to school at the Alternative Learning Center and finish her last two months. Then she plans to attend college to become a social worker or counselor to help people like herself.

Karla Shaw, 16, first worked at the Lake Superior Zoo to complete 60 hours of community service. It was then that she realized working kept her out of trouble and that she really enjoyed being involved with the zoo. It gave her something worthwhile to look forward to. After finishing her community service hours, Shaw applied for employment at the zoo, but was turned down. With disappointment, she almost returned to her prior lifestyle until her father sent her to meet career counselor Barb Jones. Jones enrolled Shaw in the youth program and found a position for her at the Lake Superior Zoo. Shaw now has plans to attend Lake Superior College to study social work and child psychology. "I think it's a really good program," said Shaw. "It helps teenagers learn how to handle a job and manage money and it keeps them out of trouble."

MYP and WIA Programs

The MYP and WIA eligibility requirements cover a range of low-income, at-risk, and disabled youth, allowing the Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training to stretch its funding to serve a number of youth.

Out-of-School Services

Through the Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training, many youth workers qualify for financial aid and assistance to attend college after graduating from high school or obtaining a GED. Nathan Bray, 21, has

Success Story--Talynn Jackson

Talynn Jackson, 18, has spent two summers involved with the youth program. Prior to her enrollment, Jackson had dropped out of school, become chemically dependent, refused to speak to her alcoholic single mother, and was trying to deal with the pregnancy of her fifteen-year-old sister. During her first year with the program, Jackson obtained her GED, completed a chemical dependency treatment, and enrolled at Itasca Community College. She was recognized as the "Outstanding Youth Worker of the Year" in 2002.

Now in her second year with the program, Jackson has proven that her life is not only on the right track, but has no intentions of straying. She completed her first year of college and is now looking into a university to continue her education. Working at MacRostie Art Center in Grand Rapids has allowed Jackson to use her skills. She repaired the computer networks, created and maintained databases, handled bookkeeping and customer service, and developed a newsletter for the business. The work experience has given her a chance to learn a lot on her own. "I think it's a great program. It's helped me get on my feet, and my self-esteem has gone up a lot," said Jackson.



been involved with the summer youth program since he was 14 years old. He recently graduated from Hibbing Community and Technical College with a degree in electrical maintenance and is now searching for an apprenticeship. His education was funded through the Office of Job Training, and career counselor Missy Mortenson assisted Bray with registration, financial aid, and applications.

Work-Based Learning

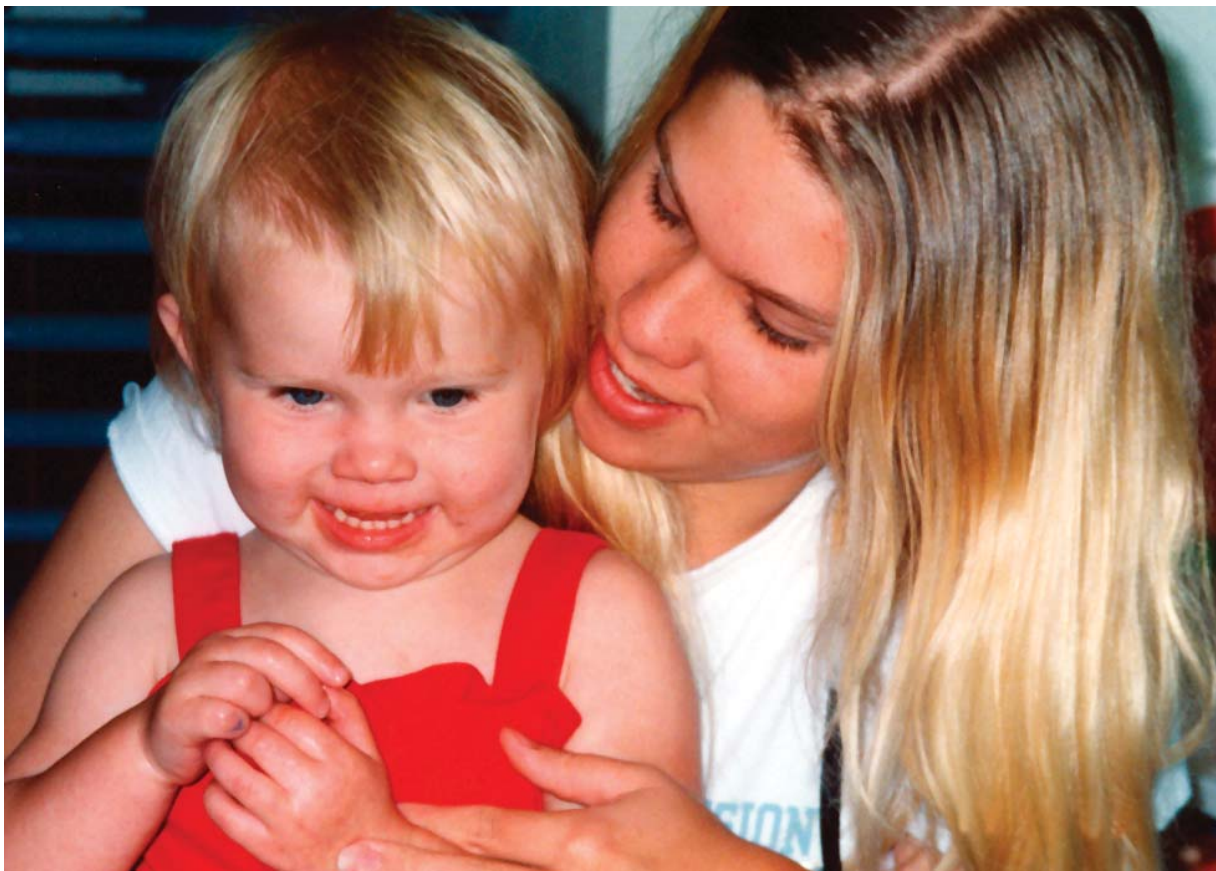
One of the “best practices” for work-based learning is when the youth worker is given the opportunity to accomplish something on their own but with a supervisor by their side to help them along and teach as they go. At the International Wolf Center, supervisor Lori Schmidt and youth worker James Yuenger work side-by-side caring for the wolves. Yuenger is able to do the work himself, but Schmidt is always there to assist, and the youth participants often prefer a supervisor who works with them rather than just assigning tasks.

Adult Mentoring

At the Cloquet Forestry Center, youth workers Paul Zelazny, 16, and Ryan Ojibway, 15, have found a mentor in supervisor John Blanchard. Lacking needed structure and support while growing up at home, Zelazny and Ojibway have spent the summer learning from Blanchard. They not only respect him as a supervisor, but admire him as a role model. He has taught them about the forestry center and allowed them to take part in a five-year study of Black Ash. This work experience has given them something to be proud of, and Blanchard made it clear that they were appreciated at the center and are welcome to come back anytime.

Rewards/Recognition

Each year, awards of recognition are presented to the outstanding individual youth participants, supervisor, worksite, and work group. These individuals are honored at a luncheon where they receive a certificate signed by the Governor. There is always a possibility of adding another award category to ensure that deserving youth are recognized.



Martha Eilola comforts a young girl at Chicagami Too Daycare as she develops valuable work skills to aid in reaching her future goal of becoming an elementary school special education teacher.

City of Duluth

Program Summary

Services are provided to in-school and out-of-school youth at the Duluth Workforce Center. All youth receive opportunities for work experience, help with job search, and career guidance. In addition, tutoring is available in the on-site classroom for study skills, basic skills help, and GED preparation. Funding and guidance are available to those continuing on to college. Each participant receives case management and individual plan development.

Work Experience

Forty-four youth participated in a summer work experience this year. Most of the youth were in-school youth, and all were placed in individual worksites. One rather unique worksite was North Country Ride, a horseback riding program for disabled people. The youth assigned there enjoys the work so much that she volunteers a lot of her time with the program. One special year round worksite for out-of-school youth has been the Women In Construction Training Program, which trains women in all the skills they need to build houses.

Program Impact

Most youth who were working on their GED this past year did complete the program. Those who haven't are still attending and working towards that goal. Many high school graduates continue on to pursue post-secondary training. High school students who participated in the program during the summer returned to high school in the fall. Success has also been experienced in the completion of work experiences and the continuation of unsubsidized employment during follow up.

MYP and WIA Programs

All participants are dual-enrolled in MYP and WIA. MYP helped fund work experience opportunities in the Duluth area.

Out-of-School Services

Youth can prepare for their GED in the on-site classroom and receive one-on-one attention from a licensed teacher. Because the classroom is located on-site, case managers can easily communicate with the teacher on students' progress and have more opportunity to interact with the youth. College tours and graduation parties are often planned together by staff and students. This year, the program celebrated 19 GED graduates. Youth who have graduated from high school can get guidance and funding to attend college and, if needed, get tutoring from the classroom teacher. A unique Vision Training Lab is also a service provided on-site to those who have reading difficulties related to improper binocular functioning.

Assessment

A licensed vocational evaluator administers a series of inventories to the youth. The youth get a copy of their report, which shows their scores and the careers that match their interests and abilities. Another assessment tool is used for those who have reading difficulties to find out if they would benefit from the Vision Lab program. The assessment involves a checklist of symptoms that an individual may experience while reading and writing. The individuals who show a need based on the checklist are then assessed on the Vision Lab equipment.

Outcomes at a Glance.....

Area Served: City of Duluth.

Contact Information:

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(218) 730-5770

WIA Youth Served..... 243
MYP Youth Served 232

No. of WIA Youth With a Disability..... 24
No. of MYP Youth With a Disability 24

No. of Juvenile Offenders (WIA) 54
No. of Juvenile Offenders (MYP) 52

No. of Foster Children Served (WIA) ... 17
No. of Foster Children Served (MYP)... 17

Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance (WIA)..... 52
Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance (MYP)..... 52

No. of Teen Parents (WIA)..... 26
No. of Teen Parents (MYP)..... 26

No. of Youth Earning a HS Diploma or GED (WIA) 25
No. of Youth Earning a HS Diploma or GED (MYP) 25



Cheng Vang helps with preparing meals for the youth he monitors at his work experience site, Neighborhood Youth Services in Duluth.

Partnerships with Other Youth-Serving Agencies

Duluth Workforce Development has an established partnership with Life House, an organization for homeless, runaway and other at risk youth. Life House helps with basic needs and Duluth Workforce Development helps with training and employment needs. A case manager is on-site at the Youth Center one day a week to help with applications, resumes, job leads and other employment and training needs. Staff also make regular appearances at Oh No Eighteen meetings to share information about careers and jobs.

Rewards/Recognition

An incentive program for youth provides rewards for accomplishing goals towards education and employment. For example, \$10 is awarded for passing each of the GED tests, and \$50 is awarded upon completion of the whole test. Ten dollars are also awarded for completion of a resume or any other pre-employment competency. Also, a graduation party at the classroom is also held every Spring to celebrate and acknowledge the graduates.

Success Story: Anna Defoe

Anna Defoe started in the program when she was 18 years old. She had very limited work experience and very low self-esteem. She needed the work experience funding our program could provide to continue the work she started with the Women In Construction Training Project. Anna became very successful in the program. She did such a great job that Women In Construction wanted to give her a leadership position. Our program extended her work experience so she could be trained as a crew supervisor. The program also covered the cost of tools and work clothes. Upon her completion of the work experience, Women In Construction was able to hire her full-time at \$11 an hour. Aside from building homes and supervising crews, Anna has also been involved in a number of other leadership activities with the program: coordinating an outreach program to help get more young women interested in a construction career, serving on the Board of Directors, representing the program at conferences such as the Kids Plus Conference, and training new employees in tiling. According to her supervisor, "Anna has become the in-house tiling expert."

Anna says she believes the Women In Construction Training Project does great things for women, including women of color, because it gives women opportunity that they wouldn't have otherwise in this field. She also says, "I found my passion. This work experience has turned my life around."



Central Minnesota Jobs and Training Services

Program Summary

The mission of the youth programs of Central Minnesota Jobs and Training Services (CMJTS) is to serve disadvantaged youth by providing employment and training services that help youth achieve their potential to become productive and self-sufficient. CMJTS provides comprehensive case management services to at-risk youth ages 14 to 21 in eleven rural counties within Central Minnesota. Youth Employment Specialists (YES) work with participants in their schools, worksites, homes and other locations convenient for the participants. YES works with participants one-on-one to develop strategies that address each young person's unique barriers to self-sufficiency and to assist them in meeting individual goals.

Work Experience

Participants engage in a wide variety of work experience activities. Participants are matched with work that will help them build work skills and a sense of worth. The worksites are beneficial to rural youth who may not otherwise have the opportunity to develop such skills or explore their career interests. This is especially true in the Central Minnesota counties where the youth unemployment rate has ranged from 11 percent to 44 percent throughout 2003. In addition, staff visit participants at their worksites to evaluate their progress. With the support of YES, participants learn to perfect necessary skills such as punctuality, problem solving, communication and more.



Outcomes at a Glance.....

Area Served: Eleven counties in Central Minnesota including Chisago, Isanti, Kanabec, Kandiyohi, McLeod, Meeker, Mille Lacs, Pine, Renville, Sherburne, and Wright.

Contact Information:
Barbara Chaffee, Director
Central Minnesota Jobs and Training Services
106 Pine Street
Monticello, MN 55362
(763) 271-3715

WIA Youth Served..... 486
MYP Youth Served 81

No. of WIA Youth With a Disability... 311
No. of MYP Youth With a Disability 58

No. of Juvenile Offenders (WIA) 62
No. of Juvenile Offenders (MYP) 18

No. of Teen Parents (WIA)..... 46
No. of Teen Parents (MYP)..... 2

No. Earning Academic Credit (WIA)..... 84
No. Earning Academic Credit (MYP)..... 4

No. of Youth Earning a HS Diploma or GED (WIA) 75
No. of Youth Earning a HS Diploma or GED (MYP) 5

An important part of the youth employment programs at CMJTS is the relationship between the youth and their supervisors.

Impact of the Program

The vast array of services provided by CMJTS ensure at-risk youth a successful transition to adulthood and self-sufficiency. Such outcomes frequently result in a reduced need for social services, higher employment rates, fewer unintended pregnancies and reduced crime. Helping youth learn skills necessary for success at work benefits employers and the community.

MYP and WIA Programs

The MYP and WIA programs work together to provide the best plan of action possible for each participant. The MYP program works to improve participants' employability, basic educational skills, citizenship skills, and provide comprehensive case management. WIA provides the same services as well as increased supportive services. YES develops an Individual Service Strategy (ISS) with each participant to meet his or her unique needs.

Out-of-School Services

Youth not enrolled in school and who do not yet have a diploma or GED have considerable barriers to address as they work towards self-sufficiency. YES works with each person to create strategies that work best for them. Many participants enroll in an Alternative Learning Center with the assistance of YES. Other participants entering a GED program are eligible for an incentive of \$15.00 per class, up to \$250.00. The incentive plan helps participants complete their GED more quickly than those not utilizing the incentive



Communities benefit from the services participants provide.

Success Story: Samantha Swanson

Samantha Swanson enrolled with Central MN Jobs & Training Services youth programs on June 4, 2001. She was 14 at the time. When asked why she wanted to be in the program, she stated that "I had a hard time getting a job because of my age, I was only 14 and no one would hire me." Samantha also has speech and language disabilities that hindered her employment-seeking efforts.

Through the youth programs, Samantha was able to obtain work experience at the local food shelf. While there, she learned valuable skills such as interaction with co-workers and clients, punctuality, and decision-making skills.

Samantha's career interest is in working with children. This past school year, Samantha was able to obtain another work experience as a kindergarten teacher's classroom aide. This gave her a background in working with children. Her responsibilities included working one on one with youth to complete craft projects that they were having difficulty with.

Samantha recently got her driver's license and employment in the private sector. She works every day from 3 pm to 6 pm at "Stay & Play," a local daycare facility. Samantha makes \$5.25 per hour. "I like the money, interacting with the kids, and talking to other people," she says. These are just a few of the reasons she gave about her positive employment experience.

Samantha is unsure about what she would like to do after she graduates from high school. She does know that "this program works. It helps kids like me work."



plan. In addition, YES will assist the participants in determining their career interests through a variety of assessments. Those who wish to pursue post-secondary education will research such opportunities with YES, often visiting colleges. Those wishing to be employed immediately may take on work experience to build their employability levels, or work with their YES specialist to find work in the private sector.

Follow-up Services

Upon completion of the program, participants remain in contact with YES for at least 12 months. During that time, follow-up participants are continually assessed to ensure they are able to sustain self-sufficiency. Participants are eligible for supportive services, and, should it be necessary, they can be re-enrolled in the program. Each month, the participant is contacted and mailed helpful information for their transition to independence. Information is gathered regarding their school or employment status and any new needs that may have developed. The ongoing support provides a safety net to permanent self-sufficiency.

Leadership Development

CMJTS youth programs look for innovative methods to help at-risk youth develop leadership skills. In the past year, several participants have spoken at public forums regarding the services they received and how they were beneficial. Two participants served on the Youth Advisory Council, providing insight on the needs of rural youth. Forty-four youth took part in focus group discussions on the lives of rural youth, gaps in services and needs for the future.

Site Supervisor Training

Work Experience Site Supervisors undergo specialized training with YES to help them best manage youth workers. The training not only addresses required topics such as child labor laws, sexual harassment and reports of injury, but also discusses many youth development issues such as coaching youth employees, teamwork, goal-setting and mentoring.



Learning practical skills--such as basic auto maintenance--are an integral part of the program.

Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council

Program Summary

The Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council provides a variety of opportunities for youth in the 14-county Workforce Service Area, including:

- ❖ Work experience in both public and private settings.
- ❖ Career exploration activities, including field trips, job shadowing, and assessments.
- ❖ Assistance with job-seeking and job-keeping skills.
- ❖ Post-Secondary Education Assistance.

These opportunities are provided in coordination with other service providers such as local high schools and education cooperatives, post-secondary schools, businesses and civic groups, family services and group homes, Rehabilitation Services and other partners of the WorkForce Center. In addition to funding through WIA and MYP, the PIC also accesses funding through grants from the Youth Intervention Program and Juvenile Justice.

Work Experience

Through the PIC's work experience component, youth have the opportunity to:

- ❖ Experience employment in an environment where there are clear expectations.
- ❖ Explore jobs in a career field that is of interest to them.
- ❖ Understand and develop good work habits.
- ❖ Understand the value of a paycheck.

Youth are placed in a variety of worksites - offices, museums, bait shops, county offices, schools, hospitals and nursing homes, golf courses, retail stores, landscaping companies - any place of business is viewed as an opportunity for a youth to work. One worksite supervisor commented at the end of the summer that the program "provides an excellent way for younger employees to learn job-related skills." A youth participant said that the program "gives kids jobs that they normally wouldn't consider and opens their minds to careers."

Career Exploration

For the past two summers, the PIC has granted \$5,000 to the Minnesota River Valley Education District's River School, which serves 10 area districts, offering summer sessions in core subjects. The funding from the PIC is used to offset transportation and related costs of field trips and other activities that expose the students to various careers. The opportunity to explore careers first-hand gives participants a positive look into their future. Pete Ziegler, Director of the Minnesota River Valley Education District, says of the River School partnership with the PIC, "Without the additional funding, we would not have been able to give the students the field trip opportunities."

Outcomes at a Glance.....

Area Served: A 14-county area in Southwest Minnesota including Big Stone, Chippewa, Cottonwood, Jackson, Lac Qui Parle, Lincoln, Lyon, Murray, Nobles, Pipestone, Redwood, Rock, Swift, and Yellow Medicine counties.

Contact Information:

Juanita Lauritsen, Director
SW Minnesota Private Industry Council, Inc.
Minnesota WorkForce Center
607 West Main
Marshall, MN 56258
(507) 537-6987

WIA Youth Served..... 144
MYP Youth Served 20

No. of WIA Youth With a Disability..... 90
No. of MYP Youth With a Disability 10

No. of Juvenile Offenders (WIA)..... 7
No. of Juvenile Offenders (MYP) 3

No. of Foster Children Served (WIA) 9
No. of Foster Children Served (MYP)..... 1

Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance (WIA)..... 14
Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance (MYP)..... 1

No. of Teen Parents (WIA)..... 6
No. of Teen Parents (MYP)..... 1

MYP and WIA Programs

MYP and WIA funding sources complement each other in the PIC's service delivery by allowing service to a larger number of youth. MYP allows more flexibility in eligibility and services, which is a great benefit to the youth of SW Minnesota. The PIC also leverages additional resources from the Youth Intervention Program and federal juvenile justice funds. By pooling our resources, we can offer more youth more opportunities.

Out-of-School Youth

The Private Industry Council provides services to alternative school students, offering career exploration activities along with work experience and tuition assistance. PIC staff work closely with Alternative Learning Center staff to provide students with needed services.

Academic Credit

During the school year, the majority of the youth program participants are involved in their school's Work Experience program. This partnership allows the students to earn academic credit while holding a job and earning a paycheck. The alliance of the school work experience coordinator, the worksite supervisor, and the PIC staff person assures that the student will have the necessary support to achieve success in the workplace. Issues at the workplace can be addressed as they arise, and the student has the opportunity to change unacceptable workplace behaviors. Students are graded on their performance both in the workplace and in the classroom, where they concentrate on job-seeking and job-keeping skills, as well as career exploration activities.

Adult Mentoring

Often the role of worksite supervisor becomes more of a mentoring relationship. One youth returned to a worksite at which she had previously been placed and where she had not been successful due to personal issues. After a year, during which she became a teen parent and began living on her own, she asked to return to that worksite because she really liked the job and the staff, and wanted to show them she could be successful. The supervisors were hesitant at first because they had invested a lot of their personal time with this youth, trying to help her make good personal choices during the time she had been placed with them. Because the youth had basically rebuffed their efforts, they were unsure if they wanted to put themselves through a possible ordeal once more. Ultimately, they decided to give her another chance, and she was subsequently placed at this worksite for the summer months. Happily, the year's experience had matured the youth, and she was successful at this site during the second placement. The staff realized that their parenting advice, etc, found now a more willing ear, and they now have a very good relationship with the youth, one that continues on, even after the placement ended.

Success Story

Courtney Bitker has worked under the Private Industry Council's work experience program for two years, and every time she's asked how her job is going, she gives an enthusiastic "I love it!"

This summer, Courtney worked at Tracy Food Pride, stocking shelves. Courtney felt she learned some valuable skills working this summer. She learned to ask questions when she didn't know something. She developed her "people skills by working with kids my own age and customers." Courtney's favorite part of the job is working with people. She saved her earnings from the summer to buy school clothes, water skis, and a life jacket.

As she enters her senior year at Tracy High School, Courtney will continue her job at the grocery store so she can learn even more skills as she prepares for life after graduation. She will be fitting her work schedule during the school year around this season's basketball games since she is the student manager for the basketball team.



South Central Workforce Council

Program Summary

Minnesota Valley Action Council (MVAC), on behalf of the South Central Workforce Council, administers year-round and summer employment and training programs for economically disadvantaged, at-risk youth using WIA and MYP funding. With help from a WIA case manager, youth complete assessments, and an individual service plan is established with clearly defined long- and short-term goals. Youth receive career/guidance counseling to overcome employment barriers, basic skills instruction, work-readiness skills training, and supportive services to assure they reach their career, education and occupational goals.

Academic Credit and Leadership Development

MVAC partners with 19 school districts to offer a Summer Youth Employment and Training Program based upon a service-learning model. Students earn school credit while participating in meaningful service learning projects to enhance applied learning in reading and math. Youth gain leadership skills while participating in projects that benefit their community. Youth also learn about skills needed for successful employment. While attending school, each youth earns a training payment of up to \$10.00 a day for successfully demonstrating good attendance, punctuality, work quality, work quantity, and cooperation. One youth said, “[the money] made me be on time, listen, and work hard every day.”

Work Experience/Career Exploration

Youth explore careers through assessments, paid work experiences, internships, job shadowing and mentoring. Case managers recruit worksites that match the youth’s interests and abilities. One youth participated in a paid internship as an administrative assistant at an employment agency. She stated that the internship helped her to “learn skills needed to get a job in this field.” Summer youth participants tour local businesses and have guest speakers on various careers.

Program Impact

Eighty-five percent of summer youth participants received school credit for completing the program. Two youth graduated from high school after completion of the program. All other students returned to school this fall. Students were given a pre- and post-test of reading and math skills using the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE). Students demonstrated grade level gains in both reading (.1) and math (.3) upon post-testing. One youth, when asked what he learned during the program, stated, “I learned a whole heap of landscaping skills, work values, and it helped keep my brain in tune.”

WIA and MYP Programs

The summer program serves both WIA and MYP youth. Youth enrolled in WIA are targeted for year-round services. This continuation of services provides additional support youth need to achieve their career and education goals.

Outcomes at a Glance.....

Area Served: Nine counties in South Central Minnesota including Blue Earth, Brown, Faribault, LeSueur, Martin, Nicollet, Sibley, Waseca, and Watonwan counties.

Contact Information:
Sandy Oppegard, Director
South Central Workforce Council
464 Raintree Road
Mankato, MN 56001
(507) 549-3452

WIA Youth Served..... 94
MYP Youth Served..... 215

No. of WIA Youth With a Disability..... 42
No. of MYP Youth With a Disability.. 117

No. of Juvenile Offenders (WIA)..... 11
No. of Juvenile Offenders (MYP) 12

No. of Foster Children Served (WIA) 3
No. of Foster Children Served (MYP)... 14

Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance (WIA)..... 26
Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance (MYP)..... 13

No. of Teen Parents (WIA)..... 18
No. of Teen Parents (MYP)..... 6

No. Earning Academic Credit (WIA).... 22
No. Earning Academic Credit (MYP).. 184

Out-of-School Services

MVAC assists out-of-school youth complete high school or obtain a GED by linking youth to appropriate educational institutions, alternative schools or GED preparation classes. Youth identified as basic skills-deficient are referred to ABE classes. Opportunities are provided to explore military, apprenticeship, or post-secondary education institutions. Youth gain occupational skills through classroom training and paid work experiences. Work-readiness activities, including job search skills and positive work habits, are provided to youth so they learn how to obtain and maintain employment. Youth are also connected with local WorkForce Centers.

Youth from South Central Minnesota learn proper techniques for laying a cobblestone patio during summer, 2003, as part of their service learning project.



Success Story: Miranda Brudellie

Miranda Brudellie, a 19-year-old single mom, came into the MVAC office in June of 2002. She was working part-time, and was receiving assistance through Human Services. She was interested in going to school and was determined to become self-sufficient.

Her WIA case manager helped her identify her career goal of becoming a Medical Coding Specialist and working for a medical clinic. Miranda registered for classes in this field at South Central Technical College (SCTC) in Mankato. She arranged her schedule to complete this program in one year. Her WIA case manager worked closely with the county human service case manager to make sure Miranda received the support services she needed to help her complete school.

Miranda's second son was born in March of 2003. Miranda took very little time off after the baby was born. She continued to attend school and work part-time. Miranda maintained a 3.5 Grade Point Average and was named to the Spring Semester President's Honor List. She graduated this summer with a Medical Coding Degree from SCTC. She has a full-time job as a customer service representative working at a promotions company. She is no longer receiving any assistance through county Human Services. Miranda is planning to relocate to start her new career in Medical Coding.

On July 21, 2003, Miranda received the MVAC Community Action Achiever Award for Watonwan County. Miranda exemplified what it takes to become self-sufficient. At this event Miranda stated, "I would not have been able to attend school without the support I have received. It meant a lot to me to have someone tell me I was doing well and to hang in there. Many times I thought of quitting and just needed a little encouragement."

Southeast Workforce Development, Inc.

Mission: "To assist youth in becoming life-long learners, making successful transitions into adulthood and the workplace."

Program Summary

Youth Connections offers youth participants a variety of activities related to life/work skills and career preparation. Youth can participate in youth development activities including subsidized employment, personal or career mentoring, computer skill enrichment, GED preparation and college-based training. Some youth also participate in focus groups addressing the specific teen issues that they are facing.

Youth Connections has a strong service learning component embedded in all of the activities. Youth take an active role in the design and delivery of service with youth taking the lead in identifying and planning projects, field trips, setting rules for peer groups and drafting behavior agreements as well as selecting and planning community development projects. Students who have successfully completed projects have the opportunity to become educational assistants in future classes. Youth are encouraged to see themselves as valued members of their communities and the leaders of tomorrow. They are encouraged to design activities where they can take a leadership role in that community.

The Community Service Learning Team is designed to provide hands-on instruction for youth to help them gain knowledge in work-related skills, time management, resource management, and leadership development while at the same time, encouraging them to recognize their value to the community. In many Southeast Minnesota communities, youth participated in projects that were in partnership with their local city, county or other community-based organizations. Youth met with the local governing boards to learn about the needs of their individual community and to develop a plan to address those issues. Youth are excited to participate in the projects from start to finish and like it that family and friends can see their work all over the city. This gives youth the opportunity to see themselves as contributing members of their community. Over 100 youth participated on Work Teams during the summer of 2003. Youth combine 20 hours of team or individual work experience with academic enrichment and work-skill development activities. Youth also participate in Leadership Skill Development activities that prepare them for future careers and independent living.

Youth Connections has developed a comprehensive planning strategy that responds to the stages of development that the youth encounter. This strategy recognizes two basic concerns for youth: staying in school and finding employment. Components to address these issues are varied and can be arranged in the way that best meets the needs of the individual youth at the age or stage of development.

One of the projects this summer was "Summer Readers" in Rochester. Six teens prepared to "teach" summer school to non-English speaking children for four weeks. Classes were held at a local elementary school and focused on helping the youth with a crash course in teaching English through games and fun activities. One day a week was reserved for field trips where the student teachers and children loaded onto a large school bus and visited important places in the community such as the fire station, ambulance company and the Mayo-One emergency helicopter pad. Another day, they went to a ranch and petting zoo

Outcomes at a Glance.....

Area Served: Dodge, Fillmore, Freeborn, Goodhue, Houston, Mower, Olmsted, Rice, Steele, and Wabasha Counties.

Contact Information:

Randy Johnson, Director
SE Minnesota Workforce Development, Inc.
1016 Civic Center Drive NW
Second Floor
Rochester, MN 55901
(507) 292-5153

WIA Youth Served..... 216
MYP Youth Served..... 397

No. of WIA Youth With a Disability..... 93
No. of MYP Youth With a Disability.. 178

No. of Juvenile Offenders (WIA)..... 42
No. of Juvenile Offenders (MYP) 61

No. of Teen Parents (WIA)..... 22
No. of Teen Parents (MYP)..... 5

No. Earning Academic Credit (WIA)..... 89
No. Earning Academic Credit (MYP).... 71

No. of Youth Earning a HS Diploma or GED (WIA) 39
No. of Youth Earning a HS Diploma or GED (MYP) 17

to learn about nature and animals. While this was all an extreme amount of fun for the children, our teen teachers learned more than they ever thought possible about planning and organization as well as the needs and behaviors of children, how they learn, and how to motivate them to learn more.

Healthy Seniors and Youth Connections put together a project in Owatonna to help provide a respite for elderly caregivers who needed a break from caring for a spouse with Alzheimer's disease. The family would bring them to the center for two hours of cards, games, puzzles or just chatting with each other. Sometimes the spouse would leave for a while to get away, and other times they would stay and visit as well. At first the youth ages 14 to 17 were a little nervous about the task they had taken on, but soon they were having lots of fun with the seniors, coming up with very creative ideas to entertain them.



One of the rewards for a "job well done" by youth participants in the Workforce Development, Inc. youth program was an afternoon at a Minnesota Twins baseball game. These youth were joined by the Twin's mascot, T.C. Bear.

Hennepin-Scott-Carver

Program Summary

The summer employment program is the principal youth employment activity of Hennepin County. Employment services are provided by Tree Trust, Hennepin's youth employment service provider. During WIA Year 3 and MYP FY 2003, Hennepin served approximately 400 suburban youth.

Hennepin County's summer program provided three distinct work experiences:

- ❖ Group Site Employment: Crew-based (outdoor) work in parks, playgrounds, and nature centers located in suburban municipalities and school districts. 119 youth were employed in the Group Site Program.
- ❖ Scattered Site Employment: Developed for youth seeking traditional (indoor) employment experiences, the Scattered Site experience provided individual placements in non-profit organizations and/or schools. 56 youth worked at Scattered Sites.
- ❖ Special Needs Youth Employment: Addresses the employment goals in Individual Education Plans of Special Needs Youth. Job Coaches, from their home school districts, accompanied the youth as they worked. Hennepin employed 133 Special Needs Youth.

Work Experience

Group Site Employment participants completed 42 projects in the suburban communities of Bloomington, Eden Prairie, Edina, Golden Valley, Minnetonka, Plymouth, Robbinsdale, and St. Louis Park. Projects included:

- ❖ Rebuilding 275 feet of decking at the Minnetonka City Hall.
- ❖ Grading and seeding 3,200 square feet of hillside at Eden Prairie's Richard T. Anderson Conservation Site.
- ❖ Rip-wrapping 50 yards of shoreline on Parker's Lake in Plymouth (using 50+ tons of rocks).
- ❖ Constructing a 52 x 4-foot timber retaining wall in Golden Valley's Pennsylvania Woods Park.
- ❖ Installing 200 yards of split-rail fencing at Humphrey Woods in Robbinsdale.
- ❖ Built 16-foot wheelchair ramp to existing boardwalk in St. Louis Park's Westwood Hills Nature Center.

Scattered Site Employment participants worked at 24 locations:

- ❖ Participants gained clerical work experience at locations such as, Park Center High School, the City of Brooklyn Park, the CROSS Foodshelf in Maple Grove, the Bloomington Art Center, and the Hennepin County Libraries.
- ❖ Participants gained childcare work experience at locations such as, Maple Grove Community Center, St. Louis Park Community Education, and the Bloomington Art Center.
- ❖ Participants gained janitorial work experience at the Maple Grove Community Center.

Special Needs Youth Employment participants worked at 27 locations. They had opportunities to work in non-profit organizations and in the private sector by working at organizations such as:

Outcomes at a Glance.....

Area Served: Hennepin County (excluding Minneapolis), all of Carver County and Scott County under WIA.

Contact Information:
Bill Brumfield, Director
Hennepin County Training & Employment Assistance Department
300 S. Sixth Street
Minneapolis, MN 55487
(612) 348-5203

(Note: WIA and MYP totals below represent the sum of participants in Hennepin, Carver and Scott Counties.)

WIA Youth Served..... 168
MYP Youth Served..... 322

No. of WIA Youth With a Disability... 136
No. of MYP Youth With a Disability.. 204

No. of Juvenile Offenders (WIA)..... 21
No. of Juvenile Offenders (MYP)..... 29

No. of Foster Children Served (WIA) ... 14
No. of Foster Children Served (MYP)... 11

No. Earning Academic Credit (WIA)..... 87
No. Earning Academic Credit (MYP).. 100

- ❖ Goodwill Industries, the American Cancer Society, Hennepin County Century Plaza, Ridgedale YMCA, City of Brooklyn Park City Hall and Police, Habitat for Humanity, Department of Homeland Security, and Jerry's New Market in Eden Prairie.

Additional Topics

Rewards/Recognition – At the end of each summer, Tree Trust holds a recognition picnic for all of the youth working in the outdoor (Group Site) employment program. At the picnic, individual crew members and crews are recognized for their accomplishments. Local dignitaries, including Hennepin County Commissioners, present individual Governor's Awards.

Preparation for Employment – Work ethics, values and SCANS skills learned while participating in Hennepin's work experience program prepare youth for future employment. Youth learn the importance of completing tasks correctly (by doing them over if they're not right), and they learn that small steps can have big outcomes.

Academic Credit – Youth may earn academic credit for their work experience. Participants are enrolled in a local Alternative Learning Center. Youth earn work experience elective credits for successful completion of their summer work experience program. The number of credits earned is directly related to the number of hours worked: 161 youth earned academic credit.

Program Impact

Surveys of youth employment participants and their parents consistently show high levels of approval and support from both parties. Continued support from partners in local municipalities, school districts, and the Hennepin County Board confirm that the program has a very positive impact on the youth it serves.

MYP and WIA Programs

The coordination of MYP and WIA youth programs is an essential part of the service design of Hennepin County and its service provider, Tree Trust. With the exceptions of out-of-school and older youth, youth enrolled in MYP participate in the same employment experiences as youth enrolled in WIA. When possible, youth are co-enrolled in MYP and WIA to maximize the use of program funding.

Out-of-School Services

Hennepin's Out-Of-School Youth (OSY) services include:

- ❖ Work readiness skill training including job search for youth with previous work experience and work experience for youth with less work experience.
- ❖ Paid work experience in either Tree Trust-supervised worksites or private sector locations.
- ❖ Work-based learning for academic credit and competencies as required.
- ❖ Vocational counseling to help OSY learn about jobs and occupational clusters related to their interest areas.
- ❖ Occupational skills training.
- ❖ Job development and job placement.



Carver County

Program Summary and Work Experience

The Carver County 2003 Summer Youth Work Experience Program provided work experience for 23 youth (20 males and 3 females). Eleven public non-profit worksites participated. A variety of summer jobs were offered which include: park and maintenance workers; activities and recreational assistants; museum, library and clerical assistants; and Youthbuild.

Two youth worked at Baylor Park (Carver County Park Systems). Their job tasks included cleaning campsites, hauling and bundling wood, general landscaping, and cleaning the beach area and park facilities. Four youth worked as custodial assistants at various schools throughout Carver County. They assisted custodians in the general cleaning of the schools. Two youth worked in the activities department of local health-care centers. Two other youth worked at Ridgeview Hospital in Waconia. Three other youth worked for the cities of Watertown, Waconia and the Chaska Chamber of Commerce. Duties varied among these youth in each location. All learned valuable lessons about responsibility, follow-through, and the importance of teamwork.

Two youth worked at the Carver-Scott Educational Cooperative's Farm in Waconia. They performed a variety of tasks such as: cleaning animal barns and pens, collecting eggs, grooming and feeding animals and maintaining fences. Both youth were ready each day to begin their work and looked forward to completing the day's chores and activities in a thorough manner.

Two of eight youth that were accepted into Youthbuild (a Youth Service Corps model program) successfully completed the 10-week course. Youthbuild provides high school youth behind in academic credits an opportunity to be offered applied math classes, team-building skills and hands-on experience in the construction trade. During the summer, these participants helped remodel a school computer room and worked on finishing taping the home that was under construction through the Youthbuild Program. Participants could earn up to three academic credits for their efforts.

Impact of the Program

All youth who participated in this program greatly affected their community in a positive manner. They were enthusiastic about learning new things and obtaining new skills in addition to giving back to the community. Several parents commented to staff about the positive impact the work experience and program were having on their child. Attitudes and outlooks toward working, school, and themselves were changed. Self-esteem was improved through helping others, giving back to the community, and earning a paycheck.

Partnerships with Other Youth-Serving Agencies

Carver County Summer Youth Program works very closely with the Carver-Scott Educational Cooperative (CSEC) to recruit students as well as to provide job training activities through the Farm Project in Waconia and the Youthbuild Program. Many of the program's applicants come from the Coop's educational programs. CSEC is dedicated to facilitating educational cooperation in alternative learning and special education in Carver and Scott counties.

Outcomes at a Glance.....

Area Served: Carver County for MYP services. Part of the Hennepin/Carver/Scott consortium under WIA.

Contact Information:
Jim Broucek, Director
Carver County Community Social Services
600 East 4th Street
Chaska, MN 55318
(952) 361-1710

WIA Youth Served..... 11
MYP Youth Served 12

No. of WIA Youth With a Disability 8
No. of MYP Youth With a Disability 12

No. of Juvenile Offenders (WIA) 2
No. of Juvenile Offenders (MYP) 2

No. of Foster Children Served (WIA) 1
No. of Foster Children Served (MYP)..... 2

Academic Credit

The Youthbuild Program is an example of a partnership (with CSEC) that offers academic credit along with quality job training activities.

Prevention Strategies

Four of the youth enrolled in the Summer Program were offenders. All four completed the program and did not engage in any delinquent activities. The youth that participated appeared to take pride in their jobs and succeeded in keeping their work experience positions.

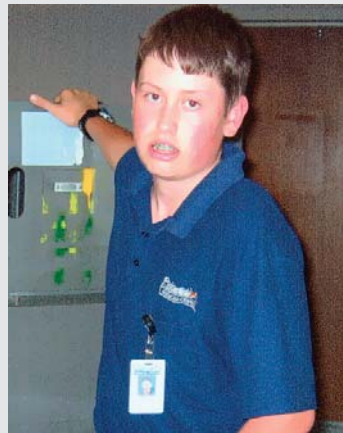
A Success Story Through the Eyes of the Youth and the Parent

Youth Participant

"My name is Jeff, and I worked at the hospital this summer. I got through the Summer Youth Program. My job was in Shipping and Receiving. All products that came in had to be logged in a book and then delivered to the correct department. I learned responsibility from this. It made me feel good to know that they trusted me to take on this job alone. People liked my service and I enjoyed meeting everyone. I also had to help with the trash and loading bags of laundry. The hospital is a great place to work."

Working at the hospital was sometimes hard work, but I enjoyed it so it didn't seem like that. The guys I worked with treated me as one of them. My boss was great to work for. If there was a problem and I couldn't work, he was very understanding. I learned a lot about working and working with others. Work is much better if everyone gets along. You can work and still have fun."

My job is over for now. I wish I could work more. This was my best summer. The guys I worked with invited me to come and have lunch with them anytime. This made me feel really good about myself and the friends I made."



Parent

"Thank you for the wonderful employment opportunity given to my son, Jeff. This program not only taught him job skills, but also how to get along with others he worked with. He was so proud of himself for doing a good job and was rewarded with more responsibility. What a wonderful combination of a job well done, responsibility and pride."

I saw a tremendous growth in my son during this time he worked at the hospital. His self-esteem increased; he grew up. He learned social skills by interacting with other departments at the hospital. He learned not to fear his job duties because he had a hard time reading. He now knows that even though he has a learning disability he can obtain a job, do it well, and there is enjoyment attached to it. He learned responsibility, how to be on time, how to save money. All of this is so much more than I expected."

I am so proud of him. He made so many lasting friends while working. It is a joy to see him invited by co-workers to come back and have lunch with them. I truly believe that they would not be doing this if they did not enjoy him and the way he handled his job. I see a new-found pride in my son and the way he handles himself. He loves it when we go places and it is he who introduces me to someone new and not the other way around."

This program is wonderful and I hope it continues. I can't express enough how much this changed my son in such a positive manner. He will remember this experience for the rest of his life. I believe that many more good things will come because his first experience at work was so positive in so many ways. I do thank you for that."

Scott County

Scott County offers jobs for youth; ages 14 to 21 at minimum wage so they can gain work experience and/or training. Opportunities for academic credit are also offered. After eligibility is determined, orientations are mandatory for participation and include participants, parents and worksite supervisors. This covers all of the program information and requirements as well as current Child Labor Laws and the Right-to-Know Act.

The youth receive services such as:

- ❖ Bus tickets/transportation
- ❖ Counseling
- ❖ Paid work experience
- ❖ T-shirts from group worksites

Right from the beginning, the youth gain some experience in that they receive a bulletin listing the job opportunities, and they need to take responsibility and call for an interview in order to secure the position. They are offered many individual worksites as well as these group sites:

- ❖ Youthbuild
- ❖ Murphy's Landing

These sites, plus the other individual sites, offer:

- ❖ Credits.
- ❖ History appreciation.
- ❖ Combining generations (congregate dining for senior citizens).
- ❖ Construction occupations (for males and females).

Scott County offers these scattered worksites and group worksites throughout the public sector in Scott County. Scott County pays minimum wage for a 10-week program. Jobs vary from custodial assistant, park assistant and kitchen assistant to carpentry assistant, among others. New sites this summer were a position at the Thrift Store and one at the Historical Society.

The Scott County youth program impacted youth and their communities in many ways, including:

- ❖ Attaining academic credit.
- ❖ Completing projects at public sector sites in this time of budget cuts.
- ❖ Youth getting on track.
- ❖ Maintaining reading and math skills.

Some of the applicants who were not eligible for WIA were able to be a part of the program through MYP. This enabled more youth to participate in the summer youth program of Scott County.

Collaborative Efforts

A sub-contracted cooperative effort with the Carver-Scott Educational Cooperative, Three Rivers Park and Scott County offers a maximum of two credits at Murphy's Landing for science, math, English and history. A cooperative effort with CSEC and Scott County offers a maximum of four credits for students needing

Outcomes at a Glance.....

Area Served: Scott County for MYP services. Part of the Hennepin/Carver/Scott consortium under WIA.

Contact Information:

Jean Sinell, E&T Supervisor
WorkForce Center, Scott County
752 Canterbury Rd. S.
Shakopee, MN 55379
(952) 496-8273

WIA Youth Served..... 33
MYP Youth Served..... 25

No. of WIA Youth With a Disability..... 28
No. of MYP Youth With a Disability..... 7

No. of Juvenile Offenders (WIA)..... 3
No. of Juvenile Offenders (MYP)..... 3

No. of Foster Children Served (WIA)..... 6
No. of Foster Children Served (MYP)..... 2

Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance (WIA)..... 2
Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance (MYP)..... 4

No. Earning Academic Credit (WIA)..... 9
No. Earning Academic Credit (MYP)..... 17

credits to graduate or assistance in moving to the appropriate grade level.

Scott County also assisted the youth that were SELF-eligible in areas of demonstrated need. To be a participant in SELF, the youth had to have been either in foster care, a runaway situation, lived in a shelter facility or had to have spent a night outside the home due to difficulties. Opportunities to discuss career, independent living skills and other miscellaneous information were available to these youth.



Ashlee Barrington helps sort clothing at the Community Action Program Thrift Store.

Success Story: Brad Purrington

Not everything turns out as you think it will.

Brad started in the Youthbuild project this summer with the intent of gaining credits to continue with his senior year. The Youthbuild experience brought a lot more into Brad's summer than just credits: a career, skills, and self.

Brad had "given up on school" in the past few years. Then he realized he wanted to graduate with his class. His school counselor had him contact the WorkForce Center for an application for Youthbuild.

Youthbuild taught Brad that if he just tried and gave it his all, he could achieve anything. He learned the construction trade, which would help him secure a future job. The skills included drywalling, painting, mudding, taping and demolition. The latter was the best part of the projects of the summer.

The major challenge for Brad was getting up early each morning so he wasn't late. It was hot on some of the days, and they worked outside. This required physical endurance.

Brad was surprised that part of the curriculum was physical education. They played games during breaks from their work. They also went on field trips to colleges and other areas of interest. They went to Murphy's Landing to learn how architecture and construction of buildings today is different from how it was done in the 1800's.

Brad states that he will take most of the skills that he learned into the future. He plans to pursue a career in construction.

City of Minneapolis

Program Summary

Minneapolis WIA Youth Employment and Training participants have the opportunity to receive intensive case management services through a community-based delivery system via eight highly qualified employment and training non-profits. Case managers assist youth in setting work readiness, occupational and education-related goals following an assessment period in which the youth's barriers and avenues for overcoming those barriers are addressed.

In addition, Minneapolis Public School Special Needs youth benefit as year round participants who experience a summer work activity under the advisement of a job coach. These youth would otherwise be unable to tap into the economic fabric of Minneapolis and ultimately their experience helps to expose the many benefits of employing people with disabilities.

Approximately 60 non-profits provide a learning rich job for hundreds of other youth during the summer. A variety of extra opportunities such as a mentorship program, an educational component and an environmental camp are also available. As one youth worker commented when asked what he liked about his summer experience, "Being treated as a leader, not just a kid, being allowed to make suggestions." This speaks volumes about the effect a positive work experience can have on a youth who may not have the means to gain this much-needed development skill on his own.

Work Experience

Pillsbury United Communities (PUC) is just one summer youth worksite that offers quality experiences for inner city youth. Youth Workers work alongside other caring adults (Pillsbury staff, AmeriCorp members and volunteers) to provide the following: development and implementation of PUC summer programs, administrative and clerical support to the building receptionist and center director, food shelf assistance, advocacy, referral, intake services and assisting clients with locating appropriate services within the centers. A PUC staff person had this to say about the program: "The youth at our site have gained new skills and learned how to be responsible. One of the exciting things for me is to watch them grow and mature. A couple of youth at our site had been participants in our youth programs when they were younger. It is exciting to watch them change and take on a leadership role in our center."



Hien Thuy Nguyen, seen here updating and organizing client files, also speaks Vietnamese and helps communicate with Vietnamese elders at CAPI in Minneapolis.

Outcomes at a Glance.....

Area Served: City of Minneapolis.

Contact Information:

Chip Wells, Director
Minneapolis Employment &
Training Program
105 5th Avenue S.
Suite 600
Minneapolis, MN 55401
(612) 673-6221

WIA Youth Served..... 822

MYP Youth Served 229

No. of WIA Youth With a Disability... 295

No. of MYP Youth With a Disability 6

Youth From Families Receiving Public
Assistance (WIA)..... 135

Youth From Families Receiving Public
Assistance (MYP)..... 112

No. of Juvenile Offenders (WIA)..... 35

No. of Juvenile Offenders (MYP) 10

Impact of the Program

The program at Pillsbury United Communities (PUC) serves neighborhood youth who would more than likely be on the street during the summer if it were not for the constructive nature of the youth program. Teens learn critical work-related skills while neighborhood needs are met. One such need is the translation support provided by the youth workers. Youth impact their neighborhood by translating/interpreting center services to non-English speaking populations who come into the center to obtain resources.

Success in this particular program is measured during a progress review that takes place every two weeks. Youth review their work habits by speaking with their supervisor. Their mentor provides feedback and guidance throughout the course of the summer.

MYP and WIA Programs

Minneapolis has always combined resources in order to provide a quality experience for youth. Assuming funding is available, youth participants are afforded the opportunity to participate in a work experience, Camp Sunrise, Business Partners, or other personal case management services to help guide their goal development.

Assessment

During the intake and assessment, each youth works with a counselor to complete a Training Worksheet, as well as a Training Plan. These tools help staff to learn about the youths current school situation, previous work experience, job skills, academic and training needs, interests and self-perceptions. In addition, youth are evaluated each pay period on the following skills: reading, math, communication, responsibility, sociability and decision-making.

Preparation for Employment

PUC spends the first week of the summer preparing youth for their summer experience. The intensive training includes basic first aid, situational leadership, goal setting, time management, Toastmasters Speechcraft, child development and teaming. Youth also identify 2 to 3 foundation skills under each of the SCANS categories that they would like to work on with their supervisor during the course of the summer. Staff also provides one post-secondary tour and one corporate tour to each youth.

Rewards/Recognition

PUC asks each youth to write a biography to be posted alongside their picture on the staff bulletin board for the entire summer. Each week, one youth is honored as "Summer Youth Employee of the Week." A small gift is given. At program's end, each youth receives a Completion Certificate and a thank you letter from the Center Director. Additional recognition occurs at the start of the summer when each family receives a welcome letter that includes their child's work schedule, supervisor's name, summer calendar and agency brochure. Parents are also invited to attend an end-of-summer recognition banquet.

Success Story: Andreas Asher

Andreas Asher is one of five teens who spent their summer making a video documentary as part of Turn it Up! Youth Media Team at Phillips Community Television (PCTV), located at the corner of Chicago and Lake in Minneapolis. Each youth learned how to research, interview, record and digitally edit video. A typical day might include research, asking passers-by for their opinions, interviewing state and county officials, and tape editing. Their supervisor, Michael Hay, encouraged them to think about socially relevant programming. It seems they listened. The focus of their research was the economy of Phillips neighborhood. With help from Mr. Hay, they produced a half-hour documentary in two months. The finished project includes segments on the effects of the state budget cuts, the job market, affordable housing and new business developments.

Andreas confessed that he wasn't eager to start the program. "I didn't really feel like learning anything because I had just gotten out of school," he said. "I didn't really want to be bothered with it." Once he learned the ropes, though, he started having fun and enjoyed the extra income.

Anoka County

Program Summary

Programming continued to be a cooperative effort with other area agencies and the local schools. The budget reductions had a profound impact on how the Anoka County Youth Program operated this year. Decisions were made by the Youth Council regarding participant priorities, what services were most important, recruitment strategies, staffing and contracting.

Youth programming shifted to placing a greater emphasis on year-round services with a much smaller summer component than in past years and thus kept staff levels more consistent throughout the year. Activities are generally provided by WorkForce Center staff including guidance and counseling, support services, summer and other employment experience and placement, links to employers in the area, and occupational information as well as follow up. No contracts were written this year with local schools or community agencies for summer enrichment activities or transportation.

Secondary educational completion programs and preparation for training are the primary goals for younger participants. MFIP recipients and high school graduates are assessed and counseled regarding post-secondary opportunities and occupational skill training at local post-secondary schools with many attending Anoka-Hennepin Technical College or Anoka-Ramsey Community College.

Work Experience

The program provided work experiences for 80 participants at sites throughout Anoka County. Employment opportunities were offered in a number of different jobs and at a variety of worksites including: park and recreation programs, clerk and office settings, day cares, schools, retail outlets, and county and city parks. Supervisors were given individual orientations with occupational skills training and adult mentoring encouraged while supervising their youth workers. The area benefited by participants providing thousands of hours of service to the community.

One unique collaboration with Anoka-Hennepin Schools provided work experiences for 12 special needs students. The school district provided transportation and job coaching, and the Youth Program paid the students, in addition to workers' compensation coverage. One of the agency staff stated, "This is so wonderful to have these young people working here. It's a real positive for all of us."

One student spent part of the school year "trying out" a floral shop job. This was an unpaid internship to test an interest this student had. The job fit was not appropriate for the student, but she learned a lot as did the supporting employer.

Program Impact

This year the Youth Council made the decision to target youth in foster care and families receiving public assistance. Forty-eight of 98 applications received were from these targeted youth. The County's Foster Care and Income-Maintenance Units were a part of the application documentation process. Youth program recruitment will likely continue with a more targeted approach to serving those who are most in need and will benefit from participation. While working to offer eligible youth the opportunity for a summer experience, it is clear that a more specific outreach effort is a necessity with the greatly reduced budget.

Outcomes at a Glance.....

Area Served: Anoka County.

Contact Information:

Jerry Vitzthum, Director
Minnesota WorkForce Center-Anoka
County
1201 89th Ave. NE
Blaine, MN 55434
(763) 783-4800

WIA Youth Served..... 66
MYP Youth Served..... 107

No. of WIA Youth With a Disability..... 34
No. of MYP Youth With a Disability..... 63

No. of Juvenile Offenders (WIA)..... 6
No. of Juvenile Offenders (MYP)..... 9

Youth From Families Receiving Public
Assistance (WIA)..... 23
Youth From Families Receiving Public
Assistance (MYP)..... 20

No. of Teen Parents (WIA)..... 18
No. of Teen Parents (MYP)..... 6

No. Earning Academic Credit (WIA)..... 41
No. Earning Academic Credit (MYP)..... 62

MYP and WIA Programs

The two programs allow flexibility, especially when a youth is enrolled in both. The unallotment of MYP funds in February 2003 forced some very difficult decisions. Fortunately, with WIA funds available for most of the school year, an immediate shutdown of all work experience sites was avoided. There was some closing of worksites, laying-off of participant workers, reducing hours for others and a change in the summer recruitment strategy. The MYP program funded the summer component, and those summer participants will provide a client pool for the ongoing programming during the school year.

Out-of-School Services

Anoka County serves high school dropouts, graduates and alternative program students with out-of-school funds. Career counseling, job readiness, work experience, internships, skills training and job placement are the main services provided, depending on assessment information. MFIP participants are most often taking advantage of skills training opportunities and are most likely to use support services. The outcomes have been positive with high school and GED completions, credentialed and/or training completions, and job placements meeting the set levels of performance.



Success Story: Elizabeth Rader

Elizabeth Rader started in the Anoka County Youth Program as a summer participant in the coordinated Anoka-Hennepin Special Options project. She was a junior at Coon Rapids High School and liked animals. Her first summer she worked at the Anoka County Humane Society cleaning out cages, feeding and playing with kittens, rabbits and puppies. Her love of animals made the job, which was not always the most pleasant, a very positive first paid experience.

Since that first experience, Elizabeth has tried a number of other jobs. She worked in the school district's print shop sorting, collating and binding materials. She found out she did not like custodial work after working at Fred Moore Middle School with a summer crew cleaning out lockers and getting the school cleaned for the next fall. An in-school unpaid tryout in the kitchen at Fred Moore seemed more to her taste. She got a chance to work with a team of food service workers preparing breakfast and lunch for middle school students. Elizabeth left Coon Rapids High School in June of 2002 and is now attending Anoka-Hennepin's Transition Plus.



This is her second year of going to work in the cafeteria in the morning, walking from Transition Plus to start work at 8:30. Last spring Elizabeth was able to take a food service class at Anoka Technical College in the afternoons. She has applied for an open job with the school district's food service and is waiting to hear about that job. Elizabeth said she has learned a lot about working and employment in the last three years. The experience she has gained through the program has given her the confidence to seek out a steady job in the food service industry.

Partnerships with Other Youth-Serving Agencies

Over the last number of years, the Anoka Youth Program has contracted with the local school districts to provide summer enrichment activities. These partnerships have been very successful in providing youth with basic skills, computer classes and work seminars while offering school credit and bonuses. This year, with limited funding, no contracts were written to fund instructors. One district took up the challenge and agreed to partner with the summer youth program and provide an educational program. The Centennial School District provided transportation, instruction, field trips, an air-conditioned school, crew leaders and job coaches while the youth program provided the worksite development and coordination, orientations, workers' compensation and wages. The school official responsible for our collaboration stated, "We really want to continue this partnership even though the reimbursement of our extra cost is not available this year." Although the number of youth served was limited this year, the collaborative effort created a truly positive, meaningful summer for those who participated.

Private Sector Involvement

An older out-of-school youth participant was hired to contact non-eligible and non-served youth to connect them with private sector employers. Reliable placement statistics from this effort are not yet available.

Youth Program staff were pleased at the response from the private sector community to the Outstanding Worker Award campaign, including a donation from the Kraus-Anderson Construction Company: "We feel it is very important to reward youths for their hard work and effort in becoming our leaders of tomorrow. Thank you for letting Kraus-Anderson Construction Company be a part of Anoka County's 'Outstanding Worker Award'."

Work-Based Learning

The Youth Program is a partner with the all-transition programs provided by the local school districts. The five areas of focus for transition programs--post-high school training, employment, community participation, recreation and housing--fit well with the program goals and WIA program elements. Some of the transition students have been Job Training participants in the summer program while in high school. This was the first paid employment; often, a job coach or crew leader supported the training at the worksite. In transition, students on Individual Employment Plans are focused on becoming independent adults. Learning solid work habits as well as transferable job skills is key for these special needs individuals to become self-reliant adults.

Dakota County Workforce Services

Program Summary

Dakota County provides a summer work experience program through MYP to youth aged 14 through 21. During Program Year 2003, 241 young people had opportunities for employment and training in either individual placements or on work crews. In Dakota County, youth are also served in a year-round program under the Workforce Investment Act. Year-round services include assessment, service strategy and follow up. Youth in this program get what many more fortunate young people take for granted, a caring, interested adult who can guide them toward success. 140 youth participated in WIA youth programs during the program year.

Competitive Process

In September, 2002, Dakota County published a Request for Letters of Interest (LOI) for organizations interested in providing services to eligible youth. Working closely with a committee appointed by the Dakota County Youth Council, staff developed a document that articulated local youth needs. This process was a rich one for both the Youth Council and the Workforce Council. It raised the level of awareness of youth needs and clarified the nature of the services we wanted to provide for youth in our community. Contractors reworked their program offerings to create a service profile that both met WSA demands and emphasized strengths.

Work Experience

Work experience is offered in two ways: subsidized summer employment and private sector job placements.

Younger youth are served through summer work at Tree Trust. These youth work in public sector venues either in work crews or in individual placements, such as schools, libraries and government offices. Very special adults are selected to supervise these young people for whom the experience provides both a job and a valuable learning experience. On crews, youth work in outdoor settings where they build or repair public structures such as park pathways, playgrounds, swimming pool areas or municipal displays. In both these settings youth learn how interdependent the members of a community are as these youth are often both the producers and consumers of their own goods and services. That is, as residents of the community, they use the facilities they have built or repaired. By stating this outright in letters to neighbors of their projects, they are both teaching and learning a valuable community lesson.

Older, out-of-school youth are prepared for unsubsidized employment through a wide range of employability lessons centering around a Youth Competency system at the Employment and Training Center. They are assisted with career exploration, resume preparation, interviewing skills, and research and

Outcomes at a Glance.....

Area Served: Dakota County.

Contact Information:

Mark Jacobs, Director
Dakota County Workforce Services
1 Mendota Rd. W., Suite 100
West St. Paul, MN 55118
(651) 554-5622

WIA Youth Served..... 140
MYP Youth Served 133

No. Earning Academic Credit (WIA)... 110
No. Earning Academic Credit (MYP).... 53

No. of Youth Completing Competency
Program (WIA) 35
No. of Youth Completing Competency
Program (MYP) 53



preparation for post-secondary education. During the first months on the job, youth are encouraged to keep in touch with counselors to review any “issues” that arise on the job. Seven youth attained and retained jobs during this program year. “My counselor made all the difference,” one of ETC’s youths remarked.

Program Impact

Dakota County and its contracted providers emphasize service to youth with special needs and high school drop-outs. Pregnant and parenting teens are served at the Employment and Training Center. Homeless youth and young offenders are targeted by Job Service. These choices were based on existing relationships with agencies through which these youth already receive services and because of our commitment to reaching out to groups of young people who might be overlooked by other programs. In Dakota County, according to the Children’s Defense Fund’s “Kids Count,” 15 percent of youth do not graduate on time. Clearly there is a need to bring additional services to youth enrolled in alternative schools. By serving pregnant and parenting youth, we are making a difference in the lives of the children as well as the parents. With the help of staff, youth overcome barriers to become successful.

Demographically, Dakota County is wealthy and high-achieving. Special needs youth are not typically showcased, but at Tree Trust their achievements are the focus of high-profile awards ceremonies. By partnering with people who know these youth, Dakota County offers programs that meet their needs.

Outreach has been a large part of the Dakota County mission as well. Over 600 youth received employability services through outreach efforts of Job Service, including Job Fairs, workshops at the New Chance Program at the Juvenile Services Center (JSC), and presentations to school and community groups. The new “Zone” hosts young jobseekers daily and since its launch, the companion website has had over 3,500 visits. “The Zone is a much-needed resource, and it is obvious that the individuals who developed it recognize the needs of young adults,” declared the JSC Program Director. The Youth Council also has its own website and a brochure that invites collaboration with other organizations serving youth in Dakota County.

Success Story: Justin Wick

Justin Wick was lucky; he found the perfect first job. For someone who loves being outdoors and has ambitions to have his own car one day, working at Tree Trust was the best way to work outside and earn a paycheck. But Justin’s experience ended up being much more important.

As part of the Lakeville crew under Crew Leader Aaron Freng, Justin was one of 16 youth who built a 250-foot-long boardwalk connecting one path in one neighborhood to another across an expanse of wetland. Residents use the path for walking or biking and even cross-country skiing. Justin could see his work take shape daily. He learned how to measure and build, how to budget the cost of the project, how to manage his time and energy. When it was all over, neighborhood residents had a top-notch boardwalk and Justin had a bank account and a Governor’s Award for distinguished service and dedication to community service.

But Justin’s sense of community didn’t stop there. With his dad, Mike, Justin wrote letters to both of Minnesota’s U.S. Senators touting the benefits of Tree Trust. They told the senators that “Tree Trust employs youth...to build all kinds of walkways in parks, tree planting, construction parks and more.” With tight funding, advocacy is important for the programs and for the elected officials.

Justin’s mother, Kris, says that Justin has learned a lot during his two years with Tree Trust. He learned that he could accomplish big things and make a difference in his community; he learned that he could work with lots of different people and the importance of being responsible. Kris said that Justin had wonderful mentors through the program, that in the smaller community of the crew, kids can take pride in their work for the larger neighborhood community.

Justin is learning that --and more. He is already leveraging the Tree Trust experience into a new effort, his Boy Scout Eagle project, which will give him the most prestigious award that Scouting offers. Justin will coordinate the construction of a labyrinth at a neighborhood church. What better outcome for someone who has had first-hand experience with coordination and projects and public service! Justin’s advice to other youth: “Don’t give up!”

Ramsey County Workforce Solutions

Program Summary

In 2003, Workforce Solutions served almost 1,000 eligible youth participants. Unchanged from previous years, the service delivery method combined a contract for services to urban youth, and direct service provision to the suburban enrollees. Extension of the contract with Workforce Solutions' youth program prime contractor, Center for Employment and Training, kicked off Program Year 2002, and the CET once again provided a combination of work experience, support services, counseling, and an individualized approach to WIA-element service provision to young enrollees.

Collaboration

Ramsey County YouthLEAD program co-enrolled 80 CDBG participants, providing them with services under Tree Trust, CAMPUS, and other high-quality youth development programs.

There was increase in collaboration with other youth programs in the County, e.g., collaboration with a demonstration program that serves young offenders. During September, an effort was made to identify youth who were: either adjudicated or at-risk of becoming involved in the Criminal Justice system, and living in or being released to the Saint Paul Enterprise Community and offer to them the option to co-enroll in the Youth Offender Demonstration project, "Building Lives." At this point, at least 10 youth are interested in participating, and will benefit from enrollment in a program that offers high-intensity services. This type of emphasis on collaborations pays off as shown by our performance numbers.

Work Experience

Work Experience remains an integral part of our Youth Program and one of the core services for our younger youth population. The delivery of this particular service was reviewed in order to provide more meaningful outcomes; thus, it was named "positive work experience." We anticipate collaborating more with our CBO organizations such as the Community Design Project and Twin Cities Tree Trust. Both organizations not only provide work experience but also work-based learning on a year-round basis.

Modified/Unified Approach to Services

For years, Workforce Solutions has branded WIA as a year-round employment and training service, and MYP as a "summer only" program. Workforce Solutions has taken another look at these assumptions and has come up with a new concept that provides a new outlook. Workforce Solutions Youth Program has emerged under a new brand name, Youth LEAD (Learn, Earn, Attain, Develop). Under the Youth LEAD concept, both programs come together under WIA performance measures while keeping their respective eligibility criteria. This approach is transparent to the program participants.

Outcomes at a Glance.....

Area Served: All of Ramsey County, including the City of Saint Paul.

Contact Information:
Patricia Brady, Director
Workforce Solutions
2098 11th Avenue East
North St. Paul, MN 55109
(651) 779-5651

WIA Youth Served 367
MYP Youth Served 585

No. of WIA Youth With a Disability 38
No. of MYP Youth With a Disability 70

No. of Juvenile Offenders (WIA) 52
No. of Juvenile Offenders (MYP) 48

No. of Foster Children Served (WIA) 30
No. of Foster Children Served (MYP) 35

Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance (WIA) 108
Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance (MYP) 174

No. of Teen Parents (WIA) 56
No. of Teen Parents (MYP) 38

No. of Youth Earning a HS Diploma or GED (WIA) 63
No. of Youth Earning a HS Diploma or GED (MYP) 14

Out-of-School Services

Workforce Solutions continues to solidify its collaboration with local vocational institutions and other school districts within Ramsey County. A Youth LEAD program specialist is now located at the Hubert Humphrey Job Corps Center to provide a potential Job Corps dropout with an alternative to complete his/her GED/ Diploma education by recruiting and enrolling him or her into the WIA program and services. This co-location opportunity will also provide a potential Job Corps graduate the opportunity to receive timely support services for such items as transportation, uniforms, shoes, car repair and all other needs that will help to keep the focus on his or her new career for a minimum of one year.

Youth LEAD training and services are also available to high school dropouts with the aid of the St. Paul Public School's CAMPUS system. The system collects and tracks information on all City of Saint Paul School District participants who are absent from school more than two days in a row within a week.



Success Story: Jammie Jiles

Jammie was a dropout from the regular high school settings in Ramsey County. She came to the YouthLEAD program looking for employment and guidance and support to complete her GED. She met with YouthLEAD program staff, completed all of the necessary paperwork and immediately started her efforts to reach her goal. In short order, she not only completed her GED, but also enrolled in the Certified Nursing Assistant Program offered through the American Red Cross after she worked with staff to explore career options.

Today, Jammie is employed full-time at a St. Paul hospital and is receiving additional training through her employer to enhance her skills and move into other positions within the hospital.

Success Story: Maurisa Foote

Maurisa Foote is a recent high school graduate from St. Paul who was first introduced to the Workforce Solutions YouthLEAD program at her high school when she was seeking after-school employment. After working with staff, she not only found employment at a local healthcare center but also spent time exploring her own future career options. With the assistance of Workforce Solutions staff, Maurisa developed the work maturity skills she needed to be successful in current and future employment.

In the spring of 2003, Maurisa graduated and is now pursuing a degree in Business Administration at Perimeter College in Atlanta, Georgia, and continues to work part-time in sales.

Washington County

Summary

The WorkForce Center provides direct services year-round and contracts during the summer with Tree Trust to provide a service corps model of employment for some of the youth served.

Services provided through the WorkForce Center include:

- ❖ Assessment and service strategy.
- ❖ Paid work experience.
- ❖ Career decision-making.
- ❖ Supportive services.
- ❖ Referral to diploma, alternative diploma or ABE/GED/ESL programs.
- ❖ Referral to community counseling resources.
- ❖ Financial assistance for post-secondary training.
- ❖ Service corps learning.
- ❖ Work-based learning.
- ❖ Academic credit coordination.
- ❖ Leadership development.
- ❖ Follow-up services.

Work Experience

Subsidized work placements provide opportunities for young people to gain experience and good work habits. Youth are matched to sites based on interests, ability, and transportation.

Lee is 17 years old and has been volunteering at a bike repair shop run by Family Means of Stillwater since he was 12. This past summer the WorkForce Center's WIA funds were able to pay a wage for Lee at a time when the nonprofit agency's funding has declined.

The shop operates in a mobile home community with a high incidence of police calls and a relatively high rate of poverty. It provides constructive learning and leisure activities through teaching young people to repair bicycles, offering kids the opportunity to earn a bicycle through hours spent volunteering at the shop, and organized bike rides of varying distances. The shop accepts donations of used and broken bicycles to supply its stock.

Youth working with Tree Trust this past summer learned basic landscape and wood construction skills. They performed work projects for two of the County's regional parks, making them more accessible to visitors through construction of safer stairs, and adding landscaping materials storage bins for the maintenance facility.

Impact of the Program

Tree Trust teaches practical skills in applied math functions, basic construction and landscaping, and group dynamics/interpersonal relations. Youth carry these skills into adulthood and home ownership. They return to school in the fall equipped with better coping skills and more tolerance.

Additionally, working with Tree Trust gives young girls the chance to do work that they consider non-traditional. Brittany said, "I like doing hands-on things. I'd like to be a carpenter when I graduate from high school." Her crew leader, Rob, said, "She's like a breath of fresh air and keeps the guys in line."

Outcomes at a Glance.....

Area Served: Washington County.

Contact Information:

Robert L. Crawford, Division Manager
Washington County WorkForce Center
2150 Radio Drive
Woodbury, MN 55125
(651) 275-8650

WIA Youth Served..... 53
MYP Youth Served 40

No. of WIA Youth With a Disability..... 24
No. of MYP Youth With a Disability 30

No. of Juvenile Offenders (WIA) 7
No. of Juvenile Offenders (MYP) 11

Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance (WIA)..... 7
Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance (MYP)..... 24

No. of Youth Earning a HS Diploma or GED (WIA) 17
No. of Youth Earning a HS Diploma or GED (MYP) 2

Tree Trust projects are highly visible and usable. Youth know exactly what they've completed each day and the community benefits from improved playgrounds, safer stairs, erosion-control obtained through retaining walls, etc.

Other youth work in nonprofit and public agencies. Work that couldn't be completed in these agencies because of limited budgets and staff gets completed. Youth who may not otherwise be hired have something meaningful to do in the summer: they get up, follow a schedule, learn what an employer expects, follow directions, and earn money.

Successful outcomes are measured by ratings on post-work assessments of youth's work habits. Supervisors complete these assessments. Youth and supervisors know at the start of the job which work habits are important and will be measured.

MYP and WIA

Without the MYP allocation, our youth program would serve less than one-third the number of youth that it serves with combined WIA and MYP dollars.

MYP dollars allow more 14 to 16 year-old youth with learning and other disabilities to be served in a work-experience-only capacity. Many of these youth have Individual Education Plans through school special

Success Story: Amanda Hanson

Amanda Hanson is 21 and ready to transition to adulthood. The skills and experience she has gained over the last 4 years in her school's transition program and the WorkForce Center's work program have prepared her to do just that.

Four years ago, Amanda started preparing for work through volunteer positions coordinated by Joanne in her school's transition program. She gained confidence and good habits, and in the spring of 2001 Joanne told her about the WorkForce Center's summer employment program. Amanda applied and worked that first summer for Tree Trust, doing outdoor landscape labor.

The following summer Amanda definitely wanted to work for Tree Trust again, despite working in a bog the previous summer.

In the Fall of 2002, Joanne asked WorkForce Center staff if there was a jobsite that would allow Amanda to combine her interest in working with her hands, being outdoors and putting to use the janitorial skills she learned through District 916's Transition Program. The City of Newport Public Works seemed like it would be a good fit. Bruce, the Superintendent of Public Works, had himself worked in the CETA youth program (a legislative ancestor of WIA) and has always been supportive of training opportunities for young people. Amanda interviewed and was hired to start in October. The WorkForce Center has been paying Amanda's wage for the past year, but in October the City of Newport will begin paying Amanda.

"I used to think I would like an indoor job but now I think an outdoor job is more enjoyable. [A job involving] making change and [handling] money would have been hard. Math is difficult," Amanda reflects.

Daily duties for Amanda include washing City vehicles, organizing tools, painting, lawn mowing, clearing brush and cleaning the break room.

The best thing about the job? "I got to ride in a dump truck for the very first time. We went to load tree branches. I got to operate the [dumpster] controls."

The worst thing about the job? "Sometimes I hate doing the sweeping and mopping because I'd like to get outdoors. [Eventually] I do go outside."

education programs; the needs of each youth are determined in consultation with schools, and appropriate programming is provided.

Out-of-School Services

Youth who have dropped out of school or have graduated and need help finding a better job or training will find options through our program. The youth employment counselor makes sure youth are aware of and visit a local GED or alternative learning program classroom.

In the past year, the WorkForce Center's youth program served nine youth who were considered dropouts from traditional high school settings. They attended alternative learning programs or GED classes. Six of those nine are returning to class this fall; three have left the program or moved from the area.

Three students attended post-high school training during the past year. One of them graduated and is working.

Seventeen students graduated from high school (including transition programs for students with disabilities) this past year. Nine of these students were placed in unsubsidized jobs; four students will go on to work with other community agencies for transition into independent living and work; and two of the students will continue to work with the youth employment counselor for job placement assistance.

Basic Skills Training

The youth program pays a wage equivalent during the summer to youth who are working and need to attend remedial, basic standards, or missing credit classes. This has been an effective approach to ensure that youth enroll in and complete these important classes instead of skipping them in order to work.

Rewards/Recognition

Each year the WorkForce Center hosts a customer celebration for customers from all programs. Approximately 90 customers, guests, staff and supporters of the WorkForce Center attended in June. This year, three youth were nominated for recognition of achieving success in work and education.

Work-Based Learning

Youth apply basic math skills daily when measuring and fitting materials for the projects in Tree Trust jobs. In addition, using laptop computers, Tree Trust provides instruction in developing a personal budget, writing a letter to the community describing the project, and drawing the project. This is truly work-based learning that is fully integrated at the worksite.



Stearns-Benton Employment and Training Council

Program Summary

Eligible youth of Stearns and Benton counties receive services to enhance their career goals. Traditional services such as assessment, career planning, work training, classroom training, and supportive services are used. Youth are assigned a career planner who provides one-on-one career planning and goal development. Delivery models chosen to reach each “at-risk” youth are unique.

Work-Based Learning

A 17-day summer Employability Skills Training Camp provided 39 youth with experiential learning while developing and presenting the 2nd Annual Festival of Cycles in the St. Cloud community. A local college campus provided the setting for the camp. Youth were in teams of 5 to 7 members, led by an experienced adult. Each team took responsibility for a part of the Festival. Youth were supported through academic enrichment, team-building activities, SCANS Skills, customer service, safety, and career exploration activities. Youth demonstrated the effectiveness of this approach by having a 92 percent completion rate, practical application of SCANS Skills, journaling and the creative delivery of their assigned tasks. 81 percent of those participating achieved 95 percent competency in employability skills and were presented an “Employability Skills Training Certificate.” Safety Awards were presented to the 97 percent who demonstrated work safety 100 percent of the time.

During the school year, a work-based learning youth service team with similar components and goals operates an entrepreneurial Bike Repair and donation project.

Work Experience

Work Experience may be at an individually created worksite or in the context of a Youth Service Team such as the Bike Shop or Camp. An individual skill plan is developed. Youth demonstrate and learn appropriate work habits on the job. Skills specific to the worksite’s job description are written in the learning plan. The worksite supervisor assesses the youth’s skill development and sets continued training goals. Upon achieving 95 percent competency with occupational skills, a “Mastery of Skills Certificate” is issued. This benefits the agency with needed labor while the youth develops needed employability skills.

Basic Skills Training

The camp setting uses computer labs and personnel from community agencies to assist teams in researching topics for the festival. Reflections and journaling are built into each week of training. The teams prepare advertisements, written materials and present information through activities, games and demonstrations at the festival. Through this contextual applied learning method, youth retain or increase their math and reading levels. A similar approach is used at the Bike Shop.

Rewards/Recognition

An awards ceremony is held for youth who successfully complete Camp or a Youth Service Team. Their families and community partners are invited. Youth are presented with team awards and earn certificates and safety awards. Appreciation certificates are presented to individuals from community agencies.

Outcomes at a Glance.....

Area Served: Stearns and Benton counties.

Contact Information:

Kathy Zavala, Executive Director
Stearns-Benton Employment and Training Council
3333 West Division St.
Suite 212
St. Cloud, MN 56301-3783
(320) 229-5702

WIA Youth Served..... 53
MYP Youth Served 62

No. of WIA Youth With a Disability..... 21
No. of MYP Youth With a Disability 41

No. of Juvenile Offenders (WIA)..... 18
No. of Juvenile Offenders (MYP) 11

Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance (WIA)..... 38
Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance (MYP)..... 16

No. of Teen Parents (WIA)..... 29
No. of Teen Parents (MYP)..... 7

Out-of-School Services

Career planning is delivered individually to youth. Referrals to community resources, school placement, job search/placement activities, and work training may be utilized to achieve career goals. Twenty youth received services. Ten youth completed secondary school, and seven remain in school. Four youth enrolled in post-secondary school, five are working, two left for health reasons, one moved, and one is incarcerated.

MYP and WIA Programs

MYP provides youth the opportunity to participate in an Employability Skills Training Camp. Some youth from camp are selected for participation in the after school work training program at the Bike Shop. Youth who demonstrate the need for more long term services and goal planning are referred to WIA programming.

Program Impact

Youth demonstrate the ability to retain work and/or remain in school. They demonstrate increased attendance at school, how to communicate, and how to resolve conflict without violence. The career planner assists with goal development and sets goals for participation. When youth achieve their goals and exit the program, the career planner continues to assist them for up to twelve months. Assistance is given in job/school retention, job search, advanced training and supportive services. Success is measured through academic gain in reading and math, number of youth who complete the program, number who

Success Story: Chandrell Fincher

Chandrell started participating in WorkForce Center services in the fall of 2001 at the age of 15. After school, she was involved in the work training program at the bike shop. Chandrell learned how to balance her school and work training activities along with taking care of her responsibilities with her family. She earned her Employability Skills Certificate for demonstrating 95 percent mastery in attendance/punctuality, team work, cooperation, work quality and work quantity. Because of her ambition and willingness to succeed, she was chosen to participate in the Leadership Adventures program provided by St. John's University and sponsored by SBETC. Chandrell learned about challenging the process, inspiring a shared vision, enabling others to act, modeling the way and encouraging the heart. She demonstrates these skills on a daily basis in her personal and academic life. Because of Chandrell's demonstration of leadership skills, she was chosen to be a peer leader for the 2002 Summer Employability Skills Camp training. She assisted a crew leader in helping her peers learn appropriate employability skills.



Technical High School recognizes Chandrell for her outstanding educational efforts in maintaining an excellent grade point average by placing her on the honor roll. Chandrell continues to take some of Tech's most challenging courses. She has been chosen to attend the NAACP banquet with her school and participated in the Cultural Awareness and Racial Equity Club at school. She is active in the speech team, the leadership program for students of color, and the women's group. Her English teacher selected her to receive the Language Arts Community Award for her outstanding citizenship and scholarship in Language Arts. The criteria for this award includes academic success and doing an exceptional job with task management skills. She was paired with First American Bank as her community business partner and was acknowledged at the end of the year Community Awards banquet. In 2003, Chandrell was recommended for the Carleton Liberal Arts Experience summer program.

Chandrell continues to take Tech's most difficult courses within the medical career pathway. Chandrell's hope is to become a doctor. Currently, she is a senior at Tech High School and attends night classes at St. Cloud Technical College in basic nursing. She is pursuing a variety of scholarships, so she may attend the University of Georgia.

She sends this message to all youth: "Always do your best no matter who you are or what you do!"

receive Mastery of Skills Certificates, Employability Skills Certificates or Safety Certificates, number of goals obtained, and number who retain employment and wage gain. This summer, 95 percent completed Camp, 80 percent received certificates and 97 percent received safety awards. There was an average grade level increase of .80 in reading and .44 increase in math. Over 200 people attended the festival. This year, younger youth in the WIA program achieved 58.3 percent of goals, 100 percent of exiters obtained secondary school certificates, and 85.7 percent retained employment/school. Of older WIA youth exiters, 66.7 percent entered employment, 66.7 percent retained employment with wage gain of \$3,387, and 60 percent obtained credentials.

Additionally, the community receives roadworthy bikes throughout the year and participate in a festival of learning and fun during the summer.

Quotes From Participants

"The summer youth camp really changed my outlook on how to get and apply for a job. I learned many skills that I can use for the future. With the money that I got, I was able to buy all of my school supplies and clothes." -Stephani Osuji

"Through this program, I was able to broaden my perspective on life, such as helping my job search and looking forward to a brighter future for myself." -Chandrell Fincher



Winona County

Program Summary

The youth are referred to the Winona WorkForce Center in several different ways. It may be from the area schools, Community Education, Winona County Dept. of Human Services, the Churches, Mental Health Services, ads that appear in the local newspapers or on the cable network or just by word-of-mouth.

Each eligible youth meets one-on-one with a Winona WorkForce Center counselor to assess their interests, skills, abilities and any special circumstances in regard to their particular needs. Each eligible youth's needs may range from obtaining a GED, completing high school, career exploration and planning, secondary or post-secondary education assistance, job training, direct job placement, work experience and support services.

Depending on the needs and/or desires of the youth, further testing may be required. This could range from pre-GED testing, basic skills evaluation, administering a General Aptitude Test Battery (GATB) to an Interest Inventory. An Individual Service Strategy (ISS) is then established for each youth.

Work Experience/Academic Credit

Youth are placed at worksites in an individual work setting. Most sites have been a part of our program for several years. The worksites and the supervisors at these sites have a clear understanding of what we are attempting to accomplish with our youth programs. These worksites are nurturing and supportive of the youth.

Most youth have little or no work experience, so these worksites offer them not only possible career choice experiences but also the essential soft skills necessary for a positive work experience: getting to work on time, calling if unable to go to work, asking questions, responsibility, honesty and integrity. The youth are placed in public nonprofit, county and state agencies. The jobs range such as clerk, dietary aide, custodian, childcare worker, groundskeeper, nurse aide assistant, and tour guide to silk-screen printing assistant.

The Winona WorkForce Center has excellent working relations with the area schools. A student may be referred to the WFC for Career Exploration and/or assistance with obtaining a job. After the student is assessed, we may put them on a worksite. The student will attend school part-time and work part-time, with the stipulation that if they do not attend school, they are not able to work. This concept has kept several students in school and able to earn enough credits to graduate and receive their high school diploma. Whereas, if they just had to attend school to get their credits, they would have dropped out.

MYP and WIA

Youth who meet the eligibility requirements may receive services through both programs. MYP primarily assists with placing youth in the summer and/or year-round program through work experience, typically in

Outcomes at a Glance.....

Area Served: Winona County

Contact Information:

Mike Haney, Director
Winona County Workforce Council
1250 Homer Road, Suite 200
Winona, MN 55987
(507) 453-2920

WIA Youth Served..... 61
MYP Youth Served..... 62

No. of WIA Youth With a Disability..... 48
No. of MYP Youth With a Disability..... 47

No. of Juvenile Offenders (WIA)..... 26
No. of Juvenile Offenders (MYP)..... 7

Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance (WIA)..... 16
Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance (MYP)..... 12

No. of Teen Parents (WIA)..... 20
No. of Teen Parents (MYP)..... 16



their field of interest. The youth who are enrolled in the WIA program are generally youth working towards longer-term goals. A youth may be enrolled in just one program or both concurrently, as their needs are determined.

One of our more unique and nurturing worksites is the U.S. Fish and Wildlife National Sign Center. The youth placed there not only learn soft skills and silk-screen printing, application of mathematical skills, shipping, computer skills, etc., but also the staff there act as mentors to the youth. We are extremely lucky to have people like Duane Gualke and his staff to give their time and talents to our youth. When the youth leave, they are taking with them a bevy of new skills that can be utilized in any occupation they wish to enter.

Crime Prevention Strategies

The Independent Living Skills Group is a 12-week, 2-½ hours per week program that worked with 15 Winona County youth previously in residential or foster care. This program provides and enhances life skills training in such areas as: finding employment, managing personal finances, cars (maintenance, insurance, etc.), decision-making, apartment finding and the responsibilities that go with maintaining an apartment, obtaining health coverage, continuing their education, planning, shopping and preparing meals, providing resources for mental illness and chemical dependency, and basic health and disease prevention.

Ten of the youth “graduated” from this program in the spring of 2003. When asked “what are you doing different now than when you started this program?” some of the responses were “...opened a savings account”, “...doing better at my job”, “...will graduate from high school.”

Of the ten youth who have completed the program, there has been no recidivism. That in itself is a tremendous success. This program is a joint effort between the Winona WorkForce Center, Department of Corrections and the Department of Human Services.

Leadership Development

When the Winona WorkForce Center created the Youth Council, the six youth on the council wanted to try something new and different for the youth of Winona County. They wanted to have a concert. At each subsequent meeting and with guidance from the other Council members, the youth developed leadership skills. Each formed their own sub-committees and reported back to the main council on his/her progress. The subcommittees consisted of 3 to 5 youth who decided where the concert would be held based on cost, permit requirements and availability. One group was in charge of advertising, This meant they were to write articles for Public Service Announcements (PSAs) and create a poster that could be put up in various places they thought would attract the most youth; another was for food concessions and the permits and regulations required for that. A transportation sub-committee was established to provide youth with a way to safely get to and from the community park, the site of the concert. Security was also an issue. With their hard work, their dedication and the leadership qualities they learned and practiced, the concert was held on June 29th, 2003 and was a success.

Success Story: Ben Freitag

Ben Freitag is our shining star! He is the perfect example of things not always being as they appear. Upon first meeting Ben, a person may be a little shocked by his outward appearance, and depending on how and where you were brought up, you may even be a little frightened. His hair is usually in long colorful spikes, his clothing is usually black and his choices of jewelry include a variety of sizes of bright shiny silver spikes.

Appearances can be deceiving. This past year, he was a full-time student at the Winona Alternative Learning Center. While he was attending, he was working as a para-professional at an elementary school and as a teacher's aide at a daycare center. He also plays guitar in a local band and took a lead role in the Winona Youth Council. Ben is also the gentle, loving father of two-year old Skyler.

Ben graduated in 2003 and was hired on full-time at the daycare center. He hopes to continue on with his schooling in the future. Whatever he eventually pursues, we're sure that he will be successful. As for now, we're just grateful that we were able to meet and get to know the real Ben Freitag.

